



Poll Worker Training: Adult Learning

Tip Sheet

Effective poll worker training begins with understanding how adults learn. Poll workers come from diverse backgrounds and have different levels of experience. Some are familiar with election procedures, while others may be participating for the first time. How you train poll workers is just as important as what you teach.

Below are some easy tips to make your poll worker training more effective.

Start with the “Why”

Adults need to understand why they are learning something, especially when the reason is not obvious.



- Explain why they are learning something:
 - Why is this task important?
 - How does it help them succeed?
 - What problem(s) does it solve?
- Make it relatable:
 - Use clear language and examples that poll workers will recognize.
- Connect each task to the bigger picture:
 - Explain how the task supports the next step in the election process.
 - Discuss what can happen if the task is not done right.
 - Show what problem the task solves and the benefits of completing it correctly.

Help Them Feel Supported

Poll worker training can feel overwhelming. Stay positive and supportive to help them succeed.



- Create a comfortable training environment:
 - Schedule breaks to maintain energy and focus.
 - Encourage questions without judgment.
 - Consider a buddy system for peer support.
- Provide respectful, clear feedback.
- Show appreciation:
 - Thank poll workers for their time and service.
 - Offer small incentives, such as certificates, badges, or light refreshments.
 - Pay for participating in training, if applicable.
- Provide growth opportunities, such as moving from a basic role to an advanced role.
- Keep communication open before, during, and after training.

Keep Them Involved

Adults like to actively participate in their learning. The more they participate, the more they will remember.



- Ask meaningful, open-ended questions.
- Allow experienced poll workers to share knowledge.
- Use real-life scenarios and talk through solutions:
 - Encourage peer discussions.
 - Show them how to find answers in the poll worker manual.

Teach in More than One Way

Adults learn in different ways. There is no “single best way” to train.



- Use a mix of training formats to help them see, hear, do, and practice:
 - Show: Short video clips, flow charts, and images (with explanations).
 - Say: Use simple written materials and clear verbal instructions.
 - Do: Role-play, peer-to-peer discussion, and hands-on practice with equipment.
 - Check understanding: Use question-and-answer sessions, fill-in-the-blank worksheets, and knowledge checks.

Offer Flexible Training Options

Poll workers have busy schedules. They will learn more and be less distracted when training fits their availability.



- Offer training at different times and on different days.
- Provide take-home materials:
 - A copy of the poll worker manual.
 - A copy of the quick reference guide(s).
- Offer additional resources:
 - Online videos they can watch anytime.
 - Virtual “office hours” for questions.
 - “Open house” style sessions, for extra hands-on practice.
 - Online surveys or quizzes to check their knowledge.
- Use “just-in-time” training:
 - Supply short checklists at the voting location.
 - Create an Election Day hotline or Help Desk for support.
- Compile links to resources for learners to refer to before or after training to practice a training topic.

Additional EAC Resources

- [EAC Poll Worker Resources for Election Officials](#)– best practices, tools, and guidance.
- [EAC Learning Lab](#) – Free online training for election officials.
- [EAC Sample Poll Worker Training Survey](#) – Adaptable template to assess and improve poll worker training.