



**NEVADA
COUNTY**
CALIFORNIA

Elections
Registrar of Voters

How to Place a Measure on the Ballot

A Guide for Governing Boards for the County, Cities, School Districts and Special Districts

(Revised Jan. 2026)

Nevada County Registrar of Voters

950 Maidu Ave Ste. 210

Nevada City, CA 95959

Phone: 530-265-1298

Web: www.nevadacountyca.gov/elections

Email: elections.mail@nevadacountyca.gov

Fax: 530-265-9829

This guide was developed in an effort to provide answers to questions frequently asked by governing bodies regarding how to place a measure on the ballot. It is for general information only and does not have the force and effect of law, regulation, or rule. In case of conflict, the law, regulation, or rule will apply.

Persons using this guide must bear full responsibility to make their own determinations as to all legal standards and duties.

General Measure Calendar

Dates	Events
E-125	Formal notice of the intent to call or consolidate election due to Nevada County Elections, required for general elections. Recommended time frame for ballot measures and for offices up for election in primaries.
E-88	Deadline to file resolution requesting Election or Consolidation of Election Last day to amend or withdraw a measure
E-88	Last day for County Counsel or City Attorney to submit Impartial Analysis Last day to submit arguments
E-85	10-Day public examination period for ballot measure materials begins
E-78	Last day to submit rebuttals to County Elections Official
E-77	10-Day public examination period for rebuttals begins
E-40	Voter Information Guide and Sample Ballots go in the mail
E-29	Ballots are mailed to all active registered voters; early voting begins
E-28	Drop boxes are available for use through the close of polls on Election Day
E-7	Last day for voters to request a ballot by mail
E-0	Election Day
E+2	First day of official canvass
E+30	Completion of official canvass (may be completed sooner)

Preparing Your Resolution

1. Resolution Calling for Election and Consolidation

Districts and Cities: Submit a “Resolution Requesting Consolidation of Election and Ordering of Such Election” and a “Notice to County Clerk of Measure Submitted to the Voters.”

County: Submit a “Resolution Requesting Consolidation of Election and Ordering of Such Election.”

Schools: Submit a “Resolution Ordering Election, Specifications of the Election Order, and Requesting Consolidation” and a “Notice to County Clerk of Measure Submitted to the Voters.”

The resolution should include a request for consolidation, ballot label (not to exceed 75 words, including title), the full measure text and instructions on printing (see below), jurisdiction map, and the vote requirement for measure passage (i.e., majority of votes cast; 2/3 votes cast; 55% votes cast). The resolution must state that the City or District will reimburse the County for costs incurred.

We can provide interested parties with an election-specific measure calendar.

2. The Measure Text

Provide clear instructions on what portion of the resolution or ordinance is considered the full text of the ballot measure. The full text may be printed in the County Voter Information Guide. There is no limit on the number of words that can be printed.

If you want the measure text printed in the County Voter Information Guide, please specify as such in the resolution. Instead of measure text, we can provide a link for voters who are interested in reading it. Voters are also instructed to contact Nevada County Elections for a copy of the measure text. Jurisdictions will be billed for costs.

3. The Ballot Label

A ballot label is a condensed version of the ballot title and summary (including the financial impact summary) and must be no more than 75 words.¹ See next page on “How to Count Words.”

Jurisdictions should consider beginning their ballot label with a few key summary words to summarize the measure. The summary words count toward the 75-word limit. See examples on Page 9.

Measures are followed by the words “YES” and “NO.”

School bond measures are followed by the words: “Bonds—Yes,” “Bonds—No.”²

School reorganization measures are followed by the words: “Reorganization of School Districts—Yes” and “Reorganization of School Districts—No.” Similar words may be used.³

¹ Elec. Code §§ 9051, 13247

² Educ. Code § 15122

³ Educ. Code § 35762

How to Count Words

There are strict guidelines for how to count words when creating your ballot label, as outlined below in Table 1.⁴ If you have any questions on word counting, please notify our office and we can assist you.

Table 1. How to Count Words

Abbreviations	An abbreviation for a word, phrase, or expression is counted as one word.
Dates	Dates consisting of a combination of words and digits shall be counted as two words, e.g., "January 1, 2021." Dates consisting of only a combination of digits shall be counted as one word, e.g., "1/1/21."
Hyphenations	Hyphenated words that appear in any generally available dictionary are considered one word. Each part of all other hyphenated words shall be counted as separate words.
Numbers	Any number consisting of a digit or digits are counted as one word, e.g., "100." Any number that is spelled out, e.g., "one hundred," count as separate words.
Percent Signs (%), Number Signs (#), and other symbols	It is department policy to count numbers consisting of a digit or digits used with a dollar sign (\$), cent sign (¢), percentage sign (%), or number sign (#) as one word.
Phone and Internet	Web addresses and telephone numbers are counted as one word.
Proper Nouns & Geographical names	All proper nouns, including geographical names, are counted as one word. For example, "Nevada County Board of Education" shall be counted as one word.
Punctuation	Punctuation is not included in the word count.
Required Titles	Words used in the title of arguments, rebuttals, and analyses, such as "Argument in Favor of Measure A" are not counted. All words used in the 75-word ballot question are counted except for the letter designating the measure.

⁴ Elec. Code § 9. Please note that the rules on counting words does NOT apply to the list of supporters and opponents of ballot measures, as specified under Elections Code Section 9170, nor does it apply to ballot designations under Elections Code Section 13107.

Assigning Letters to Measures

Nevada County Elections assigns letters to local measures. Letters are assigned in alphabetical order, starting with the next letter following the previous election. Measures are assigned through Z, or as close to the end of the alphabet as possible to accommodate all measures in the current election without wrapping letters. For example, if the previous election ended with local measure V and there are five local measures in the current election, then they will be assigned letters A, B, C, D, E (rather than W, X, Y, Z, A).

The County Elections Official may designate local measures with any letter following “A” and continuing alphabetically, in order to avoid voter confusion that might result from different local measures carrying the same letter designation in successive elections.⁵

Measures appear on the ballot in the following order:⁶

- State propositions
- School measures
 - County Board of Education
 - College
 - Unified schools
 - High schools
 - Elementary schools
- County measures
- City measures
- District measures

To allow for the most efficient use of space, our office may vary the order of the measures. However, state propositions must always be listed before local measures.⁷

If a district has voters in two or more counties, the counties will mutually agree to use a letter designation for the measure that will not conflict or confuse the voter.

⁵ Elec. Code § 13116

⁶ Elec. Code 13109

⁷ *Id.*

Arguments For or Against Ballot Measures

Nevada County Elections prepares and publishes a legal notice of election, including deadlines to file arguments for or against the measure. Information will also be posted on the Nevada County Elections website: www.nevadacountyca.gov/elections.

If more than one argument is submitted, our office will select one argument only. Priority is based as follows: 1) the governing body or members thereof, 2) an individual voter, bona fide association of citizens who are sponsors or proponents of the measure, 3) bona fide association of citizens, and 4) individual voters eligible to vote on the measure.⁸

All arguments and rebuttals must be filed with the Signature Statement provided by the County Elections Official. Arguments are limited to 300 words.⁹ All arguments concerning measures shall be accompanied by a Ballot Argument Statement Form. It must be signed by each proponent and by each author, if different, of the argument.

In addition to inclusion in the County Voter Information Guide, pursuant to Elections Code section 9170¹⁰, a list of supporters and opponents of local ballot measures shall be printed on the ballot, unless a statutory exception applies.

The printed list may include an association, a nonprofit organization, a business, or an individual.

If an association, nonprofit, or business, Nevada County Elections requires a signed statement from a representative of that entity, under penalty of perjury, that includes its name and an address and that attests (i) that the association, nonprofit organization, or business supports the measure, (ii) that the association, nonprofit organization, or business has been in existence for at least four years, and (iii) that it was not originally created as a committee described in Section 82013 of the Government Code.¹¹ Proponents or opponents that are entities may shorten their names using acronyms, abbreviations, or by leaving out words in their name, as long as doing so would not confuse voters with another well-known organization or business that did not take the same position on the ballot measure.

If an individual, current or former elected officials may be listed with the official's title (e.g., "State Senator Mary Smith," "Assembly Member Carlos Garcia," or "former Eureka City Council Member Amy Lee"). These titles may be shortened (e.g. "Senator" or "Sen." for "State Senator" or "Asm." for "Assembly Member"). An individual who is not a current or former elected official may be listed only with the individual's first and last name and an honorific (e.g., "Dr.," "M.D.," "Ph.D.," or "Esquire"), with no other title or designation, unless it is a title representing an association, nonprofit organization, or business that meets the above requirements.

A supporter or opponent shall not be listed if the supporter or opponent is a political party or is representing a political party.

The list of supporters or opponents may not exceed 125 characters, including spaces and semicolons.

⁸ Elec. Code §§ 9166, 9287, 9503

⁹ Elec. Code §§ 9162, 9282, 9501

¹⁰ The full text of Elections Code Section 9170 can be found at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=9170.&lawCode=ELEC.

¹¹ The full text to Government Code Section 82013 can be found at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=82013.&lawCode=GOV.

Rebuttal Arguments and Analyses

If arguments in favor and against are submitted, then filers will have the opportunity to submit rebuttals. Rebuttals are limited to 250 words.¹²

County Counsel or the City Attorney, whichever is applicable, will submit an impartial analysis. The impartial analysis may not exceed 500 words.¹³ County measures may also include a short statement of what a Yes or No vote means, with the summary limited to 75 words or less. The impartial analysis is available for public inspection and will be printed in the County Voter Information Guide.

Bond measures require a tax rate statement to be filed by the 88th day before the election. If the bond is a county measure, then the Board of Supervisors may direct the County Auditor to prepare a fiscal impact statement of no more than 500 words.¹⁴

¹² Elec. Code §§ 9069, 9167, 9285, 9504

¹³ Elec. Code §§ 9160, 9280, 9313, 9500

¹⁴ Elec. Code §§ 9160, 9401

Overview of Campaign Disclosures

First	Download the Fair Political Practices Commissions' Manual 3 for ballot measure committees at https://www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/campaign-rules/campaign-disclosure-manuals.html#title3
Second	<p>The Form 410 must be filed within 10 days of receiving \$2,000 in contributions. When filing the Form 410, include a \$50 payment made payable to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>If your committee has not yet reached the \$2,000 threshold, mark the "not yet qualified" box. The \$50 fee is requested at this time but is not legally required until the group qualifies as a committee.</p> <p>All FPPC forms are available online at https://www.fppc.ca.gov/forms.html</p>
Third	<p>The Form 460 is filed by recipient committees to report expenditures and contributions. The Form 460 can be used to file a pre-election statement, semi-annual statement, quarterly statement, termination statement, special odd-year report, or an amendment to a previously filed statement.</p> <p>For technical advice on completing the forms, contact the FPPC.</p> <p>Fair Political Practices Commission 428 J Street, Suite 620 Sacramento, CA 95814 General Contact: 916-322-5660 Advice Line: 1-866-ASK-FPPC (1-866-275-3772) Fax: 916-322-0886 Website: www.fppc.ca.gov</p>
Fourth	File Forms 460 and 410 to terminate the committee upon completion of your efforts.

Nevada County requires all filers to use Netfile to file disclosure documents. Using Netfile is easy and convenient. For more information, visit their website <https://www.netfile.com/corp/> or call (209) 742-4100.

Examples of How a Measure May Appear on the Ballot

CITY:	
Measure Z	
Z	Key Word Summary of Measure. Followed by the ballot title. The total number of words, including the summary, may not exceed 75 words. ¹⁵
<input type="checkbox"/>	YES
<input type="checkbox"/>	NO

Example with the first few words summarizing the measure in bold.

CITY:	
Measure Z	
Z	75-word ballot title without a summary
<input type="checkbox"/>	YES
<input type="checkbox"/>	NO

Example without a few key words summarizing the measure.

Bullets, italics, underlining, and bolding (beyond the title) are not permitted.

¹⁵ Elec. Code §§ 303, 9051, 13247

Guide to Writing Ballot Arguments

Nevada County Elections offers a comprehensive guide to writing ballot arguments, rebuttals, and analyses. If you are interested in this resource, please visit our website

<https://www.nevadacountyca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/47951/Nevada-County-Guide-to-Writing-Ballot-Arguments>.

If you have any questions, please contact our office and we will be happy to serve you.

This page is intentionally blank



Nevada County Registrar of Voters

950 Maidu Ave Ste. 210

Nevada City, CA 95959

Phone: 530-265-1298

Web: www.nevadacountyca.gov/elections

Email: elections.mail@nevadacountyca.gov

Fax: 530-265-9829