**Election Judge 101**

Have you ever given it any thought about serving your community as an election Judge? Here is some information that might peak your interest or help answer questions you have always had but never asked.

County Clerk Pam Cartee reports at this time there is a definite need for both Democrat and Republican volunteers in several of those voting places. We in Montgomery County are very lucky to have a wonderful list of very experienced and knowledgeable election judges, but unfortunately, health issues and work constraints among our current volunteers are making it difficult to staff some of the voting places. “Serving as an election judge can be a very rewarding and fulfilling experience. Being a part of not only Montgomery County, but the United States of America democracy is something to take pride in,” said Clerk Cartee. Montgomery County will be staffing two more elections in 2018, Tuesday, August 7, 2018 the Primary Election and Tuesday, November 6, 2018 the General Election.

The Missouri Election Law says that in all primary and general elections, the election authority shall appoint at least two (2) judges from each major political party to serve at each polling place. That means in Montgomery County there are to be two (2) persons as judges to represent the Democrat Party and two (2) persons as judges to represent the Republican Party in each voting location for those elections. The Missouri Election Law goes on to say that each judge must be a registered voter in Missouri and each election judge shall be a person of good repute and character.

With all of that being said here are some questions that most people would like to know the answers to before they make the commitment to serve as an election judge.

**Q. Do I have to be a registered voter to serve as an election judge?**

A. Yes, you must be a registered voter in Montgomery County to serve as an election judge in Montgomery County.

**Q. Do I have to have special skills to serve as an election judge?**

A. No, election judges have all kinds of skills. Are you friendly? Do you like being around people? Do you enjoy helping others? Do you have reading and writing skills? Do you like to use a computer and are relatively familiar with a computer or tablet? Are you interested in the voting process? If you said yes to those skills, you are a great candidate for serving as an election judge.

**Q. Do I have to declare which political party I want to represent?**

A. Yes, as stated above the law requires the two major political parties are equally represented therefore you will be ask which party you would like to represent.

**Q. If I serve as a Democrat or Republican judge do I have to vote that ballot in a primary election?**

A. No, In Missouri registered voters do not register in any political party therefore, each voter may select which political party ballot they choose to vote in a primary election.

**Q. Is there training to teach a person about the election process and what an election judge does?**

A. Yes, before each election there is training held by the staff at the Clerk’s office. Procedures for opening and closing the voting location, and documents such as the ballots, poll books, oaths of office and other necessary forms are studied. There is a demonstration of the set up and closing down of the electronic voting equipment while preparing it for the voting at the voting location. Details like what time to arrive at the voting location and lunch are always hot topics of lively discussion.

**Q. May I serve as an election judge if someone from my family in on the ballot?**

A. No, you may not serve as an election judge if a close family member is on the ballot, but in some circumstances you may be able to serve at another voting place where your family member is not on the ballot.

**Q. Will I have to be there all day of the election?**

A. Yes, election judges arrive at the voting location before the polls open at 6:00 a.m. and then they have to perform the closing of the voting location procedures after the polls close at 7:00 p.m.

**Q. Where are the voting locations in Montgomery County?**

A. Bellflower Community Building, Big Spring Fire Department, High Hill City Hall, Jonesburg Community Building, Middletown City Hall, Montgomery City Knights of Columbus Hall, New Florence Community Building, Rhineland Fire Department, and Wellsville United Methodist Presbyterian Church.

Please consider offering your time and talent as an election judge. You may volunteer by calling or making a visit to the County Clerk’s Office 573-564-3357, Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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