

**SAN MATEO COUNTY
CALIFORNIA VOTER'S CHOICE ACT
SUPPLEMENT TO JANUARY 2020 – JANUARY 2024
ELECTION ADMINISTRATION PLAN
FOR THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
CALIFORNIA GUBERNATORIAL RECALL ELECTION**



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OFFICE OF
**ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-
RECORDER & ELECTIONS**
COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

MARK CHURCH
CHIEF ELECTIONS OFFICER &
ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER

August 2, 2021

Dear Fellow Voters,

This supplement to the San Mateo County Election Administration Plan (EAP) for the period January 2020 through January 2024, contains plans specific to the September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election. This document addresses changes to our EAP due to revisions to the Elections Code under Senate Bill 152 and to reflect updated local, state, and federal guidelines to those implemented in the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our office continues to follow CDC guidance and State and County Health Department COVID-19 Health Orders to ensure San Mateo County voters will have safe, secure and convenient election services. Each Vote Center will continue providing personal protective equipment and conducting regular cleaning throughout the voting period.

Senate Bill 152 was signed into law on June 28, 2021 and provides universal access to our Remote Accessible Vote by Mail (RAVBM) System for this election. RAVBM allows voters to use any computer with access to the internet and a printer to mark their selections and print their ballot. Voters may return their voted ballots via mail, at one of our 42 Ballot Drop Box locations or at one of our 20 Vote Centers and two Pop Up Vote Center locations.

This is the first time since 2003 that there has been a statewide recall election. The recall ballot will contain two questions: should the Governor be removed from office and if so, who should replace him. If you vote no to removing the Governor, you can still vote on the second question on who should replace him. Votes for a replacement candidate will only be counted if more than 50% of voters casting ballots vote yes to the first question to recall the Governor. 46 replacement candidates will be on the ballot. Candidate statements will appear in your State Voter Information Guide for those candidates who decide to pay to have a statement included there. By Elections Code, only the officer being recalled has the option to publish a statement in the County Voter Information Pamphlet. There are no county races nor measures on the ballot. As such, the County Sample Ballot & Voter Information Pamphlet will be smaller than usual, but still provide important information on your voting options. The county pamphlet will come to you with your official Vote by Mail ballot, being mailed no later than August 16.

Even though you will be voting for Governor this year, the regularly scheduled Primary Election for Governor will occur in June 2022 and a General Election for Governor in November 2022. In addition to the statewide offices on the 2022 ballot, there will be local offices up for election.

As with each election, I encourage you to vote. It is your privilege and your public duty.

Sincerely,

Mark Church

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Overview of Election Changes

The San Mateo County Registration & Elections Division will follow changes to the California Elections Code mandated for the September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election under the provisions of [Senate Bill 152](#). We will follow all election administration guidance by the Secretary of State. To keep voters and staff safe at our Vote Centers, we will follow public health guidance from the Centers for Disease Control as well as state and county health departments.

Each Vote Center will be assigned a Greeter to inform voters on protective practices and navigate voters through the voting process. Face coverings will be available for voters upon request. Greeters, trained in disability etiquette, will roam every voter line to offer guidance or assistance. Inside each Vote Center, check-in tables will have plexiglass shields to allow staff to assist voters without requiring physical distancing.

Senate Bill 152 provides for the following specific requirements for the September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election:

- Provide universal access to our Remote Accessible Vote by Mail (RAVBM) System.¹
- Extend the deadline to receive Vote by Mail ballots postmarked on Election Day to the 7th day after Election Day.²
- Begin processing of Vote by Mail ballots on the 29th day before the election.³

San Mateo County voters will continue to be able to verify when their ballot is received, and when it is counted, through our website, www.smcvote.org at [My Election Info](#). Voters may also sign up for the Vote by Mail ballot tracking system, [Where's My Ballot?](#), provided by the Secretary of State.

San Mateo County will continue its practice of opening three Vote Centers 29 days before Election Day.

Safe Voting Options

Vote by Mail

As one of the first five counties to implement the California Voter's Choice Act in 2018 and as a whole, San Mateo County is well-positioned to send all our registered voters [Vote by Mail ballots](#). Voters then have the option to return their ballot in the mail, use one of our [Official Ballot Drop Boxes](#) or bring their ballot to a Vote Center. We have 42 Ballot Drop Box Locations for the public for this election, an increase from 39 in the 2020 Presidential General Election, providing voters more convenient options to return their voted ballot. Drop Box locations are selected under the same Voter's Choice Act siting criteria as Vote Centers.

Vote Centers

We will have 20 [Vote Centers](#) this election. All 20 Vote Centers will be conveniently located throughout the county based on the Registration & Elections Division identification practices for best Vote Center locations as well as the Center of Inclusive Democracy's Voting Location Siting Tool. In addition to the 15 factors stated in the Voter's Choice Act, Vote Centers have been surveyed to confirm it is possible to provide physical distancing between voters. All Vote Center locations are accessible.

Vote Center Representatives (VCRs) will receive both online training and in-person training. While the main roles of VCRs has previously been to check in voters and provide printed ballots or cards for voters to use the Ballot Marking Tablet (BMT), VCRs will now also be trained on mask usage and requirements. Vote Center staff will be increased to allow coverage for these additional responsibilities.

¹ RAVBM System was created for voters with disabilities, voters living overseas or with the military and/or a military family member.

² Under current law, the deadline for receipt of a ballot postmarked by Election Day is three days following.

³ Under previous law, counties could begin processing vote-by-mail ballots 15 business days before an election. Results will still not be released until after all polls close on election night.

All VCRs receive training in disability etiquette and customer service. The principles contained within our disability sensitivity awareness training include employing courtesy, offering help and providing the voter the opportunity to clarify the support required.

We encourage all voters to vote early to avoid the lines on Election Day.

Curbside Voting

To facilitate curbside voting, each Vote Center will have an informational sign with a bell, which can be activated with a tap or light touch from a vehicle's window. The VCRs will hear the bell and then provide a sanitized clipboard and pen with a check-in form for the voter(s). A voter may ask to provide the information verbally to the VCR to fill-in the form.

Depending on the voter's preference, two people (either two staff or one staff member and the voter's assistant) will:

1. Create a Vote by Mail packet-to-go for the voter, which can be mailed, dropped off at an outdoor Drop Box or brought back to any Vote Center.
2. Bring a paper ballot to the voter inside a secrecy folder and, after the voter has marked their ballot, the team assisting will deposit the voted ballot in a ballot box.
 - For additional secrecy, a Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) ballot can be issued so the voter can seal their voted ballot inside the envelope and drop it into a ballot box. Staff would need to label the outside of the CVR envelope as a valid ballot with the date and their initials.
 - If the voter asks to see the ballot deposited directly into the ballot box, staff shall request the Vote Center Lead to send two staff to bring out a sealed ballot box to the car.⁴

At our 30-Day, 11-Day Vote Centers and the Foster City and Menlo Park 4-Day Vote Centers, if a voter requires a BMT to vote independently, two people (either two staff or one staff member and the voter's assistant) can offer a BMT and printer to be brought to their vehicle. The ballot will be cast following the return instructions above.

Replacement Ballots

While voters may request replacement ballots to be mailed to them through September 7 or go to any Vote Center to pick one up, for this election, to reduce wait times, voters may request a replacement ballot for pickup before visiting one of the 30-Day Vote Centers (list in Appendix). Voters can find a request form on our website, www.smcvote.org, or can call/text 650.312.5222 one day before pickup, to submit a request and select a location for pickup. Once their ballot is ready for pickup, they will receive an email with location-specific instructions.

Remote Accessible Vote by Mail System

For this election, all voters can use the [Remote Accessible Vote by Mail \(RAVBM\) System](#) to safely access, mark and print their ballot from any computer with internet access and a printer. Voters must return a signed Oath of Voter form or sign the postage-paid return envelope provided within the Official Ballot packet. This service has been a voting option for voters with disabilities to receive and mark their ballots independently and securely. It has also provided overseas voters and military voters with a way to vote in a timely fashion. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this service was successfully expanded to all voters to make voting as easy and accessible as possible for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

⁴ This option is not available if there is only one ballot box in the Vote Center.

Ballot Drop Boxes

Beginning August 16, voters will have access to 42 Ballot Drop Box locations conveniently located throughout the county. 33 Ballot Drop Box locations are outdoors, making them accessible 24/7. Every box is secure, with indoor boxes containing security locks and fastening cables, and outdoor boxes being made of steel and bolted in-place into concrete. All Ballot Drop Boxes and their locations are physically accessible to voters with disabilities.

Curbside Drop-Off

Curbside Drop-Off has expedited the voting process for voters, as they can drop their ballot off more quickly and conveniently with Vote Center staff than having to exit their vehicles. It has also provided another option for people with physical limitations to drop their ballot off in an Official Ballot Drop Box. Curbside Drop-Off will be available at these 10 Vote Centers on Election Day:

| | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Burlingame | Daly City |
| Foster City | Menlo Park |
| Millbrae | Pacifica |
| Redwood City | San Bruno |
| San Mateo | South San Francisco |

Ballot Counting

The Registration & Elections Division has the staffing and technology in place to ensure ballots are tallied accurately and efficiently. Per Senate Bill 152, the Division may begin to process Vote by Mail ballots on the 29th day before Election Day for the September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election.

Voter Education & Outreach

Postcard Targeting Areas with Lower-than-Average Registration

The Registration & Elections Division will mail a postcard with registration information in four languages to nearly 100,000 households. The postcards will be delivered via USPS Every Door Direct Mail in parts of Daly City, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Redwood City, San Bruno, South San Francisco and unincorporated county areas.

Summary of Changes to the Election Administration Plan 2020 – 2024 Appendix

Proposed Vote Center Locations

The Elections Division will conduct the September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election in accordance with Senate Bill 152. We will open 8 Vote Centers 11 days prior to Election Day. The County Sample Ballot & Voter Information Pamphlet will be included with the Vote by Mail ballot.

Due to projected reduced voter turnout, the number of Vote Centers will decrease from 45 during the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election to 20 Vote Centers and 2 Pop-Up Vote Centers for this election.

18 of our 20 Vote Centers were used during the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election. The new Vote Centers are the Belle Air Elementary School in San Bruno and the Twin Pines Lodge in Belmont.

The new Vote Center locations were chosen with the same selection criteria: the 15 selection criteria in the California Voter's Choice Act, community input and the Center for Inclusive Democracy's Voting Location Siting Tool.

Ballot Drop Box Locations

We have increased the number of outdoor 24/7 locations from 29 in November 2020 to 34 for the September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election. Locations were chosen with the same selection criteria: the selection criteria in the California Voter's Choice Act and community input.

Community Partners, Community Events Calendar and Media Partners

New partners and events will be added to our online appendix.

New media partners may include India Currents newspaper, Radio Zindagi 1170 AM radio, Bolly 92.3 FM radio, PTC Network Punjabi television or Namaste TV and others as determined.

Direct Voter Contact

Postcard 1 included the Vote Center dates and number of centers open, as well as a website and phone number to obtain additional information.

Postcard 2 will remind voters who have not returned their ballot or voted in-person about the remaining time to vote in the election and their voting options.