

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

REQUIREMENTS FOR A STUDENT TO SERVE AS AN ELECTION CLERK

- Must be 16 years old or older on Election Day;
- Must be enrolled in a public, private, or qualified home school; and
- Must be a U.S. citizen.
- The student must also have consent of his/her parent or Legal guardian and his/her school principal (or parent/legal guardian for home-schooled students) to work in an election. The application form contains the necessary consent forms to be signed by the parents and principal.
- The student must also attend an election worker training program for poll workers prior to Election Day.

THE HOURS OF SERVICE

Election Day Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Election clerks must arrive before the polls open and stay after the polls close. Election clerks generally work a minimum of 12 hours. Please note the Supervisor at each poll will determine the Election Day work schedule for election clerks.

COMPENSATION

Not including training, election clerks can make up to a minimum of \$120 for serving all day on Election Day.

SUBMISSION METHODS FOR COMPLETED STUDENT ELECTION CLERK APPLICATION & PERMISSION FORM:

- **EMAIL:** County.Clerk@cco.hctx.net
- **FAX:** 713.755.9311
- **MAIL:** Harris County Clerk, Voter Outreach, 1001 Preston #426, Houston, TX 77002

The information in this brochure was obtained from the office of the Texas Secretary of State



DIANE TRAUTMAN
Harris County Clerk

Civic-Minded Students
High Schools
Harris County, Texas, USA

Dear Civic-Minded Student,

As of September 1, 2009, high school students 16 years of age and older may serve as election clerks in Texas, with the approval of a parent/legal guardian and school principal. Students that speak Spanish, Vietnamese or Chinese are in high demand for all elections conducted by the Harris County Clerk's Office.

Students interested in serving as election clerks may complete the **Student Election Clerk Application and Permission Form** and submit it, with appropriate signatures, to the Harris County Clerk's Office in the following ways: fax to 713.755.9311, email to County.Clerk@cco.hctx.net, or mail to Communications and Voter Outreach Department at 1001 Preston #426, Houston TX 77002. Students are compensated at the rate of \$10.00 an hour for their service. Students must be U.S. citizens to qualify.

Please note: the Texas Education Code now includes serving as an election clerk in the definition of "excused absence." For more information, students may contact Kristina Nichols in the Communications & Voter Outreach Department at 713.274.9559 or KNichols@cco.hctx.net, or visit www.HarrisVotes.com to review the Student Election Clerk FAQ.

Currently, persons serving as election clerks average 72 years of age. Thus, high school students need to step forward to serve as the new generation of election clerks to ensure the vitality of our democratic process now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Diane Trautman
County Clerk and Chief Election Officer, Harris County, Texas

1001 Preston, 4th Floor, Houston, TX 77002 • 713.274.9550
County.Clerk@cco.hctx.net • www.HarrisVotes.com

STUDENT Election Clerk FAQ & Application

*Young
people
can play
a
key role
in the
conduct
of an
Election*

DIANE TRAUTMAN
Harris County Clerk



www.HarrisVotes.com

Student Election Clerk Application and Permission Form

Name of Student	_____	Date of Birth	_____
Home Address	_____	Telephone Number	_____
School Attending	_____	Election Date	_____
Email Address	_____	Speak any other languages?	_____

Student Affidavit: By signing this application, I acknowledge the following:

- I am interested in working the following election(s) _____ (election date).
- I am/will be at least 16 years of age on Election Day.
- I am currently enrolled at _____ (name of school).
- I am a United States citizen.
- I will complete the required training course prior to Election Day.
- I agree to obtain an excused absence from my school office for Election Day. I will promptly notify the election office if I am unable to obtain an excused absence. It is my responsibility to collect and complete any and all school assignments for the day.

(signature of student)

(date)

Parent/Legal Guardian Permission: This is to certify that I give permission for my son/daughter, named above, to serve as a student election clerk for _____ (election).

(signature of parent/legal guardian)

(date)

(print)

(telephone)

School Principal Permission: This is to certify that the student named above is currently enrolled at _____ (name of school) and has my consent to serve as an election clerk on _____ (date).

(signature of principal)

(date)

(print name)

(Home-schooled students must have the Parent/Legal Guardian Permission section completed by the parent/legal guardian responsible for their education.)

Send the completed form to your local elections office conducting the election for which you wish to serve (county clerk/elections administrator, city secretary, school superintendent, etc.). For more information about elections, go to the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.state.tx.us.

Please fax to the Harris County Clerk’s Office, Attn: Voter Outreach Department at **713.755.9311** or scan and email to County.Clerk@cco.hctx.net

STUDENT ELECTION CLERK FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. What are student election clerks?** The 81st Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 1134 (effective on September 1, 2009), which allows high school students 16 years of age and older to serve as election clerks in Texas elections. The purpose is two-fold: 1) to introduce students to the electoral process and inspire them with an interest in their government, and 2) to provide election authorities with an additional resource of persons who can serve at the polls.
- 2. What are the requirements for a student to serve as an election clerk?**
- The student must be 16 years old or older on Election Day;
 - Student must be enrolled in a public, private, or qualified home school;
 - Student must be a U.S. citizen.
 - The student must also have consent of his/her parent or legal guardian and his/her school principal (or parent/legal guardian for home-schooled students) to work in an election. The application form contains the necessary consent forms to be signed by the parents and principal.
 - The student must also attend an election worker training program for poll workers prior to Election Day.
- 3. Can a student election worker serve as an interpreter?** Yes. When election workers are communicating with a voter who cannot communicate in English, a student election worker may communicate with the voter in a language the voter and the clerk understands.
- 4. Since the Presiding Judge selects their clerks except the alternate judge, how will the judge know which students are interested and available or how to even contact them?** The Secretary of State’s office has an application form posted on its website that political subdivisions can use for students to apply to be election clerks. The students can fill out the application, get the required signatures, and send the form to the election administrators who serve the election in which the student wishes to serve. The elections administrator will provide each judge with a list of all eligible student election workers.
- 5. Do the school authorities send the election officials student names, addresses, and phone numbers directly? Can the school give out this information without a written approval notice from a parent/legal guardian of the students?** The student will provide all required information directly to the election officials. The **Student Election Worker Application and Permission Slip (included to the left)** for students to complete and send to their local elections officials includes a consent section for both parent/guardian and the appropriate school official. The student will be responsible for obtaining the principal’s consent to serve as an election clerk. The student (not the school) provides the information directly to the election officials. The school will not need to contact the election officials. In addition, the student must obtain parental or legal guardian consent on the same application before the student can serve as an election clerk.
- 6. How will the election officials inform the school that the student actually worked on Election Day?** Serving as an election clerk is now included in the Texas Education Code’s definition of **“excused absence.”** Student election clerks are entitled to compensation in the same manner as other election clerks. The election official should give each student worker documentation in the form of a time sheet, pay stub, or other letter or form showing that the student served as an election worker and the hours worked. Ultimately, however, it is up to the student to ensure that the school is given the proper documentation in order to have an excused absence.
- 7. Are there any labor laws about how many hours a student can work during a school day?** Under the Texas Labor Code, the employment hours of persons 16 or older are not restricted by state law. Persons 16 or 17 years of age have no restrictions on the number of hours or times of day they may work.
- 8. Are there any curfew laws that the student could run afoul of if they were out late due to extended voting hours?** There are no state law curfews in Texas. However, some municipalities and perhaps counties have curfews by local ordinance; therefore, the answers would vary depending on the details of any applicable local ordinance. It is likely that most local curfew ordinances give exceptions for school or work-related activities, under which this would likely qualify. Also, the student will not be in violation of the compulsory attendance law for schools because, again, the legislation provides for an excused absence when serving as an election clerk.
- 9. How many student election clerks can serve at each polling place?** Not more than two student election clerks may serve at a polling place, except that not more than four student election clerks may serve at any countywide polling place.
- 10. What do we do with multiple student requests from a single precinct? Can they work outside of their home precinct?** Students can work outside of their home precinct because election clerks are not limited to working only in their own precincts. The positions in each precinct should be filled in the order in which the students apply, assuming they meet all the requirements. Any extra student applicants for a given precinct may work in another precinct that does not already have its authorized number of student election clerk positions filled.
- 11. What if the parents and student give their general consent, then the student is later assigned to a polling place or time that he or she does not want to work?** The student clerk may simply turn down the assignment (just like any other voluntary election clerk offered an assignment that presents a conflict).