

# The role of a Scrutineer

General information for scrutineers appointed to represent a candidate during an election.



## Voting

Scrutineers should consider voting in advance at one of the early voting opportunities offered before election day. On election day, a scrutineer can only vote in the polling division where they live unless they have asked the returning officer in advance and received a Transfer Certificate, Form 404, to vote at one of the polling locations where they are acting as a scrutineer. If you wait to ask for a Transfer Certificate on election day, you will not be accommodated.

## When and where a scrutineer may be present

**A scrutineer may be present at the following places and times:**

- 1 At any time in the returning office during voting hours to observe voting and to witness the verification of the outer envelopes containing the write-in ballots where applicable and the count of the ballots for the continuous and write-in ballot polls at the close of the polls on election day. A scrutineer may also witness the opening and closing of the returning office continuous poll each day.
- 2 At the seven days of the Advance Poll during voting hours to observe voting and to witness the count of these ballots after the polls close on election day. A scrutineer may also witness the opening and closing of the Advance Poll each day.
- 3 At a community or campus polling station during voting hours to observe voting and to witness the count after the polls close on election day. A scrutineer may also witness the opening and closing of the community poll each day.
- 4 At a Mobile Polling Station on election day, during the opening and closing of the poll, during voting hours, and to witness the count of the ballots at the close of the poll.

- 5 At each polling location on election day, during the opening and closing of the poll, during voting hours, and to witness the count of the ballots at the close of the poll.
- 6 In the returning office to witness the revision process anytime the returning office is open to the public.

## Scrutineers may:

In every poll specified by their candidate:

- Witness the setting up, opening and closing
- Observe the voting process:
  - At the deputy returning officer's or presiding officer's table
  - At the poll clerk's or the deputy presiding officer's table
- Have a communications device on silent in the poll
- Have access to a list of who voted at any polling station
- Take a photo of a "Voter Tracking Sheet" at the polls and text or e-mail it to campaign headquarters. No other photography is permitted.
- Have access to additions and changes to the list of electors
- Challenge an elector, who must then sign an Elector Declaration
- Observe the marking of a ballot, if the deputy returning officer acts as a friend for an elector
- Observe the counting of the ballots
- Raise an objection to the acceptance or rejection of a ballot and have the objection recorded
- Sign the Statement of Poll
- Keep a copy of the Statement of Poll
- Sign all seals used to secure election materials

**Scrutineers must not:**

- Prevent an elector from voting
- Stop or disrupt the voting process
- Engage in partisan activity in the polling location
- Wear badges, pins, emblems, etc., identifying them as supporters of a particular candidate or party
- Use a communication device in a polling location, other than to photograph and send the Voter Tracking Sheets
- Approach electors entering or leaving the polling location
- Prevent a ballot from being counted, if the deputy returning officer or presiding officer accepts it
- Re-enter a polling location once the doors have been closed and the count has started

**Counting of the ballots**

Two scrutineers per candidate may be present to observe the counting of ballots. However, a request must be made to the deputy returning officer or presiding officer to have the second scrutineer present.

**It's a fact:** Each candidate is entitled to have two scrutineers present in a polling station; however, seating must be provided for only one scrutineer at each location.

**Exception to the rule—Mobile polls and hospitals**

**voting:** As the ballot box often goes from room to room, to limit disruption of residents/patients, only one scrutineer per candidate is permitted.

**Admittance and observing at any poll**

To be admitted to any polling location as a scrutineer, you must:

- Carry a signed Appointment of Scrutineer, Form 312. This form must identify each polling location you intend to visit.
- Show your signed Appointment of Scrutineer, Form 312, to the deputy returning officer or presiding officer
- Take the Declaration of Scrutineer or Elector Representing Candidate, Form 314 in the Poll Book.

A scrutineer may leave and return to any polling station during voting hours. If asked, the scrutineer must show his or her Appointment of Scrutineer, Form 312, to the Poll Supervisor, Deputy Returning Officer or Presiding Officer on return, but need not take the Declaration of Scrutineer or Elector Representing Candidate, Form 314 again.

**Resources**

Look for your returning office information in your local newspaper, on the Voter Information Card you received in the mail or at the Election Nova Scotia website after an election has been called. See the Electoral District Finder on our website for more information.

**Important Information**

Campaign Office Phone .....

Party Office Phone .....

Electoral District Name .....

Returning Officer Name .....

Returning Office Phone .....

Elections Nova Scotia Phone 1-800-565-1504

**Advance Poll Voting Hours**

Open 7 days (Saturday to Saturday)  
before election day (closed Sunday)

Sat., Mon.– Wed.	9 am to 6 pm
Thurs.– Fri.	9 am to 8 pm

Election Day Voting Hours 8 am to 8 pm

Local Police Phone Number 911

Ambulance Phone Number 911

Fire Department Phone 911



7037 Mumford Road, Suite 6  
PO Box 2246, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3C8

**902-424-8584** (HRM)

**1-800-565-1504** (Toll free in Nova Scotia)

**902-424-7475** (TTY) 

**1-866-774-7074** (Toll Free) 

**902-424-6622** (Fax)

elections@gov.ns.ca

or visit [www.electionsnovascotia.ca](http://www.electionsnovascotia.ca)