

## SAFE BALLOT COLLECTION

After the polls close on election night, election personnel follow detailed, written procedures for tallying scanned vote counts. Election personnel must also follow detailed, written chain of custody procedures for transferring paper ballots. For added security, all adult poll workers stay on-site until SFMTA Parking Control Officers collect voting memory cards and Sheriff's Deputies collect ballots for transport directly to City Hall. After processing, and prior to certifying final election results, election workers conduct a post-election manual tally to verify all valid voted ballots were counted accurately.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

There are a number of things you can do to help protect the integrity of our elections! Here are some suggestions to help you get started:

- ✓ Check your voter registration record regularly and update it when things change (e.g., a move).
- ✓ Follow us on social media (@SFElections).
- ✓ Subscribe to our official news, updates, and notices at [sfelections.gov/trustedinfo](https://www.sfelections.gov/trustedinfo).
- ✓ Be a poll worker and get first-hand experience with election processes and security protocols.
- ✓ Observe election processes in person or online at [sfelections.gov/observe](https://www.sfelections.gov/observe).
- ✓ Report misinformation, questionable claims, or suspicious activity, such as fraud, corruption, or tampering, to any of the following:
  - Our office: (415) 554-4375
  - San Francisco District Attorney: (628) 652-4311
  - California Secretary of State: (800) 345-8683
  - SOS email: [VoteSure@sos.ca.gov](mailto:VoteSure@sos.ca.gov)
  - [sfvote@sfgov.org](mailto:sfvote@sfgov.org)

# Have Questions?

## Department of Elections

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl.  
City Hall, Room 48  
San Francisco, CA 94102

English: (415) 554-4375  
Español: (415) 554-4366  
中文: (415) 554-4367  
Filipino: (415) 554-4310  
TTY: (415) 554-4386



[sfelections.gov](https://www.sfelections.gov)  
[sfvote@sfgov.org](mailto:sfvote@sfgov.org)

   / [sfelections](https://www.sfelections.gov)



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS

# SAN FRANCISCO ELECTIONS: SAFE AND SECURE



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS

## ADDRESSING MISINFORMATION

The Department of Elections takes a proactive approach to prevent misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation through the publication of clear, easy-to-understand print and digital information. Our official educational materials ensure all registered voters know about important election dates, rules, and operational changes. We also engage in robust, multilingual outreach efforts through notices, press releases, media interviews, advertising, social media posts, and live presentations.

The Department monitors and promptly responds to any false information about our processes circulating on public platforms with official, verified facts. We developed protocols to monitor, evaluate, document, and respond to incidents involving misinformation on social media, print media, audio (e.g., robocalls and mass radio broadcasts), and other forms of digital media such as news websites, blogs, message boards, and forums.

## IMPACT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Because AI technology has the potential to negatively impact our election operations and outcomes, the Department of Elections is continuously working to identify and mitigate AI-related threats. More specifically, we have adopted cybersecurity protocols and recommendations from: 1) the Office of Cybersecurity (city) 2) the Office of Elections Cybersecurity and Enterprise Risk Management (state); 3) the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; 4) the National Institute of Standards and Technology; and 5) the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. We have also developed media evaluation and response protocols, expanded our social media guidelines and messaging strategies, and created a new web page on this topic at [sfelections.gov/security](https://sfelections.gov/security).

## WORKER TRAINING AND OATHS

All election workers undergo extensive training on election security and take the following oath: “I, [ blank ] do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the United States and the State of California; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties upon which I am about to enter [..].”

## SYSTEM SECURITY PROTOCOLS

All San Francisco voters must use a paper ballot to vote. San Francisco’s voting system is never connected to the internet and never electronically receives or transmits election data through an external network. In addition, to create an auditable record of every vote cast, our voting system produces publicly verifiable and sortable digital image files of voted ballots.

Prior to certifying our voting system, the California Secretary of State conducted source code review and evaluation as well as hardware and software security penetration and operational testing to validate its performance and identify and resolve or mitigate vulnerabilities. Any member of the public may observe and monitor local election activities at voting, ballot processing, or canvassing sites.

## VOTER RECORD MAINTENANCE

All election workers follow strict, written protocols to verify the identity and eligibility of every registered voter. We also work with the Department of Public Health and the USPS to ensure San Francisco’s voter rolls are accurate and current.

## MAIL BALLOT PROCESSING

Our mail ballot processing protocols protect several voter rights. For example, to protect every voter’s right to cast a secret ballot, returned mail ballots are kept in their envelopes until they are accepted. To protect every voter’s right to cast the ballot issued to them, the signature on each return envelope is verified before the ballot inside is accepted and processed. If, after a three-person review, a comparable signature cannot be found on file, we attempt to contact the voter and offer them a chance to confirm their identity.

## EQUIPMENT SAFEGUARDS

Election workers follow strict chain of custody requirements for all voting technology software, firmware, and hardware. Prior to each election, we conduct thorough Logic & Accuracy testing on every piece of voting equipment to verify that both the unit and the system as a whole are functioning properly. The equipment is then protected with tamper-evident seals and transported to polling places in secure containers. Similarly, San Francisco’s ballot drop boxes comply with strict state regulations; each of our official ballot drop boxes is made of heavy, high-grade metal, bolted to the ground, and features minimally sized ballot insertion slots and fireproof material. When not in use, all election equipment is stored in secure locations, accessible only to authorized election personnel.

## EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

Our comprehensive poll worker training covers detailed emergency and contingency plans to ensure voting can continue in the event of a staffing, operational, or equipment issue at any voting site. These emergency voting plans, provide, for example, clear, step-by-step instructions about how to guide voters through ballot casting processes when a) the power goes out, b) voting equipment malfunctions, or c) one or more poll workers are late or absent.