

**Observer Corps Meeting Guidelines Quick Reference**

An Observer Corps is one way the League of Women Voters promotes government transparency and accountability. League of Women Voters of Whidbey Island Observer Corps members attend council, board, commission, and advisory committee meetings and report on issues that might be of interest or concern to the League. Observers attend meetings to learn about their community, to ensure that government meetings are conducted in the open, and to encourage the accountability of public officials. Observer Corps members do not speak on behalf of the League without prior authorization.

**LWVWI Observer Corps members must follow these guidelines:**

* Learn about the council/commission/board on its website/social media/in the news.
* Confirm the date, time, and location of meetings..
* Take a copy of the meeting agenda with you to the meeting (agendas are usually available online.)
* Take a copy of the LWVWI Observer Corps Report Form with you to the meeting.
* Wear your League pin and/or name badge at the meeting. If on Zoom identify yourself as a LWV Observer next to your name and use the LWV background on your screen.
* Introduce yourself to the agency leaders.
* Observe the meeting's processes and decisions. Note any issues of potential interest to the League or concerns about the way the meeting is conducted. Take notes but not “meeting minutes.”  Look for the answers to Observer Corps Report Form questions.
* Be polite and respectful. Avoid verbal and nonverbal behavior that could be perceived as distracting, disruptive, or disapproving.
* If asked about your reason for attending, simply indicate you are observing the meeting on behalf of the LWV of Whidbey Island to learn about your local government and ensure open meeting policies are honored.
* When given the opportunity, cultivate a positive relationship with public officials and staff.
* Do not speak publicly at the meeting.
* Do not make any partisan statements, engage in partisan discussions, or participate in partisan activities while serving as a League Observer at a meeting.
* Complete the LWVWI Observer Corps ReportForm as soon as possible after the meeting and submit it to the Observer Corps committee within a week of the meeting.  You may receive feedback or be asked for clarifications.
* Your report may be very brief if there were no issues of concern. It is not necessary to provide a comprehensive report of everything discussed at a meeting.

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