

**London Borough of Newham  
Job Profile**

<b>Job Title:</b> Presiding Officer	<b>Directorate:</b>
<b>Service/Section:</b> Election Services	<b>Post Number(s):</b>  <b>Job Evaluation Number:</b>
<b>Grade:</b> Temporary/Casual	<b>Date last updated:</b>  <b>Date of last Evaluation:</b>

**Main Purpose of the Job/Key Objectives:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comply with any instructions from the Returning Officer/Deputy Returning Officer/Elections Manager</li><li>• Be responsible for the management of a polling station</li><li>• Ensure that all electors are treated impartially and with respect</li><li>• Maintain the secrecy of the ballot</li><li>• Supervise the Poll Clerks</li><li>• Ensure compliance with the requirements of Elections, the Requirement for Secrecy and the Data Protection Act</li></ul>
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**Job Context:**

1. The postholder reports to: Election Services Manager
2. The postholder will be required to work from 6.15 am until the ballot box has been delivered to the count centre or other required location.

**Experience**

The postholder must have previous experience of being a Poll Clerk or a Presiding Officer.

**Working conditions/circumstances**

Presiding Officers are required to attend a training session prior to every election. This training may be scheduled outside of normal office hours. Failure to attend and successfully complete this training could lead to any appointment offered being rescinded.

On polling day Presiding Officers will be required to be available and on duty during the whole period from 6.15 am until midnight.

Presiding Officers are not permitted to leave the polling place during the hours of poll (7am - 10pm), and must provide their own refreshments to cover this period.

Presiding Officers are required to have their own transport and car insurance that includes limited business use

All staff will be required to sign an agreement to waive their rights under the European Working Time directive.

## **Duties:**

### *Before Polling day*

- Read the polling station handbook
- Attend training sessions as directed by Electoral Services
- Liaise with contact person for their allocated polling station to confirm arrangements for key collection/opening and closing the building
- Visit the polling station in advance of polling day
- In multiple polling stations, make contact with the other Presiding Officer(s)
- Contact Poll Clerk(s) to check that they have appropriate travel arrangements in place and confirm arrival time at the Polling Station for 6.15am
- Collect the ballot box and check contents on day before poll

### *Polling Day*

- Transport ballot box and contents to the polling station
- Set up polling station in line with Electoral Commission guidance, taking the needs of voters into account
- Ensure the polling station is opened on time (7.00am)
- Ensure that all signs and instructions are clear, visible and remain in place for the duration of polling
- Instruct, supervise, and be responsible for the work of the Poll Clerk(s), logging any issues in the log book
- Account for, and be responsible for, all ballot papers, issued and un-issued
- Ensure that voters electoral numbers are checked, marked, and entered onto the corresponding numbers list
- Supervise the issue of ballot papers
- Ensure that voters cast their vote in secret and put them in the (correct) ballot box
- Provide assistance to voters where appropriate
- Receive postal votes delivered by hand and put in the wallet for collection by a Polling Station Inspector
- Manage the attendance of those entitled to be present in the polling station, e.g. polling station inspectors, candidates, agents, Electoral Commission observers, and ensure that they do not interfere with the voting process.
- Remain impartial at all times
- Monitor the activities of tellers and party activists outside the polling station
- Be responsible for health and safety at the polling station for all staff and visitors
- Ensure Data Protection is adhered to

### *Close of poll*

- Ensure that the polling station is closed on time or after the last person in the queue at 10pm has voted. Ensure that no ballot paper is issued after this time
- Supervise the packing away of the polling station and equipment and ensure the building is returned in good order
- Complete the ballot paper account and associated paperwork; pack in accordance with instructions given by the Returning Officer
- Deliver the ballot box and associated paperwork to the required location as designated by the Returning Officer as quickly as possible.
- To remain contactable by phone until midnight on polling day in case of any queries.

## **DISQUALIFYING FACTORS**

The Returning Officer is not permitted to employ anyone who is carrying out duties on behalf of any political party or candidate at the election.

All appointed staff will be required to sign a declaration confirming their agreement to maintain the secrecy of the poll.

The Returning Officer and / or Electoral Services have the right to revoke any appointment at any time if it is believed that the obligations inherent in that appointment are not being met. If your appointment is revoked, you must return all items issued to Electoral Services immediately.

Any indication of sexist, racist or anti-disability attitudes, or any other attitudes inconsistent with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy, will result in the immediate termination of any appointment.

Asylum and Immigration Act 2006: The Returning Officer is required to ensure that all staff working on the Election are entitled to work in the United Kingdom. Staff who are not an employee of London Borough Newham must provide a current passport or, if not available, must contact the Election Services office for the full list of documents that can be accepted. Please note that staff must bring in the original document in person in order to be verified.

## **NOTE**

This job description reflects the current requirements of these posts, and should not be seen as an exhaustive list of responsibilities. Duties and responsibilities may develop and change as necessity requires.

For data protection purposes, please be aware that acceptance of any appointment to a polling station role includes your permission for your name and contact details (e-mail address and mobile telephone number) to be shared with the other staff appointed to your station (including the Polling Station Inspector). This is to enable teams to be able to contact each other in advance of polling day or in an emergency.

The Returning Officer is under a duty to protect the public funds administered, and to this end may use the information you have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. They may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes.