

**WATCHER CERTIFICATE**

FOR USE ON ELECTION DAY

Section 8-500, Election Law

I/We, the undersigned, being \_\_\_\_\_  
(chair / secretary /candidates)

of the \_\_\_\_\_ party, do hereby appoint  
(political party/independent body)

\_\_\_\_\_ county of PUTNAM  
(watcher's name)

to be a watcher for the election to be held on \_\_\_\_\_ in the  
(date of election)

\_\_\_\_\_ election district(s), in the town or village of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title



# POLL WATCHER'S GUIDE

**Putnam County Board of Elections**

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## OVERVIEW

To ensure fair and honest elections, New York State law provides for appointing poll watchers to observe voting at the polls. Poll watchers are designated by candidates, political parties, independent organizations which have candidates on the ballot and/or political committees.

The role of the poll watcher is to observe elections at the polling sites on behalf of the particular candidate, political party or organization and where they observe irregularities, report these observations to either the Elections Inspector and/or the Board of Elections.

## POLL WATCHER QUALIFICATIONS

Watchers shall be appointed by the chairman or secretary of the political party or independent body.

At a Primary Election any two or more candidates may designate Poll Watchers.

Each watcher must be a qualified voter in Putnam County to serve.

Watcher certificates must be delivered to an inspector at the election district.

Not more than three watchers for any party committee or independent body or candidates whose names appear on the ballot may be appointed to serve at the same election district.

## POLL WATCHER LIMITATIONS

The Poll Watcher **may not**:

**Electioneer in any manner.**

**Assist in the conduct of the election.**

**Question any voter in any manner.**

**Remove or handle any election materials on the inspector's table.**

**Interfere with the election process.**

**Be a candidate for office in the election district in which they are running.**

## POLL WATCHER RIGHTS

The Poll Watcher **may**:

**Be present at the polling place at least 15 minutes before the unlocking and examination of any voting machine or ballot box at the opening of polls, until after the signing of the inspector's canvass at the close of polls. (8-500.2)**

**Before any voter casts his/her vote, a watcher may challenge voters whom they believe are not qualified to vote. (8-502)**

**Notify the Board of Inspectors that they have observed an individual soliciting votes or electioneering (distributing posters or banners, wearing or carrying buttons) within the polling place or within the 100-foot distance markers immediately outside of the polling place.**

**Ask the inspectors to repeat a voter's name as he/she approaches the table.**

**Sit at a close proximity to the inspector's table but not at the inspector's table.**