

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF CLERKS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS



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April 13, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Office of California Governor Newsom
State Capital Building, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Proposed Executive Order to Protect Public Health by Expanding Vote-by-Mail Options for the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election

Dear Governor Gavin Newsom:

With the understanding that the current coronavirus outbreak has greatly changed everyday life for all Americans and the citizens of the State of California, County Elections Officials respectfully recommend the following actions by Executive Order to achieve the best possible success for the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election.

- Hold the November 3, 2020, Presidential General Election as an all-mail ballot election.
- Expand Elections Code sections 3016.5 and 3000-3503 to permit all voters access to receive and cast a ballot through a certified remote accessible vote by mail system (RAVBM).
- Require all county elections officials to utilize the Secretary of State's vote-by-mail tracking system or equivalent local option.
- Allow in-person voting assistance at the discretion of the county elections official, while encouraging in-person voting opportunities available on or before Election Day in a manner consistent with public health and safety, to maximize voter accessibility
- Extend the voter registration deadline from the fifteenth day prior to Election Day to Election Day.
- Extend the acceptance of properly cast and postmarked vote-by-mail ballot to no later than 5 p.m. two days prior to the certification of the election to allow for any potential mail delivery delays.
- Extend all deadlines associated with the official canvass of the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election by 21 days.

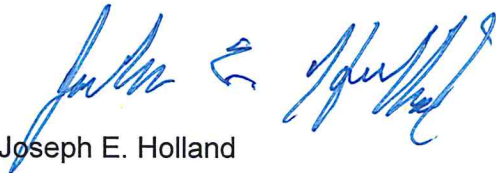
- In recognition of the extreme disruption caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic, funding will be released in the form of grants for immediate use for specified purposes, rather than through state mandate reimbursement.

The above actions, as detailed in the attached example executive order, will ensure that every voter in California will have the best, safest, opportunity to cast a ballot in the November election.

These recommendations recognize that many poll workers will not be willing to work in the November election and that many previously available polling places will no longer be available. Social distancing makes most current poll worker training settings untenable and the majority of poll workers are at increased risk due to their age. Finding suitable voting locations that will allow for proper social distancing and space for line queuing, issuing, voting and receiving ballots will be extremely challenging. The safety and health of the voters, poll workers and county employees are of the utmost importance.

The November election is consistent with flu season and many experts within the WHO and CDC are expecting the COVID-19 virus to follow a similar curve and be cyclical. Even under the best health and safety guidelines it is hard to imagine a polling place or satellite office that will not be putting people at risk under those circumstances. We need to act now to ensure that every voter has an equal and safe opportunity to vote in November.

Sincerely,



Joseph E. Holland

President, California Association of Clerks and Election Officials
