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AB-287 Elections: polling places and vote centers. (2025-2026)

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Assembly Bill No. 287

CHAPTER 253

An act to amend Section 12283 of the Elections Code, relating to elections.

[Approved by Governor October 03, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 03, 2025.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 287, Lackey. Elections: polling places and vote centers.

Existing law authorizes the governing body with jurisdiction over school buildings or other public buildings, as defined, to allow its buildings to be used for polling places, or for vote centers, beginning up to 10 days before the election and continuing through election day, or to store voting machines and other vote-tabulating devices. Once a governing body has approved the use of a building as a polling place or vote center, existing law requires the governing body to instruct the school district or other public administrator to provide the elections official a site with an adequate amount of space that will allow the precinct board or vote center to perform its duties.

This bill would require the governing body to instruct the school district or other public administrator to provide the elections official with an adequate amount of space for voting operations and storage of associated supplies.

Existing law requires the district administrator to make building parking available at no charge to the precinct or vote center board and voters, as specified.

This bill would require the district administrator to also make accessible parking spaces and parking for assisting voters curbside available, if requested by the elections official.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 12283 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

12283. (a) For purposes of this section, "public building" means a building owned or controlled by any of the following:

- (1) A local governmental agency, including a city or county.
- (2) The University of California.
- (3) The California State University.
- (4) A community college district.

(b) (1) The governing body having jurisdiction over school buildings or other public buildings may authorize the use of its buildings for polling places, or for vote centers, as described in Section 4005, beginning up to 10 days before the election and continuing through election day, and it may also authorize the use of its buildings, without cost, for the storage of voting machines and other vote-tabulating devices.

(2) If a city or county elections official specifically requests the use of a school building or public building for polling places, or vote centers beginning up to 10 days before the election and continuing through election day, as well as during key dates necessary for drop-off, set-up, and pick-up of election materials, as determined by the elections official, the governing body having jurisdiction over the particular school building or public building shall allow its use for the purpose requested, except that the University of California is encouraged, but not required, to comply with a request made pursuant to this paragraph.

(3) When allowing use of a school building for polling places or vote centers, the governing body may, but is not required to, do any of the following:

(A) Continue school in session, if the governing body identifies to the elections official making the request the specific areas of the school buildings not occupied by school activities that will be allowed for use as polling places or vote centers.

(B) Designate the day for staff training and development.

(C) Close the school to students and certificated employees.

(c) (1) An elections official requesting the use of a school building pursuant to subdivision (b) shall include in the official's request a list of the schools from which the use of a building for polling places or vote centers is needed. Requests must be made within sufficient time in advance of the school year for the governing body to determine, on a school-by-school or districtwide basis, whether to keep the affected schools in session, designate the schoolday for staff training and development, or close the school to students and nonclassified employees before school calendars are printed and distributed to parents.

(2) An elections official requesting the use of a public building pursuant to subdivision (b) shall include in the official's request a list of the buildings from which the use of a building for polling places or vote centers is needed. Requests shall be made sufficiently before election day for the governing body of the city, county, or other local governmental agency to adequately plan for the public building's use as a polling place or vote center.

(d) (1) Once a governing body has approved the use of a school building or public building as a polling place or vote center, the governing body shall instruct the school district or other public administrator to provide the elections official a site with an adequate amount of space for voting operations and storage of associated supplies that will allow the precinct board or vote center to perform its duties in a manner that will not impede, interfere, or interrupt the normal process of voting and to make internet access available for use by local elections officials, if requested.

(2) Beginning 10 days before the election and continuing through election day, if requested by the elections official, the district administrator shall make building parking available at no charge to the precinct or vote center board and voters. If requested by the elections official, the district administrator shall also make accessible parking spaces and parking for assisting voters curbside available.

(e) A public building, including, but not limited to, a building operated by a school district, that is used as a polling place or vote center shall comply with applicable accessibility requirements described in this article, the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.), the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. Sec. 20901 et seq.), and the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. Sec. 10101 et seq.).