

## TrueVoteMD.org

### Guidelines for Poll Watchers **OUTSIDE** the Polling Place *(Revised 10/24/04)*

TrueVoteMD is a non-partisan, non-profit, grassroots organization. Our goal is to work toward accurate, secure, transparent elections during the transition to new voting technology. Toward this end, we will educate voters and observe and document problems that arise with the new touch-screen machines. This is particularly important because Maryland's touch-screen machines do not provide a voter-verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) to ensure that votes are accurately recorded and counted. See [www.TrueVoteMD.org](http://www.TrueVoteMD.org) for information about touch-screen machines and VVPAT.

We do not endorse any candidate or political party. In order for TrueVoteMD to maintain its credibility as an unbiased, non-partisan election reform organization, poll watchers should refrain from voicing any partisan position during the performance of their poll watching duties.

Your job as a TrueVoteMD poll watcher outside the polling place is to ask voters to let you know if they have a problem using the touch-screen machine while voting and to record any problems that voters tell you about on the **TrueVoteMD Voter Incident Report** form we provide you. State officials have insisted that Maryland has not encountered any significant problems with the touch-screen machines. Collecting incident reports is vitally important to demonstrate the need for a paper audit trail in Maryland.

**If a voter tells you about a significant problem related to the operation of a touch-screen machine (see list of examples on other side), or if you observe any apparently unusual behavior associated with the voting process, contact TrueVoteMD.org Headquarters immediately at 301-270-6150!**

#### **BEFORE ELECTION DAY**

- ✓ Familiarize yourself with TrueVoteMD's mission and goals, as well as with general information about the need for voter-verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) for direct recording electronic (DRE) machines. See the web site at [www.truevotemd.org](http://www.truevotemd.org) for background reference materials.
- ✓ Bring your Poll Watcher Guidelines, 20 copies of the Voter Incident Report form and several hundred copies of the voter education flyer entitled "How to Document Problems with the Voting Machines or 'Don't Let the Computer Eat Your Vote'". Both contain the same information – just a different title.
- ✓ If you can, bring a table and chair, and some food and warm drinks.

#### **AS VOTERS ARRIVE AT THE POLLING PLACE**

- ✓ Wear TrueVoteMD identification.
- ✓ Set up your TrueVoteMD signs 100 feet from the polling place near where other campaigners.
- ✓ Greet each voter with a smile and give her/him the TrueVoteMD flyer titled "Don't Let the Computer Eat Your Vote!" (available at <http://www.truevotemd.org/>).
- ✓ Ask each voter to let you know if s/he encounters a problem using a touch-screen machine (or witnesses a related problem) when s/he exits the polling place.

#### **AS VOTERS LEAVE THE POLLING PLACE**

- ✓ Ask voters exiting the polling place, "Did you have any problems using the touch-screen voting machine or notice any other problems related to the machines?"
- ✓ If a voter cites a problem, **fill out a TrueVoteMD Voter Incident Report** describing all the problems that the voter encountered with the touch-screen machine while trying to vote.
  - Please write clearly!
  - Include the voter's name, email address, mailing address and phone number if s/he will provide it.
- ✓ Ask the voter if you can release her/his name to the media and/or use it for other purposes.
- ✓ Agree to keep her/his contact information confidential if he/she wishes and make sure you indicate that on the incident report.

## HOW TO HANDLE DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

- ✓ If an election judge challenges your credentials, please contact the TrueVoteMD office immediately. The judge may be confused due to the inaccurate media coverage of the court case.
- ✓ If an irate voter challenges your right to ask questions, take notes, or distribute flyers:
  - Keep your cool—respond politely and respectfully that you represent a non-partisan group of Maryland citizens that is simply trying to make sure that everyone's vote is recorded as intended and counted. No one is obliged to give you information or take a flyer; people do so voluntarily.
  - Do not respond to insults. Do not engage in confrontation. The best response to rude behavior is to ignore it. If you at any time feel physically threatened by a voter, you may 1) call the TrueVoteMD Hotline, and/or 2) if a police officer is nearby, request assistance (the police have a statutory duty to protect poll watchers).
- ✓ If in doubt about how to respond to a confrontation outside the polls:
  - Stay calm. Remain polite. And call the TrueVoteMD Hotline!

## TECHNICIANS AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

- ✓ If you see one or more touch-screen machine technicians entering the polling place:
  - Ask her/him what they plan to do or did while in the polling place
  - Record their name(s) and affiliation if possible on the incident reporting form
  - Record whether they wearing/displaying any type of identification.
  - Record all your observations on the incident reporting form
- ✓ If you observe any unusual behavior during the voting process at the polling place, please describe your observations. Do not try to confront them or exhibit an angry response.
- ✓ If you hear about or observe any of the problems listed above, contact TrueVoteMD.org Headquarters immediately at **301-270-6150**

### **SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS TO REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO TRUEVOTEMD HEADQUARTERS (301-270-6150)**

- Machine doesn't start/boot up correctly
- Machine crashes
- Machine or screen malfunction
- Vote switching – the machine selects something other than what the voter intended
- Incomplete ballot – a race or candidate's name is missing
- Voter access card (smart-card) problem

## ✓ **Voter Incident Report Forms - PLEASE RETURN TO TRUEVOTE ASAP**

- The form is available at [www.truevotemd.org](http://www.truevotemd.org)
- Please return the forms as quickly as possible preferably on Election Day. You may fax one or more completed forms to 301-270-8984, or give them to a TrueVote pollwatcher or mail or hand-deliver them to the TrueVoteMD office at 7711 Garland Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912. Thank you!