

HOW TO PLACE A MEASURE ON THE BALLOT

*A GUIDE FOR THE COUNTY, CITIES,
SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS*



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A GUIDE PREPARED BY:

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Notice

This guide has been prepared to assist Districts, Cities and Glenn County offices who are contemplating placing a measure on the ballot. Please understand that we are not rendering legal advice, and therefore this guide is not to be a substitute for legal counsel for the District, City or the organization using it.

It is recommended that you review these pages carefully. Placing a measure on the ballot is an expensive and difficult process with laws that must be adhered to.

If you have any questions, please call the Elections Department at (530) 934-6414.

Overview

This guide describes the general process you can use to place measure on the ballot. It also describes the process a governing body uses to place an initiative or bond measure on the ballot.

What Is a Measure?

In general, a measure is any constitutional amendment or other proposition *submitted to a popular vote* at any election. A county measure includes any proposed new or amendment to a county law, a proposition for the issuance of a bond, or any other question or proposition *submitted to the voters* of a county or district.

Sometimes people use the term measure interchangeably to refer to different types of measures. Typically, an initiative or referendum becomes a measure *after the petition qualifies* for the ballot.

Common Types of Measures

- ◆ Initiatives
- ◆ Referendums
- ◆ School Bonds
- ◆ Special District Bonds

The Glenn County Board of Supervisors (BOS) and other governing bodies adopt laws to govern the people in the county, city, or districts. An initiative is the power of the voters to propose a new law or to change an existing ordinance. A referendum is a challenge to a law that the governing body passed *but is not yet effective*.

Contact Information for Initiatives

The Glenn County Clerk is the elections official for countywide initiatives and referendums. See the front cover of this document for contact information.

The district elections official of the special district is the contact person for questions about the circulation and filing of an initiative petition in that district. Contact the elections official of the appropriate special district.

In some counties, cities conduct their own elections. In Glenn County, the practice is for cities to request the County to conduct an election. For City of Willows and City of Orland, the city clerk remains the elections official and contact for a city measure.

What Needs to Be Filed With the Elections Department?

The process begins with the filing of a *resolution*, including the *text of the measure* and the *ballot question*.

Resolution to Call the Election and Request Consolidation

In order to place a measure on the ballot, the governing body of the city or district passes a resolution at their board meeting, which is then filed with the County Elections Department.

Districts and Cities

- ◆ Submit a *Resolution Requesting Consolidation of Election and Ordering of Such Election*,
- ◆ *Notice to the County Clerk of Measure Submitted to the Voters*, and
- ◆ *Request for Specified Election Services* to the Elections Department.

County

- ◆ Submit a *Resolution Requesting Consolidation of Election and Ordering of Such Election* to the Elections Department.

Schools

- ◆ Submit a *Resolution Ordering Election, Specifications of the Election Order, and Request for Consolidation*,
- ◆ *Notice to the County Clerk of Measure Submitted to the Voters*, and
- ◆ *Request for Specified Election Services* to the Elections Department.

The deadline for the Glenn County Board of Supervisors to approve a request for consolidation is 88 days before the Election. §10403 However, in order to allow for scheduling for placement on the Board of Supervisors agenda and printing time, our suggested deadline for submitting a measure to our office is 112 days (subject to change) prior to the election.

Measure Text

When submitting materials to place a measure on the ballot, indicate clearly the measure wording by placing a box around the entire question you wish to appear in the Sample Ballot and Information Packet. Also state clearly, in writing, which portion of the resolution, ordinance, or measure text is to be printed in the County Voter Information Guide.

If the proposed ordinance imposes a tax or raises the rate of a tax, the ballot shall

include in the statement the amount of money to be raised annually and the rate and duration of the tax to be levied. §13119

To facilitate preparation for printing in the County Voter Information Guide, we encourage submitting the measure text in a digital format (preferably a Word document), either by e-mail or on CD.

Ballot Question

The ballot label question is limited to 75 words (see Word Count Guidelines). Jurisdictions may want to consider beginning their ballot question with a few key words to summarize the measure, which are included in the word count. §13247

Measures are followed by the words, “YES” and “NO.” School bond measures are followed by the words “BONDS YES” and “BONDS NO”. Ed.C. §15122

Measures will appear on the ballot in the following order: §13109

1. School
2. County
3. City
4. District

In order to allow for the most efficient use of space, the Elections Division may vary the order of the measures.

Letters designating measures will be assigned by the County Elections Official. §13116 For districts that overlap with other counties, the counties should mutually agree on a letter designation for the measure when possible. At the beginning of each calendar year, local measures will commence with the letter “A” and continue in order. Measure letters are assigned on a first-submitted, first-assigned basis. No allowance will be given to any district regarding letter preference.

Arguments and Rebuttals

Whenever any local measure qualifies for placement on the ballot, written arguments in favor of and against the measure may be filed. Arguments are limited to 300 words.

Arguments will be printed in the County Voter Information Guide following the analysis of the measure. If more than one argument in favor of or against the same measure are submitted, the Elections Official will select one argument for publication according to the following priority: §9166, 9287 & 9503

1. The legislative body, or member or members of the legislative body authorized by that body.
2. The individual voter or bona fide association of citizens, or combination of voters and associations, who are the bona fide sponsors or proponents of the

measure.

3. Bona fide association of citizens.
4. Individual voters who are eligible to vote on the measure.

When both an argument in favor of and an argument against a measure have been filed, the Elections Official will send a copy of the argument in favor to the authors of the argument against and a copy of the argument against to the authors of the argument in favor. The authors may then prepare and submit rebuttal arguments. Rebuttal arguments are limited to 250 words.

Arguments regarding County, School, or Special District measures are filed with the County Elections Division. Arguments regarding city measures are filed with the appropriate City Clerk.

For more information, refer to the *Guide to Writing Arguments, Rebuttals, and Analyses for Local Measures*.

Other Materials

Some or all of the following may be printed along with the Arguments in the County Voter Information Guide.

Impartial Analysis

- ◆ County or School Measure: The County Counsel is required to prepare an Impartial Analysis of a county or school measure. §9160, 9500
- ◆ City Measure: The City Attorney shall prepare an Impartial Analysis of a city measure. §9280
- ◆ Special District: For special district measures, the County Counsel of the county with the largest number of registered voters shall prepare an Impartial Analysis. §9313
- ◆ Water District: For water district measures, the legal counsel for the district, or if there is no counsel, the County Counsel of the county with the largest number of registered voters of the water district shall prepare an Impartial Analysis. If there is a legal counsel for the water district, the Impartial Analysis shall be subject to review and revision by the County Counsel. §9314

The Impartial Analysis may not exceed 500 words. §9160, 9280, 9313, 9314, 9500

Fiscal Analysis

The Board of Supervisors may request the County Auditor-Controller, not later than 88 days prior to an election, to prepare a fiscal analysis of a county measure. The fiscal impact statement shall not exceed 500 words. §9160

Tax Rate Statement

Each bond measure proposed by a county, city, district, or other political subdivision, or by any agency, department, or board thereof, the security for which constitutes a lien on the property for ad valorem taxes within the jurisdiction shall mail a tax rate statement with the County Voter Information Guide.

The statement shall be filed with the County Elections Official not later than the 88th day prior to the election. The law does not specify a word limit for tax rate statements. §9400, 9401

Full Text

Cities, counties, and districts often publish the full text of ordinances to be voted on in the County Voter Information Guide.

If the full text of a county or city measure is not printed on the ballot, nor in the voter information portion of the County Voter Information Guide, there shall be printed immediately below the Impartial Analysis, in no less than 10-point boldface type:

“The above statement is an impartial analysis of Measure. If you desire a copy of the ordinance or measure, please call the elections official at 530-934-6414 and a copy will be mailed at no cost to you.” §9160, 9280

Word Count Guidelines

(Pursuant to Elections Code Section 9)

This section shall not apply to counting words for ballot designations.

Each word is counted as one word except:

- PUNCTUATION:** Punctuation is not counted.
- TITLES:** Words used in the title of the document, such as "Argument in Favor of Measure A" are not counted.
- CITIES/COUNTIES:** All geographical names shall be counted as one word. Areas that have boundaries and can be mapped are considered geographic areas. For example, "County of Sacramento" and "City of Elk Grove" shall each be counted as one word.
- ABBREVIATIONS:** Each abbreviation for a word, phrase, or expression shall be counted as one word.
- HYPHENATIONS:** Hyphenated words that appear in any generally available dictionary shall be considered as one word. Each part of all other hyphenated words shall be counted as a separate word.
- DATES:** Dates shall be counted as one word.
- NUMBERS:** Any number consisting of a digit or digits shall be considered as one word. Any number that is spelled shall be considered as a separate word. "100" shall be counted as one word, whereas "one hundred" shall be counted as two words.
- PHONE & INTERNET:** Website addresses and telephone numbers are one word.
- PERCENT, ETC.:** It is department policy to count numbers consisting of a digit or digits used with a dollar sign (\$), cent sign (¢), percentage sign (%), or number sign (#) as one word.
- CAPITALIZED:** There is a limit of 10 all capitalized words.

If text exceeds the word limit, the author will be asked to delete or change a sufficient number of words, or a sentence, to ensure compliance with the required word limit.

Raising and Spending Money

Before raising or spending any money, all parties supporting or opposing a measure should review the FPPC's *Campaign Disclosure Manual 3-Ballot Measure Committees* for information on campaign finance disclosure requirements. Campaign Disclosure Manuals can be requested by calling 866-275-3772 or downloaded from the FPPC website at www.fppc.ca.gov.

File a Form 410 - Statement of Organization - with the County Election Official. Any committee that receives contributions totaling \$2,000 or more within a calendar year qualifies as a recipient committee and - within 10 days of qualifying - must file a Form 410 with the Secretary of State and the county. A Form 410 may be filed prior to qualifying. Upon receipt of the Form 410, the Secretary of State will issue an identification number that must be included on all campaign disclosure forms.

Be prepared to file a Form 460 for ballot measure committees that plan on raising or spending more than \$2,000.

Pre-Election Statements and Semi-Annual statements must be filed at certain times prior to the election and then semi-annually until the committee terminates. These reports detail your committee's contributions and expenditures. Know the deadlines and the type of forms you must file. *It is your responsibility to meet all filing deadlines. Failure to do so will result in fines.*

Manuals, forms, and filing deadlines are available from either of the following :

Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC)

1102 Q Street, Suite 3000

Sacramento, CA 95811

Phone: (916) 322-5660

Fax: (916) 322-0886

Website: fppc.ca.gov

Glenn County Elections Division

516 W. Sycamore St., 2nd Floor Willows, CA 95988

Phone: (530) 934-6414

Fax: (530) 934-6571

Website: www.countyofglenn.net/dept/elections/welcome

Sample Calendar

After you have filed a Resolution to Consolidate Election, we will assist you in developing a calendar specific to your issue. The following calendar is an example of the amount of time and deadlines associated with proposing an initiative.

This calendar is also applicable to the Proponent’s Initiative and Referendum process. The exception is that referendums do not require a Notice of Intention and the BOS must receive a sufficient petition **before the effective date of the law that you want to repeal**.

E = Election Day, followed by the number of days prior or following Election Day. State laws mandate some deadlines while others are suggested timeframes to provide the maximum amount of time to circulate petitions.

E- 342	County Clerk receives a sufficient Notice of Intention, and delivers same to County Counsel
E- 327	Within 15 days, County Counsel returns title and summary to Clerk, who then delivers to proponents
E- 327	Proponents must, prior to circulation, publish Notice of Intention and file proof of publication The petition may now be circulated
E- 148	Proponents submit a sufficient petition within 180 days
E- 112	County Clerk certifies results to BOS within 30 days, excluding Sat, Sun, and holidays
E- 112	Suggested Last day to submit Resolution to Consolidate Election. The last day a board can consolidate a measure with a regular election is E-88 (§10403) however, we may need more time to allow for placement on the Board agenda, and to meet printing deadlines.
E- 88	Transmit Copy of Measure to County Counsel for Impartial Analysis of the Measure
E- 88	BOS may Direct County Auditor to prepare Fiscal Impact Statement
E- 88	Tax Rate Statement (for Bond Measures)
E- 87	County Clerk publishes Notice Inviting Direct Arguments for and Against Measure
E- 77	Deadline for filing Direct Arguments for and Against Measure
E- 77-68	Period to file Rebuttal Arguments to Direct arguments
E- 68	Deadline for Impartial Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement
E- 67-57	10 Day Public Examination of Analysis, Arguments, and Ordinances
E- 67	Finalize material for printer
E- 40-21	Mailing of sample ballots
E-	Election day
E+ 1 to +28	Official Canvass

§§ 9160, 9163, 9167, 9306; Government Code (GC) § 6061