

## **ACCESO Spanish Language Voter Advisory Board for Denver Clerk & Recorder and Elections Division**

### **What is ACCESO?**

ACCESO is Denver Elections Division's advisory committee for Spanish speaking voters. This committee helps the Clerk and Recorder, as well as the Elections Director, implement programs aimed to provide voting and election services to Spanish speaking citizens with limited English proficiency. The committee is comprised of sixteen community leaders who represent public, private, and nonprofit sectors with one-third of the group possessing bilingual skill. The main goals are to facilitate voting materials, making them more accessible, ensuring there is an adequate number of Spanish speaking election judges and increasing voter participation.

### **Why was ACCESO created?**

The federal Voting Rights Act of 1973 mandates that when more than five percent or 10,000 people of a county's population speak another language and have limited English proficiency, the county must provide bilingual materials and information regarding the election and reach out to the specific other language population. In 2002, the City and County of Denver reached this five percent for Spanish speaking individuals. At that time, Denver's elections agency created an advisory board to help with this outreach. In 2010 ACCESO Spanish Language Advisory was set in ordinance as the first of its kind in the nation.

The population of Spanish language voters has been constantly growing in our city; and for this reason, it is important to provide resources in Spanish. For example, according to the 2010 census, the County of Denver reported approximately 600,158 people of whom 32% are of Hispanic origin, or 190,965 people.

### **Why is it important to vote?**

One of the most important rights citizens have is the right to elect the candidate who will represent us and how we want to be represented. The right to vote has been and continues to be a right for which many have fought throughout the history of the United States. Voting is a right that makes us free.

Sometimes we ask ourselves if our vote really counts. The answer is yes, it counts. With our vote, we hold elected leaders accountable for the decisions they make. Our representatives make all kind of decisions that affect our lives and our society that go from increasing or lowering taxes to deciding the use of the military. Our vote sends a message about the topics we consider important. Exercising our vote is our right.

## What elections will be held in 2015?

May 5, 2015 – Municipal General Election (doors open at 7 am and close at 7 pm)

June 2, 2015 – Municipal Run-Off election (doors open at 7 am and close at 7 pm)

It is important to note that to be able to vote, a citizen must be registered. Without being registered, it is not possible to vote.

**One Important fact: You can register to vote up to and on Election Day.**

## What are the requirements to vote?

- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be 18 years old on or before Election Day or be 16 years of age
- Be registered to vote
- Live in the State of Colorado for 22 days prior to the election and provide a valid Colorado ID or driver's license or any approved form of ID listed on [www.denvervotes.org](http://www.denvervotes.org) under [identification requirements](#)
- Are not serving a sentence (including parole) for a felony conviction

## How can a person register?

**It is very simple. The easiest way to register is by:**

- going to the website [GoVoteColorado.com](http://GoVoteColorado.com)
- if you live in Denver, you can register to vote in person at the Denver Elections Division, (200 West 14th Avenue, corner of West 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue & Bannock)
- at other agencies including Motor Vehicle or Denver Human Services
- you can call 311 in Denver and ask to have a voter registration form mailed to you
- another option is to go to one of 13 voter service centers located throughout the city: go to [www.denvervotes.org](http://www.denvervotes.org) to find the center closest to you

## What types of materials have been published in Spanish so far?

The Denver Elections Division has extensive information in Spanish. The website is [www.Denvervotes.org](http://www.Denvervotes.org) and click on *Elecciones*. There you will find voting information in Spanish.

Additionally, all information sent to households in the city of Denver has bilingual information. The ballots are also in Spanish. **The 311 line is a great resource for those who have questions and prefer to make a phone call because it has bilingual agents available.**

### **Where can we find more information about ACCESO and its activities?**

Visit us on our website through [www.Denvervotes.org](http://www.Denvervotes.org). You can also find us on Facebook at ACCESO. We welcome new members on an ongoing basis.

It also needs to be mentioned that Denver is in need of bilingual election judges and the information and application can also be found on the website.

### **If a Denver mail ballot is dropped off in another county's drop box (Arapahoe, Jefferson, etc) is it forwarded to Denver?**

Yes. We have a process in place to get Denver ballots from surrounding counties and get ballots from surrounding counties to them.

### **If a mail ballot is not properly signed, signature does not match, no signature provided-what is the process for rectifying? Or is the ballot just not counted?**

If a ballot is not signed or the signature is discrepant, we send a letter to the voter alerting them that they need to come in and sign their ballot or provide us a better signature and that they have until May 13, 2015 to do so for their ballot to be counted. (8 days after the election per statute)

cr\_update\_2015-02-19