



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: October 14, 2022
RE: Director's Report: October 19, 2022, 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 September 21, 2022.

I. The Department continues to execute various administrative, human resources, and procurement tasks.

- A. This month, in preparation for the upcoming election, the Department finished 1) procuring all necessary supplies and vendor services and 2) hiring and onboarding all temporary employees.
- B. The Department revised its homepage and election results summary page (sfelections.sfgov.org/november-8-2022-election-results-summary), implementing changes described in detail in Appendix A. Some highlights of the changes to these pages, that will be explained in an upcoming press release, include the following:
 - i. A new countdown clock on the homepage banner showing the time remaining until the close of the polls on Election Day. On Election Night, this clock will be replaced by an invitation to view preliminary election results, along with key, dynamic turnout and ballot processing statistics. The preliminary election results page, in turn, will show these statistics alongside highlighted text designed to emphasize the non-final nature of preliminary results and voter turnout.
 - ii. A new contest dropdown menu at the start of the preliminary election results page, allowing any visitor to that page to quickly jump to the details for a contest of particular interest. For each contest, except any ranked-choice voting (RCV) contests, the currently leading candidate or measure outcome will be bolded in green for easy reference. Each RCV contest will show only first-choice vote data, but will include a link to the complete RCV report that will display the currently leading candidate's name in green. This page will also display a new "Compare turnout to previous elections" link to past election results since 1899.
 - iii. A new tab, "What's left to count?" on the preliminary election results page, with a breakdown of ballots left to count by category that will be updated daily.
- C. In alignment with the [Digital Accessibility and Inclusion Standard](#) (DAIS) which now applies to all of the City's official websites, online applications, and digital content, the Department will begin transitioning its website to the "SF.gov" design following certification of the November 8 election. Because this transition will result in significant changes to the Department's current website (to view an example of this design in use, please see <https://sf.gov/departments/adult-probation-department>) the Department will administer an online survey to gather public feedback. Feedback collected on this topic will be considered during the transition in the context of DAIS rules.

- D. On October 14, the Secretary of State's office held its conference call with the vendor VotingWorks, Board President Walton's office, Commission President Chris Jerdonek and the Department associated with the conduct of a pilot program using the vendor's system. The SOS is still reviewing the comments from the hearing on the proposed regulations on "[Experimental Use of a Voting System in a Pilot Program](#)" that occurred September 20, 2022. The SOS emphasized these monthly calls are to discuss the vendor's development of its system in relation to conducting a pilot program rather than to discuss the drafting or implementing certain regulations. The vendor indicated it continues to develop its system and has not yet developed a ranked-choice voting component, which would be necessary to conduct a pilot program in a general election in San Francisco.

II. The Department has been providing a full array of voting services for the November 8 election.

- A. Last month, the Department transmitted ballots to the approximately 10,000 San Francisco voters serving in the military or residing overseas via each voter's selected method of delivery (mail, email, or fax).
- B. Last week, the Department delivered nearly 500,000 vote-by-mail (VBM) ballots to the United States Postal Service for distribution to locally residing voters, including non-citizens registered to vote in the Board of Education contest.
- C. On October 10, at the start of the voting period, the Department opened its online accessible vote-by-mail system (AVBM) through which any registered local voter can download and mark their VBM ballot.
- D. The Department also opened its Voting Center in City Hall on October 11. The Voting Center will be open between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays up through Monday, November 7, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. the last two weekends of the voting period, October 29-30 and November 5-6, and between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Election Day. The City Hall Voting Center serves all City residents—including eligible non-citizens—who wish to obtain personal assistance, use accessible voting equipment, pick up or drop off ballots, obtain replacement ballots, cast their ballots in person, or, after the registration deadline, register conditionally and vote provisionally.
- E. Up through October 24, the Department will mail a VBM ballot to any local voter who registers to vote online or by mail and up through November 3, will mail a VBM ballot to any voter who submits a request for a replacement VBM ballot. After November 3, when it is too late to mail a ballot, the Department will issue a ballot to any eligible voter at the City Hall Voting Center, through the online accessible vote-by-mail system, or at a neighborhood polling place.
- F. On October 11, the Department delivered nearly 500 VBM ballot packets and Voter Information Pamphlets to Prisoner Legal Services for distribution to registered voters incarcerated in San Francisco county jails. During the voting period, all ballots cast by voters in local jails will be picked up and securely transported to the Department for processing on a regular basis.
- G. To date, the Department has received and begun processing nearly 12,000 returned VBM ballot packets. VBM ballot processing includes scanning ballot envelopes, comparing signatures on ballot envelopes to those on file, opening accepted ballot envelopes, removing ballots, and scanning ballot cards in preparation for tabulation on Election Night.
- H. Earlier this month, the Department performed the necessary maintenance on the 34 official ballot drop boxes located across the City. All of the ballot drop boxes were unlocked as of October 8 and will remain available for use through 8 p.m. on Election Day. Ballots from ballot boxes will be collected regularly by Deputy Sheriffs and

authorized Department staff, and transported directly to the Department to maintain a continuous chain of custody until ballots are counted.

- I. The Department expanded its public phone bank to a 15-member team tasked specifically with answering telephone inquiries and managing email correspondence up through Election Day. The Department's phone bank lines will be open during regular business hours as well as the last two weekends before Election Day.
- J. To date, the Department has recruited over 3,000 poll workers for the upcoming election. Although the Department met its poll worker recruitment goal to staff each polling place with three poll workers, the Department will continue to accept new applicants to counteract expected poll worker cancellations and to increase its bilingual services.
- K. Last week, the Department launched its online training program to prepare poll workers for their service on Election Day and will commence in-person training classes on October 15 and voting equipment practice labs on October 29. For this election, in addition to in-person training classes at City Hall, the Department will offer off-site training classes to serve poll workers residing in Bayview, Hunters Point, Excelsior, Portola, Visitacion Valley, and Sunset.
- L. On Election Day, the Department will operate 501 polling places. Having secured all 501 facilities to host polling places, the poll locating team has been focusing on identifying substitute sites to serve in the event of cancellation.
- M. The Department has prepared 501 sets of supplies, signage, and voting equipment for delivery to each polling place and is now arranging delivery days/times with polling place hosts.

III. The Department continues to deliver multilingual, barrier-free voter outreach for the November 8 election.

- A. To maintain operational transparency and keep all interested members of the public informed about the November 8 election activities, the Department has been regularly issuing press releases, all of which have also been posted on [sfelections.org](https://www.sfelections.org).
- B. Last week, the Department delivered Voter Information Pamphlets (VIPs) to all locally registered voters via the voters' selected method of delivery (email or postal mail.) All voters receive the pamphlet in English, and those who request election materials in Chinese, Filipino, or Spanish also receive a copy in their preferred language. Voters may also access the VIP in PDF, HTML, XML, and audio MP3 formats on [sfelections.org/vip](https://www.sfelections.org/vip) or request the VIP in large print, audio on USB flash drive, National Library Service cartridge, or compact disc.
- C. The Department also mailed a Voter Information Booklet to every locally registered non-citizen voter. (The Voter Information Booklet includes information and a sample ballot in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Filipino.)
- D. This month, official November 8 election advertisements will appear in local print and digital media as well as on Muni buses; official public service announcements will also be broadcast via television and radio.
- E. The Department's outreach staff continue organizing registration and resource tables and conducting multilingual presentations at numerous events throughout the city, prioritizing events for the following communities:
 - i. Outreach to residents experiencing homelessness

For this election, the Department has formed new partnerships with the UCSF Emergency Department and the Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center, both of whom regularly serve San Franciscans experiencing homelessness. As part of these collaborations, the Department developed a flyer for staff at these hospitals to distribute to patients experiencing homelessness. The flyer, *Voting Information for San Francisco*

Residents Experiencing Homelessness, will be distributed in hospital discharge packets, along with other documents particularly relevant to members of this population, such as guides to shelters, meal services, healthcare, etc.

This flyer draws attention to the fact that any eligible San Francisco resident who lacks a fixed home address but who is otherwise eligible to vote may 1) register by providing a description of where they stay, such as cross-streets, a public park or a shelter, 2) provide a registered mailing address at which they can receive their vote-by-mail ballot packet and other official election materials, 3) vote in person at the City Hall Voting Center beginning October 11 or at any of the City's 501 polling places on Election Day, and/or 4) request ballot delivery/pickup service.

The Department has been distributing multilingual election outreach materials to residents experiencing homelessness for the upcoming election -- both directly and indirectly through local organizations well-positioned to reach members of this population. Earlier this month, Department staff hand-delivered voter outreach packets to over 250 of the City's shelters, permanent supportive housing units, transitional housing units, care and treatment facilities, social service agencies, and single room occupancy (SRO) hotels. Each packet was accompanied by a letter urging the recipient to consider partnering with the Department of Elections to increase awareness of registration and voting options for those experiencing homelessness and inviting them to contact Department staff to schedule a tabling event or presentation for their clients.

ii. Outreach to justice-involved residents

To reach all voters and potential voters in jail, the Department produced a short video with essential information on how incarcerated people can exercise their right to vote. This video explains voter eligibility rules, how to register to vote and get a ballot and voting materials in custody, how to return a ballot to a designated ballot box in the jail housing unit, and what steps to take if the voter is released from custody prior to Election Day. The Department provided several DVDs with this video to Prisoner Legal Services (PLS) staff who will play the video several times prior to Election Day in all local jail housing units. (As in past elections, the Department also provided print outreach materials and registration forms to PLS for distribution to those in jail.)

iii. Outreach to residents who prefer to receive information in languages other than English

To reach as many San Franciscans who prefer to receive information in languages other than English as possible, the Department is collaborating with the Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs' Community Ambassador Team to distribute multilingual information to residents across the city, including non-citizen residents eligible to vote in the November 8 Board of Education contest. This month, the Department's outreach staff will also conduct "merchant walks" in neighborhoods with large concentrations of people speaking languages other than English to encourage distribution of outreach materials via business storefronts.

IV. Responses to the Elections Commission's request for information to be included in the Director's monthly report. (The Department's responses follow each information request.)

A. *Upcoming or outstanding Requests for Proposals (RFPs) from the Department (including the dollar amount or range).*

The Department has no outstanding Requests for Proposals nor does the Department intends to issue any Requests for Proposals in this calendar year.

- B. *Sole-source contracts for which the Department has requested approval from the Office of Contract Administration (OCA) (including the dollar amount).*

The Department has no outstanding requests for approval of sole-source contracts.

- C. *Proposed projects, local legislation, or proposed positions on state legislation within San Francisco government that are related to elections and that have come to the Director's attention, especially those related to topics the Commission has adopted a policy position on, like open-source voting and internet voting.*

No proposed projects, local legislation, or proposed positions on state legislation regarding open-source voting or internet voting have come to the Director's attention.