



PRESS RELEASE

Public Hearings on Election Code Changes

December 7, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AO 2021-110, an ordinance amending Title 28, Elections, was introduced before the Assembly on October 27, 2021, and has been set for two public hearings, the first of which is at tonight's Assembly meeting. The second public hearing is set for the December 21, 2021 Assembly Meeting. The ordinance is sponsored by Mr. Petersen, Chair LaFrance, and Vice-Chair Constant, all of whom are members of the Assembly Ethics and Elections Committee.

The ordinance proposes a limited number of changes to assist voters and make election processing more efficient, including:

- Clarifying language to address voter confusion;
- Adding a fourth state condition code to the list of voters who are not automatically mailed a ballot package, saving municipal tax dollars;
- Setting the same standards for a voter assistant as for a special needs representative;
- Revising and clarifying elements of the observer program;
- Reorganizing certain sections for clarity and removing redundant language;
- Making the rules for counting write-in votes more clear and specific.

Regarding the observer program, the ordinance does not change the number of observers allowed or the times when observers are authorized to observe election activities. Nor does the proposed ordinance change the requirement for observer training, the reasons why an observer may be asked to leave an election location, or the MOA Election Team's commitment to ensuring that observers understand the election process and showing them all aspects of that process.

A substitute version of the ordinance, containing additional changes, is being developed and will be on the agenda addendum for the December 21, 2021 meeting. A draft of the substitute ordinance can be found here:

<https://www.muni.org/Departments/Assembly/Pages/Meetings-Worksessions.aspx> (see December 3)

For more election information, please visit muni.org/elections. The public can email questions to elections@anchorageak.gov.

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CONTACTS:

Erika McConnell
elections@anchorageak.gov
Phone: 907-243-VOTE (8683)

Barbara A. Jones, Municipal Clerk