



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: September 11, 2026
RE: Director's Report: September 16, 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 August 19, 2026.

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

- A. The Department has finalized the November 3 ballot. The paper ballot consists of four cards and includes federal, state, and local contests, as well as 14 state measures, 10 local measures, and one regional measure. The Department is also preparing ballots for the online Accessible Vote-by-Mail (AVBM) system, along with touchscreen and audio formats for use with accessible ballot-marking devices at in-person voting locations. Official ballots will be available in bilingual formats in English with Chinese, Filipino, and Spanish, and Vietnamese.
 - i. In addition to the standard ballot, the Department has produced a separate ballot containing only the Board of Education contest to support non-citizen voting in that election, as authorized under local law.
- B. The Department has provided ballot templates and voter registration extracts to its ballot printing and assembly vendor to initiate the production and assembly of vote-by-mail (VBM) ballot packets.
 - i. The Department will transmit ballots to more than 11,000 San Francisco voters serving in the military or residing overseas no later than September 19, using each voter's preferred delivery method (email, postal mail, or fax). The Department will mail ballot packets to approximately 520,000 local voters by October 5.
- C. The Department has been working with Prisoner Legal Services personnel to update the voter records of individuals currently housed in San Francisco jails in preparation for ballot delivery in early October.
- D. The Department has finalized the Voter Information Pamphlet (VIP) and will provide the VIP to voters approximately one month before the election, either by mail or email, according to each voter's preferred delivery method. To support voter convenience, the Department coordinates VIP distribution with the mailing of VBM ballot packets, allowing voters to review election information while preparing to cast their ballots.
 - i. In addition to the VIP, the Department has produced a Voter Information Booklet (VIB) for non-citizen voters. This booklet includes a sample ballot with the Board of Education contest only, along with general information. Consistent with the VIP distribution timeline, the VIB will be provided to non-citizen voters in early October.
- E. The Department is preparing for early voting, which will begin on October 5 at the City Hall Voting Center. The Voting Center will serve as a centralized in-person voting location for all San Francisco voters, offering multilingual in-person assistance and accessible voting equipment. Voters will be able to register and vote in person, pick up a replacement

ballot, and return their completed ballot. Voting hours will be weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., two weekends before Election Day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and on Election Day, November 3 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

- F. The Department continues to identify and secure facilities to serve as polling places on Election Day and is nearing completion of this process, with approximately 7 sites remaining to be confirmed. Department staff have been working closely with property owners and community partners to finalize site agreements and ensure that each location meets accessibility, safety, and operational requirements.
- G. The Department continues to recruit poll workers through various outreach methods to staff each of the 501 polling places with one Inspector and at least three Clerks. To date, approximately 3,800 individuals have signed up to serve as poll workers, bringing the Department close to its goal, which accounts for anticipated cancellations.
- H. The Department has implemented procedures and system safeguards for elected officials and candidates whose voter registration records are confidential under a recently passed state law. The Department has also updated its Candidates webpage and Voter Portal and provided this group of voters with information about how confidential status affects the delivery of election materials, access to online services, and in-person voting.
- I. Since September 7, the Department has been administering the write-in candidacy period, which will continue through October 20. During this period, individuals seeking to qualify as write-in candidates must file their Statements of Write-In Candidacy and Nomination Papers.
- J. The Department continues preparations to expand its ballot-processing capacity for the November 3 Election using funding allocated by the State. The Department will add vote-by-mail envelope sorting and ballot extraction equipment, provisional ballot and roster scanners, and high-speed ballot scanners to its existing equipment inventory. The Department is also coordinating equipment delivery, installation, testing, staffing schedules, training, and workspace requirements.
- K. 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.
- L. On Monday, September 21, the Department will begin conducting Logic and Accuracy (L&A) testing of the voting equipment for the November 3 Election. The Department will test all voting equipment, including ballot scanners, ballot-marking devices, and central tabulation systems, to ensure that each piece of equipment correctly records and accurately tabulates votes. L&A testing will be open to public observation both in person and via livestream on the Department's website.
- M. As required by the San Francisco Charter §13.103.5, the Department developed the Election Plan for the November 3 Election (attached). This plan describes the Department's approach to administering the upcoming election and outlines the essential services and programs that will be implemented to ensure the voting process is accessible, transparent, efficient, and inclusive.
- N. The Department prepared a request for a waiver from the prohibition imposed by San Francisco Charter § 13.104.5 to permit City employees to assist the Department with conducting the November 3 Election (attached). The City Charter prohibits City employees and officers from performing "any function relating to the conduct of an election." It

further authorizes the Board of Supervisors, upon the request of the Elections Commission, to waive this prohibition and permit City employees to assist the Department with an election.

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

- A. The Department has completed the production of multilingual informational notices for mailing to approximately 300,000 San Francisco households between September 10 and 18. Designed for both registered voters and eligible residents who are not yet registered, 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.
- B. On September 3, the Department held a meeting with its Language Accessibility Advisory Committee. The meeting covered preparations for the upcoming election, language-accessible voting services, bilingual poll worker recruitment, opportunities to observe election activities, and the measures in place to ensure that all voters can participate in the upcoming election safely and independently in an environment free from intimidation and interference.
- C. The Department prepared and posted a [calendar of observable activities](#), along with a [webpage providing livestreams of election activities](#). As part of its ongoing outreach campaign, the Department continues to encourage members of the public to observe election activities and learn more about the processes in place to ensure election integrity and transparency.
- D. The Department is currently hosting its Fall 2026 High School Elections Ambassador Program. Sixty students from 19 public and private high schools applied to participate in the program. The Fall 2026 Election Ambassadors will conduct voter pre-registration outreach activities in their schools and communities and will be paired with Department mentors who will provide guidance throughout the program. These activities will take place during California High School Voter Education Weeks, September 14–25.
- E. In observance of National Voter Registration Day on September 15, the Department's Outreach team will partner with community organizations throughout San Francisco to register eligible residents and help them prepare to participate in the November 3 Election, with a particular focus on reaching young voters. As part of these efforts, the Department will collaborate with its college-based outreach partners to host voter registration resource tables at the University of San Francisco, San Francisco State University, the University of California, San Francisco, and City College of San Francisco.
- F. 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 help prepare residents to vote in the November 3 Election, including 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 the Nihonmachi Street Fair, the 33rd annual Pistahan Parade and Festival, the San Francisco Assessor-Recorder's Family Wealth Conference at City College, Family Day at India Basin Waterfront Park, and National Night Out events at Alice Griffith Apartments and The Proxy in Hayes Valley, providing San Francisco residents with convenient access to voter registration and election information.
- iii. To promote awareness of civic engagement opportunities available for San Francisco youth, outreach staff participated in several youth-focused events including hosting voter resource tables at the Sunnydale Back-to-School Kickoff, the School House Rock performance at the African American Art & Culture Complex, and Back-to-School Backpack Giveaways in the Hunter's Point and Western Addition neighborhoods, sharing information on high school poll worker service, the High School Elections Ambassador Program, and the San Francisco Youth Commission.

G. The Department continues to engage with its outreach partners through the monthly Outreach Community Newsletter.

- i. The August edition introduced the Department's election outreach campaign, "One and All. Vote This Fall.," and provided information about voting options, opportunities to get involved, and resources community partners can use to help San Francisco residents prepare for the election. The edition also introduced a partner toolkit featuring ready-to-use election information that community partners can share on social media, in newsletters, and on their websites. The newsletter is available at <https://www.sf.gov/outreach-community-newsletter-august-2026>.

III. Legal updates affecting Department operations and services.

- A. The Department continues to monitor legal developments concerning the recently issued United States Postal Service rules that would establish new requirements for the processing and delivery of mail ballots. On September 4, a federal court issued a preliminary injunction preventing the rules from taking effect. The federal government has appealed the decision and requested emergency relief from the United States Supreme Court. At this time, the rule remains blocked and has not affected the Department's preparations for mailing vote-by-mail ballots for the November 3 Election. The Department will continue to monitor the litigation and evaluate whether any operational or voter communication changes may be necessary.

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 August 1 and August 31, the Department processed a total of 2,388 affidavits from new registrants. These registrants resided in the following Supervisorial Districts (SD): SD 1 – 196; SD 2 – 276; SD 3 – 250; SD 4 – 177; SD 5 – 241; SD 6 – 305; SD 7 – 228; SD 8 – 243; SD 9 – 179; SD 10 – 164; and SD 11 – 129.
- B. Between August 1 and August 31, the Department conducted 58 outreach events, reaching an estimated 11,962 attendees. These events took place across Supervisorial Districts (SD) as follows: SD 1 – 4; SD 2 – 4; SD 4 – 2; SD 5 – 20; SD 6 – 3; SD 7 – 6; SD 8 – 3; SD 9 – 9; SD 10 – 3; and SD 11 – 4.