



Wisconsin Elections Commission

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WEC Publishes Election Observer Rule

MADISON Wis. – After more than two years of bipartisan collaboration, the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) has voted to publish a new administrative rule addressing the conduct of election observers and their interactions with election officials.

On June 19, commissioners on the WEC voted 5-1 to approve the rule that intends to offer clarity and uniformity to election observation for the benefit of voters, election officials, and observers.

The rule will take effect on August 1 after it has been added to the administrative code as EL 4 and published in the Administrative Register at the end of July.

The final [rule order](#), which took more than two years to develop, specifies who can observe elections, defines the rights and limitations of what election observers may do, differentiates election observers from election inspectors, and creates a more streamlined and accessible set of instructions for election observers to follow during the election process.

For example, the rule specifies how close observers can stand to voters, what documents they can review, and outlines the use of video recording devices. It also details how an observer can be removed by an election official if they don't comply with the administrative rule.

To help develop the administrative rule, the WEC worked with an advisory committee comprised of 24 people, including municipal clerks, poll workers, observers, political parties, and other election-related organizations.

“Today marks a significant milestone that will ensure election observers, election officials, and voters all have a clear and consistent understanding of the observer process,” said WEC Administrator Meagan Wolfe. “After years of thorough public hearings, advisory committee input, and careful drafting, this rule enshrines standards for election observers that ensure participation in our electoral process.”

Clerks and other election officials will have an opportunity to assess the new provision of code, raise any follow-up questions with the Commission, and begin the process of implementing its requirements before the next election cycle.

The six-member, bipartisan Wisconsin's Elections Commission will also meet later this year to approve guidance for election officials based on the new observer rule.

Wisconsin Elections Commissioners

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Meagan Wolfe