

# **ELECTION OBSERVER PANEL**

## **I. County and System Information**

1. Mendocino County
2. Susan M. Ranochak
3. (707) 463-4371
4. Premier Optical Scan & Premier Tsx
5. November 2, 2010

## **II. Purpose**

The purpose of an Election Observer Panel is to:

1. Provide an avenue for public observation of and input into the election process.
2. Assist in ensuring the integrity of the election process.
3. Encourage participation and build voter confidence in the election process.

## **III. Invite**

Between E-60 and E-30, prepare letters of invitation (see sample attached) to the following:

1. County Grand Jury
2. Political Party Central Committee Members
3. Advocacy Groups
4. League of Women Voters
5. Media

Other groups or individuals expressing an interest in observing Election Day activities may also be included in the observer panel.

## **IV. Appointment Letters (for introduction to precinct workers)**

After the groups have provided the names of interested panelists, prepare letters of introduction (see sample attached) for the panelist to use when visiting polling places on Election Day. Materials to be prepared for each panelist will include a listing of all polling places within the county for that specific election as well as the central counting site location and hours of operation.

## **V. Mechanism for Feedback**

Consider providing observers with a checklist and/or questionnaires to be completed and returned to you. (See sample attached.)

## **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 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.

## **SAMPLE LETTER OF INVITATION**

Date (E-60 to E-30)

Dear Mendocino County Citizen:

The Mendocino County Clerk's Office will convene an Election Observer Panel to observe activities associated with the May 19, 2009 Election, which will be held on XXX date. Representatives of the county central committees, advocacy groups, the Leagues of Women Voters and the County Grand Jury as well as media representatives, 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 staff at the Department of Elections as they process absentee ballots. 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 Katrina Bartolomie, Assistant Registrar of Voters by mail, by phone at (707) 463-4374 or by email at [bartolok@co.mendocino.ca.us](mailto:bartolok@co.mendocino.ca.us). Please respond by XXX date, with the name of your representative. Katrina Bartolomie 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 protecting our electoral system.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Ranochak  
Mendocino County Clerk and Registrar of Voters

SMR/scm

## **SAMPLE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

Date (no later than E-5)

TO: Precinct Inspectors

FROM: Susan M. Ranochak  
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 (707) 463-4371.

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

**SUSAN M. RANOCHAK**

ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

COMMISSIONER OF  
CIVIL MARRIAGES

CLERK-RECORDER FAX: (707) 463-  
4257



OFFICE OF ASSESSOR-**COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER**

501 LOW GAP ROAD, RM. 1020  
UKIAH, CALIFORNIA 95482  
E-MAIL: [www.co.mendocino.ca.us/acr](http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/acr)

**BARRY R. LITTLE**  
ASSISTANT ASSESSOR  
(707) 463-4311

**KATRINA BARTOLOMIE**  
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR OF VOTERS  
(707) 463-4371

ASSISTANT CLERK-RECORDER  
County Clerk: (707) 463-4370  
Recorder: (707) 463-4376

October 29, 2010

Secretary of State  
Office of Voting System Technology Assessment  
Attn: Miguel Castillo  
1500 11<sup>th</sup> Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Election Observer Panel Plan

Dear Mr. Castillo:

Attached please find the Election Observer Panel Plan as presented.

Please let us know if you require anything further.

Very truly yours,

Susan M. Ranochak  
Clerk-Recorder and Registrar of Voters

Enclosures: 4

SMR/scm