

Frequently Asked Questions

California – General Election 2022

Last Updated: 11/3/2022

Disclaimer: This guide is designed for informational purposes only. It is not legal advice and is not intended to create an attorney-client relationship. The Election Protection Coalition does not warrant any information contained in this guide, nor does the Coalition suggest that the information in this guide should be used as a basis to pursue legal advice or decision-making.

Note: This FAQ is not exhaustive. Situations or inquiries may arise that are not answered below. In those circumstances, contact your hotline captain or command center for assistance. Please make sure to record all of the voter's contact information should follow-up be necessary.

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<u>REGISTERING TO VOTE</u>

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Can I register to vote?

To register to vote in California, you must be (i) a United States citizen and a resident of California; (ii) 18 years old or older on Election Day; (iii) not currently serving a state or federal prison term for the conviction of a felony; and (iv) not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court.¹

2. **PRIMARY ELECTION:** Can I vote in the primary election? Do I have to be a member of a party to vote in its primary?

California's 2022 primary election has already occurred. It took place on June 7, 2022.

3. **STATUS:** Am I registered to vote?

A voter can determine whether they are registered to vote by checking the California Secretary of State website and entering their information (voter's first and last name and date of birth or identification information) at https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/. Alternatively, some county elections officials² also allow voters to check their voter registration status through the county website, by telephone, or both. See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/registration-status.

4. **HOW:** How do I register to vote? Can I register online? Do I need a printer? Can I register to vote in person?

To register to vote, a voter must complete a registration form. The form is available to complete and submit entirely online at http://registertovote.ca.gov/. A voter can obtain a paper voter registration form by calling the Secretary of State's toll-free voter hotline at (800) 345-VOTE (8683) or emailing Elections Division staff. See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/contact/email-elections-division. Alternatively, a paper voter registration form may be obtained at any DMV field office or at many post offices, public

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¹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/frequently-asked-questions.

² A list of county elections offices and relevant contact information can be found here: https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/county-elections-offices.

³ See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration.

libraries, and government offices. Voters may also request a paper registration form from their county elections office (https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/county-elections-offices).

5. **IDENTIFICATION:** What ID is required to register to vote?

The voter registration application asks for the voter's driver license or California identification card number. If the voter does not have either, they may use the last four digits of their Social Security number. If applying to register to vote online without a California driver license or identification card number but with other information (i.e., SSN number), the website will create a pre-filled voter registration application for the registrant to print, sign and mail. If a voter does not have either a driver license, California identification card, or Social Security card, they may leave that space blank, and they will be assigned a unique identification number.

Voters who do not provide a driver's license, ID, or Social Security number upon registering will be asked for ID when they vote for the first time. See Question #17 for accepted forms of identification.

6. **DEADLINES:** When is/was the voter registration deadline? Are there different deadlines whether I register by mail, in-person, online or on Election Day?

The voter registration deadline is October 24, 2022 (the deadline is 15 days before the November 8, 2022 statewide General Election). Voter registration applications submitted by mail will be processed if they are postmarked on or before October 24, 2022.⁶

However, California has same-day voter registration. The state permits voters to "conditionally register" from October 25 to November 8, after the voter registration deadline, at a county elections office or any voting site before or on Election Day. (For a list of early voting locations where the Same Day Voter Registration Process/Conditional Registration Can Be Completed, see https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/.) The voter will then vote a provisional ballot. Conditional registration becomes permanent, and the provisional ballot is counted, after the county elections official processes the application, confirms the accuracy of the application, and confirms the registrant's eligibility to vote. See Question #7.

7. **SAME DAY:** Does my state have Same Day Registration? If so, what is the process?

Yes, Californians can register to vote after the voter registration deadline, anytime through Election Day. Eligible voters may complete their Conditional Voter Registration at their county elections office, polling place, vote center, or any other satellite voting location established in their county (from October 25 to November 8, 2022). The voter will then be permitted to cast a provisional ballot, which will be counted if the county is able to determine the voter is eligible to vote.⁷

8. **PERMANENT MOVE:** I have moved permanently and I didn't update my voter registration, can I vote?

Voters that have moved permanently should re-register online (https://registertovote.ca.gov/) or by paper voter registration application, or by sending a signed letter to the voter's current county elections office (https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/county-elections-offices) with the voter's name, current address, and date of birth. If the voter already updated their address with the

⁴ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/frequently-asked-questions.

⁵ Cal. Elec. Code § 2150(a)(7).

⁶ Cal. Elec. Code § 2119(d);

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/election-dates-and-resources.

⁷ Cal. Elec. Code § 2170; https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/same-day-reg.

Department of Motor Vehicles or U.S. Postal Service, their voter registration will be automatically updated.⁸

9. **TEMPORARY MOVE:** I have moved temporarily. How can I vote?

If a voter has been temporarily displaced from their home, and the voter intends to return to their residence in the future, and/or mail delivery to their residence is disrupted, the voter can continue to use their prior permanent residence where they were registered to vote as their address for the purpose of voting.

If a voter needs a replacement ballot for the November 8, 2022 election because they temporarily moved or want the ballot to be sent to another address (e.g., to the home of a family member or friend, a post office box, or to the voter's work), they can re-register, update their voter registration, or request a replacement ballot from their county registrar's office. If the voter wishes the replacement ballot to be sent to them by mail, their request must be received by the county registrar's office no later than November 1, 2022, to allow for sufficient mailing time.⁹

The county registrar will only accept the first ballot received from the voter, ensuring that no one votes twice.

10. **STUDENT:** I am a college student. Can I register to vote where I go to school? What if I am taking classes remotely? Where can I vote?

Californians living away from home while attending college may either register to vote at their campus address or their home address. A student may only register in one location during an election cycle. Like any voter, students can vote in the precinct in which they are registered, or may vote by mail. See Question #26. [If a student is taking classes remotely, they can register at their home address or campus address (if they have one).

Note: if a student receives a vote-by-mail ballot at an address different from the address at which they currently live (e.g., a student who lives on campus but receives a vote-by-mail ballot at their home address), then the student should call their county registrar to request a replacement ballot or update their voter registration with a new address. If the student wants another vote-by-mail ballot to be mailed to their on-campus address, they must submit the request to their county registrar's office by November 1.

11. LIVING ABROAD: I am living abroad and/or serving in the military. How can I register and/or vote?

Under the new California law that expanded access to vote-by-mail during the COVID-19 pandemic, vote-by-mail ballots will be sent to all active, registered voters. This means that all active, registered voters living overseas who wish to vote in the election should automatically receive their vote-by-mail ballots via email if their county has an email on file. If the overseas voter has not received their vote-by-mail ballot, then they can request a replacement ballot by contacting their county elections office either by phone, email, or going to the website (each county will have different procedures). The deadline to request a replacement ballot is November 1.

⁸ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/frequently-asked-questions.

⁹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/election-dates-and-resources.

¹⁰ Cal. Elec. Code § 2025; https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/students.

When filling out an application to register as a special absentee voter, the overseas voter can choose to have their ballot mailed, faxed, or emailed to them. The form must be filled out 15 days before Election Day (October 24 for the November 8, 2022 Election). Conditional registration or same-day registration options after the 15-day deadline are *in-person* only.

The voter can also register by completing the Federal Post Card Application (https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/fpca2013.pdf) and mailing it to their county elections official. Assistance is available through the Federal Voting Assistance Program. https://www.fvap.gov/. 11

Overseas voters can also use the Remote Accessible Vote By Mail (RAVBM) System to mark their selections using their own compatible technology to vote independently and privately in the comfort of their own home. Voters must request a RAVBM ballot by following the procedures of their home county (deadline to request is November 1, seven days before the Election). Some counties allow voters to request an RAVBM ballot on the county's website while others require voters to send in a formal request. The voter should call or email their county to find out more about the RAVBM process. Once the overseas voter receives their RAVBM ballot, they can mark it online, print it out to sign and date, and return it by mail with their own postage. The ballot must be postmarked by November 8, 2022 (Election Day) to count.¹²

12. **CRIMINAL CONVICTION:** I have a criminal conviction. Can I register to vote?

Yes, if an individual is not currently incarcerated in state or federal prison they can register to vote and vote regardless of their criminal conviction. In 2020, California voters passed Prop 17, a constitutional amendment altering Article II, Section 4 of the California Constitution, to permit individuals on parole with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to vote as long as they are registered to vote first. Individuals on probation, on mandatory supervision, on post-release community supervision, on federal supervised release, or a person with a juvenile wardship adjudication are also eligible to vote. If the person is currently incarcerated, they *may* be able to vote. See California SOS's guidelines available at

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/who-can-vote-california/voting-rights-californians.

13. **INCARCERATED:** I am currently incarcerated. Can I register to vote?

It depends. If an individual is currently incarcerated in a state or federal prison for the conviction of a felony, they cannot register to vote. As per a new constitutional amendment, individuals on parole can vote. Individuals who are temporarily in county jail awaiting transfer to state or federal prison cannot vote. An individual incarcerated in county jail can register to vote if: (1) serving a misdemeanor sentence; (2) jail time is a condition of probation (misdemeanor or felony); (3) serving a felony jail sentence*; or (4) awaiting trial. See California SOS's guidelines available at

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/who-can-vote-california/voting-rights-californians.

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/who-can-vote-california/voting-rights-californians/.

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¹¹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/military-overseas-voters.

 $^{^{12}\} https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/remote-accessible-vote-mail$

 $[\]underline{\text{https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/who-can-vote-california/voting-rights-californians/.}{14}$

*NOTE that if the individual is serving a state or federal prison term for a felony in a county or local jail is not allowed to register and vote.

HOW TO VOTE: ELECTION DAY

14. HOURS: When do the polls open/close on Election Day?

The polls must be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. PST on Election Day. 15

15. POLLING LOCATION: Where do I vote on Election Day?

The address of a voter's polling place or vote center locations are found in the Voter Information Guide mailed by county elections officials a few weeks before Election Day. Alternatively, a voter may (i) visit the California Secretary of State's website (https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/polling-place), (ii) call the toll-free voter hotline (1-800-345-VOTE (8683)), or (iii) text "Vote" to GOVOTE (468683).

If a voter has moved recently and has not updated their voter registration, refer to conditional or same-day registration in Questions #7 and #8.

16. **CLOSING:** What if the polls close when I am already in line?

A voter waiting in line at 8:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote.¹⁷

*Note to hotline volunteer: If you learn that a polling place prohibits those who were in line by the time the polls closed from voting, advise voters to stay at the polling location and contact your hotline captain immediately.

17. **IDENTIFICATION:** What identification is required to vote?

Most California voters do not need to show identification to vote. However, voters may need to provide identification if (i) they are voting for the first time after registering by mail or online <u>and</u> (ii) they did not provide a driver's license number, a California identification number, or the last four digits of their social security number when registering.¹⁸

In these narrow circumstances, a voter may provide an original or copy of the following:

- Current and valid photo identification, including:¹⁹
 - o Driver's license or identification card of any state;
 - Passport;

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¹⁵ Cal. Elec. Code § 14212.

¹⁶ https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/public-display/voter-info.pdf.

¹⁷ Cal. Elec. Code § 14401.

¹⁸ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/what-bring.

¹⁹ Cal. Code Regs. tit. 2, § 20107(d)(1).

- Employee identification card;
- o Identification card provided by a commercial establishment;
- Credit or debit card;
- Military identification card;
- Student identification card;
- Health club identification card;
- o Insurance plan identification card; or
- Public housing identification card.
- A document that includes the voter's name and address, and that is dated since the date of the last General Election, including:²⁰
 - Utility bill;
 - Bank statement;
 - o Government check or paycheck; or
 - A document issued by a government agency, including:
 - a sample ballot dated for the current election;
 - voter notification card; public housing identification card;
 - lease or rental statement or agreement;
 - student identification card;
 - tuition statement or bill;
 - insurance plan card or drug discount card;
 - discharge certificates, pardons, or other official documents issued in connection with a criminal case, indictment, sentence or other matter;
 - public transportation authority senior citizen and disabled discount card;
 - identification document issued by a governmental disability agency, government homeless shelter, and other government temporary or transitional facilities;
 - drug prescription issued by a government doctor or government health care provider;
 - property tax statement;
 - vehicle registration; or
 - vehicle certificate of ownership.

18. **NO IDENTIFICATION:** Can I vote without providing identification?

Most California voters do not need to show identification to vote. However, voters may need to provide identification if (i) they are voting for the first time after registering by mail or online <u>and</u> (ii) they did not provide a driver's license number, a California identification number, or the last four digits of their social security number when registering.²¹ See Question #17 for additional details.

²⁰ Cal. Code Regs. tit. 2, § 20107(d)(2).

²¹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/what-bring.

19. **NOT ON ROLLS AT MY POLLING PLACE:** I am at my polling place but am not showing up on the voter registration roll. Can I vote where I am?

Encourage the voter to check their county websites for information on early voting and Election Day locations and hours as these may differ depending on the county. Voters can use the "Find Your Polling Place" feature on the California Secretary's website at https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/polling-place, to locate this information. The site is updated daily and voters are encouraged to check back for updates.

Voters whose names do not appear on the rolls can register or re-register with **Same Day Registration** at any voting site in their county of residence. They will vote with a type of provisional ballot and their vote will be counted after the county elections official verifies their voter information.

A provisional ballot will not be rejected simply because a voter submitted it in the wrong precinct.²² A poll worker should tell the voter how to check to be sure the provisional ballot was counted, or the reasons why it was not.

Volunteers should first help the voter verify they are in the correct precinct or voting location. If they are in a county that uses vote centers instead of polling places, there is no "correct" vote center – full services are available to any voter in any vote center. If the voter is a polling place county and they are at the wrong polling place, volunteers should encourage the voter to go to the correct polling place so that they may vote by regular ballot. However, if the voter does not wish to travel to the correct polling location, the voter should vote by provisional ballot.

Voters in counties with countywide voting, including Voter's Choice Act counties and VCA-like countywide vote centers, can vote anywhere in the county. If they are not on the voter rolls at the vote center, they can register or re-register to vote through Same Day Registration.

20. **PROVISIONAL BALLOT:** If I don't have an ID, can I request a provisional ballot? My name is not on the rolls at my polling place, can I request a provisional ballot?

Voters who do not provide a driver's license, ID, or Social Security number upon registering will be asked for ID when they vote for the first time. If a voter cannot provide proof of identification, the voter will be asked to cast a provisional ballot. The elections official will verify the voter's eligibility by comparing their signature on the provisional ballot envelope with the signature on their voter registration form and if the signatures match, then the ballot will be counted.²³

Voters whose names do not appear on the rolls can register or re-register with **Same Day Registration**. They will vote with a type of provisional ballot after the county elections official verifies their voter information. A provisional ballot will not be rejected simply because a voter submitted it in the wrong precinct.²⁴ A poll worker should tell the voter how to check to be sure the provisional ballot was counted, or the reasons why it was not.

²² Cal. Elec. Code § 14310(c); https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/no-name-list.

²³ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/provisional-voting.

²⁴ Cal. Elec. Code § 14310(c); https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/no-name-list.

HOW TO VOTE: EARLY VOTING

(in some states called "in-person absentee")

21. **AVAILABILITY:** Is there early voting in my state (whether called early voting or in person absentee voting)?

Yes. Many counties will have one or more early voting locations open between October 10, 2022 and November 7, 2022, depending on the county. A list of locations offering early voting will be available at https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/.

22. **ELIGIBILITY:** Do I have to have a reason to vote early?

No. If the voter resides in a county offering early voting, the voter does not need a specific reason to vote early.

23. WHEN: When does early voting begin/end?

Many counties will have one or more early voting locations open starting October 10, 2022. A list of locations offering early voting is available at https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/.

24. WHERE: Where do I vote during early voting?

A list of locations offering early voting is available at https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/. Follow the link, add the county, city, or zip code for early voting locations, days, and hours of operation.

25. **IDENTIFICATION:** What identification is required for early voting? What if I don't have an ID?

Most California voters do not need to show identification to vote. However, voters may need to provide identification if (i) they are voting for the first time after registering by mail or online <u>and</u> (ii) they did not provide a driver's license number, a California identification number, or the last four digits of their social security number when registering.²⁵

In these narrow circumstances, a voter may provide an original or copy of the following:

- Current and valid photo identification, including:²⁶
 - o Driver's license or identification card of any state;
 - Passport;
 - Employee identification card;
 - o Identification card provided by a commercial establishment;
 - Credit or debit card;
 - Military identification card;
 - Student identification card;
 - Health club identification card;
 - Insurance plan identification card; or

²⁵ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/what-bring.

²⁶ Cal. Code Regs. tit. 2, § 20107(d)(1).

- o Public housing identification card.
- A document that includes the voter's name and address, and that is dated since the date of the last General Election, including:²⁷
 - Utility bill;
 - Bank statement;
 - Government check or paycheck; or
 - o A document issued by a government agency, including:
 - a sample ballot dated for the current election;
 - voter notification card;
 - public housing identification card;
 - lease or rental statement or agreement;
 - student identification card;
 - tuition statement or bill;
 - insurance plan card or drug discount card; discharge certificates, pardons, or other official documents issued in connection with a criminal case, indictment, sentence or other matter;
 - public transportation authority senior citizen and disabled discount card;
 - identification document issued by a governmental disability agency, government homeless shelter, and other government temporary or transitional facilities;
 - drug prescription issued by a government doctor or government health care provider;
 - property tax statement;
 - vehicle registration; or
 - vehicle certificate of ownership.

HOW TO VOTE: VOTE BY MAIL

26. AUTOMATIC MAIL BALLOT: Will I automatically be sent a ballot in the mail?

There is no need to register for or request a mail-in ballot. Rather, county elections officials automatically mail vote-by-mail ballots to all active registered voters.

The vote-by-mail ballot will be automatically sent to the voter's residence per their voter registration. If a voter has moved, they can re-register to vote using their new address (see Question # 6). The deadline to re-register or update addresses is October 24, 2022 (15 days before the November 8, 2022 General

²⁷ Cal. Code Regs. tit. 2, § 20107(d)(2).

Election, see https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/registering-vote for more information).

Voters can still conditionally register to vote after October 24, 2022, but they will need to request their ballot in person at their county elections office or polling location and they will vote a provisional ballot.²⁸ Voters cannot request that a replacement vote-by-mail ballot be sent to them by mail after the deadline—they need to go to their county registrar's office or polling place or vote center to vote a new ballot.

*Special Note for First Time Voters: see Question # 42.

For voters with disabilities:

- If the voter is (1) unable to vote in person at the polls because of an illness or disability that results in confinement (in a hospital, sanatorium, nursing home, or place of residence) or because they cannot access the polling place or equipment due to a physical handicap AND (2) the period for requesting a vote-by-mail ballot has passed, the voter may apply in writing for a late vote-by-mail ballot to be delivered to the voter by an authorized representative, using this form: https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/pdf/late-vote-by-mail-application.pdf. Note that these ballots can only be returned personally or by the authorized representative, to either the elections official or any polling place within the jurisdiction.
- A voter with disabilities can request a Remote Accessible Vote by Mail Ballot (RAVBM). The voter must be able to download ballot, mark their selections, print the ballot, sign the envelope (using the envelope provided with the vote-by-mail ballot or the voter's own envelope), and return the ballot by mail or by dropping it off at a voting location. A voter can request RAVBM when they review their voter status (at https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/), by contacting their County Elections Office, or by going to their County Elections Office website for more information. Detailed instructions are available here.

27. ELIGIBILITY: Do I need a specific reason to vote by mail?

No. County elections officials mail vote-by-mail ballots to all active registered voters. See Question #26.

28. APPLICATION DEADLINE: What is the deadline for requesting an mail-in ballot?

No application or request is necessary to receive a vote-by-mail ballot for the November 8, 2022 General Election. See Question # 26. If a voter needs to request a vote-by-mail ballot for their new address within 7 days of the election, they must do so in person at their county elections office or polling location.³⁰

To request a replacement vote-by-mail ballot if the voter failed to receive their vote-by-mail ballot or has lost or destroyed their original vote-by-mail ballot, the voter should contact their county elections office as soon as possible. A voter can apply in writing using a California Replacement Vote-by-Mail Ballot Application (see https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/replacement-application.pdf). This application must be provided to the voter's county elections office.³¹

²⁸ See https://registertovote.ca.gov/.

²⁹ Cal. Elec. Code § 3021.

³⁰ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

³¹ See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#replacement.

29. **APPLICATION RETURN:** How do I submit my mail-in ballot application? Can someone return it for me? Does it have to be postmarked by a specific date?

Every registered voter in California, regardless of their county, will automatically be sent a vote-by-mail ballot for the November 8, 2022 General Election. *See* Question # 26. If they lose, spoil, or do not receive their ballot, *see* Question #40.

Voters can designate any person to return their vote-by-mail ballot via mail, to the elections official who issued the ballot, to a polling place or vote center within the state, or to a vote by mail ballot drop-off location³², so long as the person designated to return the vote-by-mail ballot, and any entity they may work for, does not receive any form of compensation for returning ballots.³³ In order for the ballot to be counted, the voter must fill out the authorization section found on the outside of the ballot envelope.

The person designated must return the ballot in person, or put the ballot in the mail, no later than 3 days after receiving it from the voter or before the close of the polls on Election Day, whichever time period is shorter.³⁴ If the ballot is put in the mail, it must be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by November 15, 2022.³⁵

30. **IDENTIFICATION:** Are there identification requirements when I return my absentee ballot application and/or ballot?

When the vote-by-mail ballot is received by the voter's county elections official, the voter's signature on the return envelope will be compared to the signature(s) in their voter registration record.

First time voters who did not provide their driver license number, California identification number, or the last four digits of their Social Security number at the time they registered to vote are advised to send a photocopy of some personal identification to their county elections official before the election.³⁶ A copy of a recent utility bill, the county Voter Information Guide received from the voter's county elections office, or another document sent to the voter by a government agency are examples of acceptable forms of identification. Other examples include a passport, driver license, official California identification card, or student identification card.

For more information on identification to use when voting for the first time, check the complete list of acceptable forms of identification³⁷ or call the Secretary of State's toll-free voter hotline at (800) 345-VOTE (8683).

31. **RECEIVING MAIL BALLOT:** Does the ballot have to be sent to my home, or can I have it sent somewhere else? What if I don't have a home address or my address is a PO Box?

When registering to vote, voters may provide a mailing address that is different from the address where they live. They may use a PO Box as a mailing address if desired.³⁸

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³² See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#vote-by-mail.

³³ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

³⁴ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

³⁵ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/upcoming-elections/general-election-nov-8-2022.

³⁶ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

³⁷ Cal. Code Regs. tit. 2, § 20107; available online at

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/regulations/hava id regs from barclays 3 3 06.pdf.

³⁸ https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdfs/quick-guide-vrc.pdf.

32. MISSED THE APPLICATION DEADLINE: What if I have not requested a mail-in ballot by the deadline?

No application or request is necessary to receive a vote-by-mail ballot for the November 8, 2022 General Election. See Question # 26. If a voter needs to request a vote-by-mail ballot for their new address within 7 days of the election, they must do so in person at their county elections office or polling location.³⁹

To request a replacement vote-by-mail ballot if the voter failed to receive their vote-by-mail ballot or has lost or destroyed their original vote-by-mail ballot, the voter can apply in writing using a California Replacement Vote-by-Mail Ballot Application (see

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/replacement-application.pdf). This application must be provided to the voter's county elections office.⁴⁰ Alternatively they can call their county elections office for advice.

33. **STATUS OF APPLICATION AND/OR BALLOT:** How can I check the status of my application and/or mail-in ballot?

Voters can check <u>Where's-My-Ballot</u> to track their vote-by-mail ballot. If the voter failed to receive their ballot, they may apply in writing for a replacement vote-by-mail ballot to their county elections official.⁴¹ The application can be found here:

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/replacement-application.pdf.

34. **APPLICATION OR BALLOT REJECTED:** I learned my mail-in ballot application and/or ballot was rejected. What can I do to fix any errors or get another one?

If a voter failed to receive their vote-by-mail ballot or has lost or destroyed their original ballot, they can contact their county elections official in order to be sent a second vote-by-mail ballot.⁴² They can also visit an in-person voting location to receive and cast a ballot in person.

In the event that a vote-by-mail ballot is rejected because of an issue with the voter's signature (whether determined that the voter's signature does not compare to the signature on record or is missing), the county elections official must provide notice to the voter to cure the missing or mismatched signature.⁴³ The county election official is required to mail a notice to the voter if the signature did not compare or was missing.

Where the voter's signature does not appear to compare to the signature on record, the voter will have the opportunity to verify their signature no later than 5:00 p.m. two days prior to the certification of the election by completing a signature verification statement and returning it to the county elections official.⁴⁴

 $\frac{https://www.sos.ca.gov/administration/regulations/current-regulations/elections/signature-verification-ballot-processing-and-ballot-counting-emergency-regulations#20960.$

³⁹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁴⁰ See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#replacement.

⁴¹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#replacement.

⁴² https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁴³ See

⁴⁴ Cal. Elec. Code § 3019.

Where there is a missing signature, the voter will be able to cure their ballot in one of the following ways: (i) they sign the identification envelope at the office of the elections official during regular business hours no later than 5 p.m. two days prior to the certification of the election, (ii) no later than 5 p.m. two days prior to the certification of the election, they complete and submit an unsigned ballot statement in substantially the form provided in Cal. Elec. Code § 3019(e)(1)(A)(ii) (see form here: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3019), or (iii) before the close of the polls on Election Day, they complete and submit to a polling place within the county or a ballot dropoff box, an unsigned ballot statement in the form described in the foregoing clause (ii).

Voters can also track whether their ballot was accepted or not and why on BallotTrax at https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/.

35. **COMPLETING BALLOT:** How do I complete the mail-in ballot?

Completed ballots may be returned by:45

- Mailing the ballot to the county elections official (USPS postage is pre-paid for all VBM ballots);
- 2. Returning it in person to any voting site in the state or the office of the county elections official no later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day;
- 3. Dropping the ballot off at a drop-off location or into a designated ballot drop box within the state no later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day; or
- 4. Authorizing someone to return the ballot on behalf of the voter. Anyone may return a ballot, as long as they do not get paid on a per ballot basis. In order for the ballot to be counted, the voter must fill out the authorization section found on the outside of the ballot envelope. See also Question #29.⁴⁶

When the vote-by-mail ballot is received by the voter's county elections official, the voter's signature on the return envelope will be compared to the signature(s) in their voter registration record.

36. ASSISTANCE COMPLETING BALLOT: Can someone assist me in filling out my ballot?

Voters can be assisted by others to fill out and complete their ballot. Voters with disabilities can use an accessible ballot marking device if voting in-person. Voters with disabilities can use a Remote Accessible Vote by Mail system to mark their selections using their own compatible technology to vote from home. Voters can request a RAVBM when they review their information on voterstatus.sos.ca.gov or by contacting their county elections office.

37. **DEADLINE TO RETURN BALLOT:** What is the deadline for the ballot to be received? Does it have to be postmarked by a specific date? Can I drop it off in person?

The completed ballot must be received at a designated dropbox, voting location, or the county elections office by the close of polls on Election Day (8PM). Mailed ballots MUST be postmarked by November 8, 2022 and received no later than 7 days after Election Day to be counted (November 15, 2022).⁴⁷

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⁴⁵ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁴⁶ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/upcoming-elections/general-election-nov-8-2022.

38. BALLOT DROP OF LOCATIONS: What are the locations for dropping off a ballot (instead of mailing it)?

No later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, a voter may either (1) return a vote-by-mail ballot in person to any polling place within the state or the office of their county elections official or (2) drop their ballot off at a drop-off location or into a ballot drop box within the state. A list of locations where a vote-by-mail ballot can be dropped off will be available online at https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/. California does not require voters to drop off their vote-by-mail ballots in their home county; voters may use any voting site or dropbox in the state. Election officials will route ballots to the appropriate county for processing.

39. ASSISTANCE DROPPING OFF BALLOT: Can someone else drop off my completed ballot for me?

Yes. Californians who vote using vote-by-mail ballots are able to select anyone to return their voted ballots by mail, to the elections official who issued the ballot, the precinct board at a polling location or at a vote center in participating counties, or to a vote-by-mail ballot dropoff location within the state once their voted ballot is sealed inside the ballot envelope⁴⁹, so long as the person designated to return the vote-by-mail ballot, and any entity they work for, does not receive any form of compensation based on the number of ballots that the person returns.⁵⁰ In order for the ballot to be counted, the voter must fill out the authorization section found on the outside of the ballot envelope. The person designated must return the ballot in person, or put the ballot in the mail, no later than 3 days after receiving it from the voter or before the close of the polls on Election Day, whichever time period is shorter.⁵¹

40. **LOST OR SPOILED BALLOT:** What if I lost my mail-in ballot, made a mistake on it (spoiled it), or I received an incorrect ballot?

Voters may <u>apply in writing to their county elections official</u> for a replacement vote-by-mail ballot.⁵² The replacement vote-by-mail ballot application can be found here: https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/replacement-application.pdf. Additionally, voters may vote with a provisional ballot in-person at their polling place or vote center if they notify a poll worker that their VBM was lost, destroyed, spoiled, or not received.⁵³

41. **NON-RECEIPT OF BALLOT:** What if I requested a mail-in ballot but have not received it? What are my options for voting?

Voters can check "Where's My Ballot," a service available through the California Secretary of State, to track their vote-by-mail ballot.⁵⁴ Voters can sign up for the service at https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/. Voters can check the following:

- When the ballot has been delivered;
- When the voter's completed ballot has been received by the county; and

⁴⁸ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#vote-by-mail.

⁴⁹ See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#vote-by-mail.

⁵⁰ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

⁵¹ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

⁵² https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁵³ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/if-you-applied.

⁵⁴ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-status/wheres-my-ballot.

 Whether the voter's completed ballot has been accepted or a reason why the ballot could not be accepted and instructions of steps the voter can take in order to have the ballot accepted.

If the voter failed to receive their ballot, they may apply in writing for a replacement vote-by-mail ballot to their county elections official. The application can be found here: https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/replacement-application.pdf.

Additionally, the voter may vote with a provisional ballot in-person at their polling place or vote center if they notify a poll worker that their vote-by-mail ballot was lost, destroyed, spoiled, or not received. ⁵⁶ See also Questions #40 and 42.

If the voter cannot vote at the polls because of illness or disability that resulted in confinement (in a hospital, sanatorium, nursing home, or place of residence) or because they cannot access the polling place or equipment due to a physical handicap AND the period for requesting a vote-by-mail ballot has passed, the voter may apply in writing for a **late vote-by-mail ballot** to be delivered to the voter by an authorized representative using this form:

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/pdf/late-vote-by-mail-application.pdf. Note that these ballots can only be returned personally or through the authorized representative, to either the elections official or any polling place within the jurisdiction.

Voters with certain disabilities, for example, vision and dexterity disabilities, may not be able to read or mark their ballot privately and independently. Every California county has a Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail (RAVBM) system. RAVBM systems allow voters with disabilities to receive, mark, and print their ballots at home before mailing them back to election officials. Voters can use their assistive devices to read and mark their ballot. Voters can request a RAVBM ballot by using the "my voter status" feature on the SOS's website (https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/) or visiting county-specific information. Detailed instructions are available https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/)

42. **IN PERSON OPTION:** What if I requested or received a mail-in ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?

Before polls close on Election Day, a vote-by-mail voter can vote at any in-person voting location or the office of the elections official.⁵⁷

To do so, voters have the following options:

- 1. They can bring their marked and sealed ballot (inside the mailing envelope provided by their county elections official, and signed and dated on the outside of the envelope in the space provided) to any polling place in the voter's county, or to the voter's county elections office between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Election Day;
- 2. They can surrender their vote-by-mail ballot to their local polling place or a vote center anytime between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Election Day and surrender it to the inspector of the precinct board, a member of the vote center election board, or the elections official, any of whom will exchange it for a polling place ballot;
- 3. If they are unable to surrender their vote-by-mail ballot but the precinct board, vote center election board, or elections official verifies that the voter's ballot has not already been returned

⁵⁵ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#replacement.

⁵⁶ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/if-you-applied.

⁵⁷ Cal. Elec. Code § 3018. Also see https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/if-you-applied.

- and notates the voter's records to ensure that the voter's vote-by-mail ballot is not cast or tabulated after the voter's vote at the polls; or
- 4. Vote in person by provisional ballot.⁵⁸

Voters in Voters Choice Act counties do not need to surrender their vote-by-mail ballots to vote with a regular ballot. As a best practice, however, volunteers should advise voters in VCA counties to surrender their ballots or inform these voters that they may be asked by election officials to vote provisionally.

HOW TO VOTE: ABSENTEE

43. **ELIGIBILITY:** Am I eligible to request an absentee ballot?

County elections officials mail vote-by-mail ballots to all active registered voters.

The vote-by-mail ballot will be automatically sent to the voter's residence per their voter registration. If a voter has moved, they can re-register to vote using their new address (see Question #26)⁵⁹. The deadline to re-register or update addresses is October 24, 2022 (15 days before the November 8, 2022 General Election, see https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/registering-vote for more information).

Voters can still conditionally register to vote after October 24, 2022, but they will need to request their ballot in person at their county elections office or polling location and they will vote a provisional ballot.⁶⁰ Voters cannot request that a replacement vote-by-mail ballot be sent to them by mail after the deadline—they need to go to their county registrar's office to vote a new ballot.

*Special Note for First Time Voters: see Questions # 5, # 17 and # 45.

For voters with disabilities:

- If the voter is (1) unable to vote in person at the polls because of an illness or disability that results in confinement (in a hospital, sanatorium, nursing home, or place of residence) or because they cannot access the polling place or equipment due to a physical handicap AND (2) the period for requesting a vote-by-mail ballot has passed, the voter may apply in writing for a late vote-by-mail ballot to be delivered to the voter by an authorized representative, using this form:
 - https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/pdf/late-vote-by-mail-application.pdf. ⁶¹ Note that these ballots can only be returned personally or by the authorized representative to either the elections official or any polling place within the jurisdiction.
- A voter with disabilities can request a Remote Accessible Vote by Mail Ballot (RAVMB). The
 voter must be able to download and print the ballot, mark their selections, sign the envelope
 (using the envelope provided with the vote-by-mail ballot or the voter's own envelope), and
 return the ballot by mail or by dropping it off at a voting location. A voter can request a

⁵⁸ Cal. Elec. Code §§ 3015,3016.

⁵⁹ The link to the application is no longer live.

⁶⁰ See https://registertovote.ca.gov/.

⁶¹ Cal. Elec. Code § 3021.

RAVBM when they review their voter status (at https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/), by contacting their County Elections Office, or by going to their County Elections Office website for more information. Detailed instructions are available here.

44. APPLICATION DEADLINE: What is the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot?

No application is necessary to receive a vote-by-mail ballot for the November 8, 2022 General Election. See Question # 43. If a voter needs to request a vote-by-mail ballot for their new address within 14 days of the election, they must do so in person at their county elections office or polling location. 62

To request a replacement vote-by-mail ballot if the voter failed to receive their vote-by-mail ballot or has lost or destroyed their original vote-by-mail ballot, the voter can apply in writing using a California Replacement Vote-by-Mail Ballot Application (see

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/replacement-application.pdf). This application must be provided to the voter's county elections office. 63

45. **IDENTIFICATION:** Are there any identification requirements?

When a voter registers to vote, they will be asked to fill in their driver license number, California identification number, or the last four digits of their Social Security Number. If the voter included any of this information at the time of their registration, then there are <u>no identification requirements</u> when returning their vote-by-mail ballot.⁶⁴

However, if the voter is a first-time voter in the General Election held on November 8, 2022 and <u>did not</u> include this information when they registered to vote, the voter will need to send a photocopy of some personal identification to their county elections official before the election. Examples of acceptable forms of personal identification include a current and valid photo identification card of the voter, including:⁶⁵

- passport;
- driver license;
- employee identification card;
- credit or debit card;
- military identification card;
- student identification card;
- health club identification card;
- insurance plan identification card; or
- public housing identification card.

Other examples include any of the following documents, provided that the document includes the name and address of the individual presenting it, and is dated since the date of the most recent General Election:⁶⁶

- utility bill;
- bank statement;

⁶² https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁶³ See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#replacement.

⁶⁴ See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/frequently-asked-guestions.

⁶⁵ https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/regulations/hava id regs from barclays 3 3 06.pdf.

⁶⁶ https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/regulations/hava id regs from barclays 3 3 06.pdf.

- government check;
- document issued by a governmental agency;
- sample ballot or other official elections document issued by a governmental agency dated for the election in which the voter is providing it as proof of residence of identity;
- voter notification card issued by a governmental agency;
- public housing identification card issued by governmental agency;
- lease or rental statement or agreement issued by a governmental agency;
- student identification card issued by governmental agency;
- tuition statement or bill issued by a governmental agency;
- insurance plan card or drug discount card issued by a governmental agency;
- discharge certificates, pardons, or other official documents issued by a governmental agency in connection with the resolution of a criminal case, indictment, sentence or other matter;
- public transportation authority senior citizen and disabled discount cards issued by a governmental agency;
- identification documents issued by governmental disability agencies;
- identification documents issued by government homeless shelters and other government temporary or transitional facilities;
- drug prescription issued by a government doctor or other governmental health care provider;
- property tax statement issued by a governmental agency;
- vehicle reregistration issued by a governmental agency; or
- vehicle certificate of ownership issued by a governmental agency.

46. **EMERGENCY:** Is there an emergency absentee ballot? If so, am I eligible?

All voters are automatically sent a vote-by-mail ballot for the November 8, 2022 General Election, but if the voter has lost, spoiled or did not receive their mail-in-ballot, see Question # 55.

47. **APPLICATION RETURN:** Where and how can I return my absentee ballot application? Can someone return it for me?

Completed ballots may be returned by:67

- 1. Mailing the ballot to the county elections official (USPS postage is pre-paid for all VBM ballots);
- 2. Returning it in person to any polling place in the state or the office of the county elections official no later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day on November 8, 2022;
- 3. Dropping the ballot off at a drop-off location or into a designated ballot drop box within the state no later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day on November 8, 2022; or
- 4. Authorizing someone to return the ballot on behalf of the voter. Anyone may return a ballot, as long as they do not get paid on a per ballot basis. In order for the ballot to be counted, the voter must fill out the authorization section found on the outside of the ballot envelope.⁶⁸

Voters can designate any person to return their vote-by-mail ballot to the elections official who issued the ballot, to the precinct board at a polling place or vote center within the state, or to a vote by mail ballot drop-off location within the state that is provided, ⁶⁹ so long as the person designated to return the vote-by-mail ballot does not receive any form of compensation based on the number of ballots that the

⁶⁷ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁶⁸ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

⁶⁹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#vote-by-mail.

person returns and an individual, group, or organization does not provide compensation on this basis.⁷⁰ In order for the ballot to be counted, the voter must fill out the authorization section found on the outside of the ballot envelope.

The person designated must return the ballot in person, or put the ballot in the mail, no later than 3 days after receiving it from the voter or before the close of the polls on Election Day, whichever time period is shorter.⁷¹ If the ballot is put in the mail, it must be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by November 15, 2022.⁷²

48. **STATUS OF APPLICATION AND/OR BALLOT:** How can I check the status of my absentee ballot application and/or absentee ballot return?

Voters can check the status of their vote-by-mail application by visiting https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/.

Voters can also track their ballot using "Where's My Ballot," a service available through the California Secretary of State.

Noters can sign up for the service at https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/. Voters can check the following:

- When the ballot has been delivered;
- When the voter's completed ballot has been received by the county; and
- Whether the voter's completed ballot has been accepted or a reason why the ballot could not be accepted and instructions of steps the voter can take in order to have the ballot accepted.
- 49. **APPLICATION OR BALLOT REJECTED:** I learned my absentee ballot application and/or ballot was rejected. How can I confirm this and what can I do to fix any errors or get another one?

If a voter failed to receive their vote-by-mail ballot or has lost or destroyed their original ballot, they can contact their county elections official in order to be sent a second vote-by-mail ballot.⁷⁴ They can also visit an in-person voting location to receive and cast a ballot in person.

In the event that a vote-by-mail ballot is rejected because of an issue with the voter's signature (whether determined that the voter's signature does not compare to the signature on record or is missing), the county elections official must provide notice to the voter to cure the missing or mismatched signature.⁷⁵ The county election official is required to mail a notice to the voter if the signature did not compare or was missing.

Where the voter's signature does not appear to compare to the signature on record, the voter will have the opportunity to verify their signature no later than 5:00 p.m. two days prior to the certification of the election by completing a signature verification statement and returning it to the county elections official.⁷⁶

 $\frac{https://www.sos.ca.gov/administration/regulations/current-regulations/elections/signature-verification-ballot-processing-and-ballot-counting-emergency-regulations#20960.$

⁷⁰ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

⁷¹ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

⁷² https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#vote-by-mail.

⁷³ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-status/wheres-my-ballot.

⁷⁴ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁷⁵ See

⁷⁶ Cal. Elec. Code § 3019.

Where there is a missing signature, the voter will be able to cure their ballot in one of the following ways: (i) they sign the identification envelope at the office of the elections official during regular business hours no later than 5 p.m. two days prior to the certification of the election, (ii) no later than 5 p.m. two days prior to the certification of the election, they complete and submit an unsigned ballot statement in substantially the form provided in Cal. Elec. Code § 3019(e)(1)(A)(ii) (see form here: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3019), or (iii) before the close of the polls on Election Day, they complete and submit to a polling place within the county or a ballot drop-off box, an unsigned ballot statement in the form described in the foregoing clause (ii).

Voters can also track whether their ballot was accepted or not and why on BallotTrax at https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/.

50. **COMPLETING BALLOT:** How do I complete the absentee ballot?

Follow the instructions on the ballot to cast your votes. After you have voted, insert your ballot in the envelope provided, making sure you complete all required information on the envelope.

Completed ballots may be returned by:77

- 1. Mailing the ballot to the county elections official (USPS postage is pre-paid for all VBM ballots);
 - 2. Returning it in person to any polling place in the state or the office of the county elections official no later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day on November 8, 2022;
 - 3. Dropping the ballot off at a drop-off location or into a designated ballot drop box within the state no later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day on November 8, 2022; or
 - 4. Authorizing someone to return the ballot on behalf of the voter. Anyone may return a ballot, as long as they do not get paid on a per ballot basis. In order for the ballot to be counted, the voter must fill out the authorization section found on the outside of the ballot envelope. See also Question # 47.⁷⁸

When the vote-by-mail ballot is received by the voter's county elections official, the voter's signature on the return envelope will be compared to the signature(s) in their voter registration record.

First time voters who did not provide their driver license number, California identification number, or the last four digits of their Social Security number at the time they registered to vote are advised to send a photocopy of some personal identification to their county elections official before the election. A copy of a recent utility bill, the county Voter Information Guide received from the voter's county elections office, or another document sent to the voter by a government agency are examples of acceptable forms of identification. Other examples include a passport, driver license, official California identification card, or student identification card.

For more information on identification to use when voting for the first time, check the complete list of acceptable forms of identification⁸⁰ or call the Secretary of State's toll-free voter hotline at (800) 345-VOTE (8683). See also Question # 45.

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/regulations/hava_id_regs_from_barclays_3_3_06.pdf.

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⁷⁷ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁷⁸ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

⁷⁹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁸⁰ Cal. Code Regs. tit. 2, § 20107; available online at

51. ASSISTANCE COMPLETING BALLOT: Can someone assist me filling out the ballot?

A voter may discuss how to vote and what to vote for with their friends, family, or others. But no one can actually mark a voter's vote-by-mail ballot for them.

A voter may be assisted with completing a ballot but the assister must vote according the voters instructions.

However, voters with certain disabilities, for example, vision and dexterity disabilities, may not be able to read or mark their ballot privately and independently. They can have others assist them with their vote-by-mail ballot but there are other options. All polling place and vote center have accessible Ballot Marking Devices for in-person voting. Every California county has a Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail (RAVBM) system. RAVBM systems allow voters with disabilities to receive, mark, and print their ballots at home before mailing them back to election officials. Voters can use their assistive devices to read and mark their ballot. Voters can request a RAVBM ballot by using the "my voter status" feature on the SOS's website (https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/) or visiting county-specific information. Detailed instructions are available here.

52. **BALLOT DEADLINES:** What is the deadline for the ballot to be postmarked and/or received by, including dropping it off in person?

The completed ballot must be received at a designated drop-box, voting location, or the county elections office by the close of polls on Election Day (8:00 p.m.). Mailed ballots MUST be postmarked by November 8, 2022 and received no later than 7 days after Election Day to be counted (November 15, 2022). 81

53. BALLOT DROP OF LOCATIONS: Where can I drop off a ballot (instead of mailing it)?

No later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, a voter may either (1) return a vote-by-mail ballot in person to any polling place within the state or the office of their county elections official or (2) drop their ballot off at a drop-off location or into a ballot drop box within the state. A list of locations where a vote-by-mail ballot can be dropped off will be available online at https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/. California does not require voters to drop off their vote-by-mail ballots in their home county; voters may use any drop-box in the state. Election officials will route ballots to the appropriate county for processing.

Voters utilizing RAVBM ballots can return those ballots to drop-box locations as well.

54. ASSISTANCE DROPPING OFF: Can someone else drop off my completed ballot for me?

Yes. Californians who vote using vote-by-mail ballots are able to select anyone to return their voted ballots to the elections official who issued the ballot, the precinct board at a polling location or at a vote center in participating counties, or to a vote-by-mail ballot drop-off location within the state once their voted ballot is sealed inside the ballot envelope⁸³, so long as the person designated to return the vote-by-mail ballot does not receive any form of compensation based on the number of ballots that the

⁸¹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/upcoming-elections/general-election-nov-8-2022.

⁸² https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#vote-by-mail.

⁸³ See https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#vote-by-mail.

person returns and an individual, group, or organization does not provide compensation on this basis.⁸⁴ In order for the ballot to be counted, the voter must fill out the authorization section found on the outside of the ballot envelope. The person designated must return the ballot in person, or put the ballot in the mail, no later than 3 days after receiving it from the voter or before the close of the polls on Election Day, whichever time period is shorter.⁸⁵

55. **LOST OR SPOILED:** What if I lost my absentee ballot or it is spoiled or I received an incorrect one?

Voters may <u>apply in writing to their county elections official</u> for a replacement vote-by-mail ballot.⁸⁶ The replacement vote-by-mail ballot application can be found here: https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/replacement-application.pdf. Additionally, voters may vote with a provisional ballot in-person at their polling place if they notify a poll worker that their VBM was lost, destroyed, spoiled, or not received.⁸⁷

56. **NON-RECEIPT OF BALLOT:** What if I requested an absentee ballot but have not received it? Can I do anything?

Voters can check "Where's My Ballot," a service available through the California Secretary of State, to track their vote-by-mail ballot.⁸⁸ Voters can sign up for the service at https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/. Voters can check the following:

- When the ballot has been delivered;
- When the voter's completed ballot has been received by the county; and
- Whether the voter's completed ballot has been accepted or a reason why the ballot could not be accepted and instructions of steps the voter can take in order to have the ballot accepted.

If the voter failed to receive their ballot, they may apply in writing for a replacement vote-by-mail ballot to their county elections official. The application can be found here: https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vote-by-mail/replacement-application.pdf. See also Question # 55.

57. IN PERSON OPTION: What if I requested an absentee ballot but I want to vote in person on Election Day?

Before polls close on Election Day, a vote-by-mail voter can vote at any in-person voting location or the office of the elections official.⁹⁰

To do so, voters have the following options:

- 1. They can bring their marked and sealed ballot (inside the mailing envelope provided by their county elections official, and signed and dated on the outside of the envelope in the space provided) to any polling place in the voter's county, or to the voter's county elections office between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Election Day;
- 2. They can surrender their vote-by-mail ballot to their local polling place or a vote center anytime between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Election Day and surrender it to the inspector of the

⁸⁴ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

⁸⁵ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC§ionNum=3017.

⁸⁶ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail.

⁸⁷ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/if-you-applied.

⁸⁸ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-status/wheres-my-ballot.

⁸⁹ https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#replacement.

⁹⁰ Cal. Elec. Code § 3018. Also see https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/if-you-applied.

- precinct board, a member of the vote center election board, or the elections official, any of whom will exchange it for a polling place ballot;
- 3. If they are unable to surrender their vote-by-mail ballot but the precinct board, vote center election board, or elections official verifies that the voter's ballot has not already been returned and notates the voter's records to ensure that the voter's vote-by-mail ballot is not cast or tabulated after the voter's vote at the polls; or
- 4. Vote in person by provisional ballot.91

Voters in Voters Choice Act counties do not need to surrender their vote-by-mail ballots to vote with a regular ballot. As a best practice, however, volunteers should advise voters in VCA counties to surrender their ballots or inform these voters that they may be asked by election officials to vote provisionally.

58. IN PERSON ABSENTEE: Where do I vote in-person absentee? When can I do this?

Some counties offer early voting at a few locations before Election Day. Voters should contact their county elections office to see if they offer early voting. County contact information can be found by visiting the Secretary of State's website at: http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/county-elections-offices.

POLLING PLACE ISSUES

59. **POLLING PLACE NOT OPEN:** The polling place is not open. What should I do?

*Note to hotline volunteer: If you learn of a polling place not opening on time or is closed, notify your hotline captain immediately.

60. **LONG LINES:** There are long lines at the polling place. What should I do? What if the polls are closing while I'm in line?

The polls must be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. PST on Election Day. Any voter (including a voter dropping off a vote-by-mail ballot) waiting in line at 8:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote. 33

*Note to hotline volunteer: If you learn of long lines or of voters that were in line as of 8:00 pm PST that are being turned away/told they cannot vote, notify your hotline captain immediately.

61. **EQUIPMENT FAILURE:** What should I do if there are equipment problems at my precinct?

Voters should immediately notify the election officers if voting equipment breaks down while the polls are open. If the problem cannot be fixed in a timely manner, voters should ask if an emergency paper ballot is available.

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/help-strengthen-our-democracy/poll-worker-training-standards/section-three.

⁹¹ Cal. Elec. Code §§ 3015, 3016.

⁹² Cal. Elec. Code § 14212.

⁹³ Cal. Elec. Code § 14401. See also

Voters should be permitted to vote by paper ballot (in counties with voting machines) or by provisional ballot if necessary. The provisional ballots will be counted as regular ballots if the voter is otherwise qualified. ⁹⁴ If a precinct runs out of paper ballots, the county elections officials must deliver ballots to the precinct within 2 hours. Voters should be given the option to either wait for the paper ballots or vote immediately using an alternative procedure approved by the Secretary of State. Please *see Ballot Shortages*,

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/help-strengthen-our-democracy/poll-worker-training-standards/section-four.

*Note to hotline volunteer: If you learn of equipment not working properly at a polling place, notify your hotline captain immediately.

If an accessible voting system is not available or is broken, please refer the caller to Disability Rights California's voting hotline at 1-888-569-7955. DRC works with county election offices directly to resolve equipment issues on behalf of voter with disabilities. DRC also assists voters with filing equipment related complaints after elections.

62. EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE: I don't know how to use the voting equipment. Can I get help?

Yes. The precinct board should instruct voters on usage of the machines before they enter the booth and are required to answer any related questions. ⁹⁶ Voters can also designate up to two people to assist them in marking and casting their ballot at a voting location; their assister can include a friend, family member, poll worker, election observer, or anyone else, with one exception. The voter assistant cannot be the voter's employer, labor union leader, or anyone who works for the voter's employer or labor union. ⁹⁷

63. **PHYSICAL DISABILITY:** I have a physical disability and need assistance. Is my polling place ADA compliant? Does my voting location have an accessible voting system?

The California Department of Rehabilitation helps oversee and implement regulations (including regulations under the ADA) to ensure that they are accessible to voters with disabilities to the extent possible.⁹⁸

All vote centers and polling places must meet minimum accessibility guidelines, including: accessible parking; a clear path from the parking area to the polling place; doors that are wide and easy to open; election materials and signs in large print; accessible ramps, elevators and lifts if necessary to access the voting area; and poll workers to answer questions and help voters. Accessible polling places are indicated

⁹⁴ Cal. Elec. Code § 14300(e).

⁹⁵ https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/publications/voters-with-disabilities.

⁹⁶ Cal. Elec. Code § 14272.

⁹⁷ See Assistance for Voters with Disabilities,

https://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/voter-info/assistance-for-voters-w-disabilities.htm.

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/publications-and-resources/polling-place-accessibility-guidelines; See also, "Fact Sheet" (Page 2),

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/polling-place-accessibility/guidelines/polling-place-accessibility-guidelines.pdf.

by a blue wheelchair symbol on the back page of the sample ballot. 99 All vote centers in counties using the vote center model are accessible.

- **A.** Accessible Voting Machines: Every polling place and vote center must have an accessible ballot marking device. These machines have features such as: a touchscreen tablet, with options to change text size and contrast; a handheld controller with braille; headphones and audio ballot and instructions in several languages; a privacy screen for voters with low vision to ensure their votes are kept private as they use the audio ballot and instructions; and capability with a voter's own paddle, or sip and puff assistive device. The voting machines allow voters to verify their vote choices, and if there is an error, permits them to correct those choices before submitting their ballot.¹⁰⁰
- **B.** Assistance marking your ballot: A voter can choose up to two people to help them mark the voter's ballot. The voter assistant cannot be the voter's employer, labor union leader, or anyone who works for the voter's employer or labor union.
- **C. Curbside Voting:** In most voting sites, a voter can park close to the voting area and elections officials will bring a roster, ballot, and any other materials the voter may need in order to vote at the curb or from the car. Please visit the individual <u>county elections official's website</u> for more information.

If a polling place is inaccessible, a voter may call their county elections official to request to be assigned to another polling place that is accessible. Alternatively, a physically disabled person may request that a poll worker bring a regular or vote-by-mail ballot to a place that is accessible and as near as possible to the polling place (*i.e.*, curbside voting). A precinct board member will take a regular ballot to the voter, qualify that person to vote, and return the voted ballot to the polling place. If it is impractical to vote a regular ballot outside the polling place, the voter should be provided with a vote-by-mail ballot and may vote in the same manner as a regular ballot.¹⁰¹

Any voters who, for any reason, require or want assistance to vote may have the right to receive assistance from no more than two persons selected by the voter, other than the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, or an officer or agent of the union of which the voter is a member. All voters who require assistance must take an oath and state the reason why they require assistance. A person who assists a voter shall not divulge any information regarding the marking of the ballot.

California also allows voters to request a Remote Access Vote By Mail (RAVBM) ballot. The RAVBM system gives a voter an opportunity to download a ballot online, allowing them to read it and mark it using their own assistive technology device. At that point, the voter has to print out their selections and return them to the County Elections Office either in person or by mail. RAVBM is not online voting—rather it's a secure system to allow voters to read the ballot in a bigger font, change the contrast of the ballot, or use assistive technology to mark selections. Each county has a different process for requesting an RAVBM ballot and voters should check their county election websites for more information.

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/polling-place-accessibility/guidelines/overview.pdf.

⁹⁹ See Help America Vote Act (52 U.S.C. § 20901, et seq.); Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act (42 U.S.C. § 1973ee, et seq.); Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.); California Disabled Persons Act (Cal. Civ. Code § 54, et seq.). For a helpful overview of these laws, see "Polling Place Accessibility Guidelines" (March 2018), published by the California Secretary of State and available at

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/public-display/voter-info.pdf.

¹⁰¹ Cal. Elec. Code § 14282.

¹⁰² Cal. Elec. Code § 14282(a).

¹⁰³ Cal. Elec. Code § 14282(c).

For voters who have specific questions related to accommodations for disabled voters voting-by-mail or voting in person that a volunteer cannot answer – refer them to the Disability Rights California Hotline at 1-888-569-7955 or visit https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/resources/voting for more information.]

64. **READING/LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE:** I am blind, have a physical disability, or cannot read English and require assistance in order to vote. Can I get assistance at the polls?

Yes. Any voters who, for any reason, require or want assistance to vote may have the right to receive assistance from up to two persons selected by the voter, other than the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, or an officer or agent of the union of which the voter is a member. All voters who require assistance must take an oath and state the reason why they require assistance.¹⁰⁴

In addition, American Sign Language, large print, and audio versions of the Official Voter Information Guide are available at the California Secretary of State's website (https://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/en/alt-versions/) and telephone number (1-800-345-VOTE (8683) (voice or TDD/TTY)). Language assistance must also be provided under federal and state laws for certain counties and precincts which have a sizable population of eligible voters who have limited proficiency in English. 105

65. **CAMPAIGNING:** What rules apply to people campaigning or "hanging around" my polling place? Can people approach me?

Electioneering, which is the visible display or audible dissemination of information that advocates for or against any candidate or measure on the ballot, is prohibited within 100 feet of a polling place, a vote center, an elections official's office, or a satellite location. ¹⁰⁶

*Note to hotline volunteer: If a voter is approached by someone conducting these types of prohibited activities, please advise them to immediately call their county election official (the applicable phone number at this link: county-elections officials' website). If the voter fears for their physical safety, please advise them to immediately call 9-1-1.

66. CHALLENGE: Someone is formally challenging my vote. What should I do?

A voter's eligibility can be orally challenged only by a member of the precinct board, aka a poll worker. Grounds for a challenge include any or all of the following grounds:

- The voter is not the person whose name appears on the roster;
- The voter is not a resident of the precinct, or not a resident of the county (if voting at a vote center);
- The voter is not a U.S. citizen; or
- The voter has already voted in the election.

¹⁰⁴ Cal. Elec. Code § 14282(a).

¹⁰⁵ Cal. Elec. Code § 14201 (state law requiring translation of certain voting materials for certain precincts based on population size); Cal. Elec. Code § 12303(c) (requiring election officials to attempt to recruit bilingual poll workers at precincts that reach the 3% threshold).

¹⁰⁶ Cal. Elec. Code § 319.5. See also

https://www.sos.ca.gov/administration/regulations/current-regulations/elections/notices-regarding-prohibition-election eering-and-corruption-voting-process.

A voter's eligibility can also be challenged by anyone in writing. The written challenge must be submitted to a member of a precinct board, who must immediately contact the elections official responsible for conducting the election and describe the challenge and any evidence received. The elections official will advise the precinct board as to whether probable cause exists for the challenge. If probable cause exists, the precinct board will try the eligibility of the voter. If the challenge relates to residency, dual voting, or identity, an oath by the voter as to their eligibility will determine the challenge in favor of the voter. ¹⁰⁷

The California Secretary of State has published a memorandum summarizing information on voter intimidation and challenges. It is available at

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/ccrov/2021/august/21129jl.pdf

In the event that the precinct board determines that persistent challenging of voters is resulting in a delay of voting sufficient to cause voters to forego voting due to insufficient time or fear on unwarranted intimidation, the board shall discontinue all challenges. ¹⁰⁸

67. **POLICE/MILITARY PRESENCE:** There are police/members of the military at the polling place. Is this okay? What should I do?

In California, no person in possession of a firearm, no uniformed peace officer, private guard or security personnel, and no person wearing the uniform of a peace officer, guard or security personnel may be stationed in the immediate vicinity of, or posted at, a polling place without written authorization of the appropriate city or county elections official.¹⁰⁹ However, the following exceptions apply:

- An unarmed uniformed guard or security personnel who is at the polling place to cast his or her vote;
- A peace officer who is conducting official business in the course of his or her public employment, or who is at the polling place to cast his or her vote;
- A private guard or security personnel hired or arranged for by a city or county elections official;
 and
- A private guard or security personnel hired or arranged for by the owner or manager of the facility where the polling place is located, if the guard or security personnel is not hired or arranged solely for Election Day.

In addition, California prohibits the use or threat of any force, violence, or tactic of coercion or intimidation to induce or compel someone to vote or refrain from voting. ¹¹⁰

The California Secretary of State has published a memorandum summarizing information on voter intimidation and challenges. It is available at https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/ccrov/2021/august/21129il.pdf.

68. **THOUGHT WAS REGISTERED:** My name isn't on the voter registration roll but I thought I was registered. What should I do?

A voter's name may be removed from the voting list by: 111

¹⁰⁷ Cal. Elec. Code § 14240 et seq.

¹⁰⁸ Cal. Elec. Code § 14253.

¹⁰⁹ Cal. Elec. Code §§ 18544, 18545.

¹¹⁰ Cal. Elec. Code § 18540 et seq.

¹¹¹ Cal. Elec. Code § 2201.

- The voter's signed, written request;
- The voter's legally established mental incompetency;
- Proof the voter is currently imprisoned for conviction of a felony;
- A judgment directing the removal;
- Death;
- Return of a pre-election confirmation postcard that indicates the voter is no longer a resident:
- Notification the voter is registered to vote in another county or state; or
- Proof that the person is otherwise ineligible to vote.

Any voter whose name was removed from the voter registration list on the basis of a determination of ineligibility who subsequently becomes eligible to vote must re-register to have their name restored to the statewide voter registration system. For more information on how to register, or the deadline to register, see Question # 4 and Question # 6.

69. PROVISIONAL BALLOT: I have been offered a provisional ballot. What should I do?

Inquire why the voter was offered a provisional ballot and whether it was for one of the following reasons:

- The voter is conditionally registered (also known as Same Day Registration);¹¹²
- The voter did not surrender their vote by mail ballot if the county is not covered by the Voters Choice Act;¹¹³
- The voter database indicates that the voter already voted;
- o The voter cannot show ID and is required to; or
- The voter is voting during extended polling place hours per a court order. 114

Voters who vote a provisional ballot must execute, in the presence of the county elections official, a written affirmation, stating that they are eligible to vote and are registered in the county where they desire to vote. ¹¹⁵ Their vote will be counted after election day once the county elections official verifies their identity and eligibility to vote.

ACCESSIBILITY/ASSISTANCE

70. **LANGUAGE ACCESS:** I am not an English speaker. What language resources are available? Can I bring someone in the booth to help me understand the ballot?

Yes. Any voters who, for any reason, require or want assistance to vote may have the right to receive assistance from no more than two persons selected by the voter, other than the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, or an officer or agent of the union of which the voter is a member. All voters who require assistance must take an oath and state the reason why they require assistance.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Cal. Elec. Code § 2170.

¹¹³ Cal. Elec. Code § 3016.

¹¹⁴ Cal. Elec. Code § 14402.5.

¹¹⁵ Cal. Elec. Code § 14310.

¹¹⁶ Cal. Elec. Code § 14282(a).

In addition, American Sign Language, large print, and audio versions of the Official Voter Information Guide are available at the California Secretary of State's website

(https://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/en/alt-versions/) and telephone number (1-800-345-VOTE (8683) (voice or TDD/TTY)). Language assistance must also be provided under federal and state laws for certain counties and precincts which have a sizable population of eligible voters who have limited proficiency in English.¹¹⁷

71. **CURBSIDE VOTING:** Is curbside voting available? How do I request it?

Voters may contact their <u>country elections office</u> to see if curbside voting is available at their polling place or vote center. If a polling place is inaccessible, a physically disabled person may request, and a poll worker must bring, a regular or vote-by-mail ballot to a place that is accessible and as near as possible to the polling place (*i.e.*, curbside voting). A precinct board member will check-in the voter, take a regular ballot to the voter and return the completed ballot to the polling place. If it is impractical to vote with a regular ballot outside the polling place, the voter should be provided with a vote-by-mail ballot and may vote in the same manner as a regular ballot.¹¹⁸ Polling places with curbside voting should have a sign posted outside the polling place with a phone number or doorbell to call to request curbside voting.

Often counties do not have signage. Please ask someone to send out an election worker or call the county election hotline. You may also call Disability Rights California's hotline for assistance: 1-888-569-7955.

72. **VOTER GUIDE:** Can I bring a voting guide or reference notes with me into the voting booth?

Yes, a voter may reference notes and/or bring a voting guide into the voting booth. In addition, extra local voter guides are typically available at most polling places. 119

QUESTIONS

73. **QUESTIONS:** Who should I contact if I have questions about any of the above?

The Secretary of State's office maintains the following toll-free voter hotlines:

- o (800) 345-VOTE (8683) English
- o (800) 232-VOTA (8682) español / Spanish
- o (800) 339-2857 中文 / Chinese
- (888) 345-2692 हिन्दी / Hindi
- (800) 339-2865 日本語 / Japanese
- o (888) 345-4917 ខ្មែរ / Khmer
- o (866) 575-1558 한국어 / Korean

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¹¹⁷ Cal. Elec. Code § 14201 (state law requiring translation of certain voting materials for certain precincts based on population size); Cal. Elec. Code § 12303(c) (requiring election officials to attempt to recruit bilingual poll workers at precincts that reach the 3% threshold).

¹¹⁸ Cal. Elec. Code § 14282.

¹¹⁹ https://www.calvoter.org/content/voting-faq.

- o (800) 339-2957 Tagalog
- o (855) 345-3933 ภาษาไทย / Thai
- o (800) 339-8163 Việt ngữ / Vietnamese
- o (800) 833-8683 TTY/TDD

In addition, contact information for each county elections office is listed here: https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/county-elections-offices.