# November 2022

# Yolo County Elections Procedures & Guidelines for Voting in a State of Emergency or Natural Disaster



Yolo County Elections
Yolo County
11/8/2022
REDACTED

# **Preface**

To fulfill its mission of serving Yolo County residents with integrity and pride through accessible, fair, and transparent election services, the Yolo County Elections Office developed disaster and emergency plans should a natural disaster or state of emergency occur during critical election times.

These procedures and guidelines provide general guidance to the Yolo County Elections Office and are adapted for each election. The documents specific to a current election, such as phone numbers and locations, are in the Appendix.

This document does not replace any existing emergency or disaster plans established by the State or county officials. The information provided should be used in conjunction with applicable plans adopted by Yolo County. Emergency plans differ throughout the state depending on factors such as, but not limited to, staff size, county size, available facilities, fiscal constraints, and voting technology used.

In an emergency, the Governor, the Secretary of State, the Legislature, and local officials must communicate clearly and frequently with each other and the public. Yolo County Elections is committed to providing the public with accurate information and access to voting under any emergency circumstance.

Note: For readability, this document uses the singular form of the pronoun "they" rather than writing "he or she" or assuming one over the other.

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## **Overview**

Natural disasters, declared states of emergency, or local public safety incidents can occur at any time. Such events can endanger staff, sensitive voting equipment, office equipment, and other infrastructure that the Yolo County Elections Office requires to conduct its business processes. No agency can completely prepare for every situation that could possibly arise; however, this document lays out the ways the Yolo County Elections Office prepares itself to continue critical operations regardless of the challenges we face.

The approach and gravity of our response depend on when in an election calendar timeline the natural disaster, declaration of a state of emergency, or local public safety incident occurs. The most critical time is during the ballot processing periods as identified as follows:

- The period and the deadline for the transmittal of military or overseas voters' ballots, which takes place between 60 days and 45 days before Election Day
- The voting period, which begins 29 days before and through Election Day
- The canvass period, which is the 30 days following Election Day

The statutory requirements of election administration also occur outside the ballot processing periods as follows:

- The period when potential candidates file for office, which is between 113 and 83 days before Election Day
- The period when measures, initiatives, referenda, and recall petitions may be submitted, which ends 88 days before Election Day
- The preparation of the County Voter Information Guide, which generally occurs between 113 and 82 days prior to Election Day
- The layout and design of the official ballot, the vote-counting program, and the testing of the voting system, which occurs between 88 and 29 days before Election Day

This document will refer to these periods collectively as the "election cycle."

## **Yolo County Elections Emergency Response Plan**

If an employee becomes aware of an emergency that warrants law enforcement or medical assistance, the employee shall call 911 or 3-911 (from a County phone) and then notify the site supervisor. The personal safety of people is of utmost importance. The Yolo County Elections Office measures its responses to emergencies by the degree of alert created by an emergency, as described below.

#### Degree of Alert #1: Heightened Security

In the event "heightened security" is designated by the Assessor/Clerk-Recorder/Elections Department Head (ACE DH) or law enforcement, the ACE DH may, when appropriate, work with the Office of Emergency Services to coordinate:

- voters to enter and exit the building to vote;
- staff to continue counting ballots; or
- the public to enter to conduct regular business.

Suppose the Yolo County Elections Office moves its processes to an alternate location due to an extended evacuation of the building. In that case, the Yolo County Elections Office will inform the public of the area of the alternate operational sites as soon as possible.

If a staff member becomes aware of a suspicious person or object, that employee shall notify their immediate supervisor, who shall report to the elections office management. A suspicious object should not be investigated or tampered with in any way, nor should suspicious persons be questioned or confronted. Call 911 or 3-911 (from a County phone) if staff is in imminent danger.

#### Degree of Alert #2: Evacuations of Public and Staff

The following measures may be implemented by designated staff for evacuations in addition to the standard and heightened security measures discussed above:

- Inform the public to evacuate calmly through the nearest exit if an alarm sounds.
- Assist members of the public, including those who need assistance evacuating.
- Lock doors and secure vital records and ballots.
- Proceed to the designated meeting spot and stay together. (
- Approval by Elections Office management of the alternate site if the designated site is unsuitable.
- Post emergency messages on outgoing voicemail, email, and building signage.
- Forward Yolo County Elections Office phone lines to an alternate site, if possible.
- Inform staff not in the building via cell phone of the building's status.
- Collect ballots and voting system components.
- Pre-designated employees shall check each room and close the doors after exiting.

Evacuation procedures are detailed in the "Scenarios" section of this manual.

## **Baseline Security Standards**

The foundation of Yolo County's emergency preparedness plan is the security standards that are in place all the time. They serve to mitigate risk and maintain the security and integrity of elections.

## **Assigned Roles and Delegated Authority**

In an emergency, the ACE DH shall make all decisions regarding Yolo County Elections Office operations. Suppose the ACE DH is not available to make decisions. In that case, full authority transfers to the Deputy of Technology and Finance (DoTF), Deputy of Elections Manager (DoE), and then Election Yolo County Elections Emergency Response Plan

Supervisor (ES) in that order. If none of those designees is available to make decisions, the authority should transfer to the most senior staff available.

When at a safe place, the ACE DH and their designees and staff shall meet to perform a damage assessment, begin system restoration, if possible, and determine which operations should or can continue based on the nature of the emergency. Depending on the outcome of this meeting, the ACE DH will contact the necessary staff.

The individual designated for an operational role in an election and that person's backup may change from election to election. A specific list of staff members and contact information can be found in Attachment A (page 21).

## **Drills / New Employee Orientation**

New employees are informed of the contents of this policy by their supervisor. All staff shall be familiar with the evacuation routes, meeting sites, and buddy system. The Yolo County Elections Office will hold drills during various times in the election cycle so that all personnel are familiar with the Yolo County Elections Office's emergency plans. New employees are made aware of the location of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, flashlights, and water.

The buddy system requires each employee to know if their assigned buddy is absent that day, on break, lunch, or has already left for the day. Staff is trained to tell their own whereabouts to their supervisor if their buddy is absent.

#### Fire Extinguishers, First Aid Kits, Flashlights, and Water

The Yolo County Elections Office has fire extinguishers, first aid kits, flashlights, and water. The Yolo County Elections Office regularly maintains the fire extinguishers.

There are three locations with fire extinguishers:

- Scanner area near the door to the backroom
- Kitchen near the microwave
- Backroom on the wall by the break room door

The First Aid Kit is in the kitchen area. The Yolo County Elections Office's safety coordinator is responsible for maintaining the First Aid kit.

Flashlights are in the backroom, and at each workstation. Batteries are checked periodically before each election.

Water is available at the sinks in the kitchen and bathrooms. Bottled water is also available in the refrigerator.

Tarps are stored in each desk area and the backroom in case of the need to protect ballots, petitions, computers, and other equipment from water and smoke damage.

#### **Physical Measures**

The Yolo County Elections Office entrance from the front counter area to the atrium is and shall be monitored via camera surveillance. Any secure employee areas are and shall always be closed to visitors. Throughout the election cycle, visitors are required to sign-in on the visitor log and to wear a visitor name badge. Visitors are never allowed in a room that is not also occupied by at least one staff member.

The Yolo County Elections Office's election management computer server is always secured by a physical lock and key to enter the room

The backroom is accessible by authorized personnel and contains the Hart InterCivic central ballot counting servers (Verity Central). The Hart InterCivic voting equipment (Verity Print, Touch Writer, and Verity Count server), Tenex Software Solutions ePollbooks, and Red River Cradlepoint MiFi Solutions are stored in the locked cage, with a padlock and a tamper-evident seal on the door. The unique serial numbers on the seals are written on the log sheet by the gate to the cage and verified whenever the cage is opened. The double doors to the backroom are sealed with tamper-evident seals whenever ballots are on site. The unique serial number on each seal is logged when it is removed and replaced. If the serial number on the seal does not match the log, staff will immediately alert their supervisor.

#### Cybersecurity Risk Management

Election administration systems rely heavily on information technology solutions to provide secure efficiency and automation to both routine and complex tasks. This reliance on technology also introduces inherent vulnerabilities and risks associated with dependence on technology. Cybersecurity risk is best mitigated through preparation, prevention, and training. The specific intrusion detection and response technologies protecting our data are supplemented by Yolo County Elections Office's participation in preventative activities:

- Conduct regular mandated training and prioritize the most common threats, such as phishing and social media. Our success relies on Yolo County's Centralized Innovation and Technology Services Department (ITSD).
- Monitor staff completion of ITSD training programs.
- Conduct or participate in election-specific tabletop exercises with staff and review our internal
  incident reporting and response procedures. This ensures a rapid and robust response during
  the onset of an incident. These exercises are available through the SOS, DHS, and other partner
  agencies.
- Regularly conduct vulnerability assessments, mitigation reviews, and install patches for software. Our success relies on ITSD.
- Continually update procedures and train our established incident response team. Ensure the team has up-to-date contact information, especially for after-hours IT support. Our success relies on ITSD.
- Protect systems from unauthorized access by restricting physical and virtual account access. The Elections Office staff and ITSD share responsibility for this preventative measure.
- Ensure robust logging of information changes made to the system and employ automated and human reviews of these logs. Our success relies on ITSD.

 Practice restoration of servers in mock scenarios. Our success relies on ITSD and, in the case of several systems, our partnership with our vendors.

#### Server and Network Backup

The Yolo County Elections Office's Election Management System (EMS) activity is saved on a serv	/er
; the server is located inside	serve
room. Backups for these data take place regularly	
. There are	s kept
at alternative site	
Voting programs, databases, and past election information are stored	
. The backups are saved to and stored . At NO t	ime is
the Hart InterCivic voting equipment connected to a County network, internet, or any wireless de	evices.

## **Emergency Outside of Work Hours**

The Sheriff, City Police, Yolo County Elections Office, County Administrators Office (CAO's), or the alarm company would notify the ACE DH of an emergency occurring outside of work hours. If the emergency consists of an event that would allow selected staff to enter the building to retrieve vital information and data servers, the ACE DH will inform the appropriate staff.

## **Evacuation of County Administration Building**

In the event of an emergency requiring building evacuation, security measures must be executed in order to preserve the election. Depending on the period of time during an election, procedures for a given operational unit may vary. The particular type of incident will warrant a specific response based on County training and policies. For instance, a fire in the building would be handled differently than a severe earthquake or active shooter. In all cases, the Deputy of Elections will:

- Ensure that all staff are accounted for and all customers are evacuated from the Front Counter area, or in their immediate vicinity. All employees (permanent and temporary) are to immediately leave the building and report to the designated meeting site (
   Customers are welcome but not required, to join us as needed to stay safe and receive instructions.
- 2. Keep and obtain the updated list of vendors and emergency contacts which is maintained by the elections manager outside of the office. This will provide easy access to critical staff, especially given the possible urgent need to duplicate or reorder election supplies. Vendor information is on Attachment A: November 8, 2022 General Election on page 21.

#### **ADMINISTRATION**

If the County Administration Building cannot be used, the Deputy of Elections will notify the US Postal Service immediately to redirect all mail, including registration materials, requests for ballots, and voted ballots to the off-site relocated Elections Office.

Under federal and state law, counties must transmit ballots to military and overseas voters no later than 45 days before Election Day. The off-site relocated office must be able to transmit ballots via email and fax, in addition to postal mail. The relocation of the Elections Office will not likely affect the mailing of ballots to voters because Yolo County's ballot printing and mailing vendor is located in Porterville, California. However, should an emergency befall the plant in Porterville, the relocated Elections Office can print and prepare mail ballots for mailing offsite with existing election materials. The ballots would be mailed from Woodland under the Office's local postal permit.

Other procedures are coordinated by operational unit supervisors and leads, indicated below.

#### **VOTE-BY-MAIL**

If personal safety and time permit in the case of a building evacuation (fire, flood, bomb threat, or structural failure) or as directed by ACE Management after the incident:

- Obtain tarps or plastic to cover ballots if needed.
- Relocate voted ballots to a safe location or cover them with a tarp or plastic
- Cover PCs and heavy machinery if needed (i.e., envelope sorter, ballot extractor, printers, scanners, etc.)

#### CAMPAIGN SERVICES

If personal safety and time permit in the case of a building evacuation (fire, flood, bomb threat, or structural failure) or as directed by ACE Management after the incident, the following items must be removed from the building:

- Money Tray and Receipts
  A copy of the (Candidate Proof List) (located in (Date of List))
  The Candidate files/folders (located in (Date of List))
  Measure Folders (located in (Date of List))
  Election Folder (located in (Date of List))
  The Candidate and Measures Proofs (located in (Date of List))
  Candidate Nomination Packets (located in (Date of List))
  County seal stamp and Registrar stamp (located on (Date of List))
- Other items may be gathered, covered, or taken if personal safety permits.

The above documents and files will ensure that staff could process candidates at another location, assuming that we had EMS available through a PC. The candidate filing officer would file papers with candidates conditionally, at that time advising them that we would be calling them if they were not qualified to run, (e.g., if they live out of the jurisdiction, etc.). Once back online (with EMS), we can print documents and enter candidates into the system and resume normal business operations in just a few days. We also coordinate with the Secretary of State in the case of elections with state and federal candidates.

#### **REGISTRATION & OUTREACH SERVICES**

If personal safety and time permits in the case of a building evacuation (fire, flood, bomb threat, or structural failure) or as directed by ACE Management after the fact:

- Cover the computers with a tarp or heavy plastic
- Cover the most current affidavits of registration that have not been scanned and entered into the Election Management Database
- Cover any petition that is in-house for certification
- Gather a black supply bag for Outreach
- Other items may be gathered, covered, or taken if personal safety permits

#### **PRECINCT OPERATIONS**

In the event of an emergency requiring building evacuation on or before the voting period, due to fire, bomb, flood, etc., these procedures are to be followed:

- All employees (permanent and temporary) are to immediately leave the building and report to the designated meeting site (
- **2.** The following items are to be procured before departing the building, in order of importance, if time and personal safety allow:
  - Thumb drive\* on a lanyard, located with the following information saved:
    - Equipment Delivery & Drop Box /Pick-up vendor contact information
    - Inventory List (From Warehouse, most recent version)
    - Records Storage List (From Warehouse, most recent version)
    - Complete list of Vote Centers & Ballot Drop Box locations, with contact information
    - Complete list of Election Officers (Election Workers)
       "(Update to thumb drive at E-15 and again at E-5)
  - Two department laptops in cases
  - One Red River Cradlepoint MiFi Solution case from a

\*It is the responsibility of the DoTF to ensure all the reports/information on the thumb drive are current and relevant for the upcoming election.

- 3. Once safely at the assembly area, the DoE or ES will load the thumb drive on a department laptop.
- **4.** The ES will then divide the list of Vote Center (VC) Supervisors and Roving Inspectors (Rovers) for staff to call. Ensure the VC Supervisors and Rovers are given the following information:
  - Precinct Operations Coordinator's cell phone number: See Appendix A
  - Alternate Ballot Drop Box site location(s) for the ballot and/or equipment returns
  - Alternate phone number(s) to call for assistance at the Vote Centers

Election Workers will follow the instructions in the Election Worker Training Manual unless otherwise instructed by technical support teams or office personnel.

Evacuations that do not affect an election will require obtaining the department laptops and Red River Cradlepoint MiFi Solution case for internet and EMS access. The DoE, DoTF, and ES have VPN remote access.

#### **ELECTIONS OFFICE PROCESSING AREA**

In the event of an emergency requiring building evacuation, the following procedures shall be followed:

- 1. Proceed to the designated assembly area. All safety training includes information about the designated assembly area. Lead staff will guide personnel to the
- **2.** Processing Area Lead to procure the sign-in sheet used for temporary staff and assist the ES in accounting for all elections personnel in the building that day.
- **3.** If time and safety permit, the DoTF and/or ES will oversee the removal of the following, in order of importance:
  - Voted Ballots of ALL statuses: (unopened envelopes, unprocessed, sorted, challenged, scanned, adjudicated, damaged/duplicated)

This process will be accomplished by small teams focusing on a particular area, making sure that all trays, cages, and boxes are well-labeled and double-checked before removal.

- Official Ballot Stock
- Personnel Records
- Election equipment: Verity Print and Verity Touch Writer

When an alternate location is established, the site shall accept and secure the election materials. The status and order of importance depend on the point in the election cycle when the relocation takes place. The alternate location will also secure equipment coming from the Vote Centers or Ballot Drop Boxes.

- Official Ballots
  - Voted ballots will be delivered from Vote Centers by two Vote Center election workers, rovers, or election staff. This includes ballots in Vote Center ballot boxes: Vote-by-Mail, Conditional Voter Registration/Provisional ballots, and "live" ballots voted in-person.
  - Blank ballot stock
- Additional election supplies and equipment

While safely at the alternate location:

- Coordinate with Sheriff's Office for security
- Coordinate with the drayage vendor for possible rescheduling of pick-up of election equipment

In the absence of storage equipment (pallets, hampers, carts, pallet jacks, and postal cages) all election supplies and equipment will be transferred by hand.

## **Specific Scenarios**

## **Voting Systems and Technology**

In the event of an emergency the following procedures are to be followed:

The DoTF, along with a pre-designated staff member, will be responsible for securing the computers containing election data, along with supporting material, and transporting them to the group evacuation area. The election equipment and supporting material are stored and updated throughout the election cycle to ensure no single item is irreplaceable. The backup container will contain the following as described in our current policy and procedure manual:

- Current Election Data (
- PDF of Election Ballots
- County Voter Information Guides
- o PDF of the County Voter Information Guide
- One (1)
  Two (2)
  One (1) Monitor, Keyboard, and Mouse
- Two (2)
- One (1)
- each affected Vote Center

#### 1. In the event of power loss, the following procedures are to be followed:

The DoTF will ensure the following:

- All voting systems and technology staff have been accounted for
- A designated staff member is assigned to the ballot tabulation room in non-election mode; when an election is in process, two people are assigned to this room
- A designated staff member is assigned to check on the server room
- All designated staff members are to advise the DoTF of their status upon first inspection and every fifteen minutes thereafter using issued cell phones
- Upon restoration of power, each designated staff member will ensure their respective areas of responsibility are functioning properly
- After each staff member has conducted a final inspection of their respective area, they will report their findings to the DoTF
- If the building was evacuated refer to the section regarding building evacuation.

# 2. <u>In the event of power loss and the Vote Center area has generator power, the following procedures</u> are to be followed:

The DoTF will ensure the following:

• All voting systems and technology staff have been accounted for

- A designated staff member has been assigned to the ballot tabulation room in non-election mode; when an election is in process, two people will be assigned to this room
- All designated staff members are to communicate and confirm they have power in their respective areas and that the functions of each area are working properly.
- All designated staff members are to advise the DoTF of their status upon first inspection and every fifteen minutes thereafter using issued cell phones
- Upon restoration of power, each designated staff member will ensure their respective areas of responsibility are functioning properly

#### 3. In the event of total failure of Tenex Precinct Central electronic poll books:

- The DoTF will investigate the issue
- The vendor will be contacted to help troubleshoot
- If the issue persists and ALL ePollbooks are not functioning, all Vote Centers will have readily available support from the elections office to issue ballots accordingly.

#### Cybersecurity Incident Response

If the Yolo County Elections Office experiences a cybersecurity incident the DoTF shall immediately contact the Yolo County Chief Technology Officer and the Secretary of State's office with all details available, even if there is still significant uncertainty about the incident.

The Secretary of State's office will coordinate interagency support efforts. The Secretary of State's office will inform State and Federal partners such as the California Office of Emergency Services, the California National Guard, Homeland Security, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Secretary of State's office will activate the Elections Cyber Incident Response team and ensure Yolo County officials receive the support needed for incident response. In the event of a cybersecurity incident, we will:

- Work to contain the threat to limit the network exposure. Disconnect the workstation(s) or affected equipment from the network including any wireless or Bluetooth access. However, do NOT power down the machine. Preserving forensic evidence will assist in recovery.
- Evaluate the network connections that were available to that workstation and ensure the incident has not spread to additional network locations.
- Keep a log of activities, decisions, and steps taken. Collect indicators of compromise to help prevent other similar incidents in the future. Assign a staff member to document the incident as it unfolds.
- Contact the Secretary of State's office, voting system vendor, or election management system vendor, and, if appropriate, local, state, or federal law enforcement. The Secretary of State will also work to coordinate with state and federal law enforcement during any cyber incident.

## Emergency at a Single Vote Center

Yolo County's highest priority in an emergency situation is the physical safety of people. Our mission is to ensure every voter has the opportunity to cast a ballot and that the integrity of the election is preserved. Toward that end, our procedures at any Vote Center are focused on human safety and minimizing any disruption to the voting process.

Emergency supply kits are provided to all Vote Centers with the following equipment:

- First aid kit
- Flashlights
- Communications plan
- Emergency contact list
- Backup voting materials (county voter information guides, rosters of voters, provisional ballots, and voting machines, if feasible)

Additional supplies may be transported to the location based on need:

- Emergency backup lights
- Generators
- Voting machines and equipment

In case of an emergency that interrupts voting at a Vote Center (VC), the VC Supervisor must:

- Notify the Yolo County Elections Office to advise them of the emergency at the Vote Center as soon as it is safe to do so. Phone numbers are provided in the Vote Center materials to contact the office and or local emergency personnel.
- After conferring with the Yolo County Elections Office, building personnel, and/or other
  emergency personnel, an assessment and determination will be made regarding the necessity
  and feasibility of moving ballot boxes, signage, supplies, etc. to another room on the premises
  or to a nearby site to permit voting to continue.
- If relocation to a new site is appropriate, the ACE DH, DoE, and DoTF will coordinate with the Vote Center Supervisor and Roving Inspectors (Rovers) to do so. If relocation to a safer room onsite is appropriate, paper ballots, voter registration lists, signage, supplies, etc., may be moved so that voting can continue.
- In the event of a power outage, after confirming that it is a safe environment the Yolo County Elections Office may instruct the Vote Center election workers to continue assisting voters using alternative ballot procedures described in California Elections Code section 14299 and the lights from their cell phones while generators and lighting are set up.
- If the Vote Center must be evacuated, the VC Supervisor, working in conjunction with police and/or other emergency personnel, must make certain that everyone gets out to safety. If there is no imminent danger to personal safety, the VC Supervisor should protect the integrity of the voting process and voting materials, to the extent possible, by doing the following:
  - Call the Yolo County Elections Office immediately for instructions.
  - Record the top serial number of the unused ballot stock.
  - Unplug all voting systems and move them to a safe location.
  - Gather and secure the ballot boxes containing voted ballots and move them to a safe location.
  - If possible, all materials should be transported by teams of two.

If the site can safely be reopened after evacuation, the VC Supervisor should call the Yolo County Elections Office, who should:

- Dispatch an elections staff member to determine if any tampering has occurred.
- Replenish any needed supplies.

- Advise election workers of any special instructions that might be necessary due to the interruption.
- If there are not enough ballots at a Vote Center, the county should turn to its alternative voting procedures that have been approved by the Secretary of State. (Elections Code section 14299.)

In the event there is an emergency that affects the operation of a Vote Center or Ballot Drop Box, the Communications Manager will work with the Registrar to prepare a statement for the media as well as an information alert to be sent to the Board of Supervisors, the County Administration Office, the Office of Emergency Services, and the Secretary of State's office.

## **Emergencies Affecting More than One Vote Center**

In the event of an emergency affecting one or more Vote Centers, relocation and/or consolidation of Vote Centers may be required. Under such circumstances, the following procedures must be observed by election workers, VC supervisors, and/or rovers:

- Post signage advising voters of the relocation directing them to new Vote Center sites and ballot drop boxes.
- Collect all voted ballots and secure them in the Transport Bag and Blue VBM and Yellow CVR/PROV Ballot Boxes if possible.
- Collect the ballot boxes, unused ballot stock, and the voting systems and transport them to the new location.
- At least two election workers, VC Supervisors, or rovers must always remain with the ballots from each Vote Center and monitor that the ballots are securely transferred to the new Vote Centers.
- The election official's office will assign staff to deliver any new seals or other supplies required.

#### **Vote Centers**

Prior to each election, our office will identify alternate Vote Centers or existing Vote Centers that can handle more voters if needed. These alternate sites will be used for voters who may need to be redirected from an evacuated Vote Center. Our preparations include:

- Maintaining a listing of any available Vote Centers within the jurisdiction, along with a contact person and their telephone number.
- Noting the jurisdiction where each Vote Center is located to ensure the proper authorities are contacted in the event of an emergency (e.g., city police for a Vote Center within the city).
- Evaluating the need for extra parking and traffic control.
- Placing notices at the old location to inform voters of the new location if it is necessary to relocate Vote Centers at the last minute.
- Notifying the media of any Vote Center changes; posting this information on the elections official's website and social media, and contacting the Secretary of State's office.
- Having emergency Vote Center signs available if it is necessary to relocate Vote Centers at the last minute

The Yolo County Elections Office identifies backup Vote Centers per city in preparation for an emergency:

- Davis
- West Sacramento
- Winters
- Woodland

Locations for a specific election are found in Attachment C: November 8, 2022 General Election on page 23.

In the case of an emergency on Election Day, an assessment and determination will be made if a nearby alternative site is available to utilize our mobile vote center, in order to limit transportation hardships to voters. If no nearby location is determined to be safe and viable then voters will be directed to the next closest Vote Center in the area.

## Emergencies Affecting Collection Routes or Staff in the Field

Yolo County Elections Office staff shall:

- Contact the Yolo County Sheriff's Office if the collection route is impacted by Vote Center relocations. If necessary, request escorts; however, at no time will voting material be in the sole possession of non-elections office personnel. Yolo County Sheriff's Office employees are not elections office personnel.
- Inform rovers in the field of the status of the site and the identity of any newly authorized staff to assist in ballot collection. The chain of custody and the chain of command must be maintained during emergencies.

## Telephone System Down

- If phone systems are down at the Yolo County Elections Office, Yolo County Elections Office staff will call via cell phone to (530) 406-5090 to open a ticket with the Telecommunications Division of the Innovation and Technology Services Department.
- Elections Office phones are Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP), and will be unavailable for
  outgoing calls during a power or internet/network outage; however, incoming calls will connect
  through and staff will be able to serve the public. When voters call in with specific registration
  or Vote-by-Mail questions requiring a network connection, staff will write down all the
  necessary information from the voter and return the call when systems become available.

## Power or Technology Failures

It is difficult to predict a power failure or problems with technology. Planning for these types of failures ahead of time, building relationships with organizations, and having a hard copy of the procedures is critical to a quick response and recovery.

• Yolo County works with our local power company and the Secretary of State's office to determine if there are any planned Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events scheduled during any of the critical election periods.

- The local power company receives a list of Vote Center locations to monitor during the voting period for PSPS or other power failure events.
- In case of a power failure, all election materials must be secured as quickly as possible to prevent damage, loss, or theft.
- Emergency lighting (flashlights, battery-operated lights) is available.
- A generator will be present at the main office of the elections official and all other Vote Centers
  to ensure power will be available. The elections office is aware of the process to set up the
  generator and has performed tests to ensure that it is in proper working order prior to the
  election.
- Voting system backup batteries are tested before each election.
- Coordinate with the Yolo County Chief of Technology on a regular basis to ensure that data is backed up and that it will be available if there is a power failure at the main office of the elections official.
- Activate the use of the Memorandum of Understanding with neighboring Solano County.
   Solano uses with the same voting equipment, and in case backup equipment and/or out-of-county location is needed, an MOU is already in place.

#### Personnel or Election Worker Shortage

Personnel or election worker shortages can impact the normal course of business in the office or at the Vote Centers on Early Voting Days or Election Day. The following are plans for how the elections office will overcome potential issues surrounding staffing shortages:

- Monitor and be aware of seasonal absenteeism. Determine absenteeism thresholds that may negatively impact or obstruct normal operations.
- Develop a worker replacement and contingency plan to respond if absenteeism approaches/reaches those thresholds.
- Establish a list of backup office staff. Ensure that elections staff understands election worker replacement procedures.
- As part of election worker recruitment, assign a certain percentage of election workers to a
   "stand by" status. Require that these election workers report by phone to the main elections
   office instead of an assigned Vote Center location on the morning of the election. These
   workers can be deployed to any Vote Center in the county in the event of any absences.
- Each Vote Center is assigned two VC Supervisors and six to eight judges. The built-in redundancy is part of standard operations; however, it is an asset if the elections office needs to replace a missing inspector without disruption.

- As part of Vote Center procedures, if there are not enough election workers to safely and legally operate a Vote Center, election workers are instructed to recruit a voter until the Yolo County Elections Office sends a standby election worker to the Vote Center.
- In the event of a pandemic, Yolo County reserves the right to designate county employees outside of the elections office as Disaster Service Workers (DSW) to perform the essential functions of election workers so long as it is guided by state and/or county proclamations.

#### **Post-Election Canvass Period**

In the event of a natural disaster or another emergency during the canvass period, the office of the election official will be secured immediately.

All voted ballots will be retrieved and secured as quickly and as safely as possible. If time allows, the ballots will be taken to a secure backup location.

All computers, heavy machinery, and vote processing equipment will be secured.

If feasible, any affidavits of registration, conditional ballots and/or provisional ballots that have not been processed and/or scanned will also be retrieved.

The elections office will contact the Secretary of State and election vendors immediately.

Vote-by-Mail ballots will be secured by management. The management team will perform the following:

- All ballots are secured in an organized fashion with all containers well-labeled and inventoried.
- Ballot area(s) are checked for confidential ballots, UOCAVA faxed ballots, provisional ballots, and any other returned ballots that have not been processed.
- A complete inventory of all voted ballots is taken.

#### **Conducting an Election with Manual Systems**

In the case of any catastrophic event, Yolo County Elections Office will be able to conduct an accurate and transparent election manually. Voters would cast a paper ballot using the Conditional/Provisional processes. Verification of voter eligibility, counting votes, the post-election audit, and other activities would be done physically/by hand.

In the case of a hand-count of ballots, the Elections Office would work with the facility managers at the County Administration Building to set up a suitably large workspace, such as securing the Atrium. Alternatively, the Elections Office would work with partners to address the space requirements that come with manual processing.

All activities would be open to the public to observe while maintaining the security and integrity of election materials. Yolo County Elections Office would notify the public of the time and location of each activity using various emergency communication methods.

## **Emergency Communications Plan**

In any emergency or disruption of voting, the Assessor/Clerk-Recorder/Elections (ACE) Administration team and the Yolo County Elections Office will provide timely, accurate, and useful information to the public. Transparency and integrity are our guiding principles.

The ACE Public Information Officer (PIO) provides a contact list for mission-critical staff and makes it available to staff, Vote Center supervisors/inspectors, and any other necessary parties. The contact list will include the ACE DH, IT support, law enforcement, utility companies, transportation officials, facilities representatives (including backup facilities), and any other key officials who can be contacted during an emergency.

The PIO is the designated elections staff member to be the central media contact person and all employees should refer all questions from the media to this elections staff member. This staff member maintains a contact list for all local media. Press releases regarding changes in election times, Vote Centers, expected release of election results, etc. are to be developed and disseminated expeditiously.

The ACE PIO or ACE DH can put out a public service message:

- Social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube)
- Website (yolocounty.org AND yoloelections.org)
- Radio
- Local print media
- Local TV stations
- Electronic bulletin boards at high schools or other businesses
- Office of Emergency Services
- Neighboring jurisdictions

#### **Alternate Communications**

An alternate communications system will be used if internet, Voice Over IP (VOIP) phones, and/or mobile phones are unavailable. An example of a system in place is the Elections Office facsimile transmission machine (fax): the fax machine accepts incoming faxes without an internet connection.

The elections office has contacted our local landline telephone provider as well as the county's mobile telephone service provider(s) to determine whether these alternatives are available in the event of a disruption of service.

## **Protection and Recovery of Records**

The items below are considered vital and essential records and should be taken from the building, if possible, depending on the nature and scope of the emergency.

- Counted and uncounted ballots
- All voting system components
- Other electronic data storage
- Cash and checks in the front counter cash drawer
- Oaths, including oaths of elected officials

#### **Counted and Uncounted Ballots**

Generally, voted Vote-by-Mail ballots are sorted into their respective precincts.

- Not counted VBM: Not sorted, not signature-verified; stored in a secured room
- Not counted VBM: Still in an envelope, sorted into precincts, signature verified; stored in a secured room
- Ballots yet-to-be scanned: Out of envelope but in sealed bags with batch number; stored in a secured room
- Scanned ballots: Stored in clear plastic bags, in boxes, sorted by scanned batch; boxes placed in a locked and sealed cage
- Ballots yet to be duplicated: Out of envelope but in sealed bags with precinct number; stored in a secured room
- VBM ballots that have been challenged can be temporarily in the secured room or remain stored in the DoE's locked office.
- Undeliverable VBM ballots can also be temporarily stored in the DoE's locked office

If an emergency occurs that requires staff to remove voted ballots from the building, staff shall seal the bags/boxes and move them to the new location.

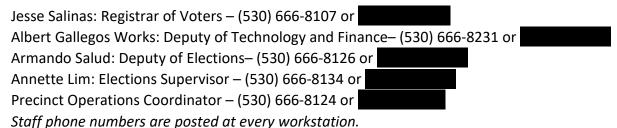
If they cannot be moved from the building, ballots will be placed in one of the secured cages.

Blank or unused ballots should be left behind if there is no time to remove them. If there is time, the ACE DH or designee will advise staff on what to do with blank or unused ballots.

## Attachment A: November 8, 2022 General Election Contact Information

#### **Yolo Elections Contact Numbers and Voting System Vendors**





#### **LOCAL MEDIA CONTACT**

Vacant: Yolo County Public Information Officer – (530) 666-8042 or Katharine Campos: ACE Public Information Officer – (530) 666-8132 or

#### IMPORTANT COUNTY PHONE NUMBERS

Kristin Weivoda: Office of Emergency Services –
Gerardo Pineda: County Administrator –

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)**

Lee Gerney: Chief Technology Officer –

Tom Bates: Telecommunications Manager –

#### **CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE**

Chief of Elections –

: Voter Services Manager –

: VoteCal Manager –

Election Services Manager and Election Night Reporting –

#### **DFM/EIMS (Election Management System)**

DFM Support Manager –

#### Hart InterCivic

: Project Manager –

#### **ProVote Solutions**

: Client Services Manager – : Client Services Manager –

#### DemocracyLive

COO and Corporate Counsel –

#### **Tenex Software Solutions, Inc.**

## **Attachment B: November 8, 2022 General Election**

Yolo County Elections Office Internal Staff Roles

Name	Role	Assigned Location
Jesse Salinas	Registrar of Voters	County Admin Bldg.
Katharine Campos	ACE Public Information Officer	County Admin Bldg.
María Coronel	ACE Outreach Specialist	County Admin Bldg
Armando Salud	Deputy of Elections	County Admin Bldg.
Albert Gallegos	Deputy of Technology and Finance	County Admin Bldg.
Annette Lim	Elections Supervisor and	County Admin Bldg.
	Candidate Filing	
Angelica Urbina	Voter Registration Lead	County Admin Bldg.
Abida Shafi	Vote-by-Mail Lead	County Admin Bldg.
Melinda Dubroff	Administrative Services Analyst	County Admin Bldg.
All Staff	Receiving Location Lead	County Admin Bldg.

## **Attachment C: November 8, 2022 General Election**

### **Backup Vote Centers**

Backup location to be used depends on the site of the Vote Center to be closed or evacuated and the nature of the emergency.

#### Vote Centers Open for 11 Days

Saturday, October 29, 2022 to Monday, November 7, 2022 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. & Election Day, Tuesday, November 8, 2022 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Davis Veterans Memorial Center - Multipurpose Room, 203 E 14th Street, Davis

West Sacramento City Hall - Galleria Rooms 157 & 160, 1110 W Capitol Avenue, West Sacramento

Yolo County Administration Building - Room 106, 625 Court Street, Woodland

#### Vote Centers Open for 4 days

Saturday, November 5, 2022 to Monday, November 7, 2022 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 pm. & Election Day, Tuesday, November 8, 2022 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

#### **Davis**

UC Davis ARC - Ballroom A & B, 760 Orchard Road, Davis

Montgomery Elementary School - Multipurpose Room, 1441 Danbury Street, Davis

Emerson Junior High School - Multipurpose Room, 2121 Calaveras Avenue, Davis

Esparto

Esparto Community Hall, 17020 Yolo Avenue, Esparto

#### **West Sacramento**

Bridgeway Lakes Boathouse, 3650 Southport Parkway, West Sacramento
Bryte CCT - Bryte Cafe - Multipurpose Room, 637 Todhunter Avenue, West Sacramento

#### Winters

Public Safety Facility - EOC Training Room, 702 W Main Street, Winters

#### Woodland

Woodland High School - Gymnasium, 21 N West Street, Woodland Pioneer High School - Cafeteria, 1400 Pioneer Avenue, Woodland Woodland Community & Senior Center - Ballroom 3, 2001 East Street, Woodland

## **Attachment D: Authority to Modify Procedures**

The California Secretary of State provided the citations below reflecting the flexibility available to elections officials and voters in case an emergency arises shortly before or on Election Day.

## **County Elections Officials**

- Any vote-by-mail voter may vote in person at the county elections office on or before the close
  of the polls on Election Day. (Elections Code section 3018(a).
- Elections officials may set up satellite voting locations with 14 days' notice or, in the case of a declared emergency or disaster in a county, 48 hours' notice. A waiver of this law would be required if a satellite voting location has to be established less than 48 hours before the start of Election Day voting. (Elections Code section 3018(b).)
- Elections officials may designate a replacement polling location as late as on Election Day. The
  new polling location must be as close as possible to the original polling location, and a notice
  must be posted at the original polling location directing voters to the new location. If there is
  sufficient time, the elections official must also mail a notice to affected voters. (Elections Code
  section 12281.) Please note that this provision does not apply to elections conducted using vote
  centers.
- Existing laws require the county elections official to begin processing voted ballots and deliver
  those ballots to receiving centers as soon as possible after the polls close. Should an event
  cause a delay in the processing and return of voted ballots, Elections Code section 15213 allows
  the elections official to direct that the ballots be counted at the precinct. If the ballots are to be
  counted at the precinct, the procedures are set forth in Elections Code sections 15270 through
  15281.

## At the Polling Location

- If one or more poll workers do not show up for work at the opening of the polls on Election Day, voters who are present at the polling location, and any members of the precinct board who are present, may appoint a voter to fill any vacancy. (Elections Code section 12313.) Please note that this provision does not apply to elections conducted using vote centers.
- A precinct inspector may appoint a voter to replace any poll worker who cannot perform their duties on Election Day. (Elections Code section 12314.)
- A majority of the remaining poll workers may appoint a substitute if a precinct inspector cannot perform their duties on Election Day. (Elections Code section 12315.)

## **State Officials**

While elections officials are given some latitude under the Elections Code to modify their procedures in the event of an emergency, other actions require action by the Governor and/or the State Legislature.

Under Government Code section 8571, the Governor has the authority to declare a state of emergency and issue an executive order waiving or suspending certain laws.

Government Code section 8567 authorizes the Governor during a declared state of emergency to make, amend, and rescind orders and regulations that have the force of law necessary to carry out a State Emergency Plan.

The following are some election scenarios during an emergency or disaster, and the laws the Governor may wish to waive or suspend.

#### Extend Voting Times and Accept Ballots After the Deadline

If a polling location must be moved using existing law, voting hours may need to be extended, which would require either a gubernatorial executive order or a court order.

If voting hours are extended by a court order, Elections Code section 14402.5 requires that all votes after 8:00 p.m. be cast on provisional ballots.

If there is a statewide court order, the Governor may waive the provisional ballot requirement for votes cast after 8:00 p.m.

If the Governor wants to extend voting hours or accept vote-by-mail ballots beyond 8:00 p.m. on Election Day without a court order, the following laws may need to be waived or suspended:

- Elections Code section 14212 requires polls to be open from 7:00 a.m.to 8:00 p.m. on the day of any election.
- Elections Code section 14213 requires the precinct board to proclaim aloud that the polls are open before receiving any ballots.
- Elections Code section 14401 requires the precinct board to proclaim aloud that the polls are closing before closing them. Anyone in line waiting to vote at the time of proclamation must be allowed to vote.
- Elections Code section 14402.5 requires that, if voting hours are extended by a court order, all votes after 8:00 p.m. be cast on provisional ballots.
- Elections Code sections 3017(a) and (d) and 3020 require all personally delivered vote-by-mail ballots to be received before the close of the polls on Election Day.

## Permit Out-of-County Voting

If the Governor wants to allow all voters to cast ballots outside of the county where they are registered to vote, the following laws may need to be waived or suspended.

- Elections Code sections 3017(a) and 3018 require a voted vote-by-mail ballot to be returned to any polling location within the state, at the office of the voter's county elections official, any vote-by-mail dropoff location within the state, any vote-by-mail drop box within the state, or satellite location within the county where the voter is registered to vote.
- Elections Code section 3020 requires county elections officials to receive personally delivered vote-by-mail ballots by the time the polls close on Election Day. However, any vote-by-mail ballot cast shall be deemed timely if it is received by the elections official via the United States Postal Service or a bona fide private mail delivery company no later than seven days after Election Day and either of the following is satisfied:
  - 1) the ballot is postmarked on or before election day or is time stamped or date stamped by a bona fide private mail delivery company on or before Election Day; or,
  - 2) if the ballot has no postmark, a postmark with no date, or an illegible postmark, the vote-by-mail ballot identification envelope is date stamped by the elections official upon receipt of the vote-by-mail ballot from the United States Postal Service or a bona fide private mail delivery company and is signed and dated pursuant to Section 3011 on or before Election Day.
- Elections Code section 14279 allows a voter to apply for and receive a ballot only in that voter's precinct. Elections Code section 14311 provides an exception to this law to allow a voter to apply for a provisional ballot outside the home precinct, but within the home county.
- Elections Code section 14310 sets the rules for provisional voting and handling of those ballots.

## **Voting Procedures for Emergency Workers**

## Out of State

In the event of an out-of-state emergency near Election Day, the Governor has the authority under Elections Code section 3021.5 to allow California emergency workers the opportunity to vote.

An out-of-state emergency worker is defined by Elections Code section 336.7 as a voter who is officially engaged in responding to the proclamation of an out-of-state emergency and whose vocation has been identified in an executive order relating to the state of emergency.

Upon the declaration of an out-of-state emergency by the Governor and the issuance of an executive order authorizing an out-of-state emergency worker to cast a ballot outside of their home precinct, a county elections official shall, upon request of an out-of-state emergency worker, issue a vote-by-mail ballot to the out-of-state emergency worker using a process to be determined by that elections official. The process shall include all of the following:

- Authorization for an out-of-state emergency worker to request a vote-by-mail ballot after the close of the vote-by-mail ballot application period specified in Elections Code section 3001.
- Authorization for a vote-by-mail ballot and accompanying voting materials to be sent to an outof-state emergency worker by mail, facsimile transmission, or electronic transmission, as
  requested by the out-of-state emergency worker. An elections official may use reasonable
  facsimiles of the county voter information guides ballots sent to voters as vote-by-mail ballots.
- A requirement that an out-of-state emergency worker marks the vote-by-mail ballot provided to them, place it in the vote-by-mail ballot identification envelope, and return the vote-by-mail

ballot to the elections official from whom it was obtained. If no identification envelope is provided, the envelope used to return the vote-by-mail ballot to the elections official shall include the information required by subdivision (a) of Elections Code section 3011 and a statement signed under penalty of perjury that the voter is an out-of-state emergency worker.

• In order to be counted, a vote-by-mail ballot cast pursuant to this section shall be received in compliance with Elections Code section 3020.

#### In-State, But Out-of-Precinct

An in-state emergency worker is a person who is officially engaged in responding to the proclaimed state of emergency and whose vocation has been identified in an executive order relating to the state of emergency.

In the event of an in-state emergency near Election Day, the Governor has the authority under Elections Code section 14313 to allow California emergency workers the opportunity to vote.

Upon the declaration of a state of emergency by the Governor and the issuance of an executive order authorizing an emergency worker to cast a ballot outside of their home precinct, elections officials in the counties included in the executive order shall, upon demand, issue to an emergency worker a provisional ballot that may be identical to the provisional ballot offered to other voters in the county, using a process to be determined by the elections official. The elections official shall transmit for processing any ballot cast, including any materials necessary to process the ballot to the elections official in the county where the voter is registered to vote. To be counted, a ballot cast pursuant to this section shall satisfy both of the following requirements:

- Be cast by the voter no later than the close of the polls on Election Day.
- Be received by the county elections official where the voter is registered on or before the 10th day following the date of the election.

Upon receipt of the returned ballot, the elections official shall process the ballot pursuant to the procedures in subdivision (c) of Elections Code section 14310.

## Require the Election to Be Conducted Entirely by Mail

If the Governor wants to eliminate polling locations altogether and conduct the entire election by mail, the following laws will need to be amended by the Legislature:

- Elections Code section 4000 provides conditions for conducting an all vote-by-mail ballot local, special, or consolidated election. This section does not apply to statewide elections, so legislative action would be required.
- Elections Code sections 4100 through 4108 provide the procedures for conducting an all-voteby-mail election. These sections can be used as a model to establish a statewide all-vote-bymail election.
- Elections Code section 1500 sets election dates for all-mail-ballot elections.

#### Cancel and Reschedule the Election

In the case of emergency or disaster, Government Code section 8571 gives the Governor the power to cancel and reschedule an election. To reschedule an election, the Governor would need to waive Elections Code section 12000 and establish a new election date.

Elections Code section 15101 generally permits elections officials to begin processing vote-by-mail ballots twenty-nine business days before Election Day. If the election might be canceled, it is advisable that this law be waived at least ten business days before Election Day to ensure vote-by-mail ballots that have already been cast are not prematurely counted and the results of that count reported.

#### Close the Polls and Transport Ballots

The following Elections Code sections set procedures that must begin upon the closure of the polls. County elections officials have procedures for returning ballots and polling location supplies in the event of an emergency or disaster. If these procedures cannot be followed at the time polls close, the following laws may need to be waived or suspended:

- Elections Code section 14422 allows an elections official to direct a precinct board to seal the ballot container prior to the closing of the polls so voted ballots may be retrieved early for delivery to a receiving center or central counting place.
- Elections Code section 14420 requires precinct workers to begin processing ballots as soon as the polls close, or upon receipt of ballots retrieved before the closing of the polls pursuant to Elections Code section 14422.
- Elections Code section 14433 requires that, if ballots are counted at the precinct, the precinct board must immediately transmit to the county elections office an unsealed statement that shows the voting results for that polling location.
- Elections Code section 14421 requires precinct workers to deliver ballots and other materials as soon as possible to county elections offices.
- Elections Code section 14430 requires precinct workers to prepare all supplies for delivery to county elections offices as soon as possible after the polls are closed.
- Elections Code section 14431 requires all voted, spoiled, canceled, or unused ballots to be sealed in one or more packages.
- Elections Code section 14432 requires tally sheets, rosters of voters, the copy of the voter list
  used as the voting record, the challenge list, and the assisted voters list to be sealed in one or
  two packages.
- Elections Code section 14434 requires the items noted in Elections Code section 14432 to be delivered unopened without delay to the county elections office.

## **Voting Records Destroyed**

In case of a disaster in which a portion or all of the voting records of any county are destroyed, the Governor may appoint an election commission to outline and recommend procedures to be followed in the conduct of regular or special elections. The commission shall consist of the Governor, the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, and the county elections official of each county in which destruction occurs. (Elections Code § 14)

#### Change the Canvass Procedures

Elections Code section 15150 requires county elections officials to begin the semifinal official canvass as soon as the polls close. In the event of an emergency or disaster during the ten business days before the election or on Election Day, Elections Code section 15101 may also need to be waived.

If the official canvass and transmission of results have begun pursuant to Elections Code sections 15150 and 15151, then the following laws may need to be waived or suspended:

- Chapter 3 (Semifinal Official Canvass) Elections Code sections 15150-15290
- Chapter 4 (Official Canvass) Elections Code sections 15300-15376
- Chapter 5 (Announcement of Results) Elections Code sections 15400-15402
- Chapter 6 (Determination of Elected or Nominated Candidates) Elections Code sections 15450-15490
- Chapter 7 (Duties of the Secretary of State) Elections Code sections 15500-15505