

State of Wisconsin\Government Accountability Board

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TO: Wisconsin Municipal Clerks
City of Milwaukee Election Commission
Wisconsin County Clerks
Milwaukee County Election Commission

FROM: Michael Haas
Elections Division Administrator

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DATE: October 10, 2013

SUBJECT: Appointment of Election Inspectors from Lists Submitted by Political Parties

December 31, 2013 marks the end of the current term of election inspectors (poll workers). At a meeting in December, but not later than December 31, 2013, the municipal governing body shall appoint election inspectors for a two-year term which begins January 1, 2014 and ends December 31, 2015.

Submission of Inspector Nominee Lists by Political Parties

No later than November 30, 2013, the two major political parties whose candidates for governor or president at the last general election received the largest number of votes at an *individual polling place* (generally, the Democratic and Republican parties) may submit a certified list of election inspector nominees to the municipal governing body. The party which received the largest number of votes at each polling place is entitled to one more inspector than the party receiving the next largest number of votes. For inspector appointments made this December, the election used to determine the two dominant parties and which party is entitled to the extra poll worker at each polling place is the November 6, 2012 Presidential Election.

Example: Five election inspectors are to be placed at a polling place. Mitt Romney received the most votes at the polling place in November 2012. The Republican Party may nominate three people and the Democratic Party may nominate two people. The parties are entitled to 3 and 2 inspectors respectively. They can nominate at least as many names as there are needed appointees from that party.

In addition to being a qualified elector of the ward or district in which they serve¹, being able to read and write the English language, and otherwise being capable and of good understanding, each party may establish additional criteria that a prospective nominee must meet in order to be included on the list submitted by the party. This may include a requirement to be a member of the party or to belong to an organization affiliated with the party.

Currently, the Democratic and Republican Parties are actively working to assemble and submit lists of election inspector nominees to as many municipalities as possible. You may receive a communication from one or both parties asking you to list your inspectors and their party affiliations. **Unless your current inspectors were appointed from party lists, the response to this request is that your inspectors are "unaffiliated."**

¹ The municipal clerk may reassign an inspector to another polling place to assure adequate staffing at all polling places. Wis. Stat. § 7.15(1)(k)

Delivery/Transmission of Lists

Wis. Stat. § 7.30(4), provides that the lists are to be submitted to the Mayor, Village President or Town Board Chairperson. (In the City of Milwaukee, the lists are to be submitted to the City of Milwaukee Board of Election Commissioners.) Though not required, the parties have been advised to also provide a copy to the municipal clerk in order to facilitate the process. Letters have been sent to the Republican and Democratic state parties reminding them of the local parties' responsibility to submit lists of poll worker nominees. Copies of the letters accompany this correspondence.

The deadline for submission of lists by the Parties is November 30, 2013, which is a Saturday. If the clerk's office is not open on Saturday, the deadline extends to Monday, December 2, 2013. Lists of inspector nominees may be submitted by personal delivery or electronically (by fax or email) no later than close of business on the deadline. If the list is submitted electronically, the list containing the original signature(s) of the appropriate party affiliate must follow, postmarked no later than the deadline. Wis. Admin. Code GAB § 6.04.

If Lists are Received from One or Both Parties

When lists of election inspector nominees are submitted by one or both Parties, appointments must be made from the lists submitted by the Party for as long as election inspector positions are available. If party lists have been timely received, positions must be filled from the lists until the names on those lists have been depleted. The lists may also designate individuals as "first-choice" nominees, who must be appointed if they qualify and so long as positions are available. If the governing body has good cause not to appoint an individual whose name is submitted as a "first-choice" nominee, it may request the G.A.B. authorize non-appointment.

If Lists are Received but are Insufficient

If a Party's list is insufficient to fill the positions available for that party's nominees, the remaining positions are filled without regard to party affiliation.

Example: Seven inspectors are to be placed at a polling place. Barack Obama received the most votes at the polling place in November 2012. If sufficient lists from both parties were submitted, four names would be appointed from the Democratic list and three names would be appointed from the Republican list. In this example however, there are only three names on the Democratic list and no Republican list was submitted. The governing body appoints the three Democratic names and the Mayor, Village President or Town Board Chairperson nominates other qualified individuals, regardless of party affiliation, and submits the names to the governing body for appointment to the remaining four "unaffiliated" positions. If the Republican Party submitted a list with two names in this example, then only two unaffiliated positions would be appointed.

If No Lists are Received

If no lists are submitted, the Mayor, Village President or Town Board Chairperson nominates other qualified individuals, regardless of party affiliation, and submits the names to the governing body for appointment. All appointments are made without regard to party affiliation.

Please refer to the Election Official section of the [Election Administration Manual](#) for additional information. If you have questions, please contact the G.A.B. Help Desk at (608) 261-2028, or gabhlpdes@wi.gov. Thank you.