

A Guide for Districts

ELECTION COST ESTIMATES



MONTEREY COUNTY ELECTIONS

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Table of Contents

Election Cost Estimates..... 2

Variables Impacting Actual Costs 2

Calculating Election Cost Estimates 3

Election Invoices 3

Election Disclaimer 3

Election Cost Estimates

Local districts can calculate an estimated cost range based on historical election costs. These cost estimates are calculated to provide districts with the information they need to budget for an election. These estimates are based on historical averaged election costs including all districts in the county across all election types. The estimates are provided in the following categories:

- Consolidated Election: an election in which other districts are also holding an election and costs are shared. Typically includes polling places and mail ballot.
- Standalone Election, Polling Places: a special election in which no other districts share the cost of the election. This estimate includes polling places and mail ballot.
- Standalone Election, All-Mail: a special election in which no other districts share the cost of the election. This estimate does not include polling places.

Variables Impacting Actual Costs

The estimated range is not a fixed fee and will differ from the actual rate billed based on variables that impact the actual cost. These variables include but are not limited to the size of the district (district registration varies from 18 voters to over 218,000 voters); the number of districts sharing the cost of the election; the number of contests and candidates the district has on the ballot; the length of candidate statements and the party responsible for candidate statements; printing full measure text, the addition of arguments, rebuttals and additional pages in the voter information guide related to the measure, the actual number of registered voters at the time of the election; as well as changes in legislation will all impact the actual cost of any election.

A district consolidating with a primary election, with fewer districts sharing the cost, will experience a higher per registered voter cost than if they consolidate with a general election in which all districts are now participating, reducing the individual district's share of the election. Both of these scenarios are considered consolidated elections. The average cost of consolidating in these scenarios is reflected in the range.

The estimated cost range is based on historical costs inclusive of all variables and all districts. Considering the various scenarios, a district may experience election costs well below the range, within the range, or slightly above the range for any given election. Given the number of variables, the estimated range is provided to districts to ensure the district is prepared for their potential proportional share of the election.

When calculating cost estimates, the range is based on all districts and all scenarios. The estimated range is inclusive of varying numbers of contests. The range for a district will not double in a single election with the addition of a contest.

Example: If District A is scheduled to have their board member election in the November General Election, their estimated range for that election will be the standard range for consolidated

elections. If District A then adds a measure on the ballot, the estimated range for District A remains unchanged. District A will still use the standard estimated range for their district in budgeting for the election.

Calculating Election Cost Estimates

To calculate cost estimates, the district will multiply the number of registered voters in the area going to election by the dollar amount representing the average “low” of election costs and then separately for the average “high” of election costs. (Again, these are historical averages based on all districts and scenarios). For the categories of elections, these include:

- Consolidated Election: \$7 to \$10
- Standalone Election, Polling Places: \$16 to \$24
- Standalone Election, All-Mail: \$14 to \$22

Amounts on the range have recently been adjusted to reflect increases in costs related to staffing, printing, mailing, etc. Medium to large-sized districts may experience actual costs below the estimated range for consolidated elections during a regular scheduled general election. Each district will have record of their actual election costs.

The number of registered voters as of the last report of registration to the Secretary of State is available at [Voter Registration Counts](#). For current registration counts, please contact elections@countyofmonterey.gov.

Election Invoices

Election billing takes 4 to 5 months on average. This timeframe is needed to ensure all invoices related to the election and any potential funding sources that would off-set election costs are received and processed.

Election Disclaimer

Please note that calculating an estimate using the formula provided in this material is not consent or agreement to hold, consolidate or provide support services for an election. Requests from districts for any election scenario must be received in the form of an adopted resolution and considered by the Elections Department and brought to the Board of Supervisors. For more information, please contact elections@countyofmonterey.gov.