Hillsborough Classroom Teachers Association
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HCTA PERC Recertification Election FAQ

1. Why am I receiving information about a recertification election?

Florida law requires certain public employee unions to participate in a recertification election if less than 60% of the employees in the bargaining unit are dues-paying union members. Because HCTA's membership level is below the 60% threshold established in state law, HCTA must participate in and win a recertification election to remain the certified bargaining representative for employees in the bargaining unit.

2. What is PERC?

PERC (Public Employees Relations Commission) is the Florida state agency responsible for administering public-sector labor relations and conducting recertification elections.

3. What is a recertification election?

A recertification election is a vote conducted by the PERC to determine whether HCTA will continue serving as the bargaining representative for employees in the bargaining unit.

4. Why does this matter?

The election determines whether employees will continue to have the rights to negotiate wages, benefits, working conditions, leave, and other workplace policies with the School Board, keep our legally negotiated contracts and a process for resolving disputes through the grievance procedure through HCTA.

5. Why does the 60% membership requirement matter?

Under Florida law certain public sector unions with membership levels below 60% must petition for a recertification election.

6. Who can vote?

All eligible employees in the bargaining unit may vote, whether they are HCTA members or non-members.

7. What is a bargaining unit and how do I know if I'm in it?

A bargaining unit is a group of employees defined by PERC who are represented together for the purposes of collective bargaining. Employees in the bargaining unit are covered by the same contract and are represented by HCTA in negotiations over wages, benefits, employee rights, terms and conditions of employment.

If your position is included in the bargaining unit represented by HCTA, you are eligible to vote. If you are unsure if you are in the bargaining unit contact HCTA for assistance. (813-238-7902 | HCTA@hcps.net)

8. If I'm not an HCTA member, why should I care?

Whether you are an HCTA member or not, the contract covers all employees in the bargaining unit. Wages, benefits, leave provisions, workplace protections, and working conditions negotiated by HCTA affect all employees represented in each bargaining unit.

9. What if I'm on leave?

Employees who are on approved leave are eligible to vote and participate in the election.

10. Can administrators/managers/confidential employees vote?

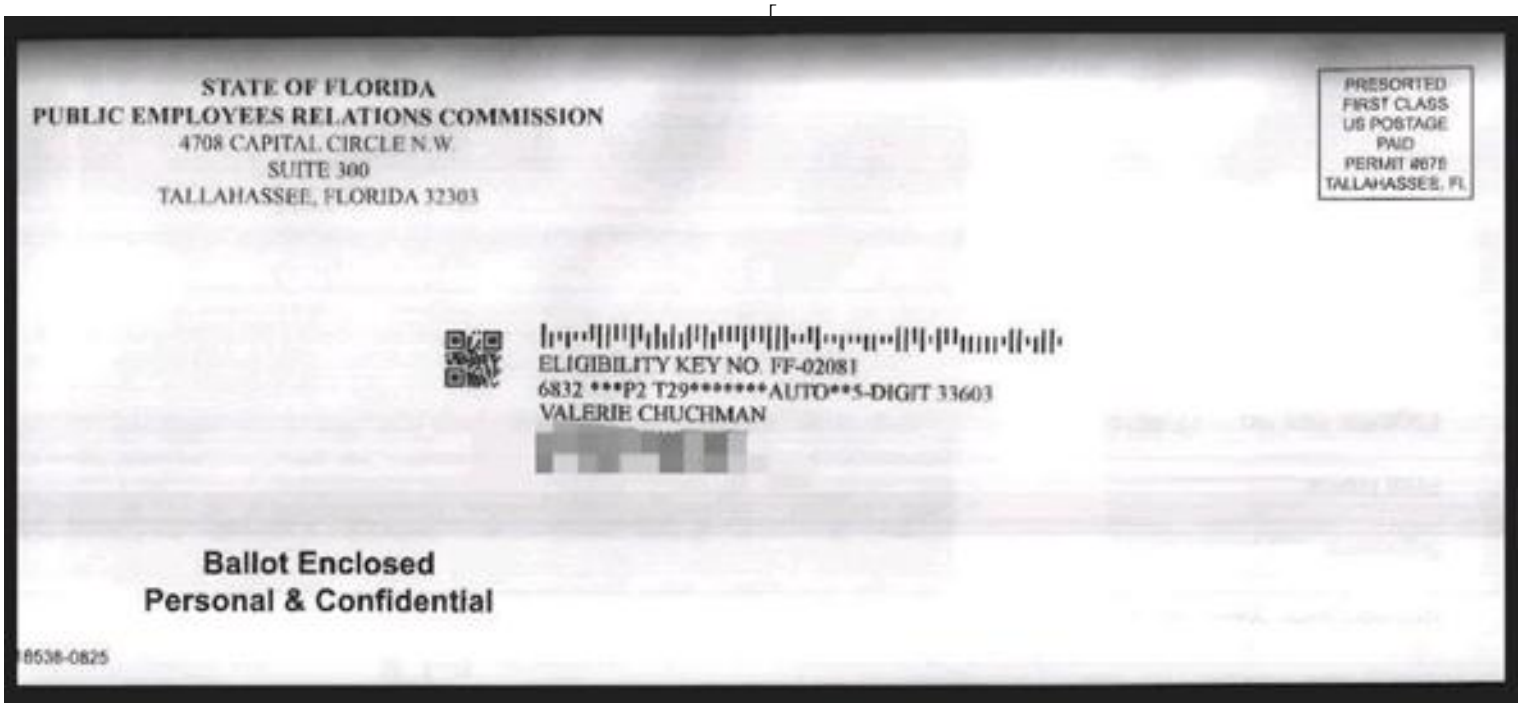
No. Employees who are not part of the bargaining unit are not eligible to vote in the election.

11. How will I receive my ballot?

PERC will mail a ballot directly to eligible employees at their home address that are on file with HCPS.

12. What should I be looking for in the mail?

Watch for an official election mailing from PERC containing voting instructions, a ballot, and a postage-paid return envelope. Be sure to check your mail carefully during the voting period. (Sample Election Mail Ballot Packet from PERC)



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13. When should I expect my ballot?

PERC establishes the election timeline.

- Instructional: Ballots are mailed on October 22nd *(look for on or around October 29th)*
- Clerical: Ballots are mailed on November 18th *(Look for on or around November 25th)*
- Paraprofessional: Ballots are mailed on November 23rd *(look for on or around November 30th)*

14. When should I return my ballot?

As soon as you receive it. Returning your ballot promptly helps ensure it is received and counted before the deadline.

15. What if I don't receive a ballot OR I recently moved OR my mail/ballot is lost, damaged, or accidentally thrown away?

Contact HCTA immediately for assistance. Do not wait until the end of the voting period.

(**813-238-7902** | **HCTA@hcps.net**)

16. Can I mail a ballot for a coworker or friend? Can I give my ballot to someone else to mail?

No. Just as with other elections, each voter is responsible for handling and mailing their own ballot. Employees should not collect, transport, or mail ballots on behalf of coworkers. To protect the integrity of the election process, employees should personally handle and return their own ballots.

17. Is my vote confidential?

Yes. Your ballot is secret. No one can determine whether you voted YES or NO.

Election records only indicate whether an eligible employee returned a ballot and participated in the election. However, those records do not reveal how an employee voted.

18. What happens if I don't return my ballot and the election doesn't reach 50% turnout?

Your vote will not be counted.

Florida law requires **participation** **from at least 50% of eligible voters** in order for the election results to be valid. Even if the majority of ballots returned are YES, the election is not valid unless at least 50% of total eligible employees return their ballots.

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19. What happens after the election?

For the election to be valid, at least 50% of eligible employees must return their ballots.

If the turnout requirement is met and a majority vote YES, HCTA remains the bargaining representative and employees retain their contract, collective bargaining rights, and contractual protections.

If the turnout requirement is met and a majority vote NO, HCTA is no longer the bargaining representative, the collective bargaining agreement would no longer remain in effect, and employees would lose collectively bargained rights and protections.

20. Why is membership important if HCTA represents everyone?

Membership demonstrates employee support for union representation and provides the resources necessary to negotiate contracts, enforce workplace protections, and represent employees. The power of any union is dependent upon its membership. Florida law now uses membership levels to determine whether certain unions must participate in recertification elections.

21. Why should I vote if I've never needed union assistance?

The outcome affects all employees in the bargaining unit, including future wages, benefits, working conditions, employee rights, and workplace protections.

22. Who should I contact if I have questions about the election or HCTA membership?

Contact HCTA if you have questions about eligibility, ballots, election timelines, voting procedures, or HCTA membership.

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