2020 General Election
Vote Center Allocations

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L.A. COUNTY’S 2020 VOTING EXPERIENCE

You choose when, where, and how to vote

Every voter is mailed a ballot
10 days of voting before Election Day
In-person voting at Vote Centers
Electronic Pollbooks & Ballot Marking Devices
POST-ELECTION SUMMARY
March 2020 Presidential Primary

Nearly 1 million voters went to a vote center

First 10 days
27%

Election Day
73%

More than 1.14 million ballots cast by mail (53.79% of total)

Post-election surveys & voter exit polls

RR/CC teamed up with independent consultants and researchers to analyze March Primary Election
All voters will be issued a Vote by Mail ballot 2.5 million ballot increase over what was mailed in the Primary

VBM Ballot Drop Box expansion 300+ Drop Boxes throughout the County

10 days of voting available prior to Election Day

In-person Vote Centers will follow State and County guidelines from public health and safety officials
VOTER INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE RELATING TO COVID-19

Vote by Mail ballot mailed to all registered voters.

L.A. County encourages voters to stay at home and vote using their mail-in ballot. In-person voting options will be available to meet voter needs. We will follow the State and County’s public health and safety guidance to provide a safe voting environment.

COVID-19 Information for Voting In-Person:
1. Voters should wear a clean face-covering when visiting the Vote Center
2. Election Workers will be wearing protective gloves and masks
3. Social distancing will be enforced during the check-in and voting process
4. The Ballot Marking Devices will be sanitized after each use
5. Gloves and face-coverings will be provided to voters upon request
All registered voters will be mailed a Vote by Mail ballot.

Facilitates providing safe, secure and convenient in-person voting options when voting by mail is not a viable option.

In-person early voting prior to Friday, October 30th (E-4) is not required but is encouraged where possible in alignment with Public Health guidelines.

Public facilities and public employees are designated to support the election.

Election (Vote Center) Workers are authorized as Disaster Assistance Workers.

Ballots mailed and postmarked by Election Day will be counted if received by November 20th (E+17).
BOARD MOTION – STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO NOVEMBER ELECTION

Temporarily suspends the County Employee Election Worker Program and instead adopts the County Disaster Service Worker Election Worker Program.

Directs the Chief Executive Office of Emergency Management to work with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, the Department of Human Resources, and County Counsel to immediately implement the new DSW Program, including mandatory Departmental deployment thresholds.

Directs the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk to implement a Vote Center model consistent with the Governor's Executive Order that focuses on high-quality locations and services over the final four to five days of the voting period.

Directs the Chief Executive Office to communicate with County Departments, cities, school districts and other municipal entities about the importance and necessity of utilizing public facilities as Vote Centers, as required/authorized under California law.
DATA MODELING – URI VOTES
ENGINEERING FOR DEMOCRACY

Statistical and simulation modeling based on post-election data and in-person observation studies during the March Primary.

Predictive modeling and reporting on average and maximum time in system based on March Primary data on Vote Center allocation, equipment distribution, site capacity, room layout and staffing levels.

Consideration of COVID-19 impact on Vote Center layout and staffing.

Validates capacity deficiency based on smaller, lower capacity Vote Centers.

Provides tools for ongoing modeling and predictive adjustments.
LOCAL ACTION TEAM

Adopted Principles for Equity and Inclusion for Vote Center selection and placement; Election Worker recruitment and assignment; and Voter Outreach and Education.

Identified trust gap areas and communities to be addressed in eliminating barriers to access.

Providing localized on-the-ground, community-based assistance with voting locations, election worker recruitment and voter outreach.
GENERAL ELECTION ALLOCATIONS
Priorities

Safety and security of voters and election workers

Maximize Vote by Mail options and participation

Align capacity to highest expected volume and to predictive analytics

Market voting events to encourage early voting

Target mobile and flex voting programs to address geographically isolated areas and voters who have historically faced barriers to access

Effectively and broadly communicate information on voting options and encourage voters to plan ahead for when, where and how they will vote
# 10-Day Early Voting

## ALLOCATIONS

- 75 locations
  - 20 each in SD1, SD2
  - 15 in SD5
  - 10 each in SD3, SD4
- Geographically balanced distribution within each Supervisorial District
- Extra-Large and Large capacity, high visibility and easily identifiable sites (i.e. college campuses, sports/entertainment venues, hotels/convention facilities)
- Hours: 10AM – 7PM daily through E-1; 7AM – 8 PM on Election Day

## IMPACT

- Encourage early participation through Vote by Mail and accessible in-person voting options
- Higher distribution in areas with lower historical Vote by Mail participation
- Market as early voting events; align with Vote by Mail drop-off events/options
- Leverage messaging from key influencers and community stakeholders
- Provides an on-ramp to the full 5-day voting period
5-DAY Voting Period

**ALLOCATIONS**

- Target 800 locations
- Distribution of Extra-Large, Large and Medium capacity sites to be determined based on review of URI modeling
- Geographically balanced distribution within each Supervisorial District
- Hours: 10AM – 7PM daily through Monday, November 2nd (E-1); 7AM – 8PM on Election Day

**IMPACT**

- Encourage early and distributed participation (load balancing)
- Higher distribution in areas with lower historical Vote by Mail participation
- Market as the Voting Period for the election
- List three closest locations to voter's residence in Sample Ballots
Key Risk Factors

Hesitancy and resistance from site contacts to confirm use of facilities

School District and other public facility resistance and concern with Public Health Order restrictions

Limited availability of spaces/facilities with adequate square footage, connectivity and accessibility to meet Vote Center capacity needs

Time constraints to confirm all locations aligned to Sample Ballot and election information publications

Staff capacity to meet timelines

Uncertainty around COVID-19 expansion or retraction leading up to and during the voting period
How Do Californians Want to Cast their Ballots During the COVID-19 Crisis?
Thad Kousser, UC San Diego, Mindy Romero, California Civic Engagement Project at University of Southern California, Mackenzie Lockhart, UC San Diego, Seth Hill, UC San Diego, and Jennifer Merolla, UC Riverside

• 51.7% said that they would prefer to vote by mailing in their ballot

• Another 18.9% selected the option of dropping off a ballot that had been automatically mailed to them a month before election day

• At the same time, about 30% say they want to vote in person at a voting site

https://sites.google.com/ucsd.edu/newelectorateproject/home

California Youth of Color Poll Summary Results
Power California and Latino Decisions

• Young people are confident in mail ballots. A robust 45% of California youth overall indicate they will be submitting a mail ballot through the U.S. postal service. AAPI (52%) and white (51%) young people indicate this is their preferred voting method, though Latino (39%) and Black (39%) youth are comparatively less likely to prefer this method.

• Black and Latino youth show a greater appreciation for safe in-person voting options, whether it be dropping off ballots in person or voting before election day or on election day itself with social distancing precautions. But a less than half of AAPI and white voters also preferred safe in person voting, pointing to the importance of having safe in-person and vote by mail options to support robust youth voter turnout.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59d51916b1fb6653bc0d05b/t/5f2836c28d9f5b4a5695b4d/1596470980563/Final+PoCA+Youth+of+Color+Poll+Summary+Memo.pdf
Preliminary Evaluation of Los Angeles County Vote Center Performance in the March 2020 Primary Elections
R. Michael Alvarez, Daniel Guth, Claudia Kann and Seo-young Silvia Kim – California Institute of Technology American University

(excerpt from Conclusions and Recommendations) “We recommend that significant resources be allocated to estimating and disseminating the wait time data in future elections. Indeed, the issue of managing and minimizing voter wait times may be even more important with the onset of COVID-19, as there is a significant concern that the pandemic may put significant constraints on in-person voting services in the November general election. There is a significant risk that it might be necessary to mitigate voter wait times and long lines, to ensure the safety of both voters and vote center staff.”

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ace8a6b45776eba2e40cbee/t/5f0c8761bf07614913f1569d/1594656624688/LA_County_Vote_Center_Preliminary.pdf
GENERAL ELECTION
KEY MODIFICATIONS
AND IMPROVEMENTS
### Excessive Wait Times

#### ISSUES

- Technical issues with Electronic Pollbooks (PollPads) during check-in
- Smaller Vote Centers had fewer PollPads
- Voter look-up in PollPads was difficult
- Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) processing and changes in registration was time consuming

#### SOLUTIONS

- Improved PollPad software to speed up the synchronizing of voter data and new search filters to locate voter quickly added to the PollPads
- Established minimum of 5 PollPads to be deployed and all equipment at each location will be connected daily
- Additional training for Election Workers on CVR and changes to registrations will be emphasized and the process streamlined
Staffing at Vote Centers

**ISSUES**

- Lack of an effective data management system affected recruitment and tracking
- Delay in finalizing Vote Centers and size allocation resulted in under/overstaffing
- Delay in mailing assignments to Election Workers resulted in no-shows
- Vote Center Leads working 11 consecutive days led to attendance issues

**SOLUTIONS**

- Implemented new data management system PollChief to adequately track Election Workers and generate assignment letters
- Vote Center and Election Worker recruitment based on data modeling from March
- Reassessed and streamlined the Vote Center Lead time commitment and overall staffing program
- Flexible Election Worker models to include more than one schedule
Election Worker Training

**ISSUES**

- Training content changed during training period
- Election Workers were unaware of training materials on PollPad
- Rules related to CVR and changing voter information were not understood well.

**SOLUTIONS**

- All procedures to be finalized prior to training
- Overview and orientation to PollPad training will be included
- Training required for November election has been adjusted to include additional 8 hours of hybrid (online and in-person) training content
- Online training enhanced to include a passing assessment score
Vote Center Set-up & Deployment

**ISSUES**

- Some Vote Centers were not opened as scheduled
- Inadequate staffing, experience and resources for deployment at this scale
- Many public facilities initially declined to serve; some then minimized room size or duration
- Only 42% of private sites contacted agreed to be a Vote Center

**SOLUTIONS**

- Outsourced Vote Center deployment, set-up and Field Tech Support
- Enlisted support from Board of Supervisors and CEO for public site compliance and private site recruiting
- Operationalized Account Manager team of full-time staff dedicated to Vote Center recruitment
- Third-party vendor to assess and test the capacity of all Vote Centers
Help Desk Call Center for Election Workers & Voters

ISSUES

• Excessive wait times caused by high volume of calls

• Inadequate staffing and technical issues

• Use of several call centers and help desk systems: IT Help Desk, Election Worker Services, and Voter Help Desk

SOLUTIONS

• Engaged a third-party vendor to assess IT Help Desk call center and logistical planning

• Engaged a third-party vendor to staff and manage IT Help Desk call center

• Migrated all Call Centers into one incident management system

• Conducted call volume analysis to determine staffing needs
### Ballot Marking Device

#### Issues

- Reported issues primarily caused by faulty printer gear
- Some BMD issues were left unresolved by Election Workers because other BMDs were available for use
- In larger Vote Centers, some BMDs were never turned on

#### Solutions

- Completed and validated BMD printer assembly replacements
- Election Workers will be trained to turn on all BMDs on Election Day
- Designated, well-trained Field Technical Support will be deployed to all Vote Centers
- Full VSAP solution has been enhanced, re-tested by the State's independent testing authority; certification pending
Ballot Boxes

**ISSUES**

- Some confusion with casting ballot at the BMD
- Voters accustomed to a centralized ballot box
- Clarity on on-screen language and prompts could be improved

**SOLUTIONS**

- Refined messaging as part of Voter Outreach and in Vote Centers
- Added clarifying text and imagery to the on-screen BMD instructions
- Created a script for check-in clerks to inform voters to cast their ballot at the BMD
- Modified MORE button to include more visible voter notification