

Ballot Design Advisory Committee Survey

Summarized Responses

This survey includes responses from county elections officials throughout California. The Secretary of State sent this survey to all 58 counties and received responses from 24 counties.

1. For the September 14, 2021, Gubernatorial Recall Election did you add or remove anything from the ballot instructions prescribed by the state and if so, the reason why? Please provide the instructions below or attach a copy of the ballot.

YES	NO
15	9

2. What ballot instructions would you change or add to provide further assistance to voters?
 - (3) Adding further instruction to voters – Yes/No instructions
 - (3) Simplify all elections instructions
 - (2) Remove pencil as an option for marketing ballot
 - (2) Simplifying EC 13204
 - (2) Suggested change to: “if you wrongly mark, tear, or deface ballot, contact your elections official to obtain another.”
 - (2) “To vote on any measure, mark the voting target next to the word “yes” or after the word “no”.”
 - (1) Remove: “Marking the ballot outside of the designated space to vote for a candidate...”
 - (1) Instructions on the use of sharpies
 - (1) You don’t have to vote on all contests
 - (1) Location of target square
 - (1) Marking ballot with pencil
3. Did you receive any comments/complaints/questions regarding the ballot instructions? If so, please send a summary of the comments or the comments themselves.
 - (13) Received no comments
 - (2) Using Sharpie markers on the ballots
 - (2) Instructions allowing pencil as the marking device
 - (5) Voters did not understand they could still vote for the candidate to replace the governor if he was recalled
 - (1) Vote on only one question or both
 - (1) The system does not allow to add a footer saying “contests continues on next column”

- (1) Difficulty finding the ovals for “yes” and “no”
 - (1) “What a qualified write-in is” not printed in the voter guide or VBM insert
4. Did you provide any additional ballot instructions about how to vote on the recall questions or how to vote generally either on the ballot or in any other document (e.g., the County Voter Information Guide)? If so, please provide those instructions below or attach a copy of the document on which the ballot instructions were printed.

YES	NO
14	10

5. What were the most common issues you encountered when designing the recall ballot?
- (7) No issues
 - (6) Size of candidates’ names/long names/fitting candidates into one page in all languages
 - Longer paper size causes issues with scanning
 - (1) Target positions
 - (1) Revisions in translations caused delays
 - (1) Making 46 candidates & write in fit in 2 columns
 - (1) Ballot software and printer had restrictions for example length of ballot, # of columns, contest must be contained to one side of a ballot card, contest can only have so many # of candidates. Ballot production system has limits on point size adjustment, text justification, headers and footers
 - (1) Write-in used for Gavin Newsom
 - (1) Plain language
 - (1) Putting ovals on the right side far away from “yes/no” caused voter confusion
 - (1) No statutory language for recall instructions
 - (1) Inability to make adjustments without violating EC 13200
6. What Elections Code provision(s) or regulation(s) caused the issue(s) and prevented you from resolving it?
- (15) N/A/None
 - (1) CCROV 21097 County elections officials are encouraged to use glossaries and translated election materials created by the SOS
 - (1) EC 13205
 - (1) EC 13204
 - (1) EC 13210
 - (1) Point size and capital letters on ballot instructions

- (1) EC 13203
- (1) EC 13207
- (1) Voting target being on the right
- (1) EC 13208
- (1) EC 13200

7. What changes do you recommend that would remedy any problems you encountered during the recall election or any other election?

- (1) EC 13200 should be repealed entirely; instructions should be clearer or simpler
- (1) Revising instruction to be simpler
- (1) Ballot names should be limited to a set # of characters
- (1) Hart (or any vendor) having its own limitation on ballot design
- (1) All codes that do not have substantive value e.g., no need to be in 16 fonts
- (1) More time in between calling the election and the election
- (1) Ballot font size
- (1) All caps
- (2) Plain language needs to be used
- (2) Flexibility for counties to use their own instructions
- (1) Make "Vote for one" bold
- (1) Do not specify column width
- (1) 13204(a)
- (1) Bilingual ballots are difficult to fit into one page
- (1) 13208
- (1) remove 13205
- (1) Instructions on contests being independent (one vote doesn't affect the other)
- (1) Requiring candidates to be on the same page