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October 30, 2026

County Clerk/Registrar of Voters (CC/ROV) Memorandum #26276

TO: All County Clerks/Registrars of Voters

FROM: /s/ Robbie Anderson
Elections Counsel

RE: General Election: Final Collection of Ballots from Drop Boxes – Action Required

As you are aware, upon the closing of the polls on Election Day, all drop boxes shall be locked and covered or otherwise made unavailable at 8:00 p.m. to ensure that no ballots are dropped off after the polls have closed. Please note that any extension to the closing of a polling place pursuant to Elections Code section 407 would not affect the locking of drop boxes at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

The Secretary of State's Office strongly encourages county elections officials to retrieve as many ballots as practicable from staffed and unstaffed drop boxes before 11:59 p.m. on Election Day. If that is not feasible, ballots shall be retrieved from those drop boxes by 8:00 p.m. on the day after the election. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 2, § 20136(f).)

California Code of Regulations section 20136(f)(2) requires that all county elections officials certify to the Secretary of State immediately upon retrieving ballots from all staffed and unstaffed drop boxes that all ballots have been retrieved from all staffed and unstaffed drop boxes.

Additionally, county elections officials shall provide written notification to the Secretary of State in the event a county is aware that they are or may not be able to retrieve all ballots by 8:00 p.m. on the day after Election Day. The written notification shall be made immediately upon the determination that not all ballots will be retrieved prior to 8:00 p.m. on the day after Election Day. When all ballots have been retrieved from all staffed and unstaffed drop boxes, the elections official shall provide the required certification.

Please send the attached certification document with the appropriate sections completed, via email to Mike Darling at electioncybersecurity@sos.ca.gov, no later than Wednesday, November 4, 2026.

For your reference, the entire text of Section 20136 can be found on the Secretary of State's website at https://www.sos.ca.gov/administration/regulations/currentregulations/elections/vote-mail-ballot-drop-boxes-and-drop-locations#20136.

If you have any questions regarding this procedure on or before Election Day, please contact me at aanderso@sos.ca.gov.

Attachment: Certification Form

# November 3, 2026, General Election
# Final Collection of Ballots from Drop Boxes Certification Form

California Code of Regulations section 20136(f)(2) requires that all county elections officials certify to the Secretary of State immediately upon retrieving ballots from all staffed and unstaffed drop boxes that all ballots have been retrieved from all staffed and unstaffed drop boxes.

## A. Election Official:

**Contact Name**

**County**

## B. Retrieved by November 4, 2026

If your county has retrieved all ballots from staffed and unstaffed drop boxes for the November 3, 2026, General Election by 8:00 p.m. on November 4, 2026, please complete the following certification:

*I hereby certify that all ballots have been retrieved from all staffed and unstaffed drop boxes for the November 3, 2026, General Election.*

Signature

Title

Date

## C. Not Retrieved by November 4, 2026

If your county will not retrieve all ballots from staffed and unstaffed drop boxes for the November 3, 2026, General Election, by 8:00 p.m. on November 4, 2026, please provide responses to the following:

The location of the drop box(es) from which ballots may not be retrieved prior to 8:00 p.m. on November 4, 2026:

# November 3, 2026, General Election
# Final Collection of Ballots from Drop Boxes Certification Form

The last time ballots were retrieved from that/those drop box(es):

Specific details on why all ballots may not be timely retrieved from that/those drop box(es):

At the time your county has retrieved all ballots from the location(s) referred to above, please complete the following certification:

*I hereby certify that all ballots have been retrieved from all staffed and unstaffed drop boxes for the November 3, 2026, General Election."*

Signature

Title

Date