

# Elections Department FY 2011-12 Performance Plan

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## **I. MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Elections Department is to provide a responsive, transparent, and professional approach to conducting elections that will inspire trust and confidence in our work and to promote participation of all eligible citizens in the election process.

## **II. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

The Elections Department's responsibilities include registering voters, maintaining voter registration files, conducting federal, state, county, and school elections, conducting municipal and special district elections at the request of the governing bodies, and verifying initiative, referendum, and recall petitions. Elections also maintain information on office holders and candidates as required by the Fair Political Practices Commission.

## **III. ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FY 2010-11**

- Produced and distributed voter education video and brochures in English and Spanish on Voting by Mail in Marin County
- Revised Poll Worker training manuals into an easy to read format
- Partnered with community organizations to expand capacity for voter education and outreach
- Ranked among the top five California counties with the highest percentage of registration and turnout in the November 2010 Election
- Partnered with County Geographic Information System (GIS) to map jurisdictional boundary lines of schools and special districts on the ballot to assure that voters are in their correct districts
- Partnered with Department of Information Services and Technology to use the County Helpdesk for Election Day troubleshooting
- Redesigned the Elections website by making it more accessible and easier to find information as well as increasing look-up functions

## **IV. GOALS AND KEY INITIATIVES FOR FY 2011-12**

<b>Countywide Goals</b>				
<b>I. Healthy Communities</b>	<b>II. Safe Communities</b>	<b>III. Sustainable Communities</b>	<b>IV. Environmental Preservation</b>	<b>V. Community Participation</b>
<b>VI. Excellent Customer Service</b>	<b>VII. Employer of Choice</b>	<b>VIII. Effective Communication</b>	<b>IX. Managing for Results</b>	<b>X. Financial Responsibility</b>

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**GOAL I**

**Ensure community trust by providing fair, accessible and effective elections**

**FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives**

Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Maintain current high level of voter participation by identifying and eliminating barriers to voting in Marin County	V. Community Participation
2. Align precinct boundaries with census tract boundaries to facilitate analysis of election data	IX. Managing for Results
3. Enhance Elections website to provide search features for candidate and campaign filing	VIII. Effective Communication

**V. KEY CHALLENGES AND OUTSTANDING ISSUES**

- Adjusting the boundaries of congressional, state senate, assembly, supervisor and some schools and districts to conform to census block boundaries as well as letting voters know of any changes to their polling places for the June 2012 Primary Election as a result of redistricting
- Anticipating and preparing for the June 5, 2012 Primary Election, which will be the first election under the new "top two" primary rules that may result in a longer ballot, involve perhaps multiple ballots, and require additional voter education efforts to support the change

**VI. PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

**Objective: Identify and eliminate barriers to voter participation in district and primary election years**

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
→ Turnout in November odd year district elections	n/a	n/a	37.7%	n/a	40%
→ Ratio of registered to eligible voters in statewide election held in fiscal year	n/a	n/a	80.6%	82.8%	85.0%

**Story Behind Performance:**

The level of voter participation is an indicator of community involvement. Voter participation in elections is an indicator of a population that is interested and involved in its governance. Marin County is one of the top five counties in California that has both the highest ratio of registered to eligible voters and the highest percent of turnout in all types of November elections. However, a few communities in the

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County have lower than average voter participation. The department partners with non-governmental community organizations to expand its capacity for voter outreach and education in these communities.

## Objective: Implement Poll Worker recruitment and training methods to maintain high level of community participation in election

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
➔ Number of poll workers recruited for statewide election	n/a	n/a	658	683	675

### Story Behind Performance:

When polling places are fully staffed for an election, it indicates a high level of community participation. Poll workers are vital to the conduct of elections for without them, polling places could not open. Therefore, it is important to maintain poll worker satisfaction and participation in order to have fully staffed polling places for every election. Marin poll workers express a high level of satisfaction with their work at the polls and many return to staff the polls for every election.

## Objective: Provide an informative and user friendly website for the public

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
➔ Number of hits on home page of the Elections website	n/a	n/a	27,925	29,000	34,000

### Story Behind Performance:

Homepage hits is an indicator of public usage and usefulness of the website. Self service look up features on the Elections website provide an excellent public service because they are available at all times. Voters can currently see if they are registered to vote, check to see if their mail ballot was received, and print out forms. Other lookup features planned are information about candidate filing and candidate and committee financial reports.

## Objective: Maintain accurate and current voter file

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
➔ Total number of voter registrations processed in fiscal year (includes new, cancelled and address updates)	n/a	n/a	28,181	30,000	32,000
➔ Total number of registered voters in November election	n/a	n/a	149,509	151,000	155,000

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**Story Behind Performance:**

Election mail, such as vote by mail ballots and voter information pamphlets cannot be forwarded by law. Therefore, maintaining the voter file with current information is important so that voters will receive their election materials. It is also important to maintain up-to-date voter files in order to accurately measure voter participation in elections.

Processing voter registrations to add new voters, cancel the registrations of voters who no longer live in the county, updating addresses, and maintaining the voter file with current information is a year-round task for the Elections Department.

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**Objective: Manage increasing number of voters voting by mail efficiently**

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
➔ Percentage of vote by mail voters on file for November election	n/a	n/a	57.73%	62.84%	65.00%
	n/a	n/a			

**Story Behind Performance:**

As the number of voters voting by mail increases, the number of voters going to the polls has decreased. It is important to Target the number of voters expected to vote at the polls or by mail so that sufficient ballots, personnel and supplies are made available for both methods of voting.

After 2004 legislation allowing any voter to opt to receive his/her ballot by mail, the percentage of vote by mail voters on the voter file for all elections has increased from 22 percent in 2000 to over 60 percent in the November 2010 General Election. At the same time, the Elections Department is required by law to maintain its polling places for all elections, which has increased the workload of the department and the challenges of making sure that sufficient supplies and personnel are allocated to each method of voting. The Elections Office manages the increased workload by automating portions of the vote by mail process.