

**ELECTION OBSERVER PLAN
COUNTY OF FRESNO
November 8, 2016
PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL ELECTION**

I. County and System Information

County: Fresno
Contact: Brandi L. Orth, County Clerk/Registrar of Voters,
(559) 600-1730
Voting System: Premier/ES&S AccuVote Optical Scan for vote by
mail and precinct ballots.
Premier/ES&S AccuVote TSx for voters with specific
needs

II. Purpose of the Election Observer Panel

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. Who to invite to serve on the Election Observer Panel

Between E-30 and E-15, invite members of the community to serve on the Election Observer Panel which can include:

- ✓ County Grand Jury Members
- ✓ Political Party Central Committee Members
- ✓ League of Women Voters
- ✓ Media
- ✓ Citizen Volunteers

IV. Appointment Letters and Schedule of Events

After groups have provided the names of those interested in serving on the panel, a letter is prepared and mailed to each of the panelists. This letter informs them that they have been invited to serve as panelists and invites them to attend three separate opportunities to observe the election process. These opportunities include: 1. an orientation/tour to our local certified vendor that prepares the vote by mail ballots for mailing and also prints the ballots for Fresno County; 2. a meeting/tour to observe the signature verification process for vote by mail ballots in our elections office and a mock election; 3. Election Day schedule. At the orientation meeting panel members are invited to either observe the process on Election Night at the central elections office or visit a polling place.

All observers are given a packet of information including information on what is on the ballot, a sample of the ballot, voter registration statistics and observer rules.

V. Mechanism for Feedback

The County Clerk meets with the panel and gives them an opportunity to express their concerns and ask questions.

SAMPLE LETTER OF INVITATION:

On November 8, 2016, Fresno County will conduct the Presidential General Election. As with all elections, our office is recruiting citizens to participate in our Election Observer Panel. The purpose of the Observer Panel is to insure that all critical procedures of the vote tallying process are carried out in full view of the public.

Therefore, we're asking for your participation on this citizen oversight committee. The panel consists of local citizens and will specifically function to oversee the November 8, 2016, Presidential General Election.

Participation requires attendance on three occasions as follows:

Monday, October 17, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. – Panel Orientation and tour of ballot printing facility located at The Presort Center, 1931 G Street, Fresno, CA 93706.

Thursday, October 27, 2016, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. – Overview of Vote by Mail operations and Mock Election at the Elections Warehouse/Training Facility located at 4525 E. Hamilton (south of the fairgrounds). A Mock Election will follow at approximately 10:15 a.m.

Tuesday, November 8, 2016 from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. – Ballot tabulation for the Presidential General Election at the Elections Warehouse/Training Facility located at 4525 E. Hamilton (south of the fairgrounds).

For security purposes, your confirmation of attendance is required to participate. Please confirm if you are able or not able to participate on the Observer Panel. If you have any questions, please contact Cindy Lee at (559) 600-3011.

Sincerely,

Brandi L. Orth
Fresno County Clerk/Registrar of Voters

FRESNO COUNTY CLERK/REGISTRAR OF VOTERS ELECTION OBSERVER RULES & INSTRUCTIONS

1. Interested parties **may observe** that the Elections Official is following proper procedures. The Election Official shall determine the number and placement of observers.
2. All observers shall sign in daily at the facility where they are observing.
3. It is the right of observers to be able to view processes at a proximity that allows them to ensure that staff are following proper procedures. However, please be sensitive to the individual's personal space. Observers must be professional and courteous in their conduct.
4. An Observer Badge will be issued and must be worn at all times. When leaving for the day, please return the badge to the check-in desk.
5. No eating or drinking is allowed in the election areas.
6. Radios, cameras and tape recorders are not allowed. Cell phones must be set to vibrate or off mode while observing the elections. No telephone use including taking of pictures, texting, video and conversations shall take place in any election workspace.
7. One spokesperson per group should be the primary point of contact.
8. The individual's function is to observe that procedures are followed. Observers cannot assist in operations, touch or handle any ballots or other election-related materials.
9. All questions concerning a procedure should be directed to the supervisor in charge and not directly to employees.
10. No more than two (2) observers are allowed to stand over an employee. Observers should avoid physical contact with employees.
11. Observers are to hold discussions and conversations outside the designated work areas.
12. Observers will be allowed into the work areas only when employees are performing election functions.
13. Operations will continue as scheduled whether or not an observer is present.
14. Failure to follow instructions should be reported. Violation of security by an observer may cause expulsion from the building or relocation by a Sheriff Deputy or County Security.
15. Interviews will take place outside of the buildings so that it is not disruptive to the election process, or in an area designated by the County Clerk.
16. Only credentialed media are allowed to take pictures or record (audio or video) activities within the office. (Per CCROV from the Secretary of State)
17. County telephones may not be used by non-county personnel.
18. Some people have sensitivities to perfumes and colognes. Please refrain from wearing strong perfume or aftershave while observing.

I. General Rules for Observers at the Polls

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 vote by mail and provisional ballot processing.
- Ask questions of staff 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 count site as long as they do not interfere with the conduct of the election procedures.

Observers are responsible for:

- Checking in at each site, whether polling place, warehouse, or central counting site.
- Wearing an identification badge when observing at the elections office.
- Introducing themselves to the Election Inspector when observing at the polls.
- Maintaining a professional manner while observing the election processes.
- Ensuring they do not interfere with the election process.

Observers may not:

- Interfere, in the judgment of the election 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. [EC 18541 & 18370]
- Display any election material or wear campaign badges, buttons or apparel. [EC 319.5]
- 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.
- Make physical contact with election personnel.

- Use office computers, telephones or other non-public facilities at polling places or the central counting site.
- Eat or drink in the polls, warehouse, or the central counting site.
- Assist in operations at any polling place or the central counting site.
- Some people have sensitivities to perfumes and colognes. Please refrain from wearing strong perfume or aftershave while observing.
- For safety purposes anyone entering the elections warehouse must wear sturdy shoes with closed toes that provide full coverage.
- Photograph, video tape, or otherwise record a voter entering or exiting polling place.

Revised 05-05-16