

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>POST TITLE</b>	Presiding Officer
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	Electoral Services
<b>REPORTS TO</b>	The Returning Officer, and their deputies for the London Borough of Southwark

### PURPOSE OF THE JOB

Polling Station staff are employed by the Returning Officer at Parliamentary, Borough and GLA elections and referendums to work at polling stations across Southwark.

Presiding Officers have overall responsibility for the polling station and carry out an additional supervisory role as well as ensure that voters are able to cast their vote independently, in secret, free from influence and in a calm atmosphere.

Presiding Officers are required to attend training (2 hours), collect their ballot box, equipment and sundries (1 hour), visit their polling station in advance (1 hour) and work 6am - 10.30pm on polling day (16.5 hours). Polling station staff are not permitted to leave the polling station for any reason during the hours of poll.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Responsible for the conduct of the ballot in the polling station
- Comply with any instructions issued by the Returning Officer
- Account and be responsible for all the ballot papers, paperwork and the ballot box
- Liaise with the key holder and plan for the opening and closing of your polling building.
- Visit your polling station in advance to ensure polling day arrangements are in place.
- Collect your ballot box/boxes and equipment before polling day at your allocated time slot. The box/boxes must be kept in a secure environment until polling day
- Contact Poll Clerk(s), and any other Presiding Officer(s) appointed to the same polling place, at least a week before polling day
- Instruct and supervise the work of Poll Clerks
- Organise the layout of the polling station
- Open and close the polling station on time
- Ensure the secrecy and security of the ballot
- Be polite and professional in dealing with electors, candidates and agents, and others entitled to be present in the polling station
- Act impartially at all times
- Maintain order in the polling station
- Ensure voters are able to cast their vote safely including by making sure that any public health advice from the Returning Officer is observed throughout the day
- Ensure that when either they or their Poll Clerk issues ballot papers, the ballot papers bear the official mark and are issued correctly to eligible electors
- Ensure that the proper procedure for voting is followed, ensuring that the corresponding number list is marked correctly
- To refuse to issue a ballot paper to an elector if their photographic ID raises reasonable doubt as to whether the voter is the elector they claim to be or if it is reasonably suspected to be a forgery
- To refuse to issue a ballot paper to an elector who has not answered the prescribed questions satisfactorily
- Maintain accurate records of electors who attend the polling station without an accepted form of photographic ID

- Support disabled voters to use any special equipment or devices.
- Ensure all equipment for disabled voters is displayed and ready to use
- Ensure only companions of voters with disabilities who have completed the necessary declaration, accompany a voter into the polling booth
- Ask the prescribed questions of voters when necessary, including when asked to do so by candidates or agents or before the issue of any tendered ballot papers
- Deal with special voting procedures as required
- Receive any postal votes handed in by electors
- Manage the attendance of those entitled to be present in the polling station, such as candidates and agents, representatives of the Electoral Commission and accredited observers, and ensure that they do not interfere with the voting process
- Update the polling station log to record all those who are present in polling stations for the purpose of observing proceedings
- Monitor the activities of tellers outside polling places and ensure that they do not interfere with the voting process
- Ensure that all signs and notices are clear, visible and remain in place throughout the day
- Keep the polling station neat and tidy
- Request that a police officer remove someone from a polling station, if necessary
- Limit the number of accredited observers present at any one time, if necessary
- Delivering the ballot box/boxes and all other equipment and sundries to the count venue promptly after the close of poll.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person specification is a picture of skills, knowledge and experience required to carry out the job.

<b>Knowledge, including educational qualifications:</b>
An excellent understanding of the election process
<b>Experience:</b>
Experience of working with the general public
Previous experience working as a Poll Clerk
<b>Aptitudes, Skills &amp; Competencies:</b>
Good literacy and numeracy skills, with excellent attention to detail
Ability to carry out work as instructed, even under pressure
Excellent timekeeping
<b>Special Conditions of Recruitment:</b>
Comply with and promote the Council's Equal opportunities policy. Individuals cannot be employed for election duties if they have carried out any duties on behalf of any political party or candidate at the election.