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Governor Newsom Issues Executive Order to Send Every Registered Voter a Vote-by-Mail Ballot for the November 3, 2020 General Election

SACRAMENTO, CA – Governor Gavin Newsom has signed Executive Order N-64-20, a directive on how California will administer the November 3, 2020 General Election during the COVID-19 pandemic. Per the executive order, every registered voter will receive a vote-by-mail ballot.

“California will not force voters to choose between protecting their health and exercising their right to vote,” Secretary of State Alex Padilla said. “I thank Governor Newsom for taking decisive action now, to preserve voting rights and provide sufficient time to properly prepare for the General Election. Today, California becomes the first state in the nation to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by mailing every registered voter a ballot. We are meeting our obligation to provide an accessible, secure, and safe election this November. Sending every registered voter a ballot by mail is smart policy and absolutely the right thing to do during this COVID-19 pandemic.”

“While we will do everything we can to provide as many options as possible to voters, we must recognize that we do not know how exactly the pandemic will affect our lives this fall. Administering this election will be an enormous task. We will also need to recruit thousands of new poll workers throughout the state and identify new, safer, voting locations. Elections officials cannot do this alone. We will need the help of citizens, government, community groups, and the private sector.”

“Voters can do their part by making sure their voter registration information is up to date. It is especially critical that elections officials have your current registration, mailing, and e-mail address on file. Voters can verify their registration at voterstatus.sos.ca.gov and make any updates at registertovote.ca.gov.”

[Read the full text of Executive Order N-64-20.](#)

Vote-by-Mail Ballots to be Sent to Every Registered Voter

Per the Executive Order, every registered voter living domestically will be mailed a ballot 29 days prior to Election Day. Military and Overseas voters will be mailed their ballots 45 days before Election Day.

California is well positioned to expand voting-by-mail. More than 75% of California voters received a vote-by-mail ballot for the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary.

In California, every vote-by-mail ballot already comes with a prepaid postage return envelope.

In-Person Voting

“While expanding vote-by-mail is critical, we remain committed to providing as many in-person voting opportunities, on and before Election Day, in a manner that is safe for both voters and election workers,” Padilla added. “In-person opportunities are important for voters who may need assistance or need access to Same Day Voter Registration.”

As noted in Governor Newsom’s executive order “the Secretary of State has been working with California elections officials, voting rights advocates, and other stakeholders to explore how best to implement procedures for the November election that will make in-person voting opportunities available, give county elections officials needed flexibility, and preserve public health.”

A deadline of May 30, 2020 to provide clarity on in-person voting requirements has been set, which may require a subsequent executive order.

