



SANTA CRUZ  
COUNTY  
GRAND JURY

Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

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## County Clerk Response Packet

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Tricia Webber <Tricia.Webber@santacruzcounty.us>

Tue, Aug 1, 2023 at 5:24 PM

To: "syda.cogliati@santacruzcourt.org" <syda.cogliati@santacruzcourt.org>, "grandjury@scgrandjury.org" <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

Hello –

Attached is the response packet from the Santa Cruz County Clerk. Please let me know if you have any questions, or if there is an issue with the attached file.

Thank you,

Tricia

Tricia Webber

Santa Cruz County Clerk

831.454.2409 desk

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[tricia.webber@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:tricia.webber@santacruzcounty.us)



County Clerk Response to 2019.2020 Report.pdf  
196K



**The 2022–2023 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury  
Requires the**

**Santa Cruz County Clerk**

**to Respond by August 7, 2023**

**to the Findings and Recommendations listed below  
which were assigned to them in the report titled**

**Honoring Commitments to the Public**

**County Agency Actions in Response to  
2019–2020 Grand Jury Recommendations**

Responses are **required** from elected officials, elected agency or department heads, and elected boards, councils, and committees which are investigated by the Grand Jury. You are required to respond and to make your response available to the public by the California Penal Code [\(PC\) §933\(c\)](#).

Your response will be considered **compliant** under [PC §933.05](#) if it contains an appropriate comment on **all** findings and recommendations **which were assigned to you** in this report.

Please follow the instructions below when preparing your response.

## Instructions for Respondents

Your assigned [Findings](#) and [Recommendations](#) are listed on the following pages with check boxes and an expandable space for summaries, timeframes, and explanations. Please follow these instructions, which paraphrase [PC §933.05](#):

1. **For the Findings, mark one of the following responses with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
  - a. **AGREE with the Finding**, or
  - b. **PARTIALLY DISAGREE with the Finding** – specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and include an explanation of the reasons why, or
  - c. **DISAGREE with the Finding** – provide an explanation of the reasons why.
  
2. **For the Recommendations, mark one of the following actions with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
  - a. **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – provide a summary of the action taken, or
  - b. **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – provide a timeframe or expected date for completion, or
  - c. **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – provide an explanation, scope, and parameters of an analysis to be completed within six months, or
  - d. **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – provide an explanation of why it is not warranted or not reasonable.
  
3. **When your responses are complete, please email your completed Response Packet as a PDF file attachment to both**

The Honorable Judge Syda Cogliati [Syda.Cogliati@santacruzcourt.org](mailto:Syda.Cogliati@santacruzcourt.org) and

The Santa Cruz County Grand Jury [grandjury@scgrandjury.org](mailto:grandjury@scgrandjury.org).

***If you have questions about this response form, please contact the Grand Jury by calling 831-454-2099 or by sending an email to [grandjury@scgrandjury.org](mailto:grandjury@scgrandjury.org).***

## Finding

**F9.** Data security is an important issue, including the security of voter registration data and it is unknown if measures have been taken in this area.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE**

**DISAGREE**

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The County Clerk/Elections department is answering “partially disagree” because of the way this finding is worded.

The County Clerk and the department agree that data security – including voter registration data – is an important issue, one that this department takes seriously.

Measures have been taken to strengthen the security of data within the County Clerk/Elections department. What we have put into place since 2020:

- Two factor authentication for all workstations in the office as well as out at the voting locations.
- More security controls for both election servers – the one hosting the voter file and the one for election operations (ballot creation, tabulation, etc.)
- Working with partners such as the California Secretary of State (statewide voter registration database), the election management system vendor, the election voting system vendor, Santa Cruz County Information Services Department, election officers, and department staff, to ensure security policies and procedures are in place and adhered to.
- Training for those who work with election data – employees, election officers and end users.

# Recommendation

**R10.** The Santa Cruz County Clerk should outline steps that have been taken to make voter registration data more secure by September 30, 2023. (F9)

**HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done

**HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe

**REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)

**WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

**Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:**

The County Clerk/Elections department has had discussions with the election management vendor and the California Secretary of State's office regarding the date of birth field on the voter file. VoteCal is the statewide voter registration database that is the system of record for California, and how the data is transmitted to counties is determined by the Secretary of State. Currently, the date of birth is sent as an 8-digit numeric number (MMDDYYYY).

Through our election management vendor, we have submitted a "system change request" to the Secretary of State to get the date of birth in two 4-digit numeric fields (MMDD) and (YYYY). Until that change request is approved by the Secretary of State, the department has removed the date of birth field from any file requests fulfilled by the department. To change the field into MMDD would be a manual process that would be resource consuming and prone to error. Once the change request is approved, it will be implemented.

The County Clerk/Elections department has redesigned the voter data application to highlight the permissible and non-permissible uses of the voter file per the California Elections Code. The department updated the form for the November 2020, and for process improvement and usability, it has been redesigned again to be used for the 2024 elections.

Training – the Department has strengthened the training of employees and election officers (those working in the voting locations) around the importance of securing the data files during election time (voting locations and employees) and non-election time (employees).

A request was made for the County Clerk/Elections department to use the training session the California Secretary of State is mandated to provide when a statewide voter file is purchased from them. To date, the Secretary of States office has NOT created a security training session, and as far as the County Clerk knows, there is not a plan to implement one soon. The California Elections Code does not mandate counties to have a training for people who are purchasing a data file. It does not list the items to be included in the training, the timing of the training, what happens if the training doesn't occur, etc.

Without a state model or clear direction in the Elections Code, the County Clerk is unsure what this type of training would entail, whether there is a method of enforcement or even if there can be enforcement, if any type of training needs to be approved by the Secretary of State since they have the mandate, and more.

The County Clerk will implement something more around the security of voter data beyond what is on the application, for the 2024 election cycle, however at this time it is unknown as to the form and the actual implementation date.