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Electronic Pollworker Application Tracking System

Los Angeles County, CA

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ABSTRACT OF THE PROGRAM

The Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) continually strives to enhance organizational effectiveness and efficiencies by streamlining and improving business processes. In keeping with this goal, the RR/CC implemented an automated Pollworker Application Tracking System (Tracking System) in conjunction with the November 2, 2010 General Election in an effort to enhance and streamline the processing and tracking of specialty recruitment pollworker applications (for student/county pollworkers).

THE PROBLEM/NEED FOR THE PROGRAM

Recruitment of pollworkers for the Specialty Recruitment Programs has increased dramatically since inception of the programs in 1998. Between 1998 and 2010, the number of student/county pollworker applications received for a major election has increased from approximately 2,000 in June 2000 to approximately 8,000 in November 2010; a 300 percent increase. Consequently, an updated system for processing student/county pollworker applications needed to be developed and implemented in order to process and track pollworker applications more effectively and efficiently. The purpose of the automated Tracking System was to eliminate the current paper flow process, which consisted of numerous tedious manual steps, and to expedite the processing and tracking of pollworker applications.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

The development of the automated Tracking System leveraged an existing Election Help Desk Support System implemented in 2008 which was procured by the RR/CC through a competitive bid process. The development and implementation of the Tracking System consisted of 3 stages: (1) development (2) testing, and (3) implementation.

The RR/CC staff played a pivotal role during the development stage. During this stage, the vendor met with RR/CC staff in person and via conference calls to identify the requirements of the Tracking System. During the testing stage, RR/CC staff conducted two mock elections to ensure the effectiveness of the Tracking System. In the 1st mock election, RR/CC staff identified system gaps and additional features needed for optimum deployment of the Tracking System. In order to ensure that all system gaps were addressed and additional system features were implemented and functioning properly, RR/CC staff conducted a 2nd mock election. After the 2nd mock election was completed, it was determined that the system functioned optimally, therefore, the Tracking System was implemented in August 2010 for processing of student/county pollworker applications for the November 2, 2010 General Election.

Before implementation, the RR/CC used a paper process to track pollworker applications from time of receipt to completion. This paper and labor intensive process consisted of 15 steps (Attachment A) which had a turnaround time of seven days from date of receipt of application to completion of processing and tracking. The application information was input to an Excel spreadsheet for tracking purposes and then forwarded to the Polls and Officers Section for precinct assignment through a tedious, semi-manual process. The 15 step

process was originally developed to ensure timely processing and efficient tracking of pollworker applications. However, as recruitment of student/county pollworkers increased, it became increasingly challenging to process applications within the established timeframe. Therefore, it was critical to transition to an automated data management tracking system to expedite the processing and tracking of pollworker applications.

THE RESULTS/SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM

As a result of implementing the automated Tracking System, the 15 step paper-flow process was reduced to an 8 step automated process (Attachment B) eliminating tedious, manual steps for approximately 8,000 pollworker applications. By eliminating paper-flow steps no longer required with the automated Tracking System, processing time was decreased by 50%; therefore, staff were able to process more applications on a daily basis while increasing productivity. With the prior paper-flow process, turnaround time for processing/assigning student and county pollworkers required approximately 7 days to complete, however, with the automated Tracking System, processing/assigning of pollworkers was reduced to less than 3 days to complete (In many instances, processing/assigning was completed in 1 day). By attending election training early in the recruitment process, pollworkers were assigned earlier which facilitated preparation for Election Day.

In addition to expediting the process, the Tracking System decreased the error rate in data entry of home addresses due to the "find home precinct" feature. Since this feature automatically populates an applicant's home precinct through an interface with the RR/CC's Voter Information Management System (DIMSNet), an error message displays when the home address is entered incorrectly, therefore, allowing the user to correct the address before submitting.

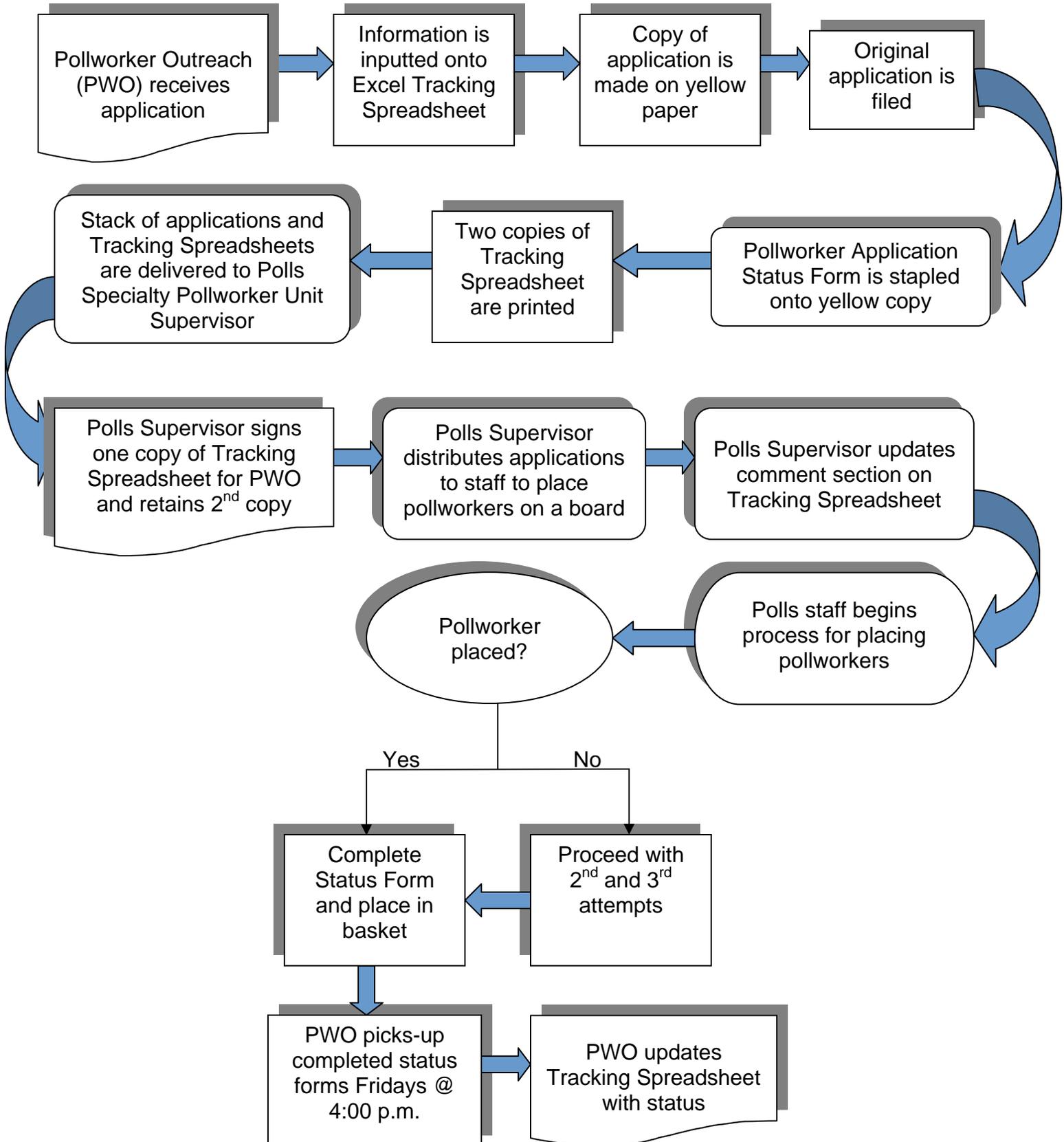
The automated Tracking System also eliminated paper and toner costs associated with photocopying of pollworker applications and printing status forms required for tracking purpose. Due to the current fiscal climate, the RR/CC continually strives to implement efficiency initiatives to improve operations and to reduce costs. In alignment with the RR/CC's efficiency goal, implementation of the Tracking System successfully reduced printing and paper costs by eliminating a step requiring hard copies of applications to be processed as well as hard copies of tracking sheets to be printed.

Lastly, and most importantly, implementation of the Tracking System enhanced customer service to student and county pollworkers by enabling RR/CC staff to provide real-time status of the applicant's pollworker application. Providing better customer service to student/county pollworkers resulted in improved pollworker retention which is essential for staffing poll places for Election Day.

The Pollworker Application Tracking System is an innovative tracking system which can be utilized by other governmental entities when seeking to transition from a paper-flow tracking process to an automated tracking process.

Attachment A

POLLWORKER APPLICATION PROCESSING FLOW CHART



Attachment B

POLLWORKER APPLICATION TRACKING SYSTEM FLOW CHART

