

The Judges and Inspectors of Elections each serve only two days a year for a 4-year term, and the county provides all necessary training and manuals.

A typical election day for the local precinct officials runs from 6:30 AM until the vote count is complete, usually around 9 PM, with time off for meals and occasional breaks.

As the person in command of the polling place, the duties of the Judge of Elections are as follows:

1. Pick up the voter registration binder and other paperwork from a designated place;
2. Verify the voting machine serial numbers against the keys and documentation;
3. Swear in the poll workers, assign duties and have them sign their oaths of office;
4. Schedule relief periods and fill any vacancies in the poll staff;
5. Set up the polling place and machines;
6. Open the doors promptly at 7 AM;
7. Spend the day helping neighbors vote;
8. Close the polls promptly at 8 PM;
9. Tally the votes and seal the machines;
10. Prepare and post the official returns;
11. Return all voting materials to the designated site.
12. For the day's effort, a Judge of Elections is paid \$120, but it varies from county to county.

Here is an organization dedicated to promoting pollworking, and to networking pollworkers between elections: [www.pollworkersforpennsylvania.org](http://www.pollworkersforpennsylvania.org)

As the assistants to the Judge of Elections, duties of the Inspectors of Elections:

1. Arrive at the polling place by 6:30 AM on each election day;
2. Be sworn in and sign the oath of office (The Minority Inspector swears in the Judge of Elections);
3. Assist the Judge in preparing and opening the polling place;
4. Perform duties assigned by the Judge;
5. Spend the day helping neighbors vote;
6. Close the polls promptly at 8 PM;
7. Assist the Judge in the tally of votes, the preparation and posting of the official returns.
8. For the day's effort, an Inspector of Elections is paid \$90 but it varies from county to county.

#### Running for Neighborhood Office

There are two ways to run your campaign for Inspector or Judge of Elections: petition to get your name on the ballot, or conduct a write-in campaign. Each approach has its benefits and drawbacks.

Petitioning involves collecting signatures from registered voters in your precinct, usually only about a dozen or so, then submitting some simple paperwork to your county Election Board by the first of August. Assuming everything is filled out properly, your name will then appear on the November ballot.

For a write-in campaign, nothing needs to be done in advance. Come election day, supporters simply cast their write-in ballots.

One of the biggest advantages of a write-in campaign over petitioning is its stealth aspect. In the case where there's no old-party candidate on the ballot, you could win with only a single write-in vote -- your own. This happened in almost half the victories in MontCo in 1997.

The drawback to a write-in campaign is that fewer people are likely to vote for you (especially if you have an unusual last name). So a write-in campaign works best when there is no other candidate for a given office.

The main advantage to having your name on the ballot is that it's much easier for people to vote for you. Having any candidate on the ballot also increases the credibility and visibility of your party, win or lose.

Regardless of which sort of campaign you run, there are certain sure-fire tricks that can further boost your vote totals.

