

# PLACER COUNTY ELECTIONS DIVISION

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Vote-By-Mail

- What is Vote-By-Mail voting and how does it work?
- Do I have to request a Vote-By-Mail ballot for every election?
- Can someone else pick up my Vote-By-Mail ballot?
- Who is eligible to become a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter?
- How do I apply to become a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter?
- When are Vote-By-Mail ballots mailed out?
- What if I am a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter and move?
- What if my ballot does not arrive in the mail?
- What if I am out of town when my ballot is mailed? How do I vote?
- I am currently out of the country and the mail is slow. Can I apply for a Vote-By-Mail ballot earlier than the designated 29 days prior to an election?
- How do I vote using a Vote-By-Mail ballot?
- What if I make a mistake on my Vote-By-Mail ballot? Can I get a new one?
- As a Vote-by-Mail voter, how will I receive information about candidates and measures?
- During a Primary Election, how are non-partisan Vote-By-Mail voters notified of which political parties will allow voting for partisan candidates?
- When should I return my voted Vote-By-Mail ballot?
- What should I do if I think the Elections Division may not receive my voted ballot in time by mail?
- What if my ballot becomes lost or damaged?
- Can I still vote at a polling place if I am a Permanent Vote-by-Mail voter?
- I'm in a Mail Ballot Precinct, why?
- Do you count all of the ballots that arrive by mail?
- How can the Elections Division be sure the ballot I return belongs to me?
- Where can I find more information on Vote-By-Mail voting?

#### **What is Vote-By-Mail voting and how does it work?**

Vote-By-Mail voting allows registered voters to cast a ballot without going to a polling place on Election Day. If a registered voter submits a request for a Vote-By-Mail ballot, the Elections Division will send the ballot to the address listed on the request beginning 29 days prior to Election Day. Once the Vote-By-Mail ballot has been completed it may be returned in person or via the 24 hour drive-up, drop-off ballot box located at the Placer County Elections Division. The Elections Division is located at 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn CA, 95603. Regular business hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. For added convenience the Placer County Elections Division may be open on weekends prior to an election. Contact the Elections Division for election specific hours. Vote-By-Mail ballots may also be submitted at any polling place in Placer County from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. on Election Day.

### **Do I have to request a Vote-By-Mail ballot for every election?**

State law allows any voter to be a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter. If you are a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter, you do not need to complete an application for each election. Your ballot will be automatically mailed to you at 29 days prior to every election. To learn more visit our website at **How to Vote/Apply to Vote-By-Mail** or contact the Placer County Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California at 1-800-824-8683.

### **Can someone else pick up my Vote-By-Mail ballot?**

Yes. According to Election Code 3009(b), the ballot can be picked up by a voter's spouse, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, or a person residing in the same household as the Vote-By-Mail voter. The individual picking up the ballot must be at least 16 years of age or older. Written authorization is necessary along with the voter's Vote-By-Mail Application. No application is necessary if the voter is a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter. Further, in both situations a Penalty of Perjury Statement will be signed at the Elections Division by the person picking up the ballot for the voter.

### **Who is eligible to become a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter?**

Any registered voter can apply to become a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter. Ballots for Permanent Vote-By-Mail voters are automatically mailed to the address listed on the completed Voter Registration Form. By law the Elections Division cannot accept Vote-By-Mail ballot applications or requests less than 7 days prior to an election.

### **How do I apply to become a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter?**

If you are currently registered to vote within Placer County and would like to apply for Permanent Vote-By-Mail Status, you may:

- Download and print the **Permanent Vote-By-Mail Application** from our website at **How to Vote/Apply to Vote-By-Mail**. Once completed, mail the form to the Elections Division at P.O. Box 5278, Auburn CA, 95604.
- Download and print an application from the Secretary of State's website at **www.sos.ca.gov**. Once completed, mail the form to the Elections Division at P.O. Box 5278, Auburn CA, 95604.
- Apply in person at the Elections Division located at 2956 Richardson Dr, Auburn CA, 95603. Regular office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. For added convenience the Placer County Elections Division may be open on weekends prior to an election. Contact the Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California 1-800-824-8683 for election specific hours.
- Submit a written request for Permanent Vote-By-Mail Status to the Placer County Elections Division at P.O. Box 5278, Auburn CA, 95604. Be sure to include:
  1. Your full name
  2. Your current Placer County residence address
  3. The address to which you would like your ballot mailed (if different from your residence address)

4. Your date of birth
  5. Your signature
  6. Your phone number (optional)
- Complete the Application for Permanent Vote-By-Mail Status found in the Sample Ballot and Voter Information Pamphlet. Once completed, mail the application to the Elections Division at P.O. Box 5278, Auburn CA, 95604.
  - Request an Application for Permanent Vote-By-Mail Status by telephone from the Elections Division. Applications are available by request at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California 1-800-824-8683.

Your status as a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter will remain active unless you fail to participate in two (2) consecutive statewide general elections or you submit a written request to cancel this service. In either case, your registration as a Placer County voter will remain active. However, a new application must be submitted if you wish to reinstate your status as a Permanent Vote-By-Mail Voter.

*Mail-in applications and requests for Vote-By-Mail ballots must be received no later than 7 days prior to Election Day. After that, normally you must apply in person at the Placer County Elections Division. Although Elections Code Sec 3021 provides that under certain conditions a ballot may be delivered to the voter. Contact the Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California 1-800-824-8683 to see if we can assist.*

**If you are not currently registered to vote in Placer County but would like to register and apply for Permanent Vote-By-Mail Status, you may:**

- Print a **Voter Registration Form** and **Permanent Vote-By-Mail Application** from the **How to Vote** portion of our webpage or the Secretary of State's website at **[www.sos.ca.gov](http://www.sos.ca.gov)**. Once completed, simply sign and mail the forms to the Elections Division at P.O. Box 5278, Auburn CA, 95604.
- Register to vote and request a Vote-By-Mail ballot by applying in person at the Placer County Elections Division located at 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn CA, 95603. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
- Voter Registration Forms are also available at local libraries, post offices, DMV offices and City Clerk's offices.

For more information on voting and returning your Vote-By-Mail ballot, visit our website at **How to Vote/Apply to Vote-By-Mail** or contact the Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California at 1-800-824-8683.

#### **When are Vote-By-Mail ballots mailed out?**

By law, Vote-By-Mail ballots are mailed out beginning 29 days prior to an election. Ballots are mailed continuously up until 7 days prior to Election Day. Vote-By-Mail voters may also choose to vote at the Placer County Elections Division from 29 days prior to an election and up until 8:00 P.M. on Election Day.

**What if I am a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter and move?**

By law, election mail (including ballots and sample ballots) cannot be forwarded. You will need to re-register to vote and mark the appropriate box for Permanent Vote-By-Mail Status. Your ballot will be sent to the mailing address currently listed in your voter file before every election in which you are eligible to vote. If you move or change your mailing address and do not update your contact information, your ballot will be returned to the Elections Division as undeliverable. Contact the Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California at 1-800-824-8683 to confirm that you are currently registered.

**What if my Vote-By-Mail ballot does not arrive in the mail?**

Contact the Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California at 1-800-824-8683 to confirm that you are currently registered and the date your ballot was mailed out. If necessary we can send you a replacement ballot.

**What if I am out of town when the Vote-By-Mail ballots are mailed? How do I vote?**

You may request a ballot to be sent to a temporary mailing address by contacting the Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California at 1-800-824-8683. Vote the ballot once it has arrived, sign the return ballot envelope where indicated and return it in the mail to the Elections Division with the envelope provided. In order for the ballot to be counted, it must be received by the Elections Division prior to 8:00 P.M. on Election Day; a postmark is not acceptable for this purpose.

**I am currently out of the country and the mail is slow. Can I apply for a Vote-By-Mail ballot earlier than the designated 29 days prior to an election?**

You may apply for and receive a Vote-By-Mail ballot earlier than 29 days if you are eligible for Special Vote-By-Mail Status. Under California Election Code EC300 (b) a Special Vote-By-Mail voter is described as an elector who meets any of the following requirements:

- A member of the armed forces of the United States or any auxiliary branch thereof.
- A citizen of the United States temporarily living outside of the territorial limits of the United States or the District of Columbia.
- An individual serving on a merchant vessel documented under the laws of the United States.
- A spouse or dependent of a member of the armed forces or any auxiliary branch thereof.

To learn more visit our website at **How to Vote/Military and Overseas Voters** or contact the Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California at 1-800-824-8683.

**How do I vote using a Vote-By-Mail ballot?**

In order to successfully complete a Vote-By-Mail ballot, you must:

- Follow the directions included with your Vote-By-Mail ballot.
- Use a black or dark blue ink pen or a #2 pencil and completely fill in the oval next to the candidate or measure on which you are voting.
- Place your voted ballot in the return envelope provided, sign the envelope and mail it to the Elections Division for processing.

**Be sure that your signature and address are on the return envelope. Ballots without a signature on the return envelope cannot be counted.**

Voted ballots must be returned to the Elections Division no later than 8:00 P.M. on Election Day; a postmark is not acceptable for this purpose. So be sure to mail your ballot back early!

**What if I make a mistake on my Vote-By-Mail ballot? Can I get a new one?**

Yes. According to California Election Code 14288, voters are eligible to receive up to two (2) replacement ballots during an election. Replacement ballots are available by request through the Placer County Elections Division. You may receive a replacement ballot by mail, at the Placer County Elections Division or your designated polling place on Election Day. Please note, replacement ballots are mailed up until seven days prior to Election Day.

To request a replacement ballot or find out the location of your polling place contact the Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California at 1-800-824-8683. The Elections Division is located at 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn CA, 95603.

**As a Vote-By-Mail voter, how will I receive information about candidates and measures?**

You will be mailed a Sample Ballot and Voter Information Pamphlet for all local candidates and measures. In a statewide election, every household will receive a Voter Information Pamphlet with information about State propositions and candidates. To learn more visit our website at **Election Info/Current Elections** and/or the Secretary of State's website at **[www.sos.ca.gov](http://www.sos.ca.gov)** for more information on candidates and measures.

**During a Primary Election, how are non-partisan Vote-By-Mail voters notified of which political parties will allow voting for partisan candidates?**

The Elections Division will send a letter to all non-partisan, Vote-By-Mail voters informing them of the parties that permit "cross-over" voting. The letter contains a form for non-partisan voters to complete in order to request the ballot for one of those political parties. Voters may also visit the Secretary of State's website at **[www.sos.ca.gov](http://www.sos.ca.gov)** for more information.

**When should I return my voted Vote-By-Mail ballot?**

All Vote-By-Mail ballots whether sent by mail or submitted in person must be received by the Elections Division prior to 8:00 P.M. on Election Day. Postmarks are not acceptable. Vote-By-Mail ballots received after 8:00 P.M. on Election Day cannot be counted.

## **What should I do if I think the Elections Division may not receive my voted ballot in time by mail?**

You may return your ballot:

- In person to the Placer County Elections Division. The Elections Division is located at 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn CA, 95603. Regular business hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. For added convenience the Placer County Elections Division may be open on weekends prior to an election. Contact the Elections Division for election specific hours.
- Via the 24 hour drive-up, drop-off ballot box in front of the Placer County Elections Division. The Elections Division is located at 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn CA, 95603.
- At any Placer County polling place from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. on Election Day.

If you have mailed or misplaced your ballot you may vote provisionally at your designated polling place in Placer County on Election Day. To learn more visit our website at **FAQs/Frequently Asked Questions: Provisional Voting** or contact the Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California at 1-800-824-8683.

## **What if my ballot becomes lost or damaged?**

Call the Elections Division for a replacement ballot at 530-886-5650 or toll free within California at 1-800-824-8683. If it is too late for us to send you a replacement in the mail, you may pick one up at the Placer County Elections Division. The Elections Division is located at 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn CA, 95603. Regular business hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. For added convenience the Placer County Elections Division may be open on weekends prior to an election. Contact the Elections Division for election specific hours.

## **Can I still vote at a polling place if I am a Permanent Vote-By-Mail voter?**

Yes. In order to vote at a polling place you must first surrender your Vote-By-Mail ballot in its return envelope to the poll worker before receiving a regular ballot.

If you are unable to surrender your Vote-By-Mail ballot at the polling place, you may still vote a provisional ballot. The provisional ballot will be reviewed by the Elections Division to determine eligibility and to make sure the original Vote-By-Mail ballot has not already been returned.

## **I'm in a Mail Ballot Precinct, why?**

Voters may be required to vote by Mail Ballot if their precinct has fewer than 250 registered voters on the 88<sup>th</sup> day prior to an election and is declared to be a "Mail Ballot Precinct" by the Elections Division. Notification is mailed to voters prior to each election to advise that they live in a Mail Ballot Precinct. Voters who live in a Mail Ballot precinct may also vote in person at the Elections Division located at 2956 Richardson Drive, Auburn CA, 95603.

## **Do you count all of the ballots that arrive by mail?**

Every returned envelope that contains a verifiable signature, ballot and is received prior to 8:00 P.M. on Election Day will be counted.

**How can the Elections Division be certain the ballot I return belongs to me?**

According to California Election Code 3019, once your Vote-By-Mail ballot has been returned to the Elections Division, the signature on the return envelope will be compared to the signature on your Voter Registration Form. If there is a match your ballot will be counted. If the signatures do not match the ballot cannot be counted. However, our office may attempt to contact you directly. A new Voter Registration Form will be mailed out to you so that we may obtain your current signature for future elections.

If a signature was not provided on the return envelope containing your ballot, it may be mailed back to you for signing or (depending on the proximity of the election) our office may attempt to contact you directly.

**Where can I find more information on Vote-By-Mail voting?**

To find out more about voting by mail or your status as a Vote-By-Mail voter, contact the Placer County Elections Division at 530-886-5650 or toll free in California at 1-800-824-8683.