

**Mariposa County Department of Elections**



**Election Administration Plan**

**2019**

# Mariposa County Elections Administration Plan

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## **Introduction**

### **Background**

In 2002 California State Law was amended to allow voters the option to register as permanent vote-by-mail. Since then, the number of vote-by-mail voters has steadily increased in Mariposa County. Currently, approximately 70% of voters in Mariposa County are vote-by-mail voters. Although Mariposa County has generally demonstrated above average voter turnout, utilizing this method regularly surpasses that of the turnout at polling sites on Election Day

A dramatic change came to election law in California in 2016 with the passing of SB 450, therefore adopting the Voters Choice Act (VCA). This allowed California Counties the option to conduct any election all by mailed ballot, with the use of Voter Centers, commencing January 1, 2020. On June 2, 2019 the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors approved the implementation of the VCA in Mariposa County.

### **Overview**

With the adoption of the VCA, the Mariposa County Elections Department is required to prepare an Election Administration Plan (EAP). With it, the idea is to expand the County's voter education program to inform Mariposa residents about the VCA and also to gain community feedback and input as it develops. The first Election utilizing this new model is the March 2020 Presidential Primary Election. This Election Administration Plan provides information on how the County will implement the Voter's Choice Act. There are many actions included in this plan that are future-looking and are included as framework for what is expected to be accomplished.

Following the adoption of the VCA in June of 2019, the Mariposa County Registrar of Voters (ROV) established a joint Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) and Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC). This committee was established to provide feedback and guidance to the Elections Department and will continue to be a fundamental component of election administration in Mariposa County.

In short, this new model of conducting elections in Mariposa County affords voters more flexibility with regard to casting their ballots. All registered voters will be mailed a ballot 29 days prior to the election. They may then choose to return their voted ballot by mail, using the included postage paid return envelope. Alternatively, they may also choose to appear at one of the Voter Centers in the County. At the time of developing this Election Administration Plan, the County expects to establish four Vote Centers (2 ten day vote centers and 2 four day vote

centers). In addition, there will be an expected 3 ballot drop box sites that that will be available 28 day prior to the elections, where voters can return their ballot.

Vote Centers will operate similarly to polling places, allowing voters to cast their ballots in person, whether on paper or by utilizing an accessible ballot marking device. Voters can also cast their ballots or request and receive replacement ballots at any Vote Center countywide, and may also register or update their registration. Voters who have not registered prior to the close of registration (14 days prior to the election), will be able to Conditionally Register to Voter (CVR) at any Vote Center and cast a provisional ballot through Election Day.

## **SECTION 1 – VOTER EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PLAN**

### **Requirements**

#### **1-A Use of the media for purposes of informing voters of the availability of a vote by mail ballot in an accessible format and the process for requesting such a ballot.**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(II), §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VIII)

Mariposa County ROV will provide information about obtaining a VBM ballot in an accessible format and the process for requesting such a ballot utilizing the outlets and methods described in Section 1-B of this document, and such outlets as the following:

1. Local newspaper (Mariposa Gazette)
2. Radio (KRYZ radio 98.5 FM)
3. Social Media and Department website
  - County Elections Facebook
  - [www.mariposacounty.org](http://www.mariposacounty.org)
4. Local Community video blog (Yosemite Gold Country)
5. Outreach to various groups such as community partners, advocacy organizations, elected officials, special districts, school districts, community based organizations, faith-based organizations, Public Information Officers throughout the County.
6. County Departments (such as Health and Human Services, Community Services and Veteran’s Services).
7. Public Service announcements, broadly distributed to all outlets serving the County

The information to be provided will include that option to use an accessible voting device at any Vote Center, and how to use the device; and the method for requesting, marking and submitting an accessible ballot through the County’s Remote Accessible Vote-by-mail (RAVBM) program. Mariposa County does not intend to focus on the use of television outlets as there are no local networks.

#### **1-B Community Presence to Educate Voters on the Voter’s Choice Act**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(III)

Mariposa County’s ROV community presence will provide Vote Center Model information directly to the voters and to attendees of various events and meetings. The goal is to coordinate with community partners, along with the VAAC and LAAC to identify opportunities to educate our voters, offer demonstrations of the voting equipment and explain how to request and obtain an accessible ballot. Voters will have various opportunities to gain such information, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Mariposa County's VAAC/LAAC

- Meetings may include voting system demonstrations and informational updates.
- Any materials developed with VAAC/LAAC members will be presented for distribution within their communities

2. Presentations to various audiences/meetings:

- County Board of Supervisors
- County Central Committees and Political Committees
- School District Boards
- Special Districts Boards
- Philanthropic Organizations (such as Soroptimist, Rotary, Lions, etc.)
- Mariposa County Public Libraries
- Recurring events

**1-C Use of Resources for Voter Education and Outreach**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VII)

Mariposa County Election's Departments will use the necessary resources to ensure voters are informed about the Vote Center model voting process. The budget inform for the March 2020 election, along with a comparison of the education and outreach budgets from past years is available upon request.

**1-D Direct contacts with voters providing information on the upcoming election and promoting the toll-free voter assistance hotline.**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(X)

The Elections Department will contact each Mariposa County registered voter two times by mail to provide information on the upcoming election and the availability of the toll-free voter assistance hotline. The contacts may also provide information on when to expect the Voter Information Guide and voting options in a Vote Center Model election.

**1-E Postage-paid postcard for requesting materials in an alternate language or an accessible format VBM** §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(X)

All registered voters will receive a postage –paid postcard with their County Voter Information Guide or vote by mail ballot packet that the voter may return to the County Elections Official

for the purpose of requesting a vote by mail ballot in a language other than English or for the purpose of requesting a vote by mail ballot in an accessible format.

### **Education and Outreach with the Language Minority Communities**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(I)

A Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) was established in August 2019 to advise and assist with implementation of federal and state laws relating to access to the electoral process by non-English preference voters. The LAAC is comprised of local residents who advocate on behalf of the County's minority language communities.

#### **1-F Inform voters of the Upcoming Election and Promote the Toll-free Voter Assistance Hotline with Media Serving Language Minority Communities**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(I)

Information sharing with language minority communities, including information about the Vote Center Model, voting options, and toll-free access hotline for assistance will be conducted to include:

1. Department's Website ([www.mariposacounty.org](http://www.mariposacounty.org))
2. Social Media (Elections Facebook Page)
3. Materials sharing with community partners, advocacy organizations, elected officials, special districts, school districts, community based organizations, faith-based organizations and Public Information Officers.
4. Public Service Announcements, broadly distributed to outlets serving the County
5. County Departments (such as Health and Human Services, Community Services and Veteran's Services).
6. Radio (KRYZ radio 98.5 FM)

Mariposa County does not intend to focus on the use of television outlets as there are no local networks.

#### **1-G Identifying Language Minority Voters**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(V)

Mariposa County Elections Department uses the voter's language preference selection shown on their voter registration form to identify language minority voters. Voters may also contact the Elections Department by telephone or email to update their language preference or provide their language preference to vote center officials during an election.

**1-H Voter Education Workshop for Minority Language Voters**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VI), §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VI)(ia)

A bilingual voter education workshop will be held for each of Mariposa County’s federal and state required languages. At the time of preparing this plan, Mariposa’s required languages, other than English, are Spanish and Tagalog. Workshops will be held in late 2019 to early 2020 and will provide an opportunity for the County’s language communities to receive information about materials assistance available in the specified language, in addition to the Vote Center Model voting process. All workshops will have language specific interpreters to assist attendees. Information about workshop events will be announced at least 10 days in advance of the meeting date.

**1-I Public Service Announcement for Minority Language Citizens**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(IX)

Public Service Announcements will be utilized to inform voters in minority language communities of the upcoming election and the toll-free assistance hotline. The PSAs will be distributed through minority language communities as well as via the County’s website and Facebook page

**Education and Outreach with the Disability Communities**

A Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) was established in August 2019 to advise and assist with access to the electoral process by voters with disabilities. The VAAC is comprised of local residents who advocate on behalf of the disability community.

**1-J Inform voters of the Availability of a vote by mail ballot in an accessible format and the process of requesting such a ballot** §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(II)

Information sharing with disability communities, including information about the obtaining a VBM ballot in an accessible format, the process for requesting such a ballot and toll-free access hotline for assistance will be conducted to include:

1. Department’s Website ([www.mariposacounty.org](http://www.mariposacounty.org))
2. Social Media (Elections Facebook Page)
3. Materials sharing with community partners, advocacy organizations, elected officials, special districts, school districts, community based organizations, faith-based organizations and Public Information Officers.



4. Public Service Announcements, broadly distributed to outlets serving the County
5. County Departments (such as Health and Human Services, Community Services and Veteran’s Services).
6. Radio (KRYZ radio 98.5 FM)

Mariposa County does not intend to focus on the use of television outlets as there are no local networks.

**1-K Website has publicly available accessible information**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(IV)

Information on the County’s website ([www.mariposacounty.org](http://www.mariposacounty.org)) is in accessible formats and is publicly available. The includes the Election Administration Plan and other information related to the Voter’s Choice Act, as well as information about registering to vote and getting involved in the election process. Election specific information is also available on the website in an accessible format.

The information to be provided will include the following:

1. All voters will receive a vote-by-mail (VBM) ballot
2. The option to use an accessible voting device at any Vote Center, and how to use the device
3. The method for requesting, marking and submitting an accessible ballot through the County’s Remote Accessible Vote-by-mail (RAVBM) program

**1-L Inform Voters of the Availability of a Vote by Mail Ballot in an Accessible Format and the Process for Requesting Such a Ballot**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(II)

Information sharing with disability communities, including information about the Vote Center Model, voting options, and toll-free access hotline for assistance will be conducted to include:

1. Department’s Website ([www.mariposacounty.org](http://www.mariposacounty.org))
2. Social Media (Elections Facebook Page)
3. Materials sharing with community partners, advocacy organizations, elected officials, special districts, school districts, community based organizations, faith-based organizations and Public Information Officers.
4. Public Service Announcements, broadly distributed to outlets serving the County
5. County Departments (such as Health and Human Services, Community Services and Veteran’s Services).
6. Radio (KRYZ radio 98.5 FM)

Mariposa County does not intend to focus on the use of television outlets as there are no local networks.

**1-M Voter Education Workshop for the Disability Community**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VI), §4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VI)(ib)

Mariposa County will hold a voter education workshop to increase accessibility and participation of eligible voters with disabilities. Workshops will be held in late 2019 to early 2020 and will include education about the Vote Center Model voting process, new voting equipment demonstrations, the accessibility of the voting equipment, ballot drop off information, and options for obtaining an accessible vote by mail ballot electronically. Information about workshop events will be announced at least 10 days in advance of the meeting date.

## **SECTION 2 – ELECTION ADMINISTRATION PLAN**

### **General**

#### **2-A Toll-Free Phone Access**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(vii)

Toll-free phone support is offered by the Elections Department during all business hours. Staff is available to assist callers in federal/state required languages.

Toll-free hotline (866) 607-8241

### **Ballot Access**

#### **2-B Access to a VBM Ballot by Voters with Disabilities**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(ii)

##### **Receiving a Vote-By-Mail (VBM) Ballot by Mail**

All Mariposa County registered voters receive a VBM ballot packet by mail for each election. The enclosed ballot can be marked and returned in the identification envelope that is included in the VBM packet.

##### **Receiving an Accessible Ballot – Voter Centers**

Registered voters have the option of using one of the accessible ballot marking devices at any vote center. Voters check in, request an accessible ballot and are provided with a key card that populates the accessible device with their ballot. Ballots can be marked using the touchscreen display, provided audio tactile device or their own assistive technology. The accessible voting machines will be arranged to allow all voters the opportunity to cast their ballot privately and independently.

##### **Requesting a Remote Accessible VBM Ballot**

Mariposa County registered voters with disabilities may opt to go online, though the Remote Accessible Vote by Mail (RAVBM) system to request a downloadable ballot. RAVBM provides voters with disabilities the ability to request a VBM ballot to be sent electronically to the voter. The electronic ballot can be downloaded to the voter's

computer, marked using the voter's own assistive technology, and then printed. This ballot can be returned in the same manner as any VBM ballots: through the mail, in a Drop Box or at any Vote Center.

### **Requesting a Replacement Ballot**

Any voter may request a replacement ballot by telephone at (209) 966-2007, by faxing their request to (209) 966-6496, by appearing at a Vote Center or Elections Office, or through the online RAVBM system.

## **Vote Center Essentials**

### **2-C Security of the Voting Process at Vote Centers**

#### **Secure Vote Center Voting**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(iv)

All voting conducted at Vote Centers follows the California Secretary of State's security standards, Mariposa County Elections Department's security procedures and regulations in the California Elections Code and the California Voting System Use Procedures. This includes, but is not limited to; ensuring all equipment at the Vote Center is sealed, stored, delivered and used in compliance with these regulations. Additionally, current regulations require the presence of at least two election workers at all times.

#### **Security and Contingency Plans**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(i)(VIII)

#### **Preventing Disruption, Continuing Vote Center Operations**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(iv)(VIII)(ia), §4005(a)(10)(I)(iv)(VIII)(ib)

All staff, including those working the Vote Centers, and those providing the technical and compliance support, will attend training on the operation of the voting equipment, setting up a Vote Center, assisting and processing voters, securing sensitive equipment each night, and the proper procedures in case of an emergency.

Under California voting system requirements, all certified equipment must run on battery power in the event of an outage. All locations will have a cell phone. County Sheriff will receive a list of Vote Center locations, Each Vote Center will be provided with emergency procedures and an instruction manual for the operation of a Vote Center and processing voters during an emergency situation.

Mariposa County will work immediately to resolve a disruption at a Vote Center and each disruption will have its own response. Generally, if a single Vote Center is disrupted, Mariposa County will immediately instruct the staff to redirect voters to another Vote Center, and will inform the local Sheriff, the Secretary of State’s office and provide media updates to ensure voters are informed. If there is a natural disaster or other disturbance that occurs and affects a Vote Center or ballot drop off site’s physical location, additional notifications, signage and staff will be available to direct voters to an alternate location. Should all activities at a Vote Center be ceased, the staff will immediately secure that Vote Center’s voting equipment and account for all voting materials on accordance with California Election Code and the Ballot Manufacturing and Finishing guidelines. Every attempt will be made to open a replacement Vote Center and widely disseminate information to the public about the change.

**2-D Vote Centers: Number to be Established, Locations and Hours of Operation to the Extent Available at the Time of Publication**

§4005(a)(10)(l)(vi)

There will be a total of four Vote Centers available to all voters in Mariposa County. Below is a list of the proposed Vote Centers. All Vote Centers will be open for at least 8 hours a day. On Election Day all Vote Centers will be open from 7:00am to 8:00pm. The exact hours of each Vote Center will be posted on the Mariposa County website at [www.mariposacounty.org](http://www.mariposacounty.org) and included in the Vote by Mail ballot packets that are mailed to all registered voters. At this time, Mariposa County Elections Department does not expect to utilize mobile vote centers in the 2020 elections.

**Vote Centers Open 10 days Prior to and Including Election Day:**

<b>Mariposa County Elections Office</b>	<b>Bootjack Volunteer Fire Department</b>
4982 10 <sup>th</sup> Street	3883 Bootjack Lane
Mariposa, CA 95338	Mariposa, CA 95338

**Vote Centers Open on Election Day and One Day Prior:**

<b>Greeley Hill Public Library</b>	<b>El Portal Public Library</b>
10332 Fiske Road	9670 Rancheria Flat Road
Coulterville, CA 95311	El Portal, CA 95318

## **Vote Center Details**

### **Staffing Vote Centers**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(IX)

Each Vote Center will tentatively have at least four paid staff members including a Vote Center Manager. A minimum of two staff members will always be present at any given time at each Vote Center.

### **Design and Layout of Vote Centers**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(XI)

Vote centers will be designed in a way to ensure each voter has the right cast a private and independent ballot. Voting equipment and ballot drop boxes will be placed strategically in the Vote Center so that they are easily identifiable by voters and can be monitored by Vote Center staff.

## **Ballot Drop-off Essentials**

### **2-E Locations of Ballot Drop-offs**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(IV), §4005(a)(10)(I)(vi)(VII)

At the time of developing this document, Mariposa County anticipates having a minimum of three ballot drop-off locations throughout the County. Ballot drop off locations will be available at least during regular business hours. There will be one 24 hours ballot drop-off location that will close at 8pm on Election Day. Exact times of each location's drop box will be published to our website at [www.mariposacounty.org](http://www.mariposacounty.org) and included in the VBM ballot packets mailed to all registered voters.

Drop off locations currently being considered are listed below, but the goal is to work with the LAAC, VAAC and community members to fully determine drop off locations that are well-known and fully accessible.

### **24 – Hour Ballot Drop-off Location**

#### **Mariposa County Administration Building**

5100 Bullion Street

Mariposa, CA 95338

Outside and Accessible

## **Daytime Ballot Drop-off Locations**

### **Lake Don Pedro Community Services Office**

9751 Merced Falls Road

La Grange, CA 95329

### **Bassett Memorial Library**

7971 Chilnualna Falls Road

Wawona, CA 9538

Drop off locations are also being explored in the Ponderosa Basin, Catheys Valley and Yosemite Valley areas.

## **Additional Considerations**

### **2-E Estimated Costs and Savings Under This Plan**

§4005(a)(10)(I)(v), §4005(g)(2)

The first implementation of the Voter's Choice Act is expected to result in cost savings in areas related to ballot printing and vote center staffing. Initial increased costs may occur with the purchase of new and/or additional equipment necessary to comply with the VCA. Following each election conducted under the Voter's Choice Act, beginning with the March 2020 Presidential Primary Election, an election cost comparison report will be prepared and posted on the Mariposa County website in an accessible format.

Estimated short-term costs include purchasing ballot on demand printers for all vote centers that will enable staff to print all ballot types within the county for that election. Included in short-term costs are the purchasing of laptop computers for vote center staff to have the ability to process voters directly in the election management system. Additional short-term costs include, but are not limited to, secure internet connections at all vote centers, extensive training for staff, purchasing of ballot drop boxes, and facility rentals.

Additional money allocated for voter outreach and education will contribute to on-going costs, as Mariposa County Elections plans to continue educating voters on voting processes and services available for the disability and language minority communities.

**Estimated Voter Education and Outreach costs for 2020 Primary and General Elections compared to 2018 General Election.**

<b>Outreach Expense</b>	<b>2018 General</b>	<b>2020 Primary</b>	<b>2020 General</b>
<b>Advertising/Notices</b>	\$2800	\$3500	\$3500
<b>In Office Materials</b>	\$140	\$250	\$250
<b>Outreach Postcards</b>	No Allocation	\$2000	\$2000
<b>Social Media</b>	No Allocation	No Allocation	No Allocation
<b>Outreach Events</b>	No Allocation	\$500	\$500
<b>Translation Services</b>	No Allocation	\$2500	\$2500

Mariposa County is fortunate enough to have a local newspaper that does a large portion of voter outreach in article form and therefore includes little to no cost to the County. Additionally, the Elections Department generally delivers outreach presentations at the pre-existing meetings of social, political, faith based groups and others, which also generates no cost outreach events. Anticipated long-term savings include decreased costs for equipment, including the purchasing of new equipment and equipment maintenance, ballot printing, and labor.



## 2-F After Election Activities

### **Address Significant Disparities in Voter Accessibility and Participation, as Required by Subdivision (g)**

§4005(a)(10)(l)(iii)

Following each election conducted under the Voter's Choice Act, Mariposa County Elections Department will review comments received from voters and will solicit input from community partners on data collected in compliance with

Section 4005(g). Reasonable efforts will be made to address significant disparities identified on an item by item basis.

**Assistance to the SOS with Report to the Legislature**

§4005(g)(1)(A)

**Provide Election Statistics to**

Statistical information will be provided to the Secretary of State, including the information listed in Section 4005(g).