

Media Access Overview: Georgia

Polling Place Access

- Only poll workers, observers, and people actively voting are allowed in the “enclosed space,” § 21-2-413, the area within the polling place where the voting machines are located. § 21-2-267.
- Exit or public opinion polling is not allowed within 25 feet of the polling place building’s exit. § 21-2-414(c)(1). Photography and recording are not allowed inside the polling place. § 21-2-413(e). Electioneering is not allowed within 150 feet of the building where the polling place is, or within 25 feet of a voter standing in line. § 21-2-414(a).
- Poll managers can control how many people are inside the polling place, except they must allow credentialed poll watchers, poll workers, and law enforcement officers. § 21-2-414(c)(2).

Access to Vote Tabulation Processes

- All proceedings where votes are counted using optical scanning equipment are open to the public, whether they take place at a tabulating center or in the precincts. But no unauthorized person may touch any ballot or ballot container. § 21-2-483(b).

Access to Information/Records

- All data on electors whose names appear on the list of electors maintained by the Secretary of State is available for public inspection, except for bank statements, the month and day of birth, social security numbers, e-mail addresses, and driver's license numbers of the electors, and the locations at which they applied to register to vote. Voter registration applications are not open to the public except by court order. § 21-2-225.
- Election records held by the Secretary of State are open to inspection by any elector of the state. Election records include “registration statements, nomination petitions, affidavits, certificates, tally papers, returns, accounts, contracts, reports, and other documents in official custody.” §§ 21-2-51 & 72. All election documents on file are preserved for at least 24 months. § 21-2-73.
- Governmental communication regarding election security and systems breakdowns may be available through a [Georgia Open Records Act request](#).

Potential Issues

- Timely release of election returns may be an issue, as the Governor is not required to certify the slate of presidential electors until 5:00 P.M. on the eighteenth day after the election. § 21-2-499.
- The [new state voting machines only return QR codes](#) which do not allow voters to check for accuracy.

- There is also ongoing litigation over whether or not each polling place must retain a paper copy of the pollbook, which is [“used to determine voter eligibility and precinct assignment in the case of equipment malfunction or other emergency.”](#)
- In late September, Georgia voting machines were given [a last minute software upgrade](#) to fix glitches.

Key Resources:

- [Georgia Poll Worker Manual \(revised 8/2020\)](#)
- [Georgia Sample FOIA Request](#)