



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS RELEASE

DB14:092

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 5, 2014

Contact: Nicole Winger
(916) 653-6575

California Election Turnout and Final Results? Elections Officials Completing Official Canvass

SACRAMENTO – Just as they do after every statewide election, California county elections officials are now counting the hundreds of thousands of vote-by-mail, provisional and other ballots that are not counted on election day.

While the Secretary cannot announce the winner of a contest before all ballots are counted, news media or campaigns sometimes choose to call an election sooner. County elections officials have until December 2 to ensure every eligible ballot is counted accurately and certify final election results to the Secretary of State. Then the Secretary of State has until December 12 to review the materials, resolve any reporting discrepancies and compile the 58 county reports for complete election results.

In processing vote-by-mail ballots, elections officials must confirm each voter's registration status, verify each voter's signature on the vote-by-mail envelope, and ensure each person did not vote elsewhere in the same election. Other ballots that are processed after election day include provisional ballots (processed similar to vote-by-mail ballots), and ballots that are damaged or cannot be machine-read and must be remade by elections officials.

“Now that voting by mail is the most popular way to vote in California, county elections officials generally need the full month to verify voter records and tally all valid ballots,” said Secretary of State Debra Bowen, California's chief elections official. “Every valid ballot returned to county elections officials by 8:00 p.m. on election day is counted in every election, regardless of the margin in any particular contest.”

As with past statewide elections, Secretary Bowen has asked county elections officials to report the approximate number of unprocessed ballots they have on hand so she can provide a statewide estimate to the public. The estimated numbers of ballots left to count – as voluntarily reported by county elections officials – will be posted on November 6 at vote.sos.ca.gov/unprocessed-ballots-status. The Secretary of State website will be updated each time a county elections official provides a revised estimate.

– MORE –

Among the many laws and procedures that county elections officials must follow during this official canvass period:

- Remake ballots that machines cannot tabulate because of wrinkles, smudges or other damage.
- Hand-count votes for qualified write-in candidates.
- Ensure the signature on each vote-by-mail ballot envelope matches the signature on the voter's original voter registration application.
- Research all voters who cast provisional ballots to ensure each person was registered to vote and did not vote more than once.
- Sort all vote-by-mail ballots by precinct so they can be manually audited.
- Manually audit 100 percent of the ballots from one percent of the precincts in the county to ensure the results are accurate.
- Manually audit 100 percent of the voter verified paper audit trail to ensure votes cast on direct recording electronic machines were tabulated accurately.
- Audit all materials returned from polling places to ensure all ballots – voted, un-voted, spoiled, provisional, vote-by-mail, surrendered vote-by-mail – are accounted for.
- Audit all voting equipment to ensure it was properly secured and was not tampered with.

The Secretary of State will continue to update the election results website at vote.sos.ca.gov as county elections officials continue reporting results. County officials sometimes update their own websites before reporting to the Secretary of State. County contact information is at www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_d.htm.

For more details about the election reporting process, visit vote.sos.ca.gov/frequently-asked-questions.

Keep up with the latest California election news and trivia by following [@CASOSvote](https://twitter.com/CASOSvote) on Twitter.

###