

Sample Scenarios for Practice

Situation	Tactical Advice	If engaging them, a few ideas
<p>Directed at you by third party</p> <p><i>Examples</i> Asking you for photo ID or “proof of citizenship”</p> <p>Taking photos or videos of you</p> <p>Breathing into your face unmasked</p> <p>Yelling, name calling, epithets</p> <p>Demands that you leave</p>	<p>You and buddy stay where you can see them. Do not attempt to hold your spot/ nor defend “your turf.” Maintain neutral contact, not engaging in arguments.</p> <p>Maintain a 10-foot distance and stay mobile at all times. Egress awareness</p> <p>Do not provide any personal information, ID, etc. First name only (pseudonym okay too!)</p> <p>Bring face masks, ear plugs, eye protection if you wish</p> <p>If group is too large/ belligerent to engage, that’s okay. Your #1 job is simply being a witness. Make note of their efforts to coerce/ influence the election workers.</p> <p>It’s okay to be deferential as a tactic for not making a target of yourself.</p> <p>Avoid any references to who they are affiliated with, their political preferences, or how you may have been authorized/ pre-approved as an observer if they have not. (It’s advised to mention your authorized status to the election workers directly, however)</p>	<p>“I am here as a member of the public, just like you, to witness the vote count.”</p> <p>“My name is _____, what’s yours?” (Assume you are on a familiar, first name basis from then on, use their name repeatedly.)</p> <p>“Looks like we both really want to make sure this election has no problems.” (Focus on any commonalities with this other party, seek them out.)</p> <p>“Participatory democracy at its finest, right?” (Humor minimizes tension sometimes, at minimum can give you a sense of how responsive other party is.)</p> <p>“I hear you clearly. You want us to leave. Let me get back to you after I check in with my boss.” (3 mins pass) “Boss has told us to stay until the ballots have all been processed. We’ll simply stay out of your way.”</p>

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<p>Directed at election staff</p> <p><i>Examples</i></p> <p>“These ballots are invalid!”</p> <p>“These were already scanned!”</p> <p>“You are a f-ing idiot!”</p> <p>“No way I trust you, you’re working for that asshole governor”</p> <p>“These machines have been corrupted, you need to stop using them and hand count!”</p> <p>“HB 2361 challenged the use of mail-in ballots. You all are BREAKING THE LAW!”</p>	<p>Consider having printed or saved to your phone the election observer guidelines that apply to your county or state.</p> <p>Document exactly what you see, report it immediately to election official and 866-OUR-VOTE hotline, which may be able to dispatch a volunteer attorney to help by phone or even in person.</p> <p>If possible to safely record these interference attempts, do so. Even a phone in a front pocket can capture a video or audio recording discretely. Either way, your written, objective descriptions are really helpful</p> <p>Don’t contradict their position unless you see smaller signs that there is an opening (ie new information shifts their perception, they are engaging in a rational exchange of information). Then proceed diplomatically.</p> <p>Keep your language neutral, free of any affiliation or judgement.</p>	<p>“Hi, what issues are you seeing with the ballot processing?”</p> <p>Whatever they relate next, try to use their own words back. “You are worried that Sandy double dipped this batch, did I get that right?” Give them a chance to add to the narrative, keep paraphrasing until they have exhausted their issue. “Would you like to (look that up in this guide, speak to the ballot center supervisor) while I continue observing this station? I will gladly share my notes with you.”</p> <p>“I am also frustrated that all we can do is watch, I’m with you, I’d rather not just sit here. But at least we can report what we see. It’s tough huh?”</p> <p>“You’re right, hand-counting would be better. These workers don’t have the authority to make that change, though. I guess all we can do is take this to our legislators.”</p> <p>“I’ve got some extra paper if you want to take notes.”</p>

Situation	Tactical Advice	If engaging them, a few ideas
<p>Directed at you by the election staff</p> <p><i>Examples</i> “You are NOT ALLOWED to be here.”</p> <p>“You may not stand that close.”</p> <p>“You are not allowed to be here as the ballots are unboxed, just come back in 30 minutes.”</p> <p>“All video/audio recording devices are forbidden here. You put that phone away or I will confiscate it”</p> <p>“I will call the cops and report you as a trespasser.”</p>	<p>Consider having printed or saved to your phone the vote observer guidelines that apply to your county or state. Don’t assume election workers know these guidelines.</p> <p>Weigh which is best, not rocking the boat vs asserting your rights. If your capacity to observe is undermined, consider asserting yourself.</p> <p>If not successful, document exactly what you see, report it immediately to election official and 866-OUR-VOTE hotline, which may be able to dispatch a volunteer attorney to help by phone or even in person.</p> <p>When you have time, also report it to SeeSay2022. - Whatever else you do, DOCUMENT in your notes what happened, and be sure you share your experience later with groups collecting problem reports (see our other training materials for more info).</p> <p>Election workers have no authority to confiscate your belongings.</p> <p>For more on handling law enforcement, see this information from the ACLU</p> <p>If a legal observer is there (this may happen in larger venues), ask them for help.</p> <p>Remember you always have the option to leave.</p>	<p>“My name is _____ and I’m here as an impartial observer. Would you like to see the guidelines published by the county for that role?”</p> <p>“Hi, what’s your name?” Have pen and paper ready so they understand you’re documenting them and their actions.</p> <p>“It’s possible we have two different understandings of how observers are supposed to do our jobs. Would you kindly pause the process while I speak to a supervisor here? I’m sure we can resolve this quickly.” (Have your buddy remain there if you must step away.)</p> <p>“You have a really tough job. My goal is to simply observe, not make your work any more difficult.”</p> <p>“I trust that you know exactly what you’re doing. My observations will simply document that for others who are not here tonight.”</p>