



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2022-0454, **Version:** 1

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Clerk-Recorder-Assessor-Registrar of Voters

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Kim Barrett (707) 565-3471

**Vote Requirement:** 4/5th

**Supervisorial District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Compensation for Vote Center Clerks and Inspectors

**Recommended Action:**

Adopt a resolution increasing compensation for election vote center workers including clerks, inspectors, and current county employees and increase the bi-lingual premium on Election Day. (4/5<sup>th</sup> Vote Required)

**Executive Summary:**

With the transition to the Voter's Choice Act (VCA) election model, countywide elections require opening voting center locations from 4 to 11 days leading to Election Day. The Registrar of Voters (ROV) office continually struggles with getting and retaining vote center workers and will be additionally challenged to secure workers for the increased voting day period. To this end, the Registrar of Voters office is recommending an increase to vote center workers' stipends. Today's Board action authorizes increases to voter center workers' stipends paid to Clerks from \$125 to \$160 for early voting days and from \$125 to \$250 for Election Day, Inspectors from \$175 to \$240 for early voting days and from \$175 to \$360 for Election Day and County employees performing inspector duties from \$189.50 to \$259.88 for early vote days and from \$189.50 to \$389.82 for Election Day and County employees performing clerk duties from \$135.36 to \$173.25 for early vote days and from \$135.36 to \$270.71 for Election Day and increase the bi-lingual premium on Election Day from \$25 to \$40, the bi-lingual premium for early vote days will remain \$25.

**Discussion:**

**Background:**

On March 16, 2021 the Board of Supervisors approved implementation of the Voter's Choice Act (VCA) Model for Future Elections in Sonoma County. Under the VCA, based on the county's current voter registration, seven voting locations are required to be open for a total of 11 days and 24 voting locations are required to be open for four days. The transition to the new election model requires the ROV Office to work with the Human Resources Department to develop a new vote center staffing strategy for elections to consider the extended training and work time. Other VCA counties have a variety of staffing strategies, including paying volunteers a stipend for the entire 11-day period, paying workers hourly, and a hybrid strategy. Costs for staffing would depend on the plan developed between the ROV Office and Human Resources. It has been determined that the best course of action would be to hire the vote center workers as County extra help. Human Resources needs to complete a job classification study to determine the appropriate job classification and salary range. Due to extenuating circumstances, Human Resources has been unable to complete the job classification in time for the June 2022 Primary Election, therefore the ROV will need to pay workers a stipend for the

extended voting days. To be able to ensure enough workers are secured and provide reasonable compensation, ROV would like to increase the daily stipends of the workers. On early vote days, most workers will be at the vote centers for approximately 9 hours a day and on Election Day will be at the voter centers for up to 16 hours. It is most likely that the job classification study will not be completed until 2023 therefore the proposed increase in stipends will apply to future elections until the job classification study is complete. ROV would also like to increase the bi-lingual premium on Election Day to reflect the difficulty in recruiting bi-lingual workers as well as the additional hours required on Election Day.

**Proposed Increase to Vote Center Workers Stipend:**

To compensate Vote Center workers more favorably, and to acknowledge the additional training and responsibilities associated with the implementation of the new voting system changes, the department is proposing that the stipend paid to Inspectors in Sonoma County be raised from \$175 to \$240 per early voting day and from \$175 to \$360 for Election Day (including training, but excluding mileage), and that the stipend paid to Clerks be raised from \$125 to \$160 per early voting day and from \$125 to \$250 for Election Day.

**County Employees Serving as Vote Center Workers:**

The proposed changes also include an increase in County employee stipend pay, to offset Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) tax applied to county employee stipends. FICA is a mandatory payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare programs taxed at 7.65% of gross income. Anyone making more than \$1,800 in income from the county must have FICA taken out of their payments. If the current county stipend is increased, once the FICA tax is applied, the net stipend pay for current county employees will match that of non-county employees serving in the same capacity. If the County employee stipend is not increased, a County employee serving as a Precinct Inspector would receive only \$161.61 of the stipend, as compared to \$175 that a non-County employee would receive. Board of Supervisors Resolutions 94-1512 and 04-0120 authorizes County employees to receive their normal pay while serving as precinct officers.

Category	Notes	Notes	Currently	Proposed	Difference
Inspectors	Early Vote Days	Non-current county employees	175.00	240.00	65.00
Inspectors	Election Day	Non-current county employees	175.00	360.00	185.00
Clerks	Early Vote Days	Non-current county employees	125.00	160.00	35.00
Clerks	Election Day	Non-current county employees	125.00	250.00	125.00
All	Early Vote Days	Bi-lingual Premium	25.00	25.00	0.00
All	Election Day	Bi-lingual Premium	25.00	40.00	15.00
Inspectors	Early Vote Days	Current county employees	189.50	259.88	70.38
Inspectors	Early Vote Days	Current county employees w/ bi-lingual	216.57	286.95	70.38
Inspectors	Election Day	Current county employees	189.50	389.82	200.32

Inspectors	Election Day	Current county employees w/ bi-lingual	216.57	433.13	216.56
Clerks	Early Vote Days	Current county employees	135.36	173.25	37.89
Clerks	Early Vote Days	Current county employees w/ bi-lingual	162.43	200.32	37.89
Clerks	Election Day	Current county employees	135.36	270.71	135.35
Clerks	Election Day	Current county employees w/ bi-lingual	162.43	314.02	151.59

The current total cost of stipends is \$178,200 and is for 2 inspectors and 6 clerks for each vote center day, 6 vote centers (excludes the ROV office which will serve as a vote center) will be open for 11 days and 24 vote centers will be open for 4 days. The total estimated cost for the proposed increases is \$88,540: \$10,060 for the increase to County employee’s stipends over the standard stipend, \$78,480 for vote center workers’ stipend increases and \$450 for the bi-lingual increase on Election Day for a countywide, county-funded election. General Elections are heavily consolidated and the consolidating jurisdictions pay a pro-rated share of costs. Primary Elections are almost entirely a county cost. Nearly all other elections conducted by the County, whether scheduled or special, are called by jurisdictions that are responsible for the full costs of conducting those elections and no net County cost increases are anticipated.

**Strategic Plan:**

N/A

**Prior Board Actions:**

03/16/2021 - Passed Board Item 2021-0049 Implementation of the Voter’s Choice Act Model for Future Elections.

Prior resolutions increasing precinct officer/polling places rates:

04/01/1974 - Resolution 44443 - Inspectors \$20; Clerks/Judges \$18

09/23/1974 - Resolution 46313 - Inspectors \$33; Clerks/Judges \$28.50; Polling Places \$12

01/06/1981 - Resolution 68586 - Inspectors \$45; Clerks/Judges \$40; Polling Places \$20

10/08/1985 - Resolution 85-2225 - Inspectors \$60; Clerks/Judges \$55

07/31/1990 - Resolution 90-1445 - Inspectors \$75; Clerks/Judges \$65

05/11/1999 - Resolution 99-0604 - Inspectors \$100; Clerks/Judges \$75; Polling Places \$40

10/03/2006 - Resolution 06-0863 - Inspectors \$134; Clerks/Judges \$100; Polling Places \$60

12/17/2019 - Resolution 19-0557 - Inspectors non-county employees \$175; Clerks non-county employees \$125; bi-lingual premium \$25; Inspectors county employees \$189.50; Clerks county employees \$135.36; Inspectors with bi-lingual county employees \$216.57; Clerk with bi-lingual county employees \$162.43.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 21-22 Adopted</b>	<b>FY22-23 Projected</b>	<b>FY 23-24 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$88,540	\$266,740	
Additional Appropriation Requested			

<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$88,540</b>	<b>\$266,740</b>	
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF	\$88,540	\$266,740	
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$88,540</b>	<b>\$266,740</b>	

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

The Fiscal Year 21-22 ROV budget has sufficient appropriations to cover the cost of the increased vote center workers' stipends.

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

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

**Attachments:**

Attachment 1 - Resolution

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

N/A