

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Q — *Who can vote?*

A — U.S. citizens, 18 years or older, who are registered to vote in San Francisco on or before October 20, 2008.

Q — *When do I vote?*

A — Election Day is Tuesday, November 4, 2008. Your polling place will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Q — *Where do I go to vote?*

A — Go to your polling place. The address is on the back cover of this book.

Q — *My 18th birthday is after October 20, 2008 but on or before November 4. May I vote in the November 4 election?*

A — Yes, if your 18th birthday is on or before November 4, but after October 20, you can register to vote on or before October 20 and vote November 4 — even though you were not 18 at the time you registered to vote.

Q — *If I was arrested or convicted of a crime, can I still vote?*

A — You can register and vote as long as you are not in prison or on parole for a felony conviction. You must complete a new registration form on or before October 20 to vote.

Q — *I have just become a U.S. citizen. Can I vote in the November 4 election?*

A — If you became a U.S. citizen on or before October 20, you may vote in the election, but you must register to vote by October 20;

OR

If you became a U.S. citizen after October 20, but on or before October 28, you may register and vote at the Department of Elections office by October 28 with proof of citizenship.

Q — *I have moved within San Francisco but have not re-registered. Can I vote in this election?*

A — Yes, but you must go to your new polling place or City Hall, Room 48, and complete a voter registration form to update your registration information. You can look up the address of your new polling place by entering your new home address on the Department of Elections website (www.sfgov.org/elections). You may be asked to vote a provisional ballot at your new polling place.

Q — *What do I do if my polling place is not open?*

A — Check the back cover of this book to make sure you have gone to the right place. Polling places often change. If

you **are** at the right place, call the Department of Elections immediately at 415-554-4375.

Q — *If I don't know what to do when I get to my polling place, is there someone there to help me?*

A — Yes, the pollworkers at the polling place will help you.

Q — *Can I take my sample ballot or my own written list into the voting booth?*

A — Yes. Deciding your votes before you get to the polls is helpful. Your sample ballot is located inside this voter pamphlet, or you may use the Ballot Worksheet included in this pamphlet for this purpose.

Q — *Do I have to vote on every item on the ballot?*

A — No, you do not. The votes you cast will be counted whether you have voted on every item or not.

Q — *Is there any way to vote instead of going to the polling place on Election Day?*

A — Yes, you can vote before November 4 if you:

Fill out and mail the Vote-by-Mail Application printed on the back cover of this book. Once we process your request, a vote-by-mail ballot will be sent to you. Your request must be **received** by the Department of Elections no later than 5 p.m. on October 28, 2008;

OR

Go to the Department of Elections at City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 48, from October 6 to November 4. The office hours are: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays), 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday on October 18-19, October 25-26 and November 1-2 (weekend entrance on Grove Street); and 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day, November 4.

Q — *If I don't use an application, can I get a vote-by-mail ballot some other way?*

A — You can send a note, preferably on a postcard, to the Department of Elections asking for a ballot. This note must include: your printed home address, the address where you want the ballot mailed, your birthdate, your printed name and your **signature**. Mail your request to the address on the front cover of this pamphlet, or fax it to 415-554-4372. Your request must be received by the Department of Elections no later than 5 p.m. on October 28, 2008.

