OFFICE OF
REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER

810 Court Street
Jackson, CA 95642-2132
ELECTIONS (209) 223-6465
SHELDON D. JOHNSON

Election Observer Panel Plan

County and System Information

- Amador County uses ES&S Optical Scan voting system and the AutoMARK Voter Assist Terminal used to mark the ballot selections of voters who are visually impaired or have a disability.

Purpose

The purpose of an Election Observer Panel is to:

- Ensure that the election process is conducted transparently.
- Encourage participation and build voter confidence in the election process.

Invite

Between E-60 and E-30, send out letters of invitation to the following:

- Democratic Central Committee
- Republican Central Committee
- KNGT Radio
- Ledger Dispatch
- TSPN
- Grand Jury

Other groups or individuals expressing an interest in observing Election Day activities may also, at the discretion of the Registrar of Voters, be included in the observer panel.

General Rules for Observers

Observers may:

- 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 the election processes.
- Ensuring they do not interfere with the elections process.

Observers may not:

- 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 a polling place) regarding the casting of a vote, or speak to a voter regarding his or her qualifications to vote.
- Display any election material 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 operations at any polling place.

Check In Procedures

- All observers must report and sign in daily at the Registrar of Voters front counter located at 810 Court Street, Jackson, CA 95642.
- An Election Observer Badge will be issued and must be worn at all times.
- When leaving for the day, please return the badge to the front counter.

Mechanism for Feedback

- Observers will be given a written overview of processes used in conducting the election and an approximate timeline. Written Guidelines for Observer conduct and instructions on how to ask questions or seek clarification will be included.

SAMPLE LETTER OF INVITATION

Date (E-60 to E-30)

Dear XXX:

The Department of Elections will convene an Election Observer Panel to observe activities associated with the XXX Election, which will be held on *XXX* date. Representatives of political party county central committees, advocacy groups, the League of Women Voters, and the County Grand Jury will be invited to participate.

Typically, members of the Panel visit one or more polling places on Election Day and then visit the ballot counting center to observe the tabulation of ballots on election night. Panel members are also invited to observe the processing of vote by mail ballots at the Department of Elections. Members of the Panel will be provided with the information they need to participate in these activities.

If your organization would like to be represented on the Election Observer Panel, please notify *XXX* by mail, by phone at xxx-xxxx or by email at *XXX*. Please respond by *XXX* date, with the name of your representative. *XXX* will be available to meet with Panel members to explain their role in greater detail and to provide them with the information they will need.

Thank you for your interest in participating in our electoral system.

Sincerely,

XXX
Registrar of Voters/County Clerk

SAMPLE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Date (no later than E-5)

TO: Precinct Inspectors

FROM: *XXX*
Registrar of Voters/County Clerk

SUBJECT: ELECTION OBSERVER PANEL

This letter introduces *XXX*, whom I have appointed to the Election Observer Panel for the *XXX* election. Members of the Election Observer Panel are invited to observe activities related to the administration of an election, including visiting polling places.

No person, including a member of the Election Observer Panel, may interfere with the operation of polling places. *XXX* and other members of the Election Observer Panel may ask you to explain certain operations and procedures. Please extend every courtesy to *XXX*.

If you have any questions, please call me at xxx-xxxx.

Thank you for your cooperation and your service to our county's voters.