



SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS  
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## **THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON ELECTION ADMINISTRATION**

### **Supervisor of Election's Testimony**

**Prepared By**

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#### ***Introduction***

Broward County is the second largest county in the state of Florida. It is situated comfortably in South Florida between Miami-Dade and Palm Beach Counties. Broward's demographics include more than 1.8 million residents who represent various and diverse designations: cultural, ethnic, racial and economic. Broward remains a tourism and seasonal destination for visitors from around the world.

Broward has the second largest electorate in Florida with one million voters. This number also ranks Broward as one of the fifteen largest voting jurisdictions in the country according to data maintained by the PEW Foundation. Following the 2000 Presidential Election, Broward had its own history-making event with the removal of its supervisor of election who had won her new seat during the 2000 General Election.

A new supervisor was appointed by then Governor Jeb Bush. That supervisor will complete ten years of service in November 2013. The supervisor was selected from a field of nine candidates. Perhaps the quality that resulted in her appointment was her successful career as a lifetime educator in the Broward County Public Schools. This supervisor relied heavily on communication, and well as planning and organizational skills to establish systems and procedures that would form the framework for successful elections.

It became evident very quickly, that election preparation does not happen overnight, nor does it happen in a vacuum. The creation of a mission statement helped to focus “who we are, our product, for whom the election is conducted, and the quality of the expected outcomes.”

Election preparation begins no less than one year prior to a scheduled presidential election. The planning is accomplished through the coordinated efforts of a team of leaders who have distinct and unique responsibilities. All team-leaders research and plan implementation strategies for their area of specialty. The planning is shared and coordinated with all team leaders and staff through retreats, strategic planning sessions, presentations and weekly planning meetings. The team leader structure is reflected below with a director who is responsible for each function:

- Election Coordination
- Finance & Human Resources
- Technology
- Voting Equipment Center Coordination
- Election day Operations
- Voter Education and Outreach
- Voter Services
- Public Services
- Election Planning and Development

During the 2012 presidential election, the paid staff and volunteers of the Broward County Supervisor of Elections Office processed more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a million voters. There are states whose residents don't total this number. This was accomplished even though there were restrictions and limitations on resources. A summary of the work of this office in preparation and conduct of this successful election is included in a bulleted format on the following pages.

I. **Number of Polling place locations, operation and design of polling places.**

- Conduct elections for voters in 793 precincts housed in 452 polling place locations.
- Survey every polling location to ensure it meets the requirements for conducting an election.
- Create detailed drawings that show path of travel to entry, exit, emergency exits and disabled voters' path of travel.
- Illustrate flow of voters through the facility through each step in the election process.
- Illustrate the placement, set-up of all equipment, power locations, and station set-ups.
- Maintain updated contact information for person in charge of facility.

II. **Training Recruitment and Number of Workers**

- Recruitment is ongoing throughout the year via outreach events, high school voter registration drives and athletic events, web page advertisement and notifications, advertisement targeting voters in each municipality, word of mouth from current workers.
- A database of 15,000 poll workers is maintained for recruitment purposes.
- Five to six thousand workers trained and assigned in polling places on election day.
- Training is 4 to 5 hours in length and consists of the following learning concepts and strategies: adult learning, lectures, problem solving and comprehension of election law, procedures and processes, hands-on activities through labs to reinforce skills and increase worker's level of confidence, knowledge of equipment operation and troubleshooting procedures, assisting disabled voters, providing Spanish and Creole speaking workers for language assistance,

provisional ballot procedures and processes. All assigned workers must demonstrate competency on end-of-class exam in order to be placed in a polling place on election day.

### III. **Accessibility for Uniformed Overseas Voters**

- Ninety days prior to the election, the Supervisor of Elections office reaches out to UOCAVA voters using their last known contact information.
- Voters are notified of the upcoming election.
- Voters are provided specific instructions on how to vote and return ballot using dedicated secured fax line, email, etc.

### IV. **Management of voter rolls and poll books is accomplished through the following:**

- EViDs, electronic poll books, are utilized in every early voting location and polling place.
- Workers access to the live database provides a better resource for ensuring the correct processing of a voter.
- Multiple call centers for troubleshooting, verifying voter eligibility, responding to procedural questions are available to assist workers at sites.
- Technical assistance is provided in the field to monitor the function of all electronic poll books and provide on-site assistance for malfunctioning equipment.

### V. **Voting Machine Capacity and Technology**

- Electronic Voter Identification System (EViD) contains all voters' records through a live updated database.
- DS200 optical scanner is in every precinct, (will now have 2 or more based on

voter population in precincts for all future elections).

- Voting System Technicians (VST's) in every polling location.
- VST thoroughly trained in the operation of the voting equipment.
- Utilize the most up to date voting equipment that is maintained on a schedule recommended by the vendor.
- Equipment has been thoroughly tested and certified by the State of Florida Division of Elections.
- Continually analyze data from each election to guide decisions on the placement of voting equipment.
- Budgeted for additional voting equipment in this budget cycle.
- Preventative maintenance is done annually to ensure proper functionality.
- Voting machines are inspected prior to distribution.
- Transport units are provided to enhance capacity.

## **VI. Ballot Simplicity and Voter Education**

### *Ballot Simplicity*

- Utilize ballot design criteria prescribed by the Florida Uniform Ballot Code.
- Make the ballot as easy to read as possible within the framework of the code.
- Provide feedback regarding the impact of long amendments in ballot preparation and the comfort level of voters.

### *Voter Education and Outreach*

- Provide an extensive program of voter education and outreach that includes media strategies such as advertisement in movie theatres, videos focused on specific election information, strategic placement of bill boards along Broward's interstate highway system; participation in community- sponsored events; speaking engagements; establishing and sustaining partnerships with community based- organizations, businesses and governmental entities including Homeland's Security Immigration and Naturalization Service's where new citizens register to vote immediately following swearing in ceremonies; conduct bi-annual high school voter registration drives resulting in more than 60,000 newly registered

- high school students in the past ten years.
- Negotiated with the local school district to close schools to students on election-day to allow them to actively participate in the election process as election-day workers.
  - Collaborate with Broward's 31 municipalities to offer assistance and guidelines in educating voters.
  - Create a sample ballot as an instructional tool that is mailed to each voter household.

**VII. Voter accessibility for the disabled, specials needs and limited English**

- All polling places and EV Sites meet the requirements for ADA compliant facilities.
- Designated setup of all sites so voters with disabilities can navigate the path of travel, entry process and exiting of the facilities and have access to adequate parking.
- Prioritize the handling of individuals with disabilities and or special needs or language assistance within the Fl. Statute guidelines.
- Recruit, train and place bilingual workers who speak Spanish or Creole to provide language assistance inside the polling places and early voting sites.
- Setup special stations for voters with disabilities to sit to complete ballot.
- Utilize ivotronic voting unit which provides audio ballots for visually impaired voters.
- Utilize bilingual staff to handle phone inquiries from voters requiring language assistance.

### **VIII. Provisional Ballot Procedures and Processes**

- Workers contact call centers to verify a Provisional is necessary.
- Train all poll workers in the processing of provisional ballots.
- Maintain contact with polling places throughout the day to monitor the number of provisional ballots issued.
- Collect all information from voter.
- Verify the following: voter eligibility, verify voter has not already voted, voter is given free access instructions to determine how to verify their ballot was counted/rejected and why.
- Voters seal ballot envelope after placing ballot in special envelope and sign it.
- Clerk signs and indicates why the provisional was issued.
- The provisional ballot is placed in a secured sealed box and the voter signs the Provisional Ballot log.
- After the election the staff determines voter eligibility within the two-day time frame established by Florida's election law.

### **IX. Issues presented by administration of AB programs.**

- Volume of voters who responded to wide-spread publicity regarding in- office voting on election day.
- New requests for pickup of Absentee ballots on election day.
- Receipt of 15,000 absentee ballots with the last run to the post office on election day.
- ABs that were not delivered through the mail service.
- Ballots that were received by the voter on the Saturday before the election, although mailed one month prior to the election.

- Ballots trucked to the neighboring city of Opa Locka, Florida post office due to no ability to process ballots in Fort Lauderdale as has always been the practice.
- Out-of town voters reporting that the local post office in their area had been closed.
- Deadline for voters to request AB to be mailed 6 days before does not allow adequate time to print, prepare AB package for mailing, mail it, have voter receive it, vote it and return it. The deadline needs to change.

### ***Conclusion***

I applaud the Commission on your efforts to thoroughly review the elements of the past presidential election. I hope your work will lead you to conclusions that will benefit the overall election process in a fair and objective manner. As one of the Florida senators remarked at the opening of the Senate hearing on Elections and Ethics, “There is enough blame to go around”. I hope you will balance your findings with a thorough evaluation of all elements that make for and support successful elections for all voters.