§682. Political activities

Certain activities are prohibited on election day. [PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (RPR).]

1. Instruction limited. Within the voting place, a person may not instruct another in the method of marking the ballot, except as provided in section 672.
[PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (RPR).]

1-A. Definition. For the purposes of this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, "candidate" has the same meaning as in section 1, subsection 5 and includes a write-in candidate, as defined in section 1, subsection 51. "Candidate" includes a candidate of any party designation and a candidate that is not enrolled in a political party.
[PL 2025, c. 331, §1 (NEW).]

2. Influence prohibited. On public property within 250 feet of the entrance to the voting place as well as within the voting place itself, a person may not:

A. Influence another person's decision regarding a candidate for an office that is on the ballot for the election that day, whether or not the candidate's name is on the ballot, or a question that is on the ballot for the election that day; or [PL 2025, c. 331, §2 (AMD).]

B. Attempt to influence another person's decision regarding a candidate for an office that is on the ballot for the election that day, whether or not the candidate's name is on the ballot, or a question that is on the ballot for the election that day. [PL 2025, c. 331, §2 (AMD).]

C. [PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (RP).]

These limitations do not prohibit a candidate, or no more than one representative of a candidate, from greeting a voter if the candidate or representative of the candidate does not state the name of the office that the candidate is seeking in that election year or wear any button, name tag, apparel or label or have or use any item or sign displaying the candidate's name or the name of the office the candidate is seeking, engage in the conduct described in subsection 7 or otherwise express support for or opposition to a party, a candidate or a ballot question.
[PL 2025, c. 331, §2 (AMD).]

2-A. Application. This subsection governs the application of subsection 2.

A. Subsection 2 does not apply to pollwatchers, who may remain in the voting place outside the guardrail enclosure as long as they do not attempt to influence voters or interfere with their free passage. [PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (NEW).]

B. Subsection 2 does not prohibit media representatives from conducting an exit poll, as long as they do not solicit voters until after the voters have voted and do not orally communicate with voters in a way that influences a voter's vote. [PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (NEW).]

C. If a person attempts to influence voters or interfere with their free passage, the warden shall have that person removed from the voting place. [PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (NEW).]
[PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (NEW).]

3. Advertising prohibited. A person may not display advertising material; operate an advertising medium, including a sound amplification device; or display or distribute campaign literature, posters, palm cards, buttons, badges, stickers or apparel containing a candidate's name or otherwise intending to influence the opinion of any voter regarding a candidate for an office or question that is on the ballot for the election that day on any public property located within 250 feet of the entrance to either the voting place or the building in which the registrar's office is located. The term "sound amplification device" includes, but is not limited to, sound trucks, loudspeakers and blowhorns.

A. This subsection does not apply to advertising material on automobiles traveling to and from the voting place for the purposes of voting. It does not prohibit a person who is at the polls solely for

the purpose of voting from wearing a campaign button when the longest dimension of the button does not exceed 3 inches. [PL 2009, c. 253, §27 (AMD).]

B. Nonpolitical advertising may be allowed as provided in section 683, subsection 3. [PL 2025, c. 397, §42 (AMD).]

C. [PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (RP).]
[PL 2025, c. 397, §42 (AMD).]

4. Devices for audible communication. Party workers or others may not use cellular phones, voice pagers or similar devices to make audible voice communication within the voting place that is in violation of subsection 2.
[PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (NEW).]

5. Violation. A person who knowingly engages in activities prohibited by this section commits a Class E crime.
[PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (NEW).]

6. Public property limited. For purposes of this section, "public property" does not include a public right-of-way across privately owned property if it is an easement right-of-way.
[PL 2009, c. 253, §28 (NEW).]

7. Other political activities prohibited by candidates; collection of signatures; funding. On public property within 250 feet of the entrance to the voting place as well as within the voting place itself, a candidate or a representative of a candidate may not:

A. Collect or solicit voter signatures on a petition in support of the candidate's candidacy for an office the candidate is seeking in that election year; [PL 2025, c. 331, §3 (NEW).]

B. Collect or solicit contributions in support of the candidate's candidacy for an office the candidate is seeking in that election year. For the purposes of this paragraph, "contribution" has the same meaning as in section 1012, subsection 2; or [PL 2025, c. 331, §3 (NEW).]

C. Collect or solicit qualifying contributions under the Maine Clean Election Act in support of the participating candidate's candidacy for an office the candidate is seeking in that election year. For the purposes of this paragraph, "participating candidate" has the same meaning as in section 1122, subsection 6 and "qualifying contribution" has the same meaning as in section 1122, subsection 7. [PL 2025, c. 331, §3 (NEW).]
[PL 2025, c. 331, §3 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW). PL 1985, c. 383, §11 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 466, §20 (AMD). PL 1993, c. 473, §§19,20 (AMD). PL 1993, c. 473, §46 (AFF). PL 1995, c. 459, §§61,62 (AMD). PL 2001, c. 310, §37 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 447, §22 (RPR). PL 2005, c. 568, §§14,15 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 253, §§27, 28 (AMD). PL 2015, c. 447, §22 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 371, §§21, 22 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 109, §1 (AMD). PL 2025, c. 331, §§1-3 (AMD). PL 2025, c. 397, §42 (AMD).

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