

4825 Bayfield Terrace  
Madison WI 53705  
January 22, 2005

To: Legislative Council's Election Law Review Committee  
Re: Training of pollworkers

The existing program for training pollworkers is not adequate. Although there is an extensive training program for chief election officials, there is very little for the other election officials.

In Madison, for the recent election, there was no training for anyone but the chief election officers and perhaps one assistant. There were hundreds of new pollworkers, and their training consisted of the instruction, "Show up at 6:15 and do whatever the chief election official tells you."

The staff of the State Elections Board has not produced any training material appropriate for these workers. The only materials they now have are a 100-page manual and a movie about dealing with voters with disabilities. The existence of this manual was not made known to most pollworkers, and is not effective for training these officials.

The SEB staff should be given resources and a mandate to produce materials which can be digested in small portions, i.e., using complementary written guides with electronic means, such as narrated PowerPoint shows, short movie clips, or computer based training.

The main topics the guides should cover include: handling voter registration lists and serial numbers, handling observers, issuing ballots, assisting voters, absentee ballots, provisional ballots, and election-day registration. Each topic should have it's own stand-alone module so that election officials can study at their own pace, and easily access the materials before and on election day.

Better training of the pollworkers will reduce the incidence of some of the problems you have been discussing, such as the need for draw-downs during a recount.

Please give the issue of poll worker training serious discussion.

Sincerely,

Paul Malischke  
malischke@yahoo.com