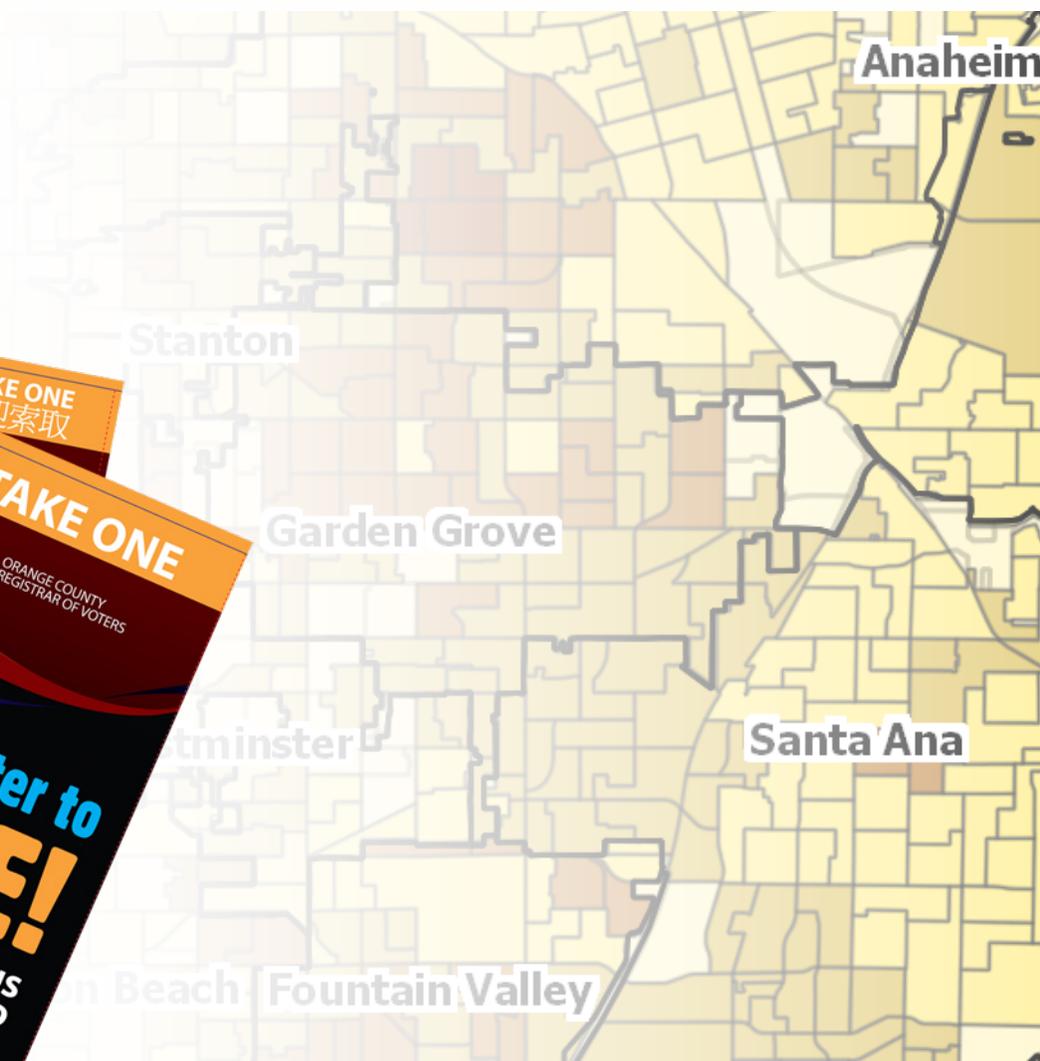




# Orange County Registrar of Voters

## 2012 Voting Rights Act Compliance and Bilingual Outreach Update







## Introduction from Registrar of Voters Neal Kelley

We are proud to present this updated, detailed report on our Community Outreach Program, which includes data from the 2010 elections and 2010 Census, thoroughly documenting our compliance with the Federal Voting Rights Act (Section 203).

The Orange County Registrar of Voters Department continues to take a proactive approach to election management. We have created an ambitious outreach plan for the 2012 Presidential Election cycle designed to educate and engage the entire Orange County community. As always, our efforts will include activities that provide language assistance to voters and eligible citizens with little or no English proficiency.

We believe our assertive approach to community outreach is essential to compliance with the minority language assistance requirements under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act.

The Department has recently been placing an emphasis on developing our community network and searching for events in areas of the County with growing minority populations including the southern half of Orange County.

In preparation for the 2012 Presidential elections, our office designed, programmed and implemented a new website, which includes 20 key components not offered in other election offices in the United States. All election stakeholders, from candidates to voters and volunteers, are offered something new. Some examples include: Online candidate filing; the Election Studio (which provides information in a new, interactive multimedia format); Data Central - a real-time dashboard that contains voter statistics, petition information, results archives, mapping functions and more; Single page voter portal, which allows voters to view all of their voter specific information on one screen - such as polling places, voter registration information and elected officials. It also provides the ability to request a ballot, opt out of receiving a printed sample ballot and more.

This new website has been translated by our permanent Community Program Specialists into all four languages mandated in Orange County under the Voting Rights Act.

We remain committed to our bilingual poll worker coverage standard which, we believe, is one of the strictest criteria in the country for satisfying the Voting Rights Act requirements.

We are passionate about our mission to provide the highest quality election services to the citizens of Orange County and are committed to a policy of continuous improvement.

Neal Kelley

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Neal Kelley".

Registrar of Voters



## Executive Summary

Section 203, the minority language provisions of the Federal Voting Rights Act (Section 203, hereinafter) was enacted in 1975 and reauthorized in 1982, 1992 and 2006. Under this section, all covered jurisdictions are required to provide language assistance in “any registration or voting notices, forms, instructions, assistance, or other materials or information relating to the electoral process, including ballots.” Orange County has been a covered jurisdiction required to provide language assistance to Spanish heritage voters since 1976. We began by providing voter registration cards printed in English/Spanish. We also made available at the polling places Spanish election materials such as ballot facsimiles and voter instructions on how to vote or use voting equipment.

When Section 203 was amended and extended in 1982, however, the definition of a covered area was changed and, as a result of this change, Orange County was no longer subject to the provisions of Section 203. Orange County would again be subject to covering Spanish coupled with Vietnamese after provisions of Section 203 were extended. This coverage was based on 1990 Census data and provided to the County by the Director of the Census in 1992.

Naturally, as the Latino and Vietnamese voter populations in Orange County increased in the mid-1990’s, so did the need for voter information, education and outreach. In 1998 a Community Outreach Unit was created to meet these multiple challenges. Two permanent community program specialists, experienced in public speaking, community affairs and protocols for dealing with sensitive community issues were hired. Both staff members were fluent in Spanish and Vietnamese respectively. We believe these may have been the first two Community Program Specialists in the State of California.

When the Director of the Census released the results of the 2000 Census (in 2002) Chinese and Korean were added to the list of covered minority language groups in Orange County. Under this new requirement, the California Secretary of State of California created a list of precincts for Orange County that are required to be assigned bilingual poll officers in the four covered languages. In 2003 our office added two full-time community program specialists - one Chinese and one Korean - to our Community Outreach Unit to provide full-scale language assistance to the mandated language minority communities in Orange County. An additional Vietnamese Program Specialist was added in 2006 to meet the growing demand for Vietnamese language assistance and vote-by-mail requests. Based on the 2010 Census, the Census Bureau determined that no additional language communities met the threshold for assisted languages in Orange County. The four languages, already covered in Orange County, continue to be required. (Federal Register Vol. 76, No.198, October 13, 2011 a notice on “the Voting Right Act Amendment 2006, Determinations Under Section 203”).

The Orange County Registrar of Voters’ initial offering of full-scale language assistance, including providing translated election materials and bilingual poll workers in all four covered languages, occurred with the 2003 Statewide Special Election. The Registrar of Voters used the bilingual precincts provided from the Secretary of State’s Office and proactively created criterion for determining additional bilingual precincts. The introduction of a new electronic voting system, four full-time Community Program Specialists, and additional focus from management, beginning in 2004, provided the opportunity to reach the covered communities that had not previously been covered by the Department.

We have adopted various internal improvements and quality control measures in the translation and distribution of election related materials by introducing a rigorous internal proofing procedure to ensure effectiveness and have set a standard to achieve one-hundred percent accuracy. We have also developed an internal system of managing timelines for the translations and proofing so that all language materials are reached by the language minority voters in a efficient and timely manner.

# Executive Summary



Efforts have been made to increase our ability for outreach and voter education including those specifically needed for the language communities. We have launched several innovative outreach programs including a partnership with all city clerks in Orange County, the MyBallot high school student volunteer program, and corporate sponsorships for polling place staffing. Our programs often include, and can be specifically aimed at, educating registered voters about the federal requirements for language assistance and the importance of exercising one's right to vote.

The Orange County Registrar of Voters is committed to taking a proactive approach to complying with the language requirements of the Voting Rights Act for every election held in the County. We pride ourselves in maintaining a comprehensive language assistance program in all covered languages. We understand that a successful community outreach program for the language community requires all of the following components:

**1) The existence of dedicated full time bilingual community program staff:** Our bilingual community program specialists coordinate all the services in voter outreach, election material translation and volunteer recruitment for the language communities. With their community outreach experience and cultural knowledge, they serve as community liaisons for the Registrar of Voters to increase participation among voters who face cultural and language barriers.

**2) Active and creative community outreach:** From media campaigns to targeted events for specific audiences, we have a variety of programs to expand our voter outreach through local channels of communication. These efforts are important in order to raise awareness on voting issues and build ongoing relations with the community.

**3) Quality control of translation of election materials:** Translating complex election materials is a time consuming and complicated task that requires one's utmost concentration. The process we have instituted ensures translated election materials are accurate, appropriate and accessible.

**4) Proactive recruitment of bilingual poll workers:** The challenge of recruiting qualified bilingual poll workers requires us to take a proactive approach in recruitment. We have developed a wide range of recruitment methods and activities to continuously expand our volunteer database.

**5) User-friendly and interactive website:** Demand continues to increase for election services and information to be provided electronically. In response, we have launched a completely revamped website increasing the amount of services and information available to voters. Our website will continue to be fully translated into the four assisted languages. A feature of our new website is page translations, which keep the user on the original page (as opposed to redirecting to the home page). Orange County has been at the forefront of the elections industry with the use of technology and we believe our new website, created entirely in-house, will be the standard for election departments across the country.

In our efforts to comply with the requirements for language assistance as mandated under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act, we have been able to provide a variety of bilingual election services to voters who need language assistance. We will continue to respond to the needs of voters and work with language communities to increase voter participation in the democratic process of voting.



# Compliance with Federal Mandate





## The Federal Mandate for Minority Language Assistance and Orange County's Compliance

### Bilingual Election Requirements under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act

Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act was enacted in 1975 and subsequently reauthorized in 1982, 1992 and 2006. Section 203 was added by Congress to ensure that limited-English proficient (LEP) members of covered communities could participate in the electoral process without fear of discrimination.

Section 203 applies statewide to five states (Alaska for Alaska Natives and Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas for Spanish Heritage) and portions of 26 other states.

The bilingual election requirements of Section 203 have been codified into United States Code Title 42 (The Public Health and Welfare), Chapter 20 (Elective Franchise), and Subchapter I-A (Enforcement of Voting Rights), Section 1973aa-1a (Bilingual election requirements) as below:

#### **Bilingual voting materials requirement**

Before August 6, 2032, no covered State or political subdivision shall provide voting materials only in the English language.

#### **Covered States and political subdivisions**

A State or political subdivision is a covered State or political subdivision for the purposes of this subsection if the Director of the Census determines, based on the 2010 American Community Survey census data and subsequent American Community Survey data in 5-year increments, or comparable census data, that—

*(i) more than 5 percent of the citizens of voting age of such State or political subdivision are members of a single language minority and are limited-English proficient; more than 10,000 of the citizens of voting age of such political subdivision are members of a single language minority and are limited-English proficient; or in the case of a political subdivision that contains all or any part of an Indian reservation, more than 5 percent of the American Indian or Alaska Native citizens of voting age within the Indian reservation are members of a single language minority and are limited-English proficient; and the illiteracy rate of the citizens in the language minority as a group is higher than the national illiteracy rate.*



## Voting Rights Act Section 203 and the State of California

**First Targeted Counties:**  
**Kings County**  
**Merced County**  
**Yuba County**

Before Section 203 was enacted in 1975, three jurisdictions in the State of California were covered under Section 4(f)(4) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to provide language assistance (see list on left).

With the enactment of Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act in 1975, more counties in the State of California needed to provide language assistance than under section 4 (f) (4). See the table below for a list of counties covered by the Voting Rights Act Section 203 (Table 1).

## Census 2000 and Orange County's Language Assistance Requirements

Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act provides that "determination of the Director of the Census under this section shall be effective upon publication in the Federal Register and shall not be subject to review in any court." Based on the 2010 Census data, the Census Bureau established the list of covered areas for providing bilingual assistance. The list of language minority groups to be covered by the County of Orange remained the same – Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean.

Counties Covered by Section 203	
County	Language Minority Group
Alameda County	Asian (Chinese); Asian (Filipino); Asian (Vietnamese); Hispanic
Colusa County	Hispanic
Contra Costa County	Hispanic
Fresno County	Hispanic
Glen County	Hispanic
Imperial County	Hispanic
Kern County	Hispanic
Kings County	Hispanic
Los Angeles County	Asian (Asian Indian); Asian (Chinese); Asian (Filipino); Asian (Japanese); Asian (Korean); Asian (Vietnamese); Asian (Other Asian – not specified); Hispanic
Madera County	Hispanic
Merced County	Hispanic
Monterey County	Hispanic
Orange County	Asian (Vietnamese); Asian (Korean); Asian (Chinese); Hispanic
Riverside County	Hispanic
Sacramento County	Asian (Chinese); Hispanic
San Benito County	Hispanic
San Bernardino County	Hispanic
San Diego County	Asian (Chinese); Asian (Filipino); Asian (Vietnamese); Hispanic
San Francisco County	Asian (Chinese); Hispanic

Table 1: Counties Covered by Voting Rights Act (1975)



Counties Covered by Section 203	
County	Language Minority Group
San Joaquin County	Hispanic
San Mateo County	Asian (Chinese); Hispanic
Santa Barbara County	Hispanic
Santa Clara County	Asian (Chinese); Asian (Filipino); Asian (Vietnamese); Hispanic
Stanislaus County	Hispanic
Tulare County	Hispanic
Ventura County	Hispanic

Table 1: Counties Covered by Voting Rights Act (1975)

## Orange County’s Compliance with the Minority Language Assistance Requirements

The implementation of Section 203 compliance measures is covered within the Code of Federal Regulation, 28 C.F.R Part 55. Below is a summary of major facets incorporated in a Section 203 compliant program and Orange County’s compliance status (Table 2):

OC’s Compliance to Section 203	
28 C.F.R. Part 55	Orange County’s Compliance
55.2 – Standards for measuring compliance	All election-related materials are provided in 4 minority languages, as well as oral assistance
55.9 – Coverage of political units	Uniform language requirements are applied to all elections administered by our office
55.15 – Affected Activities	Sample ballots and Vote-by-Mail ballots are provided, close cooperation with community groups
55.18 – Provision of minority language materials	Sample and Vote-by-Mail ballots, voter instructions, notice of elections, registration forms, and request forms are all translated; full-time language staff members
55.19 – Written materials	All translated material proofed for accuracy in all 4 minority languages
55.20 – Oral assistance and publicity	5 full-time language staff members, bilingual election aids in public phone bank, and trained bilingual poll workers provide assistance to voters

Table 2: Orange County’s Compliance to Section 203 - Summary



## Orange County's Compliance with Section 203 - Detailed

### 55.2 Standards for measuring compliance

#### Implementation

- 1) Materials and assistance should be provided in a way designed to allow members of applicable language minority groups to be effectively informed of and participate in voting-connected activities; and
- 2) An affected jurisdiction should take all responsible steps to achieve that goal.

#### Orange County's Compliance

We provide all election-related materials in four minority languages as federally mandated. These materials are either translated or proofread (translations done through a certified court translator) by our five full-time staff of community program specialists.

Additionally, our full-time bilingual staff and multiple election aides provide oral assistance to our language minority communities.

### 55.9 Coverage of political units within a county

#### Implementation

Where a political subdivision (e.g., a county) is determined to be subject to section 4(f)(4) or section 203(c), all political units that hold elections within that political subdivision (e.g., cities, school districts) are subject to the same requirements as the political subdivision.

#### Orange County's Compliance

We conduct all elections held within the County and the same language requirements are applied in all elections that are administered by our office. In addition to the federal, state and county elections, there are currently 34 cities, 26 special districts and 32 school districts as well as unincorporated areas we conduct elections for. Orange County established a new partnership with its City Clerks to ensure that together we accomplish this goal. The partnership has become a model for other jurisdictions.

### 55.15 Affected activities.

#### Implementation

Language minority requirements apply with regard to the provision of "any registration or voting notices, forms, instructions, assistance, or other materials or information relating to the electoral process, including ballots." The basic purpose of these requirements is to allow members of applicable language minority groups to be effectively informed of and participate effectively in voting-connected activities. Accordingly, the quoted language should be broadly construed to apply to all stages of the electoral process, from voter registration through activities related to conducting elections, including, for example the issuance, at any time during the year, of notifications, announcements, or other informational materials concerning the opportunity to register, the deadline for voter registration, the time, places and subject matters of elections, and the absentee voting process.



## Orange County's Compliance

Since the 2003 Statewide Special Election, we have provided full-scale language assistance for voters in four languages required by the VRA. All election related materials including official ballots are translated into Chinese, Spanish, Korean and Vietnamese.

For example sample ballots and vote-by-mail ballots are mailed according to the language preference voters indicate on their affidavit of registration or written request for change of language received. Additional translated materials are explained in subsequent sections.

### *55.16 Standards and proof of compliance.*

#### Implementation

Compliance with the requirements of section 4 (f)(4) and section 203(c) is best measured by results. A jurisdiction is more likely to achieve compliance with these requirements if it has worked with the cooperation of organizations representing members of the applicable language minority group. In planning its compliance with section 4(f)(4) or section 203(c), a jurisdiction may, where alternative methods of compliance are available, use less costly methods if they are equivalent to more costly methods in their effectiveness.

## Orange County's Compliance

We maintain very close and cooperative relationships with community organizations, collaborate with them and incorporate their recommendations in our implementation of minority language assistance when appropriate (please see *Proactive Approach to Language Assistance*, page 16).

### *55.18 Provision of minority language materials and assistance.*

#### Implementation

(a) Materials provided by mail. If materials provided by mail (or by some comparable form of distribution) generally to residents or registered voters are not all provided in the applicable minority language, the Attorney General will consider whether an effective targeting system has been developed. For example, a separate mailing of materials in the minority language to persons who are likely to need them or to residents of neighborhoods in which such a need is likely to exist, supplemented by a notice of the availability of minority language materials in the general mailing (in English and in the applicable minority language) and by other publicity regarding the availability of such materials may be sufficient.

(b) Public notices. The Attorney General will consider whether public notices and announcements of electoral activities are handled in a manner that provides members of the applicable language minority group an effective opportunity to be informed about electoral activities.

(c) Registration. The Attorney General will consider whether the registration system is conducted in such a way that members of the applicable language minority group have an effective opportunity to register. One method of accomplishing this is to provide, in the applicable minority language, all notices, forms and other materials provided to potential registrants and to have only bilingual persons as registrars. Effective results may also be obtained, for example, through the use of deputy registrars who are members of the applicable language minority group and the use of decentralized places of registration, with minority language materials available at places where persons who need them are most likely to come to register.



(d) Polling place activities. The Attorney General will consider whether polling place activities are conducted in such a way that members of the applicable language minority group have an effective opportunity to vote. One method of accomplishing this is to provide all notices, instructions, ballots, and other pertinent materials and oral assistance in the applicable minority language. If very few of the registered voters scheduled to vote at a particular polling place need minority language materials or assistance, the Attorney General will consider whether an alternative system enabling those few to cast effective ballots is available.

(e) Publicity. The Attorney General will consider whether a covered jurisdiction has taken appropriate steps to publicize the availability of materials and assistance in the minority language. Such steps may include the display of appropriate notices, in the minority language, at voter registration offices, polling places, etc., the making of announcements over minority language radio or television stations, the publication of notices in minority language newspapers, and direct contact with language minority group organizations.

## **Orange County's Compliance**

As stated before, sample ballots and vote-by-mail ballots are mailed according to the language preference voters' indicate on their affidavit of registration or written request for change of language received.

Voter instructions are translated into the four languages covered in Orange County and can be found in the sample ballot (also provided on website), posted in the polling places, in the voting booth (electronic and paper) and are included with the vote-by-mail ballots.

All notices, instructions, ballots, and other pertinent materials are provided in four minority languages at every polling place. Notice of elections are translated and published in minority language newspapers. They are also uploaded on our website. Approximately 30% of all Orange County poll workers are bilingual and provide oral assistance at polling places where the assignment of bilingual poll worker(s) is required. On Election Day, full-time language staff members are available to assist language minority voters with finding their polling places and answering their election related questions.

Affidavits of registration, requests for permanent vote-by-mail status, and applications for one-time vote-by-mail ballots are all translated into our four minority languages and these forms are placed in public places, including our website, where voters can have easy access. We are assisted in voter registration and education by community groups and political parties that have been active in our county.

Our efforts for publicizing the availability of materials and assistance in the minority languages is specific to each language community: Spanish speaking TV stations are the most effective means in the Latino community; in the Vietnamese community, both radio stations and Vietnamese newspapers are effective for communicating to the voters; and in the Chinese and Korean communities, Orange County sections of major ethnic newspapers are the most effective means for reaching voters.

The five full-time Community Program Specialists serve as liaisons between our office and each language group maintaining direct contact with community group organizations.

## **55.19 Written materials.**

### **Implementation**

(a) Types of materials. It is the obligation of the jurisdiction to decide what materials must be provided in a minority language. A jurisdiction required to provide minority language materials is only required to publish in the language of the



applicable language minority group materials distributed to or provided for the use of the electorate generally. Such materials include, for example, ballots, sample ballots, informational materials, and petitions.

(b) Accuracy, completeness. It is essential that material provided in the language of a language minority group be clear, complete and accurate. In examining whether a jurisdiction has achieved compliance with this requirement, the Attorney General will consider whether the jurisdiction has consulted with members of the applicable language minority group with respect to the translation of materials.

(c) Ballots. The Attorney General will consider whether a jurisdiction provides the English and minority language versions on the same document. Lack of such bilingual preparation of ballots may give rise to the possibility, or to the appearance, that the secrecy of the ballot will be lost if a separate minority language ballot or voting machine is used.

(d) Voting machines. Where voting machines that cannot mechanically accommodate a ballot in English and in the applicable minority language are used, the Attorney General will consider whether the jurisdiction provides sample ballots for use in the polling booths. Where such sample ballots are used the Attorney General will consider whether they contain a complete and accurate translation of the English ballots, and whether they contain or are accompanied by instructions in the minority language explaining the operation of the voting machine. The Attorney General will also consider whether the sample ballots are displayed so that they are clearly visible and at the same level as the machine ballot on the inside of the polling booth, whether the sample ballots are identical in layout to the machine ballots, and whether their size and typeface are the same as that appearing on the machine ballots. Where space limitations preclude affixing the translated sample ballots to the inside of polling booths, the Attorney General will consider whether language minority group voters are allowed to take the sample ballots into the voting booths.

## **Orange County's Compliance**

We provide translated election materials in our four covered languages. Essential information that can be directly used by a voter to participate in the electoral process has been translated and made available to voters.

Over the years, we have established a stringent system for producing quality and accurate translations. In every step of the production process, we make efforts to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and cultural sensitivity of translated materials. A minimum of six people review each document prior to its dissemination. A document tracking system was developed internally to ensure each item is translated.

Paper ballots are produced in English and the four minority languages then sent to Vote-by-Mail voters and placed at all polling places to be given to the voters upon their request. Instructions are translated and provided in the voting booths.

Our eSlate voting system is currently the only electronic voting machine certified for use in the State of California and it can accommodate a ballot in English and all four minority languages. All the voting machines are accompanied by instructions in English and are translated in our four covered languages explaining the operation of the voting machine. Our polling places are supplied with sample ballots in all five languages and are placed on a table for the voters' reference. All voters including language minority group voters are allowed and encouraged to take their sample ballots into the voting booths.

### *55.20 Oral assistance and publicity.*

## **Implementation**

(a) General. Announcements, publicity, and assistance should be given in oral form to the extent needed to enable



members of the applicable language minority group to participate effectively in the electoral process.

(b) Assistance. The Attorney General will consider whether a jurisdiction has given sufficient attention to the needs of language minority group members who cannot effectively read either English or the applicable minority language and to the needs of members of language minority groups whose languages are unwritten.

(c) Helpers. With respect to the conduct of elections, the jurisdiction will need to determine the number of helpers (i.e., persons to provide oral assistance (in the minority language) that must be provided. In evaluating the provision of assistance, the Attorney General will consider such facts as the number of a precinct's registered voters who are members of the applicable language minority group, the number of such persons who are not proficient in English, and the ability of a voter to be assisted by a person of his or her own choice. The basic standard is one of effectiveness.

## **Orange County's Compliance**

To provide oral assistance to the language minority groups in the electoral process, we have full-time staff who are fluent in one of the languages and in most cases are native speakers of the languages. During election time, we also hire bilingual election aids to staff our public phone bank to help minority language voters.

The four minority languages we are required to provide assistance – Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese - are all written forms.

To provide oral assistance to the minority language voter in four covered languages at polling places, we recruit, train and assign bilingual poll workers to polling places where the language assistance is required. The determination of bilingual precincts and the number of bilingual poll workers to be assigned are established by criteria developed internally. We begin with one poll worker for 25 registered voters that either meet the requirement by birth place or translated election materials requests. (see pages 16-17 for full explanation)



# Proactive Approach to Language Assistance





## Proactive Approach to Language Assistance in Orange County

### Creation of Community Outreach Unit

#### Background

Orange County first became a covered jurisdiction under Section 203 in 1976 when the Department was required to

begin providing language assistance to Spanish heritage voters. Once covered, the Department provided affidavits of voter registration in English and Spanish and made Spanish election materials such as ballot facsimiles and voter instructions on how to vote available at polling places.

When Section 203 was amended and extended in 1982, however, the definition of a covered area was changed and, as a result of this change, Orange County was no longer subject to Section 203. Orange County would again be listed as a covered jurisdiction in 1992 when Section 203 was again amended and extended. At that time, based on 1990 Census data, the Director of the Census listed Spanish and Vietnamese as covered minority languages in Orange County.

In the mid 1990's Orange County saw an increase in the Latino and Vietnamese voter population that necessitated increased voter education and language assistance in the electoral process. To meet the growing demand we created a Community Outreach Unit in 1998 that would include two permanent community program specialists experienced in public speaking, community affairs as well as being familiar with the proper protocols for dealing with sensitive community issues. The Community Program Specialists are fluent in both (English/Spanish, English/Vietnamese) languages allowing for accurate and appropriate translations of election materials in the covered languages.

#### Official Launching of Language Assistance

With the creation of the Community Outreach Unit we increased our ability to provide language assistance in Spanish and Vietnamese by translating essential election materials in-house and assign bilingual poll workers with staff that could speak the covered language thereby meeting the federal mandates of Section 203. Working with our community groups we came up with the criteria in which a bilingual precinct was identified. The criteria in 1998 was one bilingual poll worker assigned when, in the voting precinct, there were 50 or more voters who were born in a country where the covered language was spoken. Again, this criteria was recommended by community groups and a consensus was come to after a series of joint meetings were held with the Registrar of Voters. Countywide the criteria showed a need for 190 bilingual Spanish poll workers and 100 bilingual Vietnamese poll workers in 1998.

The criteria for determining bilingual precincts were revised for the 2000 elections. A precinct would now be identified as bilingual when there were at least 25 registered voters who requested a language sample ballot. Additional precincts were added at the request of community groups. With the new criteria, the total number of precincts to be targeted with one bilingual officer for the 2000 elections was 204 for Spanish and 180 for Vietnamese.



## **Census 2000 and The Expansion of Our Outreach Unit**

In 2002 the Director of the Census delivered the results of the 2000 Census to Orange County listing four languages (Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese) as covered minority language groups under Section 203 (67 Fed. Reg. 144 July 26, 2002).

Also in 2002, the Secretary of State of California created a list of precincts required to have a bilingual poll worker assigned in the four mandated languages. The total number of precincts by language were: Spanish - 521; Vietnamese – 206; Chinese – 124; and Korean – 98. These bilingual precincts were required to have a minimum of 1 bilingual poll worker. The precincts were first required with the 2002 General Election. It was necessary at the time to have the Vietnamese community program specialist recruit Chinese and Korean bilingual poll workers with the assistance of temporary Chinese and Korean bilingual election aides.

Full time Community Program Specialists were hired in 2003 to accommodate our requirements with the Chinese and Korean communities. As with the Spanish and Vietnamese speaking representatives, these staff members are native speakers of the covered languages and represent the County in their respective communities.

Based on the 2010 census data, the Census Bureau determined that the list of language minority groups to be covered by the County of Orange as is required under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act was the same – Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean.

## **New Electronic Voting System and Voter Education**

Following the issues surrounding the 2000 Presidential Election both Federal and State law changed forbidding further use of any punch card or lever voting system. Orange County secured funds under the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA), enacted in part to provide states funding to replace punch card voting systems. The system purchased to replace our Datavote punch-card system was the Hart Intercivic eSlate electronic voting system. The initial purchase was for 9,000 voting booths.

In 2006 the State of California required that, all electronic voting systems used in the state be equipped with a voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT). Since this requirement was made after our original purchase we refurbished all of our 9,000 units with VVPATs. An additional 600 booths were added in 2008 to take our total number of electronic voting booths to 9,600.

With the purchase of the eSlate electronic voting system, our office launched a massive voter education and outreach program to introduce the system to the entire county. The program included a speakers' bureau composed of representatives from the vendor, volunteers from throughout the county and the community outreach staff. The speakers' bureau made presentations and demonstrations at various events and covered the varied communities and political organizations in the county. From July 11, 2003 when the speakers' bureau was first launched to the end of February 2004, a total of 105 presentations and demonstrations were made.

## **New Approach to Language Assistance and Outreach Activities**

The purchase of a new voting system provided us the opportunity, and necessity to meet our HAVA requirements, to be more proactive starting in 2003 as the first use of the electronic voting system approached. The expanded voter education program included increased penetration into the language minority communities.

All election and outreach related materials were translated into our four covered languages beginning in 2003 and starting

# Proactive Approach to Language Assistance



with the 2004 Primary Election, we began to produce official ballots (both electronic and vote-by-mail/paper) in all of our covered languages.

## **Above and Beyond**

**In early 2006, a proactive step was taken to increase bilingual recruitment criteria. Polling places with high bilingual needs could now have up to three bilingual poll workers, whereas previously polling places could only receive two. This resulted in a 20% increase in total bilingual poll workers countywide.**

Prior to the Primary Election of 2006, we proactively created a more stringent criteria for bilingual poll officer recruitment to ensure that the needs of our community are met. We now use a combination of criteria that, language depending, is based on either the place of birth or the language requests of registered voters in a precinct. We also include the list of bilingual precincts provided by the Secretary of State's Office.

Place of birth is applied to the determination of bilingual precincts for the Chinese and Korean communities and language requests are used for the Hispanic and Vietnamese communities. The different criteria are used to ensure the greatest number of bilingual poll workers for each community.

The formula for determining the bilingual precincts and the number of

bilingual poll officers for our four covered languages is as follows: from 25 to 99 registered voters, one (1) bilingual poll officer is required; from 100 to 299 registered voters, two (2) bilingual poll officers are required; and 300 or more registered voters requires three (3) bilingual poll officers.

We launched several innovative outreach and voter education programs to reach the language communities and the Orange County population as a whole including a partnership with all Orange County city clerks, the Myballot high school program as an extension of our student poll worker program and corporate sponsorships for polling place staffing. The city clerk town hall speaking program was specifically designed to educate the public about the Voting Rights Act requirements. In order to make ourselves more visible at events we purchased a custom-made trailer that has been wrapped with professional graphics and equipped with touch-screen monitors used as an interactive tool to educate voters. Launched in 2004, the trailer was a first-of-a-kind in the nation and has been particularly well accepted in the language communities.

## **Current Status of Language Assistance and Future Prospects**

As a result of our proactive approach to language assistance and innovative outreach programs, the total number of registered voters as well as language requests by registered voters has continued to increase in the language minority communities in the county. Subsequently, we have experienced an increase in the number of bilingual poll officers required under our criteria.

The Vietnamese community, in particular, showed a considerable increase in the total number of Vietnamese language election materials requested during the 2002 election cycle. The Vietnamese requests exceeded that of Spanish requests and, after the 2004 elections, the total number of registered voters who requested Vietnamese election materials reached over 30,000. In order to meet the growing demand for Vietnamese language assistance that was occurring, in part due to an increase in the number of Vietnamese American candidates, our office added one more Vietnamese program specialist in July 2006.

We have adopted various internal improvements and quality control measures in the translation and distribution of election related materials since we began translating in the four covered languages. In 2006 we introduced a rigorous internal proofing procedure that now includes two people reading for proper translation and formatting and five others that look at formatting, dollar amounts and more. This ensures that all the translations of election materials are error free. We also developed an internal system of managing timelines for the translations and proofing of essential election materials so



that all language materials are reached by the language minority voters in a efficient and timely manner.

Currently, we have 5 language staff members representing the four minority language communities – one (1) for the Hispanic community, two (2) for the Vietnamese community, one (1) for the Chinese community and one (1) for the Korean community.

## Translation and Distribution of Election Materials

### The Scope of Election Material Translation

To ensure accessibility of election information for limited English proficiency voters, the Orange County Registrar of Voters provides translated election materials in all four supported languages in addition to English. Essential information that can be directly used by a voter to participate in the electoral process has been translated and made available to voters.

### *Types of Translation Projects*

The types of election materials our office translates can be divided into the following categories:

#### **Voting Materials:**

Electronic ballot (text and audio), paper ballot (for polling places and vote-by-mail), sample ballot, and various forms such as vote-by-mail request form, second ballot request form, etc.

#### **Polling Place Information:**

Various signs that direct voters and inform them of procedures and their rights, including posters, bilingual poll worker badges and voter instructions.

#### **Election Publications:**

Official documents such as election notices and handbooks.

#### **Voter Outreach and Education Information:**

This includes both print materials such as brochures and flyers and electronic media such as our website and podcasts.

#### **Website Information:**

The Orange County Registrar of Voters provides help on registering and voting, election notices and results, “how to” handbooks, and volunteer opportunities via [ocvote.com](http://ocvote.com). All of the above information is translated into four languages and presented in identical format to offer web visitors an informative experience in any of the supported languages.



Translation Items, General Election 2010		
Document	Number of Pages Per Language	Total Number of Pages for All Languages
Candidate Statements and Measures	674	2,696
Ballot Labels	31	124
Sample Ballot Pages	14	56
Web Pages	98	392
Vote-By-Mail Applications	6	24
Vote-By-Mail Instructions	1	4
Trans File for Electronic Ballot	1	4
Mail Ballot Instructions	1	4
Election Notices	4	16
Total	830	3,320

Table 3: Translation Items in General Election 2010

## Translation Process

The successful translation of election materials for an election cycle requires a multiphase process: First, our office selects the most qualified translation service provider through a bidding process. Applicants are evaluated based on many factors including:

- The quality of their translation samples
- The ability to produce results during the specified time frame.
- Their staff must have the necessary training and experience to deliver a large volume of accurate and appropriate translations in a short period of time.
- The linguistic level of election materials requires our vendor to use highly qualified court-certified translators.

***Multi-phase Process:***  
***Vendor Selection***  
***Project Planning***  
***Document Preparation***  
***Document Translation***  
***Quality Assurance***  
***Production***

The need and scope of translations are identified as soon as the election preparation process begins. A timeline based on the election calendar is then constructed to guide the translation process. Once the English versions of election materials are approved, they are prepared for translation and sent to either the vendor or our bilingual staff. Translations involving graphics, desktop publishing software or web design also require us to work closely with the printing shop and our IT staff. From the completion of the first draft translation to the approval of final translation, all documents must go through a multiple-step quality assurance process described below.

## Proofing Process

With many challenges such as a fast-paced election cycle and occasional court changes in ballot content, it is important to have a quality control process to ensure the proper production of final translated election materials:

**Reviewing:** Upon receipt of a draft translation from the vendor, the bilingual program specialist reads through the



document and compares it against the English text to check for any errors in content, grammar and format. The draft is carefully reviewed to ensure not only that it is accurate but is also not inappropriate or offensive for the targeted audience. Our staff also makes sure regional variance is taken into consideration in the translation. For example, voters who speak Spanish or Chinese come from many different countries. Usage of terminology in the translation needs to be representative yet general enough for the diverse community.

**Editing:** After reviewing a translated document, the bilingual program staff makes corrections on a PDF file and sends it back to the vendor's translator for revision. A document often needs to undergo a second or third revision due to the translator's unfamiliarity with local culture and insufficient election knowledge. During the proofing process, we track different versions of the edits electronically with a software program developed specifically for translation purposes. The centralized tracking system has greatly streamlined our workflow and reduced the production time by allowing us to organize, share and retrieve documents conveniently.

**Double Proofing:** After a translated document has been edited to be free of errors, a second bilingual staff member proofreads it again before it is finalized for internal approval.

**Final Approval:** Once the translation is determined to be accurate and clear, a review committee composed of five managerial and supervisory staff performs a final check on the document. Much of what they look for is format-related; however, they also check to ensure special characters, words and dollar figures are accurate.

## The Distribution of Translated Election Materials

Every registered voter in Orange County receives an English sample ballot. Voters who request language assistance receive the version of their requested language a few days after their English sample ballot. Our efforts in streamlining the translation process have made language materials available very close to the mailing of English materials. Voters can obtain language materials directly by visiting our office, or they can make a request by phone to have the information sent to them. In addition, Orange County voters who need language assistance can access our translated election materials through many channels:

**Mail Delivery:** Bilingual sample ballots and vote-by-mail ballots are automatically sent to voters who have requested language assistance materials. English sample ballots advertise the availability of translated ballots in each language.

**Electronic Media:** Voters can view election information and download common forms on our web site. We have also provided election information through radio, TV, and podcasts in different languages.

**Polling Places:** In addition to bilingual signs and voter instructions, bilingual sample ballots are displayed at the polling place. Bilingual electronic and paper ballots are also available at every polling place in Orange County.

**Outreach Events:** Many translated materials are available at our outreach events throughout the county, including bilingual registration forms, vote-by-mail applications, voting guides and various types of program information.

**Print Media:** Election notices are published in major language newspapers. We have also had newspaper articles and columns written to provide voters with important election information.

**Community Centers:** Translated election materials are available at some city halls and libraries. We have also partnered with some community organizations to display our informational flyers at their facilities and events.



## Recruitment, Training and Assignment of Bilingual Election Personnel

### Introduction

In addition to translated election materials, the Orange County Registrar of Voters provides a strong base of bilingual support to limited-English voters. This is accomplished by meeting or exceeding federal and state bilingual poll worker requirements, recruiting bilingual personnel for the public phone bank and maintaining permanent bilingual staff dedicated to providing quality customer service to limited-English voters.

### Criteria for Recruitment and Assignment

The criteria for bilingual poll worker recruitment originates from a variety of sources. By following these criteria, each voting jurisdiction works to meet the language assistance needs of their voting community. The US Department of Justice uses census data to determine the percentage of limited-English proficiency voting age citizens (“VACLEP”) for each precinct, which is then broken down by language and used to establish baseline recruitment criteria. The California Secretary of State also uses census data to target specific precincts statewide for bilingual language assistance. In addition to these two governmental agencies, local community groups have provided data based on independent research to determine other precincts that should be targeted. This combination of federal, state and local criteria form the final precinct list used by the Registrar of Voters to provide language assistance to Orange County voters.

In 2005, the Department of Justice conducted a poll worker assignment analysis in Orange County. Baseline criteria used for Hispanic surnamed voters, based on 25.39 percent VACLEP population, started at 1 poll worker for 100-249 voters, 2 poll workers for 250-499 voters, and 3 poll workers for 500+ voters. Criteria used to analyze the Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean communities (respectively 64.34%, 37.25%, and 48.50% VACLEP) started at 1 poll worker for 35-79 voters, 2 poll workers for 80-160 voters, and 3 poll workers for 160+ voters (Table 4).

Orange County’s Targeting Formula	
Criteria	Number of Poll Workers
25-99	1
100-299	2
300+	3

Table 4: Orange County’s Targeting Formula

The Orange County Registrar of Voters is committed to meeting the needs of Orange County’s limited-English voters. After careful analysis of internal recruitment policies and practices, and with special attention to the guidelines set by the Department of Justice, Secretary of State and local community groups, the Registrar of Voters has determined recruitment criteria that best match the Orange County voting population. Based on voter language requests for Spanish and Vietnamese, and using voter place of birth for Chinese and Korean, recruitment criteria starts at 1 poll worker for 25-99 voters, 2 poll workers for 100-299 voters and 3 poll workers for 300+ voters.



## **Permanent Bilingual Staff**

The Orange County Registrar of Voters currently maintains a base of 5 permanent, full-time bilingual staff members – at least 1 for each of the four minority languages (Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese). As mentioned in the previous section, all election material is either translated or proofread by these staff members and held to the strictest standards of accuracy. Bilingual staff also manages the incoming phone calls and in-person visits of voters with language needs, and lead outreach efforts in the respective language communities.

## **Bilingual Support Staff**

In the months preceding an election, the number of staff working at the Registrar of Voters grows from 50 to nearly 200. Many of these supportive staff members are bilingual in one of the four minority languages in order to meet the diverse needs of Orange County's language communities. These supportive staff members are assigned as public phone bank operators, customer service representatives and bilingual poll worker recruiters. In particular, the bilingual recruiters work directly with permanent bilingual staff to ensure that all poll worker recruitment needs are met in each language community. This base of bilingual support personnel greatly improves the ability of the Registrar of Voters in serving the diverse voting community in Orange County.

## **Community Outreach Program**

### **Introduction**

Orange County is made up of one of the most diverse voting populations in the country and, under the provisions of Section 203 is required to provide language assistance to Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese speaking communities. To better serve the community and implement the requirements for language assistance, we created a Community Outreach Unit in 1998 with a full-time staff of community program specialists, representing each language community.

We develop annual and longer-term community outreach plans and offer programs to our citizens at community and neighborhood events across Orange County. Since the inception of the unit, our outreach programs have been enhanced and upgraded in voter registration and voter education while highlighting the importance and power of voting and volunteering. These efforts have been successful in increasing the number of volunteers in our database including bilinguals.

Our five community program specialists in the outreach unit are actively engaged in activities for each language community and are joined by two additional community program specialists covering the general public. Our outreach activities include making presentations about the voting process, conducting voter education sessions, Mobile Voting Unit (MVU) showcase, participation in community committees, and involvement in community conferences. With all of our outreach activities we use solid language-based materials presented in an effective, interactive way to foster an interest in voting and build voters' awareness of the current election and voting process. Many of these events are conducted in the covered minority communities.

### **Purpose of Community Outreach Program**

The purpose of the Community Outreach Program is three fold: 1) to bring voter education to the general public and language minority communities; 2) to provide voter registration; and 3) to help with poll worker recruitment. For this purpose, the Outreach Unit initiates activities to reach out to citizens through active interaction and continuous communication with community-based groups.



## Elements of Outreach Program

The elements of the outreach program include the following:

- Development of the basic information about voter registration, voting procedures, current elections, using the electronic voting system, and the vote-by-mail process.
- Voter education workshops, which are conducted using visual aids such as PowerPoint presentations, eSlate electronic voting system demonstrations and other outreach materials.

For instance, our office launched a massive voter education and outreach program targeting registered voters across the County to introduce our new electronic voting system when they were first purchased in 2003. During this campaign period, a total of 105 presentations and demonstrations were successfully performed, of which 15 were targeted at specific language-based communities and over 60 were held at events that included a mix of Asian and Spanish-speaking communities.

- Network-building with diverse language communities. Over the years, we have built a solid foundation of networking with various community organizations such as senior centers, Asian community committees, Spanish-speaking community committees, grade schools, high schools, local colleges and universities, health care organizations, and other community-based agencies.

## Outreach Program Methodology

In our efforts to be more effective to reach voters in the language minority community as well as the general public, we have developed various innovative and unique outreach program methodologies as follows:

### *Development and dissemination of outreach materials.*

The materials used for Outreach events include:

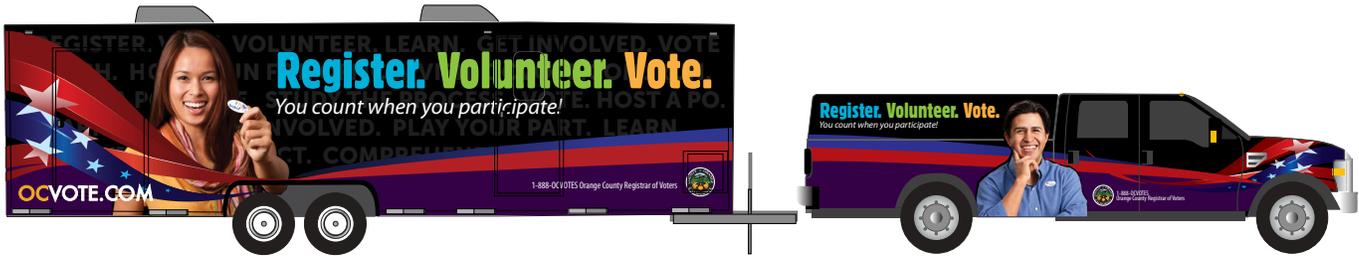
- Flyers about voting, Volunteer, Ballot's Life, and Student Program,
- Volunteer application card (used mainly for language-based communities because it incorporates information regarding bilingual poll worker program),
- Registration forms,
- Vote-by-mail application forms, and
- Comprehensive Outreach program brochures that are professionally designed and used as a marketing tool for the program.

These materials are all translated into four covered languages – Chinese, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese, and they generally include information specific to the voting process, registration process, vote-by-mail procedures, volunteer opportunities and the current election. To promote our mission and attract the attention of event attendants, we utilize small giveaway items such as pens, chip clips, coloring books for school-aged children, magnets and rulers that emphasize the voting and democratic process.

### *Utilization of Mobile Voting Unit (MVU)*

To enhance our recruitment efforts and conduct more effective and visible voter education, we purchased a custom-made mobile voting unit in 2003. The MVU is a mobile outreach vehicle that is fully ADA accessible and equipped with interactive voting displays on board, giving all citizens the opportunity to experience the democratic process including on-the-go voting.

# Proactive Approach to Language Assistance



As shown, the Mobile Voting Unit is a highly recognized addition to the Registrar of Voters' continuous outreach effort in bringing to the citizens the power of voting, volunteerism and democracy.

Since 2004, the MVU has been showcased at numerous community events, parades and outdoor venues. Not only has the MVU made its appearance at the popular Angel Stadium of Anaheim and the annual Orange County Fair, it has also been greatly recognized at language-based community events such as the highly Asian-concentrated Irvine Global Village event and the League of United Latin American Citizens event. In addition, the MVU has been officially and effectively utilized as a fully contained polling place for Early Voting and is available on Election Day as a backup polling place. The MVU was a first of its kind and has been copied in areas across the country. It has been well accepted in all communities across Orange County.

## *Utilization of Modern Communication Technology*

As internet usage becomes more widespread among voters, we have been actively using it to communicate with technology savvy voters as well as other stakeholders in the electoral process.

In addition to our English website we have identical websites in our four covered languages- Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese - to provide online access to basic voting/volunteer information for the citizens in the County. It also serves as an easy-to-access information source for updated information on the current election. Currently, voters can access the following election related information through our website:

- Details of the voting process.
- Vote-by-mail process.
- Volunteer programs.
- Various means to contact the Registrar of Voters office.
- Convenient access to download sample ballot in all languages as well as numerous application forms.
- Convenient access to download numerous application forms in all languages.
- Live newsfeed on Election Day and Election Night and podcasts.
- Links to other numerous local and statewide election contents.
- Other valuable information.

As further information emerges, the Registrar of Voters' website is continually updated to reflect up to date information. Our continuous effort in reaching out to all communities is also reflected in our web expansion to such popular social networks as Twitter and Facebook.



## Network-building with local media outlets

We have established close and cooperative relationships with local media outlets in the language minority communities as an important means of communicating with the citizens of those communities. By making the best use of local media outlets, we have had news articles published about important election information, notice of elections and press releases as well as using radio announcements, podcasts and local television ads specific to each of the four language minority communities.

## Community Poll Worker Outreach Programs

Since its inception in 1998, the Community Outreach Unit has endeavored to introduce various innovative, unique programs that cater to all citizens across all spectrums of communities in Orange County. These programs include Outreach Programs for government employees; High School Student Programs including the MyBallot Program; and our Corporate Sponsorship Program.

### Outreach program for government employees

Our government employee program is designed to recruit poll workers from the pool of employees at various levels of government agencies. Primarily used at the County level, the program reaches out to state and city employees as well. Over the years, hundreds of employees from city, county and state agencies have participated in the program and many of them worked as bilingual poll workers.

### High School Student Poll Worker Program

Our high school student poll worker program is part of a larger country-wide Federal program aimed at getting students involved in the election process. The State of California officially endorsed the program in 1996 by adding it to the California Elections Code (Elections Code Section 12302 (b)). The idea is to expose young people to the democratic decision-making process as they reach voting age. The following table shows the total numbers of student poll workers for the general elections since 2004 (Table 5):

High School Student Volunteers		
Election	Total Students	Bilingual Students
2004 General Election	1129	240
2006 General Election	777	201
2008 General Election	2733	852
2010 General Election	2138	906

Table 5: Trend in High School Student Poll Workers

As shown above, approximately three times as many high school student poll workers applied to volunteer for the 2008 General Election than the 2004 General Election. The increase in student participation is directly attributable to the newly designed, one-of-a-kind MyBallot Student Program, a program which has drawn high school students' attention to the importance of voting, volunteerism and democracy.



## MyBallot Election Program for Students

As part of our High School Student outreach, the MyBallot Election Program for Students, which was officially and fully launched on May 22, 2008 at Segerstrom High School in the City of Santa Ana, bridges the gap and broadens students' perspectives on the power of voting.

This unique program is a comprehensive 3-step series, which includes in-class lessons on the history of voting, creating ballots and vote tabulation. The program lesson reveals the complexities involved in conducting elections, and students work hands-on at our department creating their own ballots. During the final stage, we bring our Mobile Voting Unit (MVU) to participating schools to conduct their ASB or homecoming elections. Students are directly involved in the tally and certification of votes cast. At the end of the program, students are offered the opportunity to work in the polling places on Election Day, giving them a chance to learn first hand about the power of voting, volunteerism and democracy.

Since its launch in 2008, the MyBallot Election Program has conducted 19 successful student elections for over 10 high schools throughout Orange County. The number of students who volunteer as poll workers continues to rise for each election, and from this pool of students, the number of bilingual student poll workers also increases tremendously. At the end of the ASB Election at Anaheim High School, for example, there were approximately 650 high school students who volunteered to work as poll workers for the November 2008 General Election; of these, about 195 students were bilingual student poll workers who speak Chinese, Korean, Spanish, or Vietnamese.

High Schools That Have Participated in the MyBallot Program		
Name	City	Number of Times Participated
El Modena	Orange	1
Segerstrom	Santa Ana	4
Anaheim	Anaheim	1
Corona Del Mar	Newport Beach	2
Back Bay	Costa Mesa	1
Fountain Valley	Fountain Valley	2
Costa Mesa	Costa Mesa	2
Pacifica	Garden Grove	1
Loara	Anaheim	2
Marina	Huntington Beach	1
Century	Santa Ana	1
Los Amigos	Fountain Valley	1

Table 6: List of High Schools That Have Participated in the MyBallot Program

## MyBallot Election Program for Students in a quick 1-2-3 step:



1. **Classroom Component:** Students learn about history of voting, creating ballots and vote tabulation in a classroom setting.



2. **Presentation Component:** Honorable guest speakers give unforgettable speeches about the power of voting and the importance of being involved in the electoral process during the presentation component of MyBallot Student Program.



3. **Election Day Component:** On ASB Election Day, students get in line, waiting for their chance to cast their vote on the eSlate electronic voting system that their parents vote on Election Day.

## *Other Agency/Organization Poll Worker Program*

As part of our continual effort to push the outreach envelope, we launched our Corporate Sponsorship Program in November 2008. The Corporate Sponsorship Program is a volunteer program for businesses that allows them to take an active role in the electoral process and a great opportunity to strengthen ties to the community.

**Corporate Sponsorship Program:** There are two ways to participate in the Corporate Sponsorship Program: Providing poll workers and/or offering business facilities for a polling place. Providing poll workers means staffing a precinct board(s) with corporate employees. Wells Fargo Bank, for instance, fully staffed a couple of precinct boards with their employees. Some of their employees spoke one of the four covered languages providing bilingual assistance in the November 2008 Presidential General Election. Sprint partnered with us as a corporate sponsor in 2010, providing volunteers on Election Day. Sprint also contracted with our office, providing state-of-the-art communication devices including; 1,700 cell phones for polling places, Sierra Wireless Overdrive Mobile HotSpots to enhance our capabilities at outreach events and i365 Motorola Sprint Nextel Direct Connect phones with scanning devices used to track election supply deliveries.



In return, the corporation gets the benefits of sponsor recognition, high visibility, online recognition, media recognition events, and use of the Orange County logo. By participating in this one-of-a-kind program, corporations can show their involvement in the community where they do business.

## **Partnership with Community-Based Organizations**

A great part of our success in maintaining an excellent Community Outreach Program is continuing established partnerships with community-based groups/organizations. We meet with dedicated individuals from various organizations across Orange County including: advocacy groups; civic groups; citizen leagues; senior centers; churches; and other individuals. The Registrar of Voters has met with various members of specific communities and groups individually since 1998. An informal poll of California Registrar of Voters showed that a handful had community working groups. In 2009 the Department established the Community Election Working Group that involves multiple community based and political organizations involved in Orange County Elections.

### *Community Election Working Group*

At the Orange County Registrar of Voters, success comes from our passion for creating fair and accurate elections. This is the core of our mission as we serve the registered voters and citizens of Orange County. Underlying our approach to election management includes community relations that extend beyond simple compliance with legal requirements. We believe that input from the community is vital to an open and transparent process. The Community Election Working Group (CEW) serves this purpose – bringing together diverse backgrounds – each committed to making sure elections are open and accessible. Since its inception in 2009, six quarterly CEW meetings have been conducted during which we have received valuable input from the community regarding the elections process.

Strong input from the community starts with members of our Community Election Working Group who are independent, engaged, committed, and effective. Our members advise the Registrar of Voters on the election process and provide a forum to communicate back to the community on important election topics.

We believe in further strengthening public confidence in the election process and creating long-term relationships with our community partners.

### *Community Election Working Group: Highlights and Membership*

The Orange County Community Election Working Group provides input to the Registrar of Voters on minority voting, access of the disabled population to the elections process and the elections process in general. The advisory group also provides a forum for the Registrar of Voters to update the community as a whole on elections issues and promote community involvement.

Membership includes, but is not be limited to, representation from the Latino community, Asian community, City Clerks, League of Women Voters, Republican Party, Democratic Party, alternative parties, senior community, Veterans affairs, disabled community, poll workers, youth representative – 18 to 25 years of age, and tow at large positions.

The Registrar of Voters maintains a list of individuals and organizations affiliated with the County's election process that was used to provide initial notification to County citizens of the creation of the Working Group. Members applied for a position on the group through an online application process.

When sufficient nominations for each position were received, Registrar of Voters' staff reviewed each application taking into consideration who the applicant represents (what organization), how the applicant is viewed by the segment of the

# Proactive Approach to Language Assistance



community which his/her organization represents, the influence the applicant has within the specified community segment, how capable the applicant's organization is in communicating with their community, the applicant's willingness to advance the interests of the Working Group as a whole.

## Community Event Participation

Since the implementation of the Community Outreach Program in 1998 outreach activities have expanded to various activities that reach the various communities in Orange County. Between 2008 and 2011, we actively participated in over 200 community events, registering thousands of eligible citizens to vote, providing effective voter education of the electoral process, raising awareness of current elections, and efficiently enhancing the recruitment process to meet the bilingual requirements. The following are several ways we outreach to our community:

- Citizen Workshop Sessions and conference presentations for voter education.
- Mobile Voting Unit (MVU) at large events to bring awareness to elections register voters and recruit poll workers.
- We conduct outreach at various events reaching hundreds of thousands of citizens across the County yearly. Table 7 (next page) highlights some of the varied activities we regularly attend.

## Conclusion

In order to provide for a greater awareness of the electoral process, the rights and responsibilities of voters, and the importance of participating in the electoral process, the Community Outreach unit is constantly reviewing and improving our process to better serve our communities. Reaching out to our language-based communities has gone beyond meeting the requirements. We embrace the basic need of the entire community and strive to bring to light the power of voting, volunteerism and democracy to all of Orange County's citizens.



# Proactive Approach to Language Assistance



Sample of Outreach Events with Attendance		
Event:	City:	Attendance
Latino Youth Leadership Institute Seminar	Santa Ana	100
Irvine Chinese Senior Association	Irvine	200
Glass Mountain for the Disabled	Irvine	15-20
Asian Garden Mall (Flower Festival)	Westminster	250
RSCCD/ MarketPlace Ed Center/Citizenship	Santa Ana	30
Asian Senior Center (Lunar New Year Celebration)	Anaheim	200
Orange County Korea-US Citizens League	Garden Grove	50
LULAC District II Convention	Costa Mesa	1000
OCAPICA Get-Out-The-Vote Press Conference	Santa Ana	50
LULAC Youth Conference	Garden Grove	500-1000
Citizenship Ceremony Reunion	Santa Ana	2000-3000
Asian Millennium Exchange Club Meeting	Fountain Valley	50
Dioces of Orange County Registration Event	Orange	200
Dia de la Familia	Westminster	100-200
Asian Pacific Communities Health & Resource Fair	Garden Grove	100-200
Korean Festival Orange County	Garden Grove	500
Neighborhood Association El Salvador	Santa Ana	500
Southwest Senior Center NCAAP	Santa Ana	200
Orange County Fair	Costa Mesa	5000
US Open of Surfing (5 events - 7/23 to 7/27)	Huntington Beach	5000
Angel Stadium Events (5 events)	Anaheim	10,000
Cesar Chavez	Santa Ana	500-1000
KinderCaminata Event (3 events)	Santa Ana	2000
Citizenship Classes	Santa Ana	100
Irvine Global Village	Irvine	10,000
Silverado Day	Buena Park	80,000
Taller San Jose Presentation	Santa Ana	20
Cinco De Mayo	Santa Ana	150,000
Dia Del Nino	San Juan Capistrano	300
Constitution Day	Santa Ana	500
San Juan Capistrano Mercado	San Juan Capistrano	500
Mexican Indigenous Celebration	San Juan Capistrano	200
Fiestas Patrias	Santa Ana	200,000
San Clemente Fiesta Street Festival	San Clemente	1,000

Table 7: Sample of outreach events with attendance



## **International Recognition and Exposure of the Registrar of Voters' Activities**

Our successful use of an electronic voting system (introduced in 2004) and all of the processes and procedures that come with it have attracted attention from foreign governments/organizations as well as news media. Several delegations have visited us from countries such as Mexico, Taiwan and Korea to collect information and learn about how we administer elections using the electronic voting system.

### **International Exposure in the Chinese Community**

During the 2004 Presidential Election, a US correspondent of the Central News Agency from Taiwan learned of the Chinese language program of the Orange County Registrar of Voters. The reporter interviewed our Chinese Community Program Specialist on the new electronic voting system. Our office was also able to help him gain a better understanding of the election process in the United States.

In May 2007, a group of young politicians representing all major political parties in Taiwan toured our office in an event hosted by a council member of the city of Orange. The visitors received a welcome briefing on the topics of their interest including the operations at the Registrar of Voters, local electoral process and our electronic voting system.

### **International Exposure in the Korean Community**

As the Korean government was preparing to introduce an electronic voting system during the Parliamentary General Election in 2008, several Korean delegations and a major Korean TV network visited our office to observe and learn about the electronic voting system used in Orange County.

In July 2006, a group of overseas electronic voting system inspectors composed of parliamentary members from the four major Korean political parties and seven members from the committee for promoting the electronic voting system in Korea visited our office to learn about how we administer elections with an electronic voting system.

In October 2006, the Los Angeles Bureau Chief of MBC News, one of the major Korean TV stations, visited our office to film how we prepared for the 2006 general election. This film was aired to a Korean audience and was used as an educational piece to inform voters of the electronic voting system to be used in Korea beginning in 2008.

In July 2007, the Honorable Mr. Yun-Moo Kim, a commissioner at the Korean Central Election Committee came to Orange County to learn and collect information about how we operate our vote-by-mail ballot system.

In December 2008, four members representing a working group for the E-Voting Promotion Bureau at the Korean Central Election Committee visited our office to collect information regarding: 1) electronic voting system with VVPAT; 2) optical scan machine (for tallying vote-by-mail ballots); 3) early voting; 4) provisional voting; and more. In the end we completed a three page questionnaire on electronic voting for them.

### **International Exposure in the Spanish Speaking Community**

In September 2004, representatives from the Tribunal Supremo de Costa Rica and their Electronic Vote Project communicated with us regarding our electronic voting system. While researching electronic voting they came across our website. Impressed with our bilingual services, that included information in their native language, they felt compelled to contact us.

# *Proactive Approach to Language Assistance*



During the November 2004 Presidential Election we hosted a ten member delegation of observers from the Instituto Federal Electoral de Mexico. Each observer represented a different state from their country's state election department (Instituto Electoral de Estado). Their main goal was to visit polling places to view the electronic voting system, how voters are processed at polling places, volunteer recruitment, vote-by-mail ballot processing and vote tabulation. Mexico has since instituted vote-by-mail for citizens that live outside the country.

For the November 2008 Presidential Election we received a visit from five members of a delegation from Mexico guided by MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense Education Fund) and Los Dos Mexicos who were interested in viewing polling place tools used to accommodate voters with disabilities and observe the overall election process in Orange County.



# Profiles of Language Communities





## Profiles of Language Community, Status and Challenges of Language Assistance in Orange County

### General Synopsis of Language Community

As discussed previously, Orange County has one of the most diverse voting populations in the country. To ensure “the integrity of elections in a uniform, consistent and accessible manner,” the Orange County Registrar of Voters provides each minority language community specified by the Voting Rights Act all the materials and resources that are made available to the mainstream voting community in translated form.

### A Common Approach

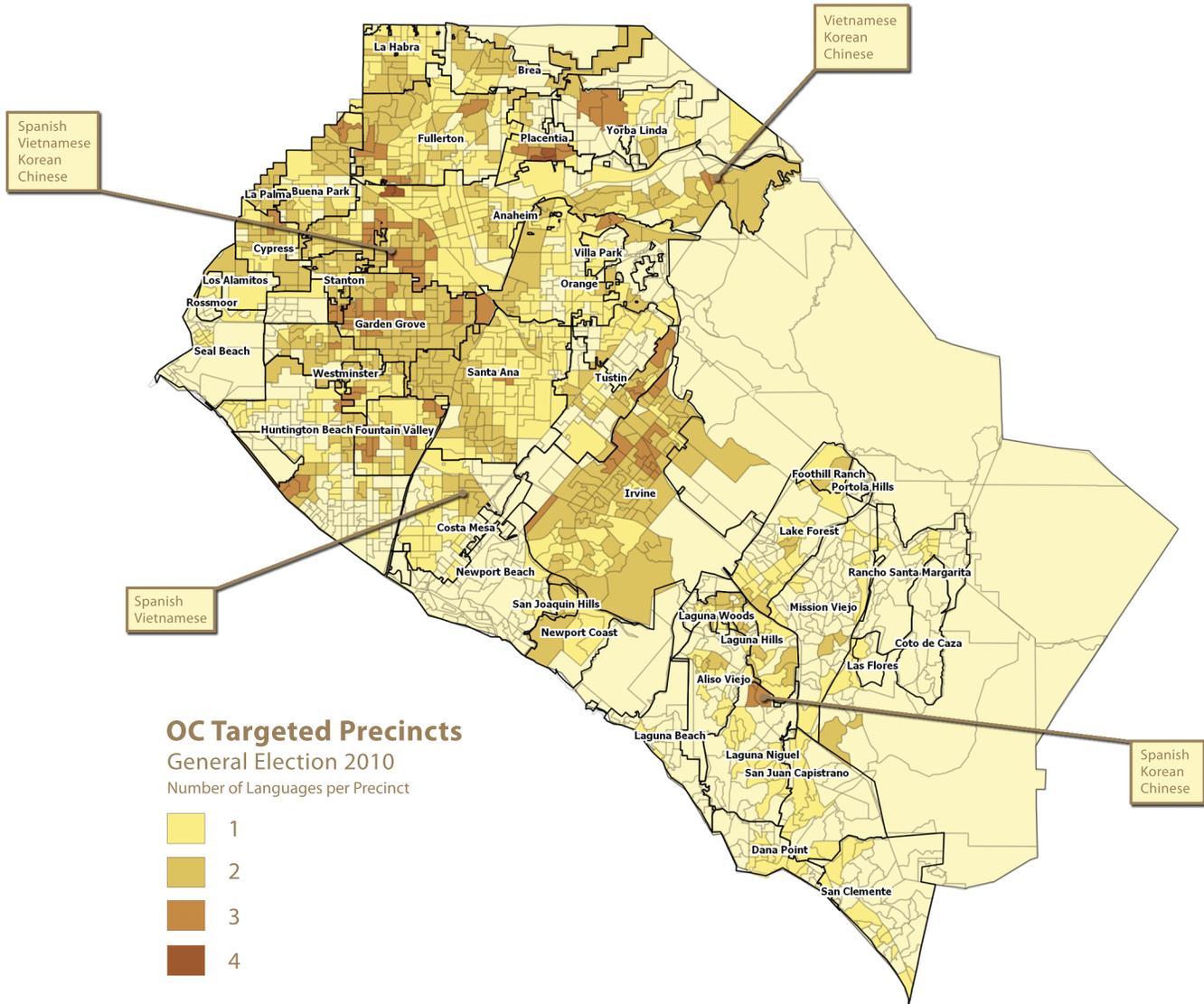
In order to address each community’s specific needs, the subsequent language profiles follow a common approach. We will explore topics such as demographics of the community to give a general overview of the landscape in which the voters are positioned, recruitment requirements with an emphasis on specific criteria for each language and how these requirements attend to the requests of the community and challenges in engaging the voting community and providing language assistance. We then look at the challenges and strategies of presenting a comprehensive voter education and outreach program.

### Community-specific Emphases

Although each community program shares goals, Orange County voters with a Latino, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese heritage all have their own story in regards to the American democratic process. Each program requires unique methods to reach their respective communities and satisfy both our legal requirements and mission. This section will shed a spotlight on those differences.



## Countywide Bilingual Requirements in Orange County



Many of the voting precincts in Orange County require bilingual poll workers, fluent in English and one of the following languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean or Chinese. This map shows the countywide distribution of bilingual needs, illustrating many areas of overlaying coverage.

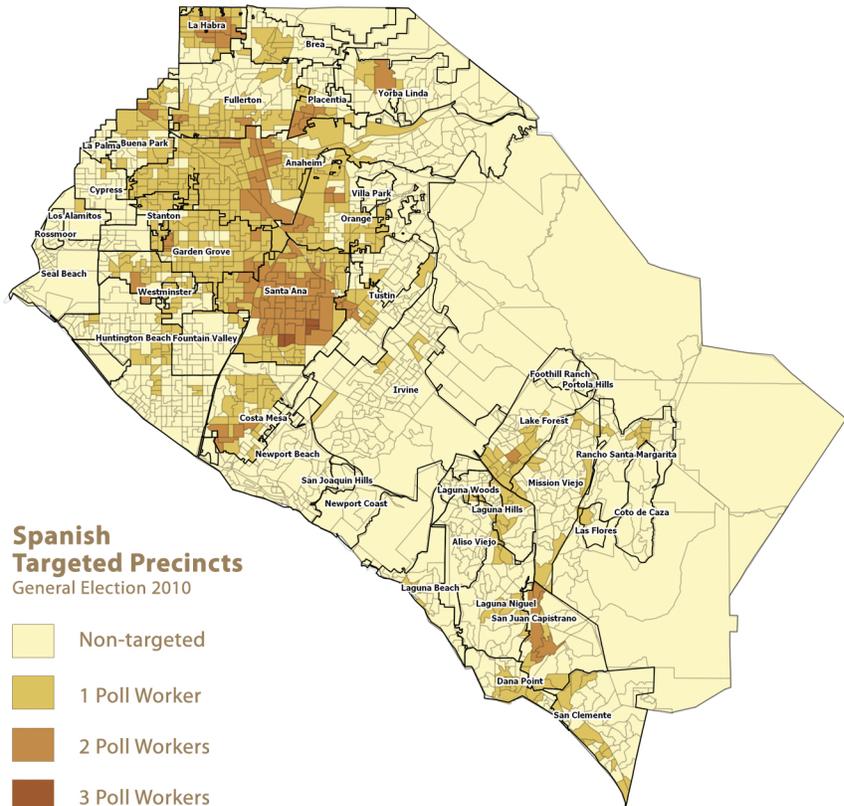


## Latino Community Profile

### Historical Perspective

The rich history of Latinos in Orange County reaches back well over 200 years. The Mission San Juan Capistrano was founded in 1776. In 1821, Mexico, of which Alta California (later California), became an independent republic. In 1846 a group of American settlers declared the independence of a California Republic. As a result of the Mexican-American War, Mexico ceded California to the United States.

In the late 1790's Juan Pablo Grijalva and his son-in-law Jose Antonio Yorba began to graze cattle in what is now northern Orange County. Many ranches and missions were established in the area. Today nearly one million Latinos from various Spanish speaking countries call Orange County home.



### Demographics

The Orange County population in 1995 was 2,597,149 with the Latino population making up 697,324 of the total number. Five years later the population had increased by approximately 180,000 representing a nearly 25% increase. According to the American Community Survey of 2007, there were 987,725 Latinos in Orange County. According to the 2010 Census, the Latino population is currently 1,014,448 representing 33.7% of Orange County's total population.

### Establishment of Community Program

When Congress adopted the language minority provisions of the Voting Rights Act in 1975 the County of Orange was then required to provide language assistance to Spanish heritage voters.

In 1976 the office began to provide language assistance to the Spanish-speaking community by providing voter registration cards printed in both English and Spanish. The office also provided Spanish election materials such as facsimile ballots and voter instructions in the polling places.

As the Latino population grew in the 1990's as did the need for language assistance in the Spanish-speaking community. In 1998 a full-time Spanish speaking Community Program Specialist was hired. She was the first Community Program Specialist hired solely to meet the needs of a minority community in the State of California.

Following is the chronology of language assistance provided by Orange County in the Latino community since 1976:



Year	Spanish Language Assistance
1976	Updating voter registration files offering forms with Spanish language options via telephone/mail to Spanish surnames and bilingual voter registration forms available.  Compliance with voter instructions and bilingual poll worker assistance at polling places.
1982	Orange County not required under provisions of Federal Voting rights act section 203 after its amendment to comply with mandated language assistance.  Voter intimidation at polling places by uniformed citizens.
1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security guards to intimidate Latino voters in Santa Ana polling place locations/ 72nd Assembly District. In response to this occurrence, it is now a crime for a person with a firearm or a person in a peace officer or security guard uniform to be within 100 feet of the polling place with a few exceptions.</li> </ul>
1992	After census of 1990, Orange County was mandated by Federal Voting Right Act section 203 to add Spanish and Vietnamese language assistance.
1996	Voter fraud in the 46th Congressional District. New era of Latino political representation in Orange County. In 1996, a shift took place in the political role of Latinos around the country, but especially in Santa Ana. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thousands of newly naturalized citizens were mobilized and for the first time in the history of Orange County, a Latina woman was elected to congress.</li> </ul>
1998	Assessing the needs of Spanish speaking communities in Orange County. Building relationships with community leaders and organizations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisting over 1000 alleged U.S. Naturalized citizens whom registered to vote prior to swearing in ceremony- 46th Congressional District.</li> <li>Permanent Spanish Community Program Specialist hired.</li> </ul>
1999-2000	Development and implementation of voter education and volunteer programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media campaigns and press releases.</li> <li>Citizenship ceremonies/voter education program.</li> </ul>
2002-2004	Voter education on new electronic voting system/ Mobile Voting Unit. Technology and new approach to management of language Outreach.
2004-2006	International exposure, delegations from foreign countries visited Orange County for its new electronic era of voting and inquiry calls reach OC because of the outreach program specialist election skills in the Spanish language knowledge.  Voter Intimidation letter addressed from the 69th Assembly District.
2006-present	Voter education program, massive new U.S. citizenship project in Spanish Speaking Communities.  New campaigns for new generation of voters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>partnerships, Vote-by-mail, student poll worker program, MyBallot program, website.</li> </ul>

Table 8: Spanish Language Community Assistance Chronology



## Participation in Electoral Process

### *Trends of Community Voters*

#### **1) Community Numbers by Place of Birth and Language Requests**

Orange County currently has 99,238 registered voters that list a birthplace in a Spanish country representing an increase of approximately 3,400 registered voters since 2010. There are 31,095 registered voters that have requested election materials in Spanish; an increase of about 1,100 requests from 30,023 in 2010. This is significant because the number of poll workers needed at polling places for the Spanish speaking community is determined by language requests.

#### **2) Estimate of number of voters**

Determining the number of “Latino” voters is complicated and not something that we attempt to accomplish. It is difficult to even define who is Latino. One cannot establish a concrete number using surname, for example. There are many people with Spanish surnames that are not Latino. With that we will present information from reports and articles that have done work in the area.

A Los Angeles Times article from 2000 states that there were 166,848 registered Latino voters in Orange County an increase of 28% since 1996. (Yi, Daniel, & Ray Herndon (2000). More Latinos Register to Vote, But Turnout ‘Not What It Could Be’: [articles.latimes.com/2000/dec/25/local/me-4682](http://articles.latimes.com/2000/dec/25/local/me-4682)). With Orange County’s total registration standing at 1,346,887 at the time Latino registration was 12% of all registered voters in the County.

In 2005 the William C. Velasquez Institute estimated there were 197,011 registered Latino voters in Orange County from the total voter registration of 1,484,836 a total of 13% overall.

#### **3) Vote-by-Mail**

In Orange County there are approximately 35,170 permanent vote-by-mail Latino registered voters from which about 19,722 voted by mail in the 2010 General Election. This data only reflects voters born in a Spanish speaking country. Latino voter turnout for that election was 59% at polling places and 41% voted by mail. In the 2008 General Election 76% voted at polling places and 34% voted by mail.

#### **4) Turnout**

According to the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) August 2010 report, a majority of Latino voters live in Southern California. Latinos represent about 33% of the state’s adult population. Southern California is home to 54% of California’s adult population and 66% of Latino likely voters (39% Los Angeles, 14% Orange/San Diego County, and 13% Inland Empire). Many black (59%), Asian (51%), and white (49%) likely voters also reside in the southern areas of the state. Some Latino adults are not U.S. citizens and thus are ineligible to vote. Their surveys over the last year indicate that only 34% of Latino adults are likely to vote compared to 44% of Asians, 57% of blacks, and 73% of whites.

The PPIC states, however, that relatively few likely voters are Latino.



## *Outreach to Community: Three Main Purposes*

### **1) Voter Education and Outreach**

The Latino community growth in Orange County has played an important role in outreach efforts. It has been necessary during election cycles to hire Spanish bilingual election assistants who help with outreach events, customer service, bilingual poll worker recruitment and translation proofing.

### **Challenges**

The number of Latinos in Orange County presents challenges. In addition to our Community Program Specialist responsible for the Latino community we have recently hired two additional Community Program Specialists that speak Spanish and are able to provide back-up.

There is high demand for voter education and outreach year round and especially during election time. There are multiple Spanish speaking community advocates and organizations whose interests can be quite varied.

We have been witnessing an increased need for Spanish language services in the southern area of Orange County over the past couple of years. The southern half of Orange County is typically the most difficult area to recruit poll workers, in general, let alone recruiting people with bilingual skills. The difficulty increases with the lack of community groups involved in that area of the county. We continue to establish and conduct grassroots voter outreach for Latinos in South County.

### **Strategies**

The cornerstone of our ability to conduct successful elections lies with our partnerships with community advocates and organizations. We network with many Orange County and Southern California based Latino organizations, religious groups, advocates, education districts and all cities to ensure our community is election educated.

We attend meetings to disseminate election information, build relationships and programs towards the needs of the community, organization or event and collaborate with local and national Spanish Media.

Our proactive approach has engaged various groups since 1997, including:

- a. NALEO (National Association of Elected and Appointed Officials)
- b. MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense Education Fund)
- c. LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens)
- d. LYLI (Latino Youth Leadership Institute)
- e. WCVI (William C. Velasquez Institute)
- f. SVREP (Southwest Voter Registration Education Project)
- g. OCCCO (Orange County Congregation Community Organization)
- h. Los Amigos of Orange County
- i. Rancho Santiago Community College District
- j. American Voter Education Fund
- k. HMN (Hermandad Mexicana Nacional)



- I. LAVA (Latin American Voters Association)
- m. CREER-SJC
- n. Juaneno Band of Mission Indians
- o. Labor Unions
- p. Religious groups
- q. Orange County Cities

## 2) Translation of Election Materials/Language Assistance

We are undoubtedly second to none when it comes to translating elections related material for our community. We pride ourselves on having innovative and thorough documents that are translated with 100% accuracy. This includes having a website translated for each of our covered languages.

### **Challenges**

Translations - The volume of materials that must be translated is tremendous. There are voter education resources, handbooks and outreach materials. The number of items needed to be translated for a countywide election can be over 300 for the sample ballot alone. The time-frame that we have to do this is extremely compressed.

A particular challenge for translating materials into Spanish is the varying dialects used by people from multiple Spanish speaking countries. It can also be challenging to ensure that there is consistency in words commonly used from election to election for Spanish language assistance voters.

We need to ensure translations are universal linguistically and culturally for all Spanish speaking voters. This becomes a challenge when we need to take into account we are speaking of 19 countries, Spain, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay from which immigrants come from and eventually become US Citizens who exercise the right to vote. In addition, we have Puerto Rico who is a commonwealth of the United States with rights to vote but their native language is Spanish.

### **Strategies**

Translations - Every sample ballot and ballot item for an election is translated first by our court-certified translator. Our Community Program Specialist reviews the translations and will make recommendations to our vendor on potential changes based on consistency with past elections, Orange County usage of terms and glossaries including one provided by the Elections Assistance Commission.

Each translation is proofed by two Spanish speaking staff members. It is then proofed by five additional staff members, who proof everything produced by the Department. The five additional proofers ensure that the formatting and numbers are correct. They can also proof by looking at the number of sentences, paragraphs, bullets and more.

All materials are tracked by the Community Program Specialist and two managers responsible for the process. A new tracking system was developed in 2009 that is used internally and by our vendor to send, proof and track all documents.



### 3) Bilingual Poll Worker Recruitment

Spanish bilingual poll worker needs are based mainly on the number of voters requesting election materials in Spanish, but includes polling places identified by the Secretary of State in 2002.

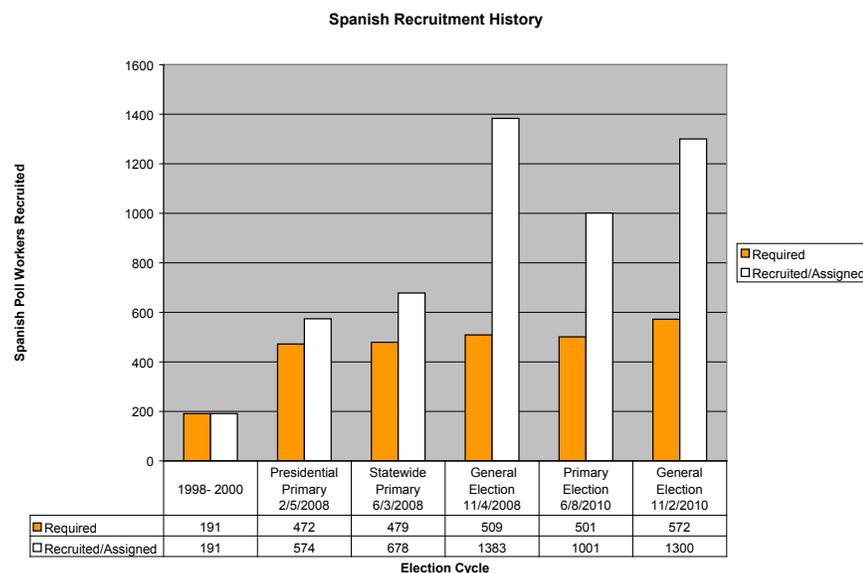
In the mid 1990's the Latino voting population, and therefore Spanish bilingual poll worker recruitment, in Orange County was mainly concentrated in the cities of Santa Ana and Anaheim while other cities in Central and North Orange County began to grow. At that time approximately 200 precincts were targeted for bilingual Spanish language assistance from the 2081 precincts in Orange County.

The 2000 Census showed the Latino population expanded to many other cities in Orange County. Most of the growth was seen in North and Central Orange County and the number of targeted Spanish bilingual precincts grew to 545 from the Census of 1990, which targeted approximately 200 precincts with Spanish bilingual need. In 2010 we added 20 additional precincts.

For the 2010 General Election 572 Spanish poll workers were required. We recruited 1,300 Spanish bilingual volunteers in addition to what was require at polling places for that election. Today we have approximately 3,740 active Spanish bilingual poll workers in our database.

Required and Recruited Spanish Poll Workers										
	Primary 2006	General 2006	Presidential Primary 2008	State Primary 2008	General 2008	Special 2009	Primary 2010	General 2010	San Clemente Special 2011	SJC Special 2011
Recruited	404	471	574	678	1383	598	1001	1300	18	28
Required	452	446	472	479	509	468	501	572	6	9

Table 9: Spanish Poll Worker Recruitment Data in Orange County, 2006-2011



# Profiles of Language Communities



The new 2010 Census data shows the following cities as having over 20% Latino population in their city:

Cities Having Over 20% Latino Population			
City	Latino Population Percentage	Latino Population Number	Total Population City
Santa Ana	78.2	253,928	324,528
La Habra	57.2	34,449	60,239
Anaheim	52.8	177,467	336,265
Stanton	50.8	19,417	38,186
San Juan Capistrano	38.7	13,388	34,593
Orange	38.1	52,014	136,416
Placentia	36.4	18,416	50,533
Costa Mesa	35.8	39,403	109,960
Garden Grove	36.9	63,079	170,883
Fullerton	34.4	46,501	135,161
Tustin	39.7	30,024	75,540
Buena Park	39.3	31,637	80,530
Midway	29.1	2,467	8,485
Brea	25	9,817	39,282
Westminster	23.6	21,176	89,701

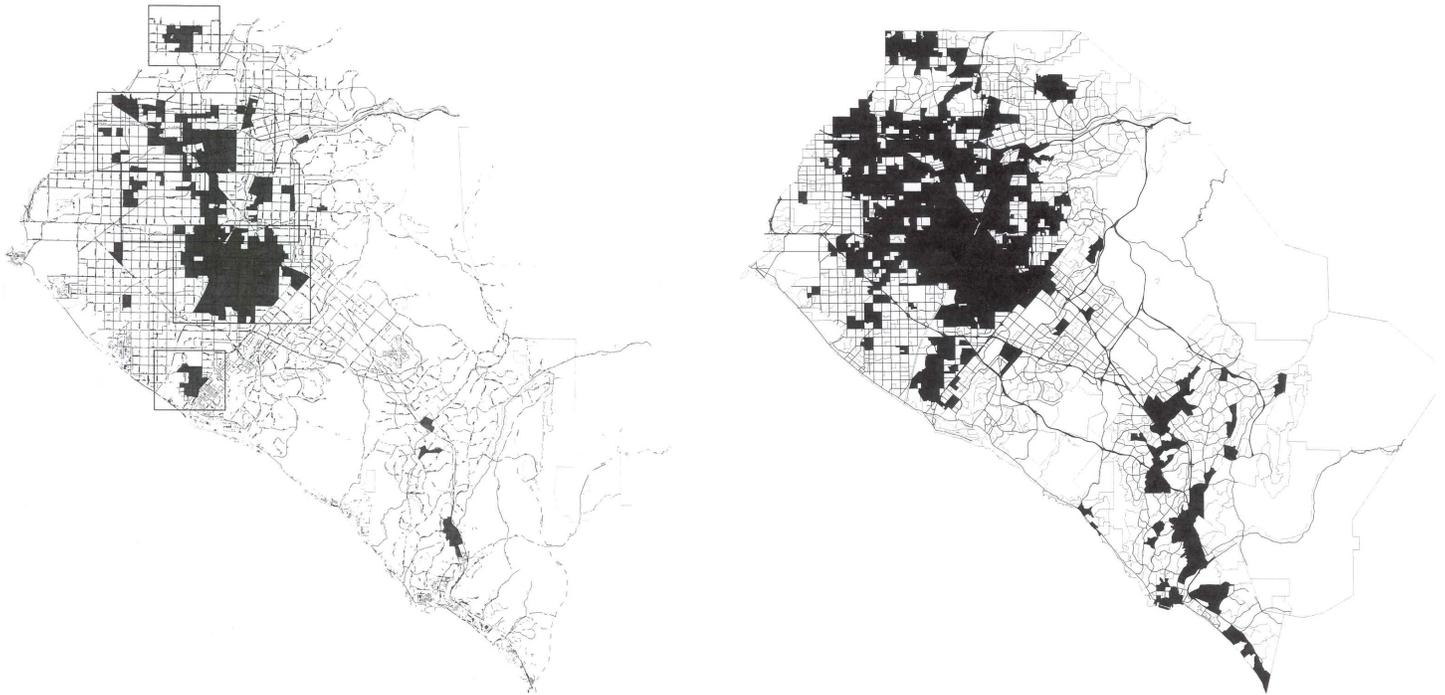
Table 10: Cities Having Over 20% Latino Population, based on 2010 Census data

## Challenges

The challenge to recruiting Spanish speaking bilingual poll workers lies with the large number of volunteers that need to be processed. The Latino community is well established in Orange County and the number of volunteers willing to work on Election Day that speak Spanish almost always surpasses the required need.

Overall Spanish bilingual recruitment faces the challenge of making sure all who want to participate as a volunteer at the polls are placed. They must first be placed at targeted polling places and then anywhere poll workers are needed in Orange County.

# Profiles of Language Communities



*Spanish language targeted precincts in 1998 (left) and 2008 (right).*

## **Strategies**

We will continue to work with our partners in the community. We look forward to involvement from new groups that can provide new energy to our programs. We will continue to target specific local community events in populated Latino areas. The Spanish media has proved extremely beneficial for educating the public about election related topics for us. We will look to extend that success to poll worker recruitment.

Student Poll Worker recruitment, especially in regards to the MyBallot program, has provided many Spanish bilingual poll workers in the past couple of years. From 1996 through 2009 we have had over 1,500 Spanish bilingual students apply to work as volunteers in our polling places.

In the 2010 election cycle alone, 996 Spanish bilingual students volunteered for the student poll worker program. We trust this will continue and these young volunteers will provide the base for our volunteers in the future.

We look to continue our success at having a reserve team of 10 - 20 percent of required targeted Spanish volunteers at the Registrar of Voters office on Election Day ready to fill in for absent poll workers.



## Vietnamese Community Profile

### Historical Perspective

After the fall of Saigon in 1975 many Vietnamese came to Orange County. The County of Orange has one of the largest concentrations of Vietnamese outside of Vietnam. Currently forty percent of all Vietnamese Americans live here. In the early 1980's, Southeast Asian refugees began to congregate around Vietnamese businesses and services in parts of Westminster, Garden Grove and Santa Ana, which by 1988 came to be known as "Little Saigon."

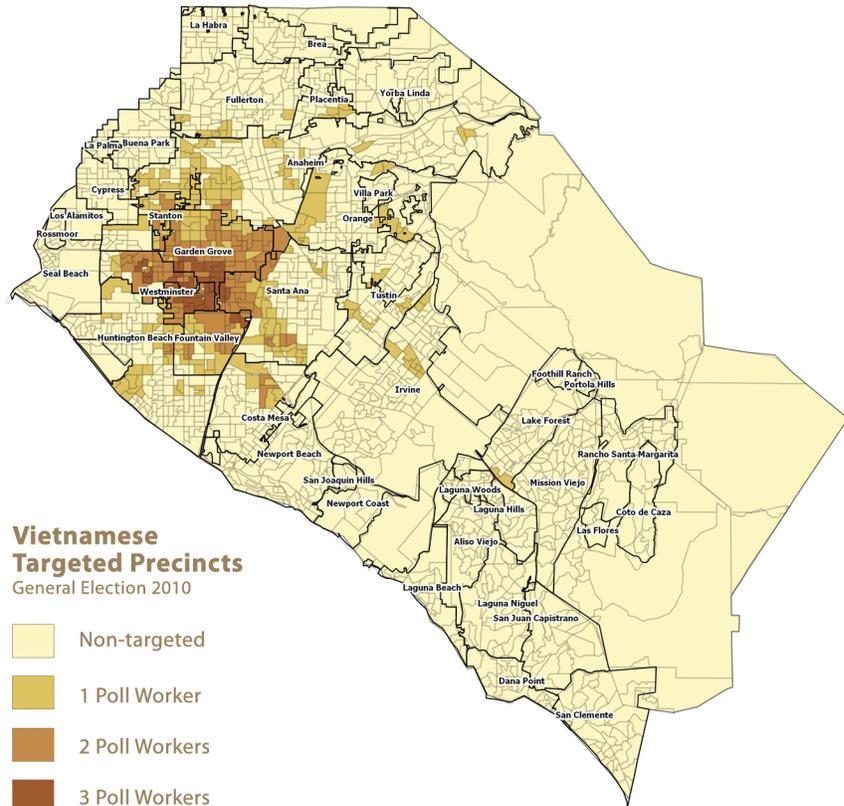
### Demographics

According to the 2010 American Community Survey, there were 183,766 Vietnamese people in Orange County comprising 34.2% of the Asian population and 6.1% of the total population of Orange County. As of the last report Vietnamese comprised 32.8 % of the Asian population and 5.29% of the total population. There are currently 83,430 registered voters in Orange County who were born in Vietnam.

### Establishment of Community Program

A Vietnamese Community Program Specialist was hired in 1998 along with the Spanish specialist when the Community Outreach Unit was created. In July 2006, an additional Vietnamese Community Program Specialist was added to the Outreach Unit in order to meet with the increasing need based on voter registration, voting material requests and the communities' engagement in the electoral process as a whole.

As with the other community programs in the Outreach Unit, the Vietnamese Community Program continues to pursue a proactive approach to language assistance and innovative outreach programs as the number of Vietnamese-heritage voters continues to increase in the County.





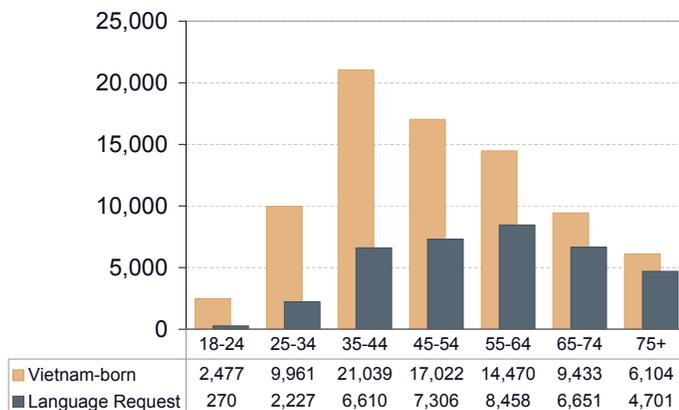
## Participation in Electoral Process

### Trends of Community Voters

#### 1) Community Numbers by Place of Birth and Language Requests

Since 2004, the number of Vietnamese language requests has only grown by 8.7%, compared to over 50% growth between 2002 and 2004. Currently there are 37,236 voters requesting Vietnamese voting materials, constituting 45% of the total number of Vietnam-born voters (83,430). Corresponding data is presented by the 2010 American Community Survey, which asserts that 62,410 (approximately 38%) of the 163,207 Vietnamese surveyed indicated that they speak English “very well.”

Vietnam-Born and Language Request



Age data of Vietnam-born voters and voters requesting Vietnamese materials

Vietnamese American Community. To illustrate, 52% of total ballots cast in the recent 2010 General Election were vote-by-mail ballots; looking strictly at ballots cast by Vietnam-born voters, 77% were vote-by-mail ballots. Moreover, the current statistics indicate that the Vietnamese community has the highest percentage of vote-by-mail voters at 56.3%, compared to the Chinese, Korean, and Spanish-speaking communities (at 38.2%, 46.7%, and 35.4%, respectively). This tremendous number of vote-by-mail voters means that typically 30% of voters show up at the polling place on Election Day.

#### 4) Turnout

As a relatively recent immigrant group, Vietnamese-Americans have some of the highest rates of naturalization. In 2000, 44% of foreign-born Vietnamese were American citizens, the highest rate among all Asian groups. Vietnam-born voters are also known to make a strong showing on Election Day, turning out at over 61% in the last two Presidential Elections.

This trend has been attributed to a high political awareness rooted in the refugee experience of many members in the Vietnamese American community. In recent years, this growth has been supplemented by a sharp rise in the number of Vietnamese American candidates on the ballot, further driving Vietnamese-heritage voters to the polls. An example of this mobilization can be drawn from 2004: The number of voters born in Vietnam jumped from 24,670 in the spring to 34,271 in the fall, exhibiting a growth of nearly 40%. Between 2002 and 2004, the number of Vietnamese-heritage candidates rose from 2 to 8.

#### 2) Estimate of number of voters

Bilingual volunteers often express disappointment when they are called upon to provide language assistance to the Vietnamese community but do not meet even one voter on Election Day who requires help in Vietnamese. A close look at historical voter turnout illuminates a surprising relationship between Vietnamese language requests and actual turnout at the polling place. With an average of 7 out of every 10 Vietnam-born voters returning a vote-by-mail ballot, the number of voters requesting Vietnamese materials overestimates the actual number of voters needing assistance in Vietnamese at the polling place.

#### 3) Vote-by-Mail

Another reason attributed to such high turnout is the prominence of Permanent vote-by-mail voters in the



## *Outreach to Community: Three Main Purposes*

### **1) Voter Education and Outreach**

Since the number of Vietnamese-heritage candidates is rising, the number of citizens eligible to vote also grows. With such increases, the need for voter education and outreach becomes more imperative. In the process of achieving proactive outreach, we come to deal with a few challenges, as mentioned below.

#### **Challenges:**

Increasing the number of Vietnamese-heritage voters requires a persistent voter outreach in the community. This voter outreach includes educating the community on registration, availability of language assistance, accessibility to various forms of voting (i.e., vote-by-mail, polling place voting, electronic voting, etc.), and active involvement in the electoral process. The challenge we encounter in outreaching to the Vietnamese community is the limited number of Vietnamese-specific events that are voting-focused or community-oriented.

#### **Strategies:**

To actively continue networking within the community, our Community Outreach Specialists seek out Vietnamese community groups at events and establish an outreach foundation with them for participation in future events they may host. For example, in July 2009, our office was invited by the Orange County Red Cross Organization for Vietnamese to take part in the Vietnamese Health Fair Event where we promoted voter registration and voter education to all Vietnamese event attendees. With a solid relationship we are able to further expand our networking to other new community groups, and hope to reach to all citizens in the Vietnamese community.

### **2) Translation of Election Materials/Language Assistance**

As stated previously, we believe that we have an advanced translation program. We are extremely aggressive in providing translations of election materials and ensuring that language assistance is available to those who need it. The ever increasing number of voters requesting materials in Vietnamese and the growing number of Vietnamese elected officials that count on proper translations makes diligence on our part even more imperative.

#### **Challenges**

As we will discuss with all of our needed translations, the high number of materials, especially in regards to election specific items needed in a short time-frame, puts a lot of pressure on our Community Program Specialists to get it right. Accent marks used in the Vietnamese language provides a unique challenge when reading over 300 sample ballots and ballot items with different combinations. Nonetheless, to ensure 100% accuracy, it is imperative that we don't miss the mark.

#### **Strategies**

That strategy is the same for all of our languages. Every sample ballot and ballot item for an election is translated first by our court-certified translator. Our Community Program Specialists review the translations and will make recommendations to our vendor on potential changes based on consistency with past elections and glossaries including one provided by the Elections Assistance Commission.

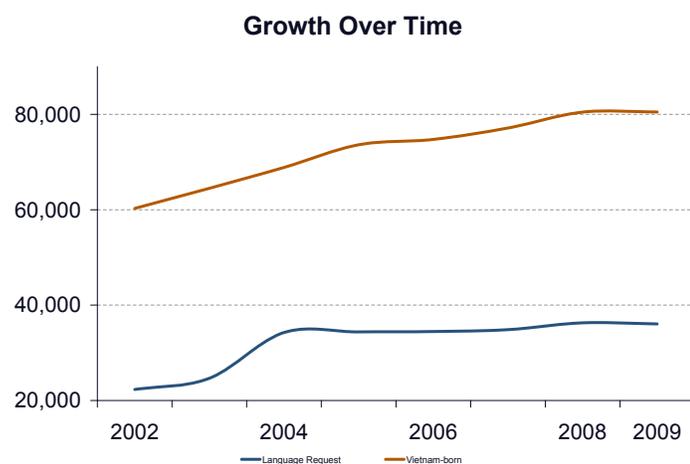


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All materials are tracked by the Community Program Specialists and two managers responsible for the process. A new tracking system was developed in 2009 that is utilized internally and by our vendor to send, proof and track all documents.

### 3) Bilingual Poll Worker Recruitment

Vietnamese bilingual poll worker recruitment is based on the number of voters requesting elections materials in Vietnamese and polling places identified by the Secretary of State in 2002. As illustrated below, the number of language requests in 2004 was great (approximate increase of 10,000) causing a magnified increase in the required number of bilingual poll workers needed.



*Comparison of language requests and voters born in Vietnam. The number of requests has leveled off since 2004 while Vietnam-born voters have steadily increased.*

Of the total precincts in Orange County roughly 220 are targeted as Vietnamese bilingual representing anywhere from 11-18% of all precincts. For many elections we are able to recruit a few Vietnamese bilingual poll workers as back-ups on Election Day. Today we have approximately 1,500 active Vietnamese bilingual poll workers in our database.

#### **Challenges**

Because the Vietnamese community is a growing community in general a language barrier is still a challenge when it comes to bilingual poll worker recruitment. As previously mentioned, we see an increasing number of registered voters born in Vietnam, and only 38% speak English "very well." We are confronted with an issue of having many devoted voters who would like to be involved in the election as poll workers, but do not meet the criteria of

being able to read and speak English. We also face a generation difference between the elderly and youth voters. As zealous citizens, many of our elderly voters would like to take an active part as poll workers but may not be fluent in both Vietnamese and English, and our youth voters may be fluent in both Vietnamese and English but may not be available because of hectic school and/or work schedules.

#### **Strategies**

Our Community Program Specialists maintain election information and poll worker recruitment by utilizing the availability of Vietnamese community media, such as popular local Vietnamese newspapers, radio, and television to urge the Vietnamese-heritage voters to volunteer as poll workers in elections. We also attend numerous events throughout the year to recruit new poll workers, and continue our proactive outreach to community groups for expanding our recruitment effort. In addition, we constantly post and update our website, including Podcasts and social networking websites (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) to broaden our recruitment in the community.



## Korean Community Profile

### Historical Perspective

After an initial wave of immigration to Hawaii to work on the sugar plantations, a second wave of Korean immigrants came to the mainland after the Korean War. In the 1970's there was an influx of Korean immigration after a new law passed regarding the need for skilled occupations in the United States. During this period 20-30% of all Korean immigrants chose California for residence and of those 7-9% chose the Los Angeles area. (Korean Immigrants in Los Angeles, Pyong Gap Min; Transaction Publishers 1993) As with many other ethnic groups, Koreans have migrated from Los Angeles to Orange County.

Koreans are one of the most rapidly growing ethnic groups in Orange County and the second largest Asian community here. Though overshadowed by the larger Korean

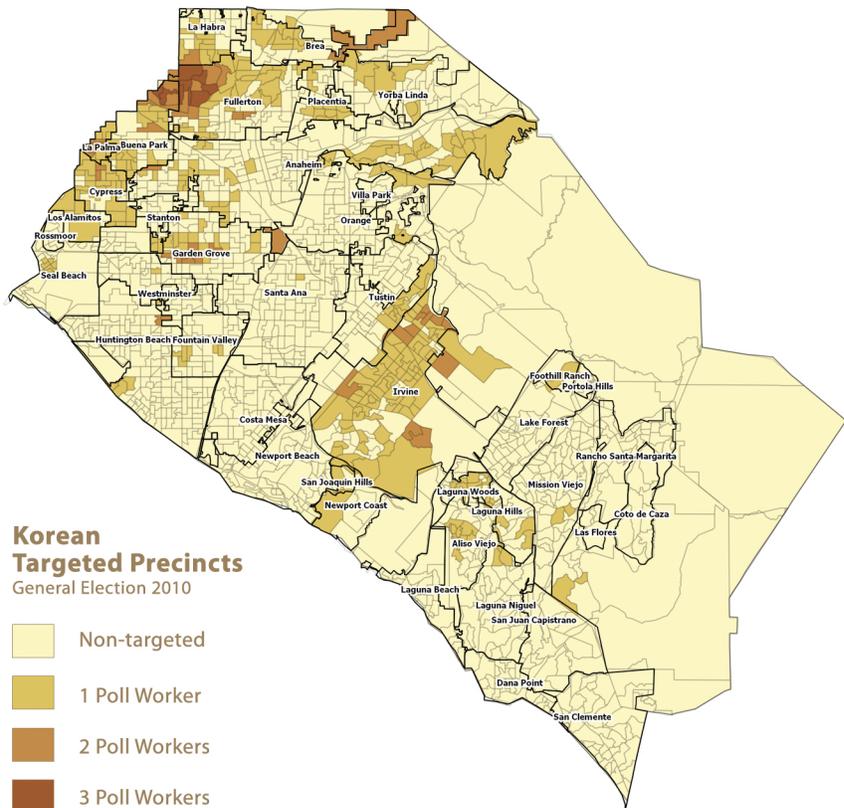
population in Los Angeles County, Orange County houses the second largest Korean population of any county in the nation. In general, the Korean population in Orange County is not made up of recent immigrants with most having lived in the United States for 15 years or more. (Profiles of the Korean American Community, California State University, Fullerton, Children and Families Commission of Orange County, and Korean Community Services 2008).

### Demographics

According to the Census 2000 Summary File, there were 55,573 Koreans in Orange County comprising 14.4% of the Asian population and 2% of the total population of Orange County. The Census 2010 Demographic Profile Data shows that there are 87,697 Koreans in Orange County comprising 16.3% of the Asian population and 2.9% of the total population of Orange County.

The growth rate of the Korean population in Orange County between 2000 and 2010 was 57.8%, ranking the highest among Asian communities.

The Korean population is mostly centered in three areas in Orange County: North area covering Fullerton, Buena Park, La Palma, La Habra, Brea, Placentia and Yorba Linda; North Central area covering Anaheim, Garden Grove, Cypress, and Fountain Valley; and South Central area covering Irvine, Tustin, Orange and Santa Ana.





## Establishment of Community Program

We hired a full-time bilingual Korean program specialist in early 2003 after the Korean language was added in 2002 to the list of covered languages in Orange County. As with our experienced Community Program Specialists the mission is to provide the Korean community with language assistance in the electoral process as mandated by federal law. Since 2003, we have actively been involved in the development and implementation of programs with a view to educating Korean American voters about the voting procedures as well as the importance of exercising their voting rights.

Starting from scratch, our Community Program Specialist had to determine who the most effective contacts would be including active community groups and the media. Our office has dedicated itself to forming close and cooperative relationships with Korean organizations to accomplish our goals of providing efficient language assistance and recruiting bilingual Korean poll officers. In particular, major Korean news media have provided us with full support in disseminating election information and recruiting bilingual Korean poll officers.

## Participation in Electoral Process

### Trends of Community Voters

#### 1) Community Numbers by Place of birth and Language Requests

The total number of registered voters who were born in Korea was 16,035 as of August 2004 and it was increased to 24,950 as of December 2011, which shows a growth rate of 55.6% during the seven year period. If we include the Korean American registered voters who were born in the United States, whose number was estimated to be about 12,600 as of May 2011, the total number of Korean American registered voters is about 37,000 or more.

Requests for election materials in Korean have increased gradually from just over 5,000 in 2003 when our Korean outreach program began to nearly 10,000 today.

#### 2) Estimate of number of voters

Korean American Voter Estimates			
Category		Number	Proportion
<b>Total Korean Population</b>		<b>86,730</b>	<b>100%</b>
Nativity	US Born	25,348	29.2%
	Foreign Born	61,382	70.8%
Status of US Citizenship	Naturalized US Citizen	33,531	38.7%
	Not a US Citizen	27,851	32.1%
Age	Under 17 years	19,524	22.5%
	18 years and older	67,206	77.5%
<b>Estimated Korean American Voters</b>		<b>45,631</b>	<b>52.6%</b>
Nativity	US Born	19,645	22.7%
	Naturalized	25,986	30.0%

Table 11: Korean American Voter Estimates

# Profiles of Language Communities



Based on the 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, the number of Korean American citizens who are eligible to vote is estimated to be 45,631, which is derived from the total number of both US born and naturalized Korean Americans (58,879) multiplied by the percentage of Koreans 18 years and older (77.5%) as shown in the table above.

### 3) Vote-by-Mail

The percentage of Korean Americans Voting-by-Mail is increasing. For general elections held in 2004 and 2006 50% of all Korean votes were cast by vote-by-mail voters. For the 2008 General election that number increased to almost 60%.

### 4) Turnout

Korean American Voter Turnout					
	2004 General	2006 General	2008 General	2010 General	
Registered Voters	16,035	19,456	22,774	23,028	
Voters who voted	10,045	7,009	14,584	9,895	
Voting Types	At Polling Place	4,734 (47.1%)	2,709 (38.7%)	5,233 (35.9%)	2,671 (27%)
	Vote-by-mail	5,065 (50.4%)	4,129 (58.9%)	8,534 (58.5%)	6,776 (68.5%)
	Provisional, etc.	246 (2.5%)	171 (2.4%)	817 (5.6%)	448 (4.5%)
Korean American Voters Turn-Out	62.6%	36%	64 %	43.0%	
County Average Turn-out	73.2%	50.5%	72.6%	55.4%	

Table 12: Turnout and Voting Types of Korean American Voters

The turnout of Korean American voters has been typically lower than the average turn out ratio of the total registered voters in Orange County. Both in 2004 and 2008 presidential general elections, for example, the turn out ratios of Korean American voters were 62.6% and 64% respectively while those of the county as a whole were 73.2% and 72.6% respectively. In the 2006 and 2010 non-presidential general elections, the turn out ratios of Korean American voters were 36% and 43% respectively whereas the average turn out ratios of the total registered voters in Orange County were 50.5% and 55.4% respectively.

### Outreach to Community: Three Main Purposes

#### 1) Voter Education and Outreach

Voter education in the Korean community gained momentum when the newly purchased electronic voting system was introduced to the public in July of 2003. At this time the Outreach Unit actively participated in making presentations including for the Korean community with help from two Korean volunteers.

Since 2004, our voter education/outreach activities in the Korean community have placed more emphasis on voter registration and participation. The registration campaigns for the Korean American voters have included the installation of voter registration booths at major community events where many prospective Korean American registered voters are expected to attend. As a result of these efforts by both our office and Korean community organizations, the number of registered voters who were born in Korea has increased 52.6% in seven years (2004- 2011).



## **Challenges**

More than 70% of Koreans in Orange County attend church of various denominations. Although we have attempted to partner with the Korean churches some have proved to be hesitant because of the political nature of the candidates we serve. They wish to remain politically neutral. However, Korean churches have openly encouraged their congregations to participate in the electoral process by registering to vote, signing petitions and voting on specific State Ballot Measures. Accordingly, there seems to exist an opportunity to seek partnerships with Korean churches through a more active and creative effort emphasizing the importance of participating in the electoral process for the benefit of the Korean community as a whole.

There is a general lack of interest in the body politic within the general community as well which stems from a lack of understanding of the United States political system.

Volunteerism in Korea is a not a cultural norm. For example, poll workers in Korea are government employees and act in their election capacity as part of their job duties. It would be like 6,000 of the County of Orange's 18,000 employees mandated to work the polls as part of their job.

## **Strategies**

In joint efforts with several Korean organizations such as the Korean-American Federation of Orange County, the Korean-American Citizens League of O.C, the Korean-American Seniors Association of Orange County and other facilities for seniors in Orange County, our language staff continues to make numerous presentations about the status of Korean American voters in Orange County and the importance of voting with a view to increasing Korean voters' participation in the electoral process.

In the Orange County Korean community, utilizing news media is the most effective way of disseminating election information and educating voters about the importance of participating in the electoral process. Our language staff has formed friendly and cooperative relationships with the two major Korean daily newspapers and they have been very active for educating Korean American voters by carrying election related articles during the election times.

## **2) Translation of Election Materials/Language Assistance**

As stated previously, we believe that we have an advanced translation program. We are extremely aggressive in providing translations of election materials and ensuring that language assistance is available to those who need it. Much like the increasing number of voters requesting materials in Vietnamese there is a growing number of Korean elected officials that count on proper translations making diligence on our part even more imperative.

## **Challenges**

Unlike the other languages we translate, the Korean language does not have different dialects or accent marks that make proper translation tricky. However, like the rest, there may be English words used, especially when it comes to technical and legal words that make it complicated to describe to the Korean reader. Finding qualified extra help to assist with proofreading Korean translated material is difficult.

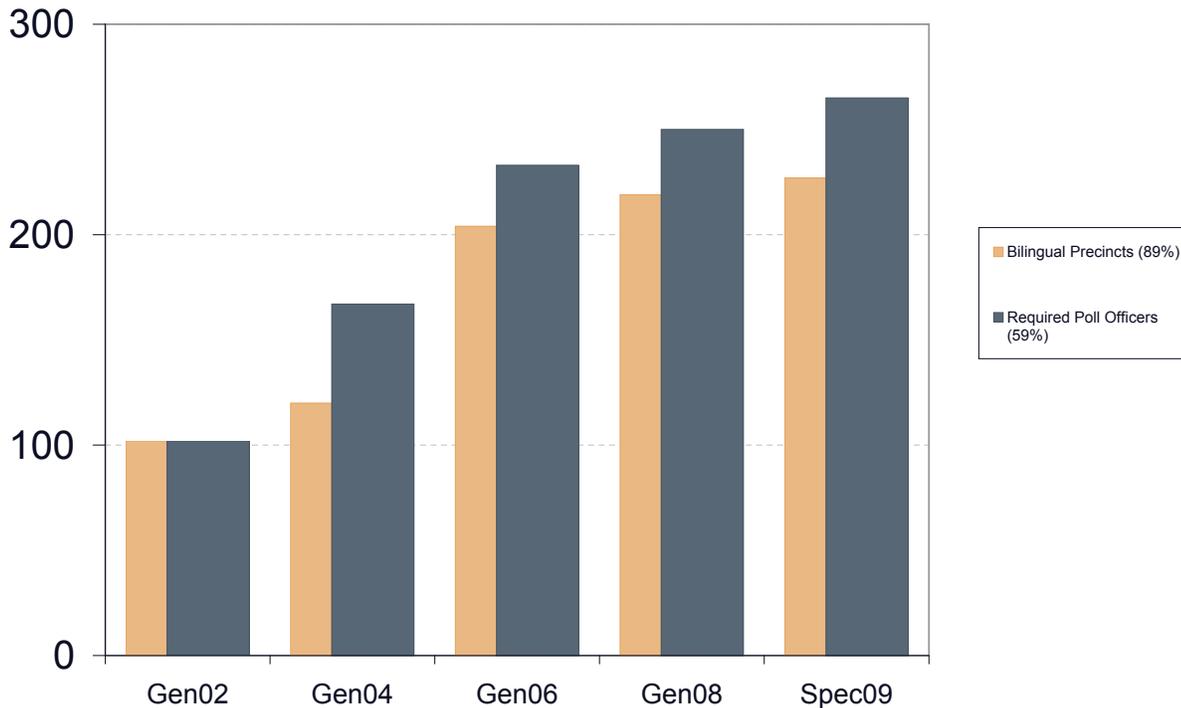
## **Strategies**

The Registrar of Voters' proofing and tracking process ensures the quality of the translated Korean materials. To provide voters with more information than translated election-specific materials, the Korean community program staff also disseminates supplemental materials to help voters gain a better understanding of the election process, including easy voter guides and FAQs.



## 3) Bilingual Poll Worker Recruitment

### Korean Bilingual Recruitment



Korean bilingual poll worker recruitment is based on the number of voters who were born in Korea in addition to polling places identified by the Secretary of State in 2002. Of the total precincts in Orange County roughly 240 are targeted as Korean bilingual representing approximately 20% of all precincts. Today we have approximately 1300 Korean bilingual poll workers in our database.

#### Challenges

In 2004, we decided to use stricter criteria in recruiting and assigning bilingual Korean poll workers instead of merely relying on the Secretary of State list for bilingual precincts. As a result, the total number of both bilingual Korean precincts and bilingual Korean poll officers required for the 2004 general election increased to 120 and 167, respectively.

These numbers have continuously been increasing for the subsequent elections. In the November 2, 2010 Statewide General Election, for example, the total number of both bilingual Korean precincts and required bilingual Korean poll officers were 238 and 274 respectively, recording an almost a 98% increase in Korean bilingual precincts and more than a 60% increase in required poll officers compared with those of the 2004 general election.

The highest growth rate in the four areas of the county is in the southern area which has recorded a 63% increase. This is not surprising as the number of bilingual precincts has increased in the southern part of the county for all languages to some degree.



Moreover, the Korean American registered voters in the South-Central area are more scattered across precincts while those in most of the North and North-central areas are concentrated in certain precincts. Accordingly, the total number of bilingual Korean precincts in Irvine is, for example, more than twice that of Fullerton despite the fact that Fullerton has more registered Korean American voters than Irvine.

Considering the fact that the hours of working the polls is from 6:00 a.m. to approximately 9:00 p.m. on Election Day, the pool of volunteers is limited to: 1) elderly voters who are possibly retired; 2) female voters without school aged children; and 3) college and high school students.

The volunteer pool is further limited, particularly among elderly voters, due to the requirement for having to be proficient in speaking, reading and writing both English and Korean to volunteer as a poll worker. In addition, college and university students are, in most cases, not available for working the polls due to conflicts with their exams.

Particularly problematic for Korean bilingual recruitment is the high ratio of cancellations among the poll workers who have initially committed. We typically see a cancellation rate over 30%. Cancellations are usually due to personal emergencies, business trips and travels out of county or abroad.

## **Strategies**

To overcome the challenges in recruiting poll officers mentioned above, we have developed a more efficient volunteer management system and more effective poll officer recruitment methods:

**Volunteer management system:** Internally, we have created and maintained a volunteer management database containing the historical data of all the poll officers worked in all previous elections as well as prospective poll officers. On average, about 50% of bilingual Korean poll workers for each election are recruited from this database.

**Diversification of recruitment methods:** With the an ever increasing number of required poll workers and given the ratio of about 50% new poll workers, we have diversified the methods of poll worker recruitment, of which the most effective ones include:

- High school student poll worker program
- Direct mailing/emailing to the voters at targeted precincts
- Poll worker interest card included on the sample ballot
- Help from Korean news media
- Referral by current poll workers
- Free recruitment ads on community bulletins of Korean news media and job sites

## **Trends of Recruitment Methods**

Since the 2004 General Election, almost half of the new poll workers recruited are Korean American high school students. The most effective method for recruiting new poll workers from the general voter population has been: 1) direct mail or email sent to the voters at targeted precincts; 2) volunteer interest card on sample ballots; 3) articles published in the major Korean newspaper about the needs for Korean poll workers; and 4) referrals by previous poll workers ; and 5) recruitment advertisements on online Korean community bulletins.

Given the limited pool of volunteers and increasing number of required poll workers, it is imperative that we maintain a high retention rate of poll workers for future elections. We will achieve this goal by building up personal relationships in part by providing excellent customer service. When the poll worker is newly recruited, a welcome letter/email is sent out with information about the assigned polling place and poll worker training schedule together with driving directions. After elections, all the poll workers are thanked for their volunteer work and asked for feedback about their experience.

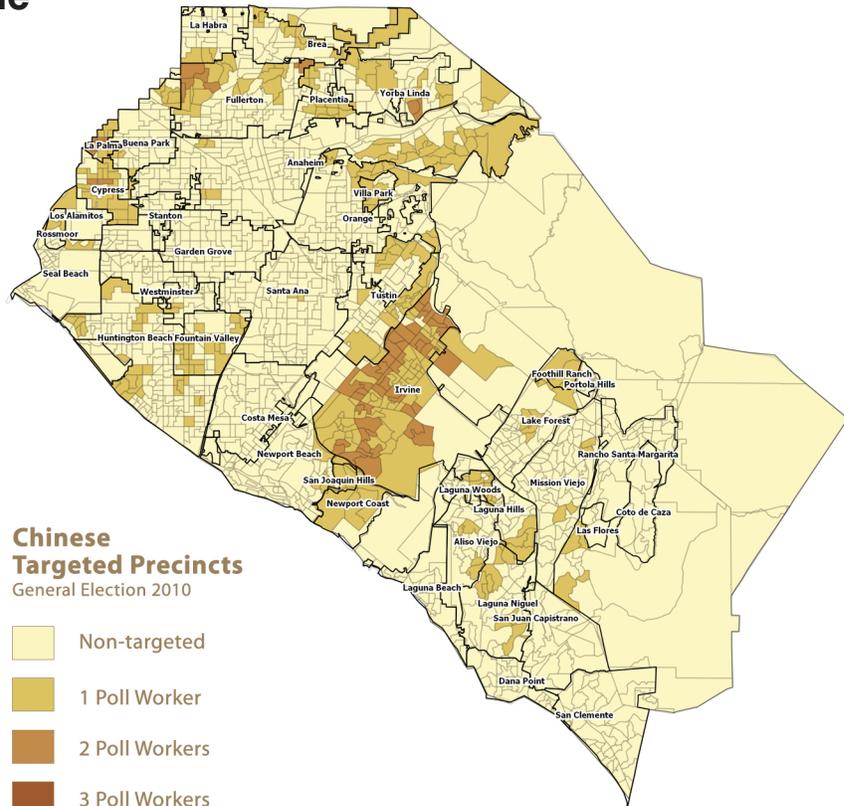


## Chinese Community Profile

### Historical Perspective

Chinese immigration to California began in the mid-1800's upon the discovery of gold in the American River near Sacramento. Over time Chinatowns would appear in major cities like San Francisco and Los Angeles. But in the 1960's Chinese began to move out of the city to the suburbs and, in many instances, have not assimilated but have come together in the same area.

As other communities have done historically, Chinese have migrated from Los Angeles to Orange County. The city of Irvine has the largest concentration of Chinese population with 31% of the Chinese voters in Orange County (see Table 13, next page). The majority of the Chinese voters in Orange County are from Taiwan, but there has been an increase in the number of Chinese voters from mainland China as the country becomes more open to the Western world.



### Demographics

In Orange County there is an estimated 82,523 Chinese residents based on the most recent 2010 American Community Survey One-Year Estimate. Of that 51,735 were born outside of the United States. The Chinese voter community is mainly comprised of naturalized citizens from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, mostly residing in suburban cities throughout the county.

Mandarin Chinese is the prevalent spoken language in the community although there are other major dialects such as Cantonese and Taiwanese. Traditional Chinese is the written language used by most local Chinese media as it has been in most parts of the Chinese immigrant communities in the United States.

### Establishment of Community Program

The Chinese community program was established in 2003 as a result of the federal mandate to meet the growing needs of the Chinese voter community. With a need for breaking ground in voter outreach to the Chinese community, the Chinese Community Program Specialist was responsible for (1) developing and implementing a bilingual Chinese poll worker recruitment plan, (2) involving community organizations in the electoral process by building relationships and



support, and (3) assisting Chinese voters in the electoral process through language services and voter education. Since the inception we have been expanding our program continuously through various outreach venues. In striving to increase the participation of the Chinese voter community in the electoral process, we have made great strides in community outreach as well as poll worker recruitment.

## Participation in Electoral Process

### Trends of Community Voters

#### 1) Community Numbers by Place of Birth and Language Requests

Chinese Voter Concentration		
City	Voters	Percentage
Irvine	7,145	31%
Anaheim	1,286	8%
Huntington Beach	1,167	5%
Fullerton	1,122	5%
Tustin	882	4%
OC Chinese Total	22,151	

Table 13: Top 5 Cities with High Concentration of Chinese Voter Population

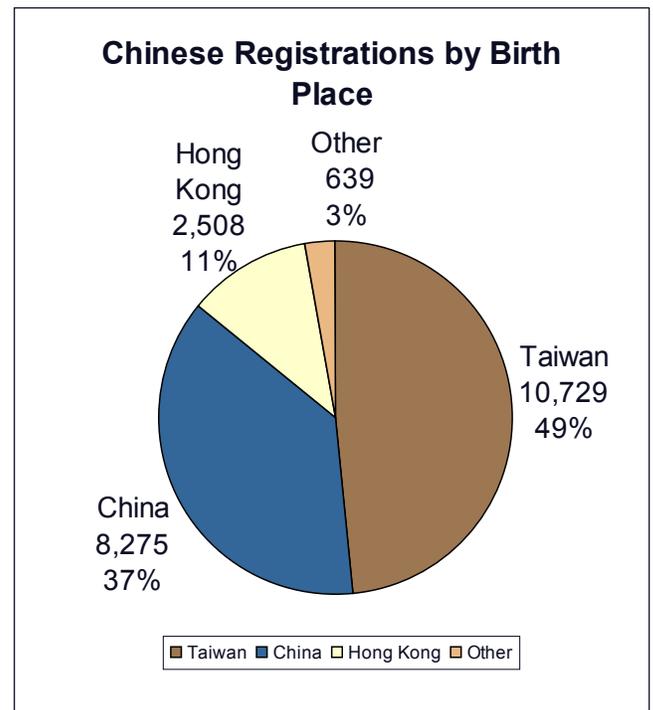
Currently there are 22,151 active registered Chinese voters (born in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong) in Orange County. This represents an increase of over 8,000 voters since 2004.

Requests for election materials in Chinese have also increased to 6,782 during the same period, but the percentage of Chinese voters requesting language materials has remained approximately the same over the years.

#### 2) Estimate of number of voters

Although the number of voters requesting Chinese language materials has not increased significantly, both the growth in the total number of Chinese voters and our outreach experience have shown that we actually have a much larger eligible voting population in the Chinese community. We have found that many Chinese voters registered at the naturalization ceremony or DMV after becoming citizens do not know to vote later due to lack of election knowledge. Still, many Chinese citizens do not register to vote due to fear of jury duty or unfamiliarity with the electoral process.

*The majority of Chinese voters are from Taiwan, but the number from mainland China has recently grown.*





### 3) Vote-by-Mail

Among the 22,151 registered Chinese voters, 8,862 are permanent vote-by-mail voters, representing 38% of the total registered Chinese voter community. In the 2010 General Election, 60% of the votes cast by Chinese voters are vote-by-mail voters. This indicates that vote-by-mail is a preferred voting option for Chinese voters in Orange County.

### 4) Turnout

In the 2010 General Election, 45% of registered Chinese voters in Orange County turned out to vote, lower than the 55% turnout rate for the general population. Unlike Los Angeles County where there is a longer history of political involvement and representation of the Chinese community on the local level, more effort is needed to encourage Chinese voters in Orange County to get out to vote.

### *Outreach to Community: Three Main Purposes*

#### 1) Voter Education and Outreach

Educating Chinese voters on the election process and the importance of voting has been the focus of our voter outreach. Customized presentations for various groups are regularly conducted to introduce the election system and address common misconceptions regarding the voting process. Most importantly, voters who need assistance in Chinese can now receive important election information through many channels such as Chinese media, community organizations and local events. An increasing number of Chinese voters utilize our language service phone line during election time, and they have shown more interest in the election process by asking in-depth questions other than how to register. We have also received inquiries from voters in neighboring counties without dedicated bilingual staff as our Chinese language program is well recognized in Southern California.

Over the years the Registrar of Voters has outreached to many Chinese community organizations and maintained good relationships with them through meeting participation and presentations. Several key Chinese community organizations have actively helped us advance our missions, including Orange County Chinese American Lions Club, Irvine Evergreen Chinese Senior Association, South Coast Chinese Cultural Center, Orange County Chinese American Chamber of Commerce and Asian American Senior Center. Leaders and enthusiastic individuals in the community help us distribute election information and recruit bilingual poll workers. Through our community network, we are also able to help our Election Services team obtain polling places and training sites as needed.

#### **Challenges**

**Diverse community:** The Chinese voter population in Orange County consists of immigrants from Taiwan, China, Hong Kong and many other Asian countries. Although Mandarin is the prevalent Chinese language, Chinese people from different countries of origin actually speak different dialects and have different political ideologies. When we outreach to individuals and organizations in the community, we need to appeal to a broad spectrum of voters since our goal is to include as many voters as possible. We also need to be aware of sensitive issues that are divisive for the community.

**Degree of cultural assimilation:** Compared to other language communities, the Chinese voter community is composed of relatively recent immigrants in large numbers. Culturally the Chinese community is less assimilated than other ethnic groups, and naturally their civic aspect of assimilation takes longer time to occur. With less familiarity with the US political system and election process, much education is needed to increase voter participation.

**Perception of Politics:** In the Chinese culture, elections are often perceived as simply politics rather than part of the democratic process. For many historical reasons, traditionally many Chinese people do not want to participate in political



activities, and parents usually do not encourage their children to get involved in the political process either. A lot of voter education is needed in order to break this cultural barrier when we reach out to the community or try to recruit bilingual poll workers.

## **Strategies**

Many of the strategies mentioned above for poll worker recruitment have also been applied to voter outreach effectively. In addition, the following channels have allowed us to disseminate election information locally to a wide range of targeted audiences in the Chinese community:

- Chinese Yellow Pages: Frequently asked questions about election process and procedures have been placed in the community resources section of the Chinese Yellow Pages which is freely available to all Chinese families.
- Chinese Schools: Throughout the county there are many Chinese schools established by first-generation Chinese immigrants to help their children learn about their heritage and language. Their events, facilities and newsletters provide great opportunities for reaching out to Chinese voter parents.
- Election Workshops: Presentations tailored to the Chinese community with customized messages and materials is a great way to raise awareness on the election process and voting procedures. Senior associations, professional organizations and cultural foundations are examples of community groups that may be interested in having a bilingual staff member as a speaker. These face-to-face interactions provide more educational opportunities and help develop long-term relationships with the community.
- Election Information Email: Regularly emailing community organizations and interested individuals with important election information can help spread the word efficiently. It also has the potential of reaching an even wider audience to their associated networks.

## **2) Translation of Election Materials/Language Assistance**

### **Challenges**

In addition to the common challenges faced by all our community outreach program staff in providing translated materials, regional differences in the Chinese community present another challenge for the Chinese community specialist. We need to ensure that translations are as universal linguistically and culturally as possible for all Chinese voters from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Court-certified translators' unfamiliarity with local culture and the election process also complicates the proofing process under tight deadlines.

### **Strategies**

The Registrar of Voters' proofing and tracking process ensures the quality of the translated Chinese materials. To provide voters with more information than translated election-specific materials, the Chinese community program staff also disseminates supplemental materials to help voters gain a better understanding of the election process, including easy voter guides and FAQs.

## **3) Bilingual Poll Worker Recruitment**

In order to meet our increasing bilingual poll worker requirements, we have been actively recruiting bilingual poll workers and have significantly expanded our Chinese volunteer database. As a result of our bilingual poll worker program, many Chinese-speaking voters who were initially not familiar with the election process have become active participants in the process. Not only do they assist language voters on Election Day, but they also work along side of their fellow precinct

# Profiles of Language Communities



board members to serve the general voter population in their community. Many of them have also extended this volunteer spirit by recruiting their family and friends to work the polls. Now there is a new pride among many Chinese voters in working the polls to serve the community.

## Challenges

**Small volunteer pool:** Compared to other language communities, a much higher percentage of Chinese voters need to be recruited in order to meet the bilingual poll worker requirements. The poll worker to voter ratio for the Chinese community is much higher than that for the general voter community. This extremely high requirement coupled with the difficulty of finding qualified bilingual voters poses a tremendous challenge for the program staff.

**Disproportionate increase in poll worker requirement to voter population growth:** Despite a steady increase in the number of registered voters in the Chinese community, the overall Chinese population in Orange County has not increased significantly over the last six years. However, the bilingual Chinese poll worker requirement has been increasing for every major election.

**Low or zero actual language assistance requests in certain precincts:** In many precincts that currently require at least one bilingual Chinese poll worker, the actual number of voters who request language ballots is either in single digits or there are no requests at all. Although more Chinese voters have requested language ballots as they become more aware of our service, many bilingual precincts have maintained very low numbers of language requests over the years.

Voter to Poll Worker Ratio					
	English	Spanish	Vietnamese	Korean	Chinese
Registered Voters	1,554,620	102,891	83,430	24,950	22,151
Poll Workers Required	3339	572	402	274	253
Ratio	2:1000	5:1000	5:1000	1:100	1:100

Table 14: Poll Worker to Voter Ratio in General Election 2010

Poll Worker Requirement and Voter Growth									
Election	Spe03	Pri04	Gen04	Pri06	Gen06	Pri08	Gen08	Pri10	Gen10
Poll Workers	66	104	152	148	223	235	238	263	253
Registered Voters	14,070	15,356	16,562	18,664	18,468	19,744	20,673	21,995	21,948
Poll Worker Increase	--	57.58%	46.15%	-2.63%	50.68%	5%	1.28%	10.5%	-3.8%
Voter Increase	--	9.14%	7.85%	12.69%	-1.05%	6.9%	4.71%	6%	0%

Table 15: Chinese Poll Worker Recruitment Requirements VS. Voter Growth

## Strategies

Multiple recruitment methods: Breaking away from the tradition of making outbound calls to voters as the main method of poll worker recruitment, which is time consuming and inefficient, we utilize a variety of methods to recruit bilingual Chinese poll workers. Our methods include:

# Profiles of Language Communities



- Direct mailing to voters (targeted precincts, new voters, etc.)
- Active request for poll worker referrals
- Partnership with community organizations
- Targeted email campaign to various groups
- Special featured newspaper articles and TV interviews (poll worker stories, presentation highlights, etc.)
- Placement of flyers at gathering places such as Chinese supermarkets, community centers and churches

We have tracked the results over the years and found that word of mouth through poll workers and direct mailing consistently produced the most number of Chinese poll workers.

- **Strategic poll worker assignment transfer:** Although we make every effort to assign poll workers as close to home as possible, we often need to ask bilingual Chinese poll workers to travel out of their own precinct due to the scarcity of bilingual poll workers in certain areas. In the beginning of the poll worker recruitment process, we have to evaluate the number of available Chinese poll workers in each city throughout the county to determine how to best place them at appropriate targeted precincts in order to maximize our coverage area. Many bilingual poll workers understand that they are assigned or transferred to certain locations based on our needs. Some of them kindly travel a great distance to other cities to help us fulfill requirements.
- **Alternative sources for poll workers:** Because of the limited volunteer pool among registered Chinese voters, we have recruited bilingual poll workers from other sources. Examples are high school students and nonnative Chinese speakers who have learned Chinese as a second language.
- **Appeal to cultural values on family and education:** Recruiting Chinese poll workers through strong family ties and emphasizing an educational opportunity has been quite effective. Among our Chinese poll workers there are many family teams such as mother-daughter, father-son, brothers, sisters and husband-wife.
- **Rapport building with volunteers through good customer service:** To retain bilingual Chinese poll workers who are recruited with great efforts, we strive to provide them with a positive experience through good customer service. Many bilingual poll workers appreciate our approaches that not only help them perform their newly assigned duty but also motivate them to return for future elections:
  - Welcome email with program information and assignment confirmation
  - Location map for elders and new residents not familiar with the area
  - Assistance with registration and vote-by-mail issues
  - Translated common election terms and frequently asked questions
  - Thank-you phone call and email following an election



# Needs Assessment and Long Term Strategy





## Needs Assessment and Long Term Strategy

As we continue to expand our language assistance programs to better serve the language community, we have identified several issues and trends that require more attention in the future. Based on our experience in the development and implementation of bilingual community programs, we believe that it is essential to take some factors into consideration in order to provide enhanced services for voters who need language assistance.

### Identification of Future Needs

#### Voter Interest in Vote-By-Mail

Over the years we have seen an increase in the number of vote-by-mail voters in Orange County. The same trend is also occurring in our language communities. With more vote-by-mail voters in the language communities, it becomes important to see how we can enhance the voting experience and increase the participation of the language voters who prefer to vote by mail rather than go to the polling place.

#### Voter Utilization of Bilingual Poll Workers

The majority of our bilingual poll workers report that their bilingual skills are not used at the polling place. Although bilingual poll workers enjoy the experience of working with other community volunteers to serve voters in general, many have expressed disappointment in not being able to use their language skills. In fact, some bilingual poll workers who do not see any minority voters in their precincts feel strongly that their service is not needed. The reduction in morale of poll workers leads to an increased need for retention efforts.

#### Increasing Voter Requests for More Election Information

As more language voters become aware of the services our office provides, there is also a need for more election information. Not only do voters call our language staff to ask about their registration and polling place information, they also desire to learn more about the democratic process. What average voters should know about voting may be unfamiliar to naturalized citizen voters who face language and cultural barriers. Voter education for the language communities often means more time spent on the phone explaining procedures, the need for customized educational materials, or more face-to-face presentations for community groups.

#### Possible Addition of Tagalog as Another Supported Language

According to the 2000 Census, there were 35,522 residents in Orange County who were born in the Philippines and 32,178 residents speaking their native language Tagalog at home. This represented approximately 1.2% of the Orange



County population. The 2007 American Community Survey One-Year Estimate further showed an increase in the Filipino population with an estimate of 40,025 residents born in the Philippines. The trends provided evidence of the possibility that Tagalog would be required in Orange County after the 2010 Census, which ultimately did not occur. The 2010 Census Demographic Profile Data for Orange County shows that there are 71,060 Filipinos representing about 2.1% of county residents. However, Tagalog was not added to the list of Orange County's covered languages when the Director of Census released the Census Bureau's determinations.

## Long Term Strategy for Enhancing Language Assistance Programs

In light of the future needs we have identified and the challenges for each language community in program implementation, we hope to enhance bilingual community programs to better serve voters who need language assistance:

### **More emphasis on voter education is needed as an integral part of language assistance programs.**

Through our community outreach work we have learned that voters who need language assistance to vote actually need such assistance before they go to the polling place. To ensure voters in the language communities can exercise their voting rights and actively participate in the election process, we need to help them understand the process and procedures first.

Ever changing election procedures and complicated election materials can confuse many natural-born citizens. Naturalized citizens who are not familiar with the system need more information assistance in the election process than translated ballot materials and bilingual poll workers. In fact such voter education can also benefit bilingual poll worker recruitment as more knowledge will generate more interest and participation.

Even though we have made great strides in outreaching to the language communities there is still much to be done given our current challenges and future needs. Constant elections provide us both the opportunity of awareness and difficulty of balancing the time for voter education, bilingual poll worker recruitment and translation workloads at the same time.

To enhance language assistance programs with a focus on voter education, the following areas may be enhanced:

- Developing easy-to-read voting guides for new citizens.
- Language speaker's bureau program.
- Coordinated educational campaign through the use of media.

### **Find creative ways to maintain a healthy and active bilingual poll worker database.**

As our voter education and outreach has improved participation in the voting process has increased. This translates into a greater need for bilingual poll workers in all languages.

We must promote volunteer recruitment by enhancing current programs and creating new ones. To increase bilingual volunteerism we may:

- Coordinate a volunteer campaign through the use of media which may include purchasing commercial time.
- Use social-networking sites, such as Facebook, by community to keep in touch with our current volunteers and find



new ones.

- Determine why we have increased incidence of cancellations with bilingual poll workers versus the general volunteer and then work to decrease that number.
- Create new marketing pieces to attract volunteers from various demographic areas.

## Conclusion

The Orange County Registrar of Voters has been committed to complying with the language requirements of the Voting Rights Act for every election. We pride ourselves in maintaining a comprehensive language assistance program in all supported languages. From our experience we believe that the following essential components constitute a successful community outreach program for the language voter community:

- **Dedicated full time bilingual community program staff:** Bilingual community program specialists coordinate services in voter outreach, election material translation and volunteer recruitment for the language communities. With their community outreach experience and cultural knowledge, they serve as community liaisons for the Registrar of Voters to increase participation among voters who face cultural and language barriers.
- **Active community outreach:** From media campaigns to targeted events for specific audiences, we have a variety of programs to expand our voter outreach through local channels of communication. These efforts are important in order to raise awareness on voting issues and build ongoing relations with the community.
- **Quality translation of election materials:** Translating complex election materials is not a simple task that can be done quickly. The process we have instituted ensures translated election materials are accurate, appropriate and accessible.
- **Proactive recruitment of bilingual poll workers:** The challenge of recruiting qualified bilingual poll workers requires us to take a proactive approach in recruitment. We have developed a wide range of activities to continuously expand our volunteer database.

In our efforts to comply with the language mandate of the Voting Rights Act, we have been able to provide a variety of bilingual election services to voters who need language assistance. We will continue to respond to the needs of voters and work with language communities to increase voter participation in the democratic process of voting.