



## VOTE SAFE IN 2022—November General Election

### Part #4— How To Vote in Person

Voting in Person means to **cast a vote without an envelope at a polling location in your county**. To prevent double voting, you must surrender the vote by mail (VBM) ballot you were mailed prior to casting an in-person vote. Surrender may be physical or electronic—see below.

Great confusion lies in the fact that counties have different regulations. You must determine what is required in your county. One size does NOT fit all.

#### **31 counties will retain the precinct polling place model. *In those counties:***

- True in-person voting may occur only on Election Day. (If you vote before Election Day at the county elections office, your ballot will still go into an envelope, and you have gained nothing.)
- Voters who wish to cast a true in-person vote must go to the polling place assigned to their own precinct.
- Polling locations with a paper roster (no electronic poll book) will require the voter to **physically surrender** their vote by mail ballot and return envelope. BOTH must be marked “SURRENDERED”, preferably torn in half, and returned securely to the elections office. Be sure this is done correctly.
  - If you do not have your ballot to surrender or you go to the wrong polling location, you will be required to vote provisionally. **Take care this does not happen to you.**
- After surrender, the voter will be given a same-day ballot. In counties that offer a paper ballot option, that is the best choice. In some counties, the only option is to use a voting machine or a Ballot Marking Device. Though some voters may be wary of voting this way, EIPCa still believes it is better than submitting a ballot in an envelope.

A few counties allow the voters to cast their marked vote by mail ballot at the polls **without the envelope** as a paper ballot option. If your county is among them, **this is the best choice**.

#### **27 counties have now adopted the Voters Choice Act.** In alphabetical order, they are:

Alameda, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Merced, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Diego, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Ventura, Yolo.

These counties will have no precinct polling locations. Instead, Vote Centers will be provided throughout the county and open for 11 days (ending on Election Day) at the ratio of 1/60,000 voters (days 1-7) and 1/10,000

(days 8-11). The primary purpose of a Vote Center is to allow voters to Vote in Person, though many county elections offices will NOT make any effort to inform voters of that option. Many actively discourage voting in person.

Here are the rules:

- Voters may vote at ANY location in the county.
- Vote Centers will have electronic poll books connected in real time to the county voter rolls and voter histories. Workers will be able to check whether a ballot in the voter's name has been received by the elections office. If the answer is no, that voter is qualified to vote in person.
- **Voters are NOT required to physically surrender their VBM ballot and envelope.** Even those who do not bring their ballot with them will be eligible to vote. Upon check-in, the electronic poll book will record the voter's in-person vote status and electronically deactivate the bar code on the return envelope sent to that voter. If that envelope were to arrive at the elections office even one minute later, the scanner would identify it as an unqualified ballot, thus preventing double voting.
- Vote Centers without a ballot printer or store of paper ballots will require voters to use a voting machine or a Ballot Marking Device. Though some voters may be wary of voting this way, EIPCa still believes it is better than submitting a ballot in an envelope.

A few counties allow the voters to cast their marked vote by mail ballot at the polls **without the envelope** as a paper ballot option. If your county is among them, **this is the best choice.**

Regardless of the rules in your county, it is wise to take your VBM ballot AND return envelope with you when you go to vote in person as evidence that you are registered and have not yet voted.

More on that in a future Vote Safe article.