



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: August 16, 2024
RE: Director's Report: August 21, 2024, Elections Commission Meeting

Following is a brief listing of the work and related information in which the Department of Elections (Department) has been engaged since the previous report issued in relation to the Elections Commission meeting on July 17, 2024.

I. The Department continues to administer ballot measure and candidate filings for the November 5, 2024 election.

- A. On August 12, the Department selected and assigned letters to identify each of the 15 local measure that will appear on the ballot. The selection process was livestreamed and the recording is available at sfelections.org/observe.
 - i. The November 5 ballot will list 10 state measures and 15 local measures. (On August 14, the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority unanimously voted to pull Bay Area Housing Bond from the November ballot.)
- B. On August 12 at noon, the Department concluded the intake period for proponent and opponent ballot arguments. On August 19 at noon, the Department will conclude the intake period for rebuttal and paid arguments. Each submission deadline will be followed by a 10-day public examination period.
- C. The nomination period for offices of the City Attorney, District Attorney, Sheriff, Treasurer, Community College Board of Trustees, Board of Education, and BART Board of Directors (Districts 7 and 9) closed on August 9. The Department has posted all final candidate lists, including Chinese-character-based names and transliterations and ballot designations on <https://www.sf.gov/candidates>.
- D. From September 9 to October 22, the Department will facilitate the write-in period during which candidates seeking to run as write-ins for any local office must submit their Statements of Write-In Candidacy and Nomination Papers.

II. The Department continued preparations related to the November 5, 2024 election.

- A. The Department is hiring and onboarding seasonal employees to assist its full-time staff in preparing for the election.
 - i. As part of its hiring campaign, the Department will host an Employment and Volunteer Opportunities Fair next month. Following the success of its spring Job Fair, the Department is bringing back this event to streamline the recruitment process, making it more efficient and accessible, while attracting a diverse pool of candidates.
- B. The Department continued preparations of ballot templates and production timelines, with most work scheduled to be completed in August. These tasks include: organizing the matrix of jurisdictional ballot types, processing ballot information from the Secretary of State for state measures and state and federal candidates, processing ballot information for local measures and local candidates, formatting the official ballot, proofing ballot content and layout, and providing final ballot templates to printing vendors. In early September, the Department will focus on producing audio, touchscreen, and downloadable ballot formats. All ballot formats must be produced by September 20 to meet the statutory deadline of transmitting ballots to voters serving in the military or living overseas.

- C. The Department initiated its poll worker recruitment campaign by mailing availability survey packets to former poll workers and inviting new applicants to join the poll worker team.
 - i. The Department leveraged the August 1 National Poll Worker Recruitment Day to promote civic engagement and encourage city residents to become poll workers. To maximize outreach, the Department sent email notifications to local registered voters, issued a press release, and promoted the opportunity on its social media platforms. These efforts resulted in a significant boost to the Department's recruitment campaign, generating over 2,200 new poll worker applications, including from many applicants who are bilingual.
- D. The Department has been updating its poll worker training curriculum to include several new or expanded practices.
 - i. The updated curriculum will feature: (1) Enhanced training on de-escalation techniques, including guidelines for effectively communicating with voters who may be agitated or frustrated, ensuring voter rights are protected, and determining when to involve inspectors, field support, or law enforcement; (2) Procedures for processing non-citizen voters. Such voters will be listed on a separate set of blue-colored pages in the roster and will have the option to use a one-card quadrilingual paper ballot or a touch-screen/audio ballot. Poll workers will be trained to respect voter confidentiality and provide consistent service to all voters; (3) A new voter ballot receipt. Instead of individual stubs for each ballot card, the November 5 ballot will contain a single receipt that will serve as a cover sheet for the ballot, offering several benefits:
 - a. Increased ballot length: By removing stubs from individual ballot cards, the Department has extended the ballot length to 18 inches, aiming to reduce the number of cards per ballot.
 - b. Multilingual information: The larger receipt will include reminders on available voter assistance, such as accessible tools, translated materials, and personal help options.
 - c. Simplified ballot issuance: The single cover receipt will make it easier for poll workers to manage the multi-card ballot. Poll workers will now tear off ballot cards in a set until reaching the next voter receipt card; thus, removing a possibility for issuing an incomplete ballot.
- E. The Department is organizing 501 neighborhood polling places to provide voter registration, in-person voting, and ballot drop-off services on Election Day. The Department needs to locate 17 new sites because of poll provider cancellations and plans to relocate 18 sites to larger or more accessible facilities.
 - i. The Department will mail notices to all voters whose polling places have changed since the March 5 Election.
- F. The Department continues to assist military and overseas voters in preparing for the election. Since July, the Department has observed a significant increase in email correspondence from such voters, processing over 600 Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) forms, which serve as both registration forms and updates.

III. The Department continues to provide voter outreach and education to communities across the City.

- A. The Department has planned two city-wide mailers to motivate and prepare voters and eligible residents for the November 5 election.
 - i. This month's mailer: To boost voter registration and participation, the Department has mailed over 300,000 quadrilingual notices to every household in San Francisco. These notices aim to reach both current registrants and eligible but unregistered voters, providing essential information on the upcoming election.

- a. The mailer features the Department's outreach theme: "One city, many voices. Cast your ballot, make your choices!", celebrating the historical significance of voting while highlighting local unity, diversity, and civic engagement.
 - b. The mailer outlines six steps to help voters prepare, summarized as follows: (1) Register to vote online or via paper form, (2) Check your address using the voter portal, (3) Decide how you will vote by researching candidates and measures early (4) Reduce paper use by opting out of mail delivery of the Voter Information Pamphlet, (5), practice marking a ranked-choice voting contest using the online practice ballot, and (6) vote by November 5, by mail or in person.
 - c. The mailer also emphasizes the Department's role as a trusted source for election information, promotes poll worker service, and highlights the availability of non-citizen voting.
- ii. Next month's mailer: The Department will send a second citywide mailer titled "Get Ready to Vote in the November 5, 2024 Election.", with a specific focus on ranked-choice voting (RCV). The mailer will list local offices that will be elected by RCV this fall, include instructions for marking an RCV contest, and provide information on RCV resources for practice and learning.
- B. The Department has introduced the [November 5, 2024 Election Readiness Toolkit](#), which is prominently linked from the Department's homepage and is designed to provide convenient access to essential information and tools.
- i. The Toolkit encourages voters to check that their registered address and personal information are up-to-date before ballots are mailed out, familiarize themselves with contests on the ballot, read the online Voter Information Pamphlet (once available), learn about election security, use the Election Readiness Tool to map out their voting plan (which can also be accessed directly via sfelections.gov/voteready).
 - a. The Tool provides a personalized voting plan through three questions: 1) Are you registered to vote in San Francisco? 2) Have you decided how you will vote in the November 5 election? and 3) Are you familiar with ranked-choice voting in San Francisco?
 - b. Based on responses to these questions, the tool offers tailored advice and resources. For example, if a user is unsure of their registration status, the tool will suggest checking their information through the Voter Portal or contacting the Department. If a user is new to RCV, they will be directed to resources explaining RCV and an online practice tool available at sfelections.gov/practiceRCV.
- C. The Department is preparing to send out several hundred informational packets to its community outreach partners, which include local non-profit organizations as well as city departments and agencies.
- i. Each packet will include a letter requesting assistance from partner organizations in distributing enclosed outreach materials across their facilities. These materials include multilingual posters and flyers, covering topics such as non-citizen registration, ranked-choice voting, and accessible voting options. Via this letter, the Department will offer support to its outreach partners by setting up resource tables, co-hosting educational events, and providing election messaging for community newsletters, websites, or social media channels.
 - ii. Next month, the Department will send similar packets to the City's shelters, permanent and transitional housing units, social service agencies, single room occupancy (SRO) hotels, local hospitals, nursing homes, and many other care facilities. Each packet will provide tailored information about election-related services available to a) residents experiencing homelessness and b) homebound and hospitalized residents.

- D. The Department is preparing to conduct two training sessions this month with 15 grantees that were selected to supplement the Department's voter outreach on 1) ranked-choice voting and 2) non-citizen registration and voting in the Board of Education contest between September 3 and Election Day.
- i. During this first part of training, the Department will provide an overview of outreach materials, both digital and hard-copy, and highlight ways in which organizations could utilize them to meet grant objectives. Grantees will also view a presentation covering rules for distributing and collecting registration cards.
 - ii. The second part of training will cover the processes and schedules for submitting invoices to the Department, along with descriptions and examples of both eligible and ineligible reimbursable expenses.
 - iii. In the third part of training, the Department will introduce the Grantee Activity Report, a template that serves as a means for organizations to report on their monthly outreach activities.
 - iv. The fourth and final part of training involves a one-on-one, in-person meeting between a representative from each of the grantee organizations and a member of the Department's outreach team, allowing grantees to ask questions, receive individualized guidance, and pick up outreach materials.

IV. The Department is responding to legislative changes that may impact its operations and services.

- A. The Department is preparing for potential changes to state election law under [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 3184](#), an urgency bill that would take effect immediately upon signing.
- i. If enacted, the bill would:
 - a. Establish a universal "cure date," giving voters 26 days after Election Day (until December 1, 2024) to address signature or unsigned ballot issues.
 - b. Require counties to certify results between December 3 and December 5, depending on the status of signature-related challenges.
 - c. Mandate counties to post a combined signature and unsigned ballot statement, along with completion instructions, on their websites.
 - d. Clarify that information about challenged ballots can be shared with candidates, committees, and other interested parties.

V. Responses to the Commission's request for information to be included in the Director's monthly report.

Data on registration rates and outreach events: 1) Total new registrations, 2) New registrations by supervisory districts, 3) Tactics employed (outreach, community engagement, grant funding, etc.) and in which districts, 4) Tactics employed by districts.

- A. Between July 1 – July 31, the Department processed affidavits for 3,742 new registrants, residing in the following Supervisorial Districts (SD): SD 1 – 283, SD 2 – 435, SD 3 – 438, SD 4 – 250, SD 5 – 477, SD 6 – 413, SD 7 – 267, SD 8 – 409, SD 9 – 293, SD 10 – 260, SD 11 – 217.
- B. Between July 1 – July 31, the Department conducted 25 outreach events; which had approximately 1,184 people in attendance collectively. The number of such events by Supervisorial District was: SD 2 – 3, SD 3 – 6, SD 5 – 3, SD 7 – 2, SD 8 – 2, SD 9 – 1, SD 10 – 3, SD 11 – 5.