

Orange County Registrar of Voters

COVID-19 Election Response Report



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the COVID-19 pandemic poses unprecedented challenges, my office has been committed to administering secure, transparent elections while successfully maintaining public health guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state and local officials.

For the April 7, 2020 City of Westminster Special Recall Election, the Governor's executive order providing direction to conduct the election as an all-mail ballot election was issued after election materials were already mailed out to voters. My office responded quickly to streamline our operation to follow the order, including cancellation of in-person voting, public closure of our office, physical distancing, and public notices to inform the public of the changes. Having the experience of already pivoting quickly to adjust election operations, we were well prepared to successfully conduct the May 19, 2020 City of Santa Ana Special Recall Election as an all-mail ballot election once the Governor issued a similar subsequent Executive Order. Beyond that, my office was able to continue implementing public health measures during the recount of the City of Westminster Special Recall Election and risk-limiting audits in May and June of 2020.

Throughout these events, we proactively sought to position Orange County in response to the public health challenges during this rapidly changing crisis, including the following:

- Sourcing hundreds of thousands of pieces of personal protective equipment such as gloves and facemasks well in advance of the fall election
- Complying with physical distancing through public access requirements, making appointments available for direct assistance
- Creating barriers on an individual contact level with face coverings and plexiglass construction at the public counter
- Developing signage and other public notices in all federally mandated languages and Elections Code section 14201 languages when applicable
- Training staff on disinfecting and cleaning procedures to support in-person voting
- Redesigning Vote Center layouts and strategically placing equipment in compliance with physical distancing guidelines

With our experience conducting two elections in the COVID-19 environment and our preparations for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election, this COVID-19 Report provides a basic overview of what changes are necessary in order to safely conduct the election while maintaining adequate services for voters in a manner that is aligned with transparency and integrity. This report will include detailed information on best practices and our plans that may assist other counties in their election planning.

I reaffirm my commitment to prioritize the protection of the health and safety of voters and staff while providing access to voting in a fair and transparent manner with integrity.

Sincerely,



Neal Kelley
Registrar of Voters
Orange County, CA

CANDIDATE FILING

Elections Code §8028(b)

Candidate filing is the process by which a candidate qualifies to be on the ballot for an election. This process includes obtaining nomination forms and completing the Declaration of Candidacy with the Oath of Office within the appropriate timeframe per Elections Code §10407). For the general election, the Orange County Registrar of Voters (OCROV) is the filing officer for the school and special district contests. In addition, our office receives candidates' statements and ballot designation worksheets filed by the top two vote-getters from the primary election.

Background

For the November 6, 2018 General Election, OCROV processed 252 candidates for school and special district contests. Of these 252 candidates, 121 candidates chose to begin the candidate filing process via the OCROV's online candidate filing portal. Although the candidates could obtain the nomination paperwork via the portal, candidates could not complete the filing process entirely online due to the limitations of Elections Code § 8028(b).

This statute requires a candidate to execute a Declaration of Candidacy either in the office of the elections official or in the presence of a notary public. The executed Declaration of Candidacy would then be filed in OCROV's office.

In addition to filing the Declaration of Candidacy, the following forms also require original signatures: Ballot Designation Worksheet, Code of Fair Campaign Practices, campaign finance forms, and candidates' statements. Historically, completing the candidate filing process in the office creates a high volume of in-person interaction, with over 40 candidates and consultants confined to the front lobby.

“Candidate filing process in the office is a high volume of in-person interaction, with over 40 candidates and consultants confined to the front lobby.”

Candidate Filing During COVID-19 Restrictions

On May 5, 2020, the Secretary of State's office issued an advisory to County Clerks and Registrar of Voters (CCROV) #20085 allowing elections officials to issue candidate filing documents via mail, email or a website. The candidate filing process will be handled in a similar fashion to how candidate filing is currently conducted, but with additional options for issuing and filing of nomination paperwork. These processes will be described on the OCROV's website, in the Candidate's Handbook, in the candidate filing portal, and to any candidate that requests information on the candidate filing process.

In order to implement the Secretary of State's (SOS) guidelines, OCROV will put in place processes that will allow the ability to maintain physical distancing and reduce in-person filing. If a candidate selects the in-person option, physical distancing will always be strictly maintained. This will reduce the number of candidates in the front lobby at any given time, particularly during the last couple of days of the filing period when a high number of candidates are processed.

Issuing Candidate Documents

The Orange County Registrar of Voters will be expanding an appointment system for candidates to offer not only early morning and evening appointments, but also appointments during normal business hours. These appointments can be requested for issuing nomination documents, general information, and completing the filing process. The Orange County Registrar of Voters will be utilizing a web-based program to schedule appointments.

There are two types of appointments that can be utilized by a candidate: online via a video conferencing service or in-person. The appointments can be made on the OCROV website, online candidate filing portal, phone, or in-person.

Online Candidate Filing Portal

OCROV has a robust online candidate filing portal which allows candidates to complete an application, download documents, and submit questions to an assigned agent. OCROV was the first in California to launch an online candidate filing portal in 2010 and is still the only agency to offer a full-service online candidate filing system. By implementing a system for candidates to file remotely, Orange County is positioned to support candidates who wish to exercise physical distancing and complete their paperwork in a timely and effective manner.

"If a candidate selects the in-person option, physical distancing will always be strictly maintained."

"OCROV was the first in California to launch an online candidate filing portal in 2010 and is still the only agency to offer a full-service online."

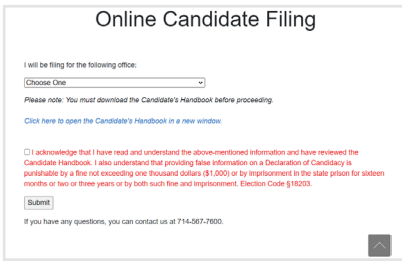


Figure 1. Screenshot of an online candidate filing page

Candidates are also able to pay for and submit their candidates' statements via the portal. SOS guidelines now allows candidates to access all nomination documents online, including the Declaration of Candidacy. In the past, this was done only in OCROV's office or in the presence of a notary public. A new feature of the online portal is the ability for a candidate to request an appointment to execute the Oath of Office on the Declaration of Candidacy via video conferencing with the assigned agent. This completely removes the need for in-person visits.

A candidate will create a log-in and password specific to his/her filing. The candidate will complete a Candidate Information Statement that will allow our office to determine eligibility for the office sought. Once approved, the agent will make documents available online that the candidate can view and download. The agent is notified by email when a candidate has downloaded each nomination document. This information is tracked and attached to the candidate's file. An Acknowledgement Receipt Form will also be included in the online candidate filing portal, which will be necessary for the candidate to complete prior to moving forward in the process.

OCROV will be promoting the use of the online candidate filing portal to minimize in-person contact and improved efficiency for candidates. Existing instructional information will be modified to include new options for utilizing contactless filing and the appointment system will be integrated into the online candidate filing portal.

Appointments

When a candidate makes an online appointment, OCROV will inform the candidate of his/her options to receive nomination papers. Our office will then issue paperwork in the manner requested by the candidate and the candidate will be informed of the options for returning the completed forms by the requisite deadline. If the nomination forms are emailed to the candidate, OCROV staff will follow the normal procedures and guidelines to verify the eligibility of the candidate for the office sought. Once eligibility has been determined, the nomination forms will be provided to the candidate in the manner they have requested.

If the candidate is prepared to complete the process during the online appointment, the paperwork will be issued and executed by OCROV staff. At this time, the candidate will be informed that he/she must return the original documents with the wet signatures to the OCROV's

office by the close of the nomination period. If the original documents are not received, the candidate will not be qualified for the ballot.

If the candidate has scheduled an in-person appointment, OCROV staff will follow our normal procedures and guidelines to verify eligibility of the office sought. Nomination paperwork will be issued at that time. If the candidate is prepared to complete the nomination process during this appointment, the forms will be issued and completed, and the Oath of Office will be administered. The candidate will then be qualified for the ballot. If the candidate is not prepared to finish the filing process during the appointment, the nomination forms will be issued and the options for returning the nomination documents will be explained. OCROV staff will encourage the candidate to schedule another appointment to complete the filing process, if needed.

Candidates with appointments will be given priority over walk-in candidates. OCROV will continue to serve walk-in candidates during the filing period upon availability of staff, while maintaining physical distancing. Candidates may wait outside of the office and use the additional tables and chairs that will be set up at a safe distance. As candidates leave the front lobby, the candidates waiting outside will receive a call that they may enter the building when physical distancing can be maintained.

Historically, the last two days of the candidate filing period is very busy. To safeguard against candidates dropping off nomination paperwork after the filing deadline, a staff member will monitor the line similar to line management at the close of vote centers. This staff member will have the Sign-In Sheet and will mark a distinct line when candidates have arrived before the filing deadline but have been unable to enter the building to process their paperwork. The candidate filing drop box will be closed precisely at 5:00 p.m. on August 7, 2020.

Execution and Returning Candidate Documents

The Declaration of Candidacy requires an oath by the candidate and can be executed in OCROV's office, in the presence of a notary, or via an online video conferencing service. If the Declaration of Candidacy is not completed in the OCROV's office, or by a video conferencing service, the candidate will be provided the options for returning the executed documents and reminded that the original Declaration of Candidacy must be notarized and returned to OCROV by the filing deadline.

The SOS guidelines allows candidates to return their nomination documents through the mail, email, in-person, or by using the designated on-site candidate filing drop box. The original documents must be received by the filing deadline. OCROV recommends that candidates return the original nomination documents via the candidate filing drop box to avoid the uncertainty of the mail and eliminate the necessity for the candidate to come to OCROV's office.

As a courtesy, OCROV will reach out to candidates whose original nomination documents have not been received by the OCROV during the final days of the filing period.

Candidate Filing Drop Box

OCROV will provide a convenient secure candidate filing drop box located in our courtyard for candidates who wish to save time delivering their original nomination documents and to minimize in-person interactions. Signage will be specifically developed to alert candidates to the candidate filing drop box. This drop box will be monitored daily and can be locked precisely at the filing deadline.

Informing Candidates of New Options for Candidate Filing

To inform candidates of the new filing options, OCROV will add a feature link to the website's homepage in advance of the filing period. OCROV will also be informing prospective candidates of these options. In addition, OCROV will be sending email blasts to district offices and publishing press releases. The Candidate's Handbook and the online candidate filing portal will also provide information on the new candidate filing options.

VOTE-BY-MAIL VOTING

Although Orange County prepared for and mailed a vote-by-mail ballot to every voter in the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election, the impact of COVID-19 is expected to further increase the use of vote-by-mail ballots in Orange County for the upcoming Presidential General Election.

Ballot Printing

Despite the expected increase of voters returning vote-by-mail ballots, the number of ballots to be printed will not increase. COVID-19, however, has affected the already limited paper supply in the United States. To mitigate the risk of the limited paper supply, OCROV has already begun to work with paper suppliers to purchase paper ahead of schedule. All paper needs, including paper ballots and other printed election materials, must be identified and purchased immediately.

Preparation for Mailing

For the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election, OCROV mailed a ballot to every voter in Orange County within the first week of the vote-by-mail voting period. The same capacity will allow us to continue to mail a vote-by-mail ballot to every voter for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election. OCROV is planning to change the return envelope that will be included in the vote-by-mail package, which will now have a peel-and-seal method of closing the envelope. This will enable the voter to seal the envelope without having to manually wet the glue on the flap, and, thus, reducing the potential transfer of germs.

"A peel-and-seal method of closing the envelope will reduce the potential transfer of germs."

Vote-by-Mail Tracking

Beginning in 2018, Orange County enhanced the ability for voters to track their vote-by-mail ballots, including the following improvements:

- In addition to the Intelligent Mail Barcode (IMB) printed on the outgoing envelope, an IMB was added to the return envelope. This allows tracking of the ballot as it is sent to the voter, and as it is returned by the voter.
- The ability to track the ballots was added to Orange County's website. Voters do not need to sign up for this tracking ability, because it is available whenever they perform a lookup on their voter record.

“OCROV has a capacity of extracting 14,400 ballots per hour.”



Figure 2. Returned envelopes in trays

“During the March Presidential Primary, OCROV received 240,733 vote-by-mail ballots on or after Election Day”

- The ability to sign up to receive text messages and/or email alerts was added. When they sign up, they receive an alert at each step of the outgoing and incoming mailing.
- The tracking of vote-by-mail ballots was available to operators answering phone calls from the public. This allows OCROV to quickly provide the status of the ballot to inquiring voters.

Beginning with the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election, Orange County participated in BallotTrax, the State’s ballot tracking program by providing data from our internal system.

OCROV’s ballot tracking solution is scalable, and there are no foreseeable issues with the increased use of this solution for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

Processing Returned Vote-by-Mail Ballots

The number of voters that have been voting at home has been steadily increasing every year since it has been made available to all voters in California. This, combined with circumstances surrounding COVID-19, requires additional preparation for an unprecedented vote-by-mail turnout in Orange County.

Additional Vote-by-Mail Automated Sorter

Orange County currently has one high-speed mail sorter with 72 sorting bins, which is used to sort outgoing mail and incoming mail. For incoming mail, the sorter takes an image of each returned vote-by-mail envelope for signature checking, while simultaneously performing a rough sort. After the signature checking is complete the envelopes are sorted once more, at which point the challenged ballots are removed, the valid ballots are sorted by precinct, and they are prepared to be counted.

During the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election, OCROV received 240,733 vote-by-mail ballots on or after Election Day, and OCROV is expecting to receive an even larger number of returned vote-by-mail ballots for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election. To shorten the processing time for this expected large return of ballots, Registrar of Voters Neal Kelley made a key decision during the week of the Presidential Primary election (in response to the rapidly developing COVID-19 situation). This decision includes the installation of an additional vote-by-mail sorter. This will allow the ability to perform the initial step of scanning the image on the

envelopes, while simultaneously sorting the envelopes with ballots that are ready to be counted. This could potentially allow processing of the returned vote-by-mail ballots on or after election day in half the time.

Ballot Extracting

After ballot envelopes have been signature checked and sorted for counting, the ballots must be removed from the envelopes for counting. Orange County installed eight new ballot extractors, which slice open the envelope and present the ballot to the operator to be removed. Each operator can extract approximately 1,800 ballots per machine, per hour. This provides a capacity of 14,400 ballots that can be extracted per hour. To prepare for the upcoming election, OCROV will be hiring adequate staffing to ensure the eight ballot extractors can run with minimal downtime.

Ballot Scanning

The projected increase of voters returning vote-by-mail ballots will result in a larger number of ballots that need to be processed and scanned centrally at the OCROV office. Additionally, each ballot for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election will likely have two sheets of paper due to the large number of local contests and measures expected to be on the ballot.

Orange County currently has 12 ballot scanners, with which we can scan approximately 1,500 sheets per hour, per machine. To increase the capacity for the extremely large number of ballots, and subsequently sheets to scan, Registrar of Voters Neal Kelley made a second key decision and increased the number of ballot scanners to 21.

Additional Staffing

For all the processes listed above, including the vote-by-mail sorting, signature checking, ballot extracting, and ballot-scanning, OCROV is expanding its hiring platform to ensure adequate staffing during this critical time period.

“The passage of Assembly Bill 860 permits any voter to cast their ballots through a Remote Accessible Vote-By-Mail (RAVBM) system”

Remote Accessible Vote-By-Mail

Elections Code §4005(a)(8)(B)(i)(IV)

The passage of Assembly Bill 860 permits any voter to cast their ballots through a Remote Accessible Vote-By-Mail (RAVBM) system whereas it was previously limited to voters with disabilities, overseas voters, and military voters. As such, messaging to voters will change to inform them of this voting option. During a recent special election, RAVBM messaging was changed to: “the Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail ballot provides voters with disabilities, those with medical impacts due to COVID-19, and overseas voters the option to request a vote-by-mail ballot to be delivered electronically.” While this messaging was helpful, the messaging will need to be altered to remove the word “medical” for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election. This will ease any confusion that a voter must only be under quarantine or have COVID-19 in order to utilize this voting option.

Step 1 of 3: Mark Your Choices

Your ballot is presented below. To mark your selection, click on a checkbox. To remove a selection, click on the checked box again.

To vote for a qualified write-in candidate who is not listed on the ballot, click the checkbox beside the WRITE-IN space at the end of the candidate list, then type the candidate's name in the space.

FOR US SENATOR
 SANTA CLAUS
 EBENEZER SCROODGE
 (WRITE-IN)

FOR REPRESENTATIVE TO CONGRESS
 AMELIA BARBART
 CHARLES "Chuck" YEAGER
 CHARLES LINDERBERG
 (WRITE-IN)

CITY COUNCIL
 JOHNNY CASH
 ELVIS PRESLEY
 DOLLY PARTON
 (WRITE-IN)

FOR CITY WASTE DIRECTOR
 WILLIAM MACDOUGAL
 (WRITE-IN)

ARTICLE 1

Figure 4. RAVBM Ballot

sites.omniballotus/ca_demo/app/ravbm/eligibility

are previewing a site configuration. These changes will not be visible to voters until published. All logging is disabled.

English Español

Font Size: A A

Home Contact

Please confirm your eligibility to access this system.

Under California law, only voters in the military, overseas voters, and voters with disabilities are eligible to use this accessible Vote by Mail system.

- I am either a voter with a disability or a military or overseas voter, and therefore I am eligible to use this accessible Vote by Mail system.
- I understand that my selections marked by this system and submitted to my local elections official will then be transferred onto an official ballot for tabulation.
- I understand that my selections marked by this system must be printed by me and submitted to my local elections official. Ballots that are mailed must be postmarked by election day. Ballots that are not mailed must be received no later than 8 p.m. election day.

I certify that all of the above are true.

CONTINUE

Figure 3. RAVBM main page

With RAVBM serving as a voting option that will be new to many voters, it is likely OCROV will receive additional phone calls from voters on how to use the system. Training will be provided to OCROV staff who answer phone calls so they can walk a voter through using RAVBM.

It is important that voters be able to find RAVBM information easily on the OCROV website. OCROV is exploring developing more simplified messaging that is included with any communication sent out on RAVBM; for example, "Access, print, mark and mail your ballot all from home by using RAVBM."

Clear and concise messaging will be provided in the Voter Information Guide (VIG), on our website, on the RAVBM portal, and on our social media platforms. Potential other educational materials, such as videos and informational flyers could be developed and shared to OCROV social media platforms and sent out to our accessibility partners for additional outreach.

“Based on a projected number of Vote Centers, the total projected hiring to fully staff Vote Centers is approximately 1,200 CSRs.”

RECRUITMENT

In planning for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election, it is important to follow the guidelines set forth by both local authorities and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. To support a positive voting experience and successful election, current plans include 7 - 8 Vote Center Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) to be staffed at each Vote Center located throughout Orange County. Based on a projected number of 166 - 188 Vote Centers, the total projected hiring to fully staff Vote Centers is approximately 1,200 CSRs.

In response to the changes in the workplace, OCROV is taking an early approach to recruitment in order to enable reaching potential candidates earlier in the process to accommodate health and safety guidelines.

These steps will include:

- Contacting prior CSRs to determine if they are interested in working in
- Physically distanced and/or virtual interviews
- Strategically promote recruitment opportunities through colleges and universities and unemployment offices
- Mailing candidates onboarding packets to complete at home instead of in-person group meetings
- Scheduling appointments to return completed paperwork and provide required documentation instead of in-person group meetings

TRAINING

The goal of Training is to ensure CSRs are prepared to protect, respect, and value the rights of voters in a manner that does not risk the health or safety of the public or fellow CSRs. To achieve this goal, Training will be modified and incorporate both online and in-person methods to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and maximize opportunities to meet CSRs' learning needs.

Messaging

Messaging for all CSRs and employees will be developed to create habits that each will remember and follow. Specifically, messaging to CSRs will include the following habits to engage in:

- Stay at home if you're sick, have a fever, and other COVID-19 related symptoms
- Practice hand hygiene (frequent hand sanitization and washing)
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- Clean and disinfect voting equipment
- Safe practices during breaks and lunches as well as outside interaction

CSRs will be educated on protocols to follow regarding when they should notify OCROV and stay at home. A CDC flyer will be provided to all CSRs to provide guidance on facemask do's and don'ts, which will set guidance on the types of masks to wear and proper cleaning or disposal.

Online Training

Once hired and onboarded, CSRs will be given information and resources to complete their online training. CSRs will engage in distance learning and learn Vote Center procedures and processes from home rather than in a traditional classroom setting. A robust learning management system (LMS) will be utilized to allow CSRs to complete their online training on their own time by a specified deadline. The Training Team will verify each CSR passes their online training before assigning them to an in-person training class.



Figure 5. Screenshot of an online training program

In-Person Training

CSRs will be notified of their in-person training class shortly after they complete their online training. In-person training classes will take place onsite at OCROV with actual quantities of Vote Center equipment/supplies to provide practical training for CSRs. In-person training will follow health guidelines provided by the CDC, State, and local public health authorities and will be reduced to 1-day (as opposed to 3 days of training) with minimal person-to-person interaction to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

All in-person classes will have 15 to 25 CSRs per class with proper physical distancing and at least one member of the Training Team to answer questions and facilitate hands-on learning. Training will focus on voter processing, Vote Center procedures, and the physical set up, breakdown, repacking, and cleaning of equipment and supplies. The purpose of in-person training is to provide a safe environment for CSRs to practice procedures that cannot be replicated or substituted by watching a video.

Vote Center Lab

Online and in-person training will be designed to ensure CSRs are prepared to correctly perform their duties at Vote Centers to best serve voters. In addition, CSRs will practice processes and procedures at the Vote Center Lab at OCROV. The Vote Center Lab, the first-of-its kind in the United States, is a full-service replica of an ideal Vote Center. This Lab, operated year-round, is used to test new equipment and processes, offer a glimpse at what a typical voter might encounter, is available for tours and as a controlled training environment. This concept is similar to that of a restaurant test kitchen in the private sector, allowing for experimentation and testing in a controlled environment. Lab sessions will allow CSRs to test their ability to use voting systems and test their knowledge of common issues they could face at a Vote Center.

Cleaning Guidelines

In both the online and in-person components of training, CSRs will be given guidance on how to properly clean and disinfect the Vote Center and voting equipment. Not only will this prepare CSRs to perform these tasks while working at a Vote Center, but it will also keep the training equipment clean for the next CSR and subsequent in-person training classes.



Figure 6. Vote Center Lab

The opening and closing routines will be practiced during in-person training, so training equipment will receive regular cleaning. CSRs will also be advised to regularly wipe down commonly shared or touched surfaces throughout the day. This includes, but is not limited to, handles, styli, check-in tables, voting booths, and screens. Every CSR attendant role should be ready to clean shared surfaces to maintain a safe and healthy environment in training and at Vote Centers.

CSRs will be trained to follow a schedule of cleaning and disinfecting requirements that outlines the areas to disinfect, when to do so, frequency and items to use for cleaning. A daily checklist will be provided to CSRs to use as a guide for each day of the voting period.



Figure 7. Personal protective equipment (PPE) sample

CSR Roles and Responsibilities

To help provide a positive and safe voter experience, CSRs will be trained in each of the roles identified for the Vote Center below. In addition, CSR roles must be identified to help with the various requirements recommended for processing voters, as well as ensuring proper physical distancing, voter flow and disinfecting equipment.

To help achieve an ideal and safe voter flow, 7-8 CSRs is the ideal recommended number needed per Vote Center. The total number could vary due to size of Vote Center and set up as well as available CSRs.

Table 2. CSR roles and responsibilities

Role	Station	Duties
CSR Greeter	Entrance	Welcomes voters Communicates with voters Provides face coverings if needed Accepts VBM ballots Directs voters to next step
CSR Line Monitor	Stanchions Voting Area	Assists with line management/voter flow Helps manage disinfecting procedures
CSR Check-In Attendant	Check-In Area	Processes voters Helps manage disinfecting procedures
CSR Voting Attendant	Voting Area	Voter flow / management Helps manage disinfecting procedures
CSR Scanner Attendant	Scanner Area / Exit	Assists voters in completing voting process Helps manage disinfecting procedures

VOTE CENTER LOCATIONS

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(B)

The Voter's Choice Act establishes detailed criteria and formulas for the placement and locations of Vote Centers and ballot drop boxes. In planning for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election, Vote Centers and ballot drop box locations will continue to be decided based on specific considerations and requirements described below:

- Proximity to public transportation
- Proximity to communities with historically low vote-by-mail usage
- Proximity to population centers
- Proximity to language minority communities
- Proximity to voters with disabilities
- Proximity to communities with low rates of household vehicle ownership
- Proximity to low-income communities
- Proximity to geographically isolated populations
- Access to accessible and free parking
- The distance and time a voter must travel by car or public transportation
- Traffic patterns

Vote Center Formula and Considerations

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(l)

Recognizing that the current COVID-19 pandemic will likely continue to be a threat to public health through the November Election, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-67-20 to establish guidelines that county elections officials will need to comply with as they plan and prepare for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

Executive Order N-67-20 compels county election officials to, “draw up plans, among other steps – to ensure that the election is held in a manner that is accessible, secure, and safe.” In addition, the executive order emphasizes the need to continue to provide safe and accessible in-person voting opportunities to voters.

More specifically, Executive Order N-67-20 prescribes the following new formula for the establishment of Vote Centers:

- “Voter’s Choice Act (VCA) counties shall continue to provide at least one in-person voting location per 10,000 registered voters within the county from E-3 through Election Day, however, are not required to open any vote center prior to E-3.”
- Executive Order (N-67-20) also sets Vote Center operation hours for the established four-day voting period. Each Vote Center will need to be in operation for at least eight hours during the first three days of voting and from 7:00am to 8:00pm on Election Day.
- While Executive Order N-67-20 sets minimum operation standards for Vote Centers, it also encourages counties “to open Vote Centers earlier, where feasible...to maximize opportunities for voter participation in the November 3, 2020 General Election.”

By contrast, prior to COVID-19 and in absence of Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-67-20, Elections Code §4005 required VCA counties to provide one 11-day Vote Center for every 50,000 registered voters and one 4-day Vote Center for every 10,000 registered voters. Based on the formula outlined, the minimum requirements for Orange County include 33 vote centers open for 11 days, including Election Day, and 166 vote centers open for 4 days, including Election Day.

Based on the new Vote Center formula outlined in Executive Order N-67-20 and final voter registration numbers, Orange County plans to operate between 166 and 188 Vote Centers with the final number of Vote Centers determined based on voter registration numbers on August 7, 2020 or E-88.

Pending the final directives from the State on in-person voting guidelines, OCROV is currently planning to open Vote Centers for a total of 5 days, including Election Day. All Vote Centers will be in full operation during the established 5-day period of voting,

“Orange County plans to operate between 166 and 188 Vote Centers based on voter registration numbers on E-88.”

beginning on Friday, October 30, 2020 through Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, 2020.

As of this publication, the Governor's executive orders related to the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election are currently being challenged in court and a temporary stay has been issued, pending resolution of a procedural issue. The State legislature has passed Assembly Bill 860 to codify sections of Executive Order N-67-20 pertaining to vote-by-mail (VBM) guidelines. Senate Bill 423 is a bill that would codify the Governor's executive order as it relates to in-person voting guidelines for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election; this bill is currently going through the legislative process at the time of this publication.

Vote Center Minimum Requirements

Vote Centers will continue to be selected based on established VCA criteria, including accessibility to voters with disabilities and language needs, location availability, and public feedback. OCROV will also analyze voter turnout data from the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election to evaluate communities that are anticipated to have the greatest need for in-person voting opportunities.

OCROV will reexamine all Vote Center processes, from conducting the initial facility-based research, to developing the final voting room layouts and everything in between, to ensure compliance with all applicable health and safety guidelines and regulations set by the CDC, State, and local authorities.

Ultimately, OCROV will identify and assess hundreds of potential facilities to ensure that the Vote Center locations selected are distributed throughout Orange County in a manner that provides greater access and convenience for all voters.

Vote Center Facility Recruitment Process

Based on guidance provided by the SOS, OCROV will change its approach to how Vote Centers are recruited, assessed and secured for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

The recruitment process will include a careful review of all Vote Centers used in the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election to determine whether these sites would be acceptable under the new requirements due to COVID-19. During this initial review process, all voting rooms previously used will be carefully examined to determine whether there

“With physical distancing guidelines, the need to secure larger spaces is critical to ensuring the safety of staff and voters.”

“Given the challenges raised by COVID-19, OCROV will continue to avoid using facilities that house and offer services to individuals who are at a higher risk for COVID-19.”

is enough floorspace to account for physical distancing guidelines. If a voting room is determined to be too small, OCROV will explore if that facility has other larger rooms that may be able to serve as a voting room.

Despite the requirements now in place due to COVID-19, the facility recruitment process has traditionally favored facilities with larger rooms. With physical distancing guidelines, the need to secure larger spaces is critical to ensuring the safety of staff and voters. In the early phase of recruitment, OCROV will work closely with municipal partners and public agencies to identify all available facilities.

In addition to identifying larger voting rooms, OCROV will also pursue facilities that have large parking lots to accommodate drive-thru ballot drop off options, which supports physical distancing and creates more options for voters to return their ballot. Additionally, facilities that can offer ample open space outside of a voting room’s entrance are desirable as it allows voters to maintain proper physical distancing while waiting in line. OCROV will also take into consideration whether these facilities have pre-defined COVID-19 guidelines or procedures, such as revised maximum occupancy for the rooms we are pursuing.

Given the challenges raised by COVID-19, OCROV will continue to avoid using facilities that house and offer services to individuals who are at a higher risk for COVID-19, such as senior residential facilities. OCROV also intentionally excludes schools from the facility recruitment process as an ongoing commitment to campus security and instead targets school district offices. However, OCROV will continue to pursue the placement of Vote Centers on university, college, and community college campuses.

Scheduling & Conducting Accessibility Site Visits

Once a site has been identified as a possible Vote Center facility, it must be screened for accessibility to ensure that it complies with all requirements including those specified in the Secretary of State’s Polling Place Accessibility Guidelines. To achieve this, OCROV will continue to work directly with the facility site contacts to schedule a site visit appointment, during which an accessibility survey will be completed.

The process of scheduling and completing an accessibility survey will need significant operational changes due to challenges raised by COVID-19. As an example, when reaching out to a site contact to schedule an appointment, it will be important to convey that OCROV

staff will be unable to complete the accessibility survey if it is at the time of the appointment occupied or in use by others due to physical distancing requirements.

Prior to COVID-19, OCROV staff carpooled together to each appointment to complete the accessibility survey. During the site visit, OCROV staff will work together to gather all necessary measurements, take photos, and collect all other required data. While completing the accessibility survey, OCROV staff utilizes several measurement tools and an iPad to record data for all measurements.

In response to COVID-19, all county vehicles will be equipped with hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes so the vehicle can be properly cleaned upon entering and returning to the OCROV office.

Furthermore, all measurement tools and iPads utilized during the survey will also need to be properly wiped and disinfected before and after each use. OCROV staff will practice physical distancing and wear a face covering as they work together to conduct the accessibility survey. Gloves will be worn when taking measurements of high-touch areas such as when measuring doorknob height. Following the recording of all necessary measurements, OCROV staff will proceed to sanitize everything that was touched or handled in the room.

Training will be provided to OCROV staff who will be completing accessibility surveys, which will be updated to include the above-mentioned changes. OCROV will explore the possibility of assigning specific roles among staff completing the surveys in order to minimize the need for an iPad to be passed back and forth.

Moreover, accessibility surveys must include additional “physical distancing” data points that will be critical to the proper configuration of each Vote Center layouts in response to COVID-19. In addition to the typical measurements, OCROV staff will also take photos and measurements of the space outside of a voting room for a potential line queue and capture areas in parking lots that may be large enough to accommodate drive-thru ballot drop off opportunities. Added measurements will also be needed for the distance between each voting stations and at any entry and exit points. Capturing all these measurements will be critical to creating proper Vote Center layouts that will abide by all accessibility requirements while also observing the public health and safety guidelines for in-person voting locations.

OCROV staff will practice physical distancing and wear a face covering as they work together to conduct the accessibility survey.

“OCROV will ensure all voting equipment ensures independent, private voting while also adhering to the public health and safety guidelines.”

Vote Center Layout

§4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(XI)

All Vote Centers will be equipped with multiple electronic check-in stations that will allow Vote Center CSRs to quickly and easily look up and process a voter. At Vote Centers, a voter will be able to:

- Vote in-person
- Drop off a vote-by-mail ballot
- Use an accessible ballot marking device that allows voters with disabilities to vote independently
- Receive a replacement ballot
- Obtain language assistance
- Register to vote or update registration information

OCROV will implement guidelines to ensure all voting equipment is placed in a manner that allows a voter to mark their ballot independently and privately while also adhering to the public health and safety guidelines. Each check-in station will have its own supplies to avoid CSRs from having touch the same items, which can be stored behind or under tables.

Vote Center layouts will need to be sensitive to the accessibility needs of voters, accommodate the varying shapes and sizes of each voting location, and minimum space requirements to allow for physical distancing between each voting station, within the line queuing area, and throughout the entire voting space.

Using much of the data gathered during the accessibility survey and site assessment phase, OCROV will create a detailed Vote Center room diagram for each Vote Center. Each Vote Center room diagram will clearly designate an area for the check-in stations, line queuing, each piece of voting equipment, as well as other pertinent information.

In addition, OCROV will also implement the following at all Vote Center locations to protect those that might be at higher risk of COVID-19:

- Personal protective equipment for CSRs (hand sanitizer, gloves, face coverings, face shields, tissues)
- Increased signage explaining physical distancing protocols while inside and outside Vote Centers



Figure 8. Vote Center sample layout

- Increased opportunities for curbside voting (where possible)
- Opportunities for drive-thru ballot drop off voting
- Cleaning supplies to support periodic disinfecting of all voting equipment including all modification equipment (this may include disinfectant wipes, paper towels, no-touch trashcans, fabric disinfectant)
- Disposable items to minimize multiple contacts between voters (ear covers for headphones, pens, secrecy folders)
- Hand sanitizer will be available
- “I Voted” sticker dispenser to eliminate a CSR having to manually hand out to voters or left out as a roll for many voters to touch
- Promotion of digital resources such as the VIG and Sample Ballot

As outlined above, OCROV will be making all necessary adjustments to Vote Center operations to prioritize the health and safety of staff and voters in order to offer safe, accessible, and secure in-person voting options in the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

Vote Center Operations

OCROV anticipates the possibility of longer wait times even at larger Vote Centers due to having less voting equipment and limiting the number of voters inside the voting room due to physical distancing. This can be mitigated by encouraging voters to vote early, avoid peak voting hours, and to utilize the wait time tool on the OCROV website.

Voters will be encouraged to wear face coverings, and one will be provided if they do not bring one; all CSRs will be required to wear face coverings. Given that there may be situations where voters are reluctant or refuse to wear face coverings, CSRs will be trained in de-escalation tactics and review opportunities to increase physical distance between the voter and others inside the voting room.

OCROV understands that some voters will hesitate to vote at a Vote Center due to COVID-19 concerns. Voter flow inside of a Vote Center will also be considered to limit crowding and exposure. As an alternative, OCROV will offer voting options that will allow voters to receive a replacement VBM ballot from their car or utilize a drive-thru VBM drop off without ever entering a Vote Center.

BALLOT DROP BOX LOCATIONS

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(B)

The VCA establishes detailed criteria and formulas for the placement and locations of Vote Centers and ballot drop boxes. Vote Centers and ballot drop box locations will be decided based on specific considerations and requirements described below:

- Proximity to public transportation
- Proximity to communities with historically low vote-by-mail usage
- Proximity to population centers
- Proximity to language minority communities
- Proximity to voters with disabilities
- Proximity to communities with low rates of household vehicle ownership
- Proximity to low-income communities
- Proximity to geographically isolated populations
- Access to accessible and free parking
- The distance and time a voter must travel by car or public transportation
- Traffic patterns

Ballot Drop Boxes

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(II)

The VCA requires counties to provide at least one ballot drop box location for every 15,000 registered voters. Voter registration data was analyzed to determine the estimated number of ballot drop boxes needed in each city and unincorporated area. Currently, OCROV has 110 ballot drop boxes installed throughout Orange County and is considering adding a few more in targeted areas for additional coverage based on increasing voter registration.

Minimum criteria are being considered and evaluated while researching any potential ballot drop box location. Ballot drop box sites that will best provide voters with additional options to securely, safely and conveniently drop off their ballots are being considered.



Figure 9. Ballot drop box

“The VCA requires counties to provide at least one ballot drop box location for every 15,000 registered voters.”

Additionally, best efforts are being made to identify locations with existing security camera coverage while avoiding placement at established Vote Centers and post offices.

Ballot Drop Box Minimum Requirements

Elections Code §3025(a)(2), Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(VI)

In addition to the VCA minimum requirements, the SOS provides additional regulations such as accessibility and language requirements. Ballot drop boxes have been designed to include translated legal language on the ballot drop box's exterior wrapping. The viability of a potential location is also dependent on meeting minimum accessibility requirements as determined by a detailed assessment and approval from the site property owner. OCROV will continue to work with disability community partners to ensure all accessibility requirements are being met, while also exploring additional accessible best practices for future consideration.

With the temporary stay issued on Executive Order N-67-20, OCROV is moving forward with planning to have at least one ballot drop box location every 15,000 registered voters to meet guidelines set by the VCA. Ballot drop box locations shall be available for ballot drop-off beginning 29 days before Election Day on Monday, October 5, 2020, and continuing through the close of voting on Tuesday, November 3, 2020. All OCROV ballot drop boxes are available to voters 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Ballot drop boxes are placed outdoors in public locations and are equipped with preventative security measures such as anti-vandalism coating on the exterior wrapping as well as fire suppression mechanisms installed inside each ballot drop box.

Ballot Drop Box Location Review and Recruitment Process

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(VI)

In preparation for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election, OCROV will review and analyze all 110 ballot drop boxes that are currently installed throughout the County. The evaluation will include the number of ballots returned at each ballot drop box during the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election, the current license agreement terms and end date, security camera coverage, public access hours, accessible parking spaces, lighting near and

around the ballot drop box, and any reported damage/issues. OCROV recognizes it is a best practice to conduct a full analysis of ballot drop box usage after a full election cycle that includes both primary and general elections. However, OCROV is aware that some existing ballot drop box locations have had their parking lot access hours changed. OCROV will be relocating existing ballot drop boxes that currently have restricted facility parking lot access hours to provide additional access to voters.

The review process will also factor in voter registration data to ensure there is adequate coverage throughout Orange County and unincorporated areas. There may be instances where there is a need for added ballot drop box coverage for certain areas where there are unique communities, such as college student populations or large senior populations. OCROV is currently working with the University of California, Irvine to add a drive-thru only ballot drop box on their campus. The ballot drop box will provide coverage for the surrounding communities while offering students and staff a safe and convenient ballot drop off location.

Every new potential site will undergo a site assessment to determine suitability and accessibility requirements. Similar to adjustments being made to Vote Center accessibility site visits, ballot drop box site visits need to be modified to ensure the safety of staff and the public. OCROV staff will now need to take separate vehicles to every ballot drop box site visit. During the ballot drop box site visit, OCROV staff members will utilize face coverings and gloves and maintain physical distancing during the visit. In addition, disinfectant wipes will be provided to staff members to wipe down all measurement tools and supplies.

After the ballot drop box site visit is completed, OCROV staff will complete a diagram with measurements and photos of the proposed ballot drop box area. Each proposed ballot drop box location will undergo a formal review and approval process by the Registrar of Voters. Once the ballot drop box location is approved internally, OCROV staff will prepare a license agreement with the site's property owner. After OCROV receives the signed license agreement by authorized signers, the license agreement will be given to the Registrar of Voters and County Counsel for full and final execution. Any new ballot drop boxes will be installed and made available for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election only after a fully executed license agreement is in place.

Ballot Drop Boxes Days/Hours of Operation

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(VI)

All ballot drop boxes will be open to the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. As mentioned earlier, there are a few existing ballot drop box locations in which the facility parking lot access hours changed. OCROV evaluated those locations and will be relocating the existing ballot drop boxes to alternate locations that will allow public access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during the voting period.

Ballot Drop Box Collections (Pick-Up)

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(VI)

The collection of ballots from ballot drop box locations must meet the guidelines and regulations set by the VCA, SOS, and pending the final outcomes on the temporary stay of Executive Order N-67-20, which include:

- At least the following number of vote-by-mail ballot drop-off locations (as defined in Elections Code section 3025(a)(2)) is made available for ballot drop-off beginning no later than 9 a.m. on Tuesday, October 6, 2020, and continuing during regular business hours each day through the close of voting on Tuesday, November 3, 2020:
 - At least one vote-by-mail ballot drop-off location per 15,000 registered voters; and not less than two vote-by-mail ballot drop-off locations regardless of the number of registered voters.”
- Ballots shall be retrieved from drop boxes at times determined by the elections official, but shall be subject to the following:
 - Ballots shall be retrieved from both staffed and unstaffed drop boxes at least every 96 hours, excluding Saturdays and Sundays, between the 29th day before the election and the 10th day before an election.
 - Ballots shall be retrieved from staffed drop boxes at least every 72 hours, excluding Saturdays and Sundays, after the 10th day before the election through the closing of the polls on Election Day. The elections official shall develop procedures for contacting locations of staffed drop boxes between ballot retrieval periods to determine if an additional retrieval is needed.



Figure 10. Ballot collection vehicles

“The ballots at Ballot Drop Boxes in Orange County will be picked up every day beginning at E-10, including weekends.”

- Ballots shall be retrieved from unstaffed drop boxes every 24 hours, excluding Saturdays and Sundays, hours after the 10th day prior to an election through the closing of the polls on Election Day.

The procedures for retrieving ballots from Ballot Drop Boxes are followed as outlined by in California Code of Regulations §20137. These include Chain of Custody documentation and processing, oath of office and acceptance at our office.

The ballots at Ballot Drop Boxes in Orange County will be picked up every other day beginning at E-29 and then every day beginning at E-10, including weekends. OCROV utilizes chain of custody documentation and processing, oath of office and acceptance at our office to ensure compliance with State regulations to retrieve ballots.

Ballot Collection Teams will use different randomized routes each day to collect ballots from ballot drop boxes. While at an assigned ballot drop box, the Ballot Collection Teams check for security seals, evidence of any tampering, and whether ballots were received. Security seal numbers are recorded on chain of custody documentation to verify both existing and replacement seals. A security seal is placed on the ballot retrieval bag and a new bag is placed in the Ballot Drop Box before the box is resealed.

Each Ballot Collection Team carries cleaning supplies to clean the Ballot Drop Box on each visit. This includes an all-purpose spray cleaner, isopropyl alcohol, cleaning rags, a cleaning sponge and nitrile gloves. Due to COVID-19, physical distancing will be practiced by the team of two individuals driving two separate vehicles to maintain physical distancing. During each visit, one staff member will check for ballots and the other staff member and observes the process and fills out the chain of custody documentation while maintaining physical distancing. The ballot drop box is then cleaned by one staff member while the other staff member keeps the ballot collection bag in their possession and is socially distanced. These practices have already been implemented during the April 7, 2020 City of Westminster Special Recall Election and May 19, 2020 City of Santa Ana Special Recall Election.

The ballots are loaded into the vehicle while observed by both staff members. The team is always maintaining radio contact with OCROV when they arrive and depart from the ballot drop box location. When arriving back to the OCROV office, the ballots are checking in by a

team assigned to verify chain of custody forms and seals using physical distancing. Once the chain of custody has been verified ballots are placed in assigned trays by Ballot Drop Box until they are sorted by precinct. The Ballot Collection Teams will be assigned to use the same vans throughout the collection process but will still wipe down commonly touched surfaces in the vehicle at the end of each day.

On Election Day, all ballot drop boxes will be closed and locked at 8:00 p.m. or after the last voter in line by 8:00 p.m. has dropped off their ballot. OCROV will utilize the support from county employees as part of the County Employee Program, which is known as the Ballot Drop Box Strike Force team, to complete this task countywide. This team is comprised of trained County Employees who are assigned to a drop box in teams of 2 to coordinate the closing of the ballot drop box on Election Night. This includes traffic control, accepting ballots and locking the box at 8:00 p.m. During the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election, over 200 county employees were recruited and assigned to close 110 ballot drop boxes. All Ballot Drop Box Strike Force team members received in-person training on Election Day where they were provided with their assignments, instructions and a supply kit. Every Ballot Drop Box Strike Force team member drove separately to their assigned ballot drop box. Each team of two team members worked together to assist voters with traffic control, closing, and locking the ballot drop box. At the end of the night, one team member was responsible for returning the supplies to an assigned collection center.

With COVID-19 public health physical distancing and cleaning guidelines, OCROV is exploring conducting virtual training for Ballot Drop Box Strike Force team members. Training will be updated to include important safety measures considering COVID-19 such as physical distancing, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and disinfectant wipes. Current planning discussions include determining how each Ballot Drop Box Strike Force team will receive their supply kit and identifying OCROV staff that can serve as backups in case of any last-minute cancellations or no shows. In addition, each team's supply kit will also include gloves, face coverings, and disinfectant wipes.

“During the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election, over 200 county employees were recruited and assigned to close 110 ballot drop boxes.”

SERVICES FOR VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES

How a Voter with Disabilities may request a VBM, RAVBM, or Replacement Ballot

Elections Code §4005(a)(5), §4005(a)(10)(l)(ii)

While the ways to request a VBM, RAVBM or replacement ballots will not change due to COVID-19, the types of voters able to request a RAVBM ballot has changed. A person with a disability or those impacted by COVID-19 can request a VBM, RAVBM, or replacement ballot via the website, through email, over the phone, in written form, or in person at the OCROV office. Voters will also be able to request a VBM or a replacement ballot in person at any vote center and request a RAVBM through the postage-paid postcard included with every VIG.

Type and Number of Accessible Voting Machines

Elections Code §4005(a)(2)(B), §4005(a)(4)(D), §4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(X)

As mentioned earlier in the Vote Center section, the implementation of physical distancing will affect the number of voting stations that will fit inside each Vote Center, which includes accessible voting booths and the Hart InterCivic Verity Touch Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs). Each location continue to have three BMDs per VCA. Larger locations received four to five additional Ballot Marking Devices in the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election may now only receive the minimum number of BMDs due to physical distancing measures and limited room size. However, additional equipment will be sent to larger Vote Centers when possible.

Type and Number of Reasonable Modifications at Vote Centers

Elections Code §4005(a)(6)(D), §4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(X)

At locations that may be particularly hilly or have broken sidewalks, curbside voting would be available to provide additional voting options for voters with accessibility needs. Curbside voting allows voters to vote from their vehicle using paper ballot without entering the vote center. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 threat, curbside voting will be available to voters with disabilities, voters experiencing limited mobility, and voters affected by COVID-19.

To protect voters who may be at higher risk, high-touched surfaces and voting booths will be required to be sanitized between use. This includes high-touch areas such as: ePollbooks, styli, handrails, door handles, modification equipment, printers, printer tables, the headphones and tactile controller on BMDs, and the voting booths. Disposable pens and single-use disposable ear covers for headphones will be provided so that each voter has access to an unused and clean equipment.

“High-touched surfaces and voting booths will be required to be sanitized between use”

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES

OCROV is nationally recognized as a leader in providing comprehensive and innovative language assistance services to voters. From having dedicated bilingual staff prepare culturally appropriate translations and support voters with language needs through video conferencing, OCROV is committed to providing numerous opportunities for language communities to receive assistance for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

Translated Reference Ballots and Language Assistance Card

Elections Code §13400

Per Elections Code §14201, OCROV is required to provide translated reference ballots at targeted precincts and a sign indicating that translated reference ballots in Tagalog, Farsi (Persian), Japanese, Hindi, and Gujarati are available at targeted precincts.

The targeted precincts are identified, and the corresponding ballot types are translated by a contracted vendor per requirements under §13307. Translated reference ballot will be posted in a binder on a table at every Vote Center and copies will be available as a reference guide for voters. In addition to receiving a translated reference ballot at a Vote Center, voters who indicate a preference for translated election materials in one of the identified languages and is registered to an address that is a targeted precinct will be mailed a translated reference ballot. As a result of COVID-19, translated reference ballots will be laminated so they can easily wiped down and disinfected between use.

Orange County provides an inclusive language assistance sign, which not only lists the availability of translated reference ballots but all language services available at Vote Centers. Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles previously described OCROV’s language assistance card as “a best practice on how to provide language assistance signage for all counties.” Currently, information pertaining to the language ability of CSRs is included in the Voter Information Sign that is placed at the front of all Vote Centers

“OCROV is nationally recognized as a leader in providing comprehensive and innovative language assistance services to voters.”



Figure 11. Vote Center closure sign translated in different languages

alongside other important voter notifications such as the Voter Bill of Rights.

Language Assistance Services included in VIGs and Website

Elections Code §4005(a)(8)(B)

Voters will be notified of their ability to request translated election materials and language assistance services in the VIG through the postage-paid postcard and online at ocvote.com/language.

Bilingual Vote Center Staffing and Supported Languages

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)(IX)

OCROV will determine which Vote Centers are located in or adjacent to a precinct that meets language requirements under the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) for in-person language assistance. OCROV previously solicited public input regarding which Vote Centers should be staffed by individuals who are fluent in specific languages, pursuant to subdivision (c) of §12303 and §203 of the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA). Every effort will be made to recruit and assign bilingual staff to these Vote Centers.

At Vote Centers identified as meeting language assistance requirements, voters will still have alternate options to receive effective in-language assistance such as translated written materials, assistance over a telephone call, and assistance through video conferencing.

Bilingual Vote Center staff prominently wear badges that indicate their ability to speak and assist voters in other languages. The unique design of this badge matches OCROV's branding and both Vote Center staff and voters can easily identify Vote Center staff that can provide language assistance to voters. Below is an example of a badge used in the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election.



Figure 12. A sample badge of a bilingual CSR

“Bilingual Vote Center staff prominently wear badges that indicate their ability to speak and assist voters in other languages.”

Toll-Free Voter Phone Line and Multilingual Public Phone Bank

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(vii), §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(I)

Leading up to Election Day, OCROV operates a public phone bank that is staffed with bilingual operators in federal and state required languages to provide in-language assistance to voters before, during, and after an election. Any gaps in coverage will be supported by a third-party vendor. Voters needing language assistance may also call a toll-free voter phone line to ask questions and receive voting and election-related information. The toll-free phone number is 1-888-628-6837 and it will be activated closer to the voting period. The phone number will be published online and provided in media outreach and direct voter contacts such as the VIG. There will be one toll-free number to serve the public, including language communities.

Video Conferencing

To supplement in-person support to voters requesting language assistance, video conferencing will be available to provide multilingual assistance at all Vote Centers. This will ensure that voters needing language assistance will be able to interact with trained bilingual staff who can verbally and visually guide the voter to meaningfully participate in the voting process, even if there is not bilingual staff physically present at the Vote Center. Telephone support will also be available depending on the preference of the requesting voter.

Supported languages include:

- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Chinese
- Korean

“Video conferencing will ensure that voters will be able to interact with trained bilingual staff even if there is not bilingual staff physically present at the Vote Center.”

POST-ELECTION AUDITS

The post-election audit is the final step in the canvass period before certifying the election. In 2018, Assembly Bill (AB) 2125 authorized counties to use risk-limiting audits in lieu of the one percent (1%) manual tally. For the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election, OCROV concurrently conducted the 1% manual tally and a risk-limiting audit. The risk-limiting audit was solely conducted for the April 7, 2020 City of Westminster Special Recall Election and the May 19, 2020 City of Santa Ana Special Recall Election.

Beginning with the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election, and in direct response to COVID-19, OCROV began implementing public health measures to safeguard staff and the public during the 1% manual tally and the risk-limiting audit. Public health and safety measures will continue to be implemented during the post-election audits for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

Preparation for Post-Election Audits

Conducting post-election audits takes considerable amount of space. A risk-limiting audit requires all ballots cast to be organized in their scanned batch order so that staff can easily locate and pull each randomly identified ballot that will be reviewed during the audit process. To observe the required physical distancing guidelines, scanned ballot batches will be spread across several tables, positioned six feet apart. While this process will require hundreds of feet of space, it will allow staff to quickly and safely locate any ballot in a batch.

The ballot manifest and random seed are essential components of a risk-limiting audit. The ballot manifest is a list of all ballots cast in the entire election, organized in a table that allows the risk-limiting tool to randomly select ballots to be audited and individual ballots to be located. The random seed is a 20-digit number generated using multiple ten-sided dice, individually rolled by various people. The random seed, contest results, and the ballot manifest are used to generate a sequence of ballots to audit. The rolling of dice will be recorded and available online along with the 20-digit random seed.

Transparency and the ability for the public to observe the audit process is a key component of any post-election audit, including risk-limiting audits. For the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election,



Figure 13. Post-election audits in Warehouse

OCROV will implement observation guidelines intended to protect the public and staff. To mitigate the risk of COVID-19 and ensure the public can observe the post-election audit process, the risk-limiting random seed selection and the manual examination of ballots will be video live-streamed. Additionally, members of the public will be allowed to physically observe the audit process in a designated area. The public observation area will include chairs positioned six feet apart to ensure proper physical distancing measures are followed. Computer monitors will also be placed in the observation area so that members of the public can safely observe the examination of the ballots. The public five-day notice announcing the risk-limiting audit will include public observation protocols and the link for the online video live-streaming.

Audit Boards

The physical examination of ballots is conducted by multiple audit boards composed of four individuals each tasked with a specific role. Due to risks associated with COVID-19, OCROV will identify a large area to accommodate the setup of multiple tables for each audit board, while following proper physical distancing protocols. Each audit board member will be seated at a table placed in a manner that allows six feet of physical distancing from each other and from other audit board tables.

Additionally, audit board members will be equipped with PPEs such as facemasks, gloves, hand sanitizer, and disinfecting wipes. Furthermore, audit board members will be provided fifteen minutes to sanitize their work areas at the beginning of the day, after lunch, and at the end of each day the post-election audit is taking place. All post-election audit health and safety protocols will be included in the training provided to those taking part in the post-election audit process.

“To mitigate the risk of COVID-19 and ensure the public can observe the post-election audit process, the audit process be video live-streamed.”

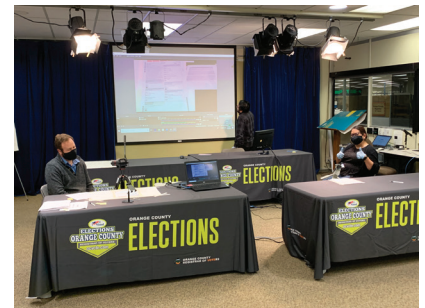


Figure 14. Post-election audits in a conference room

PUBLIC OBSERVATION

In response to the challenge of providing public access to observe election operations, OCROV developed a scalable solution where members of the public can safely view from a distance onsite and remotely via livestream to accommodate preferences. Priority was placed on the solution to be very flexible as operations and business needs can change quickly. A limit to the flexibility of this solution would be the actual physical space of the OCROV's office; for example, there is finite amount of space to place cameras and viewing monitors.

OCROV debuted livestreaming prior to COVID-19 to support members of the public who were able to physically be present for certain processes such as the rolling of the die for a risk-limiting audit and the Election Administration Plan public hearing in 2019. Livestreaming is hosted on OCROV's website where members of the public can select different options for which process to view and observe.

Some of the past processes and views offered via livestreaming have included: risk-limiting audits, canvass processes (examples include signature challenges, 1% manual tally, etc.), and recount processes. In the future, OCROV plans to expand on top of what has already been accomplished; specifically, equipment and processes are being developed so members of the public will be able to remotely observe ballot duplication. More cameras and different types of cameras (i.e., wide angle cameras, document cameras, etc.) are being purchased to support members of the public being able to view more processes and areas throughout the election period.

OCROV has also developed a solution for members of the public to view processes and operations from a distance at OCROV's office through big-screen monitors. As of this publication, eighteen 43" monitors have been purchased for this purpose. Through these monitors for in-person distanced observation, members of the public will be able to observe the same processes listed above. OCROV estimates that at least five members of the public can observe at each monitor, dependent on available space to safely physical distance from each other. These monitors will also allow the same view to appear across different monitors; for example, 8 monitors can show the same from view from a single camera.

Additionally, OCROV utilizes a video conferencing service to conduct virtual meetings and support operations. In the past, . As OCROV

"Livestreaming is hosted on OCROV's website where members of the public can select different options for which process and view to observe."



Figure 15. Public observation during post-election audits

looks to conduct community outreach and engagement, virtual presentations to be conducted through video conferencing will be offered. A new feature of the online candidate filing portal is the ability for a candidate to request an appointment to execute the Oath of Office on the Declaration of Candidacy via video conferencing with the assigned agent. For the first time, this completely removes the need for in-person visits to complete candidate filing paperwork.

Information on public observation of Vote Center operations will be provided in the updated 2020 Election Observer Guidelines Handbook. The Handbook is anticipated to be released to the public in Fall 2020.

As OCROV continues its planning for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election, OCROV will continue to look for opportunities to expand the ability of the public to observe election operations while prioritizing public health and safety of all.

OVERVIEW OF VOTER EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PLAN

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(i), §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(VI)

OCROV is committed to cultivating new relationships with community organizations and stakeholders, as well as strengthening our existing relationships with community partners as changes are implemented in preparation of the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election amidst COVID-19.

This Voter Education and Outreach Plan (VEOP) will highlight strategies such as working with community organizations, approaches that will increase our presence in the community, and embarking on creative and experimental efforts to reach voters. In an abundance of caution, OCROV will be focusing on pursuing virtual opportunities to reach voters and provide information.

Public Notices

A major effort OCROV is to provide many public notices to inform voters of the change. These public notices will include:

- Press releases
- Postcards/flyers
- Emails
- Voter Information Guide (VIG)
- Vote-by-mail (VBM) packet
- Website

Community Partners

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(III)

Successfully maintaining a community outreach program includes maintaining established partnerships with community-based groups/ organizations. OCROV has existing relationships with dedicated individuals from various organizations across Orange County including: advocacy groups, civic groups, citizen leagues, senior centers, churches,

and other organizations. These relationships have begun as far back as 1998 and the number of organizations continues to grow each year.

Community Election Working Group

The Community Election Working Group (CEW) is a diverse 25-member community advisory board committed to making sure elections are open and accessible. Since its inception in 2009, quarterly CEW meetings have been conducted which have cultivated valuable input from the community regarding the elections process. The advisory group also provides a forum for OCROV to update the community on election issues and promote community involvement.

Membership includes, but is not limited to, representation from the Latino community, Asian community, City Clerks, League of Women Voters, Republican Party, Democratic Party, alternative parties, senior community, veterans community, disabled community, youth population (voters ages 18 to 25) and at-large positions.

Meetings have typically been held in person; in light of COVID-19, these meetings have been taken hosted virtually through video conferencing. The virtual format has resulted in higher participation and attendance overall and OCROV will consider other opportunities to engage the community virtually in the future.

CEW Subcommittee Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee & Language Accessibility Advisory Committees

Elections Code §4005(a)(9)(A), §4005(a)(9)(B), §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(I)

Implemented in early 2017, the CEW Subcommittee Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) and the CEW Subcommittee Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) are two independent committees of the CEW that designated to focus on the needs of voters with disabilities and language minority communities.

The mission of the LAAC is to advise and assist the OCROV with implementation of federal and state laws relating to language access, so that all voters can meaningfully participate in the voting process. The LAAC also provides recommendations identifying and prioritizing activities, programs, and policies to ensure equal access to the ballot. The responsibilities of the committee include the following: providing expertise on language accessibility issues; promoting language accessibility initiatives; and responding to the OCROV's questions regarding language support.

The mission of the VAAC is to advise and assist the OCROV with providing services to voters with accessibility needs and meeting state and federal requirements, so all opportunities to provide equal access are explored. The VAAC also provides recommendations identifying and prioritizing activities, programs, and policies to ensure voters with disabilities can independently cast a ballot. The responsibilities of the committee include the following: providing expertise on accessibility matters; incorporating accessibility procedures into operations; and providing feedback to the OCROV regarding accessibility standards and outreaching to voters with accessibility needs.

Methods to Identify Language Communities

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(V)

OCROV utilizes the number of voters who request language assistance through voter registration forms. Voters may also notify OCROV of their language preference via telephone, fax, email or online to update their language preference. Sources such as the United States Census Bureau help identify areas where there may be communities that have limited-English proficiency and may need language assistance.

In addition, OCROV receives input from language community partners on the geographic distribution of where language communities exist in Orange County.

High Schools

OCROV has strong relationships with high schools through its award-winning MyBallot program. The MyBallot program provides high school students a history of voting and interactive opportunities to learn about ballot generation, administering a student election with official voting equipment, and overseeing tabulation of election results. Since its inception in 2010, over 4,000 students from 22 high schools participated and gained a better understanding of the election process and voting.

The MyBallot program was developed with the traditional polling place model and will be reimaged with the transition to Vote Centers after 2020. OCROV will leverage its existing relationships with high schools to provide pre-registration opportunities, information on how elections are conducted under the Vote Center model and describe how voting and elections will be modified due to COVID-19 for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

“Since its inception in 2010, over 4,000 students from 22 high schools participated and gained a better understanding of the election process and voting.”

Colleges and Universities

There are approximately 28 colleges and universities with campuses in Orange County. OCROV has built relationships with colleges and universities through hosting tabling events on campus where voting and election information is provided, voter registration training to student organizations, and speaking engagements during classes and at student club meetings.

Initial conversations have taken place on hosting virtual webinars to inform students, faculty, and staff on the changes to voting and elections for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election. Additionally, OCROV is exploring the possibility of hosting Vote Centers on campus and is in discussion with staff to determine whether there are rooms that meeting minimum size requirements due to physical distancing. Ballot drop boxes were installed on campus at numerous colleges and universities prior to the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election and will be utilized for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

Business Partners

OCROV will partner with business associations and chambers of commerce to provide virtual speaking engagements, offer voter registration training, and serve as a resource to answer any questions about the voting process. Given COVID-19, OCROV will explore alternate methods to engage with business community while keeping public health and safety guidelines in mind.

Speaking Engagements and Community Events

Speaking Engagements

The speaking engagement component of OCROV's community outreach program is an integral part of outreaching to voters of many different backgrounds throughout Orange County. Covering a diverse and expansive area, the program aims to achieve the following goals:

- Educate voters on the electoral process, including the transition to the vote center model
- Provide information on special programs, online features and voter registration
- Network and pursue collaborative opportunities

The focus is to provide small and large-scale communication to the community. Previously, speaking engagements were conducted while attending various community meetings and events. With many events being cancelled and/or being held online, OCROV will be conducting non-partisan, neutral, and culturally sensitive presentations virtually instead.

As many groups exist within Orange County, speaking engagements allow OCROV to promote services, build partnerships, and interact with various communities. Targeted groups have included, but are not limited, to the following:

- Community groups
- Rotary clubs
- Parent Teacher Associations
- Cultural clubs
- Service organizations
- Churches
- Universities
- Student organization
- Non-profit organizations
- Senior citizen centers
- Citizenship classes
- Professional associations
- Public service agencies
- Youth groups

Speakers Bureau

In addition to speaking engagements supported by OCROV staff, the Speakers Bureau will be reconfigured to train and support community leaders to present election and voting information as trusted community messengers. OCROV previously operated a Speakers Bureau program during the 2004 rollout of new voting equipment and leading up to the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election to inform voters of the change to Vote Centers. For the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election, the Speakers Bureau will be focused on informing voters how to safely vote amid COVID-19 and the entire program will be conducted virtually.

Individuals participating in the Speakers Bureau will receive training and presentation materials to effectively provide a general overview of the transition to vote centers.

Voting System Demonstrations

Following a detailed and transparent procurement process, Orange County rolled out a new voting system in the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election which replaced the existing 15-year old voting system.

To raise awareness and provide for public education, OCROV will host virtual voting system demonstrations in advance of the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election where the public will be able to learn about the new voting system. Community organizations may invite OCROV to provide a virtual voting system demonstration and videos may be developed as well.

“OCROV will host virtual voting system demonstrations in advance of the November General Election.”

Community Events

To maintain OCROV’s presence in the community, OCROV will monitor opportunities to conduct presentations and network remotely. Through established relationships and community engagement calendars from years past, OCROV has access to many organizations and communities that are also seeking to engage the public through virtual events. OCROV will provide presentations at virtual events to relay information about the changes to voting and other election information. Staff will virtually engage the public, answer questions, and assist in filling out voter registration forms. By participating in these events, OCROV will have access to thousands of individuals in communities throughout Orange County.

Elected Officials and Government Agencies

OCROV will leverage existing working relationships with government agencies and elected officials to raise public awareness of the transition to vote centers.

City Clerk Partnership

OCROV hosted several collaborative meetings with Orange County city clerks to proactively inform them of changes to voting and elections for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election. Topics included candidate filing reminders, online candidate filing to support physical distancing, important dates, Vote Center location recruitment, etc.

Meetings will continue in order strengthen the ongoing partnerships to relay information and support voters between OCROV, elected officials, and government agencies.

The Orange County Transportation Agency

The Orange County Transportation Agency (OCTA) is the official provider of countywide public transportation in Orange County. OCROV intends to wrap public buses and bus stop benches with vote center marketing. By utilizing this strategy, the opportunity not

only raises the awareness of Vote Centers among voters who utilize public transportation but also any individual in the vicinity of a public transportation vehicle or stop.

Vote Center Marketing Package for Government Agencies

A virtual marketing package will be developed for government agencies to offer informational materials at a variety of public agency locations. Translated marketing materials will be available and provided to government agencies by request.

The package will include, but not be limited to:

- Brochures
- Flyers
- Videos
- Radio recordings
- Map and List of Vote Center and Ballot Drop Box Locations

General Media Plan

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(I)

To inform Orange County voters of the upcoming changes to voting and elections, OCROV will take an expansive approach to reach as many voters as possible, multiple times. By using a blend of social media, direct mail, print, broadcast, video, online, and radio approaches, our goal is to saturate the spectrum of media outlets for voters to increase the potential for a voter to see and hear about the changes to voting for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

Media Partners

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(II), §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(VIII)

OCROV will provide press releases, video content, and social media content for mass distribution and publication to existing media partners and seek out other trusted media sources to relay communication. Accessibility options, methods to request an accessible ballot, Vote Center and ballot drop box locations, other general election information and other voting updates will be shared with media partners.

Additionally, Registrar of Voters Neal Kelley often appears on local and national media to speak as an elections expert and provide the perspective of an election official. These types of opportunities will be utilized to specifically support communicating changes on a macro level.

Language Media Partners

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(l)

Orange County's diverse communities receive news updates and information from a variety of sources, including language media outlets. OCROV has dedicated full-time staff to serve as liaisons to language communities and have developed strong relationships with language media partners in communities that speak Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Farsi (Persian), Tagalog, Gujarati, Hindi, and Japanese. Information on the upcoming election and the toll-free voter assistance hotline will be shared with language media partners.

Direct Voter Contacts

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(X)

OCROV plans to send a minimum of two direct mailers to advise all registered voters of the upcoming changes to elections and voting. The mailers may vary in size but will be designed to catch the attention of the voter with OCROV branding and messaging. The mailers may also provide information such as voting options, Vote Center and ballot drop box locations and hours, or when to expect a VIG or VBM ballot.

Postage-Paid Postcard for Requesting Materials in an Alternate Language or an Accessible Format

Elections Code §4005(a)(8)(B)(iii)

All registered voters will receive a postage-paid postcard in their VIG to request a VBM ballot in an accessible format and to request election materials in alternate languages per §14201 of the Elections Code and §203 of the federal Voting Rights Act.

Public Service Announcements

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(VIII), §4005(a)(10)(l)(i)(IX)

OCROV is developing a suite of over 70 videos of varying lengths and themes (translated in all required languages). The videos will be

informational as well as instructional such as notifying voters of the date of the election and different options for returning a ballot.

Filming will take place at various sites throughout Orange County, showcasing a sample Vote Center layout while observing physical distancing and how voters can safely cast and return their ballot.

The videos will be open-captioned and be in accessible formats to be inclusive of voters who are hard of hearing or deaf and voters who are blind or visually impaired. Additionally, videos will be audio-recorded in Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Farsi (Persian), Gujarati, Hindi, and Tagalog. Content will be provided to general media partners and language media partners.

Social Media

The OCROV will use social media to provide information to voters about the change to Vote Centers and updates on critical deadlines, events, voting tips, Vote Center and ballot drop box locations.

OCROV is exploring opportunities with Facebook and YouTube to target specific populations in Orange County such as younger voters between the ages of 18-25, members of the public who speak another language, and individuals who are interested in accessibility advocacy.

Below are social media strategies to achieve the overall goals of informing and educating voters about the transition to vote centers:

- To expand OCROV's presence on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn
- To publish highly-targeted and site-specific content on a regular schedule
- To engage meaningfully with active community members through social media
- To stimulate and nurture genuine discussion on social media
- To enhance the video content currently on OCROV's YouTube channel to be functional to Vote Center outreach, education, and training

Website

Elections Code §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(IV)

The OCROV website (ocvote.com) will be utilized heavily as the main source of Vote Center information and materials for the public.

Information on the OCROV website is in accessible formats and is publicly available. This will include election information, methods to request an accessible VBM ballot, the option to use an accessible voting device, lists of Vote Centers and ballot drop boxes, and other information related to voting.

The website will also be translated into Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean, so voters with limited-English proficiency in these languages will still be able to access voting and election information.

Vote Center Newsletter

Starting in Spring 2019, OCROV launched a weekly vote center newsletter geared towards providing planning updates, outreach information, and opportunities to share public input for the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election. Past newsletters included survey data analysis, information about vote center workshops, and methods to provide vote center and ballot drop box site suggestions. There are approximately 6,250 subscribers to OCROV newsletters.

“There are approximately 6,250 subscribers to OCROV newsletters.”

Mobile Voting

OCROV will continue to seek opportunities to bring mobile voting to voters in unique locations and geographic areas where voters might otherwise have limited access to in-person voting options.

Community Engagement Mobile Outreach Vehicle

To conduct more effective and visible voter education, OCROV utilizes a custom-made Community Engagement Mobile Outreach Vehicle. The mobile outreach vehicle is fully accessible and equipped with interactive voting displays on board. It gives all the opportunity to experience the democratic process including on-the-go voting.

Since 2004, our mobile fleet has been showcased at numerous community events, parades and outdoor venues. Moreover, these vehicles have been officially and effectively utilized as a fully contained voting location and are available throughout the voting period as a backup Vote Center. The units were a first of their kind and have been replicated in areas across the country.

Any use of the Community Engagement Mobile Outreach will involve the same cleaning protocols and standards as the Vote Centers to meet public health and safety guidelines for members of the public and staff. Staff will receive training on when and how to disinfect equipment and high-touch surfaces, interacting with members of the

public, and what procedures must be followed in light of COVID-19.

Pop-Up Mobile Voting Unit

OCROV continues to develop innovative solutions in response to voter trends and inspiration was taken from pop-up stores and restaurants that often draw positive public attention in areas with high traffic. Ultimately, the goal is to garner the interest of the public at events by using proven strategies, such as simple design principles and targeted signage that can be changed depending on the event.

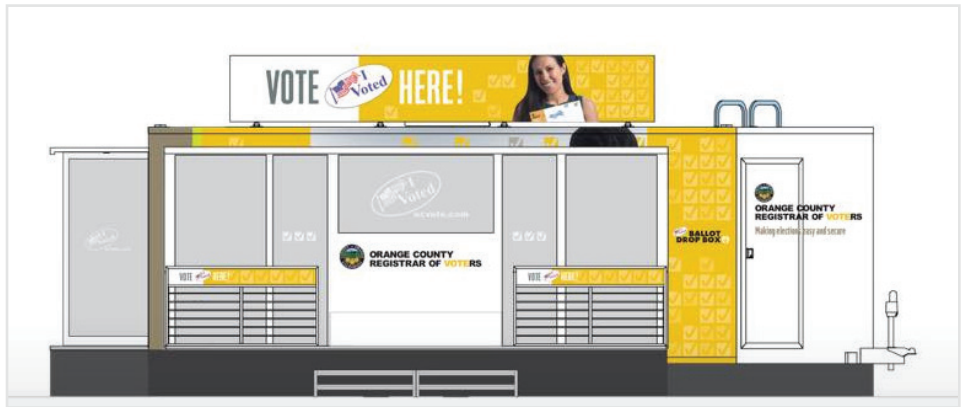


Figure 16. Pop-Up Mobile Voting Unit

The mobile unit has a custom wrap to match the marketing and branding plan OCROV has undertaken across the entire agency. The mobility of this platform promotes voter engagement and participation and allows OCROV to reach underrepresented populations and high-density locations to provide voting opportunities, vote center information, and improve the voter experience.

The Pop-Up Mobile Voting Unit will be utilized for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election cycle. Locations will be balanced between opportunities to reach geographically isolated voters and high-impact events to reach many voters. Voters will be notified in the VIG and VBM instructions of any mobile voting opportunities. Details such as locations and dates and hours of operations will be published in the VIG and website at ocvote.com/early.

Similar to the Community Engagement Mobile Outreach, any use of the Pop-Up Mobile Voting Unit will involve the same cleaning protocols and standards as the Vote Centers to meet public health and safety guidelines for members of the public and staff. Staff will receive training on when and how to disinfect equipment and high-touch surfaces, interacting with members of the public, and what procedures must be followed in light of COVID-19.

“Any use of the Pop-Up Mobile Voting Unit will involve the same cleaning protocols and standards as the Vote Centers.”

CONCLUSION

As of this publication, planning is significantly underway, and changes are happening quickly as government entities such as the SOS releases additional guidance and more is known about COVID-19. Additional efforts to protect the health and safety of voters and staff will be implemented as new challenges arise and situations change. Based on what is known and can be projected, OCROV proactively sought to position Orange County in response to the public health challenges during this rapidly changing crisis through the following:

- Providing one-time use supplies for in-person voting, such as pens, disinfectant wipes and face coverings for voters to promote health and safety
- Arranging virtual opportunities for candidates and members of the public to receive services and information
- Developing methods for the public to safely observe the elections process either at home or at the office
- Creating remote learning opportunities for Vote Center staff and reconfiguring in-person training to meet physical distancing and safety guidelines
- Complying with physical distancing through public access requirements, making appointments available for assistance
- Implementing a comprehensive media and outreach plan to inform the public of the changes to voting and elections and how to safely cast and return a ballot
- Increasing signage to notify voters of their voting options and what the process flow is at Vote Centers

With our experience conducting two elections in the COVID-19 environment and our preparations for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election, these efforts are necessary in order to safely conduct the election while maintaining adequate services for voters in a manner that is aligned with transparency and integrity.