

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MITCHELL

August 30, 2022

**Enhanced County Employee Election Worker Program**

Los Angeles County (County) employees have long been a stable and critical component of the County’s election process since the inception of the County Employee Voluntary Pollworker Program in 1998. The program was originally implemented to alleviate election worker shortages in hard to recruit areas and communities with language needs for a 1-day assignment. In 2020, adoption of the California Voter’s Choice Act and implementation of the County’s new voting model resulting from the Voting Solutions for All People (VSAP) initiative increased the number of days for voting and allowed voters to cast a ballot at any vote center throughout the County. The new VSAP voting experience, which provides expanded options and access to voters, resulted in a change in the number of election workers needed and in the staffing model, which in turn, led to the need for additional support from departments and County employees. Overall, the change in scale and correlating resource demands have made it abundantly clear that this program must expand beyond a departmental initiative to a Countywide program.

On August 4, 2020, in response to the significant challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the use of County Disaster Service Workers (DSW) to serve as elections workers in the November 2020 Presidential General Election. This proved to be extremely effective with participation by all County departments and resulted in the recruitment and assignment of almost 7,500 County employees. Under the ongoing emergency declaration and adopted Board authorization, this program was successfully used again in both the

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September 2021 Gubernatorial Recall Election and the June 2022 Statewide Primary Election using approximately 3,000 and 5,500 County employees respectively in those elections. These dedicated County employees not only ensured that our vote centers were fully staffed, but they also provided excellent customer service, were extremely reliable, and adhered to policies and procedures ensuring voter accessibility and protecting the integrity of the election.

On March 9, 2021, the Board directed the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC), in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources, the Chief Executive Office and County Counsel to develop an enhanced County Employee Election Worker Program (CEEWP) to be modeled after the successful DSW Program. On July 7, 2021, the RR/CC reported back to the Board with a proposed framework. Certain aspects of the new program were subject to bargaining with the County's labor partners (Labor), so the Board was advised to delay approving the program to allow for continued engagement with Labor on this issue. Some level of mandatory participation of represented employees is critical, so Labor's partnership is pivotal to the success of this program.

Following negotiations between our County and select Labor teams, a proposed CEEWP framework was agreed upon by both parties. The new enhanced framework establishes the strong desire by all parties to first draw on as many volunteer employee assignments as possible from the County's pool to serve as election workers. We know from past elections that the most effective election workers are those that desire to serve in the assignment. Additionally, data gathered following the September 2021 Recall Election provides positive signals to the desired goal of the adoption of the enhanced CEEWP. Approximately 2/3 of the overall County employees that served in the election volunteered for the assignment, compared to about 1/3 who were mandated. Volunteers will be further incentivized through priority selection of assignment roles and preferred location, where feasible.

Volunteer recruitment of County employees has already commenced for the upcoming November 2022 Statewide General Election. Departments should not only encourage their employees to volunteer to serve as election workers, but it is also

imperative that department managers and supervisors make their best effort to provide timely approval for their employees who volunteer.

Voluntary service will continue to be the focus of the CEEWP, but departmental mandates must be established to ensure that we fill any remaining election worker shortages. If the Board approves this motion, the program will transition to a mandatory program for departments on September 19, 2022. Departments will be provided with the number of employees that have volunteered for their department and the deficit remaining from their original allocation. Departments will be required to recruit and/or assign employees to fulfill their target. County departments will play a critical role by not only providing employees but also ensuring that those employees selected are able to serve and follow through on their assignment. Established departmental Coordinators will be more important than ever, and their involvement will be required for both recruitment and outreach. The success of this program will take more than just County employees and departmental Coordinators though, it will take ongoing executive support and managerial coordination within each department.

Elections are a fundamental and essential County service, which requires the full support of our entire County family. As other jurisdictions around the country reduce election services and make it more difficult for voters to cast a ballot, our County must remain at the forefront of providing the most accessible, transparent and secure elections in the nation. Our election workers are the backbone of our in-person voting program and as such our County employees should continue to be an instrumental component of this process. With the concurrence of select Labor partners and the support of our departments regarding the enhanced CEEWP, we will be able to continue this important tradition.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** adopt the enhanced County Employee Election Worker Program (CEEWP) for use starting with the November 8, 2022, Statewide General Election, which aligns with the framework in the tentatively approved labor agreements.

**I FURTHER MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** take the following additional actions, in alignment with the tentatively approved labor agreements:

1. Direct the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) to utilize the CEEWP for the November 8, 2022 election;
2. Authorize the Director of the Department of Human Resources (DHR), in conjunction with RR/CC and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), to set employee election worker targets for each department;
3. Encourage all County employees to volunteer to serve as election workers;
4. Direct Department Heads to make every effort to approve the volunteer requests of their employees in a timely manner;
5. Direct Department Heads to meet established departmental thresholds for every election utilizing the CEEWP, including providing a certified referral list by the requested date and ensuring selected staff on the list are able to perform the assignment prior to submission, and, if necessary, require members of select labor unions to serve as an election worker;
6. Direct Department Heads to allow County employees to attend election worker training and serve as election workers during regular work hours;
7. Direct the CEO to send a letter to each Department Head reminding them of the associated Board-adopted provisions for MAPP employees related to CEEWP participation; and
8. Direct the Director of DHR and RR/CC to provide status reports to the Board on September 19, 2022 and October 11, 2022 listing compliance rates of each County department for the November 8, 2022 election.

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