



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: August 14, 2026
RE: Director's Report: August 19, 2026, Elections Commission Meeting

Following is a brief summary 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 June 17, 2026.

I. The Department concluded the Official Canvass and certified local results for the June 2 Election.

- A. On June 25, the Department certified the local results for the June 2, 2026, Consolidated Statewide Direct Election. Voter turnout was nearly 51%, with 271,520 of San Francisco's 533,546 registered voters participating in the election.
- B. Following certification, the Department submitted the required documentation to the Board of Supervisors and the Secretary of State's office, posted the Statement of the Vote and other detailed reports on its website, and issued notifications through a press release and social media channels.
- C. To safeguard the integrity of election records, the Department applied a SHA-512 cryptographic function to the election results reports and documents, ensuring they remain authentic and unchanged over time.
- D. Throughout the election period, the Department implemented all required procedures to ensure that the June 2 Election was conducted in a free, fair, transparent, and functional manner, consistent with state and local law. All ballot-counting and canvassing activities were open to public observation, and the Department issued regular multi-format preliminary results reports and ballot-counting updates. To further promote transparency, members of the media and the public had the opportunity to participate in question-and-answer sessions with Director Arntz during each preliminary results release.
- E. Enclosed with this report are election documents provided in response to the Commission's request for post-election review. The following reports are included: Vote-By-Mail Report (Attachment 1), Provisional Ballot Report (Attachment 2), Conditional Voter Registration Report (Attachment 3), Election Day Incident Report (Attachment 4).

II. The Department has entered the main preparatory phase of the November 3 Election.

- A. The Department concluded the Ballot Simplification Committee (BSC) meetings on Friday, July 31, during which BSC members prepared fair and impartial summaries of each local ballot measure for publication in the Voter Information Pamphlet.
- B. The Department has been developing the official paper ballot templates, with most of this work scheduled for completion this month. The November ballot is expected to consist of five cards and include federal, state, and local contests, as well as 14 state measures, 10 local measures, and one regional measure. Current work includes

finalizing ballot content, proofreading ballot text and layout in English, Chinese, Spanish, Filipino, and Vietnamese, and preparing the final ballot templates for submission to the printing vendor.

- i. The Department will also produce a separate single-card ballot in five required languages for non-citizen voters containing only the Board of Education contest.
 - ii. In early September, the Department will begin producing the remaining ballot formats, including audio, touchscreen, and downloadable ballots.
 - iii. All ballot formats must be completed by September 19 to meet the statutory deadline for transmitting ballots to military and overseas voters.
- C. The Department has been preparing the Voter Information Pamphlet (VIP) and its translated versions. The VIP will provide voters with information about voting options, a sample ballot, translated and accessible voting resources, and local candidates and measures. The Department will distribute the VIP in early October, concurrently with vote-by-mail ballot packets.
 - i. All voters will receive the VIP in English through their selected delivery method (postal mail or email). Voters who have requested election materials in Chinese, Filipino, Spanish, or Vietnamese will also receive the VIP in their preferred language.
 - ii. Building on the June VIP, this election's cover will once again feature Department staff engaged in various election activities. The Department hopes this approach gives voters a more personal look at the people behind San Francisco elections, recognizes the work of its staff, and helps strengthen confidence in the local election process.
 - iii. In addition to the VIP, the Department will produce a Voter Information Booklet (VIB) for non-citizen voters containing information specific to the Board of Education contest.
- D. The Department has contacted former polling place hosts and secured approximately 480 of the 501 polling places needed for the November election. Based on responses received to date, the Department expects to identify approximately 21 new polling places due to the unavailability of some previously used facilities and as part of its ongoing efforts to improve the voting experience for voters.
- E. The Department has begun recruiting poll workers by reaching out to individuals who have previously served in this role and partnering with local organizations to help staff each of the City's 501 polling places with one Inspector and at least three Clerks. To date, the Department has recruited approximately 1,800 poll workers and expects to recruit approximately 2,000 additional poll workers to ensure adequate staffing and account for anticipated cancellations.
- F. The Department has been working on an additional section-based format for online poll worker training that will be introduced during the upcoming election training cycle. With the new format, poll workers will be able to complete the training in six sections at their own pace, with their progress saved between sessions, rather than completing the entire course in one sitting. The sections will cover preparing for Election Day, election fundamentals, polling place setup, voting procedures, closing procedures, and a final review. Each section will become available after the previous section is completed. This new approach will give poll workers more flexibility and make it easier to focus on one topic at a time. In-person and virtual training will continue to be offered in a single scheduled session.

- G. The Department continues hiring and onboarding seasonal personnel to assist full-time staff with administering the upcoming election. The Department expects to onboard approximately 200 additional seasonal employees for the upcoming election, most of whom will be returning employees who worked during the June election.

III. The Department continues to facilitate filing activities for the November 3 Election.

- A. On August 10, the Department conducted the random alphabet drawing to assign letters to the 10 local measures that will appear on the ballot.
- B. The Department concluded the filing period for proponent and opponent ballot arguments at noon on August 13. The filing period for rebuttal and paid ballot arguments will close at noon on August 17. Each filing deadline is followed by a 10-day public examination period.
- C. Because no incumbent candidates filed nomination documents, the nomination period for the Board of Education, Community College Board of Trustees, and BART Board of Directors, District 8, was extended through 5:00 p.m. on August 12. Lists of candidates who have filed for local offices are available on the Department's website at <http://www.sf.gov/candidates-november-3-2026-general-election>.
- D. From September 9 through October 22, the Department will administer the write-in candidacy period, during which candidates seeking to appear on the ballot as write-in candidates must file their Statements of Write-In Candidacy and Nomination Papers.

IV. The Department continues its voter outreach, promoting voter registration and election services.

- A. The Department has finalized its media plan for the November 3 Election. From September 14 through November 1, the Department will implement a citywide media campaign to increase awareness of the upcoming election, encourage eligible but unregistered residents to register to vote, and motivate voter participation, with a particular focus on younger voters and communities with historically lower voter participation.
 - i. To maximize both citywide reach and neighborhood-specific engagement, the Department will deploy a mix of radio, digital and social media, neighborhood and in-language print publications, and outdoor advertising. Media placements will target English-, Chinese-, and Spanish-speaking audiences, with additional outreach directed to communities with historically lower voter participation.
- B. This month, the Department will mail approximately 300,000 multilingual informational notices to every household in San Francisco. Designed for both registered voters and eligible but unregistered residents, the notices provide information about the upcoming election, voter registration, ranked-choice voting, opportunities to serve as a poll worker, and non-citizen registration and voting in the Board of Education election. The notices also encourage voters to opt out of receiving a printed Voter Information Pamphlet to help conserve paper and City resources and include instructions for doing so. In addition, translated versions highlight the availability of bilingual ballots and explain how voters may request election materials in their preferred language.
 - i. The mailer introduces the Department's outreach theme for the November 3 Election: "One and All. Vote This Fall." The theme reflects the Department's commitment to ensuring every San Franciscan feels included in the election process while providing a simple, memorable reminder to participate in the November election.

- C. To enhance public understanding of the ballot-counting process and help manage expectations regarding election results, the Department has added a new page to its website explaining why an accurate vote count takes time: <https://www.sf.gov/an-accurate-and-complete-vote-count-takes-time>. The Department has also incorporated this messaging into its voter outreach and media communications for the November election to help the public understand that preliminary Election Night results are not final, explain how expected voter turnout, the five-card ballot, and California's vote-by-mail processing requirements affect the ballot-counting timeline, and encourage the public to observe ballot-counting activities throughout the official canvass leading up to election certification.
- D. The Department's Outreach Team continued to engage vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities, including individuals with disabilities, language-diverse populations, people experiencing housing insecurity, and youth.
- i. Outreach staff partnered with community organizations, neighborhood groups, and government agencies—including Project Homeless Connect, the Glide Foundation, the Latino Task Force, and the San Francisco Public Library—to provide voter registration assistance and encourage participation in the November 3 Election, including among non-citizen parents eligible to vote in the Board of Education election.
 - ii. Staff hosted voter resource tables at community events throughout the City, including Sunday Streets in the Mission, the Hayes Valley Carnival, SFPL's Everybody's Climate Event at The New Farm, and Youth 1st One City Day/One Family Day in District 11, providing convenient access to voter registration and election information.
 - iii. To promote the Department's accessible voting resources, outreach staff participated in the National Association of the Deaf Conference and conducted presentations at community centers, including Senior Power Hour at the African American Art & Culture Complex, sharing information about accessible voting options, including emergency ballot pickup and delivery and curbside voting.
- E. The Department continues to engage with its outreach partners through the monthly Outreach Community Newsletter.
- i. The June edition reflected on the successful completion of the June 2 Election by sharing election results and post-election updates, recognizing the many community partners, poll workers, and organizations whose support contributed to a successful election, and looking ahead to preparations for the November 3 Election. The June newsletter is available at: <https://www.sf.gov/outreach-community-newsletter-june-2026>
 - ii. The July edition highlighted the work of the Ballot Simplification Council and its role in helping voters better understand local ballot measures, shared ways voters can prepare for the November 3 Election, and explained how choosing a digital Voter Information Pamphlet can help make elections more sustainable. The newsletter also looked back at nearly 150 years of election history in San Francisco and featured recent outreach activities across the City. The July newsletter is available at: <https://www.sf.gov/outreach-community-newsletter-july-2026>

V. Legal and fiscal updates impacting Department operations and services.

- A. On June 29, 2026, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in *Watson v. Republican National Committee*, holding that federal law does not prohibit states from counting vote-by-mail ballots that are postmarked on or before Election Day but received after Election Day within a state-established receipt period. As a result, California's existing law allowing vote-by-mail ballots to be counted if they are postmarked on or before Election Day and received within seven days after the election remains unchanged. Accordingly, the Department will continue administering vote-by-mail ballot processing and voter outreach in accordance with current California law.
- B. Pursuant to the provisions of [**Senate Bill 111 Budget Act of 2026**](#), the Department of Finance has requested that the State Controller remit \$34 million to county elections officials to support administration of the November 3 Election to expedite the vote-counting process by supporting additional staffing, equipment and technology purchases and to conduct voter outreach and education.
 - i. San Francisco has been allocated \$658,000, including approximately \$561,000 for vote-counting operations and \$97,000 for voter outreach and education.
 - ii. Following notification of this additional funding last week, the Department has been developing a spending plan and evaluating obtaining ballot-processing equipment.

VI. 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 June 1 and July 31, the Department processed a total of 6,297 affidavits of new registrants. These new registrants resided in the following Supervisorial Districts (SD): SD 1 – 442; SD 2 – 684; SD 3 – 688; SD 4 – 353; SD 5 – 762; SD 6 – 732; SD 7 – 463; SD 8 – 607; SD 9 – 559; SD 10 – 570; and SD 11 – 437.
- B. Between June 1 and July 31, the Department conducted 37 outreach events, reaching an estimated 8,297 attendees. Outreach activities took place across seven Supervisorial Districts as follows: SD 2 – 2; SD 3 – 2; SD 5 – 16; SD 6 – 2; SD 9 – 10; SD 10 – 4; and SD 11 – 1.