M E M O R A N D U M
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER-ELECTIONS
ELECTIONS DIVISION
COUNTY OF PLACER
530-886-5669

TO:	**Ryan Macias** **Office of the Secretary of State**
FROM:	**Lisa Thomas/Elections Manager**
DATE:	**December 24, 2007**
SUBJECT:	**Election Observer Panel Plan**

Attached please find the Election Observer Panel Plan as requested.

Please let us know if you need anything further.

Happy Holidays!

Election Observer Panel Plan

I. County and System Information

1. Placer
2. Ryan Ronco, Assistant Recorder-Registrar
3. (530) 886-5660
4. Premier OS (In-precinct AccuVotes and Accuvotes with AccuFeeders hooked up to a central count tabulator) and Premier AccuVote TSX Unit (one per precinct)
5. December 24, 2007

II. Purpose

The purpose of an Election Observer Panel is to:

1. Provide an avenue for public observation of and input into the election process.
2. Assist in ensuring the integrity of the election process.
3. Encourage participation and build voter confidence in the election process.

III. Invite

Between E-60 and E-30, prepared letters of invitation to the following (complete list and sample letter attached):

1. County Grand Jury
2. Political Party Central Committee Members
3. Advocacy Groups
4. Media
5. League of Women voters

Other groups or individuals expressing an interest in observing Election Day activities may also be included in the observer panel.

IV. RSVP by groups – presentation and tour

After the groups have provided the name of interested panelists, we prepare our RSVP list and make necessary name badges for them to tour our facility. Panelists are invited to visit our polling places as well. The Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters or the Assistant Recorder-Registrar conducts the presentation and tour.

V. Appointment Letters – panelists visiting polling places (for introduction to precinct workers)

If a member of the group is interested in visiting a polling place arrangements are made by notifying our precinct workers. A letter of introduction (see sample attached) is also prepared for the panelist to use when visiting polling places on Election Day. Materials will be prepared for each panelist that will include a listing of all polling places within the county for that specific election as well as the central counting site location and hours of operation.

General Rules for Observers

Observers may:

- Observe the proceedings at the polls, including the opening and closing procedures.
- Obtain information from the precinct index that is posted near the entrance.
- Make notes and watch all procedures.
- View all activities at the central counting site on Election Day.
- View the canvass of the vote activities following the election.
- View absentee and provisional ballot processing.
- Ask questions of staff or voters at the polls.
- Ask questions of supervisors at the central counting site.

Observers are responsible for:

- Checking in at each site, whether polling place or central counting site.
- Wearing an identification badge.
- Maintaining a professional manner while observing the election processes.
- Ensuring they do not interfere with the elections process.

Observers may not:

- Interfere in any way with the conduct of the election.
- Touch any voting materials or equipment or sit at the official worktables.
- Converse with voters (within 100 feet of the entrance to a polling place) regarding the casting of a vote, or speak to a voter regarding his or her qualifications to vote.
- Display any election material or wear campaign badges, buttons or apparel.
- Wear the uniform of a peace officer, a private guard, or security personnel.
- Use cellular phones, pagers, or two-way radios inside the polling place and/or within 100 feet of the entrance to the polling place.
- Talk to central counting site workers while they are processing ballots.
- Use the telephones, computers or other polling place facilities at polling places or the central counting site.
- Touch election personnel.
- Eat or drink in the polls or the central counting site.
- Assist in operations at any polling place.

SAMPLE LETTER OF INVITATION

Dear Election Observer: December 24, 2007

As I have done every Election since becoming the Placer County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters, I would like to invite all interested voters to observe Election Day proceedings for the February 5, 2008 Presidential Primary Election.

The Elections Division welcomes interested voters to our office on or before Election Day to observe my staff process voted vote by mail ballots and perform other election activities. However, it is suggested that you call ahead to make sure election activities are being performed when you wish to stop by.

It is the goal of the Placer County Elections Division to have our election as transparent as possible. We invite you to observe any election processes, which may include a visit to one or more polling places, and then a visit to the ballot counting center to observe tabulation of the ballots on Election Night.

On Election Night, observer panel activities will begin at 7:30 PM Election Night at the Elections Division located at 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn, in the Dewitt Center. I will give a 30-minute presentation on the process used to verify and count voted vote by mail ballots. The presentation will give you an opportunity to ask questions and showcase the procedures we follow in accordance with state law. Attendance and participation are not mandatory and you are welcome to attend anytime during the evening. I believe those who have participated in the past have come away with a greater understanding and knowledge of the election process.

At 8:00 PM, we will release the results of the vote by mail ballots processed earlier that afternoon. The polling place results will begin arriving sometime after 8:30 PM. This will be followed by periodic updates throughout the evening. Election Night activities could end as early as 10:30 PM or as late as 12:00 AM. The end of the day is unpredictable, and you are welcome to leave at any time during the evening.

My office will begin mailing vote by mail ballots on January 7, 2008 and will start processing voted ballots 7 business days before Election Day.

If you are interested in observing on or before Election Day activities, please contact Karrie Wheeler at (530) 886-5696. If you are not able to make it to my office on Election Day, be sure to visit our website at www.placer.ca.gov/elections for election results.

I look forward to seeing you. Please contact me at (530) 886-5690 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jim McCauley
County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters

SAMPLE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Date

TO: Precinct Inspectors

FROM: Jim McCauley, Placer County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters

SUBJECT: ELECTION OBSERVER PANEL

This letter introduces *XXX,* whom I have appointed to the Election Observer Panel for the Presidential Primary Election. Members of the Election Observer Panel are invited to observe activities related to the administration of an election, including visiting polling places.

No person, including a member of the Election Observer Panel, may interfere with the operation of polling places. *XXX* and other members of the Election Observer Panel may ask you to explain certain operations and procedures. Please extend every courtesy to *XXX*.

If you have any questions, please call me at (530) 886-5650.

Thank you for your cooperation and your service to our county's voters.