

Summer
2020

Poll Worker Post



Thank You!

Greetings from SF Elections!

First and foremost, we hope that you and your loved ones are safe and healthy. All of us in the Department of Elections have already begun preparing for the November 3, 2020, Election -- implementing expanded voting options, adopting current public health and safety guidelines as they relate to voting, and developing new online poll worker training program. Each of these projects is briefly described in this newsletter.

Along with this newsletter, you are receiving the Poll Worker Availability Confirmation Form. Please complete the confirmation form by August 7 to let us know whether or not you are available to be a poll worker in the upcoming election and how you plan to complete your training. We thank you, in advance, for your service as a poll worker and encourage you to invite your friends, family, and neighbors to serve as poll workers as well!

Changes to Voting Procedures

You may have heard that recent changes in state law will require California elections officials, including the San Francisco Department of Elections, to mail vote-by-mail ballots and permit access to accessible vote-by-mail (AVBM) systems to all registered voters for the upcoming election. To serve voters who want to vote in person, the Department will maintain 588 polling places and voting centers. To learn more about voting options this fall, please visit sfelections.org.

Procedures at polling places will also undergo some changes. Whereas in recent elections, the poll worker team at most polling places was made up of a Roster Clerk, Ballot Clerk, Ballot-Scanning Machine Clerk, and Inspector, in the upcoming election, the first two roles will be combined so that only one poll worker is behind the election table. The other poll worker who would normally be serving at the election table will act as a "Greeter" instead, welcoming voters while processing vote-by-mail ballot drop-offs and preventing crowding inside the voting area.

New Health and Safety Protocols

To protect the health of voters and poll workers on Election Day, we have been taking steps to adopt new health and safety protocols at all polling places.

First, all poll workers in the upcoming election will have access to face masks, face shields, hand sanitizer, and gloves. Second, to assist poll workers in setting up safe and accessible polling places, we will supply diagrams showing layout of the voting area specific to the given site. On election morning, poll workers will use such diagrams to set up their polling place so that election table, voting booths, and voting machines are all at least six feet apart. Third, to remind voters and election observers to comply with social distancing rules by staying at least six feet apart from one another, we will provide multilingual signage to be posted both outside and inside each polling place. We will also provide painters' tape that poll workers will use to mark six-foot intervals along pathways, hang signs, and identify suitable standing or sitting areas for election observers.

New Online Poll Worker Training

In recent elections, poll workers have acquired necessary knowledge by attending in-person training classes at City Hall. In light of recent events, the Department is developing an online program, through which poll workers can safely acquire necessary knowledge from home. Those without access to a computer or the internet can schedule to complete an online training session using a computer workstation at the Department's office in City Hall. In addition, those who believe they would benefit from voting equipment practice will have the opportunity to attend small group hands-on training sessions at City Hall in October.

The mandatory online training will cover:

1. the rights of voters and language and accessibility resources,
2. the proper setup and operation of voting equipment,
3. the processing of voters, including standard, vote-by-mail, and provisional voters,
4. custody procedures for voted ballots and other election materials,
5. the new health and safety procedures, and other essential topics.

You will have access to the online training, as well as the optional bilingual online training, beginning October 1, 2020, by logging into your Poll Worker Profile at sfelections.org/pwa/profile.

If you have any questions or want to get in touch, please contact us at (415) 554-4395 or email pollworker.communication@sfgov.org.

Otherwise, please stay safe and healthy throughout the summer, and we hope to have you on our poll worker team this fall.