



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: June 11, 2021
RE: Director's Report: June 16, 2021, Elections Commission Meeting

Following is a brief listing of the work and related information in which the Department of Elections (Department) has been engaged since the previous report issued in relation to the Elections Commission meeting on May 19, 2021.

I. The Department continues to carry out various administrative activities and processes.

- A. With reopening of City Hall to the public on June 7, 2021, the Department no longer requires those seeking elections services to schedule an appointment. The Department's public counter is now open to assist members of the public, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- B. The Department has launched a *Training and Professional Development Program* for its staff to facilitate opportunities for professional development and skill building. Through a partnership with Learn IT, a San Francisco based company that has served the training needs of businesses, government agencies, and individuals since 1995, the Department has offered its employees access to a wide variety of self-paced training courses, covering topics such as communication and productivity skills, leadership and decision making, and technical training on software applications.
- C. The Department has undertaken a redesign of its Employee Resource Portal with the goal of easing staff access to essential employment resources and expanding information about programs and benefits offered to City employees. The Employee Resource Portal will feature over 100 links and descriptions of various City and Department documents and materials, all organized under five main sections: 1) Orientation and Essential Resources; 2) Official Policies and Information; 3) Career Planning and Professional Development; 4) Payroll, Benefits, and Support Programs; and 5) Safety and Emergency Planning.
- D. The Department's website working group continues to consider any changes that would make it easier for users to find the information they are seeking; streamline website text so it is up to date, informative, and concise; and enhance graphics and photos used on website pages to reflect the communities served by the Department.
 - i. In alignment with goals established in the Department's Racial Equity Action Plan, the website working group has launched a new *Poll Worker and Field Support Career Resources* page, available at <https://sfelections.sfgov.org/poll-worker-and-field-support-careers-resources>. This page is intended to assist poll workers and Field Election Deputies leverage their Election Day experience into future careers by featuring links to various free local, state, and federal employment resources as well as information on how to request a poll worker service verification letter and how to add a description of Election Day service to a resume or cover letter.
 - ii. To provide a convenient and centralized location for the public to access elections forms and tools, the website working group has launched a new *Forms and Tools* page, available at <https://sfelections.sfgov.org/forms-and-tools>. This page contains links and descriptions of the

Departments' digital and PDF forms and self-help tools, and denotes which forms require a pen-to-paper signature and which can be submitted digitally. The Department is currently updating many of its forms to reflect upcoming recall election and will soon upload the revised forms both to this page as well across other relevant pages of *sfelections.org*; voters may also request to receive any of the forms by mail, fax, or email, or by visiting the Department's office.

- E. Following the City's budget process and timelines, the Department has been collaborating with and providing information on the Department's FY2021-22 and FY2022-23 budget proposals to the Board's Budget and Legislative Analyst.
 - i. The Department will present its proposed budgets at the first Budget and Finance Committee Hearing on June 14, 2021 and will attend the second Budget and Finance Committee Hearing on June 21, 2021.

II. The Department has been considering the impacts of potential statewide recall election on its operational schedules.

- A. On May 25, 2021, the California Department of Finance contacted California counties, requesting to provide estimated costs that each county would incur to conduct a recall election if (1) it is held as a special election or (2) it is consolidated with the next regularly scheduled election. The Department compiled and submitted information in response to this request, estimating that conducting a recall election as a special election would cost approximately \$8 million.
- B. The period in which voters may request county elections officials to remove their names from recall petitions closed on June 8, 2021. County elections officials must report any withdrawn signatures to the Secretary of State (SOS) by June 22, 2021. The Department received four signature withdrawal requests, which have been submitted to SOS.
- C. The Department has begun staffing preparations for the recall election, including drafting hiring plans for approximately 250 seasonal employees, coordinating hiring timelines with the Department of Human Resources, contacting former employees who assisted in recent elections, and reviewing onboarding process and associated materials.
- D. In collaboration with its printing vendor, the Department has established an earlier production schedule and secured the printing of nearly 1.2 million vote-by-mail ballot envelopes (outgoing and return envelopes) to be distributed to voters this fall. The Department is working with the Mailpiece Design unit of the United States Postal Service (USPS) to conduct test runs of processing the envelopes through USPS equipment and to ensure ballot envelopes meet current USPS guidelines for official election mail.
- E. The Department is preparing a mailer to be sent out at the end of this month to poll workers and polling place hosts who participated in the November 2020 election with the goal of gathering their availability and interest to provide services for the recall election.

III. The Department continues to provide information to the general public and to undertake the many routine activities.

- A. The Department hosted a meeting with the members of its Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) to review the status of recommendations VAAC has previously provided to Dominion Voting Systems. In this meeting, Dominion representatives provided an overview of improvements to accessible equipment that have already been implemented and highlighted improvements to occur in the next versions of the voting equipment.

- A. The Department contacted approximately 350 community partners sharing with them a new video presentation developed in consideration of recent legislative changes affecting voting procedures for California residents and in anticipation of the potential recall election. This correspondence also included an invitation to discuss collaborative opportunities for in-person voter outreach and education as the City re-opens.
 - i. This 20-minute presentation provides information about registering to vote, including registration rules for people in certain special circumstances such as non-citizen residents eligible to vote in local school board elections, unhoused voters, voters involved in the justice system, voters in college, and voters who need to remain confidential for their personal security. The presentation also features information about vote by mail voting in 2021, in-person voting, language and accessibility resources, as well as potential recall election and upcoming redistricting.
- B. The Department's Outreach team continued participating in community events to provide voter registration and election information, recently attending the Carnival Resource Fair and Celebration, the Revive SF Chinatown AAPI Heritage Month Celebration, the Gold and Black Unite Rally, and Latino Task Force meetings. Concurrent with the resumption of in-person festivals, resource fairs, and other community events, the Department will continue to identify opportunities to provide educational materials and election information at events across the City.
- C. In anticipation of expansion of in-person outreach activities, the Department is finalizing several pieces of revised collateral to be distributed at upcoming outreach events as well as directly to community partners. These include an Accessible Voting Flyer that explains the many different types of accessible voting materials and services available to San Francisco voters, including accessible equipment, tools, and personal assistance; a Justice-Involved Voter Card that explains ways to register to vote and voter registration qualifications and is designed for distribution to voters involved with criminal justice; a No Fixed Address Voter Card that explains ways to register to vote and which types of addresses can be used for voter registration purposes and is designed for distribution to unhoused or housing insecure voters; and a Career Card that provides information about employment and volunteer opportunities with the Department and features a QR code leading to the Department's Employment Opportunities page on [sfelections.org](https://www.sfelections.org).
- D. The Department continues to conduct in-person transactions in its office and respond to public inquiries received through email and its main phone line on a daily basis.
- E. The Department continues the many activities associated with the maintenance of the voter roll. These include the processing of registration affidavits received by mail, dropped off in person, or submitted online; updating voter records based on notification received through official sources, such as the USPS, Department of Motor Vehicles, and the state Department of Public Health; and other ongoing activities that ensure the continual accuracy of the voter roll in accordance with relevant laws. The Department continues to provide outreach, including mailing of voter notification cards and address confirmation postcards, to voters who register or update their information on file.