NEON
Nevada Election Observation Network

NEON Preliminary Statement

For Release Nov 5, 2026

About Nevada Election Observation Network

Nevada Election Observation Network (NEON) is a nonpartisan election observation and civic engagement initiative that aims to strengthen public trust in Nevada elections. Established in 2026, NEON is led by and for Nevadans. NEON mobilized over 200 community members in urban, rural and Tribal communities to observe election processes in every county across the state for the Nov. 3, 2026 general election.

“NEON had a large turnout of interested observers from all 16 Nevada counties and Carson City, the state’s capital. The outpouring of interest in election observation in Nevada reflects a widespread demand for timely, impartial, and accurate information about how elections are run, underscoring interest in both accountability and civic engagement. We look forward to sharing a final report after the conclusion of our data collection and analysis, and continuing NEON's efforts in the future."

- Kimberly Esse, Project Director, NEON

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Key Findings & Preliminary Trends

1) Nevadans Turned Out to Vote

NEON observers in every county across Nevada documented the Silver State's Nov. 3 general election in an environment marked by robust voter participation, and proficient and effective work by election staff. As of Nov. 5, voter turnout stands at approximately 47.87% (and counting).

2) Steady & Effective Election Management

Voting proceeded smoothly across Nevada, with new ballot marking devices and tabulators rolled out in 15 counties. Limited equipment malfunctions were fixed quickly, and, in nearly all cases, voting proceeded while the resolution was underway.

3) Long Lines at Some Polling Locations

Many voting locations across the state remained open beyond 7:00 pm on Election Night to allow all voters in line at the close of polls to case their ballots. In Washoe and Clark counties in particular, several polling locations had lines of up to 3.5 hours. In these locations, NEON observers reported seeing several voters leave the line during the day without casting their ballot due to wait times.

4) Calm Surrounding the Polls

Despite considerable discussion leading up to the election about the potential for federal law enforcement presence at polling locations - particularly given federal charges of non-citizen voting in the week prior to the election and Department of Homeland Security claims of non-citizens on the voter roll - there were few reports of law enforcement of any kind at polling sites. Those present appeared to be working within their official capacities.

Deep Dive on Polling Place Accessibility

During early voting and on election day, NEON conducted a pilot accessibility audit in Washoe County, Churchill County, and Carson City. **Seven** accessibility auditors assesed voting locations' capacity to serve voters with disabilities. Our auditors assessed not only whether polling locations complied with legal guidelines on accessibility but also whether locations were accessible in practice from a voter experience perspective. NEON is compiling data from the accessibility auditors, and in-depth findings will be forthcoming.



Election Processes and Election Observation Continue...

In-person voting is over, but mail ballot processing is still underway. Counties will soon conduct the risk-limiting audit and county canvass. In the coming days, NEON observers statewide will monitor each step and assess how procedures are carried out until these processes are complete and final results are certified later this month.

Overview & Methodology

NEON trained **214 observers** on polling location observation and built a network of **19 county, reservation, and regional coordinators.**

151 observers were mobilized to observe in every county in Nevada.

NEON observed **102 polling places** during early voting and on election day, completing **334 polling place observations.** Some locations were observed more than once.

Comprehensive Assessment of Electoral Processes

NEON's nonpartisan observation assesses the quality of Nevada's elections against local, state, and federal statutory requirements. Observers monitored poll worker training, pre-logic and accuracy testing (Pre-LAT), and in-person voting during early voting and election day. Observation of mail ballot processing, county canvass, and risk-limiting audit procedures is ongoing.

Observation of Ballot Counting and Post-Election Processes is Ongoing

NEON notes that the observation of mail ballot processing, the post-election audit, and county canvass meetings is ongoing and will continue in the coming weeks. As a result, this statement includes only preliminary findings on the pre-election environment and voting processes.

NEON will publish a comprehensive final report on the 2026 General Elections in early 2027, including detailed findings from its observer data and recommendations for the future.

Observer Recruitment and Mobilization

NEON recruited observers through an open application process and mobilized them to observe in their own communities across the state. Observers go through rigorous day-long training on Nevada's election laws, procedures, and safeguards. They sign a code of conduct requiring nonpartisan behavior and impartial reporting, and prohibiting interference with the voting process or election officials. Findings are evidence-based and vetted by NEON's data team prior to analysis and publication.

NEON's Approach to Observation on Tribal Lands

NEON's work on Tribal lands begins with the principle that Tribal Nations are sovereign governments. In its inaugural year of election observation, NEON recruited reservation coordinators, who are enrolled as members of each Tribal Nation where NEON observed. Reservation coordinators conducted informal outreach to Tribal leadership and reservation poll workers prior to observing. NEON plans to engage with the respective Tribal governments through their established leadership and administrative processes to share information, seek guidance, and discuss protocols for observation and data governance, including whether and under what conditions observation findings may be used or disseminated. In the future, NEON is committed to building long-term, equitable relationships with Tribal Nations and their citizens, grounded in respect for Tribal sovereignty.

Election Equipment
Pre-LAT: Logic and Accuracy Testing

Purpose and Scope of Pre-LAT Observation. Before every election, Nevada counties conduct Pre-LAT, or Logic and Accuracy Testing, to confirm that voting machines record votes as marked and tally them correctly. NEON observed testing in eight counties: Churchill, Douglas, Eureka, Lincoln, Lyon, Mineral, Storey and Washoe. At each session, NEON observers were the only members of the public present to observe. Aside from Churchill County, where in a trust-building practice, political party representatives participated as testers selecting their party's candidates during voting machine testing, NEON observers did not encounter observers from any political party, the media, or any other nonpartisan groups during testing.

Pre-LAT Observation Highlights. Observers saw a methodical process: staff marked test ballots, printed zero reports to show no votes had been cast beforehand, and ran test decks through tabulators, including blank, overvoted and write-in ballots in most counties.

Observers also saw room to improve. Only English-language functionality was tested on ballot-marking devices, even though some counties offer ballots in multiple languages. Some observers were seated too far from the equipment to read the screens. Testing is open to the public by design, but how much a member of the public can learn from it depends on where they sit and how much staff explain.

Early Voting & Election Day Observation

The voting process in Nevada provides eligible voters with robust opportunities to participate. Eligible voters have the option to cast a ballot by mail, in person during a two-week early voting period, or on election day. Overseas residents, voters with disabilities, and Tribal voters who live on a reservation in the state may vote via the Nevada Effective Absentee System for Elections (EASE). All registered voters residing in Nevada receive a mail-in ballot in advance of the polls, and eligible citizens may also cast a provisional ballot if they register to vote on election day.

As of November 5th, a total of **47.9% of Nevada's 2.1 million registered voters** have voted in the 2026 General Election. Of those, **49.9% voted by mail** as of November 5, **29.9%** cast their ballots i**n-person during Early Voting** at the state's 131 early voting locations, and **20.2% turned out on Election Day** at 239 election day polling sites.

Polling Location Operations & Readiness

On-Time Opening of Polling Locations: NEON observers watched polling location opening a total of **320 times** at **89 locations** between early voting and election day, and reported only **four cases of polling locations opening late**: three during early voting and one on election day. One delay during early voting lasted 50 minutes as the key to the polling location was misplaced, but in the three other cases, the polls opened within 10-15 minutes after the scheduled time.

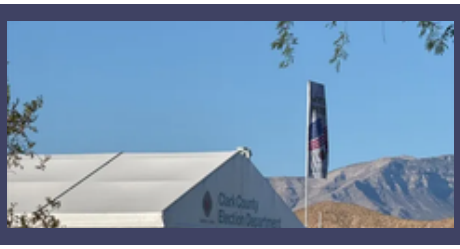
Equipment Readiness: Observers reported some equipment malfunctions occurred, largely cases of malfunctions on ballot marking devices and equipment for checking voters in and verifying their registration. Most cases were partial outages that were quickly resolved and did not impact the voting process. Additionally, two incidents of multiple ballot marking device outages for brief periods were reported. In both cases, the incidents were quickly addressed.

Voter Experience

Wait Time to Vote: During early voting, most polling locations **opened** with small or no lines. On Election Day, **48% (25 of 52)** of polling locations observed had moderate (11-50 voters) or long (50+ voters) lines at opening. On Election Day, at the **close** of polls, **56% (29 of 52)** of polling locations observed had lines at close of polls. This included locations in both urban counties of Washoe and Clark as well as the rural counties of Carson, Elko, and Humboldt.

Voters Unable to Cast a Ballot: : Observers at **21% (16 of 75)** of early voting locations and **38% (20 of 52)** of election day locations reported at least one voter leaving without having an opportunity to vote.The majority of these voters were registered to vote in another county and did not meet the requirements for same-day registration in that location. Most of the time, voters were given information about where they could vote. In accordance with Nevada law, none of NEON's observers saw voters turned away because of a prior felony conviction.







Voter Privacy: Observers raised concerns about ballot secrecy at **24% (18 of 75)** of early voting locations and **6% (3 of 52)** of election day locations observed. Most stated that one voter would be able to see another voters' selections because the dividers between machines were only approximately 5ft tall. This could be resolved with taller dividers or more space between machines. Other concerns included accessible voting machine screens visible to others and machines placed against walls, allowing people walking behind voters to see their selections.

Polling Place Transparency & Election Observation

Language Access: According to the US Census, nearly **30% of Nevadans speak a language other than English** at home. Some counties are required to provide translation services under federal law, while others provide them beyond statutory requirements. NEON observers reported on the presence of translation services, which may include remote translation services, bilingual poll workers, or official translators, **72% (54 of 75)** of polling locations observed during early voting and **34 of 52** election day locations observed.

Ballot Security: During early voting and on election day, 100% of NEON observers reported proper ballot handling during closing procedures: only election workers or official couriers handled ballots.

Presence of Partisan and Nonpartisan Observers: During early voting, NEON observers were frequently the only members of the public present to observe, for more than half of observations reported **(145 of 282 observations)**. When other observers were present, political party representatives and other nonpartisan observers were most common.

Election Day showed robust participation from other observers, however: NEON observers reported seeing **Republican** party observers at **24 of 52** polling locations, and **Democratic** party observers at **28 of 52** polling locations. There were other **nonpartisan** observers at **32 of 52** polling sites observed on election day.

Observer Access: NEON observers had unfettered access to monitor voting processes in **100% of polling locations** observed. However, during early voting, on **10 of 282 early polling days** observed, NEON observers were asked to leave during the closing and ballot security procedures. On Election Day, **51 of 52 NEON observers** were permitted to stay through the end of the process.



Conclusion

NEON's preliminary observations show robust voter participation and generally effective election administration. Opportunities noted to further improve voter experience include increasing polling locations or polling staff in densely populated areas to process voters and increasing access to translation services.

NEON recognizes the dedication of Nevada voters who faced long lines to exercise their right to vote; the significant efforts of election administrators and poll workers to prepare for and conduct voting and quickly resolve issues; and the commitment of its observers to impartial, nonpartisan observation.

As the remaining election processes and data analyses continue, NEON remains committed to providing clear, evidence-based findings that strengthen transparency and accountability, support improvements, and help increase Nevadan's trust in their elections. **NEON's final report on 2026 General Elections in Nevada will be shared in early 2027.**