



## Memorandum

**To:** Elections Commission  
**From:** John Arntz, Director  
**Date:** August 15, 2025  
**RE:** Director's Report: August 20, 2025, Elections Commission Meeting

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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 prepared for the Elections Commission meeting on July 16, 2025, that was later cancelled.

**I. The Department has entered primary operational phase of the September 16, 2025, election cycle.**

- A. The Department has mailed over 50,000 vote-by-mail (VBM) ballot packets to local voters registered in District 4, including those serving in the military and residing overseas.
  - i. Due to a one-card ballot and a smaller-than-usual Voter Information Pamphlet (VIP), the Department consolidated all materials into one mailing. As such, each vote-by-mail packet includes a Voter Information Pamphlet, the ballot, and voting instructions.
  - ii. From now until September 2, the Department will continue to mail additional ballot packets to new registrants on a rolling basis. Replacement ballots will be mailed through September 11. After September 11, when it is too late to mail a ballot, the Department will direct voters to obtain ballots in person at its office, through the online accessible vote-by-mail system, or at a polling place on Election Day.
- B. In addition to mailing the Voter Information Pamphlets (VIPs) to voters in District 4, the Department made the VIP available in PDF, HTML, and audio MP3 formats on [sfelections.org/vip](https://sfelections.org/vip), as well as in large print, CD audio, and USB.
- C. On August 18, the Department will offer additional voting options for voters eligible to participate in the recall election.
  - i. The Department will launch its Accessible Vote-by-Mail system at [sfelections.gov/access](https://sfelections.gov/access), allowing voters to download and mark their ballots using a screen reader or personal assistive technology, such as a head pointer or sip-and-puff device. For security reasons, the AVBM system does not transmit vote data over the internet.
  - ii. The Department will begin facilitating early voting at its office in City Hall, with voting hours on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., the weekend of September 13–14 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and on Election Day, September 16, from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- D. To facilitate ballot returns, the Department has opened three outdoor ballot drop boxes: at the Ortega Branch Library, the Parkside Branch Library, and City Hall. Each drop box will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, until the polls close on Election Night.

- E. The Department has secured 20 accessible polling places throughout District 4 to facilitate in-person voting and ballot drop-off on Election Day.
- F. The Department has been preparing Election Day supplies and signage for delivery to each polling place and is coordinating with polling place hosts to schedule specific delivery dates and times, ensuring all locations receive their materials in advance of Election Day.
- G. The Department has successfully recruited approximately 90 poll workers to staff polling places, ensuring that all staffing needs are met, including the required multilingual language capacity. Online training for poll workers will begin on August 17. To provide an additional option for those who prefer in-person training, a training session will be held at the Ortega Branch Library on August 27.
- H. The Department completed Logic and Accuracy testing of the voting equipment for the September recall election. Equipment testing occurred at the Department's warehouse at Pier 31 and in City Hall, Room 48. This testing ensures that all equipment accurately records and tabulates votes. The public was invited to observe the testing in person or via live stream at [sfelections.gov/observe](https://sfelections.gov/observe).

**II. The Department has been notified of a potential statewide election.**

- A. The California Secretary of State's office informed county elections officials that the governor will likely call a special election for November 4, 2025. The election would seek voter approval to change the state's constitution regarding the drawing of congressional district boundaries and voter approval of a proposed map of new congressional districts. The state legislature has until August 22 to set the criteria for an election before the governor can call a special election.
- B. The Department has begun preparing for this potential election by ordering supplies, securing space, and considering resources and staffing needs for conducting an election on November 4.

**III. The Department continues to carry out its operations and administrative functions.**

- A. The Department has executed a contract with Dominion Voting Systems, Inc. for the lease of a voting system that includes all equipment and necessary support services to conduct elections in San Francisco (Attachment 1). The contract amount is \$6,717,624 for a four-year term, beginning on July 21, 2025, and ending on June 30, 2029. The agreement provides for ongoing technical support and updates to comply with changes in election laws and regulations throughout the contract term.
- B. The Department continues its voter roll maintenance to ensure that voter records remain accurate and up to date. This work includes processing registration updates and cancellations, issuing voter notices and address confirmation postcards, and integrating data from state and local agencies. As part of this process, the Department incorporates updates from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), which captures address changes and new voter registrations, information from the National Change of Address (NCOA) system, which provides address updates for voters who have moved, reports from the Department of Public Health that identify records of deceased individuals, and weekly updates from the Secretary of State that include information on prison commitments and conservatorships.
- C. As part of its Employee Wellbeing Initiative, the Department continues to prioritize staff wellness through its partnership with the San Francisco Health Service System, supporting both mental and physical health programs.

- i. In August, the Department hosted a wellness webinar titled "Sleep Your Way to Better Health." This session offered employees practical strategies for improving sleep quality and managing stress.
- D. The City's Digital and Data Services launched training sessions for all SF.gov editors to ensure that SF.gov content, including pages, images, and PDFs, is accessible to people with disabilities by April 2026, which is the regulatory deadline for digital accessibility compliance required of state and local governments. In the coming weeks, Department staff responsible for maintaining SF.gov will attend this training and begin auditing the Department's website for compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

**IV. The Department continues its outreach to distribute information about the Recall Election and promote voter registration and election services.**

- A. The Department's outreach team continues to engage vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities, including individuals with disabilities, language-diverse populations, justice-involved residents, people experiencing housing insecurity, and youth.
  - i. In July, staff partnered with local organizations to provide voter registration assistance and share information on accessible resources and youth civic engagement programs at events such as ADA35: Americans with Disabilities Act 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration in Golden Gate Park and Library Day at the New Farm in Hunter's Point. Staff also conducted a Voting Made Simple presentation for seniors at Valencia Gardens, and hosted voter resource tables at Glide Memorial, Sunday Streets Mission, Hayes Valley Carnival, and the OCEIA SF Pathways to Citizenship Workshop.
- B. The Department continues to collaborate with its advisory committees to refine language access programs and enhance voting accessibility for all communities.
  - i. On August 6, the Department held its third Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) meeting of 2025, bringing together members of the public and representatives from nonprofit and government agencies to review language access programs and materials, and discuss strategies to improve voting access for residents with limited English proficiency.
  - ii. The agenda included discussions on the anticipated implementation of Vietnamese as an official language of the City beginning in 2026, a review of recent and upcoming outreach events, and information about the Special Recall Election. The meeting concluded with a feedback session where LAAC members provided final input on the recently revised draft polling place signage, with an emphasis on language accessibility.
- C. The Department has begun preparations for the Fall 2025 High School Elections Ambassador program, scheduled to take place during California's Fall 2025 High School Voter Education Weeks, from Monday, September 16 through Friday, September 25. The Department has opened applications and initiated outreach to San Francisco high school students to encourage their participation. The application period will remain open until August 28.
- D. The Department continues to engage with community partners through its monthly *Outreach Community Newsletter*.
  - i. The July 2025 edition highlights the work of Department multilingual staff and members of the Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) in serving San Francisco's diverse communities, provides updates on the upcoming District 4 Special Recall Election, and features a Partner Spotlight on Voters of Tomorrow, a

youth-led partner organization dedicated to engaging and educating young people citywide. The July newsletter is available at <https://www.sf.gov/outreach-community-newsletter-july-2025>.

**V. 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 May 1 and June 30, the Department processed a total of 2,316 affidavits of new registrants. The new registrants reside in the following Supervisorial Districts (SD): SD 1 – 192, SD 2 – 238, SD 3 – 246, SD 4 – 152, SD 5 – 249, SD 6 – 291, SD 7 – 188, SD 8 – 242, SD 9 – 187, SD 10 – 188, and SD 11 – 143.
- B. Between July 1 and July 31, the Department conducted 21 outreach events, reaching an estimated 2,259 attendees. These events were distributed across Supervisorial Districts (SD) as follows: SD 3 – 1, SD 4 – 2, SD 5 – 3, SD 6 – 2, SD 7 – 2, SD 8 – 4, SD 9 – 6, and SD 10 – 1.