**Presiding Officer**

**Job Description**

Presiding Officers are responsible for conduct in their polling station and must have a good knowledge of the voting procedures. As a Presiding Officer you will be responsible for complying with all instructions and ensuring the integrity and secrecy of the ballot. You will assign work to the Poll Clerk(s), ensuring the accuracy of the poll and account for all of the ballot papers. You will be responsible for collecting and delivering your ballot box and you may have responsibility for ensuring your polling building is open and closed on the day.

Polling Stations are open from 7am until 10pm. On polling day, staff are required to arrive at their polling station by 6.30am (latest) to set it up in time for opening and should not leave the premises during polling hours.

There will be a 1 hour teams briefing on procedures before polling day. There will also be an online training module to complete before polling day, provided by the AEA, which takes approximately 1 hour to complete.

Ballot box collection details will be sent nearer the time, but this will take place on the Monday or Tuesday before polling day.

The current rates of pay are available via: <https://jobs.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/job_detail/276623/>

As a Presiding Officer you will:

* Comply with any instructions given to you
* Take charge of the polling station
* Ensure that all electors are treated impartially, with respect and in a helpful, polite and professional manner
* Maintain the secrecy of the ballot
* Supervise the Poll Clerk(s) at the polling station.

**Duties**

Before election day Presiding Officers are required to

* Complete online training and attend a briefing (via MS Teams)
* Liaise with the contact person for your polling station well before polling day to confirm arrangements for key collection and opening and closing the building
* Make contact with your Poll Clerk(s) to check arrangements and to brief them on any necessary procedures
* Collect and check the ballot box and its contents
* Keep the ballot box and contents secure until they are handed back at the close of poll

On election day Presiding Officers are required to

* Transport the ballot box and contents to the polling station
* Set up polling booths (this will require some lifting)
* Organise the layout of the polling station taking all voter needs into account
* Be aware of any access issues at the polling station
* Be responsible for health and safety at the polling station for all staff and visitors
* Ensure the polling station is opened on time
* Ensure that all signs and instructions are clear, visible and remain in place
* Keep the polling station neat and tidy
* Instruct and supervise the work of the poll clerk(s)
* Account for, and be responsible for, all ballot papers, issued and un-issued
* Helping electors understand voter ID is required and advising on acceptable forms of ID
* Ensuring that voter identification is checked before ballot papers are issued
* Enable electors to present their ID in private when requested
* Refusing a voter ballot paper where you do not consider the ID to be a good likeness, or consider it to be a forgery
* Check and mark electors’ electoral numbers in the register of electors and on the corresponding numbers lists
* Issue ballot papers to voters
* Ensure that voters cast their votes in secret and put them into the correct ballot box
* Provide assistance to voters where appropriate, including helping those that have disabilities to accessing the polling station and to cast their vote
* Provide assistance and guidance to electors handing in postal votes
* Receive and record the receipt of postal votes delivered by hand
* Manage the attendance of those entitled to be present in the polling station, e.g. candidates, agents, representatives of the Electoral Commission and observers, and ensure they do not interfere with the voting process
* Monitor the activities of tellers outside the polling place
* Be polite and professional when dealing with all visitors to the polling station and remain impartial at all times.

At the close of poll, Presiding Officers are required to:

* Ensure the polling station is closed on time
* Supervise the dismantling of the polling station and ensure the building is returned to good order
* Complete the ballot paper account and associated paperwork correctly and to pack up documents in accordance with the instructions given by the Returning Officer
* Deliver the ballot box and associated paperwork to the designated location

**Working hours and breaks**

A Presiding Officer will work for approximately 17 hours on election day. You will be required to provide your own refreshments and take appropriate breaks throughout the day to avoid tiredness. Polling station staff are not permitted to leave the premises during the hours of poll.

A Presiding Officer is not permitted to have carried out duties on behalf of any political party or candidate at the election. All staff will be required to sign their agreement to this and to maintain the secrecy of the poll.

**Person Specification**

**Essential**

* Ability to work independently under pressure
* Access to a car which is also insured for Business Use
* Literate and numerate
* Good timekeeping
* Ability to treat people fairly and with respect at all times
* Ability to remain politically neutral
* Not connected to, nor will assist, any candidate or party at the election
* Compliance with requirement for secrecy and instructions regarding the use of social media
* Acceptance of waiving the Working Time Directive for the period of employment
* Must not have been convicted of an offence under Electoral Legislation

Desirable

* previously worked at a Polling Station (not essential)
* Previous line-management or supervisory experience
* Previous customer-service experience
* Diplomacy and tact when working with members of the public
* Working knowledge of the electoral process

## Make an expression of interest

Apply to work at elections at <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/your-council/elections-and-voting/apply-to-work-at-elections/>

You will need to tell us the following:

* your details - name, and address
* any experience you have in working at elections in the past
* any relevant experience to the roles listed