



2026 GENERAL ELECTION BULLETIN

FROM: Virginia Office of the Attorney General

TO: Law Enforcement Agencies

DATE: October 29, 2026

RE: Virginia Election Statute Pocket Guide

INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Attorney General (“OAG”) developed this bulletin, which is informational and should not be considered legal advice, to allow law enforcement agencies to quickly reference the text of relevant election statutes. Law enforcement agencies should become familiar with these laws and coordinate with election officials before Election Day.

General Election Date
Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Hours Polls Are Open
6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.¹

Key provisions:

- Intimidating, threatening, or coercing a voter in giving their ballot or to deter them from voting is a crime.
- Within 40 feet of a polling place’s entrance, persons may not loiter or congregate, give materials to voters, or otherwise attempt to influence someone’s vote.
- Within 100 feet of a polling place, it is prohibited to knowingly carry a firearm.²
- It is a felony to steal or tamper with any ballot container, voting equipment, record, or document used in the election process.

Law enforcement agencies can reach the OAG at the following contacts:

Virginia Office of the Attorney General
Phone (Law Enforcement Line): (804) 200-4228
Email: election@oag.state.va.us

¹ A voter who is in line at the polling place by 7:00 p.m. is permitted to vote. Va. Code § 24.2-603.

² Exceptions include law enforcement officers, qualified retired law enforcement officers, persons on their own private property within 100 feet, or properly licensed armed security officers. Va. Code § 24.2-604(F).

VIRGINIA ELECTION OFFENSES

Prohibited Area & Activities Near Polling Place, Va. Code § 24.2-604(A)

A. During the times the polls are open and ballots are being counted, or within one hour of opening or after closing, it is unlawful for any person

- (i) to loiter or congregate within 40 feet of any entrance of any polling place;
- (ii) within such distance to give, tender, or exhibit any ballot, ticket, or other campaign or referendum material to any person or to solicit or in any manner attempt to influence any person in casting his vote;
- (iii) to hinder or delay a qualified voter in entering or leaving a polling place; or
- (iv) to (a) knowingly carry on or about his person any firearm as defined in § 18.2-308.2:2 and (b) knowingly do so within 100 feet of any building, or part thereof, used as a polling place.*

**Exceptions include law enforcement officers, qualified retired law enforcement officers, persons on their own private property within 100 feet, or properly licensed armed security officers. Va. Code § 24.2-604(F).*

Prohibited Activities Inside Polling Place, Va. Code § 24.2-604(C)

C. It is unlawful for any authorized representative permitted in the polling place pursuant to § 24.2-604.4, any voter, or any other person in the room to

- (i) hinder or delay a qualified voter;
- (ii) give, tender, or exhibit any ballot, ticket, or other campaign or referendum material to any person;
- (iii) solicit or in any manner attempt to influence any person in casting his vote;
- (iv) hinder or delay any officer of election;
- (v) be in a position to see the marked ballot of any other voter; or
- (vi) otherwise impede the orderly conduct of the election.

Loudspeakers Prohibited at Polling Place, Va. Code § 24.2-605

Notwithstanding any contrary statute or ordinance of a county, city, or town, except for school purposes or in an emergency, no loudspeaker shall be used within 300 feet of a polling place on an election day. Any person violating this section shall be guilty of a Class 4 misdemeanor.

Prohibited Conduct & Voter Intimidation, Va. Code § 24.2-607

A. It shall be unlawful for any person to hinder, intimidate, or interfere with any qualified voter so as to prevent the voter from casting a secret ballot. The officers of election may order a person violating this subsection to cease such action. If such person does not promptly desist, the officers of election, or a majority of them, may order the arrest of such person by any person authorized by law to make arrests, and, by their warrant, may commit him to the county or city jail, as the case may be, for a period not exceeding twenty-four hours. Any person violating this subsection shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

B. No person shall conduct himself in a noisy or riotous manner at or about the polls so as to disturb the election or insult or abuse an officer of election.

Intimidation or Threats to Election Officials, Va. Code § 24.2-1000(A)

A. Any person who, by bribery, intimidation, threats, coercion, or other means in violation of the election laws willfully and intentionally hinders or prevents, or attempts to hinder or prevent, an election official or the employee of an election official from administering elections pursuant to this title is guilty of a Class 5 felony.

Willful Neglect of Duty or Corrupt Conduct, Va. Code § 24.2-1001

A. If any officer of election, member of an electoral board, or other person on whom any duty is enjoined by law relative to any election, is guilty of willful neglect of his duty, he shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

B. If any person listed in subsection A is guilty of any corrupt conduct in the execution of his duty, he shall be guilty of a Class 5 felony.

Intimidation of Voters, Va. Code § 24.2-1005(A)

A. Any person who intimidates, threatens, or coerces, or attempts to intimidate, threaten, or coerce, any other person in giving his vote or ballot or who intimidates, threatens, or coerces, or attempts to intimidate, threaten, or coerce a voter to deter or prevent him from voting is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

False Information to Registered Voter, Va. Code § 24.2-1005.1(A)

A. It shall be unlawful for any person to communicate to a registered voter, by any means, false information, knowing the same to be false, intended to impede the voter in the exercise of his right to vote. The provisions of this section shall apply to information only about the date, time, and place of the election, or the voter's precinct, polling place, or voter registration status, or the location of a voter satellite office or the office of the general registrar.

Interference with Voting, Va. Code § 24.2-1005.2(B)

B. Any person who furnishes a ballot to a person who he knows cannot understand the language in which the ballot is printed and misinforms him as to the content of the ballot with an intent to deceive him and induce him to vote contrary to his desire is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. Any person who changes a ballot of a person to prevent the person from voting as he desires is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Advice or Assistance in Casting Ballot, Va. Code § 24.2-1006

Except as provided by § 24.2-649, no person shall directly or indirectly advise or assist any voter as to how he shall cast his ballot after the voter has entered the prohibited area at the polls as designated in § 24.2-604. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

**Note: Va. Code § 24.2-649 applies to voters who need assistance because of a physical disability, due to an inability to read or write, or in a language other than English.*

Stealing or Tampering with Voting Ballot Containers, Voting Equipment, Software, Records, or Documents, Va. Code § 24.2-1009

Any person who

- (i) steals or willfully, fraudulently, or wrongfully tampers with any part of any ballot container, voting or registration equipment, records, or documents, which are used in any way within the registration or election process,
- (ii) steals or willfully, fraudulently, or wrongfully tampers with the software used to prepare and operate voting equipment or the software or hardware used to collect and disseminate election returns,
- (iii) steals or willfully, fraudulently, or wrongfully tampers with an electronic activation device or electronic data storage medium of the type used to prepare, operate or back-up electronic voting equipment,
- (iv) willfully, fraudulently, or wrongfully intercepts, alters or disrupts the electronic transmission of election returns or the posting of returns on the Internet,
- (v) fraudulently makes any entry, deletion, or alteration to any item listed in (i), or
- (vi) aids, abets, or permits any other person to violate the provisions of clauses (i) through (v),

shall be guilty of a Class 5 felony.

Ballot Not to Be Carried Away, Va. Code § 24.2-1011

It shall be unlawful for any person to carry the official ballot furnished him by the officers of the election further than the voting booth, and should he, after receiving the ballot, conclude not to vote, he shall immediately return the ballot to the officers. Any person who (i) carries an official ballot or copy thereof beyond or away from the voting booth, except to the officers of election, or (ii) votes any ballot except the ballot received from the officers of election, shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Conspiracy Against Citizens' Voting Rights, Va. Code § 24.2-1015

If two or more persons conspire to injure, oppress, threaten, intimidate, prevent, or hinder any citizen of this Commonwealth in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the provisions of this title [Title 24.2, Virginia's Elections Code], or because of his having so exercised such right, they shall be guilty of a Class 5 felony.

False Statements, Va. Code § 24.2-1016

Any willfully false material statement or entry made by any person in any statement, form, or report required by this title shall constitute the crime of election fraud and be punishable as a Class 5 felony.

CONCLUSION

This document should serve as a reference point for law enforcement agencies leading up to and on Election Day in Virginia. Law enforcement agencies play a critical role in preserving order and protecting our communities, including as it relates to elections. The OAG stands ready to consult and support law enforcement officials should they encounter any issues.