



June 7th Presidential Primary Election Information

The following summary information has been compiled in response to concerns or issues raised following the Tuesday, June 7th Presidential Primary Election in Los Angeles County. The Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk continues to conduct the legally required post-election canvass of the election and to carefully review and address these issues.

Issue

There were multiple problems at polling places throughout Los Angeles County.

There was a surge of new voters, some of whom were unfamiliar with the party-specific primary rules. There was also an increase in party-affiliation changes which impacted the pre-prepared election supplies that were printed and distributed to poll workers ahead of the election. As a result poll workers had to navigate ten different ballot styles and three sets of voter rosters to determine voter eligibility and to issue the correct ballot.

Party rules regarding No Party Preference (NPP) or non-partisan voter participation in the Presidential Primary also contributed to voter concern and confusion. Many NPP voters who received non-partisan vote-by-mail ballots without the Presidential contest appeared at polls and requested crossover ballots to participate in the Democratic Primary.

Issue

Voting machines at the precincts failed throughout the County.

The Precinct Ballot Reader scanners at the center of this complaint do not count votes. They scan marked ballots for possible errors and give voters the opportunity to make corrections before their ballots are dropped into the secured box. At the beginning of the day, precincts were provided a code to start the devices. In isolated cases, poll workers were unfamiliar with this code and, thus, could not turn on these scanners. In no way, did this eliminate a person's vote from being counted. When these problems arose, the Registrar worked with poll workers to fix the issues.

Issue**Voters were listed in the roster with the wrong political party selection or not listed at all.**

As noted above, party changes and new registrations were processed leading up to the weekend before the election. Party changes may have been reflected in supplemental roster pages that were not at the location or were missed by poll workers. The Registrar will review provisional ballots when this was indicated and compare to original voter registration records to ensure the ballot is counted based on the most recent party affiliation on the voter's record.

Issue**Voters were listed as receiving a vote-by-mail ballot that they did not receive or request.**

Voters who were issued a vote-by-mail ballot prior to the election may vote at the polls. But to receive a regular ballot, they must surrender their unmarked ballot to ensure only one per voter is cast. The Registrar has seen consistent increases in provisional ballots cast by vote-by-mail voters who do not surrender their unmarked ballot or who indicate they did not receive one. That trend is consistent across the state.

Issue**There was a ballot shortage at some polling locations.**

There were isolated instances of precincts where emergency ballots had to be used when original voting supplies and ballots were unavailable because of a poll worker absence. Isolated situations also occurred in high volume precincts where ballot inventory was depleted for provisional ballots. The Registrar made concerted efforts to deliver additional ballot to these locations and to minimize the use of emergency ballots. Voters were not turned away from voting due to ballot inventory shortages.

Issue**There are too many ballots left to be counted.**

Following Election Day, an estimated 616,056 ballots were unprocessed (Provisional and vote-by-mail) in Los Angeles County. It is not unusual for one-third of ballots cast in a statewide election to be counted after Election Day. The estimate is consistent with past elections. Additionally, California law now allows vote-by-mail ballots postmarked on or before Election Day to be received up to 3 days after the election. These ballots require detailed accounting and processing prior to tabulation to ensure every valid vote is counted.

Issue Provisional ballots are not counted.

Past election records show that an average of 85-90% of provisional ballots in L.A. County are validated and counted during the post-election canvass. Widespread information about restrictive rules for provisional ballots in other states has led to unfounded concerns in California. The number of provisional ballots in this election was high, but not exceedingly above other high profile elections:

February 2008 Presidential Primary	176,479
November 2008 Presidential General	271,074 (comparable surge in registration)
June 2012 Presidential Primary	49,588 (low turnout, low registration activity)
November 2012 Presidential General	371,638 (comparable surge in registration; first with online registration)
Current estimate for this election	251,894

Issue Vote counting has been slower than usual.

Election night ballot-processing was slower than in past elections. This was, in part, due to a high number of ballots with write-in votes and the implementation of new ballot accountability procedures in the Registrar's central count operations. More than 1.4 million ballots were counted on Election Night. Post election updates are proceeding on schedule as published.

Issue LA County called the election before all votes were counted.

The Registrar does not "call" the outcome of any election or contest. The County is responsible for counting and certifying the official vote totals.