

Elections, Voting & Campaign Finance

RWG has broad and long experience in all of the legal issues relating to local elections, voting and campaign finance issues.

Election Processes

RWG lawyers continuously advise local elections officials regarding every aspect of the elections process, for both candidate and ballot measure elections. From the call of the election to the certification of election results, we are involved in partnership with the local elections official. We also advise on post-election issues such as recounts, candidate eligibility, and election contests. RWG litigators are experienced and ready to step in when election controversies move to the courts. We frequently represent public agencies and local elections officials on a wide array of election-related litigation, such as challenges to ballot materials and election contests.

Ballot Measures

As the frequency and complexity of local ballot measure elections continue to increase, RWG lawyers are experienced in every element of the ballot measure process as well. Name the subject of a local ballot measure and it's likely that an RWG lawyer has drafted a measure on that issue: open space preservation, historic preservation, fireworks, revenue and taxes, airport land use, zoning, term limits, marijuana, rent control, bond issues, mobilehome park issues, and many others. Our advice on public entity-initiated measures often starts with the strategic decisions that can commence the ballot measure process, such as working with survey firms to measure public opinion, determine whether to propose a measure and draft the language of the ballot question. We also advise local officials on the procedural aspects of ballot measures and have drafted hundreds of initiative titles and summaries and impartial analyses. Our lawyers also are experts on educating and advising regarding the limits on government participation in ballot measure campaigns.

Litigation is commonly another aspect of the local ballot measure landscape, and RWG litigators have experience with every aspect of this complicated specialty, including challenges to the validity of ballot measures.

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RELATED PRACTICES

Municipal & Public Agency Law

Campaign Finance

No other law firm has drafted more local campaign finance limits in California than RWG. We have worked with cities across the state to draft and implement some of the earliest and most impactful laws in this area, including often-copied ordinances in Agoura Hills, Beverly Hills, and Thousand Oaks. One of our lawyers also worked with the City of Los Angeles Ethics Commission to help implement and enforce that city's ordinance when it was first adopted. For some public agencies, such as the County of Ventura, we also serve in an enforcement capacity. We are well-situated to advise public entities about campaign finance issues, including whether a local ordinance would be effective in a particular jurisdiction.

Voting Rights and Districting

RWG lawyers are constantly engaged in advising and litigating on issues associated with voting rights and districting, currently the most impactful area of elections law for local government. We are advising public agencies right now regarding their responsibilities under relatively new voter participation laws and the California Voting Rights Act. RWG lawyers have helped cities and special districts navigate the districting process, and we are engaged in litigation in various courts regarding districting issues.