Guidelines for Entrance Checkers

The role of <u>entrance checker</u> is an extremely important duty that will generally be performed by one of the elected officials; it will be assigned to an assistant election official only if that person is very experienced and responsible and has been carefully trained in the duties.

The primary role and duty of the entrance checker is to control admission to the voting area (the area inside the guard rail), making sure that <u>no one</u> is admitted unless that person's name is found on the voter checklist and has been checked off as voted prior to admission to the voting area.

This is a role that is crucial to the security and fairness of an election.

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<u>Responsibilities</u>:

Understand the significance of the <u>check-in process</u> and of the <u>entrance checklist</u>.

Understand the principles of <u>computer alphabetization</u>.

Be sure to check <u>alternate spellings</u> and alternate placements on the list.

<u>Repeat</u> the voter's name loudly and clearly, so that the side-checkers and anyone else present can hear.

Understand how to properly <u>mark a voter's name as having voted</u>.

Know the legal basis for a <u>challenge</u> to a voter.

Know how to deal with a <u>voter whose name does not appear</u> on the checklist.

Understand <u>appeal rights</u> and advise any aggrieved voter of these rights.

Understand <u>when and how to add a voter to the checklist</u>.

Have the voter complete a <u>checklist revision form</u> whenever appropriate (or refer the voter to the Voter Registration Board member present).

Have the voter complete the <u>Affirmation of Domicile form </u>whenever appropriate.

Understand how to deal with an <u>absent voter who shows up at the polls</u>.

Understand how to deal with a <u>voter who leaves without voting</u>.

Understand how to <u>control the flow of voters</u> to avoid any line at the ballot distribution table.

Understand your role in the process of <u>processing absentee ballots</u>.

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Computer Alphabetization – Become thoroughly familiar with the principles of computer alphabetization as they affect the work of the entrance checker. Note that in any position within a field being alphabetized, a space is always placed ahead of anything else, and that another symbol is always placed ahead of any letter. Thus, because of the space, "Van Cleave" will be placed ahead of "Vance" (or Vanarsdale", spelled as one word). "O'Brien", because of the apostrophe will be placed ahead of "Ober" (unless, of course, the apostrophe was omitted).

Since the computer cannot interpret abbreviations, "St. Peter" will not be alphabetized as "Saint Peter" but instead will be placed at the beginning of the St's (before Sta-)

Note that any change in a last name will cause the computer to place that name in a different sequence from all the otherwise-similar names. For example, a compound (hyphenated) last name will be placed after all of those names having only the first element; thus, "Wilson-Jones" will be placed at the end of all of the Wilsons. Even an added element such as "Jr." or "III", placed after a last name, will cause that entry to be placed after all otherwise-similar ones: "Smith Jr., John L." will be placed after all other Smiths, for example.

We recommend that you scan a copy of your ward checklist beforehand and try to spot any peculiarities of alphabetization. We also suggest that you orient any assistant election official who may be serving as an entrance checker about the peculiarities of computer alphabetization.

The Check-In Process – Before being admitted to the voting area, the voter must check in (announce his/her name or give it in writing). If requested to, the voter must also give place of residence. The election official then verifies the name and address on the entrance checklist and, if there is no challenge, repeats the name (loudly enough for the side-checkers and others in the immediate vicinity to hear), marks the checklist, and admits the voter.

*** Legal Resident Voters are eligible to participate in City and School elections ONLY. If this election has both city and state or federal candidates/ questions, Legal Residents will be integrated into the main checklists, but will be separated out onto their own yellow pages, which will be very clearly labelled. **Take care that a Legal Resident Voter NEVER receives a County, State, or Federal ballot. To allow election officials to easily distinguish documents regarding legal resident voters, all Election Day paperwork for Legal Resident Voters will be printed on BLUE paper.**

Check to see if there are any codes next to the voter's name.
- If the checklist reads "O" they should be directed to the Board for Registration of Voters table to take the Vermont Voter's Oath.
- If the checklist reads "NVD" or "NVS" the voter should be directed to the Board for Registration of Voters table to provide a valid VT Driver's License number or the last four digits of their social security number.
- Voters with a "C" next to their name are challenged voters, which means the Board for Registration of voters had reason to believe they may not still reside at the listed address.
    - o If the voter still resides at the address listed on the checklist, give them an Affirmation of Residence/Domicile form. Once completed, check the voter in.
    - o If the voter no longer resides at the address listed on the checklist, direct them to the Board for registration of voters.

- Lastly, check to be sure that the voter has not received an absentee ballot.
  - If the entrance checklist reads "REQ" or "ISS" in the absentee ballot column, ask the voter if they have turned in an absentee ballot. If they have not and would like to vote in person, ask them to complete an affidavit for lost or undelivered ballot. Once completed, check the voter in.
  - If the entrance checklist reads "RET", this means that the voter has already voted via absentee ballot and is not eligible to vote again in this election.

A complete key to these codes can be found at the back of the entrance checklist.

In marking the voter's name as voted, use a <u>red pencil</u> to check the box next to the voter's name. Do not mark out the barcode or any of the other information. **For Presidential Primaries ONLY,** instead of adding a check mark, mark the voter with a D or and R for the party ballot that they requested and were given.

Careful marking of the checklist will pay off, not only for future users of this list, but also for the election officials at the end of the night when they tally the checklist. **Care by the entrance checker(s) will make the job of tallying much easier and more accurate.**

Note that there are only two valid grounds for a <u>challenge</u>: (1) that the person is not in fact the person named on the checklist, or (2) that the person has already voted. In Burlington, the Inspectors of Elections present at the polling place must immediately convene, informally hear the facts and decide whether the challenge should be sustained. If the challenge is overruled, the person shall be immediately admitted within the guardrail and allowed to vote. If the challenge is sustained, the person shall not be admitted to vote unless before the polls close at 7 p.m. the person obtains a court order directing that the person be allowed to vote. If the person wishes to seek a court order please contact the Presiding Officer. 17 VSA 2564 and Section 3-21 City Charter.

If a person's name does not appear on the entrance checklist, ask them if they believe they are registered to vote in Burlington. If they believe they are, direct the voter to the Board for Registration of Voters (BRV) Table. The BRV member will make a determination as to the would-be voter's eligibility to vote and, if they are eligible, will send the person back with a form directing the entrance checker to add him/her to the checklist. If the voter does not believe they are registered to vote in Burlington, direct them to the table for new voter registrations. Once the form is complete, they will bring it back to you and you will add them to the voter checklist.

To add a voter to the checklist (after receiving confirmation to do so from the "BRV to Ward Clerk form or a new voter registration form), used the blank lined pages at the back of the checklist and:
- Write the voter's full name and address, using blue/black ink
- Check the box next to the voter's name, with red ink
- Give the voter a ballot

<u>Appeal Rights</u> – Remember: If any voter (or would-be voter) is aggrieved of a decision affecting his/her right to vote, that person may appeal to the Superior Court (located at 175 Main St.; phone 863-3467). Advise any such person of this right. If you have any questions, call the City Clerk's Office.

<u>Checklist Revisions</u> – Throughout the day the officials tending the entrance checklist should be alert for changes of name or address and possible errors on the checklist. If an official suspects a duplication of

name or other error, the official should check with the voter. In all cases of changes or corrections, the voter should be directed to the Board for Registration of Voters table.

<u>Controlling the Flow of Voters</u> – There should be a direct connection between

> (a) A voter's checking in at the entrance checklist and
> (b) Them getting the ballots

There should be no delay between (a) and (b); (b) should immediately follow (a). Thus, there should never be a line at the ballot distribution point. The entrance checker and ballot distributor should work closely together to ensure that a voter never has to wait in a second line.

Voters returning from the Board for Registration of Voters table or the new registration table should be allowed to move immediately to the front of the line so that they do not have to wait in line a second time.