

County Language Accessibility Advisory Committee Toolkit

August 2017



By the California Secretary of State's
Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC)

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BACKGROUND

This toolkit offers guidelines and practices to help county elections offices establish a Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) and create a meaningful and helpful role for it to serve the limited English proficient (LEP) voters of your community.

Background

California is home to nearly 2.5 million eligible LEP voters.¹ For LEP voters who seek to participate and contribute meaningfully in the U.S.'s democratic process but are not yet familiar with voting procedures, navigating the state's election system may be daunting. In order to cast a well-informed vote and understand how to participate in California's electoral process, LEP voters need to be able to read election information and outreach materials, and receive instructions from poll workers in the language they speak.

At the same time, challenges arise reaching those voters. For example, beyond language barriers between your office and these communities, there may also be cultural and/or geographic barriers. LAAC are a way to help bridge those gaps by forging relationships with members of those communities, residents with language expertise, and others who may be uniquely situated to advise your office on how to effectively include LEP voters in the democratic process.

County LAACs

In most cases, forming a LAAC is optional. And even when they are required, there are no formal requirements for LAACs, in terms of membership, meetings, or their role.

However, based on the experience of counties that have already established local LAACs, they have been an effective resource for receiving input and providing assistance on translations, community outreach plans, and bilingual poll worker recruitment and placement, among providing other benefits. It is therefore a recommended best practice for language assistance to maintain a year-round LAAC in all counties.

There are currently two instances where a LAAC is mandated by state law.

SB 450 (Allen, Ch. 832, Stats. 2016), California's Voter's Choice Act (VCA): Counties participating in the VCA model must establish a local LAAC before they can hold an election. The VCA requires county elections officials to establish a LAAC no later than October 1 of the year prior to the first election conducted, and hold its first meeting no later than April 1 of the year in which the first election is conducted. The LAAC must be comprised of representatives of language minority communities. If a county has fewer than 50,000 registered voters, it can establish a joint advisory committee for language minority communities and voters with disabilities. See *Appendix E* to read the statute.

AB 2686 (Mullin, Ch. 764, Stats. 2016): This bill created a pilot to allow counties, through the end of 2020, to conduct a legislative or congressional vacancy election as a mailed ballot election, subject to certain conditions. One of the conditions for holding such an election is that the county must establish either a community election advisory committee that consists of community members representing minority groups covered under the federal Voting Rights Act and voters with disabilities, or establishing a local LAAC and a local Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee. The committee must hold at least one meeting in the year prior to an all-mailed ballot election conducted under the pilot. See *Appendix E* to read the statute.

"It is difficult to reach out to populations who are generally overlooked, discriminated against, and excluded. This includes reaching out to minority populations and people who are economically disadvantaged."

— San Benito County Registrar's Office

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA STATE LAAC

The State LAAC was established in 2016 to advise California's Secretary of State (SOS) on issues related to language accessibility of elections and election materials. The mission of the LAAC is to advise and assist the SOS with implementation of federal and state laws relating to access of the electoral process by LEP voters, so that all persons who vote can understand the voting process. The LAAC also provides recommendations identifying and prioritizing activities, programs, and policies to ensure every voter has equal access to the ballot.

The responsibilities of the committee include:

1. Providing expertise on language accessibility issues.
2. Promoting language accessibility initiatives.
3. Responding to the Secretary of State's questions regarding language accessibility issues.



RECRUITING LAAC MEMBERS

Finding qualified and dedicated LAAC members is a critical part of creating a successful LAAC. This section gives you some tips on what to look for in LAAC members, where to recruit interested community members, and some helpful tools for your candidate application process.

Skills and Background

Members of a LAAC should have either a demonstrated knowledge of a particular covered language, language accessibility, or experience working with communities who speak a covered language. There are many other additional skills that could also be helpful for your LAAC:

- Members with a background in voter registration, voter outreach, or getting out the vote can bring an important perspective from their experience engaging directly with voters.
- Members with experience in communications, web design, media, or social media may have helpful input on strategies for communicating with LEP voters.
- Members with legal, advocacy, or policy backgrounds may be able to help the committee understand different election related laws and policies.
- Members with backgrounds in mapping, data analysis, or demography can help the committee think about important trends in the county's population.
- Members with leadership experience in their community, or experience in community activism, service, or outreach.

Diversity

Limited English-proficient voters are not a monolith. They are a diverse group of voters that share a common language. Because of this, recruiting diverse LAAC committee members is crucial to ensuring LEP voters have every opportunity to engage in the electoral process. The following are some suggestions for achieving a diverse committee that reflects your county:

- Languages: Seek members to represent each of the languages covered in your county under Section 203 and Elections Code Section 14201(c). Covered

languages are included in [Appendix A](#).

- Geography: Be mindful of geographic diversity, and that various parts of your county are represented. For example, think about whether both coastal and inland, rural and urban areas are represented.
- Age: Languages evolve, and voters of different generations may use different dialects or vocabulary, or respond differently to messaging strategies. Having multiple generations represented can help advise you on these distinctions and can also bring diversity in perspectives for outreach to voters.
- Economic diversity: Members from different economic backgrounds may bring different perspectives, such as input on public transportation in cities, or commuting in suburbs.
- Country of origin: People can share a language but come from several countries with different dialects or vocabulary. They may also have distinct communities and needs. Try to recruit members from different countries, as well as native born speakers.

“The challenges at times have been the differences between the members. Such as, translating materials to support all who require the assistance. There is clearly a difference in the translations required by generation. This is usually a point of discussion amongst our members.”

— **Alameda County Registrar's Office**

How to Get Started

The first thing to consider before starting your LAAC is establishing what the mission or purpose of it will be. For some ideas, (see [About the State LAAC](#) on page 2, and [Issues for the LAAC to Address](#), on page 10.)

Once you have established the mission of the LAAC, the following are some suggested steps to take to form your LAAC. Your steps may vary depending on your resources, timeline, and needs.

The first thing you want to do is determine what staff member/s will be responsible for the LAAC (see [Staffing a LAAC](#) on page 5).

If you expect a great deal of interest in joining the LAAC, consider establishing a formal application process. If you want to use an application it should include background information such as the purpose of the LAAC, expected roles and responsibilities, time commitment, terms for serving (if applicable), and the background and skills needed to apply. A sample membership application is included in [Appendix B](#).

Next, establish a page on your website where the application can be accessed, and that can be linked to in e-mail blasts and social media postings.

Finally, develop outreach materials, including flyers, an email that can be sent to contacts, and social media postings (see [Appendix C](#) for sample outreach materials).

Where to Recruit Members

A good place to start your recruitment effort is by reaching out to your existing contacts. Think about organizations you have partnered with in the past that you know have done voter registration drives, or have invited your office to come do outreach or table at their events. Even if those organizations do not focus on LEP communities, they still might be able to suggest members of their organizations, have contacts at other organizations, or have suggestions for possible contacts. They may also be helpful in distributing your recruitment information and materials.

Some other resources to try include:

- Check with your county, and cities in your county, to see if they have departments or divisions that focus on language access.
- Organizations serving language minority communities should be encouraged to join as they know the linguistic features and needs of the communities they serve.

- Other organizations to share your recruitment information with should include community based organizations, colleges, language schools, churches, and other organizations that do community outreach.
- Reach out to the State LAAC as a resource to help with your recruitment.
- See [Appendix D](#) for ways to use non-profit lookup tools to find organizations in your area.

Ongoing Recruitment

Even once your members are in place, maintain the application for the LAAC on your website, and consider continuing to accept applications. This helps generate continued enthusiasm from the community to join the LAAC, which is especially helpful if a member ends up leaving sooner than expected. You can also ask your LAAC members to keep their eyes out for potential members. While you will hopefully retain members, and not need to fill spots or make additions, it is good to be prepared.

“Recruiting is done through outreach events, website and networking amongst our partnerships. The retention of our membership has been successful by regular communication, holding appreciation events (luncheons) for our members and working together.”

— Alameda County Registrar’s Office

Staffing a LAAC

To bridge communication between LAAC members and county elections office staff, counties should designate a staff member to serve as the LAAC liaison. The liaison's responsibilities should include:

- Acting as a point of contact between the LAAC and the county elections office;
- Working with the LAAC chair and members to draft agendas;
- Scheduling meetings and ensuring the members have a meeting space;
- Responding to requests for information;
- Arranging trainings and briefings for members;
- Recruiting members and vetting applicants; and
- Taking meeting notes and distributing action items when needed.



FORMAT OF LAAC

There is no single or right way to organize a LAAC. This section is meant to answer some common questions and provide ideas and guidelines for formatting a LAAC.

How many members should a LAAC have?

The right number of members will vary depending on the county and its needs. The Secretary of State has issued guidelines recommending the following sizes for local Voter Accessibility Advisory Committees (VAAC),² and can be applied to LAACs:

“The groups are truly partners with the ROV. This partnership has provided invaluable insight and education to the ROV with better ways to support each individual language community.”

— Alameda County Registrar’s Office

Number of Registered Voters	Recommended Number of Members
Less than 50,000 registered voters	Minimum of three members
Between 50,000 and 500,000 registered voters	Minimum of five members
Between 500,000 and 1,000,000 registered voters	Minimum of seven members
More than 1,000,000 registered voters	Minimum of nine members

These recommendations are only minimums. The needs in your county may increase depending on factors such as:

- The number of languages covered under Section 203 and Elections Code Section 14201. You should strive to have at least one representative for each language covered.
- The size of your county. Large counties should consider having representatives that represent different areas, such as urban and rural, coastal and inland, northern and southern, etc.
- Consider whether other important segments in your community are represented, such as students, members who use public transportation, naturalized citizens, etc.

Do we need a LAAC for each Section 203 language and Elections Code section 14201 covered language?

If there is a great deal of interest for each language and your county has capacity to staff those meetings, it would be ideal to have LAACs for each covered language. If that is not possible, and you instead have a single LAAC, there are certainly areas of overlap for the representatives of different languages to discuss. In the absence of LAACs for each covered language, some alternatives include:

- Form two LAACs, one for Section 203 covered languages, and one for Section 14201 covered languages.
- Rely on working groups within the LAAC. If there are issues that the LAAC wants to explore further that are specific to a covered language, the LAAC can form a working group to work on that issue. The working group might meet separately, or simply discuss via e-mail, then report back to the LAAC at-large.

- Ensure there is representation from communities representing each covered language on the committee by monitoring the application process and targeting outreach to unrepresented communities.
- Include discussion of covered languages on the agenda for meetings.
- If there are staff that work on specific languages, have them attend LAAC meetings, especially if those languages are on the agenda.

Should there be a member chairing the committee?

Not necessarily, however, having members of the LAAC lead the committee has several advantages. Chairs can help set an agenda, schedule meetings, and facilitate LAAC meetings. Having a chair can also give the committee more ownership of its role as an advisory committee. Giving members leadership roles can also inspire greater attachment to the LAAC and greater retention. Some possible roles for LAAC members:

- Chair or co-chairs: co-chairs will be helpful to divide the duties of the chair and allow for an easy transition in case a co-chair needs to leave. Alternatively, a vice-chair can also share responsibilities with a chair and be in place in case a transition is necessary.
- Secretary: a secretary can help keep minutes and keep records of decisions. There may also be work to do in between meetings that the secretary can help track.

Should members commit for a minimum period of time?

It will take some time for many members to get up to speed on the various practices and laws associated with elections, and depending on when a new member joins, it could be more than a year before a general election. Because of this, it may make sense to ask new members to commit to at least one election cycle, or two years of service.

LAAC members should also be advised when they apply that in addition to attending meetings, they may need to commit some hours to prepare for meetings, and possibly contribute to smaller working groups. Members should also know that participation is imperative and what the attendance expectations are.

Should LAACs vote on recommendations or other decisions?

LAAC members should be advised that they are an advisory body, not a decision making body. While the election’s office may welcome the LAACs input and recommendations, the LAAC does not have authority to make decisions that bind the elections office on policy or the use of resources. That said, there may be some circumstances where it makes sense to ask for votes from LAAC members, for example on a meeting schedule, agenda items, on recommendations and requests to the Registrar, creating working groups, and on selecting chairs of the committee. If the LAAC will be voting on taking certain actions, make sure they are consistent on voting on those types of actions as they arise and that each vote is recorded on the meeting notes.

Can a county combine its LAAC and VAAC?

If a county is conducting an election pursuant to the Voter’s Choice Act and has fewer than 50,000 registered voters, it can establish a joint advisory committee for language minority communities and voters with disabilities.³ A combined committee is not ideal or recommended, as the communities have different policies, outreach, and agenda issues they may want to focus on. If your county is having trouble recruiting enough members for a standalone LAAC and VAAC, a combined committee can be a helpful starting point until there are enough members to breakout into individual committees.

Other Models for Chairing the Committee

“The Deputy Registrar of Voters serves as the chair of the overall committee. Each language group has a coordinator from the ROV. The coordinator works directly with their group to organize meetings, events and other activities.”

— *Alameda County Registrar’s Office*

How Elections Offices Can Support a LAAC

To get the most out of the LAAC it is important to support the development of its members. Many members will not come to the LAAC with a background in election administration, voting rights, or voter outreach, but will have a wealth of valuable knowledge about their communities and the language needs in the county. Consider some strategies for supporting members:

- Assign a staff member to work with the LAAC and take responsibility for providing them information they need and request, planning meetings, and recruiting members.
- Help build members' elections familiarity with ongoing briefings on the elections process so that they can apply their varied skills to voting and elections issues.
- Create a section of the website for LAAC related materials including membership, meeting schedules, agendas, and space for members to add materials and information they have developed.



MEETINGS

To get the most out of a LAAC we recommend investing in your members by offering trainings to new members, and periodic ongoing trainings. Members will benefit from an overview on the fundamental issues they will be working on. For example, consider offering a training for your members on:

- Election basics: While members have probably registered and voted before, many likely do not have an appreciation for the work that happens behind the scenes to make an election possible. For example, members would benefit from understanding some of the basics, like the role of precincts, how polling sites are selected, poll worker recruitment and training, and vote-by-mail ballots and processing.
- Demographics: Members need some understanding of the number of voters who speak a covered language, and the areas of the county where those voters are concentrated. Additionally, providing members with information on voter registration rates, vote-by-mail usage, and turnout rates, and to the extent possible, members would benefit from seeing this data broken down by language.
- Language access laws: Members should receive some instruction on the laws that affect language access for voters, including Section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act, and California Elections Code Sections 14201 and 12303. See [Appendix E](#) for these statutes and others, and see [Appendix F](#) for other resources.

Agenda

Once the first LAAC meeting is confirmed, a meeting agenda should be developed. For a first meeting, a good place to start is with the types of trainings suggested above, as well as offering members an opportunity to review the purpose and goals of the LAAC and brainstorm activities to move forward.

Subsequent agendas may include relevant items and topics suggested by the chair, other members, as well as items of interest to the elections office or members of the public.

Meeting Format

Consider the following best practices in the planning of meetings:

- All meetings should be open to the public.
- Agendas should be posted at least a week prior to the meeting on the county election website to give the public the opportunity to attend and comment.
- Meetings should keep to items on the agenda.
- Minutes should be kept, and posted to the website.
- To increase community participation, consider evening meetings and/or various forms of participation such as having a call-in option.
- Make translation, interpretation, and other accommodations available upon reasonable notification, such as a week or 10 days in advance.
- At a minimum, quarterly LAAC meeting(s) are recommended, and more frequent meetings are recommended in election years, or under special circumstances, like when a county is planning for adopting vote centers.

NOTE: While open meeting laws most likely do not apply, check with your county counsel if you have concerns or questions about applicability to your local LAAC.

“The agenda is created to meet the six core values of the group:

1. Fair and Transparent Elections,
2. Voter Registration of All Eligible Voters,
3. Access to Accurate and Timely Information,
4. Access to Language Specific Materials,
5. Access to polling places for disabled or elderly persons,
6. Community Involvement. Group members are also encouraged to submit agenda topics.”

— San Benito County Registrar’s Office

ISSUES FOR A LAAC TO ADDRESS

Members of a LAAC can be a resource for a number of issues. Consider engaging your LAAC on:

- Feedback on outreach materials: Ask LAAC members to review translated outreach materials for clarity and plain language.
- Feedback on election materials: LAAC members can provide input on the clarity of terminology used in materials like vote-by-mail envelopes, signage at polling sites, and other communications with voters related to registration and elections.
- Feedback on online materials: Ask LAAC members to review the county elections office's website. For example, members can give feedback on the ease of finding translated sections of the website, navigating translated portions of the website, and the quality of the translations.
- Feedback on messaging strategies: LAAC members can help develop effective registration and mobilization messaging strategies for engaging voters of multiple languages.
- Outreach opportunities: LAAC members may have valuable insight on new ways to outreach and connect with LEP voters. Some members may also be willing to assist with outreach by attending events or tabling with county staff.
- Staffing polling sites: LAAC members can provide insight into the need for voting assistance for LEP voters in particular areas.
- Polling site locations: As polling sites change from election to election, consult your LAAC on potential impacts on LEP voters.
- Bilingual poll worker recruitment: LAAC members may be uniquely situated to help recruit members of their communities to be poll workers. Members might also have insights into outreach methods that have not been tried yet.
- Voter's Choice Act (SB 450): If a county is participating in SB 450, there are additional new opportunities for the LAAC to provide input. Members can:
 - Give input on the placement of vote centers and drop boxes.

- Help plan the meeting with representatives of LEP voters as part of the development of the county's Election Administration Plan.
- Help plan the public meeting for review of the draft implementation plan.
- Provide feedback on the education and outreach plan.
- Provide feedback on the plan for addressing disparities in participation.
- Review outreach and election materials.
- Help plan the voter education workshops.

"The committees assist with the review of election materials, processes, best practices, outreach and education to the language communities."

— Alameda County Registrar's Office

Conclusion

We hope the LAAC Toolkit is a helpful resource for you and your county. Please do not hesitate to contact the State LAAC with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Consider the State LAAC a resource as you establish your LAAC. Please reach out to us, or attend a State LAAC meeting to request our help.

To contact the State LAAC, e-mail Milena Paez, Voter Access Coordinator at laac@sos.ca.gov.

Citations

1. U.S. Census Bureau, Public Use Data File, available at https://www.census.gov/rdo/data/voting_rights_determination_file.html
2. California Secretary of State's Guide to Creating a Local Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee, available at <http://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdfs/guide-create-local-vaac.pdf>
3. California Elections Code Section 4005 (a)(9)(C)

2017 State LAAC Members

Language and Elections Accessibility Experts

Deanna Kitamura
Co-chair
Los Angeles, CA

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Co-chair
Hollywood, CA

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County Elections Officials

Jill LaVine
Registrar of Voters
Designee: Armando Salud
Sacramento County

Rebecca Spencer
Registrar of Voters
Designee: Leticia Flores
Riverside County

Claudio Valenzuela
Registrar of Voters
Designee: Greta Arevalo
Monterey County

Dean C. Logan
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk
Designee: Tim McNamara
Los Angeles County

Joseph E. Canciamilla
Clerk, Recorder and
Registrar of Voters
Designee: Eren Mendez
Contra Costa County

APPENDIX A – Section 203 and Election Code Section 14201 Coverage

County	2016 Section 203 Determinations	2014 Elections Code Section 14201 Determinations (number of covered precincts)
Alameda	Chinese (including Taiwanese)	Japanese (5)
	Filipino (Tagalog)	Khmer (4)
	Hispanic (Spanish)	Korean (41)
	Vietnamese	Hindi (247)
Amador	*	Spanish (52)
Butte	*	Spanish (277)
Calaveras	*	Spanish (71)
Colusa	Hispanic (Spanish)	*
Contra Costa	Chinese (including Taiwanese)	Tagalog (193)
	Hispanic (Spanish)	Japanese (12)
	*	Korean (10)
	*	Vietnamese (3)
	*	Hindi (35)
Del Norte	American Indian (All other American Indian Tribes)	Spanish (20)
El Dorado	*	Spanish (333)
	*	Tagalog (9)
Fresno	Hispanic (Spanish)	Chinese (4)
	*	Japanese (14)
	*	Khmer (7)
	*	Hindi (186)
Glenn	Hispanic (Spanish)	*
Humboldt	*	Spanish (122)
Imperial	Hispanic (Spanish)	*
Inyo	*	Spanish (59)
Kern	Hispanic (Spanish)	Tagalog (58)
	*	Hindi (41)
Kings	Hispanic (Spanish)	Tagalog (19)
Lake	*	Spanish (106)
Lassen	*	Spanish (54)
Los Angeles	Cambodian (Khmer)	*
	Chinese (including Taiwanese)	*
	Filipino (Tagalog)	*
	Hispanic (Spanish)	*
	Korean	*
	Vietnamese	*
	Note: Los Angeles County is voluntarily providing language assistance in Japanese, Thai, and Hindi.	*

County	2016 Section 203 Determinations	2014 Elections Code Section 14201 Determinations (number of covered precincts)
Madera	Hispanic (Spanish)	*
Marin	*	Spanish (259)
	*	Chinese (4)
	*	Korean (17)
	*	Vietnamese (1)
Mariposa	*	Spanish (10)
Merced	Hispanic (Spanish)	Hindi (34)
Modoc	*	Spanish (22)
Mono	*	Spanish (13)
Monterey	Hispanic (Spanish)	Chinese (2)
	*	Tagalog (44)
	*	Korean (6)
	*	Vietnamese (2)
Napa	*	Chinese (1)
	*	Tagalog (13)
Orange	Chinese (including Taiwanese)	Tagalog (84)
	Hispanic (Spanish)	Japanese (34)
	Korean	Khmer (2)
	Vietnamese	Hindi (9)
Placer	*	Spanish (205)
	*	Tagalog (26)
Plumas	*	Spanish (58)
Riverside	Hispanic (Spanish)	Chinese (40)
	*	Tagalog (104)
	*	Korean (11)
	*	Vietnamese (2)
Sacramento	Chinese (including Taiwanese)	Tagalog (132)
	Hispanic (Spanish)	Japanese (43)
	*	Korean (14)
	*	Vietnamese (154)
	*	Hindi (48)
San Benito	Hispanic (Spanish)	*
San Bernardino	Hispanic (Spanish)	Chinese (66)
	*	Tagalog (36)
	*	Khmer (4)
	*	Korean (49)
	*	Vietnamese (15)

County	2016 Section 203 Determinations	2014 Elections Code Section 14201 Determinations (number of covered precincts)
San Diego	American Indian (All other American Indian Tribes)	Japanese (8)
	Chinese (including Taiwanese)	Khmer (11)
	Filipino (Tagalog)	Korean (22)
	Hispanic (Spanish)	Hindi (6)
	Vietnamese	*
San Francisco	Chinese (including Taiwanese)	Tagalog (135)
	Hispanic (Spanish)	Japanese (24)
	*	Korean (20)
	*	Vietnamese (37)
San Joaquin	Hispanic (Spanish)	Chinese (53)
	*	Tagalog (409)
	*	Khmer (92)
	*	Vietnamese (74)
	*	Hindi (58)
San Luis Obispo	*	Spanish (294)
	*	Tagalog (3)
San Mateo	Chinese (including Taiwanese)	Tagalog (162)
	Hispanic (Spanish)	Japanese (13)
	*	Hindi (2)
Santa Barbara	Hispanic (Spanish)	Tagalog (29)
Santa Clara	Chinese (including Taiwanese)	Japanese (54)
	Filipino (Tagalog)	Khmer (1)
	Hispanic (Spanish)	Korean (68)
	Vietnamese	Hindi (197)
Santa Cruz	*	Spanish (359)
	*	Chinese (11)
	*	Tagalog (10)
Shasta	*	Spanish (80)
Sierra	*	Spanish (21)
Siskiyou	*	Spanish (33)
Solano	*	Spanish (472)
	*	Chinese (11)
	*	Tagalog (235)
Sonoma	*	Spanish (839)
Stanislaus	Hispanic (Spanish)	Khmer (7)
	*	Hindi (33)

County	2016 Section 203 Determinations	2014 Elections Code Section 14201 Determinations (number of covered precincts)
Sutter	*	Spanish (321)
Tulare	Hispanic (Spanish)	Spanish (81)
Tuolumne	*	Spanish (75)
Ventura	Hispanic (Spanish)	Chinese (19)
	*	Tagalog (39)
	*	Hindi (5)
Yolo	*	Spanish (307)
	*	Chinese (116)
	*	Tagalog (4)
	*	Hindi (6)
Yuba	*	Spanish (114)

APPENDIX B – MODEL LAAC MEMBER APPLICATION

_____County
Language Accessibility Advisory Committee

Position Description

The Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) is an advisory committee to the county elections office.

LAAC members serve at the discretion of the County Registrar. The mission of the LAAC is to advise and assist the County Registrar with implementation of federal and state laws relating to access to the electoral process by voters with limited-English proficiency, so that all persons who vote can understand the voting process. _____
County is required to provide language assistance in accordance with state and federal law for the following covered language:_____. The LAAC also provides recommendations identifying and prioritizing activities, programs, and policies to ensure every voter has equal access to the ballot.

LAAC members will be expected to attend monthly/bi-monthly/quarterly/regular meetings at the county elections office. This is a volunteer committee. There is no stipend or reimbursement for participating in the LAAC.

Desired Qualifications

The following qualifications are desired:

1. Demonstrated experience providing language assistance or working on improving language access.
2. Experience working or volunteering in ethnically diverse and language diverse communities.
3. Experience in translation services, either as a certified interpreter or professional translator in a language covered in the county.
4. Experience in voting rights, voter outreach, voter education, and/or voter engagement.
5. Experience in policy analysis, development and/or advocacy.
6. Demonstrated data analysis or GIS mapping skills.
7. Knowledge of the use of plain language methods.
8. Experience as a poll worker, election administration, or election protection.
9. Ability to attend monthly/bi-monthly/quarterly/regular meetings.
10. Willingness to serve at least two years.

SAMPLE APPLICATION

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

Employer: _____ **Job Title:** _____

E-mail: _____ **Phone Number:** _____

For each of the following please limit responses to one paragraph.

1. Please describe your relevant experience with language assistance.
2. Please describe your relevant experience in language minority communities.
3. If applicable, please state which languages you are fluent in and the level of fluency in each language (spoken, written).
4. Please describe any experience with state and federal laws regarding voting or language access.
5. Please describe any experience in voter outreach, education, or engagement.
6. Explain your interest in being a LAAC member.
7. Please list additional relevant experience not discussed elsewhere in the application.
8. Please provide a list of three references with contact information.
9. Please enclose your CV or resume.

APPENDIX C – OUTREACH MATERIALS

Example Flyers from Inyo County for LAAC Recruitment



 **¡Llamando a todos los voluntarios!**

La oficina de Elecciones de Inyo está buscando voluntarios ciudadanos para servir en un Comité Asesor de Accesibilidad de Lenguaje (LAAC) en el Condado de Inyo.

Se anima a todas las partes interesadas a asistir a la reunión el 8 de junio de 2017, a las 11:00 am en 920 N. Main Street, Bishop CA

RSVP to 760-878-0224 or kfoote@inyocounty.us



 **Calling all volunteers!**

The Inyo Elections office is seeking citizen volunteers to serve on a Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) in Inyo County.

All interested parties are encouraged to attend the meeting on June 8, 2017, @ 11:00 am at 920 N. Main Street, Bishop CA

RSVP to 760-878-0224 or kfoote@inyocounty.us

Example Press Release from Inyo County for LAAC Recruitment



COUNTY OF INYO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA
KAMMI FOOTE, CLERK-RECORDER, REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

P. O. Drawer F, Independence, CA 93526
168 N. Edwards St, Independence, CA 93526
Telephone: (760) 873-8481, (760) 878-0222, (760) 876-5559, (800) 447-4696

PRESS RELEASE

LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LAAC)

Kammi Foote, the Inyo County Registrar of Voters is seeking citizens interested in serving in a volunteer capacity on a Language Accessibility Advisory Committee in Inyo County. All interested parties are encouraged to attend the meeting on June 8, 2017.

The purpose of the Language Accessibility Advisory Committee is the following:

- Provide the public a forum to voice concerns and make recommendations on ways to improve the electoral process for voters with limited English proficiency.
- Allow the public to advise and assist the Registrar of Voters regarding access to the electoral process for voters with limited English proficiency.

The meeting is scheduled for:

Date: **Thursday, June 8, 2017**

Time: **11:00 a.m.**

Location: **Health and Human Services (Meeting Room) 920 N. Main Street, Bishop CA 93514.**

Call in Information: **515-604-9990** access code# **264441**

If you would like to participate in the meeting or would like further information, please contact Kammi Foote at (760) 878-0224 or email kfoote@inyocounty.us . Please RSVP to assure adequate materials are available at the meeting.

###

Example Letter from San Mateo County for LAAC Recruitment



Mark Church
Chief Elections Officer & Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder

40 Tower Road
San Mateo, CA 94402
phone 650.312.5222 fax 650.312.5348
email registrar@smcare.org
web www.shapelthefuture.org

July 10, 2017

NAME
ADDRESS
ADDRESS

Subject: Language Accessibility Advisory Committee Invitation

Dear NAME:

As Chief Elections Officer, I am committed to ensuring equal access to election information, materials and voting rights. To minimize obstacles in voting facing non-English speaking communities, I am overseeing the creation of a Language Accessibility Advisory Committee ("LAAC"). The committee will assist the County in complying with federal and state laws regarding language accessibility issues in the electoral process.

I write to invite you to apply for membership on this Committee. Your experience in dealing with language accessibility issues in your community will be an invaluable asset to the committee.

The LAAC will meet at least two times a year. The meetings will be held between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays and last approximately two hours. The location of the meetings will either be 40 Tower Road in San Mateo or 555 County Center in Redwood City. Policy recommendations and methods of improving language accessibility may be formulated at meetings, which will be considered for adoption. We would like members to commit serving on the committee for at least two years.

Please complete and return the application form by July 31, 2017 in the enclosed envelope or by fax at (650) 312-5348. If you know of anyone you think should be on the committee, please do not hesitate to contact my office with their name and information. We will select qualified individuals for membership in the committee.

Please contact Michelle Yue, Elections Specialist III, of the Registration & Elections Division at (650) 312- 5293, or email myue@smcare.org with any questions. Thank you again for your leadership in the community. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Church".

Mark Church

APPENDIX D – NON-PROFIT LOOKUP

One way to look for organizations that you may not be aware of is to look up the non-profits in your area. There may be many non-profits (also known as a 501(c)(3)) in your county that work closely with LEP voters. There are several ways to find these organizations. One way to identify these organizations is with a 501 (c)(3) lookup tool. An online tool (<http://501c3lookup.org/>) allows you to search for non-profits in any city. You can narrow your search by looking up an Activity Code, or National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) classification, that tell you something about the work the non-profit does. Some of those codes are listed below, but there are many others listed that you may find useful.

You can also use a search tool like www.Guidestar.org/ search, which allows you to search zip codes and cities for non-profits by searching for key words, like “language”, or “Spanish”. You can also type in one of the NTEE codes below as a search.

Once you identify organizations that may be a good fit, search for them on the internet. Some organizations you identify may be so small they do not have websites. In that case, try checking to see if they have a Facebook page.

Activity Codes:

- 001 – Churches, synagogues, etc.
- 030 – School, college, trade school, etc.
- 124 – Study and research (non-scientific)
- 205 – Professional association
- 296 – Community Club
- 319 – Other social activities
- 349 – Other youth organization or activities
- 399 – Other housing activities
- 404 – Community promotion
- 408 – Community service organization
- 429 – Other inner city or community benefit activities
- 430 – Defense of human and civil rights
- 431 – Elimination of prejudice and discrimination
- 432 – Lessen neighborhood tensions
- 449 – Other civil rights activities
- 481 – Voter information on issues or candidates
- 482 – Voter education (mechanics of registering, voting etc.)
- 560 – Supplying money, goods or services to the poor
- 569 – Referral service (social agencies)
- 600 – Community Chest, United Way, etc.
- 907 – Veterans activities
- 923 – Indians (tribes, cultures, etc.)

NTEE CODES

Arts, Culture and Humanities A01

Alliance/Advocacy Organizations

- A03 Professional Societies & Associations
- A05 Research Institutes and/or Public Policy Analysis
- A23 Cultural/Ethnic Awareness
- A70 Humanities Organizations
- A99 Other Art, Culture, Humanities Organizations/Services

Educational Institutions

- B01 Alliance/Advocacy Organizations
- B03 Professional Societies & Association
- B05 Research Institutes and/or Public Policy Analysis
- B50 Graduate, Professional

Human Services

- P01 Alliance/Advocacy Organizations
- P03 Professional Societies & Associations
- P05 Research Institutes and/or Public Policy Analysis
- P21 American Red Cross
- P22 Urban League
- P24 Salvation Army
- P26 Volunteers of America
- P27 YMCA, YWCA, YWHA, YMHA
- P28 Neighborhood Center, Settlement House
- P84 Ethnic/Immigrant Services
- P99 Human Services—Multipurpose & Other

Civil Rights, Social Action, Advocacy

- R01 Alliance/Advocacy Organizations
- R03 Professional Societies & Associations
- R05 Research Institutes and/or Public Policy Analysis
- R22 Minority Rights
- R30 Intergroup/Race Relations
- R40 Voter Education/ Registration
- R60 Civil Liberties Advocacy
- R99 Civil Rights, Social Action, & Advocacy

Community Improvement, Capacity Building

- S01 Alliance/Advocacy Organizations
- S03 Professional Societies & Associations
- S05 Research Institutes and/or Public Policy Analysis
- S20 Community/Neighborhood Development, Improvement
- S21 Community Coalitions
- S22 Neighborhood/Block Association
- S30 Economic Development
- S31 Urban, Community Economic Development
- S32 Rural Development
- S41 Promotion of Business (Chambers of Commerce)
- S80 Community Service Clubs (Kiwanis, Lions, Jaycees, etc.)
- S81 Women's Service Clubs
- S82 Men's Service Clubs
- S99 Community Improvement, Capacity Building

Philanthropy, Voluntarism, and Grantmaking

- T01 Alliance/Advocacy Organizations
- T03 Professional Societies & Associations
- T05 Research Institutes and/or Public Policy Analysis
- T31 Community Foundations
- T40 Voluntarism Promotion
- T50 Philanthropy/Charity/Voluntarism Promotion (General)
- T70 Fundraising Organizations that Cross Categories (includes Community Funds/Trusts and Federated Giving Programs), e.g., United Way
- T99 Other Philanthropy, Voluntarism, and Grantmaking Foundations

Social Science Research Institutes

- V24 Political Science
- V25 Population Studies, Demographics (includes Geography)
- V26 Law, International Law, and Jurisprudence
- V33 Ethnic Studies

Public, Society Benefit

- W01 Alliance/Advocacy Organizations
- W03 Professional Societies & Associations
- W05 Research Institutes and/or Public Policy Analysis
- W24 Citizen Participation
- W30 Military/Veterans' Organizations
- W70 Leadership Development
- W99 Public, Society Benefit—Multipurpose & Other

Religion, Spiritual Development

- X01 Alliance/Advocacy Organizations
- X03 Professional Societies & Associations
- X05 Research Institutes and/or Public Policy Analysis
- X20 Christian
- X21 Protestant
- X22 Roman Catholic
- X30 Jewish
- X40 Islamic
- X50 Buddhist
- X70 Hindu
- X80 Religious Media
- X90 Interfaith Issues

APPENDIX E – RELEVANT STATUTES

California Elections Code § 12303 (recruitment of bilingual poll workers):

- a. No person who cannot read or write the English language is eligible to act as a member of any precinct board.
- b. It is the intent of the Legislature that non-English-speaking citizens, like all other citizens, should be encouraged to vote. Therefore, appropriate efforts should be made to minimize obstacles to voting by citizens who lack sufficient skill in English to vote without assistance.
- c. Where the elections official finds that citizens described in subdivision (b) approximate 3 percent or more of the voting-age residents of a precinct, or in the event that interested citizens or organizations provided information which the elections official believes indicates a need for voting assistance for qualified citizens described in subdivision (b), the elections official shall make reasonable efforts to recruit election officials who are fluent in a language used by citizens described in subdivision (b) and in English. This recruitment shall be conducted through the cooperation of interested citizens and organizations and through voluntarily donated public service notices in the media, including newspapers, radio, and television, particularly those media that serve the non-English-speaking citizens described in subdivision (b).
- d. At least 14 days before an election, the elections official shall prepare and make available to the public a list of the precincts to which officials were appointed pursuant to this section, and the language or languages other than English in which they will provide assistance.

California Elections Code § 14201 (posting translated facsimile ballots):

- a.
 1. The precinct board shall post, in a conspicuous location in the polling place, at least one facsimile copy of the ballot with the ballot measures and ballot instructions printed in Spanish. Facsimile ballots shall also be printed in other languages and posted in the same manner if a significant and substantial need is found by the elections official.
 2. In those counties which are required under the provisions of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, as extended by Public Law 94-73, to furnish ballots in other than the English language, the posting of the facsimile ballot in that particular language shall not be required.
 3. This subdivision shall remain in effect until the Secretary of State makes the determinations and findings required by this section.
- b. In counties where the Secretary of State has determined that it is appropriate, each precinct board shall post, in a conspicuous location in the polling place, at least one facsimile copy of the ballot with the ballot measures and ballot instructions printed in Spanish. If the Secretary of State determines that it is appropriate to post the election materials in Spanish in only certain precincts in the county, the material shall be posted in the polling places situated in those precincts. Facsimile ballots shall also be printed in other languages and posted in the same manner if a significant and substantial need is found by the Secretary of State.
- c. In determining whether it is appropriate to post the election materials in Spanish or other languages, the Secretary of State shall determine the number of residents of voting age in each county and precinct who are members of a

single language minority, and who lack sufficient skills in English to vote without assistance. If the number of these residents equals 3 percent or more of the voting age residents of a particular county or precinct, or in the event that interested citizens or organizations provide the Secretary of State with information which gives the Secretary of State sufficient reason to believe a need for the furnishing of facsimile ballots, the Secretary of State shall find a need to post at least one facsimile copy of the ballot with the ballot measures and ballot instructions printed in Spanish or other applicable language in the affected polling places.

- d. The Secretary of State shall make the determinations and findings set forth in subdivisions (b) and (c) by January 1 of each year in which the Governor is elected.
- e. In those precincts where ballots printed in a language other than English are available for use by the voters at the polls, the posting of a facsimile ballot in that particular language shall not be required.
- f. It is the intent of the Legislature that non-English-speaking citizens, like all other citizens, should be encouraged to vote. Therefore, appropriate efforts should be made on a statewide basis to minimize obstacles to voting by citizens who lack sufficient skill in English to vote without assistance.

Section 203 of the Federal Voting Rights Act - 52 U.S.C. § 10503 (federal coverage for language accessibility):

a. Congressional findings and declaration of policy

The Congress finds that, through the use of various practices and procedures, citizens of language minorities have been effectively excluded from participation in the electoral process. Among other factors, the denial of the right to vote of such minority group citizens is ordinarily directly related to the unequal educational opportunities afforded them resulting in high illiteracy and low voting participation. The Congress declares that, in order to enforce the guarantees of the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the United States Constitution, it is necessary to eliminate such discrimination by prohibiting these practices, and by prescribing other remedial devices.

b. Bilingual voting materials requirement

1. Generally

Before August 6, 2032, no covered State or political subdivision shall provide voting materials only in the English language.

2. Covered States and political subdivisions

A. Generally

A State or political subdivision is a covered State or political subdivision for the purposes of this subsection if the Director of the Census determines, based on the 2010 American Community Survey census data and subsequent American Community Survey data in 5-year increments, or comparable census data, that

i.

- I. more than 5 percent of the citizens of voting age of such State or political subdivision are members of a single language minority and are limited- English proficient;
- II. more than 10,000 of the citizens of voting age of such political subdivision are members of a single language minority and are limited-
- III. English proficient; or
- IV. in the case of a political subdivision that contains all or any part of an Indian reservation, more than 5 percent of the American Indian or Alaska Native citizens of voting age within the Indian reservation are members of a single language minority and are limited-English proficient; and

- ii. the illiteracy rate of the citizens in the language minority as a group is higher than the national illiteracy rate.

B. Exception

The prohibitions of this subsection do not apply in any political subdivision that has less than 5 percent voting age limited-English proficient citizens of each language minority which comprises over 5 percent of the statewide limited-English proficient population of voting age citizens, unless the political subdivision is a covered political subdivision independently from its State.

3. Definitions

- A. As used in this section --the term "voting materials" means registration or voting notices, forms, instructions, assistance, or other materials or information relating to the electoral process, including ballots;
- B. the term "limited-English proficient" means unable to speak or understand English adequately enough to participate in the electoral process;
- C. the term "Indian reservation" means any area that is an American Indian or Alaska Native area, as defined by the Census Bureau for the purposes of the 1990 decennial census;
- D. the term "citizens" means citizens of the United States; and
- E. the term "illiteracy" means the failure to complete the 5th primary grade.

4. Special rule

The determinations of the Director of the Census under this subsection shall be effective upon publication in the Federal Register and shall not be subject to review in any court.

- c. Requirement of voting notices, forms, instructions, assistance, or other materials and ballots in minority language.
Whenever any State or political subdivision subject to the prohibition of subsection (b) of this section provides any registration or voting notices, forms, instructions, assistance, or other materials or information relating to the electoral process, including ballots, it shall provide them in the language of the applicable minority group as well as in the English language: Provided, That where the language of the applicable minority group is oral or unwritten or in the case of Alaskan natives and American Indians, if the predominant language is historically unwritten, the State or political subdivision is only required to furnish oral instructions, assistance, or other information relating to registration and voting.
- d. Action for declaratory judgment permitting English-only materials
Any State or political subdivision subject to the prohibition of subsection (b) of this section, which seeks to provide English-only registration or voting materials or information, including ballots, may file an action against the United States in the United States District Court for a declaratory judgment permitting such provision. The court shall grant the requested relief if it determines that the illiteracy rate of the applicable language minority group within the State or political subdivision is equal to or less than the national illiteracy rate.
- e. Definitions
For purposes of this section, the term "language minorities" or "language minority group" means persons who are American Indian, Asian American, Alaskan Natives, or of Spanish heritage.

California Elections Code § 12302 (legal permanent resident poll workers):

- a. Except as provided in subdivisions (b) and (c), a member of a precinct board shall be a voter of the state. The member may serve only in the precinct for which his or her appointment is received.
- b.
 - 1. In order to provide for a greater awareness of the elections process, the rights and responsibilities of voters, and the importance of participating in the electoral process, as well as to provide additional members of precinct

boards, an elections official may appoint not more than five pupils per precinct to serve under the direct supervision of precinct board members designated by the elections official. A pupil may be appointed, notwithstanding his or her lack of eligibility to vote, subject to the approval of the governing board of the educational institution in which the pupil is enrolled, if the pupil possesses the following qualifications:

- A. Is at least 16 years of age at the time of the election for which he or she is serving as a member of a precinct board.
 - B. Is a United States citizen, will be a citizen at the time of the election for which he or she is serving as a member of a precinct board, or is lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States, as defined in Section 101(a)(20) of the federal Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. Sec. 1101(a)(20)).
 - C. Is a pupil in good standing attending a public or private secondary educational institution.
 - D. Is a pupil who has a grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.
2. A pupil appointed pursuant to this subdivision may not be used by a precinct board to tally votes.
- c.
1. In order to promote civic engagement among residents of the state and to provide additional members of precinct boards, an elections official may appoint not more than five nonvoters per precinct to serve as precinct board members. A nonvoter may be appointed, notwithstanding his or her lack of eligibility to vote, if the nonvoter possesses the following qualifications:
 - A. Is lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States, as defined in Section 101(a)(20) of the federal Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. Sec. 1101(a)(20)).
 - B. Is otherwise eligible to register to vote pursuant to Section 2101 except for his or her lack of United States citizenship.
 2. A nonvoter appointed to a precinct board pursuant to this subdivision shall not be permitted to do either of the following:
 - A. Serve as, or perform any of the duties of, the inspector of a precinct board.
 - B. Tally votes for the precinct board.

California Elections Code § 4005 - Voter's Choice Act - SB 450 (LAAC requirement in counties participating in vote center elections):

- d. Notwithstanding Section 4000 or any other law, on or after January 1, 2018, the Counties of Calaveras, Inyo, Madera, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Shasta, Sierra, Sutter, and Tuolumne, and, except as provided in Section 4007, on or after January 1, 2020, any county may conduct any election as an all-mailed ballot election if all of the following apply:
- ...
- (9) (A) The county elections official establishes a language accessibility advisory committee that is comprised of representatives of language minority communities. The committee shall be established no later than October 1 of the year before the first election conducted pursuant to this section. The committee shall hold its first meeting no later than April 1 of the year in which the first election is conducted pursuant to this section.
- ...
- (9) (C) A county with fewer than 50,000 registered voters may establish a joint advisory committee for language minority communities and voters with disabilities.

California Elections Code § 4001.5 - AB 2686 (LAAC requirement in counties participating vote-by-mail pilot election):

(b) A special election or special consolidated election described in subdivision (a) may be conducted wholly as an all-mailed ballot election if all of the following apply:

(9) (A) The county elections official establishes a community election advisory committee that consists of community members representing minority groups covered under the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. Sec. 10101 et seq.) and subdivision (c) of Section 14201 and voters with disabilities including, but not limited to, mobility, sensory, physical, and mental disabilities. In lieu of a community election advisory committee, the county elections official may establish both a local voting accessibility advisory committee pursuant to the guidelines promulgated by the Secretary of State and a local language accessibility advisory committee. For purposes of this section, a local language accessibility advisory committee shall consist of community members representing minority groups covered under the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. Sec. 10101 et seq.) and subdivision (c) of Section 14201.

(B) The advisory committee or committees described in subparagraph (A) shall hold at least one meeting in the year prior to an all-mailed ballot election conducted pursuant to this section.

APPENDIX F – RESOURCES

Secretary of State’s Language Accessibility Advisory Committee Website:

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/laac/>

Secretary of State Advisory to County Elections Officials on 2016 Section 203 Determinations:

<http://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/ccrov/pdf/2016/december/16333ji.pdf>

Secretary of State Advisory to County Elections Officials on 2014 Elections Code Section 14201 Determinations:

<http://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/ccrov/pdf/2013/december/13132jlb.pdf>

Federal Regulations Related to Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act:

<https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/crt/legacy/2011/11/04/28CFRPart55.pdf>

U.S. Department of Justice Section 203 Guidelines:

<https://www.justice.gov/crt/minority-language-citizens>

L.A. County Multilingual Access to Elections:

https://apps1.lavote.net/VOTER/PDFS/PUB/2013_Multilingual_Access_Elections.pdf

Asian Americans Advancing Justice:

- LPR Poll Worker Recruitment:
<https://www.advancingjustice-la.org/sites/default/files/LPRPollworkersFactSheet.pdf>
- Language Assistance During Elections:
<https://advancingjustice-la.org/sites/default/files/LanguageAssistanceFactSheet.pdf>

Future of California Elections – Language Access Information Resources:

<http://futureofcaelections.org/vei/la-vi/>

APIA Vote - Resources:

<http://www.apivote.org/resources>