Safeguarding our Elections

Fair and accurate elections are the bedrock of our democracy. That’s why Secretary of State Alex Padilla is collaborating with multiple government agencies to ensure that Californians can vote with confidence.

Together, we’re protecting the integrity of our elections, safeguarding against potential cyberattacks, and ensuring that every vote is counted. Here’s how we’re safeguarding our elections:

Investing in New Systems

- The 2018-2019 state budget included $134.3 million for counties to replace aging voting systems. Counties must match on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

- This is the first significant funding towards voting systems in California in 15 years.

- California received $34 million from the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission as the final disbursement of money from the Help America Vote Act. This money is being spent starting this year.

Protecting Election Infrastructure

- Since 2016, we’ve conducted agency-wide security assessments, upgraded firewalls and servers, and rolled out additional 24/7 security monitoring tools.

- California has one of the most strenuous voting system testing and certification programs in the country. Any new voting systems in California must receive certification and undergo months of testing, including functional testing, source code review, red team security testing that involves experts trying to “break into” the voting system, and accessibility and volume testing.

- California has required that every ballot must either be paper or have a voter verifiable paper audit trail.

- Elections officials conduct a manual audit of a random 1% of ballots to ensure vote count machines are accurate.

Partnering with Federal and Local Partners

- We continually work with federal, state, and local partners—including The Department of Homeland Security, The Federal Bureau of Investigation, CA Department of Technology, CAL Office of Emergency Services, California Highway Patrol, and county elections officials—to share information and best practices.

- Our office has hosted cybersecurity trainings and a tabletop exercise and drills for county elections officials.

How you can help:

Be an Informed Voter

- Be vigilant about the election information you consume and share on social media.

- Make sure that you receive your elections information from official sources such as local county elections officials and the California Secretary of State’s office.

Report misinformation

- If you suspect election information you receive on social media is false or misleading, report it to your social media network and the California Secretary of State’s office by emailing VoteSure@sos.ca.gov