

Election Observer Panel Plan

I. County and System Information

1. Placer
2. Ryan Ronco, Assistant Recorder-Registrar
3. (530) 886-5660
4. Premier OS (In-precinct AccuVotes and Accuvotes with AccuFeeders hooked up to a central count tabulator) and Premier AccuVote TSX Unit (one per precinct)
5. May 13, 2010

II. Purpose

The purpose of an Election Observer Panel is to:

1. Provide the public with the opportunity to observe and make suggestions on ways to improve the election process.
2. Help ensure the integrity of the election process.
3. Remove some of the mystery associated with the election process in an effort to build voter confidence and encourage more people to take part.

III. Invite

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

1. County Grand Jury
2. Political Party Central Committee Members
3. Advocacy Groups
4. Candidates on Official Ballot
5. Media
6. League of Women voters

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

IV. RSVP by groups – presentation and tour

After the groups have provided the name of interested panelists, we prepare our RSVP list and make necessary name badges for them to tour our facility. Panelists are invited to visit our polling places as well. The Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters or the Assistant Recorder-Registrar conducts the presentation and tour.

V. Appointment Letters – panelists visiting polling places (for introduction to precinct workers)

If a member of the group is interested in visiting a polling place, arrangements are made by notifying our precinct workers. A letter of introduction (see sample attached) is also prepared for the panelist to use when visiting polling places on Election Day. Materials will be prepared for each panelist that 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.

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 election-related activities at the central counting site on Election Day.
- View the canvass of the vote activities following the election.
- View vote-by-mail and provisional ballot processing.
- Ask questions of poll workers or voters at the polls as long as they do not interfere with the conduct of any part of the voting process.
- Ask questions of supervisors at the central counting site as long as they do not interfere with the conduct of election procedures.

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

Observers may not:

- Interfere, in the judgment of the elections official, with the conduct of the election.
- Physically handle any voting materials or equipment.
- Sit at the official worktables or view confidential voter information on any work terminal.
- Communicate 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 or attempt to stop the central counting site workers while they are processing ballots.
- Use the telephone, computers or other polling place facilities at polling places or the central counting site.
- Make physical contact with election personnel.
- Eat or drink at the polls or the central counting site.
- Assist in operations at any polling place or the central counting site.

SAMPLE LETTER OF INVITATION

Dear Election Observer:

Date:

As I have done every Election since becoming the Placer County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters, I would like to invite all interested voters to observe Election Day proceedings for the June 8, 2010 Statewide Direct Primary Election.

The Office of Elections welcomes interested voters to our office on, before, or after Election Day to observe my staff process vote-by-mail ballots and perform other election activities. However, it is suggested that you call ahead to ensure election activities are being performed when you wish to stop by.

It is the goal of the Placer County Office of Elections to have our election as transparent as possible. We invite you to observe any election processes, which may include a visit to one or more polling places, and then a visit to the ballot counting center to observe tabulation of the ballots on Election Night.

Logic and Accuracy Testing of the AccuVote-OS and TSX will begin on May 8, 2010 and will be intermittent during the next one to two weeks. The testing location is the Placer County Office of Elections, 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn. For further information about dates and times, please call 530-886-5650.

On Election Night, observer panel activities will begin at 7:30 PM at the Office of Elections, located at 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn, in the Dewitt Center. I will give a 30-minute presentation on the process used to verify vote-by-mail ballots. The presentation will give you an opportunity to ask questions and showcase the procedures we follow in accordance with state law. Attendance and participation are not mandatory and you are welcome to attend anytime during the evening. I believe those who have participated in the past have come away with a greater understanding and knowledge of the election process.

At 8:00 PM, we will release the results of the vote-by-mail ballots processed earlier that afternoon. The polling place results will begin arriving sometime after 9:30 PM. This will be followed by periodic updates throughout the evening. Election Night activities could end as early as 12:00 AM or as late as 2:00 AM. The end of the day is unpredictable, and you are welcome to leave at any time during the evening.

On June 9, 2010 at 10:00 AM, the Placer County Office of Elections will conduct the public random draw and will randomly select the precincts that will be used for a manual tally of one percent (1%) and any ten percent (10%) manual tally required of the precincts casting ballots at the June 8, 2010 Statewide Direct Primary Election. On June 21, 2010 at 9:00 AM, the Placer County Office of Elections will begin a manual tally of one percent (1%) of the precincts casting ballots at the June 8, 2010 Statewide Direct Primary Election.

My office will begin mailing vote-by-mail ballots on May 10, 2010 and will start processing voted ballots on May 28, 2010, seven business days before Election Day.

If you are interested in observing any election activities, please contact Lisa Cramer at 530-886-5696. If you are not able to make it to my office on Election Day, be sure to visit our website at www.placerelections.com for election results.

I look forward to seeing you. Please contact me at 530-886-5690 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jim McCauley
County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters

SAMPLE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Date

TO: Precinct Inspectors

FROM: Jim McCauley, Placer County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters

SUBJECT: ELECTION OBSERVER PANEL

This letter introduces XXX, whom I have appointed to the Election Observer Panel for the Statewide Direct Primary 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 530-886-5650.

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