



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release:**

**Date:** October 27, 2026

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## **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ELECTION MONITORS**

### **RETURN TO LARAMIE COUNTY, WY**

**LARAMIE COUNTY, WY-** Clerk Debra Lee confirmed today that the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Division notified her that federal election monitors will again be deployed to the state's largest county during the November 3, 2026, General Election. Unlike their visit during the Primary Election, however, monitors won't be allowed inside polling places and must remain 100 yards from the polls, in accordance with state law and a recent Wyoming Attorney General's opinion.

Clerk Lee said the opinion, requested by her office, clarifies that only individuals specifically authorized by state statute are permitted in polling places during an election. Permitted individuals include voters, election staff, and poll watchers, whose names are certified to the county clerk in advance of the election by their political parties to observe registration and turnout.

The October 16, 2026, Attorney General's opinion confirms the supremacy established in the U.S. Constitution that state law controls elections unless expressly preempted by federal law. The opinion states in part: "In the absence of a court order, settlement agreement or consent decree, Wyoming County Clerks and their election judges not only have the authority to exclude the general public, including DOJ election monitors,...our law requires that they do so."

In a virtual meeting with Lee and other county officials on October 26, 2026, DOJ representatives said they had received the Attorney General's opinion and would conduct observations and interviews only with voters who agree to be interviewed, outside the 100-yard restricted boundary around polling places, as required by state law. Monitors will identify themselves to voters and wear official badges issued by the Clerk's office.

"We appreciate DOJ's advance communication and the opportunity to discuss its plans before Election Day. That coordination will help us prepare our staff and provide voters with a safe and smooth voting experience," Lee said. "It was welcome news that the monitors dispatched to Laramie County during the Primary Election did not identify any concerns regarding our compliance with the federal statutes."

Lee added that although DOJ election monitoring for compliance with civil and voting rights laws is common in many parts of the country, it is a unique experience for Wyoming. Former senior staff of the Wyoming Secretary of State contacted by Lee said they had no recollection of DOJ monitors visiting Wyoming polls in at least 40 years, if ever.

"We have a game plan now. Our office is finalizing preparations for the monitors' arrival, including briefings for poll workers and election staff, and meetings with the Sheriff's office and other local and state security partners. We are committed to following Wyoming law and protecting the rights of our citizens to vote privately, safely, securely, and without disruption or interference," she said.



**For More Information:** Please call 1-307-633-4264 or email [elections@laramiecountywy.gov](mailto:elections@laramiecountywy.gov)

### **About Laramie County**

Laramie County is located in the southeast corner of Wyoming and is home to the City of Cheyenne, Wyoming's capital city. The County provides a broad range of services to residents and visitors, including public safety, road and bridge maintenance, planning and development, parks and recreation, emergency management, and other essential governmental services. Laramie County is committed to providing responsive, efficient, and effective services to the community

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