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## HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE - HSC

**DIVISION 12. FIRES AND FIRE PROTECTION [13000 - 14959]** ( *Division 12 enacted by Stats. 1939, Ch. 60.* )

**PART 2.7. FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT LAW OF 1987 [13800 - 13970]** ( *Heading of Part 2.7 renumbered from Part 3 (as added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013) by Stats. 1989, Ch. 1360, Sec. 91.* )

**CHAPTER 4. Existing Board of Directors and Officers [13840 - 13857]** ( *Chapter 4 added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.* )

**[13840.](#)** Every district shall be governed by a legislative body known as a board of directors.

(*Repealed and added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.*)

**[13841.](#)** Except in the case where a county board of supervisors has appointed itself as the district board, each member of a district board and each member of a fire commission appointed pursuant to Section 13844 shall be a resident of the district. In addition, if the district board is elected, each member of the district board shall be a registered voter of the district. In the case of a district board which is elected by divisions, each director shall be a registered voter of the division from which he or she is elected.

(*Amended by Stats. 1990, Ch. 1558, Sec. 6.*)

**[13842.](#)** Except in the case where a county board of supervisors or a city council has appointed itself as the district board, a district board may have three, five, seven, nine, or eleven members.

(*Repealed and added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.*)

**[13843.](#)** (a) The term of office of each member of a district board is four years or until his or her successor qualifies and takes office, except as provided in subdivision (b).

(b) In the case of a district formed on or after January 1, 1988, the directors shall serve terms as provided in the Uniform District Election Law, Part 4 (commencing with Section 10500) of Division 10 of the Elections Code.

(*Amended by Stats. 1994, Ch. 923, Sec. 132. Effective January 1, 1995.*)

**[13844.](#)** If a county board of supervisors or a city council has appointed itself as the district board, the board of supervisors or city council may delegate any or all of its powers to a fire commission composed of five or seven commissioners. In the case of a district governed by a board of supervisors, the commissioners may be councilmembers of cities which are located in the district. The board of supervisors or city council shall determine whether the commissioners shall serve at its pleasure or for staggered terms of four years subject to removal for cause.

(*Amended by Stats. 1989, Ch. 45, Sec. 1. Effective June 15, 1989.*)

**[13845.](#)** (a) Except in the case where a county board of supervisors or a city council has appointed itself as the district board, the number of members of a district board may be increased or decreased if a majority of the voters voting on the question are in favor of the question at a general district or special election. The question shall specify the resulting number of members of the district board.

(b) The district board may adopt a resolution placing the question on the ballot. Alternatively, upon receipt of a petition signed by at least 25 percent of the registered voters of the district, the district board shall adopt a resolution placing the question on the ballot.

(c) If the question is submitted to the voters at a general district election, the notice required by Section 12112 of the Elections Code shall contain a statement of the question to appear on the ballot. If the question is submitted to

the voters at a special election, the notice of election and the ballot shall contain a statement of the question.

(d) If the voters approve of increasing the number of directors, the new members shall be elected or appointed pursuant to this chapter. If the district board is elected, the additional members may be elected at the same election.

(e) If the voters approve of decreasing the number of directors, the members of the district board continue to serve until the end of their current terms.

(f) The number of members of a district board may be changed by the local agency formation commission as a term and condition of approval by the commission of any change of organization or reorganization. Unless the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, Division 3 (commencing with Section 56000) of Title 5 of the Government Code, otherwise requires voter approval, the change ordered by the commission does not require approval by the voters of the district.

*(Amended by Stats. 2006, Ch. 588, Sec. 12. Effective January 1, 2007.)*

**13846.** (a) In the case of an elected district board, the directors may be elected by divisions if a majority of the voters voting upon the question are in favor of the question at a general district or special election. Conversely, in the case of a district that has an elected district board which is elected by election division, the directors may be elected at large if a majority of the voters voting upon the question are in favor of the question at a general district or special election.

(b) As used in this section, "election by division" means the election of each member of the district board by voters of only the respective election division.

(c) The district board may adopt a resolution placing the question on the ballot. Alternatively, upon receipt of a petition signed by at least 25 percent of the registered voters of the district, the district board shall adopt a resolution placing the question on the ballot.

(d) If the question is submitted to the voters at a general district election, the notice required by Section 12112 of the Elections Code shall contain a statement of the question to appear on the ballot. If the question is submitted to the voters at a special election, the notice of election and ballot shall contain a statement of the question.

(e) If the majority of voters voting upon the question approves the election of directors by divisions, the district board shall promptly adopt a resolution dividing the district into as many divisions as there are directors. The resolution shall assign a number to each division. Using the last decennial census as a basis, the divisions shall be as nearly equal in population as possible. In establishing the boundaries of the divisions the district board may give consideration to the following factors: (1) topography, (2) geography, (3) cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity, and compactness of territory, and (4) community of interests of the divisions.

(f) If the majority of voters voting upon the question approves the election of directors by division, the board members shall be elected by election divisions and each member elected shall be a resident of the election division from which he or she is elected. At the district general election following the approval by the voters of the election of directors by divisions, the district board shall assign vacancies on the board created by the expiration of terms to the respective election divisions and the vacancies shall be filled from those election divisions.

(g) If the majority of voters voting upon the question approves the election of directors at large, the district board shall promptly adopt a resolution dissolving the election divisions which had existed.

*(Amended by Stats. 2006, Ch. 588, Sec. 13. Effective January 1, 2007.)*

**13847.** In the case of a district board elected by election divisions, the district board shall adjust the boundaries of the election divisions before November 1 of the year following the year in which each decennial federal census is taken. If at any time between each decennial federal census a change of organization alters the population of the district or the district increases or decreases the number of members of the district board, the district board shall reexamine the boundaries of its election divisions. If the district board finds that the population of any election division has varied so that the divisions no longer meet the criteria specified in subdivision (d) of Section 13846, the district board shall adjust the boundaries of the election divisions so that the divisions shall be as nearly equal in population as possible. The district board shall make this change within 60 days of the effective date of the change of organization or an increase or decrease in the number of members of the district board.

*(Added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.)*

**13848.** (a) If a majority of the voters voting upon the question at a general district or special election are in favor, a district that has an appointed district board shall have an elected district board or a district that has an elected district board shall have an appointed district board.

(b) The district board may adopt a resolution placing the question on the ballot. Alternatively, upon receipt of a petition signed by at least 25 percent of the registered voters of the district, the district board shall adopt a resolution placing the question on the ballot.

(c) If the question is submitted to the voters at a general district election, the notice required by Section 12112 of the Elections Code shall contain a statement of the question to appear on the ballot. If the question is submitted to the voters at a special election, the notice of election and ballot shall contain a statement of the question.

(d) If a majority of voters voting upon the question approves of changing from an appointed district board to an elected district board, the members of the district board shall be elected at the next general district election. If a majority of voters voting upon the question approves of changing from an elected district board to an appointed district board, members shall be appointed to the district board as vacancies occur.

*(Amended by Stats. 2006, Ch. 588, Sec. 14. Effective January 1, 2007.)*

**13849.** (a) Before circulating any petition pursuant to Section 13845, 13846, or 13848 the chief petitioners shall publish a notice of intention which shall include a written statement not to exceed 500 words in length, setting forth the reasons for the proposal. The notice shall be published pursuant to Section 6061 of the Government Code in one or more newspapers of general circulation within the district. If the district is located in more than one county, publication of the notice shall be made in at least one newspaper of general circulation in each of the counties.

(b) The notice shall be signed by at least one, but not more than three, chief petitioners and shall be in substantially the following form:

"Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition

Notice is hereby given of the intention to circulate a petition affecting the Board of Directors of the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of the district). The petition proposes that \_\_\_\_\_ (description of the proposal)."

(c) Within five days after the date of publication, the chief petitioners shall file with the secretary of the district board a copy of the notice together with an affidavit made by a representative of the newspaper in which the notice was published certifying to the fact of publication.

(d) After the filing required pursuant to subdivision (c), the petition may be circulated for signatures.

*(Added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.)*

**13850.** (a) Sections 100 and 104 of the Elections Code shall govern the signing of the petition and the format of the petition.

(b) A petition may consist of a single instrument or separate counterparts. The chief petitioner or petitioners shall file the petition, together with all counterparts, with the secretary of the district board. The secretary shall not accept a petition for filing unless the signatures have been secured within six months of the date on which the first signature was obtained and the chief petitioner or petitioners submitted the petition to the secretary for filing within 60 days after the last signature was obtained.

*(Amended by Stats. 1994, Ch. 923, Sec. 136. Effective January 1, 1995.)*

**13851.** (a) Within 30 days after the date of filing a petition, the secretary of the district board shall cause the petition to be examined and shall prepare a certificate of sufficiency indicating whether the petition is signed by the requisite number of signers.

(b) The secretary shall cause the names of the signers on the petition to be compared with the voters' register in the office of the county clerk or registrar of voters and ascertain (i) the number of registered voters in the district, and (ii) the number of qualified signers appearing upon the petition.

(c) If the certificate of the secretary shows the petition to be insufficient, the secretary shall immediately give notice by certified mail of the insufficiency to the chief petitioners. That mailed notice shall state in what amount the petition is insufficient. Within 15 days after the date of the notice of insufficiency, the chief petitioners may file with the secretary a supplemental petition bearing additional signatures.

(d) Within 10 days after the date of filing a supplemental petition, the secretary shall examine the supplemental petition and certify in writing the results of his or her examination.

(e) The secretary shall sign and date a certificate of sufficiency. That certificate shall also state the minimum signature requirements for a sufficient petition and show the results of the secretary's examination. The secretary shall mail a copy of the certificate of sufficiency to the chief petitioners.

(f) Once the chief petitioners have filed a sufficient petition, the district board shall take the actions required pursuant to Section 13845, 13846, or 13848.

*(Repealed and added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.)*

**13852.** (a) Any vacancy in the office of a member appointed to the district board shall be filled pursuant to Section 1779 of the Government Code.

(b) Any vacancy in the office of a member elected to the district board shall be filled pursuant to Section 1780 of the Government Code.

*(Repealed and added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.)*

**13853.** (a) Within 60 days after their initial election or appointment and after each general district election or unopposed election, the district board shall meet and elect its officers. The officers of a district board are a president, a vice president, and a secretary or clerk.

(b) The secretary or clerk may be a member of the district board. He or she may receive compensation set by the district board which shall be in lieu of any other compensation to which he or she may be entitled as a member of the district board. The district board may employ a clerk to perform the duties of the secretary.

(c) A district board may create additional officers and elect members to those positions, provided that no member of a district board shall hold more than one office.

*(Repealed and added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.)*

**13854.** (a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), the county treasurer of the principal county shall act as the district treasurer and shall receive no compensation for the receipt and disbursement of money of the district.

(b) The district board may adopt a resolution appointing a district treasurer other than the county treasurer and defining the duties and compensation of the office. The district treasurer, or any other person authorized by the district board, shall draw checks or warrants to pay any demands which have been audited and approved in the manner prescribed by the district board.

(c) If the district board adopts the resolution provided by subdivision (b), the district treasurer and any other person designated by the district board shall give bonds to the district conditioned for the faithful performance of their duties. The amount of each bond shall be at least one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or 10 percent of the total amount of the district's final budget for the preceding fiscal year, whichever is greater. The district board shall pay the premiums on the bonds.

*(Repealed and added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.)*

**13855.** A district board shall meet at least once every three months. Meetings of the board are subject to the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act, (Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 54950) of Part 1 of Division 2 of Title 5 of the Government Code).

*(Repealed and added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.)*

**13856.** (a) A majority of the district board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

(b) The district board shall act only by ordinance, resolution, or motion. Except as specifically provided to the contrary in this part, a recorded vote by a majority of the total membership of the district board is required on each action.

*(Added by Stats. 1987, Ch. 1013, Sec. 11.)*

**13857.** (a) Subject to subdivision (b), each member of the district board may receive compensation in an amount set by the district board not to exceed one hundred dollars (\$100) for attending each meeting of the district board. The number of meetings for which a member of the board of directors may receive compensation shall not exceed six meetings in any calendar month. Commencing January 1, 2019, if the district compensates its members for more than four meetings in a calendar month, the district board shall annually adopt a written policy describing, based on a finding supported by substantial evidence, why more than four meetings per month are necessary for the effective operation of the district.

(b) The district board, by ordinance adopted pursuant to Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 20200) of Division 10 of the Water Code, may increase the compensation received by the district board members above the amount prescribed by subdivision (a).

(c) For purposes of this section, the determination of whether a director's activities on any specific day are compensable shall be made pursuant to Article 2.3 (commencing with Section 53232) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 2 of Title 5 of the Government Code.

*(Amended by Stats. 2018, Ch. 170, Sec. 2. (AB 2329) Effective January 1, 2019.)*