



★ THANK YOU! ★

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for contributing your time and your skills toward making the past election a great success. You are a valued asset to the San Francisco Department of Elections and your hard work remains a source of pride.

February 5, 2008 Presidential Primary Election Statistics

With 269,212 voters participating, San Francisco County had the highest turnout for a Presidential Primary in years. Some facts for you to know:

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|---|--------|---|---------|
| • Turnout | 64.75% | • Registered voters | 415,761 |
| • Neighborhoods with highest voter turnout: | | • Number of polling places | 561 |
| Upper Market/Eureka Valley | 76.87% | • Number of pollworkers who worked | 2,827 |
| Noe Valley | 76.25% | • Number of pollworker phone calls received & answered on E-Day | 1,017 |
| Diamond Heights | 75.64% | | |

Participate in the Upcoming June Election!

If you are interested in working as pollworker in the upcoming June Election, complete the enclosed Official Pollworker Agreement and return it in the enclosed (postage-paid) envelope as soon as possible, but no later than Wednesday, March 19, 2008.

Did You Know?

The History of California's Primary Election System

Closed Primary System

Until 1996, California had a "closed" primary. In a closed primary, only voters who are registered members of a political party may vote the ballot of that political party.

Open Primary System

In the March 1996 primary, voters approved Proposition 198, which changed the "closed" primary system to an "open" primary, in which all registered voters may vote for any candidate, regardless of political party.

However, in June 2000, the United States Supreme Court overturned Proposition 198. The Supreme Court ruled that California's "open" primary system was unconstitutional because it violated a political party's First Amendment right of association.

Modified Closed Primary System

In September 2000, the California State Senate passed a bill to create current "modified closed" primary. This law took effect January 1, 2001. The "Modified closed" primary system permits unaffiliated ("decline to state") voters to participate in a primary election if authorized by an individual party's rules and duly noticed by the Secretary of State.

Why do Americans vote on the first Tuesday (after the first Monday) of the month?

For much of its history, America was predominantly an agrarian society, so November was the most convenient month for farmers and rural workers to travel to the polls. The first Tuesday after the first Monday was chosen for three reasons: (1) Most rural residents had to travel significant distances and would begin their travel on Sunday, so Monday was seen as unreasonable; (2) The first of November is All Saints Day, a Holy Day of Obligation for Roman Catholics, and lawmakers wanted to prevent an election from falling on that day; (3) Most merchants did their books from the preceding month on the 1st of the month and Congress didn't want the economic success or failure of the previous month to influence merchants' votes!

An Interview with the Department of Elections. Answers to FOUR of Your Most Burning Questions.

How do the pollworkers get assigned to precincts?

Prior to each election, we mail out the Official Pollworker Agreement (one is enclosed with this newsletter). We ask you to complete this agreement if you are willing to participate in the upcoming election and return it to us within stated deadline.

Once we receive the agreement, we assign you according to the criteria in the order listed below:

- (1) We assign you according to your special requests or requirements, or, if not possible;
- (2) We assign you to the polling place where you worked last election, or, if not possible;
- (3) We assign you to your home precinct polling place, or, if not possible;
- (4) We assign you to a polling place within reasonable commute distance (3 miles), or, if not possible;
- (5) We assign you to a polling place in need of workers (including language assistance requirements)

To meet Federal and State language assistance requirements, bilingual pollworkers are assigned to precincts in which voters may need language assistance as determined by different sources of information and data.

How are polling places selected?

The Department of Elections does not own any of the 561 sites that are used as polling places and relies heavily on community involvement in providing locations. In a single election year an average of 13% of polling places change locations because the poll owners are no longer willing or are unable to provide their facilities.

When locating a voting site, we make every attempt to comply with the "Americans with Disabilities Act" (ADA) and other laws pertaining to accessibility.

We first determine if any suitable public buildings are available within the precinct. If none exist, we then look for other suitable facilities that typically serve the community such as senior centers or churches. Garages are mostly used in those precincts that are exclusively residential. Often space is sacrificed in order to provide accessibility.

Natural barriers such as steep hills make it difficult to find accessible facilities. When an accessible location cannot be found by the deadline set for an election, we will accept the most usable site available for that precinct.

Precinct boundaries are determined by the amount of registered voters, "... the precinct boundary shall be fixed in a manner so that the number of voters in the precinct does not exceed 1000 on the 88th day prior to the day of election, unless otherwise provided by law. (CA Elections Code 12223)"

Do the pollworkers get evaluated based on their Election Day performance?

Yes. Performance evaluation is conducted after every election. It is a tool to improve accountability and the conduct of elections. It helps us to place pollworkers in positions appropriate to their skills. Occasionally, we use this information to decide not to hire a pollworker. Many different sources are used to evaluate a pollworker performance – Field Election Deputy & Precinct Team Review Forms, showing up on time on Election morning, opening and closing of polls on time, completion of required paperwork, following job cards & procedures outlined in the Pollworker Manual, etc.

Why can't pollworkers receive their checks the day after the election?

Processing the pollworker payroll is a very detailed process involving approximately 2,900 records. There are several steps we must complete to ensure the accuracy of data. To name a few: the payroll sheets must be organized in precinct order; the data entry staff must input the original data from the Payroll sheets into a system we use for record keeping. After the data entry is complete, four separate data verifications must occur. After the data is 100% verified, payments are generated and mailed out to the addresses the pollworkers noted on the Payroll sheets. We do not print the checks; nor do we have them in our possession. Therefore, the distribution of the checks is conducted via mail only.