



# County of San Diego

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

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**MICHAEL VU**  
Registrar of Voters

**CYNTHIA L. PAES**  
Assistant Registrar of Voters

July 14, 2020

## SENT VIA EMAIL AND U.S. MAIL

Geneviève L. Jones-Wright, Esq., LL.M.  
Legal Director  
The Partnership for the Advancement of  
New Americans (PANA)

Christina Fletes-Romo  
Voting Rights Attorney  
ACLU of California  
39 Drumm Street  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Dear Ms. Jones-Wright and Fletes-Romo:

I am in receipt of your letter dated June 8, 2020. Let me thank you for reaching out to me regarding your request to provide voting services to the Somali voting population. The San Diego County Registrar of Voters has always worked to be inclusive in its work and to ensure that voters are provided services that are in line with state and federal law. This includes the languages covered under Section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act and Section 14201 of California Elections Code.

As you may know, the Secretary of State has published an updated list of Elections Code 14201 covered communities. Included with this update are two added languages for San Diego County, Japanese and Laotian, to the existing languages already covered (i.e. Arabic and Korean). This brings the total number of languages supported by the County, via federal or state law, to nine. Absent is Somali.

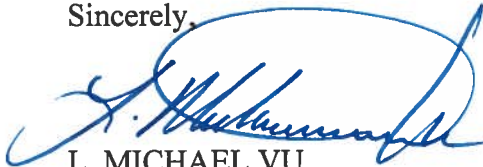
I appreciate receiving your request and making me aware of the research you have conducted regarding our Somali voting community. Although Somali is not covered, please know that the Registrar of Voters has a robust language advisory group to provide input on how best to serve communities of color. I invite your group and leaders within the Somali community to participate so we can ensure a continued level of awareness and education about the voting process. As well, we have procured services which gives us access to language interpreters who can assist those who are limited English proficient (LEP) Somalis.

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Additionally, we invite individuals within the Somali population to apply for various positions required to conduct an election. Each election, the Registrar of Voters conducts a number of hiring halls to attract qualified individuals to participate in a statewide election. These positions include seasonal temporary staff and volunteer poll workers. In the March 2020 Presidential Primary Election, the office hired over 1,200 seasonal staff members and over 7,000 volunteer poll workers. We would be happy to consider and would urge ACLU and PANA to refer individuals who are bilingual in English and Somali to apply. Should they meet the qualifications required, to the extent possible, my office would make a good faith effort to place these individuals in locations or positions where they can best serve the Somali voting population.

As we have worked closely with PANA and the ACLU of California on a variety of topics in the past, including such topics as National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) compliance; inmate voting rights; and more recently the nuances associated with the March 2020 party primary, we look forward to continuing our longstanding relationship and conversation on this topic.

Sincerely,



L. MICHAEL VU  
Registrar of Voters