

## **Role of Polling Agents**

Polling agents are appointed by candidates to observe proceedings at polling stations. They must be formally appointed no later than the fifth working day before the poll.

Polling agents have **statutory rights** set out in legislation. For example, they can detect personation, ask the Presiding Officer to put the prescribed questions to electors and attach their seal to the ballot box at the close of poll.

Only one polling agent for each candidate is allowed in the polling station at any time.

If polling agents have been appointed for your station their details can be found on a sheet in your ballot box.

Candidates and election agents can do anything that a polling agent is entitled to do.

## **Role of Tellers**

**Tellers are not allowed inside the polling place, the building the polling station is in.** They can record the elector numbers of people who come to vote. Doing this can help identify potential supporters who have not yet voted so they can be encouraged to vote.

They have **no legal status** and voters can refuse to give information to them.

Tellers cannot impede or interfere with the administration of the election and must comply with instructions issued by the Returning Officer or Presiding Officer.

**There should be no more than one teller at a polling station for each candidate at a time.**

**Tellers can wear rosettes or badges** of a reasonable size showing the candidate or party name. They should not wear anything else related to any candidate or party.

If Tellers are failing to comply with instructions, escalate the matter to your polling station inspector by calling them on. If you cannot contact your PSI, please try the elections office.

If you believe the actions of a Teller are unlawful (e.g., deliberately impeding electors from voting), you should contact the police immediately.

## **Campaigning around the polling station**

Tellers or campaigners **must not** display election material, for example campaign literature or posters on walls around the polling place. They must not distribute election material such as leaflets, around the polling place.

Campaigning is **not allowed** in the polling station or polling place. However, campaigners are allowed to put their messages to voters in public spaces **outside** polling places.

**The polling place is the building in which the polling station is situated. It includes the entrance and approach and may also include the car park and surrounding grounds.**

**The station is the room with the ballot box where the actual voting takes place.**

In public areas, campaigning can take place, but it should be reasonable and **not** aggressive or intimidating. For example, a car parked close to the polling place with a single election poster may be classed as reasonable.

No-one should campaign near a polling place in a way that could be seen as aggressive or intimidating. For example, large groups of supporters carrying banners, or heavily branded vehicles with loudspeakers are likely to be considered intimidating.

If campaigners are failing to comply with instructions, escalate the matter to your polling station inspector by calling them. If you cannot contact your PSI, please try the elections office.

## What they can and cannot do

The Electoral Commission has issued [Guidance on the Conduct of Tellers in and around polling places](#) and [Tellers do's and don'ts](#).

	Polling Agent	Teller
Enter and remain in the polling station	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check the ballot box is empty before poll opens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assist in detecting personation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assist in preventing people from voting twice (by asking the presiding officer to ask the prescribed questions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Observe the Presiding Officer marking the ballot paper of a voter who is disabled or unable to read	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mark off who has voted on their own copy of the register. <b>NOTE:</b> This register must remain in the polling station until the close of poll.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take notes and report any improper activities occurring in the polling station to candidates and agents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Be present at the close of poll, and attach their seal to the ballot box and official packets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breach secrecy requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impede, obstruct or intimidate voters on their way in or out of the polling station/polling place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wear a coloured rosette or badge displaying the name of the candidate or political party – no slogans, and not oversized	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Display campaign material other than a rosette or badge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enter the polling station to cast their own vote, or vote as a proxy, or as a companion assisting a disabled voter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remain outside the polling place unless voting or assisting a disabled voter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approach voters for information as they enter or leave the polling station	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demand any information relating to a voter's elector number, name or address	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask voters to re-enter the polling station to find out their elector number	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have discussions with voters that may influence the way they vote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>