

STATE BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

501 Woodlane, Suite 401N
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
(501) 682-1834 or (800) 411-6996

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RULES FOR POLL WORKER TRAINING

The State Board of Election Commissioners held a public hearing on July 6, 2011 following a thirty-day public comment period to adopt revisions to the “Rules for Poll Worker Training” that set forth the procedures for coordinating statewide poll worker training. Below is a summary of the initial revisions that were approved by the Board on May 25, 2011 for the public comment period, followed by a list of persons commenting on the rule, a summary of the comments, the agency’s response to the comments, and a change to the rules as a result of the public comments.

Initial changes included: 1) adding a definition of “Poll Worker” for clarity and consistency and to distinguish them from other election officials; 2) refining the definition of “primary election” for clarity; and 3) changes in language for clarity.

PERSONS COMMENTING ON THE RULE

Board of Directors, Arkansas County Election Commissions Association (Stu Soffer email: Wednesday, June 15, 2011)

Baxter County Election Commissioner Lois Smith (email: Friday, May 13, 2011 and Sunday, June 5, 2011)

Jefferson County Board of Election Commissioners (fax: Thursday, June 23, 2011)

Pope County Election Commissioners (email: Friday, June 17, 2011)

Stone County Election Commissioner Vern Humphrey (email: Sunday, June 12, 2011)

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

Recommendations were made that any item included in any SBEC Rule that is not mandated by law be identified as “recommended” or “encouraged”.

Rule 202 regarding Required Training: Recommendations were made that the wording reflect that certification by the State Board as a poll worker trainer only applies to the State Board training and not to the Secretary of State’s equipment training. Recommendations were made that all poll worker trainers be certified to include equipment trainers. A concern was expressed as to whether it’s a good idea for training coordinators to conduct regional training – thinks that election commissioners should be trained directly by the State Board and that training of the trainers should be more comprehensive and more flexible and wants videos for machine training.

A commission questioned what would classify trainers as certified and if adding the word “certified” makes a better trainer concerning recommendations by members of the ACECA pertaining to the equipment certification of poll worker trainers. A comment was made that certification of poll workers to include equipment trainers is critical, since equipment training is the most difficult part of training and where many election problems begin. (See Agency’s Response below)

Rule 206 regarding Training Materials: Recommendations were made that use of county generated training materials that supplement the State Board’s materials or implement local policies, but that do not change any rule or procedure, be allowed without the State Board’s approval. A commission posed questions and disagreed with recommendations by members of the ACECA pertaining to the State Board’s poll worker training materials not being all inclusive and counties not having the option of including their own materials and the need for a tailored approach to producing training materials. A comment was made that a mock election is necessary to properly train poll workers and requires more than the State Board provides. (See Rule Change below)

AGENCY’S RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

The certificates issued by the State Board to the State Board-certified trainers for the counties will clarify the scope of the certification and, therefore, no rule change is required for this.

RULE CHANGE AS A RESULT OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rule 206 regarding Training Materials: Add a final sentence that reads, “Approval by the State Board is not required for materials related to voting system training or supplemental procedures not addressed by materials provided by the State Board.”