



Nonpartisan Election Observers

No updates required since January 4, 2024

Background

During the 2020 election, partisan poll watchers and challengers within the states caused problems by intimidating voters and in some cases threatening to disrupt election processes. While most states allow the use of partisan poll watchers, a number of states also have policies that allow nonpartisan election observers such as academics or the media to witness various parts of the state’s election processes.

These policies promote election integrity while also avoiding the risk of voter intimidation that can sometimes result from the use of strictly partisan poll watchers. Note: States with laws allowing the general public access to election proceedings have been categorized as allowing nonpartisan observation. Laws governing partisan election observation are not addressed in this document.

Scoring

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election process, 1 point
- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election process, 0 points

Summary Table

Category	Number	List
State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election process	38 states & D.C.	Arizona Arkansas California Colorado Connecticut Delaware D.C. Florida Georgia Hawaii Illinois Indiana Iowa Kansas Maine Maryland Massachusetts Michigan Minnesota Mississippi



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		Missouri Montana Nevada New Hampshire New Jersey New Mexico North Carolina North Dakota Oregon Rhode Island South Carolina South Dakota Tennessee Utah Vermont Virginia Washington West Virginia Wisconsin
State does not allow nonpartisan observers	12 states	Alabama Alaska Idaho Kentucky Louisiana Nebraska New York Ohio Oklahoma Pennsylvania Texas Wyoming



State-by-State Sources and More Detail

Alabama (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Alaska (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Arizona (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes ([Arizona Election Procedures Manual](#)).

Arkansas (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Arkansas Code § 7-5-515, 7-5-416, 7-5-603).

California (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Cal Elec. Code §15004).

Colorado (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Colo. Rev. State. 1-7-509(2), 1-1.5-104).

Connecticut (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-244, 9-147a).

Delaware (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Delaware Code, Title 15, § 5008A, 4933, 4913).

D.C. (1)

- Explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (D.C. Mun. Regs. §3-801.2, 706.2).

Florida (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Fla. Stat. Title IX §101.5612, 101.5614).



Georgia (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Ga. Code § 21-2-37, 21-2-413).

Hawaii (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Hawaii Rev. Stat. §11-132).

Idaho (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Illinois (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (10 ILCS 5/17-23).

Indiana (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (IC 3-11.5-3-4).

Iowa (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Iowa Code §49.104, 50.1A).

Kansas (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Kan. Stat. §25-3005, 3009).

Kentucky (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Louisiana (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Maine (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (21-A M.R.S.A. §695).



Maryland (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Md. Election Law Code Ann. § 10-311).

Massachusetts (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (950 CMR 54.04(22)).

Michigan (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (M.C.L.A. §§ 168.730).

Minnesota (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Minn. Stat. Ann. §203B.212).

Mississippi (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-581).

Missouri (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Missouri Rev. Stat. §115.409).

Montana (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Mont. Code Ann. §12-12-121).

Nebraska (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Nevada (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Nev. Rev. Stat. §293.274).

New Hampshire (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (NH Rev. Stat. Ann. 659:63, 659:49).



New Jersey (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (NJSA 19:53A-8(b)).

New Mexico (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (NM Stat. Ann. §§1-1-3.2, 1-2-25, 1-2-29).

New York (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

North Carolina (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (N.C.S.G.S. § 163-234, 166.10).

North Dakota (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (NDCC § 16.1-05-09).

Ohio (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Oklahoma (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Oregon (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes ([Oregon Vote by Mail Procedures Manual](#)).

Pennsylvania (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Rhode Island (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (R.I.G.L. § 17-22-2).



South Carolina (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes ([South Carolina Poll Managers Handbook](#)).

South Dakota (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (S.D.C.L. §12-18-9).

Tennessee (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-7-104).

Texas (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.

Utah (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (UCA 20A-3a-801).

Vermont (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (17 V.S.A. § 2564).

Virginia (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (VA Code Ann. § 24.2-604.5).

Washington (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (RCW 29A.60.170).

West Virginia (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (W. Va. Code §3-4A-27).

Wisconsin (1)

- State explicitly allows nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes (Wis. Stat. § 7.41).



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Wyoming (0)

- State does not explicitly allow nonpartisan observers access to some or all parts of election processes.