

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC MEETING

August 17, 2020

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Election Commission of Harris County, Texas, will be held on Friday, August 21, 2020 at 10:00 am virtually, to advance the public health goal of limiting face-to-face meetings to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), and for the purpose of considering and taking action on matters brought before the Commission.

On March 16, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott granted a request by the Texas Attorney General to waive certain requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act to reduce face-to-face contact relating to government meetings while maintaining government transparency during government meetings in accordance with Section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code. Governor Abbott suspended various statutory provisions requiring government officials and members of the public to be physically present at a specified meeting location.

On June 26, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott issued Executive Order GA-28 which, as amended by his July 2, 2020 Proclamation, directs that all persons not otherwise excepted by the order shall not be in groups larger than ten and shall maintain six feet of social distancing from those not in their group. Therefore, the public will only be able to attend the meeting virtually. The public may access the meeting through the following link: <https://agenda.harriscountytexas.gov>. Members of the public are still entitled to participate and address governmental bodies during any telephonic or videoconference meeting. In accordance with the Governor's order, the public may make comments by signing up to speak by no later than Friday, August 21, 2020 at 8 a.m. at <https://appearancerequest.harriscountytexas.gov/>. You will be placed in a queue and will receive a phone call when it is your time to speak. Agendas may be obtained in advance of the meeting via the internet at <https://agenda.harriscountytexas.gov>.

You will be placed in a queue and will receive a phone call when it is your time to speak. All speakers will receive 3 minutes to make their remarks.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lina Hidalgo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lina Hidalgo
Harris County Judge



HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

ELECTION COMMISSION

Lina Hidalgo, Chair
County Judge

Christopher Hollins, Vice Chair
County Clerk

Ann Harris Bennett, Secretary
County Tax Assessor-Collector

Keith Nielsen
County Republican Party Chair

Lillie Schechter
County Democratic Party Chair

A G E N D A

August 21, 2020
10:00 a.m.

1. Discussion and recommendation of a timeline and plan for the hiring process of an Elections Administrator.
2. Discussion regarding the possible use of a search firm for the interview process for an Elections Administrator.
3. Discussion and approval of a job description and posting for an Elections Administrator.



LINA HIDALGO

August 14, 2020

AGENDA LETTER

Election Commission
1001 Preston Street, 9th Floor
Houston, TX 77002

Dear Election Commission Members:

The following item is recommended for the August 21, 2020 Election Commission agenda:

Discussion and recommendation of a timeline and plan for the hiring process of an
Elections Administrator.

Sincerely,

Lina Hidalgo
County Judge

LH/jm

DRAFT HARRIS COUNTY ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATOR HIRING TIMELINE

- **August 11, 2020** – Commissioners Court approved: (1) County Attorney's Office report; and (2) continuing with the plan to create an Office of the Elections Administrator
- **August 21, 2020** – Election Commission meeting to begin Elections Administrator search process
- **August 22 and onwards** – Post and distribute the job description online and to relevant organizations
- **Week of August 24** – Search firm hired and begins work
- **August 25** – Commissioners Court meeting: County Judge's Office requests action on salary and benefits range for the Elections Administrator and funding for a consultant
- **Beginning Late August**
 - Search firm recruits, vets, and interviews initial candidates
 - Search firm provides shortlist of candidates to Election Commission members
 - Interview Period: Election Commission members or an appointed Hiring Committee interviews top candidates



LINA HIDALGO

August 14, 2020

AGENDA LETTER

Election Commission
1001 Preston Street, 9th Floor
Houston, TX 77002

Dear Election Commission Members :

The following item is recommended for the August 21, 2020 Election Commission agenda:

Discussion regarding the possible use of a search firm for the interview process for an Elections Administrator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lina Hidalgo", is written over a circular stamp that is partially obscured by the signature.

Lina Hidalgo
County Judge

LH/jm



LINA HIDALGO

August 14, 2020

AGENDA LETTER

Election Commission
1001 Preston Street, 9th Floor
Houston, TX 77002

Dear Election Commission Members :

The following item is recommended for the August 21, 2020 Election Commission agenda:

Discussion and approval of a job description and posting for an Elections Administrator.

Sincerely,

Lina Hidalgo
County Judge

LH/jm

Department: Harris County Office of the Elections Administrator
Job Title: Elections Administrator
Reports to: Harris County Election Commission

JOB PURPOSE

Harris County seeks an Elections Administrator to plan, coordinate, lead, and manage the newly established Office of the Elections Administrator under Chapter 31 of the Texas Election Code. The Elections Administrator will act as the county voter registrar, administer all local, state, and federal elections in Harris County, and oversee Harris County's elections operations, including voter registration, public education and outreach, and recruitment and supervision of election judges and poll workers. The Elections Administrator will also work to modernize Harris County elections, expand access to registration and voting, and ensure voting is fair, easy, efficient, secure, and accessible for all eligible Harris County voters consistent with the Texas Election Code and Federal regulations.

OVERVIEW OF HARRIS COUNTY

Harris County is the third-largest county in the country. Its population of more than 4.5 million rivals that of the entire state of Colorado. Harris County is governed by Harris County Commissioners Court. The Court is composed of a County Judge and four Commissioners. Commissioners Court conducts the general business of the County and oversees financial matters. The Harris County Judge and Commissioners oversee a \$4.3 billion budget that helps fund key county services and institutions. As the main governing body of Harris County, Commissioners Court plays a critical role that is part administrative, part legislative, and part judicial. Its many responsibilities include adopting a budget; setting tax rates; calling for bond elections; building and maintaining county infrastructure such as roads and bridges; and overseeing county courthouses, jails, libraries, parks, and the Harris County Flood Control District. Harris County currently has more than 75 departments with over 15,000 employees. The Harris County Election Commission appoints and oversees the Elections Administrator.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Oversee and coordinate Harris County's election and voter registration activities and operations, including by conducting ongoing registration of Harris County voters.
- Monitor and ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations governing elections and voters' rights, including the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the American Disabilities Act.
- Conduct and expand public education and outreach on voter registration and election participation.
- Develop and implement protections and initiatives to modernize Harris County elections, expand access to registration and voting in Harris County, and otherwise ensure registration and voting processes are fair, easy, convenient, and accessible for all eligible Harris County citizens.

- Coordinate with elections judges and workers, as well as local organizations and citizens, to enable all eligible citizens to be properly registered and informed on voting processes and procedures.
- Review voter registration records and monitor voter registration activities in compliance with state and federal laws.
- Assemble, train, and supervise teams of election judges and workers in performing all elections for which Harris County is responsible.
- Gather and provide information to the Harris County Election Commission, Harris County Commissioners Court, election judges, election workers, and the general public regarding the state and federal laws and procedures for registering voters and conducting elections.
- Identify and designate all facilities/locations for each election event and ensure an equitable distribution of voting locations across county precincts.
- Provide to each voting location the required equipment, forms, records, maps, forms and other materials needed to conduct the election and report election results.
- Prepare and administer the annual budget for approval by Commissioners Court and monitor expenditures for the Office of the Elections Administrator.
- Audit and submit all authorizations for payments for election workers, services, and equipment according to Harris County purchasing requirements.
- Compile election results for reporting to the Commissioners Court, the Secretary of State or any jurisdictional authority with which Harris County contracts to provide election services.
- Maintain records of election results and make them available as a public record as required by law.
- Meeting regularly with the Election Administration Community Advisory Board, and regularly engaging with community stakeholders regarding the elections process.
- Oversee general management and human resources responsibilities for the Office of the Election Administrator.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree or above in a relevant field.
- Minimum 4 years of experience in relevant positions with increasing levels of responsibility.
- Excellent oral and written communications skills, management, supervisory, and organizational skills.
- Prior experience related to or knowledge of elections and voter registration laws, procedures, practices, documentation, and equipment.
- Knowledge of regulations, principles, and practices governing elections administration and voter registration.
- Familiarity with specialized elections equipment and database programming principles.
- Per the Texas Election Code, may not be a candidate for a public office or an office of a political party, hold public office, or hold an office of or a position in a political party.
- Ability to work with Party Chairs in recruiting, training and supervising election workers.

- Must be able to exercise tact and courtesy in frequent contact with various county personnel, public officials and the general public.
- Proven ability to meet multiple deadlines and balance numerous projects in a fast-paced environment.
- Ability to develop and drive new initiatives, work cross-departmentally, work within multidisciplinary teams, oversee projects to completion, and measure results.

STATE REQUIREMENTS

Per [Chapter 31 of the Texas Election Code](#):

- Sec. 31.034: To be eligible for appointment as county elections administrator, a person must be a qualified voter of the state.
- Sec. 31.035.
 - (a) A county elections administrator may not be a candidate for a public office or an office of a political party, hold a public office, or hold an office of or position in a political party. At the time an administrator becomes a candidate or accepts an office or position in violation of this subsection, the administrator vacates the position of administrator.
 - (b) A county elections administrator commits an offense if the administrator makes a political contribution or political expenditure, as defined by the law regulating political funds and campaigns, or publicly supports or opposes a candidate for public office or a measure to be voted on at an election. An offense under this subsection is a Class A misdemeanor. On a final conviction, the administrator's employment is terminated, and the person convicted is ineligible for future appointment as county elections administrator.
 - (c) In this section, "candidate" means a person who has taken affirmative action, as described by the law regulating political funds and campaigns, for the purpose of gaining nomination or election.
- Sec. 31.036. The county election commission is the proper authority to receive and act on a resignation from the position of county elections administrator.
- Sec. 31.037. The employment of the county elections administrator may be suspended, with or without pay, or terminated at any time for good and sufficient cause on the four-fifths vote of the county election commission and approval of that action by a majority vote of the commissioners court.
- Sec. 31.038.
 - (a) A vacancy in the position of county elections administrator is filled by appointment of the county election commission.
 - (b) An appointment to fill an anticipated vacancy arising from a resignation to take effect at a future date may be made at any time after the resignation is accepted.
- Sec. 31.039.
 - (a) The commissioners court shall set the number of deputies and other persons that the county elections administrator may employ.
 - (b) Repealed by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1272, Sec. 1, eff. June 18, 2005.

- (c) The commissioners court may allow the automobile expense that it considers necessary to the administrator and to any of the administrator's employees in the performance of their official duties.
- (d) The commissioners court shall provide the administrator with suitable office space and with the equipment and operating expenses needed for the proper conduct of the office.
- (e) The amount initially appropriated by the commissioners court for the operating expenses of the administrator's office may not be less than the total amount last appropriated to the county clerk and the county tax assessor-collector for the functions assigned to the administrator.
- (f) Except as provided by Subsection (g), a person employed on a full-time basis by the administrator's office is subject to Section 31.035 in the same manner as the administrator.
- (g) Section 31.035(b) does not apply to a person employed on a full-time basis by the administrator's office in a county with a population of one million or less that has an election administrator.

WORKING CONDITIONS

This position will require extended work during elections and meetings across Harris County outside normal business hours. During election cycles, extended and irregular hours during the workweek and weekend may be required.

SALARY

Commensurate with experience.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Harris County is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all applicants and employees. Accordingly, the County judges applicants and employees on individual merit and qualifications, without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information. The only exceptions are based on bona fide occupational qualifications.

TO APPLY

Please send a cover letter and resume to [email address TBD].