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September 18, 2024

County Clerk/Registrar of Voters (CC/ROV) Memorandum #24204

TO: All County Clerks/Registrars of Voters

FROM: /s/ Ryan Reece
Elections Analyst

RE: General Election: Barcode Scanners

When processing mail, the United States Postal Service (USPS) prints a fluorescent ID tag on mail pieces. This ID tag is usually orange or yellow in color and includes information identifying the day that a mail piece first entered the postal mail stream. This ID tag can be decoded by third-party barcode scanners to assist in determining a postmark date when a mail piece is received with no postmark.

In 2020, the Secretary of State's office procured these handheld barcode scanners for county elections officials to assist in processing vote-by-mail ballots that are missing a postmark.

As a reminder for the November 5, 2024, General Election, these scanners can be used to determine when the USPS received a vote-by-mail ballot for processing, providing elections officials with critical information when determining if a ballot was postmarked on time, allowing the ballot to be counted, or causing it to be rejected.

Along with these barcode scanners, the Secretary of State's office previously provided counties scanner specifications, instructions, and spreadsheet to use when scanning ballot envelopes. Please use the following links to access these documents:

- [Fluorescent Barcode Reader Instructions \(PDF\)](#)
- [Handheld Barcode Scanner Specifications \(PDF\)](#)
- [Barcode Scanner Spreadsheet \(XLSM\)](#)

If you have any questions, please contact me directly at rreece@sos.ca.gov.

Thank you.