



## VOTE SAFE IN 2022—November 2022

### Part #9—What Do I Do IF..... (at the polls)?

Poll workers are individuals just like the rest of us. Most just want to do their best to conduct a fair, honest and lawful election.

But poll workers are limited by the quality of their training, and that varies significantly from county to county. In addition, the way elections are held is quickly changing: new systems, new technology, multiple voting days, new laws and regulations---it's hard to keep up!

Voters need to become educated so they can be the “wind beneath the wings” of poll workers who are doing a very difficult job.

**Always be patient and polite, but firmly stand your ground when you know what is right. You have the right to VOTE IN PERSON, without an envelope.**

Here are some WHAT IFs to memorize:

#### **WHAT DO I DO IF I am told (encouraged, arm-twisted, forced) at the polls to just turn in my mail-in ballot in the envelope—if poll workers are reluctant to let me vote in person?**

- As you know from Part 2 of this series, turning in your ballot in an envelope is not “the same” as voting in person, even though uninformed poll workers will tell you it is. Just thank them for their suggestion but decline, and restate your intention to vote in person without an envelope.
- If the above does happen to you, please download an EIPCa Citizen Incident Statement at [www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm](http://www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm), fill it out and send it immediately to EIPCa as directed.

#### **WHAT DO I DO IF I am told at the polls that I've already voted?**

- **Always take your mail-in ballot and return envelope with you.** Show it to the clerk, point out the name and address, even show your ID to prove the ballot is yours.
- Tell the clerk there is some irregularity and ask the clerk to check again.
- If the answer is the same, ask the clerk to involve the assistance of the Lead Official.
- If the Lead Official cannot resolve the problem, politely say, **“Would you please call your Hotline?”** Once the elections office is on the line, the official or you can explain the situation. **BE PATIENT AND**

POLITE, but insist that you are in possession of proof that their “records” are incorrect and that you expect to vote in person with a **regular, non-provisional** ballot.

- If you have your ballot in hand, do NOT accept a provisional ballot without first firmly standing your ground and attempting to resolve the issue!! Make it clear that if you are not allowed to vote with a regular ballot, you are being disenfranchised. Use those words.
- In the unlikely event that resolution cannot be reached, then vote a provisional ballot as a last resort. Do not leave without voting.
- Win or lose, download a Citizen Incident Statement [www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm](http://www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm), fill it out and send it immediately to EIPCa as directed.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I am told at the polls that I’m not registered to vote?**

- **Always take your mail-in ballot and return envelope with you.** Show it to the clerk, point out the name and address, even show your ID to prove the ballot is yours and that you clearly ARE registered because you were mailed a ballot.
- If the clerk cannot resolve the issue, ask the Lead Official be consulted.
- If the Lead Official cannot resolve the situation, employ the universal next step: **“Would you please call your Hotline?”**
- Poll workers may offer you an opportunity to “same-day register”, called a Conditional Voter Registration (CVR). Since you know (and have proof) that you are registered, the only appropriate resolution is for them to allow you to vote with a regular ballot. Re-registering can create more chaos in the voter rolls.
- If you have your ballot in hand, do NOT accept a CVR or provisional ballot without first firmly standing your ground and attempting to resolve the issue! Make it clear that if you are not allowed to vote with a regular ballot, you are being disenfranchised. Use those words.
- If there is no resolution with the Hotline (highly unlikely), then request a provisional ballot. Do not leave without voting.
- Download a Citizen Incident Statement [www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm](http://www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm), fill it out and send it immediately to EIPCa as directed.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I am provided a Sharpie to mark my ballot?**

- Be prepared. Take a black ink pen with you, and if offered a Sharpie, take it, but use your black pen to mark your ballot. No need to make a fuss. Use it carefully and don’t press hard enough to wear a microscopic hole in the ballot.
- Download a Citizen Incident Statement [www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm](http://www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm), fill it out and send it immediately to EIPCa as directed.

## **WHAT DO I DO IF I am told I cannot have a paper ballot?**

- Each county's voting system is different. There are counties where your only option is to vote on a voting machine or ballot marking device. You cannot demand what does not exist.
- Research in advance. It is possible that you can be provided a paper ballot by voting at the Elections Office in your county. It is possible your county will accept your vote by mail ballot (without envelope) as a paper ballot. Know your options before going in, and vote the safest way your county provides.
- Regardless of how voting in person takes place in your county, it is ALWAYS more advisable than voting with the envelope.

**Any issue that arises at the polling place should be addressed first by polite discussion with the Lead Official.**

**If resolution is not reached, remain unruffled. Remember poll workers are doing their best, and deserve respect. Always SMILE and say, "WOULD YOU PLEASE CALL YOUR HOTLINE?"**

**Politely stand your ground if you know you are right, and officials will eventually resolve your problem.**

**You may email EIPCa at [corpoffice@eip-ca.com](mailto:corpoffice@eip-ca.com) (cc [ruthweiss@eip-ca.com](mailto:ruthweiss@eip-ca.com)) with serious concerns that need emergency attention. Provide your name and a phone number to reach you. We will get back to you immediately.**