



# Citizen's Redistricting Commission: Top 10 Questions

## 1. What is the Citizens Redistricting Commission?

Every 10 years after the census, California must redraw the boundaries of its Senate, Assembly, and State Board of Equalization districts. This is done so that the districts correctly reflect the state's population.

The Citizens Redistricting Commission is a new commission responsible for redrawing these districts. This responsibility was previously held by the legislature. The commission must draw the districts in conformity with strict, nonpartisan rules designed to create districts of relatively equal population that will provide fair representation for all Californians.

## 2. Where did it come from?

California voters authorized the creation of the commission when they passed the Voters FIRST Act (Act), which appeared as Proposition 11 on the November 2008 general election ballot.

## 3. Who can serve on the commission?

The application process is open to every registered California voter who:

- Has been continuously registered in California with the same political party, or with no political party, for the five years immediately prior to being appointed to the commission; and
- Has voted in at least two of the last three statewide general elections. However, an applicant is ineligible to serve on the commission if the applicant has a conflict of interest.

An applicant has a conflict of interest if, during the ten years prior to submitting an application, the applicant, or a member of his or her immediate family has:

- Been appointed to, elected to, or a candidate for a California congressional or state office;
- Served as an officer, employee, or paid consultant of a California political party or of the campaign committee of a candidate for California congressional or elective state office;
- Served as an elected or appointed member of a political party central committee in California;
- Been a registered federal lobbyist;
- Been a lobbyist registered with the State of California or a California local government;
- Served as paid California congressional, legislative, or State Board of Equalization staff; or
- Contributed \$2,000 or more to any California congressional, state, or local candidate for elective public office in any year.

An applicant also has a conflict of interest if the applicant is serving as staff or a consultant to, is under contract with, or has an immediate family relationship with the Governor, a member of the Legislature, a California member of Congress, or a member of the State Board of Equalization.

Please contact the Greenlining Institute for more information:

- **Northern and Central California:** Adam Briones at [adamb@greenlining.org](mailto:adamb@greenlining.org) or (510) 926-4022
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#### **4. How do I apply to become a member of the commission?**

You can submit an application to the Bureau of State Audits online at [www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov](http://www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov) beginning December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and ending February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

#### **5. How many commission members will there be?**

The commission will have 14 members, five members who are Democrats, five members who are Republicans and four members who are neither Democrats nor Republicans.

#### **6. How will the members of the commission be selected after the application period closes?**

The initial and supplemental applications will be passed along to an Applicant Review Panel consisting of three independent auditors.

1. The panel will select 120 of the “most qualified applicants” from the total pool. These 120 applicants will be interviewed in Sacramento (the bureau will reimburse applicants for their reasonable and necessary travel expenses to participate in an interview);
2. The 120 applicants will be divided into three subpools according to party affiliation: 40 applicants Democrats, 40 applicants Republicans, and 40 applicants who are neither Democrats nor Republicans;
3. From the 120 applicants that are interviewed, the panel will select 60 of the most qualified applicants divided into three subpools according to party affiliation: top 20 Democrats, top 20 Republicans, and the top 20 applicants who are neither Democrats nor Republicans;
4. By October 1, 2010, the panel presents the names of the applicants to the President pro Tempore of the Senate, the Minority Floor Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the Assembly, and the Minority Floor Leader of the Assembly. Each of these legislative leaders may remove up to two applicants from each of the subpools.
5. By November 20, 2010, the State Auditor must then randomly draw from the remaining pool the names of three Democrats, three Republicans and two applicants who are neither Democrats nor Republicans. These eight applicants shall become the first eight members of the commission; The first eight members of the commission will then select the final six members of the commission by selecting two commissioners from each of the three subpools that the State Auditor used when drawing the names of the first eight commissioners. The last six commissioners must be appointed by December 31, 2010.

#### **7. How will the new district boundaries get approved?**

The commission will redraw geographic boundaries for 40 Senate districts, 80 Assembly districts, and four State Board of Equalization districts, so that they contain reasonably equal populations.

Once the commission has agreed on the geographic boundaries of the districts, the districts will be displayed as revised maps. The commission will then vote to approve the three maps. To be approved, each map must receive the affirmative vote of at least three commission members who are Democrats, three commission members who are Republicans, and three commission members who are neither Democrats nor Republicans. Once the commission has approved the three final maps, the maps are certified to the Secretary of State with a report explaining the basis on which the commission made its decisions.

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### **8. Will commission members be paid?**

Members of the commission will be compensated at the rate of \$300 dollars for each day a commissioner is engaged in commission business. The act also allows for reimbursement for personal expenses incurred in connection with the duties required of commissioners.

### **9. How long will commission members serve?**

Commission will serve for ten years beginning with the selection of the first member by random selection no later than November 20, 2010, and ending with the random selection of the first member of the succeeding commission no later than November 20, 2020. However, most of the work that the commissioners will perform should be completed by the time they approve the maps of the new districts, which is required by September 15, 2011.

### **10. Can I keep my current job and still serve on the commission?**

The commission's primary redistricting duties will commence no later than January 1, 2011, and end no later than September 15, 2011. During this period, commission members will be working toward the adoption of three final maps that separately define the district boundaries for the Senate, Assembly, and State Board of Equalization.

The commission members will have a presently unknown amount of staff to assist them in the performance of their duties. However, there will be tasks that only a commission member may perform including, but not limited to holding open meetings at locations throughout the state; reviewing and discussing data that is pertinent to deciding on the geographic boundaries for the different districts; and, voting to approve the final maps.

A person's ability to perform the duties of other employment while serving on the commission will depend on the nature of the employment, but an applicant should assume that his or her time will have to be devoted primarily to the work of the commission during the 8 1/2 months that the commission members are working toward the approval of the final maps.

To encourage service on the commission, the Act provides that no employer shall discharge, threaten to discharge, or retaliate against any employee for attending a commission meeting.

Following the approval of the final maps, the duties of the commission will be centered on functions such as resolving legal disputes that might arise regarding the redrawn districts and ceremonial activities that the commission determines to be necessary. During this period, the commission's responsibilities should be flexible enough to permit a normal employment schedule.

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