

Chapter 276

(Senate Bill 308)

AN ACT concerning

Election Law – Chief Election Judges – Party Affiliation

FOR the purpose of requiring the election director of a local board of elections to designate chief election judges from certain political parties to each polling place except under certain circumstances; and generally relating to the party affiliation of chief election judges.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Election Law
Section 10–201
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Election Law
Section 10–203(a) and (b)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Election Law

10–201.

(a) (1) (i) Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, each local board shall provide at least four election judges to be the staff for each polling place.

(ii) In a precinct with fewer than 200 registered voters, the local board may provide two election judges for that precinct's polling place.

(2) An election judge shall be appointed in accordance with the requirements of § 10–203 of this subtitle.

(b) (1) Except as provided in [paragraph] **PARAGRAPHS (2) AND (3)** of this subsection, **TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE**, each polling place shall have an equal number of election judges, **INCLUDING CHIEF JUDGES DESIGNATED UNDER § 10–203 OF THIS SUBTITLE**, from:

- (i) the majority party; and
- (ii) the principal minority party.

(2) [(i)] If the total number of election judges for a precinct is six or more:

[1.] (I) a local board may provide one or more election judges who are not registered with either the majority party or principal minority political party; and

[2.] (II) a local board may provide one or more election judges who are minors.

[(ii)] The number of election judges provided under this paragraph may not exceed the lesser of:

- 1. the number of election judges who belong to the majority party; or
- 2. the number of election judges who belong to the principal minority party.]

(3) (I) THIS PARAGRAPH APPLIES IF AN ELECTION DIRECTOR IS UNABLE TO DESIGNATE CHIEF JUDGES FOR A POLLING PLACE AT LEAST 45 DAYS BEFORE THE START OF EARLY VOTING.

(II) IF AN ELECTION DIRECTOR DESIGNATING TWO CHIEF JUDGES FOR A POLLING PLACE UNDER § 10–203 OF THIS SUBTITLE IS UNABLE TO DESIGNATE THE CHIEF JUDGES IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, AN ELECTION DIRECTOR SHALL DESIGNATE:

1. ONE CHIEF JUDGE FROM THE MAJORITY PARTY OR THE PRINCIPAL MINORITY POLITICAL PARTY; AND

2. ONE CHIEF JUDGE WHO IS NOT REGISTERED WITH EITHER THE MAJORITY PARTY OR THE PRINCIPAL MINORITY POLITICAL PARTY.

10–203.

(a) The election director, with the approval of the local board, shall appoint the election judges for each polling place for a term that begins on the Tuesday that is 13 weeks before each statewide primary election.

(b) One or two election judges in each precinct shall:

- (1) be designated chief judge; and
- (2) supervise the staff at the polling place.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2025.

Approved by the Governor, May 6, 2025.