



## CITY OF PALO ALTO BALLOT MEASURE INFORMATION PACKET

The following are deadlines, established by the Office of the City Clerk, relating to any measure appearing on the November 3, 2026 election.

### Deadlines for the November 3, 2026 Election

| <u>Last Day</u>                                            | <u>Item</u>                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Friday, August 7, 2026                                     | Last day for jurisdictions to submit resolutions calling for a measure election to the Registrar of Voters the November 3 <sup>rd</sup> ballot                         |
| Tuesday, August 11, 2026, 4:00 p.m.                        | Last day to file written primary arguments for or against a measure not to exceed 300 words.<br><br>Last day to submit a list of Primary Argument Supporters/Opponents |
| Wednesday, August 12, 2026 through Friday, August 21, 2026 | Examination period for the primary arguments                                                                                                                           |
| Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 4:00 p.m.                        | Last day to file rebuttal arguments and City Attorney's impartial analysis                                                                                             |
| Wednesday, August 19, 2026 through Friday, August 28, 2026 | Examination period for rebuttal arguments and impartial analysis                                                                                                       |

**PLEASE NOTE: THIS INFORMATION PACKET FOR MEASURES HAS BEEN PREPARED TO ASSIST THE PROPONENTS AND OPPONENTS OF MEASURES FOR THE GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 3, 2026. THIS PACKET DOES NOT HAVE THE FORCE OR EFFECT OF LAW, REGULATION, OR RULE; IN THE CASE OF CONFLICT, THE LAW, REGULATION, OR RULE WILL APPLY. NO ONE SHOULD RELY SOLELY ON THIS INFORMATION BUT SHOULD SEEK LEGAL COUNSEL. LEGAL QUESTIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO PRIVATE LEGAL COUNSEL.**

## SUBMISSION OF ARGUMENTS FOR OR AGAINST MEASURES

Arguments will be printed in the Voter Information Portion of the sample ballot.

### **Elections Code § 9281. If not otherwise provided, voters may submit arguments.**

*If no other method is provided by general law, or, in the case of a chartered city, by the charter or by city ordinance, arguments for and against any city measure may be submitted to the qualified voters of the city pursuant to this article. If a method is otherwise provided by general law, or, in the case of a chartered city, by charter or city ordinance, for submitting arguments as to a particular kind of city measure that method shall control.*

### **Elections Code § 9282. Written arguments.**

*(a) For measures placed on the ballot by petition, the persons filing an initiative petition pursuant to this article may file a written argument in favor of the ordinance, and the legislative body may submit an argument against the ordinance.*

*(b) For measures placed on the ballot by the legislative body, the legislative body, or any member of members of the legislative body authorized by that body, or any individual voter who is eligible to vote on the measure, or bona fide association of citizens, or any combination of voters and associates, may file a written argument for or against any city measure.*

***(c) No argument shall exceed 300 words in length.***

*(d) The city elections official shall include the following statement on the front cover, or if none, on the heading of the first page, of the printed arguments: "Arguments in support or opposition of the proposed laws are the opinions of the authors."*

*(e) The city elections official shall enclose a printed copy of both arguments with each sample ballot provided that only those arguments filed pursuant to this section shall be printed and enclosed with the sample ballot. The printed arguments are "official matter" within the meaning of Section 13303.*

*(f) Printed arguments submitted to voters in accordance with this section shall be titled either "Argument In Favor Of Measure\_\_\_\_\_" or "Argument Against Measure\_\_\_\_\_" accordingly, the blank spaces being filled in only with the letter or number, if any, designating the measure. At the discretion of the elections official, the word "Proposition" may be substituted for the word "Measure" in these titles.*

Primary arguments are limited to 300 words. You may refer to the section in the enclosed **"Guidelines for Counting Words"** for assistance on counting words. Text is printed in the sample ballot pamphlet in single-spaced, full-justified, standard paragraph format. Only standard bullets will be printed and non-standard bullets will be changed to standard bullets. You may bold, italicize and underline text. After 5:30 p.m. on the argument filing deadline, arguments chosen will be emailed to the opposing authors.

Arguments filed with the City Clerk are confidential until after the deadline for the filing of those arguments. The next business day after the deadline, arguments may be viewed by the public or photocopies purchased.

All signatures on arguments and any other related documents must be original signatures. Faxed or photocopies signatures will not be accepted.

**Elections Code § 9283. Argument not accepted without names.**

*A ballot argument shall not be accepted under this article unless accompanied by the printed name and signature or printed names and signatures of the author or authors submitting it, or, if submitted on behalf of an organization, the name of the organization and the printed name and signature of at least one of its principal officers, who is the author of the argument.*

***No more than five signatures shall appear with any argument submitted under this article. In case any argument is signed by more than five authors, the signatures of the first five shall be printed.***

An author's name will appear in the sample ballot pamphlet **exactly** as submitted on the signature line of the **Declaration by Author(s) for Arguments**. Therefore, the "Type Name as Signed" line must match the signature line. Typed Names are preferred, as they are clearer to read. Only the author's name will be printed on the name line. Titles, such as Mr., Mrs., Dr., M.B.A., etc. may be included on the title line.

**Elections Code § 9285. Rebuttal arguments.**

*(a) (1) When an elections official receives an argument relating to a city measure that will be printed in the ballot pamphlet, the elections official shall send a copy of an argument in favor of the proposition to the authors of any argument against the measure and a copy of an argument against the measure to the authors of any argument in favor of the measure immediately upon receiving the arguments.*

*(2) The author or a majority of the authors of an argument relating to a city measure may prepare and submit a rebuttal argument or may authorize in writing any other person or persons to prepare, submit, or sign the rebuttal argument.*

***(3) No rebuttal argument may exceed 250 words.***

*(4) A rebuttal argument relating to a city measure shall be filed with the elections official no later than 10 days after the final filing date for primary arguments.*

*(5) A rebuttal argument relating to a city measure may not be signed by more than five persons and shall be printed in the same manner as a direct argument and shall immediately follow the direct argument, which it seeks to rebut.*

*(b) Subdivision (a) applies only if, not later than the day on which the legislative body calls an election, the legislative body adopts its provisions by majority vote, in which case subdivision (a) applies at the next ensuing municipal election and at each municipal election thereafter, unless later repealed by the legislative body in accordance with the procedures of this subdivision.*

Rebuttal arguments will be printed in the Voter Information Portion of the sample ballot.

In contrast to the arguments, those permitted to sign rebuttal arguments need **not** meet any criteria except that those who sign the rebuttal must either have signed the original argument or be authorized in writing from the authors of the argument to sign the rebuttal argument. The written authorization allowing a person to sign a rebuttal argument must be filed at the time of filing the rebuttal argument. Included in this pamphlet is a form titled “Rebuttal Signer Authorization” to authorize a different author to sign a rebuttal argument.

No more than five author signatures shall be accepted on a rebuttal argument. Authors can sign on separate pages of the **Rebuttal Argument Declaration by Author(s)**. If you have authors sign on separate pages, number the names in the order they are to appear.

An author’s name will appear in the sample ballot pamphlet **exactly** as submitted on the signature line of the **Declaration by Author(s) for Arguments**. Therefore, the “Type Name as Signed” line must match the signature line. Typed Names are preferred, as they are clearer to read. Only the author’s name will be printed on the name line. Titles, such as, Mr., Mrs., Dr., M.B.A., etc. may be included on the title line.

All signatures on rebuttal arguments, authorizations or any other related documents must be original signatures. Faxed or photocopied signatures will not be accepted.

Rebuttal arguments are limited to 250 words. You may refer to the “Guidelines for Counting Words” for assistance on counting words. Text is printed in the sample ballot pamphlet in single-spaced, full-justified, standard paragraph format. Only standard bullets will be printed and non-standard bullets will be changed to standard bullets. You may bold, italicize and underline text.

Rebuttal arguments filed with the City Clerk are confidential until after the deadline for the filing of those rebuttal documents. The next business day after the deadline, rebuttal arguments may be viewed by the public or photocopies purchased.

#### **Elections Code § 9286. Final date for arguments.**

*(a) Based on the time reasonably necessary to prepare and print the arguments and sample ballots and to permit the 10-calendar-day public examination as provided in Article 6 (commencing with Section 9295) for the particular election, the city elections official shall fix a date 14 days from the calling of the election as a deadline, after which no arguments for or against any city measure may be submitted for printing and distribution to the voters, as provided in this article. Arguments may be changed or withdrawn by their proponents until and including the date fixed by the city elections official during the normal business hours of the elections official’s office, as posted.*

*(b) The requirement in subdivision (a) that the period for submitting arguments for inclusion with the sample ballot materials must be 14 days from the calling of the election is not applicable when the election is consolidated with another election pursuant to Part 3 (commencing with Section 10400) of Division 10.*

**Election Code § 9287. Elections official to select if more than one argument.**

*If more than one argument for or more than one argument against any city measure is submitted to the city elections official within the time prescribed, he or she shall select one of the arguments in favor and one of the arguments against the measure for printing and distribution to the voters. In selecting the argument the city elections official shall give preference and priority, in the order named, to the arguments of the following:*

- (a) *The legislative body, or member or members of the legislative body authorized by that body.*
- (b) *The individual voter, or bona fide association of citizens, or combination of voters and associations, who are the bona fide sponsors or proponents of the measure.*
- (c) *Bona fide associations of citizens.*
- (d) *Individual voters who are eligible to vote on the measure.*

**Chapter 7. General Provisions**

**Election Code § 9600. Form of statement to be filed by author.**

All arguments concerning measures filed pursuant to this division shall be accompanied by the following form statement, to be signed by each proponent and by each author, if different, of the argument:

The undersigned proponent(s) or author(s) of the

\_\_\_\_\_  
(primary/rebuttal)  
argument \_\_\_\_\_  
(in favor of/against)  
ballot proposition \_\_\_\_\_  
(name or number)  
At the \_\_\_\_\_  
(title of election)  
election for the \_\_\_\_\_  
(jurisdiction)  
to be held on \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

Hereby state that such argument is true and correct to the best of \_\_\_\_\_ knowledge and belief.  
(his/her/their)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Elections Code § 9601. Arguments may be withdrawn.**

*Notwithstanding any other provisions of this code, whenever any ballot arguments for or against any measure submitted to the voters for approval are authorized, these arguments may be withdrawn by their proponents at any time prior to and including the final date fixed for filing arguments.*

**Palo Alto Municipal Code § 2.04.080. No Use Of Board Or Commission Titles In Ballot Arguments**

*No city board or commission member may use his or her board or commission title when signing a ballot argument for or against an ordinance or measure. If an argument is submitted to the city clerk with such a title in the signature, the title shall be omitted from the ballot argument signature.*

**PUBLIC EXAMINATION OF ARGUMENTS AND IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS**

**Elections Code § 9295. Public examination of arguments, ordinance and analysis.**

(a) *The elections official shall make a copy of the material referred to in Sections 9223, 9280, 9281, 9282, and 9285 available for public examination in the election official's office for a period of 10 calendar days immediately following the filing deadline for submission of those materials. Any person may obtain a copy of the materials from the elections official for use outside of the elections official's office. The election official may charge a fee to any person obtaining a copy of the material. The fee may not exceed the actual cost incurred by the elections official in providing the copy.*

(b) (1) *During the 10 calendar day public examination period provided by this section, any voter of the jurisdiction in which the election is being held, or the elections official, himself or herself, may seek a writ of mandate or an injunction requiring any or all of the materials to be amended or deleted. The writ of mandate or injunction request shall be filed no later than the end of the 10 calendar day public examination period.*

(2) *A peremptory writ of mandate or an injunction shall be issued only upon clear and convincing proof that the material in question is false, misleading, or inconsistent with the requirements of this chapter, and that issuance of the writ or injunction will not substantially interfere with the printing or distribution of official election materials as provided by law.*

(3) *The elections official shall be named as respondent, and the person or official who authored the material in question shall be named as real parties in interest. In the case of the elections official bringing the mandamus or injunctive action, the board of supervisors of the county shall be named as the respondent and the person or official who authored the material in question shall be named as the real party in interest.*

## RULES FOR COUNTING WORDS

The following guidelines are for computing the word count for candidate statements. The ***title, occupation and age are not included in the word count***, only the text of the statement is counted. The Office of the Registrar of Voters will make final determination of the word count.

### Word(s)

Punctuation..... **Free**

Dictionary words ..... **One**

"I", "the", "and", etc. are counted as individual words.

Abbreviations/Acronyms ..... **One**

Examples: SJSU, PTA, U.S.M.C., S.J.P.D.

Geographical name..... **One**

Only State of California, City, County and District names

Examples: Palo Alto - 1 word

County of Santa Clara - 1 word

College Terrace - 2 words

Numbers/Numerical Combinations/E-Mail Addresses:

Digits (1, 10, or 100, etc.)..... **One**

Spelled out (one, ten, or one hundred) ..... **One for each word**

50%, 1/2, etc..... **One**

Internet/E-mail addresses ([www.sccvote.org/johndoe@vote.com](http://www.sccvote.org/johndoe@vote.com)) ..... **One**

Number or letter used to identify a portion of text..... **One**

**Examples: (1), (a) will be counted as one word**

Dates:

All digits (01/01/14) ..... **One**

Words and digits (January 1, 2014) ..... **Two**

Characters used in place of word or number (& or #)..... **One**

Hyphenated words that appear in any generally available dictionary, printed in the United States within the past 10 years, shall be considered as one word. Each part of all other hyphenated words shall be counted as separate words.

Example: mother-in-law = 1 word      one-half = 2 words

## **ARGUMENT FILER CHECKLIST**

**Have you completed or complied with the following?**

- ☐ Authors meet criteria to sign
- ☐ Author's title as signed meets criteria
- ☐ Check which criteria author is signing pursuant to
- ☐ Residential address completed if author meets eligible voter criteria to sign
- ☐ Required form statement signed by author
- ☐ One to five author signatures
- ☐ Author signatures numbered in order of appearance
- ☐ Only author's name on name line
- ☐ Only author's TYPED title on title line (typed preferred)
- ☐ Author's TYPED name exactly matches signed name (typed preferred)
- ☐ Author's gender circled
- ☐ All signatures are original signatures
- ☐ Contact information supplied
- ☐ Not more than 300 words
- ☐ File argument by deadline



## **REBUTTAL ARGUMENT FILER CHECKLIST**

**Have you completed or complied with the following?**

- ☐ If different authors, submit written authorization
- ☐ Required form statement signed by author
- ☐ One to five author signatures
- ☐ Author signatures numbered in order of appearance
- ☐ Only author's name on name line
- ☐ Only author's title TYPED on title line (typed preferred)
- ☐ Author's TYPED name exactly matches signed name (typed preferred)
- ☐ Author's gender circled
- ☐ All signatures are original signatures
- ☐ Not more than 250 words
- ☐ Contact information supplied
- ☐ File rebuttal argument by deadline