# Plan Governance \& Administrative Issues Committee (Committee) Report 20-02 

| Date: | November 18, 2020 | Committee Members |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| To: | Committee | Joshua Gellar <br> Chairperson <br> Hovhannes Gendjian <br> Thomas Moutes |
| From: | Staff |  |
| Subject: | Proposed Revisions to Board of Deferred Compensation <br>  |  |

## Recommendation:

That the Plan Governance \& Administrative Issues Committee (Committee) recommend to the Board of Deferred Compensation Administration (Board) approval of the proposed modifications to the Board Election Policies and Procedures included in Attachment A.

## Discussion:

## A. Background

In 1983, the City of Los Angeles established the Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP) under Internal Revenue Code Section 457 and City of Los Angeles Administrative Code (LAAC) Division 4, Chapter 14 , as a voluntary supplemental retirement savings program for all employees who are members of one of the City's three primary defined benefit retirement plans.

The Board was established by the City Council to oversee the DCP and has broad program oversight and administrative responsibilities, including contracting authority. The nine-member Board includes three elected employee representatives from the Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System ("LACERS"), Los Angeles Fire and Police Pensions ("LAFPP"), and the Department of Water and Power Employees' Retirement Plan ("WPERP"); the LACERS General Manager; the LAFPP General Manager; the WPERP Retirement Plan Manager; the Personnel Department General Manager; a certified Union Representative; and a retired participant representative.

The Board adopted its Election Policies and Procedures on March 20, 2007 which establishes the procedures for the conduct of elections for DCP member representatives to the Board (LACERS
employee representative, LAFPP employee representative, WPERP employee representative, and the retired participant representative). Since their adoption, the Election Policies and Procedures have been amended four times on January 20, 2009, February 17, 2009, February 21, 2012, and most recently on March 31, 2020.

On March 31, 2020, the Board adopted staff's recommendation approving the addition of a new Section O to the Election Policies and Procedures providing the Board with emergency powers in the event of a local emergency relative to the conduct of Board elections. The Board further directed staff to conduct a full review of the Election Policies and Procedures for possible refinements and improvements, particularly as those may relate to unusual contingencies given the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the conduct of upcoming elections.

## B. Proposed Revisions to Board Election Policies and Procedures

Staff, in consultation with the City Attorney and with assistance from the Office of the City Clerk (City Clerk), conducted a comprehensive review of the Board Election Policies and Procedures and has completed a draft of proposed revisions (Attachment A). A summary of the proposed revisions and updates to the Election Policies and Procedures is summarized below and is further detailed in the following table.

- Edited section headers, terms, and statements throughout the Election Policies and Procedures document for consistency and clarity and to update City Clerk processes and procedures.
- Added option to provide for the submission of nominating petitions and nominating petition signatures electronically in lieu of hard copy petitions and original signatures; although this change is in part a response to the specific circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on gathering physical signatures, more generally it reflects the growing acceptance and utilization of electronic signatures in a wide variety of business and administrative transactions.
- Reduced the number of nominating petition signatures for the LACERS, LAFPP, and WPERP employee representative from a minimum of 100 and a maximum of 200 to a minimum of 50 and a maximum of 100 to encourage greater participation in DCP elections. Staff is proposing a reduction in the required number of nominating signatures in an attempt to strike a better balance between the objective of nominating signatures, which is to demonstrate that a candidate has some level of support from the constituency the candidate will be representing, relative to the risks that a too onerous obligation may discourage interested and capable candidates from participating in the process.

| Current Election Policies <br> and Procedures - Revised <br> $\mathbf{3 / 3 1 / 2 0 2 0}$ | Updated Election Policies <br> and Procedures - Revised <br> $\mathbf{X / X / 2 0 2 0}$ | Description of Proposed Changes <br> to Election Policies and <br> Procedures |
| :--- | :---: | :--- |
| Section A. Purpose | Section A. Purpose | - Revision of shorthand for <br> Pensions to LAFPP |
|  |  | Revision of shorthand for DWP <br> to WPERP |


| N/A | Section B. Definitions | -Addition of new section to <br> provide for defined terms as <br> they are used throughout the <br> Election Policies and <br> Procedures document <br> Section D. Nomination of <br> Candidates |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
|  | - Section E. Nomination of <br> Candidates and Official <br> Ballot | Deletion of sample language <br> contained on nominating <br> petitions |
| - Addition of provision for the |  |  |
| submission of nominating |  |  |
| petitions and nominating |  |  |
| petition signatures |  |  |
| electronically in lieu of hard |  |  |
| copy petitions and original |  |  |
| signatures |  |  |

## C. Electronic Voting Options

At its meeting on June 16, 2020, a Board member question was raised about the possibility of electronic voting options for future elections as a cost savings measure and to increase voter participation. Per Los Angeles City Administrative Code Division 4, Chapter 14, Section 4.1407 and the Board Election Policies and Procedures, the City Clerk is charged with conducting all Board elections. Accordingly, staff consulted with the City Clerk on this matter. At this time, the City Clerk has informed staff that while they are researching electronic voting options, they are not currently considering a move to electronic voting methods, and will continue with the current mail-in and in-person voting process that is conducted for Board elections.

Submitted by:


Mindy Lam, Personnel Analyst

Reviewed by:


Jenny Pau, Senior Management Analyst II

Approved by:


Steven Montagna, Chief Personnel Analyst

# BOARD OF DEFERRED COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION ELECTION POLICIES \& PROCEDURES 

Adopted by the Board of Deferred Compensation Administration on March 20, 2007<br>Revised January 20, 2009; revised February 17, 2009; revised February 21, 2012; revised March 31, 2020; revised X, 2020

## Section A. Purpose

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To establish election procedures for the Board of Deferred Compensation Administration (hereafter "Board") members representing the active participant membership of the (a) Los Angeles City Employees Retirement System (hereafter "LACERS"); (b) Fire and Police Pensions (hereafter "Pensions"LAFPP"); and (c) Water and Power EmployeesEmployees' Retirement Plan (hereafter "DWP Retirement Plan"); as well asWPERP"); and (d) the member representing participants who have retired or otherwise separated from City service.

## Section B-Section B. Definitions

When the initial letter of a word or phrase is capitalized herein the meaning of such word or phrase shall be as follows:

1) "Ballot Statement" shall mean a statement signed by the Office of the City Clerk (City Clerk) stating that all ballots received by the City Clerk have been counted.
2) "Ballot Tally" shall mean the counting of the ballots received by the City Clerk following an election in the manner described under Section K.
3) "Election Day" shall mean the date an election is to be held and the last day for ballots to be cast.
4) "Spoiled Ballot" shall mean a ballot that has been determined to be void by the City Clerk which may include a ballot that has stray marks or is damaged.
5) "Challenged Ballot" shall mean a ballot where the intent of the voter or voter information cannot be ascertained.
6) "Tally Results" shall mean the official results of the Ballot Tally.

## Section C. Term of Office

The terms of all elected positions shall be for three years beginning on the first day in July of the year of their respective elections as determined underpursuant to City of Los Angeles Administrative Code Division 4, Chapter 14, Section 4.1407.

## Section C. Elections: GeneralD. Time of Election

1) All elections shall beThe election shall be held triennially during the month of May that precedes the month in which the term of office for a member of the Board is set to expire. The date of the election shall be designated by the Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP) staff not sooner than 90 days before the Election Day.
2) The election shall be held by secret ballot and shall be conductedadministered by the City Clerk. -The City of Los Angeles Deferred Compensation Plan shall reimburse the City Clerk for all necessary expenses incurred in the administration of employeeBoard member elections and special elections.

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> The regular election shall be held in May of any year in which the term of office for an employee member of the Board expires.
3) Eligible voters shall be only those PlanDCP participants whowith a balance in the DCP and are members of the Plan as well as members of a constituent group for which an election is being held on that election day. To be a member of the Plan means that an employee maintains a balance in the Plan. Election Day. To be a member of a constituent group means that one is either: (a) an active employee member of LACERS, PensionsLAFPP, or the DWP Retirement PlanWPERP; or (b) a participant who has retired or otherwise separated from City service.
4) The Personnel Department, in its-administrative support capacity, DCP staff shallprovide to the City Clerk a primary roster, in alphabetical order, of eligible voters as of 30 days prior to an election. Election Day. The roster shall contain the name, address, and last four digits of the social security number (Employeeemployee ID Numbersnumbers for DWP EmployeesWPERP employees) of each eligible voter.

## Section DE. Nomination of Candidates and Official Ballot

Only members of the appropriate constituent group who have been nominated as provided in this article shall be eligible to have their names placed on the ballot. Nominating petitions shall be furnished by the Board. These petitions shall be in substantially the following form:official ballot for the election. In order to have their name placed on the official ballot, the member seeking to run as a candidate for a Board seat shall submit a completed nominating petition as provided for in this section. Failure to submit a completed nominating petition as provided for in this section shall result in the candidate's name not being placed on the official ballot.

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## NOMINATING PETITION FOR CANDIDATE FOR THE BOARD OF DEFERRED COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION

We, the undersigned, hereby certify, each for himself/herself and not one for the other, that we are members of the City of Los Angeles Deferred Compensation Plan and (insert: "active employer mombers of the City Employees Retirement System" or "active employee members of the Fire/Police Pensions" or "active emplovee members of the DWP Retirement Plan" or "have rotired or otherwise separated from service with the City of Los Angeles", and collectively we hereby nominate (insert name as it will appear on the ballot), a member of the Plan,
for the office of $\qquad$ for the term beginning $\qquad$ and ending
1)

If this is a special election to fill an unexpired term, theNominating petitions shall be made available at the DCP staff office in City Hall or, if the Board designates, electronically to members of the appropriate constituent group, not more than 60 days prior to Election Day.

The nominating petition shall be modified at the end to read instead: "...for the remainder of the unexpired torm ending $\qquad$ "
2) Beneath the foregoing, and in columnar form, space shall be provided for the signature of each nominatorhave a designated space for each eligible voter to sign. Each person signing the nominating petition shall provide their name, the department in which each nominator is-they are employed, or the designation "Separated from City Service," as applicable, and the date on of signing. The Board may also designate that electronic signatures be collected if barriers exist which prevent physical signatures from being collected.

In order for LACERS, LAFPP, or WPERP active employee member candidates to qualify to be placed on the petition is signed byofficial ballot, the nominator. Each person signing anominating petition shall write his/her name, department (if applicable) and the date of signing. Space shall be provided on each petition for one hundred signatures and two, and only two, petitions shall be available for each candidate at the office of the Plan each year in which the term of office of an employee member of the Board expires.
3) In order for Active Employee Member Candidates to qualify for a place on the electionballot, the petitions shall be signed by nobe signed by not fewer than 50 and not more than 100 nor more than 200-individuals who are members of the PlanDCP and respective constituent group. -In order for Gandidates Separatedcandidates separated from City service to qualify for a placeto be placed on the electionofficial ballot, the petitionsnominating petition shall be signed by nonot fewer than 10 norand not more than 20 individuals who are members of the PlanDCP and respective constituent group.

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4) The petitionsnominating petition shall be filed in the office of the Plan no later than the-submitted to the DCP staff by a date and time to be-established by the PlanDCP staff that is within two weeks ofnot more than 14 days from the date that petitions are the nominating petition is first made available to the candidates.- The City Clerk shall verify that those persons signing the petitionsnominating petition were members as of the date of signing, and shall certify the sufficiency or insufficiency of each nominating petition, and shall so notify the nominated members-candidate by registered mail.
5) Along with the submission of the signed petitionsnominating petition, interested candidates have the option to include an occupational ballot designation and a 250word typewritten statement of qualifications for office for the provision of information to the electorate.- The occupational ballot designation shall be printed on the ballot immediately under that candidate's name and shall consist of a three-word designation of either: (a) the current principal profession, vocation or orcupation of $^{2}$ the candidate, or (b) the principal profession, vocation or orcupation of the candidate $^{2}$ during the calendar year immediately preceding the filing of the candidate's nominating petition. -The standards for occupational ballot designations contained in the City's Election Code Section 306 are to be applied by the City Clerk as applicable, except that a candidate who is running for an elective office, which that person currently holds, shall have "(Incumbent)" printed on the ballot, immediately after that person's name, in addition to the candidate's occupational ballot designation.
6) The statement of qualifications for office may include information on education, work experience, years of service, and other relevant qualifications and shall not exceed 250 words in length. Qualification statements that are submitted by the due date will ${ }_{2}$ as established by the DCP staff under paragraph (4), shall be printed by the City Clerk and mailed with the ballot at no expense to the candidate.
7) The Boardstatement of qualifications shall provideinclude a disclaimer stating that neither the Board nor the City Clerk has verified the accuracy of the information contained in the candidates' qualification statements.
8) Should any candidate fail to submit an occupational ballot designation and/or a statement of qualifications by the specified due date, the appropriate sections for the occupational ballot designation and-qualification statement will be blank/or qualification statement shall include a statement indicating that the candidate declined to submit an occupational ballot designation and/or a statement of qualifications.
9) Prior to the electionElection Day, the City Clerk shall conduct a public drawing of the letters of the alphabet. Each of the letters of the alphabet shall be drawn by random. The order in which the letters are drawn shall constitute the random alphabeticaldetermine the order by which the surnames of the candidates shall be arrangedprinted on the official ballot.- The term "surname" shall mean the name borne in common by members of a family for this purpose.

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10) Each official ballot shall contain the names of all candidates who have qualified in accordance with this section. -There shall be a blank space beneath these names in which the voter may write the name of any employee member of the PlanDCP and respective constituent group not printed on the official ballot and for whom the voter may wish to vote.

## Section EF. Third Party Candidate Support

In certain situations, funds used by third parties in order to support candidates for positions on the Board may be considered reportable gifts under State and City ethics rules and laws. These rules and laws include, but are not limited to, California's Political Reform Act of 1974, the City of Los Angeles Governmental Ethics Ordinance, and their related interpretations and regulations. Candidates are strongly encouraged to contact the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission for further information.

## Section FG. Notice of Election

1) Not more than 90 norbut not fewer than 60 calendar days prior to Election Day, the regular election, the PlanDCP staff shall notify the City Clerk and the General Aanager of the Personnel Department of the fact of the election.
2) Not more than 30 norbut not fewer than 20 calendar days prior to Election Day, the regular election, the PlanDCP staff shall have prepared a Notice of Election specifying the election date, including a sample ballot containing the name of each candidate who has qualified for a placeto be placed on the electionofficial ballot, rules concerning eligibility to vote, and any additional information and instructions the City Clerk determines are appropriate. -A copy of the notice and sample ballotNotice of Election shall be posted in the Office of the City Clerk and to its website.

## Section GH. Observers to the Ballot Tally

GandidatesEach candidate whose names appear on the electionofficial ballot may-each designate no more than two observers at the tally center to observe that ballots are properly cast and votes are properly counted. - In addition to these designated observers, candidates may also observe.- Names of all observers, including any candidates who desire to attend, shall be presented to the City Clerk nonot less than three calendar days prior to the election. Election Day. Designated observers shall wear identification badges at all times, shall not interfere in the ballot tally process, and shall be subject to regulations prescribed by the City Clerkshall prescribe.

## Section HI. Voting Procedures

1) The City Clerk shall mail a ballot packet for the election to each eligible voter listed on the roster supplied by the Plan. DCP staff. The mailing shall be completed nonot less than ten calendar days prior to the date of electionElection Day.
2) Employees who become members of the PlanDCP within 30 calendar days prior to an electionElection Day and who wish to vote in that election shall obtain a certificate from the $\overline{\mathrm{DCP}}$ staff certifying their eligibility to vote. The employee must present

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themselves in the efficecertificate of eligibility to the City Clerk no earlier than seven calendar days prior to and nonot later than the close of business (specific time to be designated by the City Clerk) of the day of the election with a certificate from the Personnel Department on a form approved by the City Clerk verifying the fact of their eligibility to vote-Election Day. The City Clerk shall allow these members to vote.
$\qquad$ Each ballot packet mailed or provided to voters shall consist of the following items: *

1. A mailing envelope;
2. A return envelope;
3. The official ballot;
4. An identification envelope for the official ballot with space for the voter to affix the voter's name, mailing address, last four digits of the social security number (Employeeemployee ID Numbersnumbers for DWP EmployeesWPERP employees), signature, and date of signing;
5. A list of instructions to the voter; and
6. The candidates' statements of qualifications, if any.
4) Upon votingreceiving and casting their vote on the ballot, the voter shall enclose the ballot in the identification envelope.- The voter shall then affix the voter's name, mailing address, last four digits of the voter's social security number (Employeeemployee ID Numbersnumber for DWP EmployeesWPERP employees), signature , $_{2}$ and date of signing on the identification envelope containing the ballot and shall enclose it in the return envelope. The voter shall return the voted ballotAll ballots must be returned to the City Clerk by United States mail or personal deposit. During regular business hours in the Ballots shall be accepted not earlier than seven calendar days preceding the electionElection Day, but no later than the close of business (specific time to be designated by the City Clerk)-on election dayElection Day. During this period, voters may personally deposit the return envelope containing their ballot in the ballot box in the Office of the City Clerk, Election Division. All ballots shall, in order to be counted, be-Ballots received by the City Clerk no later thanafter the close of business (specific time to be designated by the City Clerk) on the date of the election.Election Day shall be marked as late and shall not be counted.
5) Upon receipt of the identification envelope and its contents, the City Clerk shall date stamp the envelope, verify the name and last four digits of the social security number (Employeeemployee ID Numbersnumber for DWP EmployeesWPERP employees) appearing on the envelope with the roster of eligible voters, ${ }_{2}$ and shall cause the roster to be marked showing that the member has voted.- No identification envelope shall be opened prior to the commencement of the tally.
6) _If a voter inadvertently spoils a ballot, the voter may return the spoiled ballot to the City Clerk, who shall furnish the voter with a replacement ballot. -No more than two replacement ballots may be issued to the same voter.- Spoiled ballots will be clearly marked "SPOILED" by the City Clerk.

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7) If a voter on the roster claims not to have received a ballot, the voter may receive a replacement ballot from the City Clerk upon filing a signed affidavit claiming non-receipt- of the ballot. The identification envelope of the replacement ballot shall be prominently marked "REPLACEMENT BALLOT" and the original ballot issued to the voter shall be challengedvoid, if received.

## Section + .J. Verification of Identification Envelopes and Challenges

1) The City Clerk may challenge a returned identification envelope on the following grounds:
1. The identification envelope is not properly completed according to the instructions and does not accurately identify the voter;
2. The voter did not include the correct last four digits of the social security number (Employeeemployee ID Numbersnumber for DWP EmployeesWPERP employees);
3. The voter did not properly sign the identification envelope;
4. The voter's name does not appear on the roster;
5. The identification envelope was received after the last date and time provided pursuant with these policies;
6. The voter has lost status as a member of the appropriate constituent group within 30 days prior to the election basedElection Day;
7. The voter has already turned in an identification envelope.
2) An authorized observer or the City Clerk, prior to during the time that the identification envelope is openedBallot Tally, may challenge the eligibility of any person to vote in the election.- Challenges by observers may be made only on the following grounds:
1. The identification envelope was not signed by the person whose name appears on the roster; or
2. The person's status as an eligible voter has changed since the person was certified.
3) Each identification envelope that is challenged shall have written on the envelope the word "Challenge," the reason for the challenge, and the signature of the person imposingmaking the challenge.
4) The City Clerk shall, with substantiating evidence, sustain or overrule each challenge. Without substantiating evidence being produced within three business days of the electionElection Day, the challenge shall be overruled and the ballot shall be tallied with the other ballots. -Identification envelopes whosefor which challenges have been sustained shall be retained unopened by the City Clerk for a minimum of 90 calendar days after the election results are certified.

## Section JK. Ballot Tally

1) The City Clerk shall count ballots in accordance with procedures used by the City Clerk to count ballots for other similar elections. -Only the City Clerk may handle

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ballots.- All ballots counted and uncounted shall be kept in view of the observers at all times during the tally and until the Ballot Statement is finally signed.
2) The identification envelope containing the sealed ballot envelope shall not be opened until the tally is commenced in order to preserve the secrecy of the ballot. -At the commencement of the tally, the City Clerk shall audibly announce the name of each voter and shall then open the identification envelope, removing the official ballot. After all identification envelopes have been opened and set aside from the tally area, the City Clerk shall then proceed to count and tally the ballots cast for each choice, laying the ballots face up so that observers may inspect the marks. -The count shall continue in this manner until all the ballots are opened and counted. When all ballots have been counted, the total number of votes cast for each candidate shall be entered on the unofficial Tally Results.
3) If a ballot is torn, defaced, marked in an ambiguous fashion, or is otherwise defective,* the City Clerk shall determine whether the intent of the voter can be reasonably determined and, if so, determine it. If intent cannot be reasonably determined or if the ballot directly or indirectly identifies the voterlf a ballot is a Spoiled Ballot, the ballot shall be declared void by the City Clerk and shall be preserved for a period of 90 calendar days after the election results are certified.
4) After preparing the official Tally Results, the City Clerk shall place under seal allballots, identification envelopes, and tally sheets, and shall retain them in a sealed condition for nenot less than 90 calendar days after the election results are certified.

## Section K. Regularㄴ., Election Results

1) The candidate who receives a plurality the most votes of all votes cast shall be elected to the position- of Board member for the respective constituent group.
2) In the event that two or more candidates receive an equal number of votes cast, and no candidate receives more votes, then the candidates receiving an equal number of votes shall appear before the City Clerk at the time and place designated by the City Clerk and draw lots to determine which person shall be declared elected.- The City Clerk shall determine the manner in which the lots shall be drawn and, in the event that any candidatescandidate involved dodoes not appear, the City Clerk shall act for the absent person or persons-in the drawing of the lot. The candidate who is selected by lot shall be declared by the Board to be elected to the position of Board member for the respective constituent group.

## Section LᄂM. Special Election

1) In the event that an elected member of the Board prior to the expiration of suchmember's term, has submitted a letter of resignation or the member's office becomes vacant by virtue of death, retirement, termination of employment, or for any other reason, the City Clerk shall conduct a special election to fill the unexpired term. However, no special election shall be held where there is less than twelve months remaining before expiration of the term.

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## ATTACHMENT A

2) The Board shall designate the date of the special election. -The special election shall be held not more than 90 calendar days after the submission of the letter of resignation or the receipt of notification of the vacancy. -Candidates to be voted on at any special election shall be nominated in the same manner provided aboveunder this policy, but the nominating petition shall provide that the nomination is made for the balance of the unexpired term and specify the ending date of that term. NominatingThe nominating petitions shall be available at the office of the PlanDCP or, if the Board designates, electronically to members of the appropriate constituent group seven weeks before the date fixed forof the special election.- The special election to fill the unexpired term shall be conducted in the same manner as a regular election, except as otherwise provided for in this section.
3) If any candidate in a special election receives a pluralitythe most votes of all votes cast, the candidate shall be declared by the Board to be elected to the position of employeeBoard member for the respective constituent group for the unexpired term.
4) In the event that two or more candidates receive an equal number of votes cast, and no candidate receives more votes, then the candidates receiving an equal number of votes shall appear before the City Clerk at the time and place designated by the City Clerk in order toand draw lots to determine which person shall be declared elected. The lots shall be drawn in the manner that the-The City Clerk shall determine. In the manner in which the lots shall be drawn and, in the event that any candidate involved does not appear, the City Clerk shall act for the absent person in the drawing of the lot. -The candidate who is selected by lot shall be declared by the Board to be elected to the position of Board member for the respective constituent group for the unexpired term.

## Section M.

## Section N. Certification and Report of Results

The City Clerk shall officially certify the results of the election within 14 calendar days after the date of election furnish to the Boardfrom the official certified results of the electionElection Day.

## Section O.

Section N. Protests of Election
Any interested person may challenge any proceeding, act ${ }_{2}$ or omission that may be material to the election, by written notice to the City Clerk not later than three business days after the count of the ballots. -The City Clerk shall review the protests and submit a report of findings and recommendations to the Board, together with the official certified results within 14 calendar days afterof the election.

## Section OP. Emergency Board Actions

The Board shall be able tomay take certain actions relative to the election process in the event of a local emergency declared by the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los

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## ATTACHMENT A

Angeles, the State of California, or the Federal government that significantly impacts the conduct of an election. In such an event, the Board shall be able to amend provisions in the Boardenact temporary emergency election procedures to provide for the timely conduct of elections in accordance with the Board's Election Policies and Procedures.

