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Secretary Padilla Urges Californians to Consider Voting Early

SACRAMENTO, CA – With record 20.6 million Californians registered to vote, the expansion of Same Day Voter Registration opportunities, and excitement around the Presidential Primary Election, polling place wait times are expected to be longer than normal on March 3.

“California is at record voter registration, and voters across the state are fired up for Super Tuesday,” Secretary of State Alex Padilla said. “I am expecting record turnout for California’s Presidential Primary Election. Wait times at the polls on Election Day will likely be longer than normal. I urge Californians to consider voting early. If you still have your vote-by-mail ballot, you can drop it off at any early voting location. You can find a list of early voting and ballot drop-off locations in your county at CAEarlyVoting.sos.ca.gov. You can avoid the lines on Election Day by voting this weekend.”

Vote-by-Mail Ballots

Voters who still have their vote-by-mail ballots have a variety of options for returning their ballots. Voters can return their completed vote-by-mail envelopes at their county elections office, vote center, polling place, or ballot dropbox. Vote-by-mail ballots come with prepaid postage return envelopes, and will be counted as long as they are postmarked on or before Election Day and received through the mail no later than March 6.

No Party Preference Voters – Voting for President

No Party Preference voters do not have to wait until Election Day to request a “crossover” ballot with Democratic, Libertarian, or American Independent Party presidential candidates. Crossover ballots are available at county elections offices, vote centers, and other early voting locations.

No Party Preference voters who want to vote for Republican, Green, or Peace and Freedom presidential candidates, must re-register with the party. This can also be done at early voting locations.

All Vote Centers Opening in 15 Voter’s Choice Act Counties

On Saturday, February 29 all Vote Centers will open in the 15 counties implementing the Voter’s Choice Act: Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles, Madera, Mariposa, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Sacramento, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Tuolumne counties. These counties are home to over half of the state’s registered voters.



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Voters in Voters Choice Act Counties can visit any vote center in their county to:

- Vote in-person
- Drop off their ballot
- Get a replacement ballot
- Vote using an accessible voting machine
- Get help and voting material in multiple languages
- Register to vote or update their voter registration

Expansion of Same Day Voter Registration

2020 marks the first statewide election cycle that Same Day Voter Registration will be available at every county elections office, polling place, or vote center. Voters will be asked to fill out a voter registration form and then be provided a ballot. Their ballots will be counted once the county elections office has completed the voter registration verification process.

This may increase wait times as voters checking into the polls need to complete registration forms.

* With the signing of SB 207 by Governor Newsom on February 13, 2020, voters who wish to update their political party preference or their address (if they are moving within the same county) do not have to complete an entire voter registration affidavit during the Same Day Voter Registration process. Voters making these changes will be able to make a written request using a simplified form. Californians can also find early voting locations at CAEarlyVoting.sos.ca.gov.

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