



**ALEX PADILLA** | SECRETARY OF STATE | STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
ELECTIONS DIVISION

1500 11<sup>th</sup> Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814 | **Tel** 916.657.2166 | **Fax** 916.653.3214 | [www.sos.ca.gov](http://www.sos.ca.gov)

May 5, 2017

County Clerk/Registrar of Voters (CC/ROV) Memorandum # 17044

**TO:** All County Clerks/Registrars of Voters

**FROM:** /s/ Jana M. Lean  
Chief, Elections Division

**RE:** New Vote-by-Mail Return Procedures

As you are aware, Senate Bill 450 (Chapter 832 of the Statutes of 2016) became effective on January 1, 2017, and affects how voted vote-by-mail ballots may be returned.

Prior to SB 450, the Elections Code restricted who could return the voted vote-by-mail ballot of a voter who is unable to return their own ballot. Now, Elections Code section 3017(a) provides the following:

“...a vote by mail voter who is unable to return the ballot may designate any person to return the ballot to the elections official who issued the ballot...”

This change in the law may require updates to your vote-by-mail ballot return envelopes. While the requirements for the content of the return envelope have not changed (Elections Code section 3011), in the event your envelope contains the restriction of who may return the voted vote-by-mail ballot on behalf of another, that language must be changed. Due to this change in the law, any return envelopes containing the previous restrictions on who may return the voted vote-by-mail ballot may not be used.

Also prior to SB 450, a voted vote-by-mail ballot had to be timely returned to the elections official who issued it. Now, Elections Code section 3017(a) provides that a voted vote-by-mail ballot may be returned to any polling place or vote center within the state. In the event a voter delivers their voted vote-by-mail ballot to another county, the county who receives the ballot must, no later than 8 days after receipt, forward the voted vote-by-mail ballot to the appropriate elections official. The ballot will be eligible to be counted if it was received by the first county prior to the closing of the polls on Election Day.

CCROV # 17044

May 5, 2017

Page 2

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Robbie Anderson at [Robbie.Anderson@sos.ca.gov](mailto:Robbie.Anderson@sos.ca.gov) or (916) 657-2166. Thank you.