



Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

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Flex Vote Center Program



Flex Vote Center Program Overview

In 2020, the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) enhanced the in-person voting experience by adopting the California Voter's Choice Act and implementing the County's new publicly owned voting system, Voting Solutions for All People. The adoption and implementation brought greater accessibility, flexibility, secure technology, and time to voters who cast their ballot in-person. Instead of a single day of voting (Election Day) and a designated location to vote (polling place), voters in the County now have 10 consecutive days and Election Day to vote at any voting location (Vote Center) in the County.

The move to the new voting model and system brought opportunities to creatively and strategically bring voting to voters – thereby creating the Flex Vote Center Program.

The Flex Vote Center Program was designed with a mission to reach voters with distinct needs such as voters experiencing homelessness, voters with disabilities, voters residing in assisted living homes, and geographically isolated voters. All Flex Vote Centers provide the exact services and experiences found at a Vote Center and are staffed by Election Worker Leads and volunteers provided by the partnering organization.

In the November General Election there were a total of 87 Flex Vote Center locations throughout the County across a 10-day period. A total of 2,794 voters who may not have had the opportunity to vote were able to accessibly, securely and independently cast their ballot in the General Election through the Flex program.

Recruitment and Selection

The selection process took a multiphase approach that consisted of the recruitment of existing community partners, an application period for new partners, and a final selection phase.

Over the last two decades the RR/CC has developed and maintained a variety of voter committees who specialize in a wide range of topics like voter education and outreach, accessibility and multilingual communities, technology and cybersecurity, and election administration. These committees are in addition to the local partnerships the RR/CC has with County, City, and Neighborhood stakeholders. The first step was the easiest as the recruitment phase began with outreach to existing partners and community groups.

The second phase consisted of a month-long outreach and application period that allowed any community group who owned a facility and met the criteria to apply. In total, the application period received 94 applications from across the County in the November General Election.

After an extensive application period the selection of Flex Vote Centers was determined by a variety of factors including availability, regional distribution and the anticipated number of voters.

Serving Voters with Distinct Needs

Seniors

In the lead up to the 2020 election cycle, there were concerns that seniors would have trouble adapting to the new voting model – specifically the use of new technology, transition from polling places to Vote Centers, and limited mobility/transportation. Flex Vote Centers provides a trusted and familiar space for seniors to receive a personal voting experience by staff that can answer questions and provide guidance on the new devices. During the November General Election, the RR/CC partnered with assisted living facilities and senior community centers like the Pasadena Highlands, Veterans Home of California West Los Angeles, Willowbrook Senior Center, Norwalk Senior Center, and the Russian Jewish Community Cultural Center.



*Neenach Grace Chapel (SBBC) in Lancaster, CA on Friday, October 30, 2020 (left)
Starbucks Community Store in Long Beach, CA on Friday, October 30, 2020 (right)*

Voters Experiencing Homelessness

The RR/CC worked with grassroots organizations to align Flex Vote Centers into existing services and programs where people experiencing homelessness could vote such as the St. Joseph Center and the Homeless Outreach Program Integrated Care System (HOPICS). Voters experiencing homelessness were able to vote while receiving other services.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the RR/CC also worked with Project RoomKey, a joint effort by the state, County and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to secure hotel and motel rooms for immunocompromised people experiencing homelessness to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Residents had the option to either drop off their Vote by Mail ballots or cast their ballot in-person at the Flex Vote Center set up in the lobby or common area of the hotel.



LA County Supervisor Hilda Solis at Project RoomKey Lincoln Plaza in Monterey Park, CA on Thursday, October 29, 2020 (left), and at Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, CA on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 (right)

Voters with Disabilities

The RR/CC partnered with organizations that provide services and support to voters with disabilities such as Disabled Resource Center, Service Center for Independent Life, and the Special Needs Network.

During the pandemic, voters with disabilities further relied on curbside voting where voters remained in their vehicles and the Flex Team guided them through the voting process using the Interactive Sample Ballot (ISB). Curbside voting allowed voters to maintain social distancing and provided a secure, comfortable experience for voters with disabilities, immunocompromised voters and voters concerned about being exposed to COVID-19.



Success in Challenges Inc. in Long Beach, CA on November 2, 2020 (left)

Disabled Resources Center in Long Beach, CA on Tuesday, October 27, 2020 (right)

Geographically Isolated Areas

The RR/CC's partnership with Strength Based Community Change (SBCC) was integral to serving geographically isolated communities in the Antelope Valley, where there may not be as many Vote Centers as densely populated areas. In addition to a Flex Vote Center at their headquarters, SBCC hosted six Flex Vote Centers throughout the region in a joint effort between the RR/CC, Los Angeles County Supervisorial District 5, and Antelope Valley neighborhood councils. Because of a Flex Vote Center, voters in Green Valley, CA were able cast their ballots in-person for the first time in many years.



*The Green Valley Quonset Hut (SBCC) in Green Valley, CA on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 (left)
Project RoomKey Lincoln Plaza in Leona Valley, CA on Thursday, October 29, 2020 (right)*

Expansion and Results

The Flex Vote Center Program was implemented in both the March 2020 Presidential Primary Election and the November 2020 General Election. To provide adequate access to all voters in the largest election in recent history, the RR/CC doubled the number of Flex Vote Center locations and the number of teams provided in the March Election from 44 locations to 87 and 5 teams to 10 – which consisted of over 20 RR/CC Leads.



Starbucks Community Store Watts in Watts, CA on Thursday, October 29, 2020

Spotlight Story

Mobile Voting Machines Aim To Boost Turnout Among Hard-To-Reach Voters

