

City and County of San Francisco

November 8, 2016

Consolidated General Election

Guide to Submitting Ballot Arguments

In favor of or against local ballot measures, for publication in the
San Francisco Voter Information Pamphlet



To access and print Ballot Argument Forms:

- ✓ Go to sfelections.org
- ✓ On the left side of the page, click “Campaign Services”
- ✓ Click “Ballot Argument Forms”
- ✓ Print the forms on legal-size paper (8.5” x 14”)

Ballot arguments must be filed in person at the Department of Elections no later than:

Thursday, August 18 at Noon (12:00PM)

Proponent and Opponent Arguments

Monday, August 22 at Noon (12:00PM)

Rebuttal and Paid Arguments

Department of Elections 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place City Hall, Room 48 San Francisco, CA 94102 415-554-4375;
415-554-7344 (fax) sfelections.org Hours: Monday—Friday, 8 a.m.—5 p.m.

Important Dates and Deadlines Related to Ballot Arguments

For the November 8, 2016, Consolidated General Election

Calendar Date	Time	E-Date	Event	Code Section
Monday, August 15	11 a.m.	E-85	Designation of Letters for Ballot Measures Proponent and Opponent Arguments may be submitted following Letter Designation	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 505

Proponent and Opponent Arguments (300-Word Limit)

Thursday, August 18	12 Noon	E-82	Last day to submit Proponent & Opponent Arguments	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 535(b)(1)
Thursday, August 18	2 p.m.	E-82	Lottery to select Proponent & Opponent Arguments	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 545(a)
Friday, August 19	12 Noon	E-81	Last day to correct grammatical, spelling, or factual errors contained in Proponent & Opponent Arguments	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 535(f)
Friday, August 19 to Monday, August 29	12 Noon	E-81 to E-71	Public inspection period for Proponent & Opponent Arguments*	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 590(b)(4)

Rebuttal Arguments (250-Word Limit)

Monday, August 22	12 Noon	E-78	Last day to submit Rebuttal Arguments	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 535(c)
Tuesday, August 23	12 Noon	E-77	Last day to correct grammatical, spelling or factual errors contained in Rebuttal Arguments	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 535(f)
Tuesday, August 23 to Friday, September 2	12 Noon to 12 Noon	E-77 to E-67	Public inspection period for Rebuttal Arguments*	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 590(b)(5)

Paid Arguments (300-Word Limit)

Monday, August 22	12 Noon	E-78	Last day to submit Paid Ballot Arguments	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 535(d)
Tuesday, August 23	12 Noon	E-77	Last day to correct grammatical, spelling or factual errors contained in Paid Arguments	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 535(f)
Tuesday, August 23 to Friday, September 2	12 Noon To 12 Noon	E-77 to E-67	Public inspection period for Paid Arguments*	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code Section 590(b)(6)

*During the ten-day public inspection periods for the above materials for publication in the Voter Information Pamphlet, any San Francisco voter may seek a court order requiring that the material be amended or deleted. A court may amend or delete the material only if the voter demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that the

material is false, misleading, or inconsistent with state or local election laws, and that the amendment or deletion will not substantially interfere with the printing or distribution of the Voter Information Pamphlet. (CAEC §§ 9295, 13313)

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Frequently Used Acronyms

CAEC	California Elections Code
SF MEC	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code
CGC	California Government Code
BSC	Ballot Simplification Committee
FPPC	Fair Political Practices Commission
VIP	Voter Information Pamphlet

I. Introduction

This guide summarizes the procedures and requirements for submitting ballot arguments in favor of or against a measure for publication in the San Francisco Voter Information Pamphlet. This guide also answers some of the most frequently asked questions about these procedures and requirements. This guide does not have the force and effect of law, regulation, or rule, and if there is a conflict, the law, regulation, or rule will always apply.

The Department of Elections recommends that anyone submitting a ballot argument:

- Carefully proofread the argument and count the words. The Department will make the official determinations on word counts for submitted arguments.
- Submit the argument before the legal deadline. The best practice for the submission of ballot arguments includes not waiting until the final day to submit. All signatures and supporting documents must be submitted on or before the deadline. The Department has no authority to extend the deadline.
- Pay close and particular attention to Sections VII and VIII of this guide, which describe:
 - The procedures and requirements for submitting arguments
 - Provisional acceptance of such arguments by the Department
 - Notification of defective submissions
 - Procedures for correcting submissions

If you have questions, please call the Department of Elections at (415) 554-4375.

Notice: This guide pertains only to local measures for the City and County of San Francisco. State, school and special district measure arguments are subject to separate requirements as outlined in the California Elections Code (CAEC)

II. The San Francisco Voter Information Pamphlet SF MEC Article V

Every election the Department of Elections publishes a Voter Information Pamphlet to provide voters with information about candidates and ballot measures in advance of each election. The Department mails this Voter Information Pamphlet to voters 29 days ahead of the election, unless a voter has opted out of receiving a paper copy and wishes to receive a link to the pamphlet via email. The Voter Information Pamphlet includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- The sample ballot
- The identification of each measure by letter and title
- The digest of each measure prepared by the Ballot Simplification Committee
- The City Attorney's question or statement for each measure
- The Controller's financial analysis of each measure
- An explanation of how each measure qualified for submission to the voters
- The full text of each measure
- Proponent, opponent, rebuttal, and paid arguments, if any are submitted, in favor of and against each measure

Prior to submitting arguments in favor of or against a measure, individuals and organizations have the opportunity to review materials such as the Ballot Simplification Committee digest and the financial analysis of the proposed measure.

The Ballot Simplification Committee Digest

The Ballot Simplification Committee (BSC) reviews and writes a digest for each local measure. The digest includes four subsections:

- The Way It Is Now
- The Proposal
- A “Yes” Vote Means
- A “No” Vote Means

The digest is intended to inform voters of the purpose of the proposed measure in a fair and impartial manner, using language as close as possible to the eighth-grade reading level. Digests are usually limited to 300 words. The BSC conducts its work in public meeting sessions. For more information about the BSC, go to sfelections.org/bsc or call (415) 554-4375.

Ballot Questions, Titles, and Financial Analyses of Ballot Measures

As the BSC completes the digests for proposed ballot measures, the City Attorney prepares the question to be printed on the ballot, the Director of Elections determines the official title, and the Controller prepares a financial analysis of each measure.

III. Who may author ballot arguments? SF MEC §530(b)

Any of the following may author or co-author ballot arguments in favor of or against any local ballot measure:

- The Board of Supervisors, or any member of the Board of Supervisors authorized by that body
- The Mayor
- Any proponent of an initiative measure or a referendum (the person or people who published the notice of intention to circulate the initiative or referendum petition)
- Any voter who is eligible to vote on the measure, group of such voters, association or organization, or any combination thereof

The Department of Elections can accept a ballot argument only if that argument is signed by each author whose name will appear below the text of an argument. See Section VII for more information regarding signature authorizations.

IV. Proponent and Opponent Arguments SF MEC §540

For each local ballot measure, the Department of Elections will print in the Voter Information Pamphlet, free of charge to submitters, one argument in favor of and one argument against the measure. These arguments are called proponent and opponent arguments. The proponent and opponent arguments are printed in the pamphlet immediately following the Ballot Simplification Committee’s digest of the measure, the Controller’s financial analysis of the measure, and the explanation of how the measure qualified for submission to the voters.

Anyone who is eligible to author a ballot argument as defined by SF MEC §530(b) may submit proposed proponent or opponent arguments. The Department of Elections may only accept one argument per a measure per a submitter. No one may submit more than one ballot argument for consideration as an official argument. **SF MEC §545(b)**

There is a **300**-word limit for all Proponent and Opponent Arguments. The last day to submit a Proponent or Opponent Argument is August 18 at noon; however the Department of Elections **strongly** encourages participants in this process to submit **prior** to the deadline to avoid unnecessary complications, allow ample time for corrections and minimize prolonged wait times.

Selection of Proponent and Opponent Arguments

If the Department of Elections receives more than one proposed Proponent or Opponent argument for a measure, the Department will select one proponent and one opponent argument according to the following order of priority:

Selection priority for Proponent Arguments:

1. The proponent of an initiative petition; or the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, or four or more Supervisors if the measure is submitted as such
2. The Board of Supervisors, or any member(s) designated by motion of the Board
3. The Mayor
4. Any registered San Francisco voter, group of registered San Francisco voters, association or organization, or combination thereof

Selection priority for Opponent Arguments:

1. The person who files a referendum petition with the Board of Supervisors
2. The Board of Supervisors, or any member(s) designated by motion of the Board
3. The Mayor
4. Any registered San Francisco voter, group of registered San Francisco voters, association or organization, or combination thereof

If more than one argument in favor of or against a measure is submitted at any given priority level and no argument entitled to higher priority is submitted, the Department of Elections will select the Proponent or Opponent Argument by lottery from among all arguments at the highest level of priority.

Assignment of the right to submit a Proponent or Opponent Argument

SF MEC §550(c)

Any of the following who are entitled to submit a proponent or opponent argument may assign the right to submit the argument to someone else:

- The proponent of an initiative petition
- Four or more members of the Board of Supervisors, if they submitted the measure
- The person who filed a referendum petition with the Board of Supervisors
- The Mayor
- The Board of Supervisors, or any member(s) designated by motion of the Board

Anyone else entitled to submit a proponent or opponent argument may not assign the right to submit the argument to another person or persons

The selection of official arguments will be streamed live online. Visit sfelections.org/live for a link.

V. Rebuttal Arguments

After the Department of Elections selects one proponent argument and one opponent argument for each measure, the Department makes all selected arguments available for examination. The proponent may submit a rebuttal to the opponent argument, and the opponent may submit a rebuttal to the proponent argument. Each rebuttal argument is printed on the same page of the Voter Information Pamphlet as the argument it rebuts. If no proponent or opponent argument is submitted for a measure, the Department will not accept or publish any rebuttal argument.

Assignment of the Right to Submit a Rebuttal Argument

Any author of a proponent or opponent argument may assign the right to submit a rebuttal argument to someone else, provided that the other person or people are eligible to author an argument. The Department of Elections will accept a rebuttal from someone other than the proponent or opponent if the Department receives, with the rebuttal, a signed statement with an original signature from the proponent or opponent that clearly assigns the right to submit the rebuttal.

VI. Paid Arguments

Paid arguments are printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet on the pages immediately following the proponent, opponent, and rebuttal arguments related to the same measure. Paid arguments are printed in the order in which the Department receives them. The Department of Elections **strongly** encourages submitters to turn in arguments prior to the deadline for processing to avoid unnecessary complications and long wait times. Staff may conduct informal word counts prior to submission to assist with fee estimates and cut down wait times as well. You may call (415) 554-4375 to arrange for a word count prior to formal submission.

An argument submitted, but not selected, as an opponent or proponent argument may be subsequently submitted as a paid argument.

The Department's word count determines the cost and payment amount; as such, submitters are encouraged to seek a word count prior to visiting the office to eliminate any discrepancies in the word count or calculation of fees.

Payment of Fee and Disclosure of True Source of Payment

Anyone submitting a paid ballot argument must pay a publication fee of \$200 plus \$2 per word. The fee must be paid at the time the argument is submitted, and may be paid by personal check, credit or debit card, money order, or cash.

Anyone submitting a paid ballot argument must disclose the true source of funds used for payment of the publication fee. This information will be printed below the paid argument, after the names of the authors, as follows:

The true source(s) of funds for the printing fee of this argument: (insert name).

If the source of the funds used for payment of the fee is a "recipient political committee" under the Political Reform Act (California Government Code §82013), the submitter of the ballot argument must disclose the names of the three contributors whose cumulative contributions are the largest contributions received by the committee during the six months immediately preceding submission of the argument.

For information about what qualifies as a "recipient political committee", see below, or contact the San Francisco Ethics Commission at (415) 252-3100.

Definition of a Recipient Committee (CGC §82013)

“Committee” means any person or combination of persons who directly or indirectly does any of the following:

- a) Receives contributions totaling one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or more in a calendar year
- b) Makes independent expenditures totaling one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or more in a calendar year; or
- c) Makes contributions totaling ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more in a calendar year to, or at the behest of, candidates or committees

A person or combination of persons that becomes a committee shall retain its status as a committee until such time as that status is terminated pursuant to Section 84214.

This additional information will appear below the paid argument as follows:

The three largest contributors to the true source recipient committee:

1. (name of contributor), 2. (name of contributor), 3. (name of contributor)

The order of the three largest contributors will be at the discretion of the author.

True source of funds is not included in the word count. All the names provided as the true source of funds are printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

The Department prints the names of the true source of funds and the recipient committee contributors as they are printed on the control sheet. Please ensure that all information is legible and correct. If necessary, The Department of Elections may print shortened names of the organizations due to space constraints.

Submission of Petition Signatures in Lieu of Filing Fee

Anyone submitting a ballot argument may submit a petition with the signatures of San Francisco voters in lieu of the publication fee (“fee petition”). Each signature reduces the publication fee by \$0.50.

Each fee petition must include a copy of the complete text of the proposed argument and must be submitted in the format prescribed by the Department of Elections. Any registered San Francisco voter may circulate or sign a fee petition, and voters may sign fee petitions for more than one argument related to the same measure. All fee petitions must be submitted at the time the argument is filed.

Note: The Department of Elections **strongly** recommends that all ballot arguments be submitted prior to the legal deadlines; this is particularly important for paid arguments. Early submission makes it more likely that an underpayment or shortfall in the number of fee petition signatures can be identified and corrected before the legal submission deadline.

Omitting the true source of funds or details regarding the recipient committee funding will result in prolonged wait times and may create potential complications in processing your argument. Take care to ensure that this element of the control sheet is filled out accurately and completely.

VII. How to Submit a Ballot Argument

1. Forms

Submitters of ballot arguments must complete and submit a Ballot Argument Control Sheet A to the Department of Elections with the author's signature. If there are additional authors, collect their signatures on Control Sheet B, and submit Control Sheets A and B together.

If a ballot argument states that someone other than an author supports or opposes the ballot measure, or agrees with the ballot argument, submit a signed Consent Form with the Control Sheets.

To access and print Ballot Argument Control Sheets:

- Go to sselections.org
- Look for the header entitled "Campaign Services" on the upper left side of the home page
- Click "Ballot Argument Forms"
- Print the forms on **double sided, legal-size (8.5" x 14")**

To submit multiple arguments, you may ensure consistency and save time by following these steps:

- Fill out one Control Sheet A with all unchanging information (usually Sections 1, 3, and 4)
- Save the partially completed Control Sheet A. Use this file as a template for all of the arguments.
- Add the unique information for each argument (generally Section 2 and the text of the arguments), save each argument as a separate file, and print Control Sheet A for each Argument.
- Collect all required signatures on Control Sheet A or b as well as on the Consent Form.
- Submit completed Control Sheets and Consent Forms to the Department of Elections, and send electronic copies of the argument text to publications@sfgov.org within 24 hours.

There are three main steps to submitting ballot arguments:

Authors of Official Proponent or Opponent Arguments must complete a Declaration Related to Proponent and Opponent Arguments located on the Control Sheet

Print your arguments on double sided, legal-size paper (8.5" x 14") with original signatures present.

2. Draft the Arguments

Ensure the argument meets the word limit.

Proponent, opponent, and paid arguments may not exceed 300 words. Rebuttal arguments may not exceed 250 words. Per **CAEC §9(a)** the following rules govern the word count:

- **Authors:** The names of the authors and any titles or identifying information are counted toward the word limit: “Joe Smith” counts as one word; “Joe Williams-Smith” also counts as one word.
- **Proper Nouns:** Proper nouns count as one word.
- **Geographic Names:** “San Francisco” counts as one word.
- **Numbers:** Numbers written as numerals are counted as one word: 100. Numbers written as words are counted by the number of words: “one hundred” counts as two words.
- **Dates:** Dates are counted as one word: “November 8, 2016; 11/8/16
- **Hyphenated Words:** Word combinations that are hyphenated (and which appear hyphenated in any generally available standard reference dictionary published in the United States in the last ten calendar years) are counted as one word. For example:

Counted as one word: One-sided, long-standing, high-speed, low-key

Counted as two words: High profile, low frequency

- **Punctuation:** Punctuation is not counted.
- **True Source of Funds:** Disclosure of the true source of funds for paid ballot arguments does not count towards the word limit (or for calculation of the publishing fee).
- **Initials:** Initials count as one word.
- **Abbreviations and contractions:** Abbreviations and contractions count as one word.

Obtain a Consent Form from Each Person Mentioned in the Text of the Argument Who is not an Author

If a ballot argument states that an individual or organization (entity) other than an author supports or opposes the ballot measure, or agrees with or endorses the argument, a completed Consent Form is required. The Consent Form must be signed by the referenced individual or an authorized representative of the referenced organization.

Note: If a newspaper of general circulation reports that an individual or organization supports or opposes the ballot measure, or a ballot argument merely restates what has been reported in the newspaper, the Department of Elections may allow the submitter to provide a copy of the newspaper article in lieu of a Consent Form.

3. Complete the Ballot Argument Control Sheets.

Fill Out the Required Information on Ballot Argument Control Sheet A

Ballot Argument Control Sheet A must include:

- The name, contact information, and original signature of the submitter
- The complete text of the argument, formatted exactly as it should appear in the Voter Information Pamphlet
- The names, original signatures, and any identifying information about the authors exactly as this information should appear in the Voter Information Pamphlet

Argument text will be printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet exactly as submitted. Please ensure that all information is legible and correct. Arguments should be neatly typed. Handwritten submissions or corrections are more difficult to read, interpret, and typeset than those that are typed. If a handwritten argument, supporting document, or revision is unclear, the Department of Elections staff will interpret the submission to the best of their abilities. Although there is a possibility that the ballot argument may not be printed as the author or submitter intended, the Department's interpretation of that submission is final. **Handwritten submissions must be accompanied by an Acknowledgement of Submitting Handwritten Documentation form.** This form is available on our website or office.

Specify Formatting (how the argument should appear in print)

Submitters may designate portions of the argument text to be printed in **bold**, *italic* or **bold italic** type. Any such formatting requests must be made clear.

Format the typed text as desired on Ballot Argument Control Sheet A, or

To designate text formatting by hand on Ballot Control Sheet A:

- Underline the text to be formatted
- In the left margin, indicate "B" for **bold**, "I" for *italics*, or "BI" for **bold italics**.
- To indicate more than one format within a line of text, write the format codes in order in the left margin, separated by commas.

The Department of Elections will not underline argument text, print argument text in columns or with other unusual spacing, or print graphics.

Author signature information is printed in italics.

Obtain Signature Authorization from Each Author, and Specify How the Author Should Be Identified

Each author must complete the Author Information portion of Ballot Argument Control Sheet A or B. Author names and any other signature information will be printed under the argument in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

Author Names, Title, and Other Identifying Information:

- Authors may include identifying information to be printed along with their names under the ballot argument. For example, an author may list his or her title, occupation, or affiliation with an organization. The Author Information portion of the Ballot Argument Control Sheet must clearly and legibly indicate the author's name and any title or other identifying information.
- If an author's title or other identifying information is used only for identification, and not to indicate the support of his or her organization, indicate this by checking this box in section 2 of Ballot Argument Control Sheet A or B:
 - Check if the title or identifying is for identification purposes only, if you are signing as an individual and not on behalf of an organization.
- The names, titles, and other identifying information about authors are counted toward the word limit. The following does not count against the word limit:
*For identification purposes only; author is signing as an individual and not on behalf of an organization.

Author Organizations:

- The argument should be signed by at least one of the organization's principal officers who is a registered San Francisco voter.
- If none of the principal officers is a registered San Francisco voter, a principal author must submit a separate written authorization for an individual who is both a member and a registered San Francisco voter to sign on behalf of the organization. The officer must complete the Author Information portion of the Ballot Argument Control Sheet, and clearly indicate whether the officer's name should be printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet as an author along with the name of the organization.

Multiple authors: If there is more than one author, the original signature (preferably in bold, blue ink) of any additional authors must be collected on Ballot Argument Control Sheet B and submitted with Ballot Argument Control Sheet A.

4. Submit the Completed Forms to the Department of Elections

Submit the Ballot Argument Control Sheet(s), with the Original Signature(s) of the Author(s), along with any Consent Forms

- Authors are not required to personally submit their arguments to the Department of Elections. Because the author may differ from the person submitting the argument, this guide generally refers to the "submitter" as the person who delivers the argument and supporting material to the Department.
- Submitters of ballot arguments must deliver to the Department of Elections the completed Ballot Argument Control Sheet(s), any Consent Forms, and, in the case of paid arguments, the publication fee or a fee petition, no later than the legal deadline.
- All signatures and other supporting documents, as well as the text of the argument, are due no later than the deadline. The Department has no authority to extend the deadline.
- The Department of Elections does not permit filing by email or by fax.

Submit an Electronic Copy of Each Argument

To reduce the possibility of a transcription error and to facilitate typesetting, the Department of Elections requests that submitters send an electronic copy of each ballot argument to our Publications division.

- Email argument text to publications@sfgov.org within 24 hours after submitting the hard copy.
- Please submit electronic copies via email as a fillable PDF, as a Microsoft Word attachment to an email, or, if necessary, in the body of an email.
- Please use descriptive subject lines and file names, such as “A-Rebuttal to Opponent” or “No on B – 15”.
- If there is any discrepancy in content or format between an electronic copy of an argument and the Ballot Argument Control Sheet A that was submitted in person, the Department of Elections will print the version submitted on Control Sheet A.

Notice of Defective Submission

In the event that there are any issues with an argument submission (including, but not limited to: missing information, fee underpayment, missing consent forms) the Department of Elections will notify the submitter. The Department will allow submitters 24 hours from notification to rectify any outstanding post submission issues. Depending on the issue, the Department of Elections may strike names from arguments if consent forms are missing or not print an argument in the event that there are missing fees or the submitter fails to reduce a word count.

Please send an electronic copy of the submitted argument to assist our Publications team in production of the Voter Information Pamphlet. The emailed copy should match the hard one submitted at the counter, it is not an opportunity to make changes but rather a means to expedite our typeset process.

VIII. Correction of Grammatical, Spelling or Factual Errors; Modification or Withdrawal of Ballot Arguments

The author of a ballot argument may change or withdraw the argument at any time up until the submission deadline for that argument.

After the submission deadline, authors may correct only grammatical, spelling, or factual errors in an argument, up until the correction deadline for that argument. An author may not withdraw his or her name or signature authorization after the submission deadline. The Director of Elections determines what constitutes a grammatical, spelling, or factual error, and this determination is final.

To change, withdraw, or correct an argument, the author must submit to the Department of Elections a written and signed statement clearly indicating the change, withdrawal, or correction. For some changes or corrections, the Department may require the submitter to complete a new Ballot Argument Control Sheet.

IX. Public Review and Challenges to Ballot Arguments

The ten day public examination period for ballot arguments begins on the day following submission deadlines at noon.

Copies of all ballot argument material to be printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet will be available for public inspection at the Department of Elections during regular business hours Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Any challenge to a ballot argument must be submitted to the Department of Elections in writing prior to the close of a public examination period.

X. Frequently Asked Questions

Why does it matter what size paper I use or if I print double-sided?

Section 530(c) of the San Francisco Municipal Elections Code states “To ensure that all ballot arguments are filed in a uniform format, the arguments shall be submitted in a manner specified by the Department of Elections”. **The best practice for submitting arguments is printing them on double sided 8.5” x 14” legal sized paper.**

Who verifies the accuracy of statements made in ballot arguments?

The person submitting a ballot argument is responsible for the accuracy of the argument. The Department of Elections does not verify the accuracy of arguments or edit arguments for correct spelling or grammar. The Department of Elections prints arguments exactly as submitted.

How can I ensure that my paid argument will appear as the first paid argument in the Voter Information Pamphlet?

To the extent possible, the Department of Elections prints paid ballot arguments in the Voter Information Pamphlet in the order in which the arguments are received and time stamped. Submitting paid ballot arguments before the legal deadline is recommended for several reasons. In addition to giving the submitter the best opportunity to correct any underpayment or any errors in the argument, early submission also makes it more likely that the argument will be printed amongst the first paid arguments in favor of or against the measure.

If the true source of funds for a paid ballot argument is a recipient political committee, and there were fewer than three contributors to the committee during the six-month period immediately preceding submission of the argument, what information must be provided concerning the true source of funds?

If there were only two contributors to the committee during the six-month period, the submitter of the ballot argument must disclose both contributors. If there was only one contributor to the committee during the six-month period, the sequence of contributors should start with the largest contribution amount.

Can I fax or email ballot argument forms to the Department of Elections?

No. Anyone submitting a ballot argument must deliver a signed original copy of the Ballot Argument Control Sheet and any Consent Forms before the legal deadline. The Department of Elections will not print arguments that are faxed or emailed only. Submitters are urged to also send an electronic copy of their arguments to facilitate typesetting to publications@sfgov.org.

If I submit an argument that is not chosen as a proponent or opponent argument, can I use it as a paid argument?

Yes. You can refile the same argument as a paid argument.

What if a typesetting error in the Voter Information Pamphlet is discovered after the Pamphlet has been printed?

The Department of Elections makes every effort to ensure that arguments appearing in the Voter Information Pamphlet are typeset correctly. If the Department discovers a substantive error after the Pamphlet has been printed, the Department will publish a notice of the correction in local newspapers. Publication details are noted on the index page of the Voter Information Pamphlet.

Where can I find the laws that dictate this process?

The bulk of regulations pertaining to ballot arguments may be found in Article V of the San Francisco Municipal Elections Code. This is available free online, the Department encourages submitters and interested parties to review it.

Adhering to the best practices outlined in this guide when printing and formatting your arguments will minimize processing time and complications.