

INTRODUCTION

The Neighborhood Council (NC) Board Member Elections will be held in the spring of 2023. In 2023, the Office of City Clerk (City Clerk) will implement a hybrid election model where NC voters will have the option to vote in person at polling locations or vote-by-mail. This handbook provides voters, candidates, and NC participants with information about the election process, including the candidate filing, Vote-By-Mail (VBM) and Election Day operations.

For 2023, the City Clerk will be overseeing election operations, while the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (EmpowerLA) will collaborate with individual NCs to conduct election outreach. Both the City Clerk and EmpowerLA look forward to the 2023 NC Elections and will be working closely with each NC to ensure that all NC elections are a success.

For more information about NC elections, please visit the City Clerk's Election Division website at clerk.lacity.org/elections or call our office at (213) 978-0444 or toll free at (888) 873-1000.

For more information about individual NCs or NC outreach, please visit EmpowerLA's website at empowerla.org or call at (213) 978-1551.

Office of the City Clerk

Election Division
C. Erwin Piper Technical Center
555 Ramirez Street, Space 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Email: clerk.electionsnclacity.org

Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

Main Office
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Main Street, 20th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Email: NCSupport@lacity.org

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities.

1. WHO IS INVOLVED IN NC ELECTIONS

1.1 The Office of the City Clerk (City Clerk)

The City Clerk will serve as the primary Election Administrator for the 2023 NC Elections.

In accordance with Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 20.36, the City Clerk is authorized to conduct NC elections and is authorized to promulgate any election procedure, rule, regulation, or issue any directive or moratorium necessary for that portion of the elections it administers, including the promulgation of any procedures, rules, regulations, directives, or moratoria for the resolution of any election challenge.

Any election procedures, rules or regulations promulgated by the City Clerk are hereby applied to all NC Bylaws by reference and are to be applied to the NC's Bylaws. While our office is committed to adhering to all election language stipulated in the bylaws, City Clerk election rules and regulations shall take precedence over any inconsistent language in the NC's Bylaws.

1.2 City Clerk Election Administrators (EAs)

City Clerk staff will serve as Election Administrators (EAs) for the 2023 NC Elections. Throughout the election year, EAs will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Serving as the primary liaison between NCs, the City Clerk, EmpowerLA, and stakeholders;
2. Conducting all NC elections in accordance with citywide rules outlined in this handbook and other procedures established by the City Clerk, NC Bylaws, and any governing City or State laws and regulations (e.g., California Public Records Act);
3. Reviewing and understanding NC Bylaws, as they relate to the conduct of elections;
4. Drafting voting models and sample ballots based on voter eligibility requirements in each NC's Bylaws;
5. Processing Election Information Worksheets and other election documents issued by the City Clerk;
6. Recruiting NC polling places;

7. Recruiting and training NC election poll workers;
8. Assisting the City Clerk's Public Services Section with the NC candidate filing process, including processing candidate filing challenges;
9. Providing Vote-By-Mail (VBM) information to NCs;
10. Assembling NC polling place supplies;
11. Overseeing polling place operations on Election Day; and
12. Processing post-election challenges and inquiries, when necessary

Overall, an EA is expected to work closely and communicate with their assigned NCs, either through an Election Committee or with the NC Board.

1.3 Additional City Clerk Duties

Additional City Clerk staff will be responsible for the following administrative operations:

1. Updating the City Clerk's website and providing systems maintenance;
2. Processing and certifying NC candidate applications;
3. Designing, testing, and tallying ballots;
4. Processing VBM applications; mailing and receiving NC ballots;
5. Retrieving ballots from drop-box locations;
6. Serving as poll workers and/or Poll Managers on Election Day;
7. Convening Independent Grievance Panels to process post-election challenges, when necessary;
8. Certifying and posting election results;
9. Processing poll worker payroll; and
10. Processing public records requests.

1.4 Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (EmpowerLA)

EmpowerLA is the City Department responsible for promoting civic engagement and supporting NCs in their mission to make municipal government more responsive to local needs. EmpowerLA's Neighborhood Empowerment Advocates (NEAs) help to connect NCs and City government by holding workshops and training on public engagement for both NCs and City staff. NEAs also provide NCs with support in organizing and running

meetings and coach board members on how to work with the City to advocate for their communities.

During this NC election cycle, EmpowerLA will be responsible for coordinating election outreach and candidate recruitment with each NC.

1.5 Neighborhood Councils (NCs)

Neighborhood Councils form a grassroots level of the Los Angeles City government. The system was created to connect Los Angeles' diverse communities to City Hall and was established in 1999 by an amendment to the City Charter.

Each NC operates according to the City Charter, Administrative Code, Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils and Bylaws that define the NC's governing board structure, geographical boundaries, and candidate and voter eligibility requirements. NCs also operate according to the City Charter, applicable municipal ordinances, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners policies, and directives issued by EmpowerLA and the City Clerk.

NC board members are unpaid volunteer(s), who serve on boards to monitor the delivery of City services to their communities and its stakeholders as well as present budget priorities to the Mayor and City Council. NC board members are not elected officials. NCs advocate for their communities on critical issues like planning and land use, homelessness, and emergency preparedness.

The City Clerk's EAs will work closely with NCs either through their Election Committees, or through other designated representatives, on assuring each NC election is conducted fairly and according to procedure.

Bylaw amendments must be finalized and approved by July 1, 2022 in order for election related revisions to be applied in the 2023 election cycle. Please note, any board structure changes made after the deadline date will not be applied to the upcoming NC election cycle.

1.6 Stakeholders

NC membership is open to all Stakeholders. A "Stakeholder" shall be defined as any individual who:

- (1) Lives, works, or owns real property within the boundaries of the NC; or

(2) Is a Community Interest Stakeholder, defined as an individual who is a member of or participates in a Community Organization within the boundaries of the NC.

A “Community Organization” is an entity that has continuously maintained a physical street address within the boundaries of the NC for not less than one year, and that performs ongoing and verifiable activities and operations that confer some benefit on the community within the boundaries of the neighborhood council. A for-profit entity shall not qualify as a Community Organization. Examples of Community Organizations may include Chambers of Commerce, houses of worship or other faith-based organizations, educational institutions, or non-profit organizations.

All stakeholders, when running as a candidate or voting, must specify a qualifying address or location within the NC’s boundaries to participate. Stakeholder claims cannot be based on participation occurring outside of a given NC’s boundaries.

Throughout this handbook, the terms “candidate” and “voter” may be used in place of “stakeholder.”

2. NC ELECTION DATES

2.1. Regional Election Assignments and Timelines

All NC elections will take place between March and June in 2023. As in previous NC elections, NCs will be assigned to geographical regions, in groups of six to ten NCs, and the groups within that region will hold their elections on the same day.

1. The City Clerk - Election Division office is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
2. When a deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or a religious or national holiday, the actual deadline date will be moved to the following City of Los Angeles business day.
3. Applications or required documentation must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on filing deadline days.

For more information on your NC’s election region and election date, please refer to [Attachment A: 2023 Neighborhood Council Regional Election Schedule](#).

For more information on your NC’s regional election timeline, which includes important election deadlines, please refer to [Attachment B: 2023 NC Election Timeline](#).

3. THE CANDIDATE FILING PROCESS

3.1 Candidate Filing Information - First Steps

The City of Los Angeles encourages all stakeholders to participate in the 2023 NC Elections. If you are interested in running for a NC board seat, please consider taking the following steps:

1. Find out which NC you belong to by entering your qualifying address here: neighborhoodinfo.lacity.org.
2. Attend your local NC meeting and subscribe to your NC's Early Notification System to receive your NC's meeting agendas here: [NC's Early Notification System](#)
3. Review your NC's Bylaws to understand your NC's board seat qualifications. It is the candidate's responsibility to know and select the seat they are running for. Board seat qualifications are defined in **Article V (Governing Board)** and **Attachment B (Governing Board Structure and Voting)** in all NC Bylaws. All current NC Bylaws can be found on **EmpowerLA's website** at: [NC Bylaws](#).
4. Review your NC's election timeline in **Attachment B: 2023 NC Election Timeline** or on the City Clerk's Election Division website at clerk.lacity.org/elections for more information on important deadlines.
5. Complete a Candidate Filing Application and provide the City Clerk with all of the information and documentation required for candidate certification. Once certified, all candidates will be expected to review and adhere to the Candidate Guidelines below (**3.12 Candidate Guidelines**).

The City Clerk will contact stakeholders who submit incomplete applications. The candidate is responsible for providing additional information or documentation by the deadline. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

3.2 The Right to Run for a NC Board Seat

Stakeholders cannot be denied the opportunity to run for a board seat for which they can prove eligibility, unless otherwise prohibited by a NC's Bylaws (e.g. term limits, age requirements).

3.3 The Candidate Filing Period

The candidate filing period will begin approximately 120 days before Election Day and will last for 45 days. All candidate filing and candidate challenge deadlines will end at 11:59 p.m., Pacific Standard Time.

3.4 Completing a Candidate Filing Application

Stakeholders interested in running for a NC board seat must complete a Candidate Filing Application online or by paper application, and submit it to the City Clerk's office for review and verification.

Candidates can complete and submit a Candidate Filing Application online at <https://clerkappsele.lacity.org/NCElection> or obtain a paper application from the City Clerk's website. Paper applications may be submitted by mail, email, or by fax at the following:

Office of the City Clerk
Election Division
C. Erwin Piper Technical Center
555 Ramirez Street, Space 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Email: clerk.election@lacity.org

Fax: (213) 978-0376

When completing a Candidate Filing Application, candidates must provide the following information:

1. Neighborhood Council Name*;
2. Board Seat Name*;
3. Stakeholder Status (Live, Work, Own Property, or Community Interest)*;
4. Name as it will appear on the Ballot*;
5. First and Last Name*;
6. Date of Birth;
7. Telephone Number;
8. Email Address*;
9. Qualifying Address;
10. Mailing Address; and
11. A photo identification and any documentation necessary to establish board seat eligibility.

NOTE: If submitting a paper application, the candidate must also provide their signature.

***THIS INFORMATION IS CONSIDERED PUBLIC AND SUBJECT TO LIMITED DISCLOSURE. PERSONAL ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBERS ARE NOT DISCLOSED.**

3.5 Qualifying Documentation

All candidates must submit identification and any applicable documentation to establish their eligibility for the board seat they are applying for. Candidates must submit all necessary documentation within three (3) days of the candidate filing deadline by 11:59 p.m. The City Clerk will contact every candidate lacking sufficient documentation to clarify what is needed in order to certify. The candidate is responsible for providing additional information or documentation by the deadline.

Since there is a wide variety of NC board seats, the documentation required to qualify for these seats vary. For an example of what type of documents may suffice, please refer to [Attachment C: 2023 NC Election Documentation Guide](#).

All candidates must acknowledge the NC Leadership Orientation Board Service Policy prior to certification. [Attachment D: NC Leadership Orientation Board Service Policy](#).

The City Clerk will review each Candidate Filing Application and applicable documentation to determine if the candidate meets the NC's board seat qualifications, as stated in the NC's Bylaws. Once certified, any documentation submitted by the candidate will be deleted from the City Clerk's candidate filing system.

CANDIDATES WHO DO NOT SUBMIT A CANDIDATE FILING APPLICATION, FAIL TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION OR FAIL TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, DO NOT MEET SPECIFIC BOARD SEAT REQUIREMENTS AND DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THE LEADERSHIP ORIENTATION POLICY WILL NOT BE CERTIFIED.

3.6 The Neighborhood Council Candidate Filing Portal and Instructions

Candidates who wish to complete a Candidate Filing Application online **must** create a profile in the NC Candidate Filing Portal. To create a profile, candidates can access the NC Candidate Filing Portal at <https://clerkappsele.lacity.org/NCElection> and complete the following steps:

1. Click on the 'Create New Account' button and enter the following information:
 - a. First and Last Name
 - b. Email Address
2. An email will be sent to the candidate confirming registration. Candidates must then create a password. The password must be at least eight (8) characters long and must include at least one (1) uppercase letter, one (1) lowercase letter, one (1) number, and one (1) punctuation character. Example: **Password8\$**.
3. Click 'Submit'.

Once the password has been confirmed, candidates will automatically be returned to the NC Candidate Filing Portal, where they can sign in with their email and password to begin the Candidate Filing Application. When creating a new user profile, it is strongly suggested that candidates write down their login information. Candidates can reset their password by using the *Forgot Password* link.

City Clerk staff will be available throughout the candidate filing period, during regular City business hours, to assist candidates with their filing.

3.7 Candidate Statement and Photo

Candidates will have the option of submitting a candidate statement and photograph, both of which will be posted on the City Clerk's website in random alpha order (the same order in which candidate names will appear on the ballot). Candidates may submit their optional statement and photograph up to fifty-eight (58) days before Election Day.

The NC Candidate Filing Portal allows candidates a maximum of 1,000 characters for a candidate statement.

3.8 Write-In Candidates

There will be no write-in candidates for the 2023 NC Elections.

3.9 Running in Multiple Neighborhood Councils or for Multiple Board Seats

Stakeholders may run as a candidate in multiple NCs as long as they meet each NC's board seat requirements. Within each NC, a NC's Bylaws dictate how many seats a candidate may run for. Most NCs limit candidates to one seat. However, some NCs allow candidates to run for more than one seat.

3.10 Candidate Withdrawal

Candidates who choose to withdraw their name from the ballot must do so no later than 65 days before Election Day, by clicking the *Withdraw* button in the Candidate Filing Portal. If a candidate filed a paper Candidate Filing Application, they must contact the City Clerk to withdraw their name from the ballot. If a candidate withdraws from a contest, but wishes to run for another seat, they must refile through the Candidate Filing Portal or on a paper Candidate Filing Application no later than 75 days before Election Day.

Once a candidate withdraws, the candidate's name, statement, and photo will be removed from the City Clerk's webpage. Candidates who wish to withdraw after the withdrawal deadline must notify their NC of their request as their name will remain on the ballot. In the event a candidate wins a seat but does not wish to serve, the NC will need to take action to vacate the seat, which then must be filled by the NC, in accordance with their Bylaws. This type of post-election withdrawal will not be processed by the City Clerk. If a candidate expresses their intent to withdraw after the withdrawal deadline but is elected to the seat, the candidate retains the right to be seated.

3.11 Certified List of Candidates

The City Clerk will post the NC's Certified List of Candidates 60 days before Election Day. Candidate contact information, including a candidate's name, telephone number, and email address will be provided to EmpowerLA and their NC to notify candidates of any training, outreach, or candidate forum opportunities. NCs are prohibited from providing any candidate personal or contact information. A NC, if it so chooses, may ask candidates to participate in a Candidate Forum prior to Election Day. The City Clerk will not conduct or participate in any NC Candidate Forums.

3.12 Candidate Guidelines

All NC candidates will be provided with a set of guidelines:

1. Candidates must adhere to the guidelines prescribed in this Handbook and all other NC election policies and procedures established by the City Clerk and EmpowerLA.
2. Candidates may not use City buildings, equipment, supplies, funds, or other City resources for **campaigning** activities.
3. Candidates may not use the City of Los Angeles Seal (logo) or Letterhead, the EmpowerLA logo, the City Clerk logo, the NC logo, or any other official NC designation created by EmpowerLA in candidate photos or any candidate campaign material, which can include items such as hats, t-shirts, buttons, or signs.
4. Candidates may not receive endorsements from the governing NC board as a whole.
5. Candidates may receive endorsements from individual board members, acting as individual stakeholders.
6. Candidates may not post handbills on public property.
7. Candidates may run as a slate on the condition that all participating candidates provide written consent to the slate organizer agreeing to participate.
8. Candidates may not engage in electioneering within 100 feet of the polling place entrance on Election Day.
7. Candidates should report any violation of these rules to the City Clerk.
8. Candidates must immediately notify the City Clerk and NC if their qualifying stakeholder status changes prior to the election, which may result in disqualification from the board seat they are seeking.

A violation of these guidelines could result in disqualification of candidates per sections **3.14: The Candidate Challenge Period** and **3.15: Resolving Candidate Challenges**.

3.13 Board Affirmation and Loss of Quorum

In the event there are no candidates for a single NC board seat, that contest will be omitted from the Official Ballot.

In the event there are not enough candidates in a NC election or if there are no competitive contests (two or more candidates) for all board seats after the List of Certified Candidates has been released, the election for the given NC will be suspended

and canceled. Any candidates that have been certified will be seated by EmpowerLA through the Department's prescribed Board Affirmation process.

If there are not enough candidates to meet a quorum of the board, EmpowerLA will use the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners' Loss of Quorum policy to seat a new board. For more information regarding this process, visit the EmpowerLA website at empowerla.org.

3.14 The Candidate Challenge Period

A candidate's eligibility to run for and serve on a NC board can be challenged by any NC stakeholder.

In order to file a candidate challenge, a stakeholder must provide the following information to the City Clerk:

1. Name
2. Telephone Number
3. Email Address
4. A justification for the candidate challenge
5. Documentation supporting the challenge claim
 - a. Challenges filed without supporting documentation will not be accepted.

Please note that a challenger's name and justification for the candidate challenge is subject to public disclosure under the California Public Records Act (See [Section 11: Public Records Requests](#)). Supporting documentation is subject to limited disclosure.

Candidate challenges can be submitted approximately 120 days before Election Day. The final day to submit a candidate challenge is 69 days before Election Day. The City Clerk must receive all candidate challenges by this deadline. All candidate filing challenges must be resolved 65 days before Election Day. Candidate challenges will not be reviewed until the challenged candidate has been certified. Candidate challenges, as they pertain to their eligibility, will not be accepted after the Candidate Challenge Period ends. Any other challenges related to candidates must be filed after Election Day. Please review [Attachment B: 2023 NC Election Timeline](#) for exact dates.

Challenges must be submitted to the City Clerk online, in person, by mail, email, or fax at the following:

Office of the City Clerk
Election Division
C. Erwin Piper Technical Center
555 Ramirez Street, Space 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Online Application:
<https://forms.gle/U5HddvYGeQgFn56Z8>

Email: clerk.electionsnclacity.org

Fax: (213) 978-0376

3.15 Resolving Candidate Challenges

The City Clerk will review all candidate challenge submissions that meet the criteria above. Once a determination is made concerning the candidate challenge, the City Clerk will notify the challenger and the candidate in question. If a candidate's certification is invalidated, and the document submission deadline (see [3.5 Qualifying Documentation](#)) has not passed, the candidate may provide additional documentation to support their eligibility claim.

If a candidate's certification is invalidated and the candidate does not provide additional documentation supporting their candidacy, or the candidate filing deadline has already passed, the candidate will be disqualified.

The City Clerk will serve as the final decision maker for all administrative reviews concerning the NC candidate filing process.

4. NC POLLING PLACES

4.1 NC Polling Place Preferences

The City Clerk will be responsible for recruiting polling places for the 2023 NC Elections. Polling place locations will be selected according to the preferences listed in [Attachment G: 2023 Neighborhood Council Election Information Worksheet](#) to the extent possible. The 2023 Neighborhood Council Election Information Worksheet is provided to all NCs to select their preferred polling place location and hours. If a NC fails to submit this worksheet to the City Clerk, the City Clerk will use the polling place location from the 2019 NC Elections or recruit a new polling place. Polling Place locations will be posted on the City Clerk's website at least 30 days before Election Day.

4.2 Polling Place Recruitment

The City Clerk will consider the following criteria when recruiting a polling place:

1. Sufficient space to accommodate voter registration and voting;

2. Enclosed structure that complies with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA);
3. Sufficient parking for poll workers and voters;
4. Traffic ingress/egress, which will be evaluated based on the number of potential voters on Election Day;
5. Restroom access for poll workers;
6. Proximity to public transportation;
7. Available for the entire Election Day, at least two hours before and after the voting hours (approximately 10 hours);
8. Space available for curbside voting; and
9. Neutral location for stakeholders and candidates.

The City Clerk will use a survey to assess this information. Please see [Attachment H: 2023 Neighborhood Council Elections Polling Place Survey](#) for more information.

The City Clerk will give priority to locations listed in the 2023 Neighborhood Council Election Information Worksheet. If locations are not available or do not adhere to the polling place criteria above, the City Clerk will recruit an alternate location, including, but not limited to City-owned facilities.

Please note that there will be only one (1) polling place per NC election.

4.3 Polling Place Hours

Polls will be open between four to six hours on Election Day, between 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., and will be based on NC preferences listed in their 2023 Neighborhood Council Election Information Worksheets. The City Clerk reserves the right to extend polling place hours on Election Day, if necessary, for voters who are still in line once the polls close. Voters who are still in line when the polls close on Election Day will be allowed to vote.

5. NC POLL WORKERS

5.1 NC Poll Worker Requirements

The City of Los Angeles encourages all stakeholders to participate in the 2023 NC Elections. If you are interested in serving as a NC poll worker, you must meet the minimum requirements, which include:

1. 18 years of age or older by Election Day;
2. Speak, read, and write English (Bilingual skills are welcomed, but not mandatory);
3. Provide your own transportation to and from the polling place;
4. Not a candidate for that NC;
5. Complete a poll worker application (see [5.2 Poll Worker Application](#));
6. Attend a mandatory poll worker training session;
7. Willing to work at a location assigned by the City Clerk; and
8. Willing to work the entire time the poll is open on Election Day.

5.2 Poll Worker Application

When completing a poll worker application, applicants must provide the following information:

1. Name;
2. Date of Birth (for age verification purposes);
3. Home or Mailing Address;
4. Email Address;
5. Telephone Number;
6. Select a training date and time; and
7. Sign and date.

Applicants must also indicate which NC Election Region they would prefer to work in and if they are currently participating in a NC, either as a Board Member, candidate, or volunteer. Applicants may list any additional languages they speak, read, or write to provide assistance at the polls.

Applications must be submitted to the City Clerk no later than 30 days prior to a NC Election. Applicants will be contacted by the City Clerk, starting in early 2023. If hired, poll workers must complete an Employment Eligibility Verification form (Form I-9) and a timecard.

Please note that poll worker information may be subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act. Please see [Section 11: Public Records Requests](#) below for more information.

5.3 Poll Worker Assignments and Pay

Approximately 50 poll workers are needed per Election Region. Poll workers may request to work at a specific NC election, although assignments will primarily be based upon operational needs determined by the City Clerk.

When assigning poll workers, the City Clerk will consider a variety of factors including, but not limited to the number of candidates, previous and expected voter turnout, election complexity (number of ballot varieties and stakeholder eligibility requirements), and language needs.

In general, City Clerk staff will serve as Poll Managers on Election Day and will provide each poll worker with their Election Day position. More details on poll worker positions and responsibilities can be found in [Attachment I: 2023 NC Poll Worker Handbook](#), which will be provided to all NC poll workers. All poll workers will receive a \$105 stipend for their service on Election Day.

5.4 Poll Worker Restrictions

Neither candidates nor their families can serve as poll workers in the candidate's NC. However, they will be allowed to serve as poll workers for any other NC.

5.5 NC Poll Worker Training

The City Clerk will conduct regional poll worker training approximately six (6) weeks before Election Day. The City Clerk will notify poll workers of their training date and location. Individuals who attend training will be given priority placement when selecting poll workers to serve on Election Day.

All poll workers will receive general training from the City Clerk, which will provide instruction on general election procedures. Poll workers will then be provided instructions specific to their assigned NC, including details on stakeholder verification, election complexity, and any other details pertinent to their assignment.

The City Clerk may provide poll workers additional election information leading up to and including Election Day.

Please note that poll workers will not be paid for attending training.

6. VOTING ELIGIBILITY

6.1 Stakeholder Voting Eligibility

Those that meet the stakeholder criteria per section [1.6 Stakeholders](#) and the criteria set forth in individual NC Bylaws, will be eligible to vote in NC elections.

6.2 Voting Age

In order to cast a ballot in the election, a voter must meet the voting age requirements set forth in each NC's Bylaws.

6.3 Self-Affirmation and Documentation Requirements

There are two stakeholder verification methods used in NC Elections: Self-Affirmation and Documentation-Required.

NCs that select a Self-Affirmation verification method require voters to affirm, under penalty of perjury, that they are eligible to vote in the NC's election. The voter will not be required to submit documentation to support this claim.

NCs that select a Documentation-Required verification method require voters to submit identification and documentation to corroborate their eligibility claim. Stakeholders who wish to participate in Documentation-Required NC elections may refer to [Attachment C: 2023 NC Election Documentation Guide](#) for more information.

6.4 Voting in Multiple Neighborhood Councils

Stakeholders may be eligible to vote in multiple NCs provided they meet each NC's voter requirements. Stakeholders may submit only one Stakeholder Registration Form (if voting in-person) or Vote-By-Mail (VBM) Application (if voting by mail) per NC.

6.5 The Stakeholder Registration Form

Any stakeholder who wishes to vote must complete a Stakeholder Registration Form or VBM application provided by the City Clerk and meet the stakeholder verification requirements determined by NC Bylaws and the City Clerk. The City Clerk will use this form to determine the voter's eligibility and which ballot(s) to issue to the voter. There will be no pre-registration process for the 2023 NC Elections.

A voter's information on the Stakeholder Registration Form or VBM Application is subject to limited disclosure under the California Public Records Act. Please see [Section 11: Public Records Requests](#) below for more information.

7. VOTE-BY-MAIL OPERATIONS

7.1 Vote-By-Mail Application

Stakeholders interested in voting by mail must complete a VBM application through an online portal or a paper application. The City Clerk will use this form to determine the voter's eligibility and which ballot(s) to issue to the voter.

When completing a VBM application, stakeholders must provide the following information:

1. Neighborhood Council Name;
2. First, Middle, and Last Name;
3. Stakeholder Type (Live, Work, Own Property, or Community Interest);
4. Qualifying information used to determine Stakeholder Type (Live, Work, Own Property, or Community Interest);
5. Date of Birth;
6. Mailing Address;
7. If documentation is required, documentation must be provided proving stakeholder status (See [Attachment C: 2023 NC Election Documentation Guide](#));
8. If submitting a paper application, a candidate must also provide their signature along with any required documentation, if applicable.

A voter's information on the VBM application is subject to limited disclosure under the California Public Records Act. Please see [Section 11: Public Records Requests](#) below for more information.

Stakeholders who do not submit a VBM application, fail to submit documentation (if applicable) or fail to respond to requests for additional information before the deadline, or who do not meet specific voter requirements will not receive a ballot.

7.2 Vote-By-Mail Period

The VBM application period will begin 60 days before Election Day. All VBM applications must be received 19 days prior to Election Day by 11:59 p.m., Pacific Standard Time.

Ballot(s) will be mailed to the voter beginning 35 days before Election Day. Voters will be provided with a postage-paid envelope to return voted ballots. Please review [Attachment B: 2023 NC Election Timeline](#) for exact dates.

7.3 Neighborhood Council Vote-By-Mail Application Portal

Stakeholders who wish to complete a VBM application online must first create a profile in the NC VBM Application Portal. To create a profile, stakeholders can access the NC VBM Application Portal on the City Clerk website and complete the following steps:

1. Click on the 'Create New Account' button and enter the following information:
 - a. First and Last Name
 - b. Email Address
2. An email will be sent to the stakeholders confirming registration. Stakeholders will create a password. The password must be at least eight (8) characters long and must include at least one (1) uppercase letter, one (1) lowercase letter, one (1) number, and one (1) punctuation character. Example: **Password8\$**.
3. Click 'Submit'.

Once the password has been confirmed, stakeholders will automatically be returned to the NC VBM Application Portal, where they can sign in with their email and password to begin the VBM Application. When creating a new user profile, it is strongly suggested that stakeholders write down their login information. Voters can reset their password by using the *Forgot Password* link.

Stakeholders will be able to track the status of their application and ballot in the NC VBM Application Portal.

City Clerk staff will be available throughout the VBM application period, during regular City business hours, to assist stakeholders with their filing.

7.4 Completing a Vote-By-Mail Paper Application

Stakeholders may also submit a paper VBM application to receive a NC ballot. City Clerk staff will enter the information included in the paper application into the NC VBM Application Portal for processing. Paper applications may be submitted by mail, email, or fax at the following:

Office of the City Clerk
Election Division
C. Erwin Piper Technical Center
555 Ramirez Street, Space 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Email: clerk.electionvbm@lacity.org

Fax: (213) 978-0376

NOTE: An authorized agent may return paper applications on behalf of the voter. Voters must complete the “Authorized Agent” portion of the application.

7.5 Replacement Ballots

In the event that a stakeholder does not receive a ballot, makes an error while voting the ballot, or receives the wrong ballot, the stakeholder must contact the City Clerk to request a replacement ballot before the VBM application deadline. Once a ballot is reissued, the original ballot is voided.

7.6 Ballot Drop Boxes

Ballot drop boxes will be located within each NC to accommodate voters who are unable to mail their ballot. Ballot drop box locations and dates will be posted on the City Clerk’s website at least 30 days prior to Election Day. All ballots must be dropped off by Election Day to be counted.

NOTE: Voters may designate an authorized agent to return ballots on their behalf. Voters must complete the “Authorized Agent” portion of the ballot return envelope.

8. ELECTION DAY OPERATIONS

8.1 2023 NC Election Poll Worker Handbook

This section will provide a general overview of NC Election Day operations. For additional information, please refer to [Attachment I: 2023 NC Poll Worker Handbook](#). This handbook will serve as the training guide for all poll workers and as a primary source of Election Day policies and procedures.

8.2 Election Day Staff

City Clerk staff will serve as Poll Managers for each NC election. The Poll Manager supervises polling place operations and staff, including the following poll worker positions:

1. **Greeter:** A poll worker who greets voters and assists with managing the queue of voters.
2. **Registration Clerk:** A poll worker who registers voters according to the eligibility requirements set forth in each NC's Bylaws, and
3. **VBM Clerk:** A poll worker who checks the voter registration against the VBM roster.
4. **Ballot Clerk:** A poll worker who issues ballots to voters.
5. **Provisional Clerk:** A poll worker who processes voters who have to cast a provisional ballot.
6. **Ballot Box Clerk:** A poll worker who ensures that all voted ballots are cast into the ballot box.

8.3 Polling Place Supplies

The City Clerk will provide all polling place supplies for each NC election. These supplies will include, but are not limited to:

1. Inside and outside signage (e.g., Directional arrows, "No Electioneering" signs, etc.)
2. Informational kiosks
3. Candidate Statement and Photo Binders
4. Stationary supplies (e.g., pencils, paper clips, etc.)
5. Voting booths

6. Stakeholder Registration Forms
7. Ballots and ballot box
8. Provisional and curbside voting supplies
9. Crowd control barriers (if necessary)
10. Tables and chairs

8.4 Official Ballots

The City Clerk will conduct a random alphabetical drawing to determine in which order candidate names will appear on the ballot for all NC elections.

The City Clerk will be responsible for developing and printing the official ballots for all NC elections. The variety of ballot styles will be based on NC Bylaws and the number produced for Election Day will be based on previous election turnout and the number of candidates on the ballot. The City Clerk will also consult with DONE and NCs when determining how many ballots to provide at the polls on Election Day.

8.5 Provisional Voting

Provisional voting entitles any voter who claims a stake in a NC an opportunity to vote even though their eligibility to vote cannot be immediately determined at the polling place. The content of a Provisional Ballot will be the same as a regular ballot, but it must be cast “provisionally” until the City Clerk can verify the voter’s eligibility.

Voters who were mailed a VBM ballot and wish to vote at a polling place must vote provisionally to prevent double voting. The vote will be included in the tally once it is confirmed the VBM ballot was not received by the City Clerk.

When voting provisionally, the voter must complete a Provisional Ballot Envelope to be issued a Provisional Ballot. The voted Provisional Ballot must be placed into the issued envelope, which is signed and sealed before placing it into the Ballot Box.

Provisional voters will have three business days after Election Day to submit any information necessary for the City Clerk to determine their eligibility to vote and count their ballot.

8.6 Curbside Voting

Curbside voting will only be made available to voters with disabilities who are unable to access the polling place. Poll workers will be available to assist Curbside Voters with the voter registration process and ensure that their ballots are properly cast.

8.7 Electioneering

Electioneering is strictly prohibited at the polling place on Election Day. Individuals, candidates, organizations, or other entities cannot solicit a vote, or speak to a voter, poll worker, media representative, observer, or other person in the polling place on the subject of marking their ballot on Election Day within 100 feet of the polling place location. This includes the audible dissemination of information that advocates for or against a candidate on the ballot.

Vehicles that have a banner or placard soliciting or recommending a vote are prohibited within 100 feet of the polling place location. When the 100 feet boundary falls in a street or a hazardous area, the boundary may be extended just beyond the street or hazardous area.

Loitering on the premises while the polling place is open is prohibited and will be considered electioneering by the City Clerk. Electioneering is further defined as inclusive of, but not limited to, any of the following:

1. A display of a candidate's name, campaign slogan, or logo;
2. Buttons, hats, pencils, pens, shirts, signs, or stickers containing electioneering information; or
3. A sign relating to a stakeholder's eligibility to vote or speaking to a voter on the subject of the eligibility to vote.

Violation of these electioneering guidelines may result in an election challenge, as described in the Election Challenge portions of [Section 9: Election Results](#). Any questions concerning electioneering on Election Day should be directed to the Poll Manager.

8.8 Exit Polls and Surveys

Individuals, news media, or other organizations wishing to conduct a survey, exit poll, or other survey of voters on Election Day are permitted to do so under the following conditions:

1. Any person or group conducting surveys, exit polls, or other survey of voters are required to sign in with the polling place staff and adhere to the Poll Manager's instructions concerning polling place operations;
2. Surveys and exit polling will be permitted as long as it does not interfere with the voting process. Any person or group conducting surveys, exit polls, or other survey of voters are advised to remain at least 25 feet from the entrance of the polling place;
3. Candidates are prohibited from participating and conducting surveys, exit polls, or other surveys of voters on Election Day.

8.9 Media and Observers

Observers and media representatives are permitted to observe polling place operations on Election Day provided they do not attempt to interfere with voting or vote processing procedures. Observers must sign in with the Poll Manager, receive a badge, and adhere to the Observer Guidelines outlined in [Attachment I: 2023 NC Poll Worker Handbook](#). Observers will be permitted to enter the polling place once it officially opens for voting. Observers may not interact with voters. Poll Managers or City Clerk staff reserve the right to dismiss observers if they are perceived to be interfering or disrupting the voting process or other polling place operations.

8.10 Photography and Filming in the Polling Place

Filming, photographing or otherwise recording is allowed inside and outside the polling place provided that the person filming, photographing, or recording does not, in any way, interfere with any voter or prevent poll workers from carrying out their duties. Any person filming, photographing, or otherwise recording must meet the following requirements:

1. Obtain the consent of the voters or observers inside the polling place (polling place staff may not withhold permission to be filmed or photographed);
2. Not violate a voters' privacy in the voting booth; and
3. Not film any election material that can identify a voter including but not limited to, Stakeholder Registration Forms or voted ballots

Voters may not be filmed, photographed, or otherwise recorded entering or exiting the polling place without their consent.

8.11 Online Voting and On-Site Early Voting

There will be no Online Voting or On-Site Early Voting component for the 2023 NC Elections.

8.12 Language Assistance at the Polls

The City Clerk will translate certain Election Day documents, including the Stakeholder Registration Form, and language assistance will be provided at the polls in accordance with the preferences stated in each NC's 2023 Neighborhood Council Election Information Worksheet.

Voters may bring their own interpreters or translators to the polls on Election Day to assist them so long as the interpreter or translator signs in with polling place staff and exits the polling place with the voter.

9. ELECTION RESULTS

9.1 Election Tally Location and Time

The City Clerk will begin counting ballots one (1) business day after Election Day. The tabulation of ballots shall take place at:

Office of the City Clerk – Election Division
C. Erwin Piper Technical Center
555 Ramirez Street, Space 375
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The tally process is open to the public for observation in person and via livestream. All in person observers must sign in with the City Clerk and must follow posted observer guidelines. Links to the livestreaming ballot tabulation will be available on the City Clerk's website.

9.2 The Tally Process

The City Clerk will tally ballots using high-speed scanners. In the event these scanners are unavailable for tally, the City Clerk will hand count NC ballots.

The City Clerk will post unofficial results up to four (4) business days after Election Day and official results up to fifteen (15) days after Election Day on the City Clerk's website at clerk.lacity.org/elections.

9.3 Recounts

Recounts will only be available if the vote margin is less than 1% for a specific contest. Requests must be from stakeholders who voted in the applicable NC election.

9.4 Tie Votes

Tie votes will be resolved by drawing lots after the official results are posted. The City Clerk will conduct the tie resolution in public view and candidates or their designated representatives will be requested to be present.

9.5 Candidates Elected to Multiple Seats

Some NCs allow candidates to run for more than one board seat in an election. If a candidate is elected to multiple board seats, the candidate will be required to choose one board position no more than three (3) calendar days after the posting of the official results or from the day when any and all election recounts and challenges are resolved for the specific NC election, whichever date is later.

The board seat(s) declined by the winning candidate will be awarded to the candidate who received the second most votes. If there are no other candidates, the vacant seat(s) will be filled in accordance with the vacancy provisions in the NC's Bylaws.

If a candidate does not select a board position by the deadline above, the candidate will be deemed elected to the position for which the candidate received the most votes.

9.6 Election Challenges: Submitting an Election Challenge

Any stakeholder who voted in the applicable NC election may file an election challenge with the City Clerk no later than 11:59 p.m. on the business day after the unofficial results deadline. A form to submit a challenge is available on the City Clerk website.

All election challenge requests must meet the following requirements:

1. Identify basis for the challenge to the election;
2. Provide contact information of the person(s) issuing the challenge;

3. Provide all supporting documentation, including any witness statements (Please note that no statements will be accepted after a request is filed);
4. Ensure the supporting documentation demonstrates the challenge is not only valid, but the alleged offense made a difference in the outcome of the election. Challenges without such supporting documentation will not be accepted; and
5. Provide optional witness statements (up to three (3) statements are allowed).

Information provided in an election challenge may be subject to public disclosure under the California Public Records Act. Please see [Section 11: Public Records Requests](#) for more information.

9.7 Election Challenges: Acceptable Challenge Categories

For a list of challenges, see [Attachment E: List of Acceptable Challenges](#).

9.8 Election Challenges: Processing Election Challenges

If the requirements are met, election challenges will be processed by the City Clerk and resolved by the Independent Grievance Panel. The Independent Grievance Panel will be composed of two (2) NC Stakeholders and one (1) staff member from the City Clerk's Office.

9.9 Election Challenges: Challenge Remedies

If a challenge is deemed valid, the panel will provide a written, recommended course of action. Remedies can include, but are not limited to, letters of correction/reprimand, disqualification of voters, NC funding penalties, and referral to the City Attorney's Office for criminal prosecution.

Decisions made by either the City Clerk or the Independent Grievance Panel are final and may only be appealed on procedural grounds.

10. POST-ELECTION PROCEDURES

10.1 Seating Newly Elected Board Members

Newly-elected NC board members will be seated in accordance with their NC Bylaws or EmpowerLA procedures after the City Clerk has issued certified election results and all election challenges have been resolved. The incumbent board members will continue in

their duly elected/appointed positions until the newly elected board members are seated.

The newly-elected board must be seated as a single unit. If one or more challenges to a single board seat have not been resolved, the rest of the board cannot be seated. Any board member seat(s) that is/are not filled through the election process will be deemed vacant when the new governing board takes office. Vacant seat(s) will be filled according to the NC Bylaws. If less than a quorum of the board seats are filled, then the NC will fall under the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners' Loss of Quorum policy.

10.2 Stakeholder Registration Information

Following each NC election, the City Clerk will provide stakeholder registration information to EmpowerLA and each NC. This information will be provided strictly for the purposes of conducting ongoing outreach. Once EmpowerLA and each NC take custody of this information, both are required to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in the California Public Records Act.

Unless otherwise requested via the California Public Records Act, the City Clerk will not disclose personal stakeholder information to any other person or entity.

10.3 Election Records

The City Clerk will retain all NC physical and digital election-related materials for a period of 90 days after the certification of election results for the last region.

During this period, the City Clerk will make the following items available for pick up by each NC:

1. Stakeholder name, stakeholder type and email address;
2. Candidate name, stakeholder type and email address; and
3. Ballots.

The newly-elected board must designate an individual to pick up the above-mentioned material on behalf of the NC. The designated individual must contact the City Clerk to schedule an appointment to pick up the materials.

Please note that all documents retained by a NC are subject to the California Public Records Act for the length of time the documents are retained by the NC.

Thereafter, NC election-related materials will be destroyed.

11. PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS

11.1 The California Public Records Act

Under the California Public Records Act (CPRA), the public may request City records. Once a CPRA request is made, the City will have 10 calendar days to inform the requester what can or cannot be disclosed (with explanation), time needed to fulfill the request, and any applicable fees. Please note an additional 14 calendar days to respond is permitted. Extensions may be required due to special circumstances.

In some instances, City records may be subject to limited disclosure under the CPRA. A record may be subject to limited disclosure and redacted in order to protect an individual's right to privacy or to preserve the City's need to perform its assigned functions in a reasonably efficient manner. Otherwise, records related to NC elections are subject to disclosure under the CPRA.

11.2 Requesting a Public Record

Public record requests can be made either in writing (including e-mail) or orally. Although not required under the CPRA, the City Clerk encourages the public to use this public request portal: recordsrequest.lacity.org when submitting a public record request. This portal will help the City Clerk keep track of record requests and provide the public a record of previously published requests and records.

Please note that if photocopies of materials are requested, the City Clerk may charge \$0.10 for each photocopy. Payments can be made in person or sent to the City Clerk at 555 Ramirez, Space 300, Los Angeles 90012 prior to the copies being made. Checks should be made out to the City of Los Angeles.

11.3 Public Record Requests - Candidate Filing Information

Since candidates for NC board seats are vying for public seats, some candidate filing information is considered public information and subject to disclosure under the CPRA. Specifically, the following information may be subject to disclosure:

1. Neighborhood Council Name;
2. Board Seat Name;
3. Stakeholder Type (Live, Work, Own Property, or Community Interest);
4. Name as it will appear on the Ballot;

5. First and Last Name;
6. Email Address;
7. Candidate statement and/or photo, if applicable; and
8. Any correspondence between the City Clerk and the candidate.

In order to protect a candidate's right to privacy, the following information will be redacted and is not subject to disclosure:

1. Date of Birth;
2. Telephone Number;
3. Mailing Address;
4. Qualifying Address;
5. Photo identification or any documentation necessary to establish board seat eligibility;
6. A candidate's signature, if applicable; and
7. Any identifying information as determined by the Office of the City Attorney.

Any private information for minors under the age of 18 will not be subject to disclosure.

11.4 Public Record Requests - Stakeholder Registration Information

Information on the Stakeholder Registration Form or VBM Application is considered public information but is subject to limited disclosure under the CPRA. The following information is considered public information and subject to disclosure:

1. Neighborhood Council Name;
2. Stakeholder Type (Live, Work, Own Property, or Community Interest); and
3. First and Last Name.

In order to protect the stakeholder's right to privacy, the following information will not be subject to disclosure:

1. Date of Birth;
2. Telephone Number;
3. Email Address;

4. Mailing Address;
5. Qualifying Address;
6. Photo identification or any documentation necessary to establish board seat eligibility;
7. A stakeholder's signature, if applicable;
8. Staff notes made regarding the application; and
9. Any identifying information as determined by the Office of the City Attorney.

Any private information for minors under the age of 18 will not be subject to disclosure.

11.5 Public Record Requests - Election Challenges

Election Challenges may be subject to disclosure as a public record. When requested, the name of the person filing the challenge and the grounds for filing the challenge must be disclosed. However, a challenger's private contact information may be protected from disclosure as well as any documentation submitted by a challenger to support his or her challenge.

11.6 Public Record Requests - Other Election Materials

Processed ballots are considered a public record and must be provided upon request after the completion of the official tally. Any identifying information on paper ballots, such as a stakeholder's signature, must be redacted.

All other election documents will be considered public records, but may be subject to limited disclosure.