



## Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

DEAN C. LOGAN  
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

August 13, 2018

TO: Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Dean C. Logan, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

### **Issues from the June 5, 2018 Statewide Primary Election**

At the Board of Supervisors meeting of June 6, 2018, your Board instructed the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) to report back on a variety of issues caused by records being left off the Roster of Voters (roster) during the June 5, 2018 Statewide Primary Election. The following is a detailed analysis regarding the June 5<sup>th</sup> Primary Election, which includes the following areas: summary of the independent review, breakdown of the impacted records, description of poll worker training related to provisional voting, explanation of multilingual poll worker recruitment, and an overview of the public/media response. There is also reference to the motion passed at the Board of Supervisors meeting July 7, 2018, that seeks to ensure the accuracy of rosters for future elections.

#### **Summary of Independent Review**

Following an extensive independent review that lasted four weeks by information technology leader IBM Security Services along with the County's Chief Information Officer and Auditor-Controller, software misconfigurations – not a cyberattack – were identified as the root cause of the omission of 118,509 names from printed voter rosters in precincts across Los Angeles County for the June 5<sup>th</sup> Primary Election. The review showed that no voters were removed from the voter file because of the roster error, and their right to vote was never at issue.

The roster print problem ultimately affected approximately 12,000 voters who went to the polls and cast provisional ballots, which were processed immediately and counted as part of the official election results. The independent review verified that there was no pattern

of voters being excluded from the printed roster due to demographic characteristics or geographic boundaries. In its investigation of the omissions, IBM found that formatting changes in the statewide voter database made it incompatible with the software the County uses to generate the printed lists for polling places. According to IBM, the County's Voter Information Management System application had not been updated to process this state format change, so the system generated voter records with empty spaces for the birthdates of 118,509 voters.

Since the birthdates were missing, the County's system incorrectly classified these voters as "underage" and left them off the printed precinct rosters. IBM ran multiple simulations to determine what happened. It found that the incompatible State database was initially used to develop a voter roster file for printing. That initial export was stopped after 118,509 records were processed with empty birthdate fields. Then a second export was started, using the County's own voter database. That export generated correct voter information. However, the system did not clear the erroneous data from the first export. As a result, the incorrect data was merged with correct data, leading to the error in printing the rosters.

In its review, IBM also investigated a 21-minute outage of the County's voter information website, LAVote.net, on the evening of the election after the polls had closed. Once again, it found no evidence of a cyberattack, and attributed the outage to heavy demand on the website.

IBM recommended that the County undertake a series of corrective actions. Our office has already begun to put in place measures to ensure that voter rosters are correctly printed for the General Election on November 6, 2018 and to address website stability and capacity.

### **Breakdown of Provisional Ballots**

The following is an estimated breakdown of total universe of voter records\* by Supervisorial District that were omitted from the precinct rosters on Election Day:

District 1	26039
District 2	25553
District 3	5214
District 4	21263
District 5	40440

\*Includes active, inactive and Vote by Mail voters (see further information below)

To reiterate, no voters were ever removed from voting rolls and their right to vote was never at issue. The estimated 118,509 voter records that were omitted from precinct voter rosters on June 5<sup>th</sup> refers to the universe of potential voters, including active and inactive records.

Of that number, approximately 92,653 were identified as active voters, and 38,182 of the active voters were identified as Vote by Mail voters who received their election materials in the mail.

That left an estimated 54,471 active voters who could potentially vote at the polls on Election Day. Of this number, approximately 12,000 cast their vote with a provisional ballot because they were not listed on the polling place rosters.

### **Training on Provisional Processing**

Extensive effort is always made to provide contextual and practical training for poll workers about assisting voters. Overall, it is important for poll workers to understand why the provisional voting process exists and how it is a benefit that protects voters' rights. The topic is introduced during all poll worker training classes by first reviewing the purpose for provisional voting:

*“As described by the CA Secretary of State, Provisional Voting ensures that no properly registered voter is denied his or her right to cast a ballot if that voter’s name is not on the roster of voters due to clerical, processing, computer, or other error.*

*Also, it allows the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) the ability to verify that no voter votes twice, either intentionally or inadvertently, in each election.”*

In addition to the above orientation, poll worker training staff explain that provisional ballots are required, by law, to be verified. Verification, including checking the voter's signature to their official voter record, occurs during the post-election canvass. Once eligibility is determined, the ballot is processed and counted.

Training materials identify the three reasons why a voter would require a provisional ballot: (a) name not found in the roster of voters; (b) the roster of voters indicates the voter requested a vote-by-mail (VBM) ballot, but the voter does not have his or her VBM ballot to surrender; and, though less common, (c) the voter's status is listed as “new,” which requires a form of identification to be provided, but the voter is not able to present identification.

As well as contextual information, training staff walk through a step-by-step processing of voters who require provisional assistance. Furthermore, poll workers are led through an in-class, hands-on exercise covering how to provide provisional voter assistance.

Along with in-person training, Inspectors are required to complete an online module that reviews themes and processing for provisional voters. The online training supplements the classroom-style training and is designed to reinforce training on important Election Day processes, such as provisional voting.

### **Bilingual / Multilingual Poll Worker Recruitment and Polling Place Material**

To identify bilingual poll worker needs, data is retrieved and analyzed from many sources including census, voter registration data with respect to voters who self-selected a language preference, survey information based on voters' surnames, community-based organization requests and election day voter requests. This data creates the Department's “targeting system” and combines with precinct information to arrive at a tangible number of poll workers who provide language assistance.

All polling places in Los Angeles County are assigned one or more poll workers who can assist voters in Spanish. Bilingual poll worker assistance in other required languages are distributed to a varying number of precincts based the “targeting system” data.

Additionally, information on multilingual materials is available at all polling locations. This includes reference to bilingual provisional materials available in each required language at all polling locations.

### **Public and Media Response**

On Election Day, when the Department determined there was a systemic issue with the rosters, we were focused on providing messaging that reminded voters that if they were not listed in the roster, they should vote a provisional ballot and that ballot would be counted (Attachment 1).

We immediately notified poll workers via automated phone messaging to ensure they were giving voters the option to vote provisionally. Later in the day when we had more information, we worked with CEO Countywide Communications to increase visibility on the issue (Attachment 2) and were in contact broadly with media, including Spanish-language media, and actively on social media where we immediately notified voters not to be alarmed and to ask for a provisional ballot (Attachment 3).

Attached you will find the joint graphic and post we distributed among the County departments and our media channels to alert the public both in English and Spanish. We also utilized live on-air interview opportunities through media outlets stationed at our headquarters to amplify this messaging, focusing on updating news media outlets both in television and radio as well as print in real time. We contacted various media outlets who covered the incident and reminded voters of their options at the polling sites.

In the days that followed the election, we identified the voters who were impacted and connected with them via e-mail, automated phone messaging, and letters in the mail (Attachment 4). They were also sent out a physical postcard informing them that their ballot was counted; this postcard is sent after every election to all provisional voters whose votes are counted once the election is certified.

### **Conclusion**

The Department takes its mission to provide election services to voters of the County of Los Angeles very seriously. Our voters must be confident in the electoral process and issues like this can have a negative impact on that confidence. Our Department has already established new processes to ensure that an incident like this is never repeated. We have begun reviewing and will be implementing the recommendations from the independent IBM Security report per the board motion by Supervisors Janice Hahn and Sheila Kuehl on August 7, 2018. Our office will report back to the Board in 30 days on this motion.

Attachments

c: Celia Zavala, Acting Executive Officer



**Dean Logan, RR/CC** 

@LACountyRRCC



Important Election Day Information: If your name does not appear on the roster at your polling place today, do not be alarmed. You will be given a provisional ballot to be able to cast your vote. [#ProvisionalBallots](#) are processed and counted in the election returns. [#LAVOTES](#)

12:19 PM - 5 Jun 2018

**465** Retweets **671** Likes



 47

 465

 671





Los Angeles County

@CountyofLA

Following

Important Election Day Information: If your name does not appear on the roster at your polling place today, do not be alarmed. You will be given a provisional ballot and your vote will count  #LAVotes

## IMPORTANT:

Some Los Angeles County polling places have incomplete voter rosters today because of a printing error. **But don't worry**—you can still vote and it will be counted!



**Request a provisional ballot if your name is not on the list. It's your right.**



**Protect your voice. Don't leave any polling place without voting.**



**Your provisional ballot will be counted once your registration is verified.**



Your Community, Your Voice

**#LAVOTES**

3:24 PM - 5 Jun 2018



Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

DEAN C. LOGAN  
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 5, 2018

**Contact**

Brenda Duran: (562) 462-2726

Media & Communications: (562) 462-2648

[bduran@rrcc.lacounty.gov](mailto:bduran@rrcc.lacounty.gov)

[mediainfo@rrcc.lacounty.gov](mailto:mediainfo@rrcc.lacounty.gov)

### **Election Day Polling Locations Affected By Roster Printing Issue**

**LOS ANGELES** – Despite a printing error affecting voting rosters at several Los Angeles County polling places, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk Dean C. Logan emphasized that all registered voters can cast provisional ballots even if their names do not appear on the list.

A total of 1,530 precincts of the County's 4,357 voting locations were affected in some way, with a total of 118,522 voters' names omitted.

"Our office is committed to ensuring every voter has a positive voting experience on Election Day," Logan said. "We apologize for the inconvenience and concern this has caused. Voters should be assured their vote will be counted."

Our office is working to determine the root cause of the problem, which arose when some data was not included in the printed lists.

Meanwhile, poll workers at all locations have been instructed to make sure that every voter whose name does not appear on the roster is issued a provisional ballot, and to inform the voters that their ballot will be counted.

Provisional ballots are counted in the election returns once their registration is confirmed. Past election records show that on average 85-90 percent of provisional ballots are determined to be valid and counted.

The mission of the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk is to serve Los Angeles County by providing essential records management and election services in a fair, accessible and transparent manner. For more information, visit [lavote.net](http://lavote.net) and follow us on Twitter @LACountyRRCC.





## Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

DEAN C. LOGAN  
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

June 15, 2018

Voter Name  
Voter Address 1  
City, State Zip

**RE: June 5, 2018 Statewide Direct Primary Election**

Dear (Name):

This letter is to acknowledge receipt of the provisional ballot you cast in the June 5, 2018 Statewide Direct Primary Election. Your ballot has been processed and counted.

We are sorry for the inconvenience you experienced on Election Day and we appreciate your patience. Provisional ballots serve as a fail-safe method to ensure all voters who appear at polling places can cast a ballot on Election Day. The omission of your name from the voter roster at your polling location was the result of a system error and not an issue with the validity of your voter registration. Your right to vote was never at issue.

Los Angeles County is engaged in an independent review of our systems and procedures to identify the exact cause of the error that resulted in the omission of your name in the voter roster and to put in place safeguards to prevent such errors from occurring again.

This letter also confirms that your voter registration status and eligibility remain active and valid, and that your ballot has been counted.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at 1-800-815-2666 or by email at [voterinfo@rrcc.lacounty.gov](mailto:voterinfo@rrcc.lacounty.gov).

Thank you for voting on Election Day.

Sincerely,

DEAN C. LOGAN  
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk