



**VOTER'S CHOICE ACT**  
Humboldt County Office of Elections

# HOW TO PLACE A MEASURE ON A BALLOT

**A GUIDE FOR GOVERNING BOARDS FOR THE  
COUNTY, CITIES, SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND  
SPECIAL DISTRICTS**

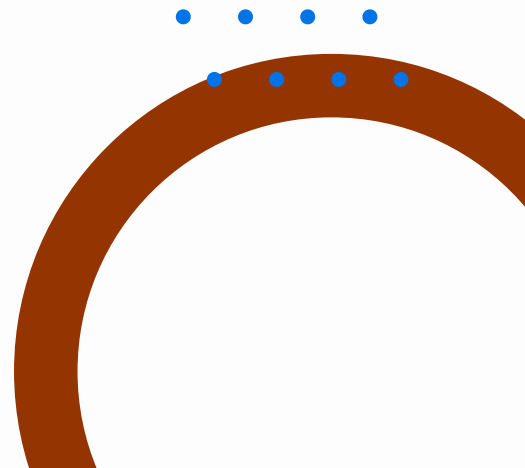
**JUAN PABLO CERVANTES**

CLERK, RECORDER & REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

Phone: 707-445-7481

Email: [humboldt\\_elections@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:humboldt_elections@co.humboldt.ca.us)

Website: [www.humboldt.gov/elections](http://www.humboldt.gov/elections)



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This guide was developed to provide answers to questions frequently asked by governing bodies regarding how to place a measure on the ballot. It is for general information only and does not have the force and effect of law, regulation, or rule. In case of conflict, the law, regulation, or rule will apply. Persons using this guide must bear full responsibility to make their own determinations as to all legal standards and duties.

## Preparing Your Resolution

1. Resolution Calling for Election and Consolidation
  - a. Districts and Cities: Submit a "Resolution Requesting Consolidation of Election and Ordering of Such Election" and a "Notice to Elections Official of Measure Submitted to the Voters."
  - b. County: Submit a "Resolution Requesting Consolidation of Election and Ordering of Such Election."
  - c. Schools: Submit a "Resolution Ordering Election, Specifications of the Election Order, and Requesting Consolidation" and a "Notice to Elections Official of Measure Submitted to the Voters."

A resolution "Calling for an Election" should include purpose of election, Ballot Measure Text (not to exceed 75 words, including title) and the vote requirement for measure passage (i.e., majority of votes cast; 2/3 votes cast; 55% votes cast). The resolution must state that the city or district will reimburse the County for costs incurred. We can provide interested parties with an election-specific measure calendar.

2. The Measure Text

Provide clear instructions on what portion of the resolution or ordinance is considered the full text of the ballot measure. The voter information guide will direct interested voters to the website for the full measure text.

Voters are also instructed to contact the Elections Office for a copy of the measure text. Jurisdictions will be billed for costs.

3. The Ballot Label

A ballot label is a condensed version of the ballot title and summary (including the financial impact summary) and must be no more than 75 words (Elections Code § 9051, 13247). See next page on "How to Count Words." Jurisdictions should consider beginning their ballot label with a few key summary words to summarize the measure. The summary words count toward the 75-word limit.

Measures are followed by the words "YES" and "NO."

School bond measures are followed by the words: "Bonds—Yes," "Bonds—No." (Educ. Code § 15122)

School reorganization measures are followed by the words: "Reorganization of School Districts—Yes" and "Reorganization of School Districts—No." Similar words may be used. (Educ. Code § 35762)

## How to Count Words

<b>Abbreviations</b>	An abbreviation for a word, phrase, or expression is counted as one word.
<b>Dates</b>	Dates consisting of a combination of words and digits shall be counted as two words, e.g., "January 1, 2021." Dates consisting of only a combination of digits shall be counted as one word, e.g., "1/1/21."
<b>Hyphenations</b>	Hyphenated words that appear in any generally available dictionary are considered one word. Each part of all other hyphenated words shall be counted as separate words. For example, "able-bodied" is counted as one word.
<b>Numbers</b>	Any number consisting of a digit or digits are counted as one word, e.g., "100." Any number that is spelled out, e.g., "one hundred," count as separate words.
<b>Percent Signs (%), Number Signs (#), and other symbols</b>	It is department policy to count numbers consisting of a digit or digits used with a dollar sign (\$), cent sign (¢), percentage sign (%), or number sign (#) as one word.
<b>Phone and Internet</b>	Web addresses and telephone numbers are counted as one word. All proper nouns, including geographical names, are counted as one word. For example, "Humboldt County Board of Education" shall be counted as one word.
<b>Punctuation</b>	Punctuation is not included in the word count.
<b>Required Titles</b>	Words used in the title of arguments, rebuttals, and analyses, such as "Argument in Favor of Measure A" are not counted. All words used in the 75-word ballot question are counted except for the letter designating the measure.

## How to Raise or Spend Money with a Measure Committee

<p><b>First</b></p>	<p>Download and read the Fair Political Practices Commissions' Manual 3 for ballot measure committees <a href="https://www.fppc.ca.gov/content/fppc-v2/fppc-www/learn/campaign-rules/campaign-disclosure-manuals.html#title3">here</a>. [https://www.fppc.ca.gov/content/fppc-v2/fppc-www/learn/campaign-rules/campaign-disclosure-manuals.html#title3]</p>
<p><b>Second</b></p>	<p>Read instructions carefully as a Form 410 will be rejected if all applicable sections are not completed.</p> <p>File a Form 410 - Statement of Organization within 10 days of receiving \$2,000 in contributions. Include a \$50 payment made payable to the Secretary of State. Thereafter, the \$50 fee is due annually no later than January 15. In addition to the \$50 fee, a penalty of \$150 may be assessed if payment is late.</p> <p>Filing address is in the instruction on the form.</p> <p>If applicable, file an amendment to update the name of the treasurer or any other information.</p> <p>For early submissions, mark the "not yet qualified" box. The \$50 fee is requested at this time but is not legally required until the group qualifies as a committee.</p> <p>The committee's FPPC ID number will be posted at <a href="http://www.sos.ca.gov">www.sos.ca.gov</a>. All committees must now disclose the financial institution and bank account number used by the committee on the Form 410.</p> <p>The form is available online at <a href="https://www.fppc.ca.gov/content/dam/fppc/NS-Documents/TAD/all-forms/410%20ADA.pdf">here</a>. [https://www.fppc.ca.gov/content/dam/fppc/NS-Documents/TAD/all-forms/410%20ADA.pdf]</p>
<p><b>Third</b></p>	<p>Be prepared to file a Form 460 (long form) for ballot measure committees that plan on raising or spending \$2,000 or more. A Form 470 (short form) needs to be filed for committees that do not plan on raising or spending more than \$2,000.</p> <p>Pre-Election Statements and Semi-Annual statements must be filed at certain times prior to the election and then semi-annually until the committee terminates. These reports detail your committee's contributions and expenditures. Know the deadlines and the type of forms you must file. View the Filing Schedules <a href="https://www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/campaign-rules/where-and-when-to-file-campaign-statements/when-to-file-campaign-statements-state-local-filing-schedules.html">here</a>. [https://www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/campaign-rules/where-and-when-to-file-campaign-statements/when-to-file-campaign-statements-state-local-filing-schedules.html]</p> <p>For technical advice on completing the forms, contact the</p> <p><b>Fair Political Practices Commission</b>  428 J Street, Suite 620  Sacramento, CA 95814  General Contact: 916-322-5660  Advice Line: 1-866-ASK-FPPC (1-866-275-3772)  Fax: 916-322-0886  Website: <a href="http://www.fppc.ca.gov">www.fppc.ca.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Fourth</b></p>	<p>File Forms 460 and 410 to terminate the committee upon completion of your efforts.</p>

## Assigning Letters to Measures

The County Elections Official assigns letters to local measures. Letters are assigned in alphabetical order, starting with the next letter following the previous election. Measures are assigned through Z, or as close to the end of the alphabet as possible to accommodate all measures in the current election without wrapping letters. For example, if the previous election ended with local measure V and there are five local measures in the current election, then they will be assigned letters A, B, C, D, E (rather than W, X, Y, Z, A).

The County Elections Official may designate local measures with any letter following "A" and continuing alphabetically, in order to avoid voter confusion that might result from different local measures carrying the same letter designation in successive elections. (Elections Code § 13116)

The order measures appear on the ballot is defined in Section 13109 of the Elections Code. To allow for the most efficient use of space, the County Elections Official may vary the order of the measures.

- School measures
  - County Board of Education or College
  - Unified schools
  - High schools
  - Elementary schools
- County measures
- City measures
- District measure

If a district has voters in two or more counties, the counties will mutually agree to use a letter designation for the measure that will not conflict or confuse the voter.

## Arguments For or Against Ballot Measures

The County Elections Official prepares and publishes a legal notice of election, including deadlines to file arguments for or against the measure. Information will also be posted on the County Elections website: [www.humboldt.gov/elections](http://www.humboldt.gov/elections).

If more than one argument For or Against is submitted, the County Elections Official will select one argument only. Priority is based as follows: 1) the governing body or members thereof, 2) an individual voter, bona fide association of citizens who are sponsors or proponents of the measure, 3) bona fide association of citizens, and 4) individual voters eligible to vote on the measure. (Elections Code § 9166, 9287, 9503)

All arguments and rebuttals must be filed with the Signature Statement provided by the County Elections Official. Arguments are limited to 300 words.

### Rebuttals to Arguments For or Against

If arguments in favor and against are submitted, filers will have the opportunity to submit rebuttals. Rebuttals are limited to 250 words. (Elections Code § 9167, 9285, 9504)

## Impartial Analysis

The county counsel shall prepare an impartial analysis of the measure showing the effect of the measure on the existing law and the operation of the measure.

1. The analysis shall include a statement indicating whether the measure was placed on the ballot by a petition signed by the requisite number of voters or by the board of supervisors. The analysis shall be printed preceding the arguments for and against the measure. The analysis may not exceed 500 words in length.
2. Additionally, the county counsel may prepare a summary of the impartial analysis in a format that answers the questions "What does a yes vote mean?" and "What does a no vote mean?" for each measure, with the summary for each question limited to 75 words or less. If the county counsel or district attorney prepares a summary pursuant to this paragraph, it may be included in the county voter information guide.
3. If the entire text of the measure is not printed on the ballot, nor in the county voter information guide, there shall be printed immediately below the impartial analysis, in no less than 10-point boldface type, a legend substantially as follows: "The above statement is an impartial analysis of Ordinance or Measure \_\_\_\_\_. If you desire a copy of the ordinance or measure, please call the elections official's office at (insert telephone number) and a copy will be mailed at no cost to you."
4. The elections official may, at his or her discretion, add the following message to the statement in paragraph (3): "You may also access the full text of the measure on the county Web site at the following Web site address under Upcoming Elections: [www.humboldt.gov/elections](http://www.humboldt.gov/elections). (Elections Code §9160, 9313, 9500)

The city attorney will prepare the impartial analysis for city measures. (Elections Code §9280)

## Fiscal Impact Statement

Not later than 88 days before an election that includes a county ballot measure, the board of supervisors may direct the county auditor to review the measure and determine if the substance of the county ballot measure, if adopted, would affect the revenues or expenditures of the county. He or she shall prepare a fiscal impact statement which estimates the amount of any increase or decrease in revenues or costs to the county if the proposed measure is adopted. The fiscal impact statement may not exceed 500 words in length. (Elections Code §9160)

## Other Ballot Materials

County counsel or the city attorney, whichever is applicable, will submit an impartial analysis. The impartial analysis is available for public inspection and will be printed in the Voter Information Guide.

Bond measures require a tax rate statement to be filed by the 88th day before the election. A fiscal impact statement may also be ordered.

## Examples of How a Measure May Appear on the Ballot

Bullets, italics, underlining, and bolding (beyond the title) are not permitted in the ballot title.

<b>CITY:</b>	
<b>Measure Z</b>	
<b>Z KEY WORD SUMMARY OF MEASURE.</b> Followed by the ballot title. The total number of words, including the summary, may not exceed 75 words. (§§ 9051, 13247)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>YES</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b>

*Example with the first few words summarizing the measure in all caps and in bold*

<b>CITY:</b>	
<b>Measure Z</b>	
<b>Z</b>	75-word ballot title without a summary (§§ 9051, 13247)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>YES</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b>

*Example of a ballot title without a few key words summarizing the measure.*



# Examples of Titles

City Resolution Calling For An Election

RESOLUTION NO. 2006-06  
 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ CALLING FOR A GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2011 FOR THE ELECTION OF CERTAIN OFFICERS AS REQUIRED BY THE PROVISIONS OF THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE.

CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 2006-07

CALIFORNIA  
 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

\_\_\_\_\_, City Clerk of the City of \_\_\_\_\_, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, reported, and adopted by the City Council of the City of \_\_\_\_\_ at a regular meeting of said Council held on the 28th day of January, 2006 by the following roll call vote:

COUNCILMEMBERS	Mayor Pro Tem
COUNCILMEMBERS	Name
COUNCILMEMBERS	Name
COUNCILMEMBERS	Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
 City Clerk of the City of \_\_\_\_\_

City Resolution Requesting Consolidation

RESOLUTION NO. 2006-07  
 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ CALIFORNIA, REQUESTING THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES TO CONSOLIDATE A GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 1, 2011 WITH THE STATEWIDE PRIMARY ELECTION TO BE HELD ON THE SAME DATE PURSUANT TO §10403 OF THE ELECTIONS CODE.

RESOLUTION NO. 2006-06  
 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ CALLING FOR A GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2011 FOR THE ELECTION OF CERTAIN OFFICERS AS REQUIRED BY THE PROVISIONS OF THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE.

CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 2006-07

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
 CITY OF \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, City Clerk of the City of \_\_\_\_\_, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, reported, and adopted by the City Council of the City of \_\_\_\_\_ at a regular meeting of said Council held on the 28th day of January, 2006 by the following roll call vote:

PRESENT: COUNCILMEMBERS	Mayor Pro Tem
ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS	Name
	Name
	Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
 City Clerk of the City of \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION NO. 2006-07

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ CALIFORNIA, REQUESTING THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES TO CONSOLIDATE A GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 1, 2011 WITH THE STATEWIDE PRIMARY ELECTION TO BE HELD ON THE SAME DATE PURSUANT TO §10403 OF THE ELECTIONS CODE.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of \_\_\_\_\_ called a General Municipal Election to be held on June 6, 2006 for the purpose of the election of a Mayor, three (3) Members of the City Council, a City Clerk, and a City Treasurer each for a full term of four years; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable that the General Municipal election be consolidated with the Statewide Primary election to be held on the same date and that within the city the precincts, polling places and election officers of the two elections be the same, and that the county election department of the County of Los Angeles canvass the returns of the General Municipal Election and that the election be held in all respects as if there were only one election;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ DOES HEREBY DECLARE, DETERMINE AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. That pursuant to the requirements of §10403 of the Elections Code, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles is hereby requested to concur and agree to the consolidation of a General Municipal Election with the Statewide Primary election on Tuesday, June 6, 2006 for the purpose of the election of a Mayor, three (3) Members of the City Council, a City Clerk, and a City Treasurer each for a full term of four years.

SECTION 2. That the county election department is authorized to canvass the returns of the General Municipal Election. The election shall be held in all respects as if there were only one election, and only one form of ballot shall be used.

SECTION 3. That the Board of Supervisors is requested to issue instructions to the county election department to take any and all steps necessary for the holding of the consolidated election.

SECTION 4. That the City of \_\_\_\_\_ recognizes that additional costs will be incurred by the County by reason of this consolidation and agreed to reimburse the County for any costs.

SECTION 5. That the City Clerk is hereby directed to file a certified copy of this resolution with the Board of Supervisors and the county election department of the County of Los Angeles.

SECTION 6. That the City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this resolution and enter it in the book of original resolutions.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED ON JANUARY 24, 2006.

APPROVED AS TO FORM: \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor Pro Tem  
 City Attorney ATTEST

To: \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant City Attorney  
 City Clerk