

Director
Registrations & Elections Department
Fulton County, Georgia

Fulton County

Home to Atlanta and lying in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Fulton County (population 992,000) is a wonderful place to live, work and play. It is a vibrant, multi-cultural community that is the transportation, commercial and cultural hub of the South. Besides being the state capital, CNN, Cox Enterprises and Delta Air Lines have their headquarters in the County. Its attractions are many, including the Georgia Aquarium, Underground Atlanta, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center, the World of Coca Cola Museum, and Zoo Atlanta. Culturally, it is a leader with the High Museum of Art, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and the Atlanta Ballet. Its institutions of higher learning include Georgia Institute of Technology, Georgia State University, Spelman College, Morehouse College, Clark Atlanta University, Oglethorpe University, Atlanta Christian College, and Mercer University. It is known for its college athletics and its professional sports teams include the Atlanta Braves, Falcons and Hawks. Add the pleasant, warm southern climate and it is simply difficult to find a better place to call home.

Overall, Fulton County encompasses 528.7 square miles, and stretches over 70 miles from one end to the other. North Fulton includes the cities of Sandy Springs, Alpharetta, Roswell, and Mountain Park. South Fulton includes the suburban cities of College Park, East Point, Fairburn, Hapeville, Palmetto and Union City. The City of Atlanta lies between them. Named after Robert Fulton, the inventor of the steamboat and the first practical submarine, Fulton County was formed from DeKalb County in 1853, and consolidated with Milton and Campbell Counties in 1932.

The Government

The County is governed by a seven member Commission whose members serve staggered four year terms. Two of the Commissioners run at large while the other five represent geographic districts. It follows the County Manager form of government

with an appointed manager overseeing its operations. Its total budget is approximately a billion dollars and it has approximately 6,500 employees.

The Department of Registrations and Elections

The Department of Registration & Elections is responsible for overseeing the registration and voting processes throughout Fulton County. The day-to-day operations are overseen by the Department Director who reports to a five member, appointed board. The Republican and Democratic Committee Chairpersons each appoint two members and the County Commission appoints the Chairperson. In reality the Board functions as a non-partisan body with its sole desire being to have efficient, effective and fair elections run throughout the County. The Board Members are collegial, respectful and friendly. While they have high expectations for their staff, they are sincerely supportive. Over the years, the Board's membership has been stable.

The Department has a budget of almost \$3 million and a permanent staff of 25. At election time, the staff grows to approximately 2,000. Presently the County has 552,574 registered voters (up 36% from the 2000 election). In the last year, the Department has processed 224,000 new voter applications and 50,000 absentee ballots. Further, by year end, it will have overseen five major elections: a presidential preference primary in February, a general primary in July, a general primary run-off in August, the general election in November and a run-off election in December.

The Department is composed of three divisions. The Registration Division registers Fulton County voters, maintains the master elector lists, notifies electors of polling places, performs purges (criminal and deceased), mails absentee ballots and verifies petitions.

The Elections Division conducts national, state, county, municipal, school and organizational elections and maintains campaign disclosure reports. It is also responsible for selection, preparation and equipping of polling places, precinct management (redrawing precinct lines), recruiting, training and assigning poll workers while maintaining, preparing, distributing and retrieving voting equipment and supplies.

The Administrative Division is responsible for the daily administrative operations of the department including legislative actions, budget preparation and monitoring, recruitment and employment screening/hiring/training, procurement, maintaining minutes of the Board of Registration and Elections and ensuring compliance of Board policies. Additionally, the Division provides Voter Education and Outreach to the County's citizens.

The Challenges

Not surprisingly, the principal challenge is to operate a small, efficient and effective core organization in an extremely cyclical environment, an environment that requires extensive use of properly trained and educated volunteers during often highly charged elections. As such, it is imperative that logical and, to the degree possible, foolproof processes are developed, implemented and optimized. Unfortunately, historically the systems and some members of staff have not always performed to the levels necessary to deliver the election results in a timely manner and that will withstand scrutiny. As a result, the press coverage election has not always been positive and the Secretary of State has vigorously pursued every opportunity to find fault in the Department. At this juncture, the Board is not satisfied with the status quo and feels change is not only necessary but imperative. Many, but not all, the employees are hardworking, team players. The new Director will have the full support of the Board to make the changes he/she feels are necessary to make the Department a model that others in the state and the nation will recognize and aspire to emulate.

The Ideal Candidate

The Board is seeking an energetic, strong and professional manager. The selected candidate will be expected to develop an operational vision for the organization, convey it effectively to the Board and staff, build consensus and then implement it. While experience in conducting elections and registration is preferred, leadership skills and demonstrated success in process management and optimization are much more important. People and intergovernmental skills are critical. While the Director reports to the Board and manages/inspires the staff, he/she must also be able to work and communicate well with the County Commission, the Secretary of State and the media. Experience in voter education is a plus. The Board will consider outstanding managers with demonstrated records of achievement from other areas of government and the private sector.

The position requires a bachelor's degree in public administration, business, or related field AND seven (7) years of progressively more responsible management experience in government administration, business administration, or the legal field involving the interpretation of governmental laws, rules, and statutes. Experience in elections and registration management is preferable. Applicants must also have at least three (3) years experience supervising the work of subordinate employees and must have or be able to obtain a valid Georgia Driver's License.

Compensation

Starting salary to \$150,000. The Board recognizes it costs money to hire talented people and is willing to pay what it takes (up to \$150,000) to get the right person. Benefits are very good.

How to Apply

E-mail resumes to **Recruit23@cb-asso.com** by April 9, 2009. Faxed or mailed resumes will not be accepted. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at the following number: 561-707-3537.

The Process

Interviews will be held as soon as possible after April 9th and probably in early May.