

The Role of the Ballot Design Advisory Committee

I. Purpose and Responsibilities of the Ballot Design Advisory Committee (BDAC)

Elections Code section 13218 (a) requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to establish a ballot design advisory committee to assist the SOS to promulgate regulations that prescribe ballot design and format.

The Elections Code specifies that the ballot design advisory committee shall consist of the SOS, or the secretary's designee, and members to be appointed by the SOS who are recognized ballot design experts and county elections officials or a designee of a county elections official. Each recognized ballot design expert shall have demonstrated experience with ballot design requirements and knowledge of presenting election materials to voters using plain language methods or another method that is easy for voters to access and understand.

The responsibilities of the committee include:

1. Providing expertise on ballot design and format issues.
2. Assist the SOS in promulgating regulations that prescribe ballot design and format.
3. Answering Secretary of State questions regarding ballot design and format issues.

II. Organization

- A. The committee consists of members appointed by the SOS, which shall consist of county elections officials, ballot design experts, and vendors.
The Elections Division received 25 applications and recommends appointing 23 members of the committee. Merced and Santa Clara counties submitted two applications; however, the division does not recommend having more than one staff member per county. The two additional applicants may be used as back up members in the future. A quorum, needed to hold any meeting, shall consist of at least twelve (12) members.
- B. Two members of the committee will act as co-chairs and will run the meetings of the committee. They will be responsible for ensuring the agenda for each meeting is developed with the coordination of SOS staff, and that the agenda is followed at each meeting.
 1. The two co-chairs will be elected at-large among the members.
- C. The SOS shall provide representative(s) who will attend all meetings and participate in member dialogue. The representative(s) will have no voting rights.

- D. The Secretary of State shall provide resources and administrative services to the committee in accordance with the following:
1. The SOS shall provide at least one staff member to act as liaison to the committee.
 2. The SOS shall provide for production and distribution of meeting notices and agendas.
 3. The SOS shall design and host an Internet website that will include postings of notices, agendas, and minutes, as well as general information about the BDAC.
 4. The SOS shall provide coordination of meetings, to include location and conference call setup, as well as distribution of meeting materials.
 5. When required, the SOS shall provide technical assistance, and record keeping.

III. Meetings

- A. The BDAC shall meet no more than monthly, according to a prepared calendar. A quorum of a majority of the members must be present for any committee business.
- B. Agendas and meeting notices will be prepared, finalized, posted, and sent out at least 10 days before a scheduled meeting.
- C. Due to the ongoing concerns related to COVID-19, and consistent with Executive Order N-29-20, there will be no public meeting locations. Meetings will be available to the public via teleconference and videoconference.

IV. Committee Member Information

Committee members and meetings are subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. BDAC members will be expected to attend monthly meetings via the teleconference information provided by the SOS. This is a volunteer committee. There is no stipend or reimbursement for participation in the BDAC.

Oath of Office

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

Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act

A summary of the open meeting law can be found here: [A Handy Guide to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act 2004 \(ca.gov\)](#).