



Election Integrity Project California
EVERY LAWFULLY CAST VOTE ACCURATELY COUNTED

September 10, 2018

Protecting Ballot Secrecy

[CLICK HERE](#) for audio-visual presentation of this information)

A **secret** and **uninfluenced** ballot is the cornerstone of the American democratic process. **NO ONE** has the right to tell you how to vote, see how you vote, or influence the way you vote in any way. **Laws and procedures are written to make sure you have absolute privacy.**

But EIPCa's observer reports show that those protective laws and procedures are **routinely bent and broken.** The growth of the abuse has been gradual, and voters, by and large, have not only NOT noticed but have actually been lulled into seeing the intrusion on their civil right to a secret ballot as a positive thing. **If we are to KEEP this REPUBLIC, we must educate one another and reverse this trend.**

HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- The ballot box(es) should be properly sealed with the submission slot oriented **away from** the voter. California law requires that the Poll Worker, **NOT the voter**, submit the ballot, to avoid any extra ballots or destructive foreign substances from getting inside. Only counties with ballot scanners should allow the voters to submit their own ballots. To protect your ballot, check the ballot box direction, and be sure that voters are NOT being allowed to put their own ballots in. If you see a violation, SAY SOMETHING (in the form of a question), and call EIPCa if the problem is not resolved.
- All supplies and ballots, voted or not, should be secured and out of reach of the public. Voted ballots are to remain in **unmoved, sealed containers** until the close of the poll. The only exception would be in the few counties that have a mid-day pick up, in which case there should be strict following of procedures for chain of custody. Be aware of ballot security, and question anything that seems inappropriate.
- Voting booths should be arranged for **maximum voter privacy.** Whenever possible, the booths should be oriented so that the **wall forms the fourth side**

of each booth. Booths should be placed **2-3 feet apart** so that no one needs to pass behind another voter to enter a neighboring booth. Obviously, this arrangement, while optimal, is not always possible due to the constraints of the various polling place venues. But Poll Workers should do their very best to provide **as much privacy as possible** under the circumstances. Always (politely) demand to vote in privacy, and do what you can to see that others have the same protection. Call EIPCa if inappropriate voting circumstances persist.

- Unless receiving assistance, for which proper procedures must be stringently followed, voters are required by law to vote **alone in the confines of a booth or compartment. *Voters may not lawfully share a booth, nor may they vote at tables or any other open area.*** Voters have interpreted offers to vote together and to vote at open tables as signs of kindness and consideration, which is the intention in most cases, but such unprotected voting subjects people to **coercion and intimidation. ALL voters deserve protection, which is why the law must be followed.** Handicapped-accessible booths are required to be provided for voters who cannot stand long enough to use the traditional booths, and **offering seats at tables is NOT an act of consideration but rather a removal of civil rights.** Protect yourself and others by **politely questioning** the Precinct Inspector about non-private voting arrangements, but remember **never to interfere** with the voting process. Contact EIPCa if the situation remains unchanged. (www.eip-ca.com)

One person who speaks up can protect votes and voters for the rest of the voting day. Be sure to use your knowledge to help others who may not know how their rights are being violated. Fair and honest elections **KEEP THE REPUBLIC.** Thanks for doing your part.

Linda and the EIPCa Team

Linda Paine
President and Co-founder
Election Integrity Project California

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