

ELECTION OBSERVER PANEL PLAN – MAY 19, 2009  
STATEWIDE SPECIAL ELECTION

ELECTION OBSERVER PANEL

COUNTY AND SYSTEM INFORMATION:

Name of County: Alpine

Name of Contact: Barbra Howard, County Clerk/Elections Official

Contact's Phone: 530-694-2281

Vendor and Voting Systems Used by County: Premier Election Solutions, Inc.  
AccuVote Optical Scan  
AccuVote TSX Touch Screen

The purpose of an Election Observer Panel is to provide an avenue for public observation of and input into the election process, assist in ensuring the integrity of the election process and encourage participation and build vote confidence in the election process.

For all elections held in Alpine County, the following plan for an Election Observer Panel is to be followed. This plan is to enable an Election Observer Panel to observe all procedures of the vote tallying process at the Central Counting Center.

1. Between E-60 and E-30 the County Clerk / Elections Official will prepare and send letters of invitation to the local news media, the Alpine County Grand Jury, Political Party Central Committee Members and other groups or individuals expressing an interest in observing election day activities inviting them to appoint representatives to an Election Observer Panel for that election. The person(s) appointed shall not be candidates in that election. Names of appointees shall be furnished to the County Clerk.

2. The County Clerk will conduct a briefing for the Observer Panel describing the vote counting process and the procedures that will be used in the receiving and tallying of the ballots. There are no polling places and no drop box locations to observe.

3. The County Clerk will make arrangements for admitting the Observer Panel to the counting area on election night to observe the procedures and operation of the equipment involved in the ballot receiving and vote counting process. No panel member will be permitted to touch any controls of the vote counting equipment, voted ballots or any other precinct supplies, unless so specified by the County Clerk.

4. The Observer's function is to observe that procedures are followed. Observers cannot interfere with the vote counting process. In the event of violation of any of these restrictions, the County Clerk or authorized deputy is empowered to direct any offending member to leave the vote counting area.

## GUIDELINES FOR OBSERVERS ON ELECTION NIGHT ALPINE COUNTY

Alpine County is proud of the way it conducts elections and the integrity built into the ballot counting process.

All candidates, media, representatives of political campaigns, and the general public are welcome to observe the ballot counting process.

The counting of ballots will be conducted as expeditiously as possible. All activities will be open and as visible as possible to all who are observing. Ballot counting takes place in the Board Room, Administration Building, in Markleeville, beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.

The ballot counting area of the Board Room will be roped off; persons present cannot enter areas to which access has been restricted, unless they are accompanied by an elections official. There is a public viewing area for all observers.

Persons observing the process cannot touch or handle any ballot container or ballots.

All questions concerning procedures should be directed to the county clerk / elections official or supervisor in charge and not directly to members of the counting board.

Talking should be held to a minimum so that staff can concentrate on their work.

### FUNCTIONS TO BE OBSERVED

- Logic & Accuracy (L&A) testing of the ballot counting machines.
- Sorting of ballots by precinct number.
- Signature/eligibility verification of absentee/mail ballots.
- Opening and preparation for counting of absentee/mail ballots.
- Remaking (duplicating) of ballots that cannot be processed.
- Processing of provisional ballots and write-in ballots.
- Counting process. Computer counting or hand counting process, when used.
- One percent manual recount of the election. (Conducted as part of the official canvass of the election, about one week after the election – telephone the County Clerk for actual date.)

### PERTINENT CODE SECTIONS

Interference with election officers: EC 18502. “Any person who in any manner interferes with the officers holding an election or conducting a canvass, or with the voters lawfully exercising their rights of voting at an election, as to prevent the election or canvass from being fairly held and lawfully conducted, is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months or two or three years.”

## General Rules for Observers

Observers may:

- Attend the Schools of Instructions for precinct board members
- Observe the proceedings at the polls, including the opening and closing procedures.
- Obtain information from the precinct index that is posted near the entrance.
- Make notes and watch all procedures
- View all activities at the central counting site on election day.
- View the canvass of the vote activities following the election
- View absentee and provisional ballot processing.
- Ask questions of staff or voters at the polls.
- Ask questions of supervisors at the central counting site.

Observers are responsible for:

- Checking in at each site, whether polling place or central counting site.
- Wearing an identification badge.
- Maintaining a professional manner while observing election processes.
- Ensuring they do not interfere with the election process.

Observers may no:

- Interfere in any way with the conduct of the election.
- Touch any voting materials or equipment or sit at the official worktables.
- Converse with voters (within 100 feet of the entrance to the polling place) regarding the casting of a vote, or speak to a voter regarding his or her qualifications to vote.
- Display any election materials or wear campaign badges, buttons or apparel
- Wear the uniform of a peace officer, a private guard, or security personnel.
- Use cellular phones, pagers, or two-way radios inside the polling place and/or within 100 feet of the entrance to the polling place.
- Talk to central counting site workers while they are processing ballots.
- Use the telephones, computers or other polling place facilities at polling places or the central counting site.
- Touch election personnel.
- Eat or drink in the polls or the central counting site.
- Assist in the operation at any polling place.