



**ALEX PADILLA**  
California Secretary of State

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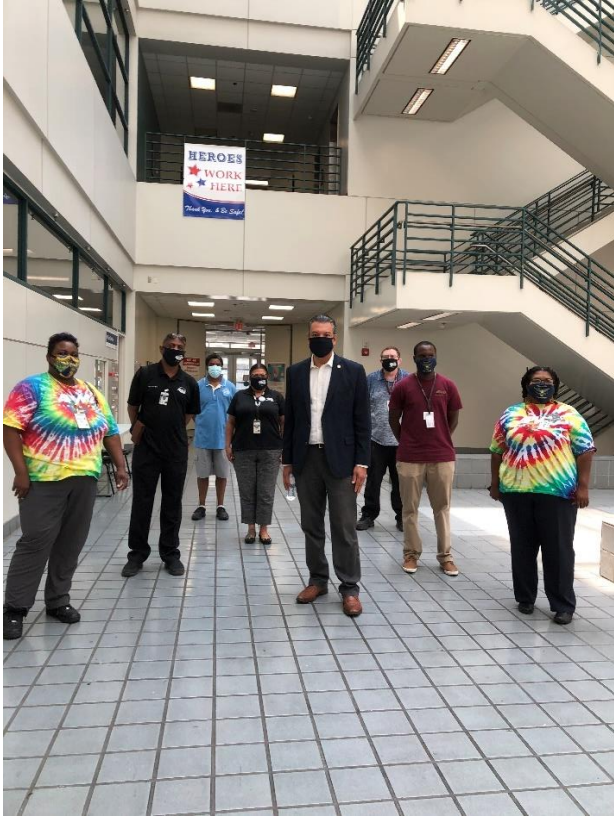
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## **California Secretary of State Alex Padilla Tours USPS Plant in Los Angeles**

**LOS ANGELES, CA** – California Secretary of State Alex Padilla toured the United States Postal Service (USPS) main processing facility in Los Angeles today — the largest USPS processing facility in the nation — to learn more about recent operational changes and their impact on postal service. With California elections officials preparing to mail a ballot to every active registered voter for the General Election, the USPS will play a critical role in ensuring voters are able to cast their ballots safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

From [August 18, 2020 – CA Secretary of State Alex Padilla Statement on USPS Suspension of Operational Changes](#)

“Postal workers, mail handlers, and letter carriers are essential workers and they deserve our full support. Postal workers keep our economy and our democracy going and we are asking even more of them during the COVID-19 pandemic,” Secretary of State Alex Padilla said. “The postal service is a constitutional promise and postal workers deserve the equipment and resources to do their job.”



**Among the observations made were:**

While important physical distancing and other health and safety measures have been implemented, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the workforce, forcing many employees to miss time. Secretary Padilla was told this USPS facility is trying to quickly hire and train hundreds of new employees in an effort to meet mail processing needs.

He was also told there has been a significant decrease in letter volume and a significant increase in parcel volume since the beginning of the pandemic. While some of the adjustments made to accommodate the increase in parcel processing and delivery might make sense short term, the volume of letter mail will significantly increase in late September and October with the delivery of ballots (both to voters and from voters back to their county elections office), State and County Voter Information Guides, and political mail from candidates and campaigns.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, this processing facility routinely handled approximately 5 million letters. During COVID, the figure is closer to 3 million. While not every voter in Los Angeles County receives their mail from this facility, it does serve more than half of Los Angeles County households. The addition of millions of ballots and elections materials in the course of just a couple of days represents a significant increase in volume for a short window of time. Postal workers and mail handlers were confident they could handle increased election mail, but they urged voters to return their ballots early to lessen mail volume spikes around Election Day.

“While I appreciate the information that was shared today, this will certainly not be the last visit or conversation with USPS officials. The stakes for our democracy are too high. I still believe that California can meet the needs of our voters this fall, but we must maintain a close watch on the Postal Service. Any operational changes must be communicated clearly to employees and transparently to the public.”

“Reductions of postal service during a national public health crisis and an election year are unconscionable. It’s hard to see the changes at the Postal Service as anything other than an attack on a key pillar of American society. President Trump and the Postmaster General must be held to account, and the public is owed the truth,” Padilla added.

**California has taken steps to protect voting rights in 2020:**

1. Every active, registered voter in California will be mailed a ballot 29 days before Election Day. This prevents voters from having to lose time requesting a vote-by-mail ballot, having that request processed, and the ballot subsequently mailed. Instead ballots will be in the hands of California voters weeks ahead of Election Day.
2. The deadline for vote-by-mail ballots to arrive to county elections officials has been extended. Vote-by-mail ballots can now arrive to county elections offices up to 17 days after Election Day and be counted, as long as they were postmarked on or before Election Day.

3. Californians have options for returning their vote-by-mail ballots. Every ballot comes with a first class prepaid postage return envelope. Vote-by-mail ballots can also be returned to any voting location, drop box, or county elections office.
4. The Secretary of State's "Where's My Ballot?" tracking tool is being expanded statewide. Voters who sign-up at [wheresmyballot.sos.ca.gov](https://wheresmyballot.sos.ca.gov) can get automatic notifications on the status of their vote-by-mail ballots by text message, email, or voice call.

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