



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: May 10, 2024
RE: Director's Report: May 15, 2024, 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 April 17, 2024.

I. The Department continues to facilitate candidate filings for the November 5, 2024 election.

- A. May 17th will mark the opening of the nomination documents filing period for local mayoral and supervisorial candidates. The Department will facilitate the submission of the nomination papers for these offices through June 11.
- B. Between May 16th and July 10th, the Department will accept signatures-in-lieu of filing fees petitions for City Attorney, District Attorney, Sheriff, Treasurer, Board of Education, and Community College Board candidates.

II. The Department continues to provide voter outreach and education to communities across the City.

- A. The Department's *Spring 2024 High School Elections Ambassador* program, with 18 local high school students from Balboa, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Lowell, Lick-Wilmerding, Convent of the Sacred Heart, the Bay School, the Urban School, Gateway School, and the French American International School, has concluded:
 - i. In total, ambassadors conducted more than 30 pre-registration and voter education events at their schools, hosting resource tables and registration drives, making announcements on their schools' PA systems, and conducting voter pre-registration presentations during school assemblies.
 - ii. Several ambassadors participated in other outreach events in the community, helping to host resource tables at the SFPL Excelsior Branch and the Youth Health Summit Mission Neighborhood Health Center.
 - iii. Altogether, ambassadors pre-registered more than 200 future voters, educated thousands of youth, and provided information on civic engagement opportunities, including high school student poll worker service.
 - iv. The Department will host a celebration ceremony for ambassadors on Tuesday, May 14th. At the ceremony, ambassadors will view a celebratory video and then receive participation certificates signed by Mayor Breed. In addition, prizes will be awarded to those with the most creative outreach and the most voter registrations.
 - v. This month, the Department will send a letter to high school educators, reminding them of opportunities for students to engage with elections in the coming fall. Information about the Fall 2024 High School Elections Ambassador program will be included, as well as information about poll worker opportunities, a pre-registration reminder, and information about the Secretary of State's 2024 California Student Mock Election. (The Department has added a link for schools to sign up for the Student Mock Election to its High School Student Programs webpage.) The Department plans to send a second reminder about the Mock Election prior to the fall deadline for schools to register with the Secretary of State.

- B. In the spirit of Earth Day (April 22), the Department sent out an email to approximately 250,000 local voters inviting them to consider reducing paper waste by opting out of postal delivery of their Voter Information Pamphlet (VIP).
- i. This email explained the November 5 VIP will be long and encouraged multi-voter households in particular to consider sharing a paper copy by having all but one voter in the household to opt out of postal VIP delivery.
 - ii. The Department's homepage also now prominently features information on this environmental topic and offers a quick and easy way to opt out of mail VIP delivery in favor of digital access.
 - iii. In response to these communications, the Department has received approximately 1,200 opt out requests, with the cumulative number of voters opting to read the local VIP online now nearly 50,000.
- C. On May 6, the Department issued two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) as part of its ongoing efforts to partner with local nonprofits in order to supplement its direct outreach efforts. Grantees will help with two key November 5 topics: 1) ranked-choice voting in local contests, and 2) non-citizen registration and voting in the Board of Education contest.
- i. Each RFP will have a total distribution of \$100,000, not to exceed \$20,000 per grantee, with proposals due Monday, June 17. Grantee outreach will begin in late August and continue through Election Day.
 - ii. The Department posted the RFPs on the City's bidding website ([REG | 2024 Non-Citizen Voting Outreach Partnership](#) and [REG | Ranked-Choice Voting Education Partnership](#)), a newly created page at sfelections.org/RFP2024, and also sent an email about the issuance of the RFPs to nearly 200 partners.
- D. The Department is currently working to expand and improve its social media presence in several ways:
- i. The Department has begun using social media management software designed to help streamline its social media and messaging. Using features such as scheduling, publishing, engagement, monitoring, analytics and reporting, the Department can better manage its multiple social media accounts and more easily track performance metrics. This platform should provide valuable insights for optimizing social media strategies and enhance the Department's presence on Facebook, Instagram, X, and more.
 - ii. The Department continues to explore ways to enhance its social media presence in languages other than English. Although WhatsApp and WeChat were identified as popular platforms for Spanish and Chinese speaking users, with further research, the Department identified some technical and privacy issues. The Department now plans to implement other strategies to boost multilingual election content, such as using targeted ads for Chinese and Spanish speaking audiences on Facebook and Instagram.
- E. The Department is working on several projects related to expanding its November non-citizen voting outreach:
- i. The Department has reformatted the webpage dedicated to NCV registration and voting at sfelections.org/NCV. More specifically, by repositioning text, using textboxes and typography creatively, and adding certain information to expandable boxes, the Department has improved the organization of legally mandated information along with practical and logistical information. This new page has been fully translated by Department staff, and is provided in the threshold languages supported by the City's web platform. From its main page, web-users can find links to a page hosting the NCV registration form (in all languages) and to a page displaying all 49 translations of the legally-mandated Important Notice for Non-United States Citizens.

- ii. On April 1, 2024, the United States Customs and Immigration Service released an updated version of its N-400, Application for Naturalization. In the new version of this form, applicants are again asked if they have registered to vote in any federal, state, or local election in the United States. However, applicants who have done so in a local election per local law may now answer "No" to this question. (Still, the Department will continue to encourage any non-citizen with questions on this topic or related topics to contact an attorney or organization specializing in immigration-related matters before submitting any declaration.)
- iii. The Department has made new NCV outreach materials available on both the NCV webpage and the main outreach webpage. In addition to an NCV flyer and audiovisual presentation, the Department is in the process of printing 20,000 guides and posters for distribution at outreach events and for use by community partners.
- iv. Department staff continue to meet with representatives from SFUSD and other governmental and community-based organizations serving local immigrant populations to arrange for collaborative work. In addition to the SFUSD, the Department is including in its NCV outreach private and international schools such as La Scuola, the French American International School, the Chinese American International School, and the Lycée Français de San Francisco, all of whom will receive NCV communications and materials.
- v. The Department is preparing for its upcoming Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) meeting, part of which will be dedicated to NCV discussion and review of the Department's NCV materials and planned outreach. Prior to this meeting, the Department will send an email to its community partners, encouraging them to participate in the meeting and share ideas about enhancing the Department's NCV outreach efforts.

III. The Department continues to work on numerous short, mid, and long-term administrative projects.

- A. The Department will submit its 2023 Racial Equity Progress Report (including updates provided by the Elections Commission) on Monday, May 13, 2024 and will post it online. The report highlights racial equity practices implemented by the Department in FY 2023-24 and describes goals set for FY 2024-25, as summarized below:
 - i. Firstly, last year the Department created the Vote Restoration Outreach Grant Program, partnering with local nonprofits that work closely with the justice-involved community to disseminate information about voting rights and registration. To help those with criminal histories understand their voting rights, the Department distributed topical and multilingual materials both directly and through its community partners.
 - ii. Secondly, last year the Department implemented several strategies to encourage candidates from diverse populations to apply for seasonal elections opportunities. Specifically, the Department held its inaugural Employment and Volunteer Opportunities Job Fair. At this event, attendees were able to apply, interview, receive a conditional offer, and begin onboarding/fingerprinting, all on the same day and in one location.
 - iii. Finally, last year the Department spearheaded several new and related programs centered around youth equity, including "office hours" at San Francisco Juvenile Hall, a partnership with the San Francisco Public Library to promote civic engagement around National Voter Registration week, and the provision of stipends and ongoing support to student participants in the Department's Youth Ambassador program.
 - iv. This year, the Department will continue to integrate equitable practices in the hiring of temporary elections workers. For example, the Department will allow applicants to complete a short interview questionnaire in lieu of a traditional face-to-face interview. (The Department will collaborate with the City's Department of

Human Resources to vet the content of the questionnaire to make sure it meets the intended goals of promoting equity and diversity within the workplace and eliminating potential barriers in the hiring process.)

- v. Over the course of the upcoming year, the Department will also provide equitable and effective outreach on ranked-choice voting (RCV) in the 2024 November election to certain groups who might be less aware of RCV rules (e.g., young voters; new citizens and residents; people involved with the justice system; and people with limited-English proficiency). To supplement its direct RCV-related outreach efforts, the Department has secured grant funding for nonprofit organizations who serve focus populations.
 - vi. Finally, the Department plans to conduct robust, multilingual, and equitable outreach on non-citizen registration and voting (NCV) in the 2024 November Board of Education Election to the City's immigrant parent population. The Department will coordinate with school administrators as well as nonprofits who serve immigrants and/or their families to disseminate election-related messages particularly relevant to this population. As with RCV-related outreach, in order supplement its direct NCV-related outreach efforts, the Department has secured grant funding for nonprofit organizations who serve focus populations.
- B. On Monday, May 13, the Director will appear at the Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee hearing on artificial intelligence in local elections. The Director will provide information on: 1) protocols for informing the public about misinformation and disinformation; 2) Department's responsibilities in relation to misinformation and disinformation; and 3) trends and observations on the impact of AI in elections.
- C. The Department is currently reviewing and revising its presentation of election results for the November 5 election.
- i. The Department plans to add: 1) more graphics in the Results Summary page, including graphics related to estimated turnout and turnout by voting method; 2) a filtering mechanism for historical turnout information so the public can quickly identify and compare turnout across similar past elections; 3) a thick line, or a similar visual cue, under the list of leading candidates in multiple seat contests to distinguish leading candidates in these contests; and 4) explanations about undervotes and overvotes.
 - ii. The Department is also working to incorporate the Ranked-Choice Voting Results Reporter display into its November 5 presentation of election results. This display will feature round-by-round results of RCV contests in multiple languages as well as an accessible HTML format.

IV. Responses to the Commission's request for information to be included in the Director's monthly report.

Data on registration rates and outreach events: 1) Total new registrations, 2) New registrations by supervisory districts, 3) Tactics employed (outreach, community engagement, grant funding, etc.) and in which districts, 4) Tactics employed by districts.

- A. Between April 1 – April 30, the Department processed affidavits for 2,169 new registrants, residing in the following Supervisorial Districts (SD): SD 1 – 150, SD 2 – 236, SD 3 – 209, SD 4 – 118, SD 5 – 259, SD 6 – 225, SD 7 – 214, SD 8 – 202, SD 9 – 196, SD 10 – 197, SD 11 – 163.
- B. Between April 1 – April 30, the Department conducted 25 outreach events; which had approximately 4,300 people in attendance collectively. The number of such events by Supervisorial District was: SD 2 – 2, SD 3 – 5, SD 4 – 1, SD 6 – 2, SD 7 – 1, SD 8 – 1, SD 9 – 3, SD 10 – 5, SD 11 – 5.