

## WORD COUNT GUIDELINES

(Elections Code Chapter 1, General Provisions, Section 9)

The following guidelines are used by the Registrar of Voters Office for counting words on candidate statements. The guidelines do not apply to ballot designations for candidates. If the text exceeds the specified 200-, 250- or 400-word limit, the author will be asked to delete words or change the text until the statement conforms to the requirements.

9. (a) Counting of words, for purposes of this code, shall be as follows:

- (1) Punctuation is not counted.
  - (2) Each word shall be counted as one word except as specified in this section.
  - (3) All proper nouns, including geographical names, shall be considered as one word.  
Example: "County of San Diego" shall be counted as one word.
  - (4) Each abbreviation for a word, phrase, or expression shall be counted as one word.  
Example: "PTA" shall be counted as one word.
  - (5) Hyphenated words that appear in any generally available standard reference dictionary, published in the United States at any time within the 10 calendar years immediately preceding the election for which the words are counted, shall be considered as one word. Each part of all other hyphenated words shall be counted as a separate word.
  - (6) Dates shall be counted as one word.
  - (7) Any number consisting of a digit or digits shall be considered as one word. Any number which is spelled, such as "one," shall be considered as a separate word or words. "One" shall be counted as one word whereas "one hundred" shall be counted as two words. "100" shall be counted as one word.
  - (8) Telephone numbers shall be counted as one word.
  - (9) Internet Web site addresses shall be counted as one word.
- (b) This section shall not apply to counting words for ballot designations under Section 13107.