

January 2022

*EAP Amended Draft*

# Yolo County California Voter's Choice Act Election Administration Plan



**Jesse Salinas**

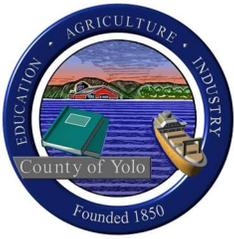
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REGISTRAR OF VOTERS



December 2021

Dear Voters,

I am pleased to present the first working draft of Yolo County's Election Administration Plan (EAP) for the administration of elections under the California Voter's Choice Act (VCA). This draft EAP serves as a starting point for stakeholder discussions about the County's transition to the VCA.

Yolo County Elections will incorporate community input and present a Final Draft of the EAP for public review. The public review will lead to an adoption of the Yolo County EAP after a public hearing.

The adopted EAP will provide the foundation and guiding outline for the future of voting and elections in Yolo County. The EAP describes the VCA, the vote-by-mail process, Voter Centers, Ballot Drop Box locations and the technology that will be used.

The section titled "Voter Education and Outreach Plan" (Outreach Plan) is critical to making the transition and future elections a success. Yolo County seeks broad community input and suggestions from the members of the County's Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) and Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC).

The Outreach Plan incorporates comments received during public community outreach meetings and from the VAAC and LAAC, as specified by the Act. All comments received during the public review period and those comments that were incorporated into the EAP may be found in the section titled "Public Comments." Some comments about the plan are already included.

Given the tremendous success of our pilot of a VCA like model in the last two elections, we are excited to fully transition to the VCA model. As Yolo County moves to the VCA model, my staff and I are committed to an inclusive process that protects the integrity of the vote and maintains a transparent, accurate and fair election process.

Please contact Yolo County Elections at (530) 666-8133 or [elections@yolocounty.org](mailto:elections@yolocounty.org) should you have any questions regarding the Voter's Choice Act, upcoming elections, or our Election Administration Plan.

Sincerely,

Jesse Salinas  
Yolo County Assessor/Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters

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## Section 1: Election Administration Plan

### Overview

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VI)

Yolo County was one of the original counties of California, created in 1850 at the time of statehood with an estimated population of 1,086. The Yolo County Elections Office (YCE) is one of three sister agencies directed by the Yolo County Assessor/Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters, who is elected every four years. Because elections are fundamental to our democracy, public confidence in the fairness and accuracy of elections is vital. We provide the same excellent service to every candidate, every voter, and every campaign.

In 2016, Senate Bill 450 created the Voter's Choice Act (VCA). In 2018, five counties converted to the VCA (Madera, Napa, Nevada, Sacramento, and San Mateo.) The VCA model provides that every voter receives a vote-by-mail (VBM) ballot, and vote centers replace traditional polling locations. Under the traditional polling place model in the March 2020 Presidential Primary Election, Yolo County had 96 polling places open for one day. Due to coronavirus pandemic-related regulations, Yolo County replaced those traditional polling locations with Voter Assistance Centers (VACs) for the November 2020 Presidential General Election and the September 2021 Gubernatorial Recall Election. Each VAC was open for four days.

Under the VCA, Yolo County will have a minimum of 13 Vote Centers (VCs) with three open for 11 days and ten open for four days, including weekends, holidays, and Election Day. An additional 14 secure Ballot Drop Boxes (BDBs) will be added under the VCA model that will be open for 30 days, including Election Day. Yolo County voters can choose to vote at any of the 13 VCs which will provide a higher level of service, including ballot on demand and voter registration.

A minimum of 28 locations (13 VCs, 14 BDBs, and the Yolo County Elections office) will be available for depositing vote-by-mail ballots. Voters may also mail their VBM ballots postage paid. This new way of holding elections has many benefits for voters, as was demonstrated in the elections conducted during the pandemic. The new election model will help the community by increasing voter participation, convenience, and accessibility to voters with disabilities.

The Yolo County Elections Office has established the VAAC (Voter Accessibility Advisory Committee) and the LAAC (Language Accessibility Advisory Committee) as of August 2021.

The Yolo County Elections Office must prepare a draft Election Administration Plan (EAP). The EAP provides information to the voters of Yolo County about the VCA. It describes the vote-by-mail (VBM) process, the Voter Center and Ballot Drop Box locations, and the technology to be used. It also outlines our voter outreach plan. The Yolo County Elections Office will also hold community outreach meetings.

YCE included an Acronym and Glossary with this EAP which you can find at Appendix L. The purpose of this glossary is to provide the reader of the Election Administration Plan with a better understanding of the elections process and to define some terms used within the document. For clarification and understanding of the nuanced requirements that are related to some of the terms, see the specifics in the Election Administration Plan.

**OUTREACH SUMMARY:** Yolo County will work with the two committees of community members (Language Accessibility Advisory Committee and Voter Accessibility Advisory Committee) and other community representatives as we transition to the Voters Choice Act. Voter education and outreach efforts will utilize various media including print, social media, radio, and television. Each voter will receive two mailings explaining that all voters will receive a vote-by-mail ballot and their options for voting and services available. All communications will be translated as required by the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965.

## **Vote-by-Mail Ballots**

Under the VCA, all registered voters are mailed a ballot beginning 29 days before the election, accompanied with a postage-paid return identification envelope. The packet mailed to the voter will also contain voter instructions and a list of Vote Center and Ballot Drop Box locations and hours of operation.

As of 2021, Yolo County is not mandated to provide official ballots in languages other than English.

As of 2021, Yolo County is required under Section 14201 of the California Elections Code (EC) to provide translated reference ballots, known as “facsimile” ballots, in four languages (Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Punjabi) but also provides facsimile ballots in Russian in support of our large Russian population within the county. A facsimile ballot can be sent to any voter upon request; however, these ballots are only for reference and are not official ballots. The facsimile ballots, related instructions, and bilingual assistance are available at voting locations.

The federal requirements are issued every five years. The state requirements are issued by January 1 of each year the governor is elected. A current list of all language requirements in Yolo County is in the Appendix.

Any voter in California may sign up for ballot tracking notifications on the Secretary of State’s “Where’s My Ballot?” website (<https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/>). Voters can receive updates on the status of their vote-by-mail ballot through automatic emails, SMS (text), or voice calls. Yolo County has extended these services by customizing the US Postal Service’s Intelligent Mail barcodes (IMb), allowing a voter to track their ballot as it progresses through checkpoints in the U.S. Postal Service mail system.

Voters may request a replacement ballot by telephone at (530) 666-8133, (916) 375-6490, or (800) 649-9943; by faxing a request to (530) 666-8123; by sending an email to [elections@yolocounty.org](mailto:elections@yolocounty.org); or by appearing at a Vote Center or at the Yolo County Elections office.

All vote-by-mail ballot return identification envelopes are checked for eligibility before being counted. The voter must sign the return identification envelope. The signature on the return envelope will be compared with the signatures on file in that voter’s registration record. If the signatures match, the ballot will be accepted. If there are issues with the signature, the ballot will be challenged. Voters have the opportunity to resolve the signature issue under EC §3019. Voters will be contacted via mail if their ballot is challenged. Voters will also be contacted by phone and/or email, if they included that information in their voter registration application.

## Returning Voted VBM Ballots

Voters will be able to deposit their signed return identification envelope into one of the many secure official ballots drop boxes available throughout the county. Two (2) Yolo County Ballot Retrieval Team members will collect the ballots from the BDBs on a mandated schedule.

Voters may also drop off a voted VBM ballot in their signed return identification envelope at a Vote Center, U.S. Post Office, or USPS mailbox. Alternatively, voters who receive residential mail service may have their delivery person pick up their ballot. No postage is necessary when returning the ballot through the USPS in the postage-paid return identification envelope.

See the Appendix for a list and a map of locations used in the November 3, 2020 General Election and the September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election and those of proposed Ballot Drop Box locations for the next election. (Ballot Drop Box locations are subject to change, based on the availability of the location host.)

The exact times of each drop-off location's operation will be posted on the Yolo County Elections webpage (<https://www.yoloelections.org>).

## Remote Accessible Vote by Mail

EC §§4005(a)(8)(C), 4005(a)(10)(B)(xii), 4005(a)(10)(E)(iii), 4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(II), and 4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(II)(IV) and 4005(a)(10)(I)(ii)

Under Assembly Bill 37 in 2021, all registered voters may now use Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail (RAVBM). This system was created under Assembly Bill 2252 in 2016 as a tool to allow voters with disabilities who prefer or need to vote from home to read and mark their ballot as privately and independently as possible. The link to the RAVBM system is on the Yolo County website starting 29 days prior to the election and available as a direct link if requested. Voters may request access to the RAVBM system by contacting YCE by phone, email, or fax. The voter will be sent the direct link to the RAVBM system via email.

Yolo County Elections uses Democracy Live's Secure Select System version 1.2.2 to host our RAVBM tools and display the Accessible County Voter Information Guide (ACVIG). The entire Secure Select System is WCAG 2.0 and Section 508 compliant for accessibility.

In order to use RAVBM, the voter must have the necessary equipment to do so, including an Internet-connected device, such as a home computer, and have private and independent access to a printer. It is important to note that the voter downloads, reads and marks the RAVBM ballot on the voter's own device, such as a computer or smartphone, with the ability to use the voter's own assistive technology device. County-issued ballot return identification envelopes will have two holes, which allow voters with visual impairments to use as a signature guide to sign in the proper place (or otherwise have a tactile way to locate the signature line on the envelope).

The RAVBM process is straightforward. First, voters provide basic personally identifying information (PII) to verify their eligibility. Then, they download the return instructions and voter information. Next, the voter marks their vote-by-mail ballot privately and independently. Finally, the voter prints and returns the ballot to the YCE Office for counting.

## **Vote Center and Ballot Drop Box Locations**

EC §4005(a)(10)(B)

The Voter's Choice Act (VCA) establishes detailed criteria and formulas for the placement and locations of "vote centers" and "ballot drop-off boxes." Vote center and/or ballot drop-off locations are subject to change, based on the availability of the location host. The locations will be decided based on specific considerations and requirements described below:

- Proximity to public transportation
- Proximity to communities with historically low vote-by-mail usage
- Proximity to population centers
- Proximity to language minority communities
- Proximity to voters with disabilities
- Proximity to communities with low rates of household vehicle ownership
- Proximity to low-income communities
- Proximity to communities of eligible voters who are not registered to vote and may need access to same day voter registration.
- Proximity to geographically isolated populations, including Native American reservations
- Access to accessible and free parking
- The distance and time a voter must travel by car or public transportation
- The need for alternate methods for voters with disabilities for whom vote by mail ballots are not accessible to cast a ballot.
- Traffic patterns
- The need for mobile vote centers in addition to the number of vote centers established pursuant to these considerations.
- Vote center location on a public or private university or college campus.

## **Vote Centers (VC)**

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(ii)

Vote Centers (VC) in Yolo County reflect the high level of service provided at the in-person voting locations. Vote Centers have more services available than offered at traditional polling places.

A Yolo County voter will be able to use any VC in the county, increasing flexibility and convenience for voters to access and receive services. At a VC, a voter will be able to:

- Get a replacement Vote-by-Mail (VBM) ballot,
- Get a VBM ballot return identification envelope,
- Drop off a voted VBM ballot,
- Receive language assistance,
- Mark a ballot privately and independently using an ADA accessible device,
- Register to vote,
- Update their voter registration,
- Vote a provisional or conditional voter registration ballot.

Voters who have not registered before the close of registration (15 days prior to Election Day) will be able to complete a Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) at any VC and cast a provisional ballot on the same day, through Election Day.

Vote Center staff will have real-time access to VoteCal, the statewide voter registration database, and the County's Election Management System (EMS). This encrypted connection will allow them to look up and update the status of each voter through an electronic poll book (ePollbook). YCE will provide and monitor the secure communication link.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, YCE executed a VCA-like model of conducting the election. Tenex ePollbooks at 12 VCs replaced paper voter rosters for the November 3, 2020 General Election. The VCA-like model demonstrated that the ePollbooks were easy for voters and staff to use for voter check-in. The ePollbooks provide a dashboard that allows voters to see wait times at all VCs. This was successfully expanded to 13 VCs for the September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election.

Each VC will have at least three Hart Verity Touch Writer ballot marking devices as well as a number of voting booths available. There will be at least two Ballot on Demand (BOD) printers at each location to ensure the proper ballot can be provided to each voter. Roving Inspectors (Rovers) will be trained and equipped with backup BOD printers in the event there are printer issues or a high volume of ballots that need printing.

### VC Formula and Location Considerations

EC §4005(a)(4)(A); EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(I); and EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(III)

The Voter's Choice Act (VCA) has established a formula for determining the number of Vote Centers based on the number of registered voters as determined on the 88th day before the day of the election. VCA counties must provide one 11-day Vote Center for every 50,000 registered voters and one four-day Vote Center for every 10,000 registered voters.

Based on the algorithm outlined in the VCA for >120,000 registered voters, the required minimum is three Vote Centers open for 11 days (ten days prior to Elections Day and Election Day), and 13 Vote Centers that will be open for four days (three days prior to Elections Day and Election Day) in Yolo County.

*Table 1 Vote Center Formula*

Days before Election Day	Number of Registered Voters Per VC	Total Hours Daily	Estimated Minimum Number of VCst
10 days	50,000 voters	8 hours	3 VCs
3 days	10,000 voters	8 hours	13 VCs
Election Day	10,000 voters	13 hours	13 VCs

† Based on >120,000 registered voters

YCE will use data from past elections, habits of our voters, census records, and knowledge of the area to pick the best locations for our Vote Centers. We acknowledge that there may be sites that are not ideal under the additional criteria considered under Election Code EC §4005(a)(10)(B). However, we will make a good faith effort to include as many considerations within each location choice as possible. This way our voters will have convenient and accessible resources and locations. See the Appendix for the proposed VC locations.

### **VC Accessibility**

EC §§4005(a)(10)(I)(ii), 4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(X), and 4005(a)(10)(I)(vii)

All potential Vote Centers will be surveyed following the California Secretary of State Polling Place Accessibility Guidelines designed with the California Department of Rehabilitation. These strict requirements ensure that polling places are accessible to voters with disabilities to the greatest extent possible. It is important to note that VCA Guidelines do not make new law or impose new polling place accessibility requirements on county elections officials. Rather, they are a compilation of laws and regulations that county elections officials are required to adhere to, regardless of the existence of the Guidelines. The Polling Place Accessibility Guidelines are available on the Secretary of State's website at <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/publications-and-resources/polling-place-accessibility-guidelines>

All Vote Centers will meet Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) standards for accessibility (permanently or with temporary mitigation solutions) to the building, the room used as a Vote Center, and the path of travel to the voting room. Vote Center locations throughout the county will vary in size. There will be three (3) Hart Verity Touch Writer accessible ballot marking devices in each VC placed to maximize voter privacy.

The Verity Touch Writer ballot marking device's voter interface is a touchscreen and an Audio-Tactile Interface (ATI) which allows the voter to move through the ballot without touching the screen. The handheld controller provides the voter additional input options: a scrolling wheel and select button, headphones, and an analogue connection for tactile buttons or a voter's sip-and-puff device.

### **VC Days and Hours of Operation**

EC §§4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(III) and 4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(VI)

The VCA model provides all voters with more opportunities to cast their ballots at any VC with a minimum of 93 hours over 11 days, including weekends and holidays. This expands voting opportunities compared to 13 hours (over one day) under the polling place model.

Voter registration services will be provided at all Vote Centers instead of the one location (county elections office) available under the polling place model. The first three locations will open ten days before Election Day. Ten more sites will open three days before Election Day. There will be 13 VCs in total.

Table 2 VC Days and Hours of Operation

Estimated Minimum Number of VCs	Days Before Election Day	Total Hours Daily	Hours of Operation
3 VCs	10 days	8 hours	10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
13 VCs	3 days	8 hours	10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
13 VCs	Election Day	13 hours	7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

See the Appendices for a list and a map of locations of proposed Vote Centers for the next election. (Vote Center locations are subject to change, based on the availability of the location host.)

### VC Layout

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(XI)

Each VC will have a specific, predefined layout to ensure poll workers set up stations to maximize voter privacy. Floor plans will be designed to meet accessibility requirements and adjusted to best utilize each location’s differing shapes and sizes.

See the Appendix for voting room layouts of Vote Centers used in the November 3, 2020 General Election and the September 14, 2021 California gubernatorial Recall Election that we plan to use for the next election. (Vote Center locations are subject to change, based on the availability of the location host.)

### VC Staffing

EC §§4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(IX) and 4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(IX)

The projected need for recruiting and training VC employees depends on the number of 11-day and four-day Vote Centers, the number of check-in stations, the anticipated capacity of a VC, and a schedule that supports a variety of shifts for in-person training purposes. Tentatively, a minimum of eight (8) staff, including two (2) VC supervisors, will be working at a Vote Center.

A Roving Inspector (Rover) will be assigned to each of the three geographical areas of Yolo County’s VC locations to assist and monitor the VC operations. Paid standby poll workers will be available to deploy as needed. Note that the term “poll worker” is used interchangeably with “VC staff.”

For the VC locations open for 11 days, the first seven days will be used for hands-on in-person training of all VC staff and Rovers. Full-day shifts will be scheduled to give hands-on experience before the VCs get busy. VC staff will then be assigned for the four days up to and including Election Day.

Paid standby poll workers will also have the opportunity to gain real time experience during the seven-day hands-on training and be ready for assignment to a VC.

Table 3 VC Staffing Needs

Vote Center Type	Locations	Num. Workers	Recruitment Need
11-Day VC	3	8	24 shifts per day
4-Day VC	10	8	80 shifts per day
Total Projected Need			104 poll workers
7 Days Hands-on Training	3	8	168 poll worker training shifts
4 Day Assigned VC	13	8	104 assigned poll workers
Standby Poll Workers			TBD based on training and testing

Election staff will be trained to assist voters. The Yolo County Elections Office will make a good faith effort to recruit election workers who will provide language assistance in Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, Spanish (Elections Code §14201), and Russian. All Voting Assistance Center locations will be supplied with appropriate signage and translated facsimile ballots in Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, and Spanish. All voting materials and ballots are in English per Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act.

Additionally, each Vote Center will be supplied with access to telephone interpreter services. The telephone interpreter service allows county elections officials, including support staff and poll workers, to connect with a third-party interpreter to communicate with voters in their native language in over thirty-two different languages. This service is available 24/7. The supervising poll worker at a VC will use their county-issued mobile phone to access this service.

Poll workers are trained to assist voters with options to change text size and contrast on the Hart Verity Touch Writer and use the assistive tactile interface (ATI), including adjusting the volume and reading speed on the ATI. The ATI units are compatible with several assistive devices for voters with disabilities, such as sip-and-puff systems, paddles, and head-pointers. Touch Writers are also programmed to be read or listened to in English.

Backup plans will focus on lines of communication, extra staffing, and pre-configured extra equipment. Security will be ensured through set protocols, including secure storage, tamper-evident seals, strict chain of custody tracking, and a robust cybersecurity posture.

### Voting Technology at VCs

EC §§4005(a)(2)(B), 4005(a)(4)(D), 4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(X), 4005(a)(6)(D), 4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(X)

Yolo County Elections uses Hart InterCivic Verity Print version 3.1.1. and Verity Touch Writer 3.1.1 at all VCs and the YCE office. The Verity Print is the voting system’s ballot printing device that allows the poll worker to print the voter’s ballot on demand. In contrast, the Verity Touch Writer allows voters to mark a digital ballot and then print their marked paper ballot. Any voter can use the Touch Writer; however, its accessibility features make it ideal for some people with disabilities, such as a visual impairment or a disability that makes it difficult to put “pen-to-paper” to mark the paper ballot. Each voting location will contain at least three Verity Touch Writers and two Verity Print systems.

Yolo County Elections uses Tenex Software Solutions’ Precinct Central ePollbook version 4.3 system. This system replaced paper voter rosters in 2020. The VCA-like model demonstrated that the ePollbooks were easy for voters and staff to use for voter check-in, and they provide a dashboard that will allow voters to see wait times at all Vote Centers.

Vote Center staff will have access to VoteCal, the statewide voter registration database, and the County’s Election Management System (EMS). This real-time connection allows VC staff to look up and update the status of each voter through an electronic poll book (ePollbook). YCE owns and maintains the secure communication links using Cradlepoint. Cradlepoint is an encrypted and secure infrastructure system of routers, gateways, and software for wireless WAN edge networking.

### Mobile Vote Center (MVC)

Yolo County Elections is in the planning phase of implementing a mobile Vote Center (MVC). The benefits include, but are not limited to, reaching voters in township areas, reaching hard to reach voters in a geographically large county, supporting and providing services to voters who are limited on transportation resources to visit an already established vote center. The hours of operation for this mobile VC will be available to the public on the YCE website and in voting materials sent to voters. Any mobile VC will have the same functionalities as any established Vote Center.

### Official Ballot Drop Boxes (BDB)

EC §§4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(II), 4005(a)(3) and 4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(VI)

The Voter’s Choice Act (VCA) requires counties to provide at least one “ballot drop-off location” for every 15,000 registered voters as determined on the 88<sup>th</sup> day before the day of the election. In Yolo County, these locations are called Ballot Drop Boxes (BDBs). Voter registration data was analyzed to determine the estimated number of BDBs needed in each city and unincorporated areas. Although the required minimum is nine (9) for the estimated 130,000 registered voters in Yolo County, the Yolo County Elections Office plans to place 14 Ballot Drop Boxes throughout Yolo County. Five of these 14 official BDBs will be outside and open to the public 24 hours a day.

Table 4 Ballot Drop Box Formula

Days before Election Day	Number of Registered Voters Per BDB	Estimated Minimum Number of BDBs†
29 days	15,000 voters	9 BDBs

† Based on >120,000 registered voters

In addition to the VCA minimum requirements, the California Secretary of State (SOS) provides additional regulations such as accessibility and language requirements. Ballot drop boxes have been designed to provide translated legal language included in the graphics of the ballot drop box. The viability of a potential location is also dependent on meeting minimum accessibility requirements as determined by a detailed assessment.

### BDB Location Recruitment Process

An informational packet has been developed for the site owners to explain the process and specify their role as a Ballot Drop Box location. The packet includes a disclaimer of liability, a responsibility letter, and

a flyer on specifications, expectations, and frequently asked questions. The packet is used to reach out to potential sites and provide detailed information about the BDB process so that all parties clearly understand the obligations and processes involved in hosting a BDB.

Every potential site will undergo a site assessment to determine suitability and accessibility. Once the site is fully reviewed, final determinations will be made on the potential location of any placement. This will require working with the site tenant, property management company and/or property owner for approval and a contract. Ballot drop box locations will be selected in conjunction with public feedback and meeting legal requirements.

### **BDB Days and Hours of Operation**

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(IV) and EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(VII)

All official Ballot Drop Boxes (BDB) will be available 29 days before Election Day. These boxes will be secure, accessible, and easy to identify. BDBs placed indoors are open during regular business hours of each respective location. See the Appendix for actual hours of operation of each internal BDB location.

*Table 5 Official BDB Days and Hours of Operation*

<b>Estimated Number of BDBs</b>	<b>Days Before Election Day</b>	<b>Total Hours Daily</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>
6 External BDBs	29 days	24 hours	12:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.
10 Internal BDBs	29 days	Business hours	See Appendix
16 Total BDBs	Election Day	Business hours	Hours listed until 8:00 p.m. See Appendix

Some BDBs will be secured outdoors and open 24 hours a day. To prevent physical damage and unauthorized entry, the unattended, outdoor BDBs are constructed of durable material that can withstand vandalism, removal, and inclement weather. The ballot deposit slot will be of sufficient size to prevent tampering or unauthorized removal of the ballots.

See the Appendices for a list and a map of locations of proposed Ballot Drop Boxes for the next election. (Ballot Drop Boxes locations are subject to change, based on the availability of the location host.)

### **BDB Retrieval Teams**

Two (2) Yolo County Ballot Drop Box Retrieval Team members will collect the ballots from the official BDBs on a mandated schedule. On Election Day, BDB Retrieval Teams will be posted at all BDB location to secure the BDB at the close of the election at 8:00 p.m. Any voter waiting in line at 8:00 p.m. to deposit a Vote-by-Mail ballot will be able to drop off their ballot in the official BDB for collection by the BDB Retrieval team.

## Language Assistance

EC §§4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(IX), 4005(a)(10)(I)(vii), and 4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(I)

Help is available for voters who need language assistance at the Vote Centers during early voting and Election Day. YCE commits to reaching out to voters who have requested language assistance in the past using language identifiers on the voter registration forms. This is a great way to help our office identify language minority voters. Additionally, our Language Assistance Advisory Committee has provided suggestions regarding outreach to specific-language community groups.

### Language Assistance for Vote-by-Mail Voters

Starting 29 days prior to the election, you may download a facsimile of your ballot at <https://www.yoloelections.org/voting/facsimile-ballots> or call our office at (530) 666-8133 to request one.

Facsimile ballots are available in the following languages:

*Table 6 Available Facsimile Ballot Languages*

Chinese	中文
Korean	한국어
Punjabi	ਪੰਜਾਬੀ
Russian	русский
Spanish	Español

### Language Assistance for In-Person Voters

All Vote Centers will have facsimile ballots available for reference in all ballot types for the following languages: Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, Russian and Spanish.

Vote Center poll workers who can speak Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, Russian and/or Spanish may also be available at our voting locations. They will be identified by name tags in the spoken language.

Any voter may bring up to two people into the voting booth to help them vote, provided those assistants are not representatives of the voter's employer or labor union.

## Telephone Services

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(vii)

The telephone interpreter service allows for county elections officials, including support staff and volunteers, to connect with a third-party interpreter to communicate with voters in their native language in over 32 languages.

Poll workers will tally the number of calls on a “call tally sheet” to document the usage of the third-party interpreter service. The call tally sheet will be included in every VC supply box for easy access to poll workers. Rovers will periodically check on VC workers' use of the tally sheet. Call tally sheets will be returned to the YCE office, with other pertinent election material, at the end of each voting day.

Deaf and hard of hearing voters may call YCE by dialing the toll-free hotline number which will be posted on the YCE website and materials sent to the voters at least 29 days prior to Election Day. Voters may dial the toll-free number using the California Relay Service (RTT/TTY) at 711.

## **Security and Contingency Plans**

EC §§4005(a)(10)(I)(iv), 4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(VIII)(ia), and 4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(VIII)(ib)

In the environment of elections administration, facilities, election materials, registration systems, and voting equipment are secure if both the human and machine components are addressed:

- Physical access – recorded, monitored, limited to the principle of least permission/privilege
- Electronic access – close maintenance of accounts and logins, limited to the principle of least permission/privilege
- Separation of duties, two-person integrity, cross-training, and quality control
- Segmented systems, audit logs, hash testing, and reinstallation of trusted builds of software
- Physical asset inventory control and management
- Inventory of network boundaries, limitation, and control of network ports and services
- Ongoing training of staff regarding potential threats and testing, such as a spear-phishing campaign
- Ongoing updates to devices, firewalls, routers, switches. Timely installation of patches
- Explicit documentation of routine procedures, election procedures, and incident response procedures
- Explicit documentation of backups, protection of back-ups, and system recovery and restoration after an incident
- Continuous vulnerability management and risk assessment

## **Security Measures at Vote Centers**

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(iv)

The Yolo County Elections Office will ensure the security of voting conducted at Vote Centers using the following methods and standards:

Every Vote Center staff member will be well-trained and prepared to assist eligible voters in every way possible. The training will include:

- Maintaining and monitoring chain of custody of all equipment
- Incident response procedures and reporting requirements

- Opening and closing procedures
- Registration and voting system procedures
- De-escalation techniques to use in tense interpersonal situations
- Setting up and maintaining a physically safe environment compliant with the Secretary of State’s Accessibility Requirements and public health guidelines.

Vote Center staff will use the Tenex ePollbook with a real-time connection with our voter registration and election management system (EMS). This will allow staff to determine a voter’s eligibility, the status of their vote-by-mail ballot if one has been issued, and the proper ballot type to issue to the voter. In accordance with the California Use Procedures, the ePollbook and EIMS systems are protected via:

- Strict chain of custody procedures for the ePollbook tablet
- Encrypted connection between the tablets
- Encrypted cellular communicating with the EMS Equipment connected to the election management system’s server will fully comply with all security measures and regulations (2 CCR §20158) with the assistance of Yolo County Innovation and Technology Services staff.

The Hart InterCivic Verity voting equipment will not be connected to any network, including the county’s internal network or Wi-Fi or Bluetooth connection. All equipment will be sealed with official Yolo County seals and will be shut down and locked when Vote Centers are not open.

All ballots, including vote-by-mail ballots, ballots cast in-person, conditional voter registration and provisional ballots, spoiled and surrendered ballots will be securely transported daily to the Yolo County Elections Office.

### **Preventing a Disruption of the Vote Center Process**

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(VIII)(ia)

All YCE office staff and Vote Center staff will be well-trained and prepared for potential mechanical, human, or natural disruptions at Vote Centers. All Vote Centers will have smartphones with a custom ArcGIS application that facilitates quick troubleshooting by connecting with the YCE office or viewing training materials and job aids. The Appendix contains a sample emergency response plan which documents internal processes and procedures YCE will use when responding to disruptions.

The Yolo County Elections Office collaborates with the Secretary of State’s Office of Election Cybersecurity (OEC) and actively participates and engages in the Secretary of State’s County Election Situation Awareness Room, a virtual space for counties to report any type of disruptions. This room is comprised of federal, state, and local agencies.

### **Continuance of Operations in the Event of a Disruption**

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(VIII)(ib)

The Yolo County Elections Office will have many experienced staff members on duty to distribute replacement equipment, supplement staffing at a Vote Center, or troubleshoot escalated issues.

Before each election, YCE prepares an Emergency Response Plan that includes baseline security standards, evacuation procedures, emergency communications, protection and recovery of ballots and

other records, and specific scenarios. The Emergency Response Plan for the 2021 Gubernatorial Recall Election is in the Appendix.

The YCE entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the County of Solano as part of Continuity of Operations should something happen to our Verity equipment before/during/after the election. This MOU also can be found in Appendix.

### Fiscal Impact and Cost Savings

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(v)

Election expenses are compared across the 2020 Presidential Primary and Presidential General, with the estimated election expense for the 2022 June Direct Primary.

*Table 7 Election Expenses Comparison*

<b>Yolo County Election Expenses</b>	<b>2020 Presidential Primary Election (Actual)</b>	<b>2020 Presidential General Election (Actual)</b>	<b>2022 Direct Primary Election (Projected)</b>
Election Type	Traditional Poll Place Model	VCA-Like Model	Full VCA Model
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 617,322.24	\$ 686,849.30	\$ 561,500.00
Consumable Election Supplies	\$ 6,047.34	\$ 278,802.56	\$ 13,500.00
Communications	\$ 6,037.84	\$ 2,984.43	\$ 4,000.00
Postage	\$ 53,350.65	\$ 146,021.74	\$ 188,250.00
Transportation, Election-Related	\$ 2,643.02	\$ 4,548.38	\$ 5,000.00
Printing	\$ 221,752.39	\$ 263,889.13	\$ 337,000.00
Other	\$ 81,970.78	\$ 124,360.32	\$ 142,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 989,124.26</b>	<b>\$ 1,507,455.85</b>	<b>\$ 1,251,250.00</b>

## Outreach Expenses

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VII)

Table 8 Outreach Expenses Comparison

Yolo County Outreach Expense	2020 Presidential Primary Election (Actual)	2020 Presidential General Election (Actual)	2022 Direct Primary Election (Projected)
Advertising/Notices	\$ 5,787.64	\$ 15,801.78	\$ 25,000.00
Outreach Mailers		\$ 51,164.06	\$ 75,000.00
Social Media		\$ 1,750.00	\$ 10,000.00
Outreach Events			\$ 5,000.00
Translation Services	\$ 2,862.81	\$ 19,043.93	\$ 80,000.00
Collaterals/Swag			\$ 20,000.00
Videos			\$ 25,000.00
Signs and Banners		\$ 2,259.84	\$ 20,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 8,650.45</b>	<b>\$ 90,019.61</b>	<b>\$ 260,000.00</b>

## Moving Forward Addressing Accessibility and Participation Disparities

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(iii)

Creating this Election Administration Plan has been and will continue to be a collaborative and iterative process. Listening to the community work groups in 2020, developing the plan in consultation with the community in 2021, compiling best practices from other jurisdictions, adopting the EAP, and obtaining the internal resources to conduct VCA elections in 2022, are just a start.

After all elections conducted in compliance with the Voter’s Choice Act, Yolo County Elections will make a reasonable effort to identify and address significant disparities in voter accessibility and participation.

We will meet with the VAAC and the LAAC to address and discuss any issues that their communities experienced during the election. The YCE will survey all Vote Center staff to evaluate and address any disparities regarding voter accessibility and participation from their perspective. The YCE will set-up a digital survey for any voter to complete and will promote the survey at Vote Centers and outreach events. This will help identify and address issues related to voter accessibility and participation.

# Voter Education & Outreach Plan

*EAP Amended Draft*

## Yolo County California Voter's Choice Act Election Administration Plan



## Section 2: Voter Education and Outreach Plan

### Overview and General Requirements

Yolo County Elections (YCE) is committed to improving voter registration and participation among all eligible voters. Addressing disparities in the democratic process is key to conducting accessible, fair, and transparent elections.

In preparation for the November 2020 Presidential General Election, Yolo County Elections convened several working groups across the county. The “Voter Outreach, Messaging, Education, and Information Campaign” working groups consisted of community members and city officials working toward a common goal.

Yolo County Elections will continue to provide media partners with press releases, video content, and social media content for mass distribution and publication. YCE seeks other trusted media sources to relay information about Vote Centers, Ballot Drop Boxes, deadlines, vote-by-mail information, accessibility options, and methods to request an accessible ballot or a replacement ballot. The list of media partners is in the Appendix.

Additionally, Yolo County Registrar of Voters Jesse Salinas and his designee often appear in local media to speak as an elections expert and provide perspective on Yolo County. They are also available to appear at meetings of civic groups and community service groups. These types of opportunities will specifically support disseminating information from a trusted source.

### Community Presence

EC §§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(III) and 4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(IV)

Yolo County Elections enjoys robust connections with community members and organizations. Our relationships are built with people, through one-on-one connections, collaborating to create joint events, participating in existing events, and by having an approachable digital identity.

The YCE presence will continue at in-person events and virtual meetings. Traditionally, this has also included partnering with event organizers to have active booths or tents and tables at fairs, festivals, and other events. YCE is always looking to maximize these opportunities. Currently, YCE is exploring partnerships with institutions that will significantly amplify election information messaging. Information about events like these are in the Appendix.

### Digital Accessibility

Our engagement with individuals and organizations on social media and our intuitive website have bolstered the YCE profile as a trusted source of information. This electronic information is presented in an accessible manner for people with disabilities, and conforms with WCAG 2.0, the Revised Section 508 standards. The Yolo County Elections website (<https://www.yoloelections.org/>) will maintain accessible standards as recommended in Elections Code §2053(b)(4).

Our digital materials are meant to be accessible to anyone who wishes to find out about elections, voting, and the VCA. To that end, YCE applies best practices in the use of plain language and design. Our

Department's social media policy document is kept updated, and our collateral material is reviewed by the outreach coordinator for issues such as color contrast and inclusive representation of the diversity of the community. Posts and website content includes, but will not be limited to, a list of the ballot drop-off locations and Vote Centers with dates and hours they are open, as well as the services available at Vote Centers.

## **Community Partners**

Community Partners may assist in simple ways such as placing a flyer in an office, including an article in an organizational newsletter or website, or having a representative present VCA information to clients, members, or residents. Educational tools will be available to download from the YCE website ([www.yoloelections.org](http://www.yoloelections.org)), and physical copies will be available at the Yolo County Elections office. Requests for presentations or materials are encouraged.

In 2020, the Yolo County Elections voter outreach team had great success in private businesses putting up posters in their establishments. One hundred forty-seven retail locations posted election information, of which 129 posted at least one additional language. See Appendix for samples.

## **Individual Voter Network**

Individual voters may serve as part of outreach efforts by alerting YCE to barriers to voting and/or providing solutions to ensure widespread awareness of the new voting model. YCE will post a form on its website for this purpose and will provide office business cards with contact information at Vote Centers to receive comments via web, email, or phone.

## **Language and Voting Accessibility Advisory Committees**

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(V)

In accordance with the Voter's Choice Act, the Language Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee were established prior to October 1, 2021. For information on meeting times and dates, see the Appendix.

Yolo County will pursue opportunities and suggestions provided by the Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC). These recommendations may lead to presentations, virtual meetings, or the distribution of educational materials to specific minority language organizations. The LAAC's review of our translated materials will be especially valuable.

Yolo County will pursue opportunities and suggestions provided by the Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC). These recommendations may lead to presentations, virtual meetings, or the distribution of educational materials to organizations associated with disability communities. The VAACs review of floor plans and physical layouts of Vote Centers will be especially valuable.

Members of the public who wish to join one or both committees can reach out via email to [elections@yolocounty.org](mailto:elections@yolocounty.org). Currently our advisory committees do not have an application process. More information will be found on our website once we establish our county LAAC and VAAC information pages.

## **Education and Outreach with Language Minority Communities**

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(I) and EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VI)(ia)

All registered voters will receive a postage-paid postcard in their County Voter Information Guide (CVIG) to request a VBM ballot facsimile and election materials in alternate languages per section 14201 of the California Elections Code and section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act. Instructions will be included in the CVIG and on the Yolo County Elections website for completing and returning the postcard.

Yolo County Elections will determine which Vote Centers are located in or adjacent to a precinct that meets language requirements under the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) for in-person language assistance. In addition, Yolo County Elections will solicit public input regarding which VCs should be prioritized for staffing by individuals who are fluent in specific languages, pursuant to subdivision (c) of section 12303 of the California Elections Code and section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA). Every effort will be made to recruit and assign bilingual staff members to these Vote Centers.

All voters will have options to receive language assistance such as translated written materials in required languages and interpreter assistance via phone.

Yolo County will conduct one bilingual voter education workshop for each required language under EC §14201 prior to each major election. Specific information provided in these bilingual community meetings may include, but is not limited to:

- Overview of the new voting model
- Voting equipment demonstrations and accessibility
- How to obtain a facsimile ballot
- How to ask for bilingual assistance or a telephone interpreter at a VC
- Ballot drop-off information
- Signing VBM return envelopes properly, witnessed marks, power of attorney, etc.
- Curing challenged vote-by-mail ballots

## **Education and Outreach with Disability Communities**

EC §§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(II) and 4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VI)(ib)

Yolo County has a long-standing commitment of working with voters with disabilities to increase accessibility for voter registration and casting a ballot. All registered voters will receive a County Voter Information Guide (CVIG). The guide will include information about how and where voters can use the accessible ballot marking devices and how to access and use Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail (RAVBM). The VAAC members will assist in connecting with groups to broadcast information to the target audience.

Yolo County will conduct at least one voter education workshop to increase the accessibility and participation of eligible voters with disabilities prior to each major election.

Specific Information provided to the disability community may include, but is not limited to:

- Overview of the new voting model
- Voting equipment demonstrations
- Accessibility of the voting equipment,
- Ballot drop-off information
- How to obtain an RAVBM ballot electronically
- Signing VBM return envelopes properly
- Signing with a witnessed mark rather than a signature
- Curing challenged vote-by-mail ballots
- Limitations on conservatorships and power of attorney relationships

### **Direct Voter Contacts**

EC §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(X)

Yolo County Elections plans to send two direct mailers, in addition to the CVIG and the VBM ballot package, to advise all registered voters of the availability of the toll-free voter assistance hotline and the upcoming changes to elections and the voting process.

The mailers may also provide explanation of voting options to be inclusive of the RAVBM system, Vote Center and Ballot Drop Box locations and hours, and when to expect a CVIG or VBM ballot in the mail. These mailers will use best practices in plain language and accessible elements of effective visual design. The mailers may vary in size but will be designed to catch the attention of the voter with trusted Yolo County Elections branding and messaging. See Appendix for samples from past elections.

### **Indirect Voter Contacts**

EC §§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VIII), 4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(IX), and 4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(I)

Yolo County Elections has a track record of publicizing trusted election information on various platforms. Platforms include traditional and digital media, paid advertisements, and “earned” media. Earned coverage of elections often comes in response to a media advisory or press release announcing a particular election activity is beginning. While those opportunities can be unpredictable, many local media are eager to broadcast or publish information about the election based on current trends.

See Appendix for a specific list of community and media partners, events, and sample materials.

Table 9 Indirect Voter Contact Platforms

Type	Platform	Message/Purpose
Public Service Announcements (PSA)	Community Access Stations/Cities/Campus	Messaging will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be in English and minority languages</li> <li>• Be accessible to voters who are deaf or hard of hearing</li> <li>• Be accessible to voters who are blind or visually impaired</li> <li>• Educate the public about VCA changes</li> <li>• Promote the YCE toll-free phone number</li> <li>• Promote YCE website, social media and email address</li> <li>• Promote workshops with community groups</li> <li>• Announce deadlines, voting options, mailings</li> <li>• Promote VC and BDB options</li> </ul>
Paid Advertising (PSA)	Billboards	
	Newspapers	
	Digital Ads	
	Radio	
	Theaters	
Social Media	See Appendix	
Traditional “Earned” Media	Newspapers	
	Broadcast TV	
	Radio	

Yolo County’s robust social media presence is year-round. Publicizing the VCA will be a major thread in our posts. Facebook often facilitates interactive conversations with voters, and Twitter spreads direct messages about important topics. In August and September 2021 (during the Gubernatorial Recall Election), we tweeted 78 times, had 20,775 impressions and 2,122 profile visits. This level of traffic is significant for a county of any size in California.