

1 **RESOLUTION NO.**

2 **WHEREAS**, voter registration is a fundamental requirement for
3 participating in the election of public officials and the approval or rejection of
4 Texas Constitutional amendments, City Charter amendments, bonds, and other
5 propositions; and

6 **WHEREAS**, civic participation is a foundational value for the City; and

7 **WHEREAS**, the City has previously found that our communities thrive
8 when all voices are heard in our democratic processes; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the City has also previously sought greater inclusion and civic
10 empowerment among Austin residents; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the City has strong history of pro-voter policies as seen in
12 Resolution Nos. 20200917-017, 20201112-017, 20200409-078, 2019101-033,
13 20190307-027, 20181018-040, 20130829-074, and 20210729-176; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the City has reaffirmed its support for state and federal
15 legislation that promotes and protects voting rights and access to voting; and

16 **WHEREAS**, voter registration rates are disproportionately lower among
17 low-income individuals, communities of color, young voters, and naturalized
18 citizens; and

19 **WHEREAS**, Texas voters in particular face barriers such as a Voter ID law,
20 a 30-day voter registration deadline, the inability to register to vote online, heavily
21 restricted access to voting by mail, and other systemic barriers to participation; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the City is committed to the highest standards of election
23 integrity and also to encouraging broad voter registration, access, and citizen
24 participation in elections among voting-eligible citizens; and

25 **WHEREAS**, the City recognizes that many Americans are not able to vote
26 because they miss a registration deadline, do not update their registration
27 information, or are unfamiliar with how to register; and

28 **WHEREAS**, the City recognizes the need for diverse partners such as
29 nonprofits, libraries, businesses, colleges and universities, and more to work in the
30 communities they serve to register citizens to vote; and

31 **WHEREAS**, the need for reliable and trusted public information and
32 education on voter registration is critical to active participation in elections and the
33 integrity of electoral processes; **NOW THEREFORE**,

34 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

35 The City Manager is directed to perform a cost estimate analysis of allowing
36 City employees two hours of paid time off to attend a volunteer deputy registrar
37 training for the county they work or live in, and whether this cost can be absorbed
38 within each department, or if a budget amendment for an additional allocation will
39 be required.

40 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

41 The City Manager is directed to perform a cost estimate analysis of allowing
42 City employees paid time off to serve as volunteer deputy registrars at certain city
43 facilities, including Austin City Hall, Austin Public Libraries, and community
44 centers, on National Voter Registration Day and on or preceding voter registration
45 deadlines for the regular Primary and General Elections.

46 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

47 The City Manager is directed to explore intergovernmental opportunities
48 with Travis, Williamson, and Hays Counties to host volunteer deputy registrars at

49 certain City facilities, including Austin City Hall, Austin Public Libraries, and
50 community centers, on National Voter Registration Day and on or preceding voter
51 registration deadlines for the regular Primary and General Elections.

52 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

53 The City strongly encourages Austin ISD, Del Valle ISD, Eanes ISD, Manor
54 ISD, Pflugerville ISD, and Round Rock ISD to make similar arrangements for
55 voter registration within high schools, in accordance with the law and in line with
56 the guidance provided by the Texas Secretary of State.

57 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

58 The City Manager is directed to perform a cost estimate analysis of requiring
59 certain City services or departments that capture residential addresses to provide
60 voter registration and ballot by mail information to new residential customers and
61 current or returning residential customers with a new address, including but not
62 limited to:

- 63 1. Austin Energy
- 64 2. Austin Public Libraries
- 65 3. Austin Resource Recovery
- 66 4. Austin Water
- 67 5. Any other City department that captures residential addresses.

68 The City Manager is directed to include in the cost estimate a comparison of
69 the cost of providing physical and electronic copies of this information.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to report back to Council with the results of this analysis no later than May 1, 2025.

ADOPTED: _____, 2024 **ATTEST:** _____

Myrna Rios
City Clerk

DRAFT