



Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

California Secretary of State Elections Division

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August 24, 2026

County Clerk/Registrar of Voters (CC/ROV) Memorandum # 26223

TO: All County Clerks/Registrars of Voters

FROM: /s/ Mike Darling
Elections Cybersecurity Analyst

RE: General Election: Early Ballot Retrieval Ballot Collection and Chain of Custody Procedures - ACTION REQUIRED

Before each election, counties may choose to retrieve ballots prior to the closing of the polls. If ballots are to be retrieved in this manner, the county must develop early ballot retrieval collection and chain of custody procedures. These chain of custody procedures must be submitted to the Secretary of State's office. (Elections Code section 14422 and California Code of Regulations sections 20143(a) and (b)).

To report if your county **will or will not** be retrieving ballots prior to the closing of the polls, complete and send the attached acknowledgement form to survey@sos.ca.gov.

If you are conducting early ballot retrieval, please also submit your county's chain of custody procedures for the November 3, 2026, General Election.

Please provide all responses by, **Friday, October 2, 2026**, to survey@sos.ca.gov.

For reference, the regulations may be found on the Secretary of State's website at <https://www.sos.ca.gov/administration/regulations/current-regulations/elections/early-ballot-retrieval>

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at mdarling@sos.ca.gov.



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November 3, 2026, General Election

Early Ballot Retrieval Ballot Collection and Chain of Custody Procedures Acknowledgement Form

County Name:	
Contact Name:	
Contact Phone:	
Contact Email:	

Will your county be retrieving ballots prior to the closing of the polls?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you indicated Yes above, please attach and send your county's chain of custody procedures with this acknowledgement form by **Friday, October 2, 2026**, to survey@sos.ca.gov.