



COALITION OF BAY AREA ELECTION OFFICIALS

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FACT SHEET

Topic: In Person Voting

Voters Still Have the Option to Vote in Person

- While AB37 requires that all active registered voters receive Vote by Mail (VBM) ballots, voters still have the option of voting in person on or before Election Day.
- Voters can visit a County Elections Office beginning 29 days before the election and cast their ballots in person up to and including Election Day.
- Depending on the county, voters will have the opportunity of visiting a polling place, early voting location, or vote center.
- Refer to your county voter information guide for more specific information.

Reasons a Voter May Want to Vote in Person

- Voter did not receive or lost his/her VBM ballot and needs a replacement ballot.
- Voter missed the registration deadline or recently moved into the county and must appear in person to complete Conditional Voter Registration, and/or vote provisionally.
- Voter has moved within the county and needs to update his/her residence address to vote on all the contests he/she is entitled to vote on.
- Voter desires to use the accessible voting equipment at voting locations to cast his/her ballot independently and confidentially.

- Voter needs language assistance.
- Voter wants to personally hand in his/her VBM ballot to an election worker at a voting location.
- Voter simply prefers to vote in person.

Main Differences Between Polling Place and Vote Center Operations

- Number of locations and days of operation. In general, there are more polling places than vote centers, but vote centers are open for multiple days before Election Day.
- Some vote centers are open 10 days before the election, with all vote centers open beginning 4 days before and including Election Day.
- Polling places are typically open on Election Day only, but counties may have early voting locations open on some days leading up to the election.
- While vote centers allow a voter to go to any voting location throughout the county, technology at polling places allow counties to have all ballot styles available electronically and the ability to check on a voter's VBM ballot status.

Similarities between Polling Places and Vote Centers

- All polling places and vote centers throughout the state are open from 7am to 8pm on Election Day.

- Polling places and vote centers are both subject to the same accessibility requirements to have accessible voting equipment for voters with disabilities.
- The assistive ballot marking device accommodates voters with visual impairments by presenting the ballot in audio format during an accessible voting session. Headsets provide voters with audio instruction to perform all actions, such as selecting language, adjusting volume and speed of ballot, and reviewing, editing, or changing a write-in selection. A handheld device can be used by a voter during an Accessible Voting Session to navigate through and make selections on their ballot.
- Voters may also take advantage of curbside voting or drive-thru options at select voting locations. These options allow voters to request, mark, and return a ballot from the convenience of their car.
- Polling places and vote centers are subject to the same language requirements, with printed ballots in federally-required languages and translations in other languages to assist with voting.
- At both polling places and vote centers, first time voters whose registrations were not verified by the DMV or Social Security Administration will be required to show a current valid photo I.D. when checking in to vote.
- Polling places and vote center election workers utilize the same chain of custody procedures, two person teams, and security measures to maintain the integrity of the election.
- Election workers at both polling places and vote centers are trained to follow all CDC protocols regarding public health and safety for staff and voters, including regular cleaning of voting equipment and supplies, maximizing social distancing, and providing PPE.
- Whether you vote at a polling place or vote center, your votes are safe with us!

Be Sure Your Voter Registration is Up-to-Date

- Check your voter status at <https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/>
- To update your voter status, re-register at <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>
- To track your VBM ballot, sign up at <https://wheresmyballot.sos.ca.gov>

Be an Informed Voter

- Voters should become familiar with their voting options at their respective counties.
- Review your County Voter Information Guide. It includes detailed information concerning voting options, times and places.
- Go to your local County Election Official's website. Links to all Greater Bay Area county websites are available on the Coalition website: www.bayareavotes.org

Develop your Personal Voting Plan

- Voting the ballot you are sent is the easiest and safest way to vote during the ongoing pandemic. It keeps you, our staff, and other members of the public safe and allows you to vote on your schedule.
- If you are voting by mail, be sure to sign your VBM return envelope and drop it in the mail, a VBM ballot drop box, or deliver it in person at a voting location on or before Election Day.
- If you need specific assistance or wish to vote in person, you can go to an early voting site, a vote center, or a polling place, depending on your county options. Locations, dates, and times should be in your County Voter Information Guide or posted on your local County Election Official's website.
- If you are voting in person, know the location you will be voting at as well as the hours of operation. Vote on or before Election Day.