

# Poll Worker Recruitment: Laws & Proposals in Other States

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# What is a Poll Worker?

Poll Workers, or Election Judges, are paid temporary employees who provide assistance at polling locations and central election offices on Election Day.

A Poll Worker's tasks can include checking voter IDs, distributing ballots, helping elderly and disabled citizens vote, updating voter registration information, and maintaining a safe and orderly polling place.

# 2024 Federal General Election

Across the country, 772,433 poll workers assisted with in-person voting during the 2024 general election.

In Montana, there were 390 in-person polling locations across the state, including 77 early voting sites.



# Existing Laws in Other States

**California:** A state employee “shall receive payment of his or her regular wages or salary for that election day, without forfeiting any compensation received for his or her service as a precinct board member.”

**Colorado:** An employee of a state agency may take “administrative leave with pay” on Election Day to serve as an election judge.

**Illinois:** A person may be absent from their place of work for the purpose of serving as an election judge, as long as they give their employer at least 20 days written notice before the time of service. An employer cannot require such an employee to use vacation time or any other form of paid leave to serve as an election judge, but they may implement a “a deduction in salary for the time the employee was absent from his or her place of employment.”

# Existing Laws in Other States

**Maryland:** State and county employees who serve as election judges during their normal working hours shall receive one hour of administrative leave for each hour of service as an election judge, up to eight hours for each day served.

**Nebraska:** A person appointed to serve as an election judge or clerk cannot, in relation to their service, be discharged from employment, or be subject to loss of pay, loss of overtime pay, loss of sick leave, loss of vacation time or any other form of penalty as a result of his or her absence from employment. A person who chooses to serve as a poll worker, rather than being appointed, has similar protections, but may be deducted pay for each hour of work missed by an amount equal to the hourly compensation.

**Virginia:** A person who serves as an election worker cannot be discharged from employment or be required to use sick leave or vacation time to serve on Election Day or following the election if helping with ballot processing and counting.

# 2026 Bills in Other States

## Serve as an election judge in lieu of jury duty

- Arizona SB 1655
- Idaho HB 560 (*signed by Governor 3/26*)

## Election worker compensation

- Connecticut SB 464
- Louisiana SB 25, HB 205
- Missouri HB 1754
- NJ AB 733, SB 116, AB 1516, SB 3968

# 2026 Bills in Other States

## Expand eligibility for election judges

- Mississippi HB 630 (*signed by Governor 3/26*)
- New Jersey SB 3207

## Close schools on election day/allow for virtual instruction on election day

- Arizona SB 1746
- Idaho HB 831 (*signed by Governor 3/26*)
- Illinois SB 3284, HB 4535
- Missouri HB 1787
- New Jersey SB 1166, AB 1691, SB 3291

# 2026 Bills in Other States

## Make election day a state holiday

- Louisiana SB 107
- Missouri HB 2802, HB 3399, HB 3403
- Ohio SB 335

## Youth election judges/participation

- Florida HB 461 (signed by Governor 1/26)
- New Jersey AB 1699, AB 4108

# Questions?



# Resources

- <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/election-poll-workers>
- <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/finding-and-keeping-qualified-poll-workers>
- <https://issueone.org/articles/turning-the-tide-on-turnover/>
- <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/issue-brief/election-official-turnover-rates-through-the-2024-election/>
- <https://www.eac.gov/research-and-data/studies-and-reports>
- <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/state-election-legislation-database>