

Application to Serve on the County of San Diego Independent Redistricting Commission

This is your application to serve as a Commissioner on the County of San Diego's 2020-2021 Independent Redistricting Commission.

Read the tips below to
make sure your
application is complete.

Megan

First Name

Thomas

Last Name

Make sure you have all the pages.

There are nine (9) total pages that make up this application, including this page. The pages are numbered in the bottom right corners.

Initial the top right corner of pages 2-9 in the "Initial Here" box. This will make sure your application stays together.

Print clearly and legibly or type your application. Doing so will speed up processing time. Unclear handwriting may cause delays.

Don't know if you're eligible to serve on the County's Redistricting Commission? Among other requirements, you must be a registered voter in San Diego County to serve on the Commission. See page 3 for more details.

Questions? Learn more at www.sandiegocounty.gov/redistricting or redistricting@sdcounty.ca.gov.

This application must be received no later than Friday, July 31, 2020, at 5 p.m. See page 9 for submittal instructions.



Application Timeline

- July 31, 2020** Applications must be received by the San Diego County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors no later than 5 p.m.
- August 26, 2020** From the pool of qualified applicants, the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors will post the names of the 60 most qualified applicants. The names will be posted online for at least 30 days.
- October 13, 2020** The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors will conduct a random drawing of the qualified applicants at the Board of Supervisors meeting to select eight Commissioners.
- October 22 and November 5, 2020** The selected eight Commissioners will meet to choose the remaining six Commissioners from the remaining pool of qualified applicants.

Important Things to Know

- The questions in this application ensure you are eligible to serve on the Commission.
- Answer the questions to the best of your ability.

A. Tell us About Yourself

First Name: Megan Last Name: Thomas

Address (where you are registered to vote)

Street Address: [REDACTED]
City: [REDACTED]
State: [REDACTED] Zip Code: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address (if different than the address listed above)

Street Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Contact Information

Phone 1: [REDACTED] Type: Mobile
Phone 2: _____ Type: _____
E-mail: [REDACTED]

B. How This Application Will Be Used

- I understand the contents of this application may be made available to the public. Yes, I understand
- I understand that while this application is a public document, my personal e-mail address, street address, and phone number(s) will be kept confidential to the extent authorized by law. Yes, I understand

C. Questions to Determine Eligibility

Government Code section 21550 sets forth certain qualifications to serve on this Commission. Please check the appropriate box for each question. Applicants may be asked to verify and update information at various points in the process.

1. Are you a resident of the County of San Diego? Yes No
2. Which supervisorial district do you live in? 1
If you're not sure, visit www.sandiegocounty.gov, click on "Find My District" under the Board of Supervisors, and enter your address in the top right of the web page. 2
 3
 4
 5
3. Which political party are you currently registered?
 Democratic Republican American Independent Green Libertarian
 Peace and Freedom Other: _____
 I am not registered with a political party (non-partisan)
4. Have you been continuously registered to vote in the County of San Diego with the same political party preference or with no political party preference and have not changed your political party preference for at least five years? Yes No
If you're not sure, you can check your voter registration at www.sdvote.com.
5. Have you voted in at least one of the last three statewide elections immediately preceding your application to be a member of the Commission? Yes No

Explanatory Notes: If necessary, you may further explain answers to the questions above.

My last name changed due to marriage. Previously BAEHRENS; now registered as THOMAS.

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INITIAL
HERE: → MT

6. Within the 10 years immediately preceding the date of this application to the Commission, have either you, or an immediate family member, done any of the following? For purposes of these questions, immediate family members means a spouse, child, in-law, parent, or sibling.

You are not eligible to serve on the Commission if you answer "Yes" to any of the following:

- a. Been appointed to, elected to, or have been a candidate for office at the local, state, or federal level representing the County of San Diego, including as a member of the Board of Supervisors. Yes No
- b. Served as an employee of, or paid consultant for, an elected representative at the local, state, or federal level representing the County of San Diego. Yes No
- c. Served as an employee of, or paid consultant for, a candidate for office at the local, state, or federal level representing the County of San Diego. Yes No
- d. Served as an officer, employee, or paid consultant of a political party or as an appointed member of a political party central committee. Yes No
- e. Been a registered federal, state, or local lobbyist Yes No

Explanatory Notes: If necessary, you may further explain answers to the questions above.

N/A

D. Experience Qualifications

State law requires candidates demonstrate experience in areas related to redistricting. Please provide responses to the following questions.

1. **What experience do you possess that demonstrates analytical skills relevant to the redistricting process and voting rights, and demonstrates your ability to comprehend and apply the applicable state and federal legal requirements?**

Through involvement in the Census and redistricting process, I have gained an understanding of the multitude of influences and outcomes related to redistricting and voting rights including legal complexities, budget and policy, and the ways that voting and Census responses are deeply influenced by intentional and structural social and political factors like race, class, cultural norms, and community engagement efforts.

For the past two years, I worked closely with employees of the Governor's Office and State Complete Count 2020 Census Office; SANDAG, County of Imperial, and the United Way SD as the local jurisdictional and CBO grantees; local, regional, and statewide funders; and with dozens of San Diego and Imperial County community based organizations to build a diverse, well-resourced get-out-the-count infrastructure. I have done this as a funder and complete count committee member, emphasizing resources flowing to outreach with hard to count individuals by trusted members of their community.

Through this process, I have used Census tract and block data and maps to understand needs and progress, co-developed advocacy calls for action and engaged with legislators to secure funding for our region's effort and ensure that every person is counted, one time, and in the right place. In addition, for the past year, I've worked with a statewide coalition to distribute funds and develop education for funders about redistricting and how to leverage the existing Census infrastructure. Today, as the federal government brings twists and turns to the rules and regulations surrounding Census and redistricting and the judicial system becomes involved, navigating a complex and fluid environment will be critical.

Complex analytical tools embedded in government functions are not new to me. In addition to the past two years of Census and redistricting work, I have also managed State grant funds, requiring detailed record-keeping; advocated for public policy changes at the city, County, and State levels as executive director of an environmental advocacy organization protecting water quality and now vice president of a philanthropic membership organization that advocates about social justice issues.

I completed a Bachelor of Science at Georgetown University and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) at Yale School of Management and have applied finance, policy, language, and management skills for 20 years in service to my community.

You are encouraged to limit your response to one page, however if more space is needed, you may attach an additional page.

2. What experience do you possess that demonstrates an ability to be impartial?

An impartial approach to the redistricting process is imperative, but does not signify that it will be isolated or easy. In fact, to achieve impartiality, we exert ourselves to have the breadth and depth of information and understanding to make appropriate decisions. We must clear away barrier after barrier that would cause incomplete and biased information -- languages, time commitment, knowledge, connection and the many other ways that people become disenfranchised.

For the past five years I've led philanthropic grantmaking, distributing over \$4 million to community organizations in San Diego and Imperial Counties. In every case, there was more need or requests than funds available meaning that "yes" and "no" decisions had to be made. At their best, these decisions are universally understood and supported by those who receive funds, those who don't, and those observing.

I've learned many lessons throughout these processes about what can ensure that all parties feel they have been heard, that the decision was sound and impartial, and that the result represents a fair and just outcome. These include shared understanding of goals and circumstances, co-creation of solutions, and frequent clear communication. Development meaningful trust among the people making decisions and the people who are impacted through an impartial approach built on facts, dialogue, and transparency are all practices that I embrace.

You are encouraged to limit your response to one page, however if more space is needed, you may attach an additional page.

3. What experience do you possess that demonstrates an appreciation for the diverse demographics and geography of the County of San Diego?

The rich diversity of our region is the singular reason that I am enthusiastically offering myself as a candidate for the County of San Diego Independent Redistricting Commission: to help ensure that district lines are drawn in such a way that amplifies the influence of people with a multitude of identities and combat the silencing of their voice that might occur if we systemically draw them out of the electoral process.

Though I was born and raised in the County of San Diego, my understanding of its diverse demographics and geography has developed and deepened most intensely in the past ten years. I have had the immense privilege to know and learn from many people in my roles as an employee and volunteer at multiple countywide social service and policy advocacy nonprofit organizations. I have gained relationships and experiences that open my eyes not just to diversity, but the benefits when diverse groups of people have a voice in--and in fact guide--the decisions that impact all of us. Furthermore, I've come to understand the subtle and not-so-subtle ways that those voices are quieted and disenfranchised.

One example of how our region's population has come life for me is through the projects and people I have come to know in the Social Equity Collaborative Fund. Whether connecting with the Homie UP and the National Latino Research Center in San Marcos in their work with incarcerated individuals; Project New Village in Southeast for their work on food sovereignty; or the Asian Solidarity Collective on pan-Asian solidarity and rooting out anti-Blackness; I have rejoiced in the leadership and joy that our community has in it. And I've seen how our region thrives when that leadership is reflected in our public decision-making processes.

Through involvement with the 2020 Census, my appreciation for the nuances of diversity as multiplied. Each demographic characteristic of an individual is only a singular lens on their life. People in East County are all ages, races, health conditions and more. People who identify as Asian may be parents, immigrants, and of a multitude of origins and ethnic identities. The privilege and challenge of redistricting is to ensure every aspect of every person shows up on the map.

As a commissioner, I would commit my time and energy to seeking out and incorporating the input of residents in the County of San Diego to ensure that Black, Pacific Islander, or Latinx; gay, straight, or non-binary; veteran, parent, or renter; all of us have a voice for the next ten years.

You are encouraged to limit your response to one page, however if more space is needed, you may attach an additional page.

E. Demographic Information

Providing this information is optional. You may select "decline to state" for each answer. Elections Code section 21550(g)(2) requires six of the 14 appointees, in addition to meeting minimum requirements, be chosen in a way that ensures the Commission reflects the County's diversity, including racial, ethnic, geographic, and gender diversity. However, formulas or specific ratios shall not be applied for this purpose.

1. Please describe your ethnic origin. Mark one or more boxes.

- BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN: All persons having origins in any of the original Black racial groups of Africa.
- HISPANIC/LATINO: All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- ASIAN: All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- NATIVE HAWAIIAN/OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER: All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE: All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain cultural affiliation or community recognition.
- WHITE (not of Hispanic Origin): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.
- Prefer to Self-Describe: _____
- Decline to state

2. What is your date of birth? [REDACTED] Decline to state

3. Select the gender you identify as:

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Decline to state

F. Signature

By signing below, I declare under penalty of perjury that the answers provided in this application are true to the best of my knowledge.

First Name: Megan

Last Name: Thomas

Signature: _____



Date: 07/31/2020

G. Submittal

Completed applications must be received by the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors no later than Friday, July 31, 2020 at 5 p.m. Double check your answers in the application; once submitted, applications cannot be amended. Remember that you must answer all questions on this application to be considered for the Commission. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Option 1: Mail or drop off the signed paper copy of your completed application to:

County of San Diego
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Redistricting Commission
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 402
San Diego, CA 92101-2471
(619) 531-5434

Postmarks are not accepted. Applications must be received by the Clerk of the Board by the due date.

Option 2: E-mail your completed application.

Ensure the application is signed, then e-mail the application to:
redistricting@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Applications must be received by Friday, July 31, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.