

# OHIO 2024 LAW ENFORCEMENT QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

This pocket reference guide contains key penal provisions found within Title 35 of the Ohio Revised Code and other relevant sections.

- Impeding or attempting to impede, intimidate, or influence a public servant in the performance of their duties is a felony.
- Attempting to interfere with a voter's exercise of voting by intimidation, coercion, or other unlawful means is a felony.
- Tampering or attempting to tamper with, deface, impair the use of, or change voting equipment or accessories is a felony.

## VOTING HOURS

**Election Day:** 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
**Early voting hours and locations by county:** [ohiosos.gov/elections/elections-officials/county-boards-of-elections-directory](https://ohiosos.gov/elections/elections-officials/county-boards-of-elections-directory)

## 2024 ELECTION DATES

**Primary Election:** March 19  
**General Election:** November 5  
**For more election dates:**  
[ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/current-voting-schedule](https://ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/current-voting-schedule)

## REPORT SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR TO

**Your local election official:**  
[ohiosos.gov/elections/elections-officials/county-boards-of-elections-directory](https://ohiosos.gov/elections/elections-officials/county-boards-of-elections-directory)

**OH Secretary of State:**  
877.SOS.OHIO; [ohiosos.gov/elections](https://ohiosos.gov/elections)



## **Offenses against justice and public administration general definitions.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 2921.01

(A) "Public official" means any elected or appointed officer, or employee, or agent of the state or any political subdivision, whether in a temporary or permanent capacity, and includes, but is not limited to, legislators, judges, and law enforcement officers.

(B) "Public servant" means any of the following:

(1) Any public official;

(2) Any person performing ad hoc a governmental function, including, but not limited to, a juror, member of a temporary commission, master, arbitrator, advisor, or consultant

## **Intimidation.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 2921.03

(A) No person, knowingly and by force, by unlawful threat of harm to any person or property, or by filing, recording, or otherwise using a materially false or fraudulent writing with malicious purpose, in bad faith, or in a wanton or reckless manner, shall attempt to influence, intimidate, or hinder a public servant, party official, or witness in the discharge of the person's duty.

(B) Whoever violates this section is guilty of intimidation, a felony of the third degree.

## **Obstructing official business.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 2921.31

(A) No person, without privilege to do so and with purpose to prevent, obstruct, or delay the performance by a public official of any authorized act within the public official's

official capacity, shall do any act that hampers or impedes a public official in the performance of the public official's lawful duties.

(B) Whoever violates this section is guilty of obstructing official business. Except as otherwise provided in this division, obstructing official business is a misdemeanor of the second degree. If a violation of this section creates a risk of physical harm to any person, obstructing official business is a felony of the fifth degree.

**Interference with conduct of election.** Ohio Rev. Code § 3599.24

(A) No person shall do any of the following:

- (1) By force, fraud, or other improper means, obtain or attempt to obtain possession of the ballots, ballot boxes, or pollbooks;
- (2) Recklessly destroy any property used in the conduct of elections;
- (3) Attempt to intimidate an election officer, or prevent an election official from performing the official's duties;
- (4) Knowingly tear down, remove, or destroy any of the registration lists or sample ballots furnished by the board of elections at the polling place;
- (5) Loiter in or about a registration or polling place during registration or the casting and counting of ballots so as to hinder, delay, or interfere with the conduct of the registration or election;
- (6) Remove from the voting place the pencils, cards of instruction, supplies, or other conveniences furnished to enable the voter to mark the voter's ballot.

(B) Whoever violates division (A)(1) or (2) of this section is guilty of a felony of the fifth degree. Whoever violates division (A)(3), (4), (5), or (6) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.

## **Bribery; Intimidation.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 3599.01

(A) No person shall before, during, or after any primary, convention, or election:

(1) Give, lend, offer, or procure or promise to give, lend, offer, or procure any money, office, position, place or employment, influence, or any other valuable consideration to or for a delegate, elector, or other person;

(2) Attempt by intimidation, coercion, or other unlawful means to induce such delegate or elector to register or refrain from registering or to vote or refrain from voting at a primary, convention, or election for a particular person, question, or issue;

(3) Advance, pay, or cause to be paid or procure or offer to procure money or other valuable thing to or for the use of another, with the intent that it or part thereof shall be used to induce such person to vote or to refrain from voting.

(B) Whoever violates this section is guilty of bribery, a felony of the fourth degree; and if he is a candidate he shall forfeit the nomination he received, or if elected to any office he shall forfeit the office to which he was elected at the election with reference to which such offense was committed.

## **Authority of precinct officers.**

Ohio Rev. Code §3501.33

All precinct election officials shall enforce peace and good order in and about the place of registration or election. They shall especially keep the place of access of the electors to the polling place open and unobstructed and prevent and stop any improper practices or attempts tending to obstruct, intimidate, or interfere with any elector in registering or voting. They shall protect observers against molestation and violence in the performance of their duties, and may eject from the polling place any observer for violation of any provision of Title XXXV of the Revised Code. They shall prevent riots, violence, tumult, or disorder. In the discharge of these duties, they may call upon the sheriff, police, or other peace officers to aid them in enforcing the law. They may order the arrest of any person violating Title XXXV of the Revised Code, but such an arrest shall not prevent the person from registering or voting if the person is entitled to do so. The sheriff, all constables, police officers, and other officers of the peace shall immediately obey and aid in the enforcement of any lawful order made by the precinct election officials in the enforcement of Title XXXV of the Revised Code.

## **Failure of officer of law to assist election officers.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 3599.31

No officer of the law shall fail to obey forthwith an order of the voting location manager and aid in enforcing a lawful order of the voting location manager at an election, against persons unlawfully congregating or loitering within one hundred feet of a polling place, hindering or delaying an elector from reaching or leaving the polling

place, soliciting or attempting, within one hundred feet of the polling place, to influence an elector in casting the elector's vote, or interfering with the registration of voters or casting and counting of the ballots.

Whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.

### **Misconduct of members or employees of board of elections.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 3599.16

No member, director, or employee of a board of elections shall:

(A) Willfully or negligently violate or neglect to perform any duty imposed upon him by law, or willfully perform or neglect to perform it in such a way as to hinder the objects of the law, or willfully disobey any law incumbent upon him so to do;

(F) In any other way willfully and knowingly or unlawfully violate or seek to prevent the enforcement of any other provisions of the election laws.

Whoever violates this section shall be dismissed from his position as a member or employee of the board and is guilty of a felony of the fourth degree.

### **Prohibitions concerning precinct election officials.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 3599.19

(A) No precinct election official shall knowingly do any of the following:

(15) Permit or sanction the counting of the ballots contrary to the manner prescribed by law;

(16) Neglect or unlawfully execute any duty enjoined upon the precinct election official by law.

(B) Whoever violates division (A) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.

## **No loitering or congregating near polling places.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 3501.35

(A) During an election and the counting of the ballots, no person shall do any of the following:

(1) Loiter, congregate, or engage in any kind of election campaigning within the area between the polling place and the small flags of the United States placed on the thoroughfares and walkways leading to the polling place, and if the line of electors waiting to vote extends beyond those small flags, within ten feet of any elector in that line.

(2) In any manner hinder or delay an elector in reaching or leaving the place fixed for casting the elector's ballot;

(B) (1) Except as otherwise provided in division (B)(2) of this section and division (C) of section 3503.23 of the Revised Code, no person who is not an election official, employee, observer, or police officer shall be allowed to enter the polling place during the election, except for the purpose of voting or assisting another person to vote as provided in section 3505.24 of the Revised Code.

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the contrary, a journalist shall be allowed reasonable access to a polling place during an election. As used in this division, "journalist" has the same meaning as in division (B)(2) of section 2923.129 of the Revised Code.

(C) No more electors shall be allowed to approach the voting shelves at any time than there are voting shelves provided.

(D) The precinct election officials and the police officer shall strictly enforce the observance of this section.

### **Possession of voting equipment prohibited; tampering; penalty.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 3599.27

No unauthorized person shall have in the person's possession any voting machine that may be owned or leased by any county or any of the parts or the keys thereof. No person shall tamper or attempt to tamper with, deface, impair the use of, destroy, or otherwise injure in any manner any voting machine.

No unauthorized person shall have in the person's possession any marking device, automatic tabulating equipment, or any of the parts, appurtenances, or accessories thereof. No person shall tamper or attempt to tamper with, deface, impair the use of, destroy, or otherwise change or injure in any manner any marking device, automatic tabulating equipment, or any appurtenances or accessories thereof.

Whoever violates this section is guilty of a felony of the fifth degree.

### **Tampering with ballots.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 3599.26

No person shall fraudulently put a ballot or ticket into a ballot box; or knowingly and willfully vote a ballot other than an official ballot lawfully obtained by the person from the precinct election authorities; or fraudulently or deceitfully change a ballot of an elector, by which such elector is



prevented from voting for such candidates or on an issue as the elector intends to do; or mark a ballot of an elector except as authorized by section 3505.24 of the Revised Code; or hand a marked ballot to an elector to vote, with intent to ascertain how the elector voted; or furnish a ballot to an elector who cannot read, knowingly informing the elector that it contains a name different from the one that is printed or written thereon, to induce the elector to vote contrary to the elector's intentions; or unduly delay or hinder an elector from applying for registration, registering, or from attempting to vote or voting; or knowingly print or distribute a ballot contrary to law. Whoever violates this section is guilty of a felony of the fifth degree.

## **Appointment of challengers and witnesses.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 3505.21

(B) At any primary, special, or general election, any political party supporting candidates to be voted upon at such election and any group of five or more candidates may appoint to the board of elections or to any of the precincts in the county or city one person, a qualified elector, who shall serve as observer for such party or such candidates during the casting of the ballots and during the counting of the ballots; provided that separate observers may be appointed to serve during the casting and during the counting of the ballots. No candidate, no uniformed peace officer as defined by section 2935.01 of the Revised Code, no uniformed state highway patrol trooper, no uniformed member of any fire department, no uniformed member of the armed services, no uniformed member of the organized militia, no person wearing any other uniform, and no person

carrying a firearm or other deadly weapon shall serve as an observer, nor shall any candidate be represented by more than one observer at any one precinct or at the board of elections except that a candidate who is a member of a party controlling committee, as defined in section 3517.03 of the Revised Code, may serve as an observer.

## **Weapons Control; Duties of licensed individual.**

Ohio Rev. Code § 2923.126

(B) A valid concealed handgun license does not authorize the licensee to carry a concealed handgun in any manner prohibited under division (B) of section 2923.12 of the Revised Code or in any manner prohibited under section 2923.16 of the Revised Code. A valid license does not authorize the licensee to carry a concealed handgun into any of the following places:

- (2) A school safety zone if the licensee's carrying the concealed handgun is in violation of section 2923.122 of the Revised Code;
- (3) A courthouse or another building or structure in which a courtroom is located if the licensee's carrying the concealed handgun is in violation of section 2923.123 of the Revised Code [relating to illegal conveyance or possession of a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance into a courthouse];
- (5) Any premises owned or leased by any public or private college, university, or other institution of higher education, unless the handgun is in a locked motor vehicle or the licensee is in the immediate process of placing the handgun in a locked motor vehicle or unless the licensee is carrying the concealed handgun pursuant to a written

policy, rule, or other authorization that is adopted by the institution's board of trustees or other governing body and that authorizes specific individuals or classes of individuals to carry a concealed handgun on the premises;

(6) Any church, synagogue, mosque, or other place of worship, unless the church, synagogue, mosque, or other place of worship posts or permits otherwise;

(7) Any building that is a government facility of this state or a political subdivision of this state and that is not a building that is used primarily as a shelter, restroom, parking facility for motor vehicles, or rest facility and is not a courthouse or other building or structure in which a courtroom is located that is subject to division (B)(3) of this section, unless the governing body with authority over the building has enacted a statute, ordinance, or policy that permits a licensee to carry a concealed handgun into the building;

**Illegal conveyance or possession of deadly weapon in school safety zone.** Ohio Rev. Code § 2923.122

(A) No person shall knowingly convey, or attempt to convey, a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance into a school safety zone.

(B) No person shall knowingly possess a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance in a school safety zone.

(E) Whoever violates division (A) or (B) of this section is guilty of a felony in the fifth degree.

*[Exemptions include certain law enforcement officers, agents, and employees who are authorized to carry deadly weapons in a school safety zone, and other limited exceptions pursuant to § 2923.122 (D).]*



Committee for

**SAFE AND SECURE  
ELECTIONS**

