

**Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)**  
**Policies and Procedures Manual**

**Table of Contents**

**I. Elections Code Section 2053**

- A. Purpose
- B. Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)

**II. Purpose and Responsibilities of the VAAC**

- A. Purpose of the Committee
- B. Responsibilities of the Committee
- C. Authority of the Committee

**III. Committee Organization and Operating Procedures**

- A. Organization
- B. Meetings
- C. Reporting and Record Retention
- D. Rules of Order

**IV. Committee Member Information**

- A. Oath of Office
- B. Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act

## **I. Elections Code Section 2053**

### **A. Purpose**

The appointees shall have demonstrated experience working or volunteering in diverse communities, particularly those with respect to voting accessibility. They shall also have demonstrated experience in voting rights policy, representing voters with disabilities, with voter education, outreach, and engagement efforts, particularly with respect to voting accessibility, and in policy analysis, development, and advocacy. As a committee under the Secretary of State, the Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) is responsible for making recommendations for improving access to voting and election materials. At least three county elections officials shall be appointed to the committee. The Secretary of State shall consult with and consider the recommendations of the committee. The committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Secretary of State.

### **B. Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)**

The Secretary of State shall establish a Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Secretary of State shall consult with the committee and consider the committee's recommendations related to improving the accessibility of elections for voters with disabilities. The Secretary of State may implement the committee's recommendations she deems appropriate. The committee shall consist of the Secretary of State, her designees, and additional members appointed by the Secretary of State. The appointees shall have demonstrated experience with accessibility requirements for voters with disabilities or be a county elections official.

## **II. Purpose and Responsibilities of the VAAC**

### **A. Purpose of the Committee**

The VAAC is established to advise the Secretary of State on recommendations for improving access to voting and election materials.

### **B. Responsibilities of the Committee**

The responsibilities of the committee include:

1. Guidelines for reaching voters with disabilities.
2. Recommendations for improving the availability and accessibility of election materials.
3. Distribution of public service announcements.
4. Recommendations about web accessibility.
5. Promoting the voter hotlines.
6. Promoting the state and local library services for voters with disabilities.
7. Recommendations for improving access and participation.
8. Promotion of plain language and alternative formats.
9. Recommendations for poll worker training.

#### C. Authority of the Committee

The committee shall have limited authority to offer advice to the Secretary of State.

### **III. Committee Organization and Operating Procedures**

#### A. Organization

1. The committee consists of at least 8 members and at least 3 will be county elections officials.
2. A Chair (or two Co-Chairs) shall be selected by the Secretary of State and will be in charge of meetings in her absence with the support of staff from the Secretary of State.
3. The Secretary of State shall provide resources and administrative services to the committee in accordance with the following:
  - a. The Secretary of State shall provide at least one staff member to act as liaison to the committee.
  - b. The Secretary of State shall provide for production and distribution of meeting notices and agendas.

- c. The Secretary of State shall design and host an Internet website that will include postings of notices, agendas, and minutes, as well as general information about the VAAC.
- d. The Secretary of State shall provide coordination of meetings, to include location and conference call setup, as well as distribution of meeting materials.
- e. When required, the Secretary of State shall provide technical assistance, advice, and legal assistance.

## B. Meetings

1. The VAAC shall meet bimonthly, according to a prepared meeting calendar. A quorum of a majority of the members must be present for any committee business.
2. Agendas and meeting notices will be prepared, finalized, posted, and sent out at least 10 days before a scheduled meeting.

## C. Reporting and Record Retention

Meeting minutes shall be prepared for each meeting and will specify the actions taken on each agenda item.

## D. Rules of Order

These are the rules of order to be used for conducting committee meetings.

### ▪ ***Welcome & Roll Call***

The Chair shall begin each meeting by reading the welcome message aloud and noting the attendance of members present, certifying a quorum of a majority of the members of the committee. The Chair will also announce any new appointments and/or dismissals from the committee since the last meeting.

### ▪ ***Agenda Items***

Item discussion will begin with an introduction of the topic by the Chair.

The topic presenter (usually the one who requested the item on the agenda) will then expound on the topic, and present any information, results, or further questions to the committee.

The Chair will then open the floor for discussion.

The Chair will close and conclude discussion on an item, as appropriate.

- ***Discussion Protocol***

After the Chair opens the floor for discussion, whoever would like to speak on the topic should address the Chair, and the Chair will recognize each speaker and give them the floor, in turn.

Each speaker should be allowed to speak fully without interruption, until they have either yielded the floor, or have been interrupted by the Chair in order to continue the meeting in a timely manner.

While they have the floor, a speaker may ask questions of other members and participants directly. Such questions should be concise and should be answered concisely. If a member or participant wishes to ask a general question of the committee, that question should be directed to the chair, who would then elicit responses from the committee.

In yielding the floor, a member may recommend the next speaker for the Chair to call on. The Chair may consider that recommendation.

- ***Voting***

Because the committee is not a decision-making body, it will not normally vote on items for action. The Chair, at his or her discretion, may call for an informal opinion poll of the committee, but such a poll shall be non-binding.

- ***Closing a Meeting***

To end a meeting, the Chair shall announce the next meeting date, time, and location, and shall call for any agenda items for that future date.

The Chair will then thank the members of the committee, the participants of the meeting, and the public at large, and state, "This concludes today's meeting."

#### **IV. Committee Member Information**

##### **A. Oath of Office**

The Secretary of State, for each committee member at the beginning of their first meeting, will administer the oath of office.

##### **B. Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act**

A summary of the open meeting law shall be attached.