



League of Women Voters of California Redistricting Implementation September 2009

Why Apply to Become a Citizens Redistricting Commissioner?

Background: What Is Redistricting?

Every 10 years, after the federal census, new districts must be drawn for governmental legislative bodies. Under Proposition 11, the Voters First Act, California state Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization districts will be drawn by a "citizens' commission" rather than by the legislature, thereby removing direct political interests from the process. This will be a vitally important improvement to our election systems in California.

The Commission. There will be a 14-person citizens redistricting commission, politically balanced (5 Democrats, 5 Republicans, 4 others). Commissioners will be chosen for their impartiality, analytical and personal skills, and to reflect our state's demographic and geographic diversity. In addition, Proposition 11 lists certain conflicts of interest that would make a person ineligible to serve on the commission. Applications (online) to become commissioners will be accepted from December 15, 2009 to February 12, 2010. The final selection process will be completed by December 31, 2010.

The Work of the Commission. The commission's work will begin in January 2011, and the district maps must be completed by September 15, 2011. After organizing itself, the commission will engage staff, both management and technical (demographic), and possibly consultants. Following receipt of the census data from the federal government, the commission will hold meetings at various locations around the state to hear public input about how their communities should be represented. Then the staff under the guidance of the commission will prepare preliminary electoral district maps, based on the mapping criteria established by Proposition 11.

These preliminary maps will be published for public review and comment, and further hearings will be held to hear such comment directly. Emphasis is placed on making the redistricting process open and transparent to the public.

After considering all comments, the electoral district maps will be revised as necessary, and then approved by the commission. Approval will require at least three votes each from the Democratic, Republican and other commissioners to assure its nonpartisan nature.

Why Should You Want to Become a Commissioner?

- Make history by participating in a redistricting process unique in our country.
- Make a significant contribution in achieving much-needed change in our state's electoral process through a nonpartisan redistricting process.
- Obtain a vitalizing first-hand education about our state, its communities and its people.
- Have fun while doing something incredibly valuable for the people of California.

Find more information on redistricting at www.lwvc.org and on the commission at www.bsa.ca.gov

Duties of Redistricting Commissioners*

Applicants for the Citizens Redistricting Commission should be aware that Commissioners will need to devote a substantial amount of time, attention and care to their Commission duties.

Selection of Remaining Six Commissioners: Under Regulation 60853, the first eight members of the Commission selected by random drawing must choose the remaining six Commissioners from a specified pool of applicants, in accordance with criteria set forth in the Voters First Act. This process will involve, at the minimum, reviewing application materials of individuals in the applicant pool, conducting deliberations about the applicants, and voting to determine who will fill the remaining six Commission seats. The process is likely to start around November 20, 2010, and must be completed by December 31, 2010.

Establishing District Maps for the California Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization (the “redistricting process”): The Commission as a whole must establish the district maps for the Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization in accordance with criteria set forth in the Voters First Act. This redistricting process will involve, at the minimum:

- Selection of a chair and vice chair of the Commission;
- Hiring of staff, legal counsel, and consultants as needed; these staff, legal counsel and consultants will be available to assist with all Commission activities;
- Establishing and implementing an open hearing process which allows public input to the redistricting process; this will involve at least two sets of hearings which the Commissioners must attend;
- Developing district maps which must conform to certain criteria set forth in the Voters First Act; this will involve the evaluation of data, statistical materials and other relevant information, as well as the application of appropriate legal standards to drawing district boundaries;
- Soliciting and evaluating public testimony and comment on the maps, which will involve attendance at hearings and listening to and formulating questions about public testimony;
- Conducting deliberations with other Commissioners about the district maps, and voting on the approval of maps; this will involve reaching nine affirmative votes for each map, distributed among Commissioners of different political party affiliation as directed by the Voters First Act;
- Issuing a report on the maps that explains the basis on which the Commission made its decisions in achieving compliance with the criteria set forth in the Voters First Act; and
- Conducting all of the foregoing activities in a manner that is impartial and that reinforces public confidence in the integrity of the redistricting process, including, but not limited to, holding meetings in public, making all records of the Commission public, and refraining from Commission-related communications outside of a public hearing.

The redistricting process will start on January 1, 2011, and must be completed by September 15, 2011.

On average, Commissioners will spend anywhere from 10 to 20 hours per week fulfilling their Commission responsibilities, but there will be times where significantly more hours are required in a given week. In order to ensure widespread public accessibility of the hearings, it is likely that several will be scheduled at times that are convenient for public attendance. Thus, Commissioners will need to participate in several hearings which will be scheduled on weekday evenings after business hours and on weekends.

In addition, while the Commissioners' primary redistricting responsibilities must be completed by September 15, 2011, their terms of service officially extend for ten years until the next decade's Commission is seated. The Commissioners may have continuing duties if the Commission's maps are subject to court review and/or initiative challenge. Additionally, the Commissioners may choose to propose changes to the Voters First Act and related rules and regulations, which may involve time for both deliberations and public hearings.

Commissioners shall be compensated the rate of \$300/day for each day engaged in Commission business. Commissioners are also eligible for reimbursement of personal expenses incurred in the connection of duties performed pursuant to the Voters First Act.

Individuals appointed to the Citizens Redistricting Commission are ineligible for a period of 10 years beginning from the date of the appointment to hold elective public office at the federal, state, county, or city level in California. A Commissioner shall be ineligible for a period of five years beginning from the date of appointment to hold appointive federal, state, or local public office, to serve as paid staff for the Legislature or any individual legislator, to or register as a federal, state, or local lobbyist in California.

* Proposed for inclusion with the application to become a member of the Citizens Redistricting Commission established by the Voters First Act, Proposition 11 of 2008.

This statement was part of the comments made on September 21, 2009 by representatives of the League of Women Voters of California, California Common Cause, California State NAACP, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund, California Voter Foundation, California Forward, Center for Governmental Studies, Asian Pacific American Legal Center, and Rose Institute for State and Local Government of Claremont McKenna College and by Steven J. Reyes, attorney, concerning the draft application published by the Bureau of State Audits.