

State of California

ELECTIONS CODE

Section 10010

10010. (a) A political subdivision that changes from an at-large method of election to a district-based election, or that establishes district-based elections, shall do all of the following before a public hearing at which the governing body of the political subdivision votes to approve or defeat an ordinance establishing district-based elections:

(1) Before drawing a draft map or maps of the proposed boundaries of the districts, the political subdivision shall hold at least two public hearings over a period of no more than thirty days, at which the public is invited to provide input regarding the composition of the districts. Before these hearings, the political subdivision may conduct outreach to the public, including to non-English-speaking communities, to explain the districting process and to encourage public participation.

(2) After all draft maps are drawn, the political subdivision shall publish and make available for release at least one draft map and, if members of the governing body of the political subdivision will be elected in their districts at different times to provide for staggered terms of office, the potential sequence of the elections. The political subdivision shall also hold at least two additional hearings over a period of no more than 45 days, at which the public is invited to provide input regarding the content of the draft map or maps and the proposed sequence of elections, if applicable. The first version of a draft map shall be published at least seven days before consideration at a hearing. If a draft map is revised at or following a hearing, it shall be published and made available to the public for at least seven days before being adopted.

(b) In determining the final sequence of the district elections conducted in a political subdivision in which members of the governing body will be elected at different times to provide for staggered terms of office, the governing body shall give special consideration to the purposes of the California Voting Rights Act of 2001 (Chapter 1.5 (commencing with Section 14025) of Division 14 of this code), and it shall take into account the preferences expressed by members of the districts.

(c) This section applies to, but is not limited to, a proposal that is required due to a court-imposed change from an at-large method of election to a district-based election.

(d) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) "At-large method of election" has the same meaning as set forth in subdivision (a) of Section 14026.

(2) "District-based election" has the same meaning as set forth in subdivision (b) of Section 14026.

(3) "Political subdivision" has the same meaning as set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 14026.

(e) (1) Before commencing an action to enforce Sections 14027 and 14028, a prospective plaintiff shall send by certified mail a written notice to the clerk of the political subdivision against which the action would be brought asserting that the political subdivision's method of conducting elections may violate the California Voting Rights Act.

(2) A prospective plaintiff shall not commence an action to enforce Sections 14027 and 14028 within 45 days of the political subdivision's receipt of the written notice described in paragraph (1).

(3) (A) Before receiving a written notice described in paragraph (1), or within 45 days of receipt of a notice, a political subdivision may pass a resolution outlining its intention to transition from at-large to district-based elections, specific steps it will undertake to facilitate this transition, and an estimated time frame for doing so.

(B) If a political subdivision passes a resolution pursuant to subparagraph (A), a prospective plaintiff shall not commence an action to enforce Sections 14027 and 14028 within 90 days of the resolution's passage.

(f) (1) If a political subdivision adopts an ordinance establishing district-based elections pursuant to subdivision (a), a prospective plaintiff who sent a written notice pursuant to subdivision (e) before the political subdivision passed its resolution of intention may, within 30 days of the ordinance's adoption, demand reimbursement for the cost of the work product generated to support the notice. A prospective plaintiff shall make the demand in writing and shall substantiate the demand with financial documentation, such as a detailed invoice for demography services. A political subdivision may request additional documentation if the provided documentation is insufficient to corroborate the claimed costs. A political subdivision shall reimburse a prospective plaintiff for reasonable costs claimed, or in an amount to which the parties mutually agree, within 45 days of receiving the written demand, except as provided in paragraph (2). In all cases, the amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the cap described in paragraph (3).

(2) If more than one prospective plaintiff is entitled to reimbursement, the political subdivision shall reimburse the prospective plaintiffs in the order in which they sent a written notice pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (e), and the 45-day time period described in paragraph (1) shall apply only to reimbursement of the first prospective plaintiff who sent a written notice. The cumulative amount of reimbursements to all prospective plaintiffs shall not exceed the cap described in paragraph (3).

(3) The amount of reimbursement required by this section is capped at \$30,000, as adjusted annually to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, U.S. city average, as published by the United States Department of Labor.

(Amended by Stats. 2016, Ch. 737, Sec. 1. (AB 350) Effective January 1, 2017.)