



United States
Election Assistance Commission

ELECTION CENTER

Elections in Crisis: Rethinking How To Serve and Survive

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What are Election Survival Strategies?

- They are strategies to help plan, organize and implement areas of elections administration such as technology, staff multi-tasking, media and community building more efficiently.
- Using these strategies in these areas can result in savings of time, space, human resources, and eventually money over the course of time.
- Strategies provided have been developed, proven and time tested by professionals in the field of elections.



Overview of EAC Election Survival Strategies

- Election Office Administration
- Accessibility
- Technology in Elections
- Absentee Voting and Vote By Mail
- Polling Place and Vote Center Management

- Poll Worker Training
- Communicating with the Public
- Building Community Partnerships
- EAC Resources

ELECTION OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

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graph TD; A[ELECTION OFFICE ADMINISTRATION] --- B[Staff]; A --- C[Budget]; A --- D[Facilities]; A --- E[Statistical Data];
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Staff

Budget

Facilities

Statistical Data

Elections Office Administration

STAFF

- Encourage staff shadowing to learn multi-tasking and develop solutions to challenges in elections with limited resources.
- Create *organizational chart* as reference for chain-of-command in different areas of administering elections.
- Prepare potential staff hires with election schedule (i.e., limited vacation days, long hours and overtime).
- Reduce training cost by re-hiring part-time staff, from same temporary agency, for all elections.



Elections Office Administration

BUDGET

- Create *contingency funding plans* and budgeting for unforeseen emergencies (i.e., Special Elections, natural disasters, or equipment failures).
- Earn rental fees from voting systems, mail ballot readers and various computer programming services needed by political subdivisions.
- Develop fee schedule for public request of voter lists and other election data.



Elections Office Administration

FACILITIES

- Develop a *facilities and equipment* diagram detailing location of equipment and *chain-of-custody* form when transferring equipment.
- Identify areas of climate-controlled managed buildings to store voting systems.
- Utilize training rooms for preparing absentee ballots, staging election equipment, or canvassing an election.



Elections Office Administration

STATISTICAL DATA

- Most effective to collect on a *2-year election cycle* as all types of elections happen at least once in that period.
- Data helps develop future election decisions such as determining ballot orders, number of poll workers needed, and cost per election.
- Consider collecting and publishing election performance measures and data in budget requests, media packets, and annual reports.

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ACCESSIBILITY

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graph TD; A[ACCESSIBILITY] --- B[Guidelines]; A --- C[Organizations]; A --- D[Resources]; B --- C; C --- D;
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Guidelines

Organizations

Resources

Accessibility

GUIDELINES

- HAVA mandates that all states and jurisdiction polling place sites must include 1 voting system accessible to individuals with disabilities, including non-visual accessibility for the blind and visually impaired, in same manner that access and participation (including privacy and independence) is for other voters.
- Add ADA modules to training and ensure that poll workers are able to identify ADA voters.
- Examples of disability etiquette guides listed in *Election Management Guidelines* chapter on Accessibility (19).



Accessibility

ORGANIZATIONS

- Invite disability organizations to provide sensitivity training to poll workers.
- Establish advisory board to focus on disability issues such as testing new voting equipment ADA components.
- Nonprofits can provide assistance on marketing strategies and review material for the public.



Accessibility

RESOURCES

- States have a Governor's Commission on Disabilities that advises State government on disability issues.
- Hire poll workers with disabilities to encourage positive attitudes.
- Web Accessibility evaluation tools found at W3C Web Accessibility Initiative:
<http://www.w3.org/WAI/RC/tools/>

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TECHNOLOGY IN ELECTIONS

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graph TD; A[TECHNOLOGY IN ELECTIONS] --- B[Electronic Voter Registration]; A --- C[Records Management]; A --- D[GIS / GPS]; A --- E[Internet]; A --- F[Equipment]
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Electronic Voter
Registration

Records
Management

GIS / GPS

Internet

Equipment

Technology in Elections

ELECTRONIC VOTER REGISTRATION

- Improves security with data that is sent electronically.
- Improves efficiency; staff can focus on other responsibilities nearer to Election Day.
- Improves accuracy; less potential for mistakes with no manually entered data required.



Technology in Elections

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

- Content Management Systems (CMS) database can contain information on voter history, polling places, provisional ballots, and early voting.
- CMS allows for elections staff to contribute and share stored data, reduce duplicate input and ease report writing.
- CMS software can be built in-house by technical staff to save money.



Technology in Elections

GIS / GPS

- Geographical Information System (GIS) can help update voter registration software street indices and precinct information from different voters.
- GIS tracking capacity allows efficient placing of early voting sites and vote centers in jurisdictions.
- Global Positioning System (GPS) can track drivers as equipment and supplies to polling places are delivered.



Technology in Elections

INTERNET

- Inexpensive tool to reach out to voters, especially younger voters, through web sites, e-newsletters, and social media.
- Internet gives registered voters ability to update addresses or looking up election information saving time and paper.
- Fewer paper records means less warehouse space needed.



Technology in Elections

EQUIPMENT

- Implementing absentee ballot tracking and sorting machines to aid in signature match processes save time.
- Maintenance cost of technology necessitates constant planning with jurisdiction's budget authority to ensure it continuity of this vital service.
- E-Poll Books used more frequently across US.
 - Complete access to statewide voter registration database.
 - Avoids human error of processing wrong voter on poll list.



ABSENTEE VOTING AND VOTE-BY-MAIL

Facility Needs

Schedule

Ballot Records

Absentee Voting and Vote-By-Mail

FACILITY NEEDS

- Depending number of ballot styles and quantity of ballots, adequate shelving and a security-controlled storage area should be in place.
- Create space needed for review of: undeliverable ballots, possible duplications, signature verification and challenged ballots.
- Stock all equipment and supplies needed to process ballots and insure enough is available pre-election.



Absentee Voting and Vote-By-Mail

SCHEDULE FOR PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTING BALLOTS

- Prepare timeline for:
 - ✓ filing deadlines
 - ✓ close of registration
 - ✓ delivery date of ballot
 - ✓ deadline of public review
 - ✓ logic and accuracy testing
 - ✓ last day ballot can be mailed
 - ✓ last day ballot can be received in election office.



Absentee Voting and Vote-By-Mail

BALLOT RECORDS

- Create audit trail throughout ballot reception process to keep track of number of ballots going out and being received in the elections office.
- Provide staff with signature verification training especially if required by State law.
- Important to educate voters on proper way to vote their ballot and all other procedures for returning the envelope with a ballot.



POLLING PLACE AND VOTE CENTER MANAGEMENT

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graph TD; A[POLLING PLACE AND VOTE CENTER MANAGEMENT] --- B[ ]; B --- C[Vote Center Considerations]; B --- D[Polling Place Tracking and Data Bases];
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Vote Center
Considerations

Polling Place
Tracking and Data
Bases

Polling Place and Vote Center Management

VOTE CENTER CONSIDERATIONS

- Multiple computer network capacity
- Voter privacy and security measures
- Number and size of rooms to be used
- Staging area required for voter processing



Polling Place and Vote Center Management

POLLING PLACE TRACKING AND DATA BASES

- Evaluation of polling place accessibility should focus on those areas of facility that are important to voting.
- Continue to build on data base of possible polling places in event of last minute cancellation of use for elections.
- Accessibility survey and needs assessment should be considered when reviewing any new building for use as a polling place or vote center.



POLL WORKER TRAINING

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graph TD; A[POLL WORKER TRAINING] --- B[Recruitment]; A --- C[Retention]; A --- D[Continuous Training]
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Recruitment

Retention

Continuous
Training

Poll Worker Training

RECRUITMENT

- Poll workers need diverse language skills and must feel comfortable with new technology to meet needs of voters.
- Poll workers need ‘attention to detail’ training with all documentation and security procedures because closely contested elections are becoming more common.
- Important to track recruiting efforts that yield greatest number of high-quality poll workers



Poll Worker Training

RETENTION

- Cultivate strong personal relationships with poll workers by recognizing achievements and hosting celebrations.
- Make poll workers part of advisory boards to gain feedback to help improve Election Day procedures.
- Strengthen relationship with poll workers and she / he will strengthen commitment with elections office.



Poll Worker Training

CONTINUOUS TRAINING

- Evaluate post-election error reports to determine future training needs.
- Create supplemental on-line training options to offer review of Election Day procedures 24/7.
- Provide supply kit and poll list examples and actual polling place room settings to bring hands-on understanding of duties during training classes.



COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC

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graph TD; A[COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC] --- B[Planning Communication Strategy]; A --- C[Website Information for Voters and Candidates]; A --- D[Developing Communication Materials]; A --- E[Options for Communicating]; A --- F[Developing Internal Procedures]
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Planning
Communication
Strategy

Website
Information for
Voters and
Candidates

Developing
Communication
Materials

Options for
Communicating

Developing Internal
Procedures

Communicating with the Public

PLANNING COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

- Voters and candidates are the main audiences.
- Have accurate and timely election information.
- Select and disseminate information voters and candidates want.



Communicating with the Public

WEBSITE INFORMATION for VOTERS and CANDIDATES

- Am I registered to Vote?
- Ballot eligibility information for potential candidates.
- Information to serve as poll worker.
- Specific information for military and overseas voters.



Communicating with the Public

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

- Election FAQs, maps, videos, brochures.
- On-line sample ballot, voter polling place locator, voter registration tool, military and overseas ballot information.
- Election calendar with relevant election information for public.
- Information kits with fact sheets, press releases, historical data and contact information.



Communicating with the Public

OPTIONS for COMMUNICATION

- WEBSITES

- o Collect voter email addresses to send election information.
- o Coordinate with news outlets to feature website link.

- SOCIAL MEDIA

- o Feature videos on video sharing programs (i.e., Youtube).
- o Blogs/social media sites cost effective way to reach voters.
- o Create Facebook / Twitter accounts to share information.

- TRADITIONAL MEDIA

- o Television, print media, and radio.

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Communicating with the Public

DEVELOPING INTERNAL PROCEDURES

- Create hardcopy of crucial phone numbers.
- Create formal decision hierarchy to ensure messages to public are current.
- Create *communication contingency plan* to keep flow of information to public on unforeseen situations (i.e., loss of power, bad weather, building fire).



BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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graph TD; A[BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS] --- B[ ]; B --- C[Diverse Partnerships]; B --- D[Voter Outreach];
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Diverse
Partnerships

Voter Outreach

Building Community Partnerships

DIVERSE PARTNERSHIPS

- Encourage outreach to national, State, and local government agencies for assistance on distributing voter information.
- Establish partnerships with other election offices to pool resources.
- All organizations are composed of people who can be potential poll workers for next election.



Building Community Partnerships

VOTER OUTREACH

- Voter outreach initiatives can begin with local businesses, civic groups, language minority groups, and schools.
- Local business partnerships can help advertise for potential poll workers by posting flyers at checkout counters.
- Establish partnerships with organizations that help serve varied populations by bringing election resources to them.



EAC Resources



Election Management Guidelines

- 19 chapters of election administration topics with practical guidelines.
- Designed to assist State and local election officials.
- Vetted by EAC's Advisory Boards and developed by over 100 election experts in 30 States and Washington, DC.



Quick Start Election Management Guides

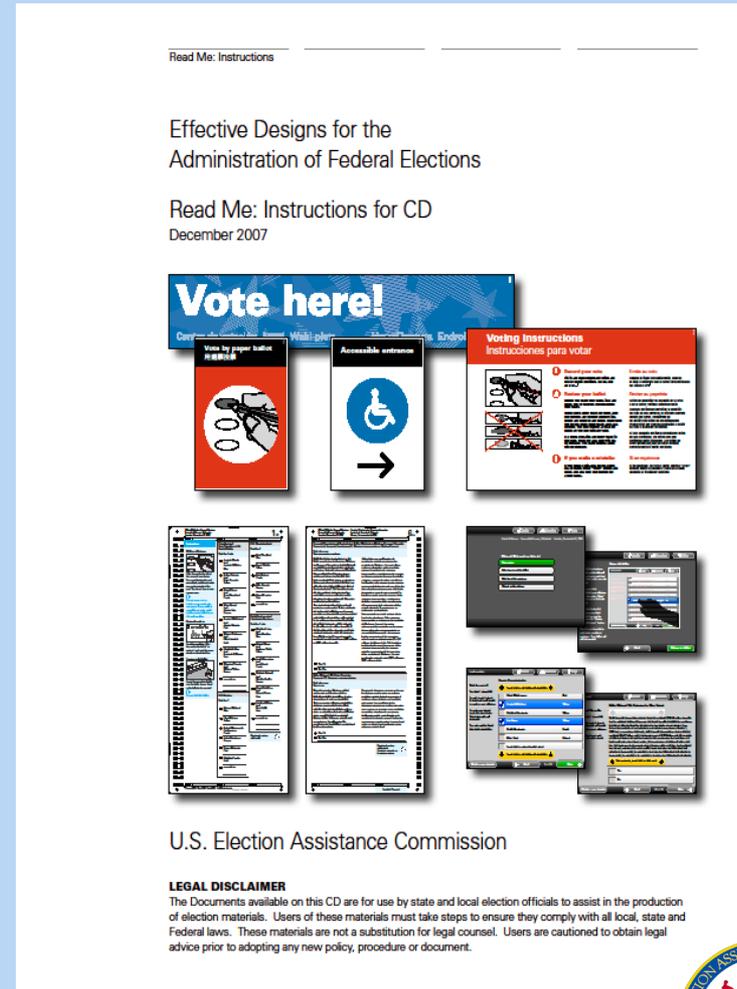


- Series of 21 brochures that highlight timely topics that impact the field of elections.
- Helpful guides in practical summary formats.
- Concise and easy-to-read tips to assist election office staff.



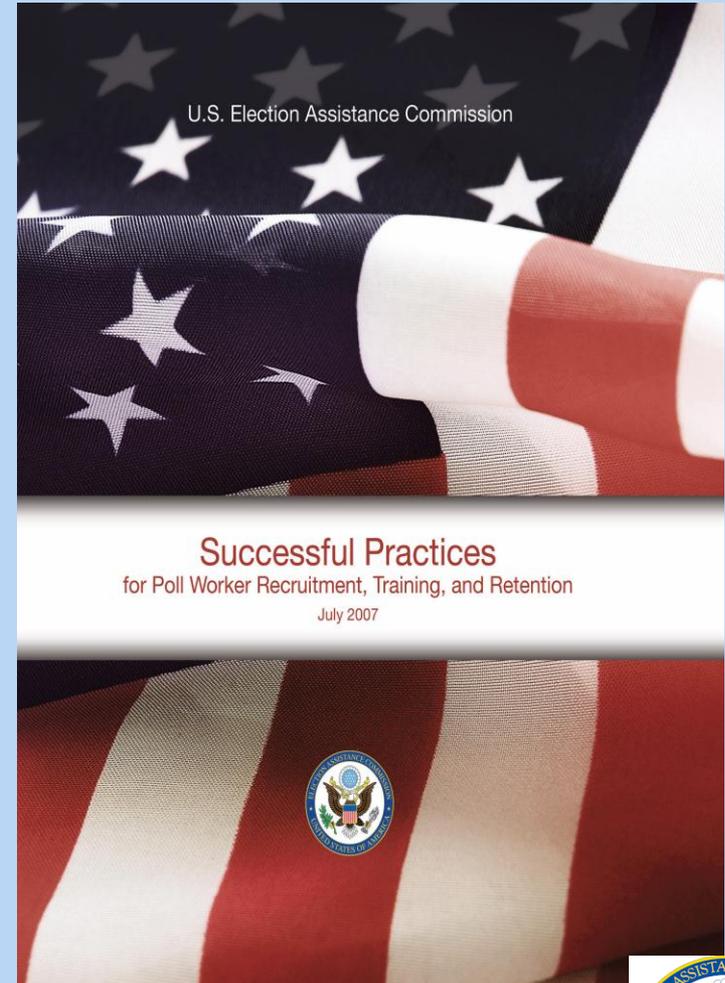
Effective Designs for the Administration of Federal Elections

- Best practices report on ballot design.
- Samples and camera-ready images of ballots, signage, and polling place materials.
- Informed by legislative guidelines, design principals and research with election officials, voters, and poll workers.



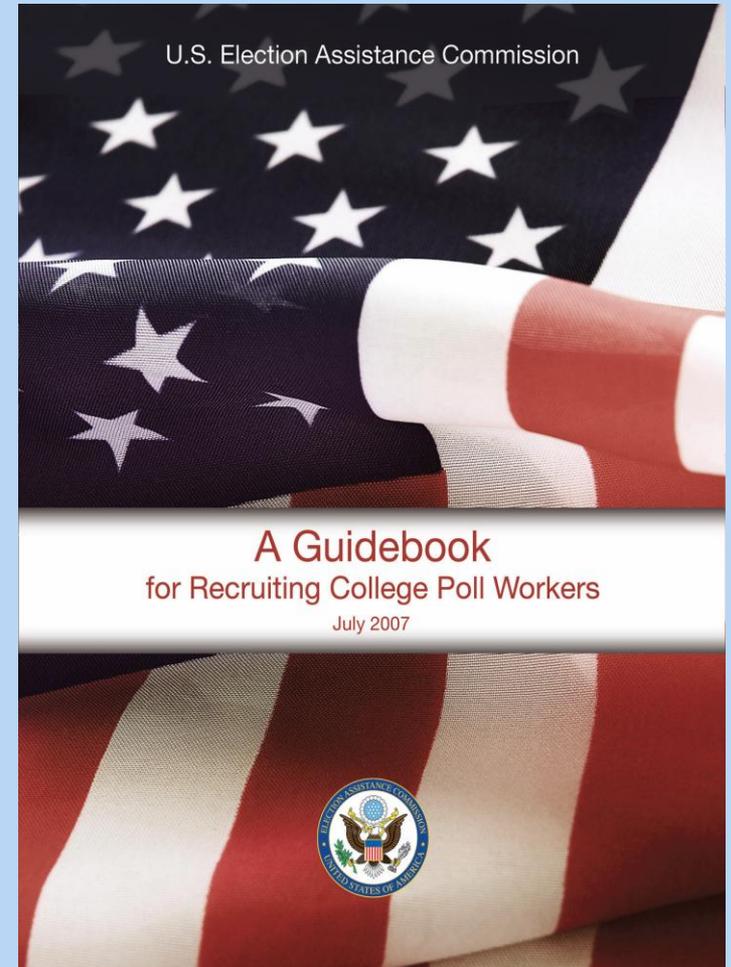
Successful Practices for Poll Worker Recruitment, Training, and Retention

- Framework for evaluating election training practices.
- Broad spectrum of techniques to help election officials seek poll workers.
- Based on interviews, surveys and feedback from thousands of election officials and other community leaders.



A Guidebook for Recruiting College Poll Workers

- Practical methods for recruiting and training college students as poll workers.
- Useful information for colleges introducing students to the electoral process and election offices recruiting poll workers
- Developed by veteran election officials, poll workers, and field tested at six locations during the 2006 elections.

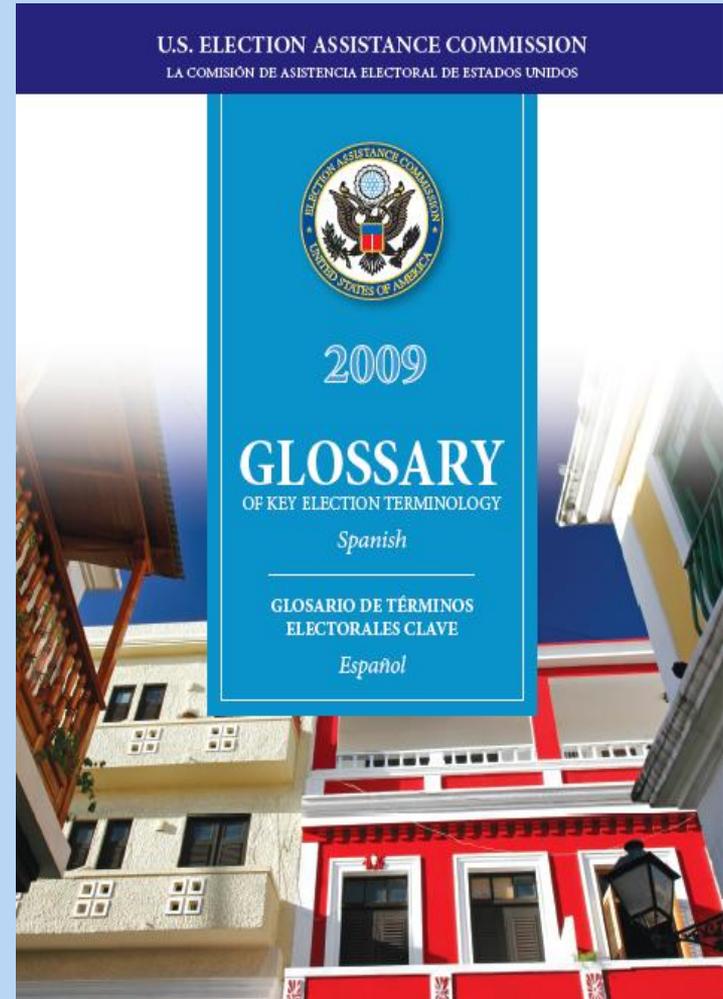


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GLOSSARIES OF ELECTION TERMINOLOGY

- Available in 6 languages: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese
- Over 1800 terms and phrases used in election administration.
- Appropriately developed culturally and linguistically by translators from all regions of each language.



Questions?

