



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 2/25/2025

To: Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma

Department or Agency Name(s): Human Resources

Staff Name and Phone Number: Janell Crane, 707-565-2885; Spencer Keywood, 707-565-3568

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Exemption of Registrar of Voters from Civil Service Ordinance

Recommended Action:

Adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 21, Article I, Sec. 21-5 of the Sonoma County Code, Civil Service, placing the Registrar of Voters in the Unclassified Service in the County's Civil Service System.

Executive Summary:

On January 28, 2025, a stand-alone Registrar of Voters Department was created, and at the Board's February 11, 2025, meeting, the job classification for the new Registrar of Voters position was established to lead this department.

The Civil Service Ordinance allows the Board of Supervisors to exempt department head positions from the Civil Service System. In order to establish the newly approved Registrar of Voters job classification and exempt the position from the classified service, which essentially means establish the position as "at-will", the Civil Service Ordinance must be amended. This involves a two-part process in which, at the first meeting, there is a first reading that introduces the ordinance and a subsequent meeting at which time the Board may formally adopt the proposed amendments to the ordinance.

At the February 11 meeting, the corresponding Civil Service Ordinance amendment was introduced, and a resolution was passed that waived further reading of the proposed ordinance. Today's action is the second part of the process and adopts the ordinance.

Agenda Date: 2/25/2025

Discussion:

On January 28, 2025, the Board of Supervisors approved the County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor and County Executive's recommendation to create a stand-alone Registrar of Voters Department. The creation of the stand-alone department will strengthen and enhance the County's ability to administer elections, expand voter engagement, ensure compliance with evolving legislative, policy, and voting related cybersecurity advancements, and eliminate potential conflict of interest and separate the responsibility of election oversight from an elected official to an appointed department head. As a result of the Board's approval of staff's recommendation, Human Resources was tasked with developing a new Registrar of Voters job classification.

Registrar of Voters

At their February 11, 2025, meeting, the Board of Supervisors adopted the new classification of Registrar of Voters. Working under general policy direction of the Board of Supervisors and the County Executive, the Registrar of Voters will provide leadership, administrative policy, and operational direction for the Registrar of Voters Department, including analyzing and interpreting legislation affecting the work of the department and performing a variety of complex work in the planning and conducting of all federal, state local elections.

Civil Service Ordinance

For the majority of departments at the County of Sonoma, the employees are "classified" and are in the County's Civil Service System. The Civil Service Ordinance has specific criteria on which positions may be "unclassified", which essentially means an "at-will" position. The Civil Service Ordinance allows the Board of Supervisors to exempt or designate as unclassified, department head positions from the Civil Service System. In order to establish the newly approved Registrar of Voters position as unclassified, the Civil Service Ordinance must be amended. This involves a two-part process in which there is a first reading and the introduction of the ordinance. This process was completed on February 11, 2025, and then at the Board's meeting on February 25, 2025, the ordinance may be officially approved. Technically, the effective date of the ordinance change will be 30 days from the date of the Board's final date of approval.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Agenda Date: 2/25/2025

Prior Board Actions:

February 11, 2025 (Item24; 2025-0116): Board of Supervisors approved the creation of the new Registrar of Voters job classification and approved the first reading of a proposed Civil Service Ordinance placing the classification in the Unclassified Service.

January 28, 2025 (Item 27; 2025-0075): Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution introducing an Ordinance to separate the Registrar of Voters from the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor Department; provide for the appointment of the Registrar of Voters by the Board of Supervisors, and shift supervision of the Registrar of Voters under the County Executive.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY24-25 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

There are no fiscal impacts associated with the recommended action.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
N/A			

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

There is no staffing impact associated with the recommended action.

Attachments:

1. Ordinance amending Chapter 21, Article I, Sec 21-5 of the Sonoma County Code, Civil Service

Agenda Date: 2/25/2025

2. Redline of proposed changes to amend Chapter 21, Article I, Sec. 21-5 of the Sonoma County Code, Civil Service

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

N/A