



Eslir Musta,
Elections Director/
Assistant County Manager

Whitney Juszczak,
Elections Assistant
Director

Margaret Penado,
Enterprise Risk Manager

Holly Roth,
Election Database
Programmer

Stan Pierce,
Elections Training and
Outreach Coordinator

Lynndel Custodio
Elections Logistics
Coordinator

Denise Anderson
Election Board Worker
Recruiter Coordinator

Ray Daw,
Native American Outreach
Coordinator

Todd Hare,
Elections Specialist

Urseloria Walsey,
Native American Outreach
Worker

Invitation Memorandum

To: Ms. Laura Carter, Chairperson of Coconino County Democrats
Mr. William "Bill" R. Culbertson, Chairperson of the Coconino Republican Committee
Ms. Jennifer Stefanow, Chairperson of the Green Party of Coconino County

Date: February 14, 2024

RE: *Political Party Observers for the Presidential Preference Election*

The Coconino County Elections Department makes every effort to provide transparency and accountability in administering elections and serving our county voters. Following state laws, court decisions, and the Elections Procedures Manual (EPM) established by the Arizona Secretary of State, I would like to invite you to appoint party observers on processes we embark on during an election. As the Chairs of the political parties, you are responsible for the appointment of party observers.

There are several areas and processes credentialed observers can observe, including: voting at polling locations; tabulation of ballots; receiving of returns on Election Night; and special election boards. There are specific rules regarding the activity of political party observers during a partisan election to safeguard the integrity of our democratic process and the privacy of our voters to choose freely. Observation is subject to the procedures described in this memo, and we ask that you share them with all the appointed observers for the upcoming March 19, 2024 election.

To assist with the preparations of the political party observers, I am including information along with the deadlines for you to properly notify the Coconino County Department of Elections of the observers for the political party that you will appoint. After we receive this information, we will deem the appointed observers as credentialed. Please note that no appointments can be accepted after the deadlines listed below.

1. Appointment Process for Election Day Observers at Polling Locations

The County Chair of the Democratic, Republican, and Green Parties must each submit a written list of names, in hard copy or electronically in advance of observation, of their political party observers for polling locations on March 19 Election by 5:00 pm on Thursday, March 14, 2024, to the Coconino County Elections Department Director. No observers for polling locations may be added after this deadline.

Political party observers for polling places must be appointed to a specific voting location (for Election Day observation) or multiple voting locations. The list of observers submitted to the County Elections Department should designate the polling location(s) where each observer is assigned to observe on Election Day. Polling places will be open for observation from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm local time on Election Day.

No more than one political party observer of the same political party may be at a polling location or within the 75-foot perimeter of the entrance to the polling location at any one time. The 75-foot perimeter limits inside which no electioneering may occur will be marked at each polling location.



Several election administration activities take place at the Coconino County Elections Center. As Party Chairs you are welcome to appoint Observers to watch the tabulation of ballots, receiving of returns on Election Night, Duplication, Voter Intent Boards, Hand Audit Boards, Equipment Testing and packaging.

2. Appointment Process for Observers at Central Counting

The Counting Board will start training and tabulation on Monday, March 11, 2024, at 9:00 AM, at the Elections Center. Tabulation will start promptly every day at 9:00 am through the completion of tabulation. You must submit a written list of names, in hard copy or electronically of your political party observers of tabulation work at the Central Counting Location **by 5:00 pm on Thursday 7, 2024**, to the Elections Department Director. Written additions to this list may be continuously submitted **no later than 5:00 pm on Thursday, March 14, 2024**. No observers for the tabulation may be added after 5:00 pm on March 14, 2024.

3. Appointment Process for Election Night Observers of the Receiving Board and Other Special Boards

The County Chairperson of the Democratic, Republican, and Green Parties must submit a written list of names, in hard copy or electronically of their political party observers for the Ballot Receiving Board and other Special Boards at the Elections Center **no later than 5:00 pm on Thursday, March 14, 2024**, to the Coconino County Elections Department Director. No observers for the Receiving Board may be added after this deadline. The Receiving Board begins work on election night, March 19, 2024 at 6:00 pm and finishes early in the morning on the day following the election. All other Special Boards will start their daily activities on March 11, 2024 through the completion of their duties.

Observer Credentials

Upon arrival, the Observer must present their letter of appointment as a political party observer and identification to the Inspector in charge at the polling location or Elections Department Director/Designee at the Election Center. The Observer will sign in on the observation log and be issued a badge, which must be worn while on-premises. If the Observer decides to leave, they must sign out and return the badge. Every Observer must receive a copy of the Coconino County Observer Guidelines with their political party appointment letter.

The political party letter of appointment must be on the Official County Party Letterhead and contain the Observer's name, the specific location(s) where the Observer is assigned, and the original signature of the County Chairperson. The Chairperson cannot delegate to another person, candidate, or candidate's agent, their authority to issue and sign a letter appointing observers.

Appointed political party observers need not be qualified electors in the precinct or the county. Except for precinct committeeman candidates, candidates appearing on the ballot or official write-in candidates may not serve as political party observers, nor may their spouses, children, or parents.



Observation at Voting Locations

Political party observers may observe the following activities at a voting location.

- Opening the voting location
- Voting at the voting location (but may not observe in the voting booth or otherwise impede voters' ability to maintain a secret ballot)
- Closing the voting location
- Transport of ballots from the voting location to the receiving site (using a different vehicle).

Observation at the Elections Center

Each political party is entitled to have one appointed observer to watch through the observation window at the Election Center the work of the Counting Board, Duplication Board, Hand Audit Board, and other Special Election Boards. Political party observers may observe the entire ballot-counting process and the ballot Snag and Duplication Board at work. Observers may also watch the tabulation of the ballots on the live stream video on the Coconino County webpage (coconino.az.gov/elections) or the Secretary of State's website (azsos.gov).

Observation of Ballot Receiving Board at the Elections Center on Election Night

Political party observers may observe the activities of the Receiving Board. The Receiving Board will begin its work after the polls close at 7:00 pm on March 19, 2024. The Receiving Board receives and documents the election returns from all 29 polling locations and issues receipts for the received items.

- Receiving the returns
- Securing of returns and transfer of the ballots to the Counting Board

Questions from Observers

Polling location observers may direct questions about the proceedings or bring up an objection by raising their hand to draw the Inspector's attention. They should communicate their request to the Inspector. Depending on the complexity of the question, the Inspector may ask the Observer to submit their question/comment in writing to the Elections Department Director, using the Observer Question/Comment Form. Please mail written questions to the Elections Department address shown on the Observer Question/Comment Form.

Observers at a polling location should direct their questions or concerns only to the Inspector at the polling location, and not to any Election Board Workers or any voters. Answers to written questions and matters submitted to the Elections Department by observers will be provided reasonably and promptly to the Political Party Chairpersons.

The Counting Board, Receiving Board, and all other Election Boards' observers must submit their questions/comments in writing to the Elections Department Director, using the Observer forms available near the check in window. Please drop off, mail the completed form to the Elections Department address shown on the Observer Question/Comment Form.



Observers Must Not Interfere in Election Process, Engage in Intimidation, or Violate Federal or State Laws, or Elections Procedures

All political party observers at voting locations, the central counting place, and the Receiving Board area are subject to removal by order of the Elections Department Director for failure to comply with a request to cease an activity that interferes with the election process, constitutes voter intimidation, violates federal or state law, or violates election procedures. We will notify the Political Party Chair of disruptive behaviors at polling locations and enact appropriate measures to remove an observer from participating in the election administration process. Any violations will be referred for further investigation.

Universal Health Safety Requirements for All Observers

Universal Health Safety Requirements for the Elections Department of Coconino County are updated regularly to match Arizona Health Department and CDC guidelines. All observers are subject to universal health safety requirements as indicated below:

- Face masks are optional unless required by local authorities. Any appointed political party observers may choose to wear a face mask when they are at their assigned location.
- All appointed political party observers should maintain a respectful social distance from others; 6 feet is the accepted norm for social distancing. All observers should maintain a social space of 6 feet from others whenever possible.

I have enclosed a copy of our current Political Party Observer Guidelines for Voting Locations. This document must be given to every appointed Observer.

I look forward to working with you during the March 19, 2024, Presidential Preference Election. You can reach me at 928-679-7896 or my cellphone 928-814-2253. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Take care and stay well.

/s/

Eslir Musta, Director
Coconino County Elections Department