


**City of Detroit**  
DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS

**Gina Avery-Walker**  
*Director*

**JANICE M. WINFREY**, *City Clerk*  
*Chairperson, Election Commission*

**Melissa King**  
*Deputy Director*

TO: Angela Whitfield-Calloway, Councilmember  
Detroit City Council

FROM: Gina Avery-Walker, Director   
Department of Elections

DATE: March 20, 2023

RE: 2023-2024 Department of Elections Budget Questions

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Regarding your memorandum, the responses to the questions are as follows:

1. **QUESTION:** Detroit continues to rank the lowest amongst major cities for eligible voter participation in both local, state, and national elections.
  - a. What is the strategy to improve our Get Out to Vote efforts? Increase voter engagement across all age groups? And specifically target our non-voters and would be first time and second time voters? This group includes our young adults.

**RESPONSE:** The Department plans to bolster voter education and outreach initiatives aimed to reach a diverse group of residents by partnering with various community organizations, high schools, colleges, and non-secular entities to raise awareness surrounding elections. Second, now that pandemic-era restrictions have largely subsided the Department plans on conducting more in person voter registration drives. Third, in order to reach non-voters, younger voters, and combat voter apathy, we plan on concentrating our outreach efforts by conducting more digital and social media advertising campaigns. Making a robust effort to engage with Generation Z and Millennials on the platforms they frequent is pivotal to raising awareness and keeping them more civically involved.

- b. Does the City Clerk's office support automatic voter registration?

**RESPONSE:** While the Clerk's office is in favor of automatic voter registration, we are not responsible for nor lend resources to that end. Under Michigan law, automatic voter registration is solely a function of the of Michigan Secretary of State's Office.

2. **QUESTION:** The FY 2024 budget proposes \$470,000 for Voter Education & Outreach. Please describe what your "aggressive voter outreach programs" are and how they have changed since the pandemic.

**RESPONSE:** Our outreach program consists of purchasing more media buys in more traditional media such as print, radio, television and billboards. Additionally, we have ramped up use of digital and social media campaigns especially since the onset of the pandemic and will continue to do so. We've also sent more mailers because conducting in person voter registrations and forums proved more challenging as the nation tried to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Within various mailers such as our newsletter, we're now planning on placing QR codes in it to allow voter to browse our website and sign up for election bulletins that can be sent via text or email using the City's GovDelivery system. This comprehensive approach will help keep Detroiters abreast to all pertinent election information.

3. **QUESTION:** Please describe what the software for managing poll workers is and what it does. Also, please explain what the proposed additional funding for poll workers is going to pay for.

**RESPONSE:** The poll worker management software has several functions. It primarily serves as our poll worker database, which allows us to communicate with poll workers and assign them to training classes as well as Election Day assignments. Moreover, it also serves as a payroll system, providing us with the capability to pay up to 7,500 poll workers and 170 polling locations typically within 6 weeks. Finally, the software provides the capability to respond to trouble tickets placed through our call center on Election Day. Next, the additional funding is going to pay for additional workers to assist with the changes stemming from Proposal 2 as well as legislative changes. Proposal 2's passage will result in early voting for the first time in Michigan history. Early voting will commence nine days prior to Election Day. Also, the Michigan Legislature passed a law in October 2022 allowing for 2 days of early preprocessing of absentee ballots. The increase in poll worker funding merely accounts for these changes to the law.