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1. Purpose

This document supplements election code and regulations regarding ballot processing, focusing on the interface between VoteCal and the county Election Management System (EMS). It provides guidance on when a vote-by-mail (VBM), conditional voter registration (CVR) provisional, nonprovisional CVR (NCVR) aka "Instant CVR", regular provisional, vote center regular ballot, or polling place regular ballot is accepted/counted anywhere in the state and what information county elections officials must provide to VoteCal, via their EMS, to update VoteCal and facilitate the cross-county knowledge that a vote was accepted/counted.

2. Guiding Principle – "First in Wins"

First ballot in wins – This is defined as an accepted/counted vote documented in the EMS and sent to VoteCal. This could be a VBM ballot, CVR provisional ballot, "Instant CVR" ballot, regular provisional ballot, vote center regular ballot, or polling place regular ballot. This first ballot in is the ballot counted; any other ballot received for the voter should be rejected as "Voter already voted" by the county.

If a voter, during the conditional voter registration time period (re-registering after the registration cutoff date through election day), is a "poll voter" in the previous county (no VBM ballots issued), any ballot cast by that voter in the new county should be held until the previous county indicates that their poll history (i.e., rosters) has been uploaded to VoteCal (see Section 4. *Polling Place Roster Adjudication Status Dashboard - "Bingo Board"*).

3. "Lights" for Issuing and Counting

VoteCal supports validation checks by the county EMS for determining if a ballot (VBM, CVR provisional, "instant CVR", regular provisional, vote center regular ballot, or polling place regular ballot) has been accepted/counted for a voter for the election. The county EMS supports the following:

- Ability to do a validation check to VoteCal to determine if a ballot has been accepted/counted for a voter.
- Notification to prevent a ballot from being issued when a ballot has already been accepted/counted for a voter.
- Functionality to allow a user to override and issue a provisional ballot (CVR or regular) to a voter.

EMSs have implemented a three "traffic light" concept to inform the counties if the ballot can be issued and/or counted. Though the EMS implementation will vary, the "light" definitions are:

- **Issuing** Ballot "Lights" Definitions:

Ballot Issuance Lights	
Light Color	**Definition**
Red Light	The voter has already cast an "Accepted" ballot. County should not issue a vote center regular ballot, CVR ballot, or "Instant CVR" ballot and can choose to issue a regular provisional ballot.
Yellow Light	The voter has outstanding message(s) (such as Potential Duplicate or Merge Voter Determine Survivor) that should be worked before deciding to issue a ballot. County should work and resolve any outstanding messages sent to their county for this voter. This is critical as, if the resolution of the message results in a voter merge, the newly combined single voter record will show if the voter has cast a ballot anywhere else in the state.
Green Light	There are no red or yellow light issues. County can issue a ballot.

- **Counting** Ballot "Light" Definitions:

Ballot Counting Lights	
Light Color	**Definition**
Red Light	The voter has already cast an "Accepted" ballot. County should not count this ballot.
Yellow Light	The voter has outstanding message(s) (such as Potential Duplicate or Merged Voter Determine Survivor) OR voter is an existing registered "poll voter" in another county (defined as a voter who re-registered after the registration cutoff, came from another county, and has no VBM ballots issued). County should work any outstanding messages sent to their county for this voter and, if a "poll voter" in another county, check the "Bingo Board" to verify the voter did not choose to cast a ballot at the polls (explained in the next Section 4. *Polling Place Roster Adjudication Status Dashboard – 'Bingo Board'*) before counting the ballot.
Green Light	There are no red or yellow light issues. County can count ballot.

4. Polling Place Roster Adjudication Status Dashboard - "Bingo Board"

For each election, when a county has completed the polling place roster adjudication upload to VoteCal, please indicate completion within your EMS so that it is reflected in the Polling Place Roster Adjudication Status Dashboard aka "Bingo Board."

- Note: Voter's Choice Act (VCA) counties as well as all-mail counties should indicate that they have completed their roster adjudication within their EMS when the election is defined as these counties will not have any polling place ballots for the election.

VoteCal provides counties with a secured web portal containing the "Bingo Board" dashboard so that counties know when other counties have completed uploading their polling place Voter Participation History (VPH). Please note, this is not part of the county EMS, but a separate web application viewed via an internet browser. A county (County B) uses this "Bingo Board" to determine when to count a ballot that is showing a yellow light in the EMS because the voter is an existing registered "poll voter" in another county (County A). County B will view the dashboard for County A where the voter is an existing registered "poll voter."

- If County A shows a green checkmark on the dashboard, this means that the county has completed uploading their polling place VPH and the voter did not cast a poll ballot.
    - County B can count the ballot that is receiving a yellow light in the EMS.
- If County A shows a red "X" on the dashboard, this means that the county has not indicated that they have completed the upload of their polling place VPH, and it is unknown if the voter has cast a poll ballot.
    - County B must wait until County A shows a green checkmark on the dashboard.
- If County A shows a green checkmark on the dashboard and the voter DID cast a "poll" ballot, County B should see a red light in the EMS for that ballot.

To obtain access to the "Bingo Board" to view other counties' status, please do the following:

- Visit the following URL through an internet browser **on a workstation that routes traffic through the county's SOS router**: https://bingo.sos.ca.gov/?countycode=CountyName
    - Replace "CountyName" with your county name (removing any spaces in your county name).
        - For example, El Dorado County would replace "CountyName" with "eldorado" resulting in the following link:
            - URL: https://bingo.sos.ca.gov/?countycode=eldorado
    - Once your county's dashboard appears, enter the election date, and select the election to check polling place roster adjudication status for all counties.
- If you are having trouble accessing the "Bingo Board," please work with your county IT department and, if issues persist, please take a screenshot of the response you see (including

the address/URL at the top of the browser) and email the screenshot and any other pertinent information to VoteCalHelp@sos.ca.gov.

5. Election Setup

Prior to the election the VoteCal Helpdesk will provide a communication to counties to describe how to create the local election to be consistent with the state created election. The following fields will be specified:

- Election Name
- Election Type
- Election Date
- Election Registration Close Date
- Election Code

The county elections officials must ensure the EMS is configured to send ballot information to VoteCal automatically; the EMS implementation will vary.

Additionally, the county elections officials must ensure that if there are local values for ballot return method and ballot rejection reason codes in your EMS, that they are mapped to VoteCal standard values for sending to VoteCal.   Please contact your EMS for detailed information.

6. Vote-by-Mail Ballots

The county elections official should refer to Section 3. *"Lights" for Issuing and Counting* above to determine if a VBM ballot should be counted. Contact your EMS for assistance.

The county elections official must update the voter record in VoteCal, via the EMS, with the following data when a VBM ballot is issued within the EMS. Please note that "issued" does not mean the VBM has been mailed to the voter.

- Sent Date – Used to indicate the (approximate) date the ballot will be sent in the mail. The Sent Date is used to trigger the ballot tracking notification to the voter that the VBM has been mailed. Please refer to the Ballot Tracking guidance document, issue date July 20, 2021.
- Sent Method Code Description – A free form field indicating how a ballot was issued.
- Remote Access Vote-by-Mai (RAVBM) Indicator – This indicates if a VBM was delivered via Remote Access VBM or not.

The county elections official must update the voter record in VoteCal, via the EMS, with the following data when a VBM ballot is returned. These values entered via the EMS are updated in near-real time to VoteCal:

- Received Date
- VBM Return Method Code
    - Drop Box – Voter returned their VBM ballot at a designated unattended stand-alone county drop box location.
    - Drop Off Location –Voter returned their VBM ballot at the county office or in any designated county attended drop off location, such as at a polling place.
    - Vote Center Drop Off –Voter returned their VBM ballot at any VCA Vote Center Drop Off location.
    - Mail –Voter returned their VBM ballot via the mail.
    - Fax –Voter returned their VBM ballot via fax.
    - Non-Deliverable – There are two acceptable methods for a county to report undeliverable VBMs to VoteCal. One method is if the ballot was returned to the county but was not returned by the voter intending to cast a ballot. It was likely returned by the post office as undeliverable. The other method is for a county to reject the VBM with a reject reason of "Undeliverable".
    - Other –Voter returned their VBM ballot, but the rejection reason does not meet any of the above categories. It is expected that this category will not need to be used widely. In cases where this return method is needed more frequently, the SOS asks that the county contact the VoteCal Help Desk regarding the scenario where this is used.
- VBM Ballot Return Status
    - Accepted
    - Not Accepted
- VBM Ballot Reject Reason Code (required if VBM Ballot Return Status is not "Not Accepted") per California Code of Regulations (CCR) section 19092. Each reason will also determine if Message #1 – Contact County or Message #2 – Not Accepted is shown to a voter when accessing My Voter Status (MVS) page as indicated below:

VBM Reject Reason	MVS Message	Description
Voter already voted	Message #2 – Not Accepted	This reason code shall be used when rejecting a VBM ballot that was submitted by a voter when the voter already has an accepted or counted ballot in California for that election, when the voter has previously: (A) Voted at a location as provided in Elections Code section 338.5; (B) Returned a VBM ballot in California that was accepted by a county elections official; (C) Returned a provisional ballot that has been processed and counted in the same or another county; or (D) Returned a CVR provisional ballot that has been processed and counted in the same or another county.

VBM Reject Reason	MVS Message	Description
Ballot missing from envelope	Message #2 – Not Accepted	This reason code shall be used when the VBM ballot envelope did not contain a ballot.
Multiple ballots returned in one envelope	Message #2 – Not Accepted	This reason code shall be used when more than one VBM ballot is returned in an envelope.
Ballot was not received on time	Message #2 – Not Accepted	This reason code shall be used when a VBM ballot was postmarked after Election Day or was postmarked on or before Election Day and was received by the county elections office more than three days after the election or was delivered to the polls or vote center after the close of the polls on Election Day.
Missing or incorrect address on envelope	Message #2 – Not Accepted	This reason code shall be used when the address is missing from the VBM envelope or when the address does not match the registration record on file in the elections office.
No voter signature	Message #1 – Contact County	This reason code shall be used when the voter did not provide a signature on the VBM ballot envelope.
Non-matching signature	Message #1 – Contact County	This reason code shall be used when the voter provided a signature on the VBM ballot envelope that did not compare to the signature on file with the county.
No ID Provided	Message #1 – Contact County	This reason code shall be used in a federal election when a first-time registrant, who is also a first-time voter, did not provide a California driver license or state identification number or the last four (4) digits of their social security number when they registered to vote, pursuant to CCR § 19075, and they did not provide the information required by CCR § 20107, prior to the final adjudication of the ballot.
Please contact your county for further information	Message #1 – Contact County	The Reject reason "Please contact your county for further information" should only be used in situations where no other available reject reasons are applicable to the scenario. It is expected that this category will not need to be used widely. In cases where this rejection reason is needed more frequently, the SOS asks that the county contact the VoteCal Help Desk regarding the scenario where this is used.
VBM ballot was undeliverable	Message #1 – Contact County (Ballots not intended to be cast by Voter)	This reason code shall be used when the voter has not cast their VBM ballot and the VBM ballot is returned by the United States Postal Service and marked undeliverable. This is one of two acceptable methods for a county to report undeliverable VBMs to VoteCal. The other method is for a county to document the return of the VBM ballot with a return method of "Non-Deliverable".
Voter deceased	Message #2 – Not Accepted (Ballots not intended to be cast by Voter)	This reason code shall be used when it is determined that the voter was deceased prior to the signature on the envelope or when the ballot has been returned unvoted with a notation that the voter is deceased.

VBM Reject Reason	MVS Message	Description
VBM ballot canceled	Message #2 – Not Accepted (Ballots not intended to be cast by Voter)	This reason code is used when a voter has not cast their VBM ballot and the VBM ballot was voided, spoiled, or the VBM ballot was surrendered or suspended and re-issued.
In Review	No additional message (Temporary)	This is a temporary reason and cannot be used for final adjudication. Used when the county is reviewing the ballot for a potential challenge/rejection. Please note: Challenge data is changing daily as challenges get cured/accepted.

The VBM reject reason selected will be displayed to the voter in My Voter Status. The following two figures are screenshots of what is displayed to a voter when accessing MVS.

The next figure shows what is displayed for MVS Message #1 – Contact County highlighted in yellow:

Voting History

If you voted in an election, you can see if you voted at a polling place, vote center, voted by mail, or cast a provisional ballot.

If you do not see a recent election that you voted in, it may be because your county has not yet sent information about your ballot to the Secretary of State. Counties have up to 60 days after the election to provide this information to the Secretary of State.

Please note that any voting history prior to the November 6, 2016, General Election is not displayed on this website.

For the most up-to-date status, please contact your county elections office or use their online ballot status tool:
http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-status/

Select an election *   [02/11/2020 - BTRX ELECTION ∨]

Show Status

For this election, you were mailed a vote by mail ballot.

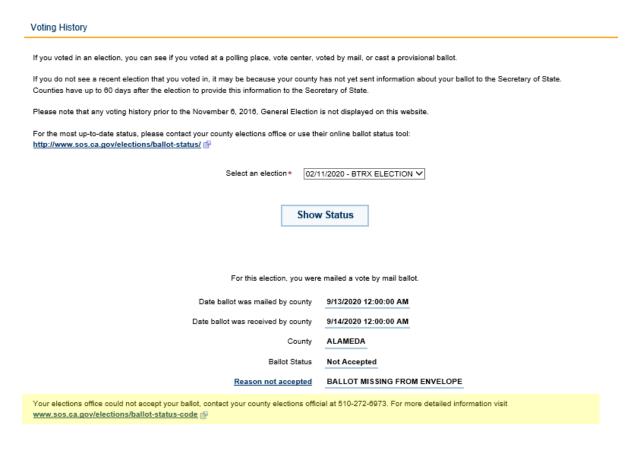|	
Date ballot was mailed by county	**9/13/2020 12:00:00 AM**
Date ballot was received by county	**9/14/2020 12:00:00 AM**
County	**ALAMEDA**
Ballot Status	**Contact Your County**
Reason not accepted	**NO ID PROVIDED**

You must immediately contact your county elections official at 510-272-6973. For more information visit www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-status-code

The next figure shows what is displayed for MVS Message #2 – Not Accepted highlighted in yellow:

Per CCR §, 19091(b)(3), each county must send VoteCal undeliverable information for all VBM's that are undeliverable. Please mark your VBMs received as undeliverable with a VBM Ballot Reject Reason of "VBM ballot was undeliverable" and/or a VBM Return Method of "Non-deliverable" to identify the VBM's that were returned by the post office or otherwise as undeliverable.

If the VBM ballot is returned and county has not finalized the ballot's adjudication, the VBM Return Status would be "Not Accepted" and VBM Ballot Rejection Reason Code would be "In Review". However, this is a temporary situation. The county elections official must resolve the "In Review" status within the canvass period.

The VPH Participation Method Code for all accepted VBM ballots must be "Vote-By-Mail".

For each voter that was issued a VBM ballot, the county elections official should verify that the county EMS updates at least one VBM ballot appropriately in VoteCal. The county elections official can utilize the "VoteCal Portal" or "Statewide Search" within the EMS to ensure that the ballot information was updated in VoteCal. Contact your EMS for assistance and/or check for related failure messages in the

EMS in the event the VBM ballot is not in VoteCal. See Section 15. *Ballot Statistics Report* for the process of verifying consistency of ballot and voter participation history data within the county and in VoteCal.

The voter's VBM ballot status, and if not accepted, the ballot rejection reason will display on the voter's My Voter Status page in near real time. See Section 14. *My Voter Status* for what is displayed in the event that a voter is issued or cast more than one ballot.

The Voter's ballot status and if a ballot is rejected or not will also impact ballot tracking messaging that is sent directly to the voter. Please refer to the Ballot Tracking guidance document for more detailed information.

7. Conditional Voter Registration Provisional Ballots

The county elections official should refer to Section 3. *"Lights" for Issuing and Counting* above to determine if a CVR provisional ballot should be issued and/or counted.

The following data must be updated in the voter record in the EMS when a CVR provisional ballot is counted per CCR § 20025:

- CVR Provisional Ballot Status
  - Counted
  - Not Counted

If the CVR provisional ballot is not counted, then the Ballot Reject Reason Code must be specified as one of the following codes per CCR § 20026:

CVR reject reason	Description
Voter already voted	This reason code shall be used when the voter has an accepted or counted ballot in California for that election, when the voter has previously: (A) voted at a location as provided in Elections Code section 338.5, (B) returned a vote-by-mail (VBM) ballot in California that was accepted by a county elections official, (C) returned a provisional ballot that has been processed and counted in the same or another county, or (D) returned a CVR provisional ballot that has been processed and counted in the same or another county.
No voter signature	This reason code shall be used when the voter did not provide a signature on the CVR provisional ballot envelope.

CVR reject reason	Description
Non-matching signature	This reason code shall be used when the voter provided a signature on the CVR provisional ballot envelope that did not compare to the signature on file with the county.
Ballot missing from envelope	This reason code shall be used when the CVR provisional ballot envelope did not contain a ballot.
Voter not registered	This reason code shall be used when the voter's record is in a deficient status pursuant to Elections Code section 2150 et seq., which means the registration does not contain the facts necessary to determine eligibility to vote, including name, place of residence and date of birth.
Envelope was incomplete and/or illegible	This reason code shall be used when the substantive information provided on the CVR provisional ballot envelope was missing or unclear.
No ID provided	This reason code shall be used in a federal election when a first-time registrant, who is also a first-time voter, did not provide a California driver license or state identification number or the last four (4) digits of their social security number when they registered to vote, pursuant to CCR § 19075, and they did not provide the information required by CCR § 20107, prior to the final adjudication of the ballot.
Please contact your county for further information	This reason code shall be used when the county rejection reason is not any of the other rejection reasons listed in this table. It is expected that this category will not need to be used widely. In cases where it is needed, the SOS asks that the county contact the VoteCal Help Desk regarding the scenario where this is used.
In Review	This is a temporary reason and cannot be used for final adjudication. Used when the county is reviewing the ballot for a potential challenge/rejection.

If the county has not adjudicated the CVR ballot, the CVR Provisional Ballot Status would be "Not Counted", and Ballot Reject Reason Code would be "In Review". However, this is a temporary situation. The county elections official must resolve the "In Review" status within the canvass period. The Reject reason "Please contact your county for further information" should only be used in situations where no other available reject reasons are applicable to the scenario.

The VPH Participation Method Code for counted CVR provisional ballots must be "CVR".

For each election, the county elections official should verify that the county EMS updates at least one CVR provisional ballot appropriately in VoteCal (if county issues a CVR provisional ballot). The county elections official can utilize the "VoteCal Portal" or "Statewide Search" within the EMS to ensure that the ballot information was updated in VoteCal. Contact your EMS for assistance and/or check for

related failure messages in the EMS in the event the ballot is not in VoteCal. See Section 15. *Ballot Statistics Report* for the process of verifying consistency of ballot and voter participation history data within the county and in VoteCal.

The voter's CVR provisional ballot status and, if not counted, the Ballot Reject Reason Code will display on the voter's My Voter Status page. This will be visible to voters in near real time. See Section 14. *My Voter Status* for what is displayed if a voter is issued or cast more than one ballot.

8. Regular Provisional Ballots

The following data must be updated in the voter record in the EMS when a regular provisional ballot is adjudicated using the following standard values:

- Provisional Ballot Status
    - Counted
    - Not Counted

If the regular provisional ballot is not counted, then the "reason" must also be specified as one of the below per CCR § 19094:

Provisional Ballot Not Counted Reason	Description
Voter already voted	This reason code shall be used when rejecting a provisional ballot that was submitted by a voter when the voter already has an accepted or counted ballot in California for that election, when the voter has previously: (A) Voted at a location as provided in Elections Code section 338.5; (B) Returned a VBM ballot in California that was accepted by a county elections official; (C) Returned a provisional ballot that has been processed and counted in the same or another county; or (D) Returned a CVR provisional ballot that has been processed and counted in the same or another county.
No voter signature	This reason code shall be used when the voter did not provide a signature on the provisional ballot envelope.
Non-matching signature	This reason code shall be used when the voter provided a signature on the provisional ballot envelope that did not compare to the signature on file with the county.
Ballot missing from envelope	This reason code shall be used when the provisional ballot envelope did not contain a ballot.

Voter not registered	This reason code shall be used when the voter's record is missing substantive information, which means the registration does not contain the facts necessary to determine eligibility to vote, including name, place of residence and date of birth.
Voted in wrong county	This reason code shall be used when a voter voted in a county where he/she was not registered.
Voted wrong ballot	This reason code shall be used when a voter voted a ballot that he/she is not eligible to vote.
Envelope was incomplete and/or illegible	This reason code shall be used when the substantive information provided on the provisional ballot envelope was missing or unclear.
No ID Provided	This reason code shall be used in a federal election when a first-time registrant, who is also a first-time voter did not provide a California driver license or state identification number or the last four (4) digits of their social security number when they registered to vote, pursuant to CCR § 19075, and they did not provide the information required by CCR § 20107, prior to the final adjudication of the ballot.
Please contact your county for further information (this is a temporary reason and cannot be used for final adjudication)	This reason code shall be used when the county rejection reason is not any of the other rejection reasons listed in this table. It is expected that this category will not need to be used widely. In cases where it is needed, the SOS asks that the county contact the VoteCal Help Desk regarding the scenario where this is used.
In Review	This is a temporary reason and cannot be used for final adjudication. Used when the county is reviewing the ballot for a potential challenge/rejection.

If the county has not adjudicated the regular provisional ballot, the Provisional Ballot Status would be "Not Counted", and Provisional Ballot Not Counted Reason Code would be "In Review". However, this is a temporary situation. The county elections official must resolve the "In Review" status within the canvass period. The Provisional Ballot Not Counted Reason Code "Please contact your county for further information" should only be used in situations where no other available reasons are applicable to the scenario.

The VPH Participation Method Code for counted provisional ballots must be "Vote Center" for VCA Vote Center counties and "Polling Place" for Polling Place counties.

For each election, the county elections official should verify that the county EMS updates at least one regular provisional ballot appropriately in VoteCal (if county issues a regular provisional ballot). The county elections official can utilize the "VoteCal Portal" or "Statewide Search" within the EMS to ensure that the ballot information was updated in VoteCal. Contact your EMS for assistance and/or check for

related failure messages in the EMS in the event the ballot is not in VoteCal. See Section 15. *Ballot Statistics Report* for the process of verifying consistency of ballot and voter participation history data within the county and in VoteCal.

The voter's regular provisional ballot status and, if not counted, the Provisional Ballot Not Counted Reason Code will display on the voter's My Voter Status page. This will be visible to voters in near real time. See Section 14. *My Voter Status* for what is displayed if a voter is issued or cast more than one ballot.

9. Nonprovisional CVR Ballots – "Instant CVR"

An "Instant CVR" ballot is issued to a voter when the county and voter meet the conditions outlined in CCROV 19125 (dated November 20, 2019) and the voter has not returned an accepted/counted ballot for the election anywhere in the state. The county elections official should refer to Section 3. *"Lights" for Issuing and Counting* above to determine if an "Instant CVR" ballot should be issued and/or counted.

When an "Instant CVR" ballot is issued, a VPH for that voter must be noted in the EMS and updated in VoteCal in near real time.

The VPH Participation Method Code for counted "Instant CVR" provisional ballots must be "Nonprovisional CVR".

For each election, the county elections official should verify that at least one voter's VPH record is updated appropriately in VoteCal. The county elections official can utilize the "VoteCal Portal" or "Statewide Search" within the EMS to ensure that the VPH information was updated in VoteCal. Contact your EMS for assistance and/or check for related failure messages in the EMS in the event the VPH is not in VoteCal. See Section 15. *Ballot Statistics Report* for the process of verifying consistency of voter participation history data within the county and in VoteCal.

The voter's "Instant CVR" ballot status will display on the voter's My Voter Status page. This will be visible to voters in near real time. See Section 14. *My Voter Status* for what is displayed if a voter is issued or cast more than one ballot.

10.   Vote Center Regular Ballots

A vote center regular ballot is issued to a voter who arrives at a VCA county's established vote center when the county elections official can verify that the voter is an eligible registered voter and has not returned an accepted/counted ballot for the election anywhere in the state. The county elections official should refer to Section 3. *"Lights" for Issuing and Counting* above to determine if a vote center regular ballot should be issued.

When a vote center regular ballot is issued, a VPH for that voter must be noted in the EMS and updated in VoteCal in near real time.

The VPH Participating Method Code for an issued/cast vote center regular ballot must be "Vote Center". Additionally, the vote center location at which the vote was cast must also be identified.

For each election, the county elections official should verify that at least one voter's VPH record is updated appropriately in VoteCal. The county elections official can utilize the "VoteCal Portal" or "Statewide Search" within the EMS to ensure that the VPH information was updated in VoteCal. Contact your EMS for assistance and/or check for related failure messages in the EMS in the event the VPH is not in VoteCal. See Section 15. *Ballot Statistics Report* for the process of verifying consistency of voter participation history data within the county and in VoteCal.

The voter's vote center ballot status will display on the voter's My Voter Status page. This will be visible to voters in near real time. See Section 14. *My Voter Status* for what is displayed if a voter is issued or cast more than one ballot.

11.   Polling Place Regular Ballots

Once the county elections official has completed uploading all polling place roster adjudication history to VoteCal, the elections official indicates through the EMS interface that they are complete so other counties can access this information via the dashboard "Bingo Board." For more information see Section 4. *Polling Place Roster Adjudication Status Dashboard – "Bingo Board"* above.

The VPH Participation Method Code for counted regular polling place ballots must be "Polling Place" for Polling Place counties.

For each election, the county elections official should verify that at least one voter's VPH record is updated appropriately in VoteCal. The county elections official can utilize the "VoteCal Portal" or "Statewide Search" within the EMS to ensure that the VPH information was updated in VoteCal. Contact your EMS for assistance and/or check for related failure messages in the EMS in the event the VPH is not in VoteCal. See Section 15. *Ballot Statistics Report* for the process of verifying consistency of voter participation history data within the county and in VoteCal.

The voter's polling place ballot status will display on the voter's My Voter Status page. This will be visible once the voter's VPH has been uploaded to VoteCal. See Section 14. *My Voter Status* for what is displayed if a voter is issued or cast more than one ballot.

12.   Summary of ballot processing validation points

During the election period Counties should verify that:

- VBM ballots for UOCAVA voters are issued no later than E-45 for UOCAVA voters.

- VBM ballots for regular voters are issued no later than E-25 for all VBM voters.
- VBM return method of "Vote Center Drop Off" is only used by VCA counties.
- VBM return method of "other" is only used in unique cases when no other return methods are applicable.
- Counties report undelivered VBM ballots to VoteCal at E-15 and finish reporting all undeliverable VBM's by the end of the canvass period.
- Counties report in near real-time all ballot and VPH data.
- Counties limit the use of "Please contact your county for further information" ballot reject reasons for only scenarios that are not applicable to any other available reject reason.
- Counties are not using the temporary VBM reject reason "In Review" after the canvass period closes.

The Secretary of State VoteCal Help Desk will be notifying counties if VoteCal data suggest that these validation points are not being met. See Section 15. *Ballot Statistics Report* for the process of verifying consistency of ballot and voter participation history data within the county and in VoteCal.

13.　　Voter Participation History

The county elections officials will apply the VPH to the voter record in the EMS to indicate voter credit (voter cast an accepted/counted vote). The VPH is sent to VoteCal in near real-time after the ballot has been accepted/counted and this impacts:

- The messages that are sent to voters that have signed up for ballot tracking. Please refer to the Ballot Tracking guidance document for more information.
- The information of voting status available to voters on My Voter Status.
- The data available to the public via Public Voter Registration Data Requests.
- Informs other counties that the voter has cast an accepted/counted ballot.

If a voter casts a vote center regular ballot or a Nonprovisional CVR (aka "Instant CVR") ballot, there is no associated ballot information for that voter sent to VoteCal to inform other counties that the voter cast a ballot. For this reason, it is especially important for the VPH for these types of votes to be sent to VoteCal immediately.

13.1　　Review of VPH Methods

- <u>VBM Ballots</u> – If a VBM ballot has been returned and the county elections official has accepted the ballot, the VPH Participation Method must be "VBM". This VPH record must be sent to VoteCal in near real-time after the ballot has been accepted/counted.
- <u>CVR Provisional Ballots</u> – If a CVR provisional ballot has been cast and the county elections official has counted the ballot, the VPH Participation Method must be "CVR". This VPH record must be sent to VoteCal in near real-time after the ballot has been accepted/counted.

- Nonprovisional CVR (NCVR) Ballots - "Instant CVR" – If an "Instant CVR" ballot has been cast, the VPH Participation Method must be "Nonprovisional CVR". This VPH record must be sent to VoteCal immediately so other counties will know that the voter has cast a ballot for this election.
- Vote Center Regular Ballots – If a vote center ballot is cast, the VPH Participation Method must be "Vote Center", and the vote center location where the voter cast their vote must be specified. This VPH record must be sent to VoteCal immediately so other counties will know that the voter has cast a ballot for this election.
- Regular Provisional Ballots – If a regular provisional ballot has been cast and the county elections official has counted the ballot, the VPH Participation Method must reflect where the regular provisional ballot was cast. For example:
    - If the voter cast the regular provisional ballot at a polling place in a non-VCA county, the VPH Participation Method would be "Polling Place".
    - If the voter cast the regular provisional ballot at a VCA county's vote center, the VPH Participation Method would be "Vote Center".
    The associated VPH record must be sent to VoteCal in near real-time after the ballot has been accepted/counted.
- Polling Place Regular Ballots – If a polling place regular ballot has been cast, the VPH Participation Method must be "Polling Place". This VPH record must be sent to VoteCal after the polls open on Election Day.

14.   My Voter Status

My Voter Status presents a voter's participation for each election. For example, if a voter is issued a VBM ballot in one county but casts a vote center regular ballot instead or perhaps casts a CVR provisional ballot in another county, My Voter Status will use a hierarchy to determine which ballot or VPH information is presented to the voter for that election.

This hierarchy is used for all methods of voting, such as VBM, CVR, "Instant CVR", regular provisional, vote center regular, or polling place regular anywhere in the state.

In the event VoteCal receives multiple ballots or VPH for a voter, My Voter Status determines what is presented to the voter in the following order:

1. The first ballot returned and "Accepted" or VPH record received in VoteCal.
2. If no ballot has been "Accepted" and no VPH record has been received in VoteCal, My Voter Status determines what is presented in the following order:
    a. The first ballot returned where ballot return status is "Not Accepted" and ballot reject reason is "In Review".
    b. The first ballot returned where ballot return status is "Not Accepted" and ballot reject reason is something other than "In Review".

     c.   The last ballot sent to voter.

Tie Breaker Rules

If there is a tie when there are multiple ballots rejected with the same return status and date, VoteCal needs to be able to determine which ballot to present to the voter in My Voter Status. VoteCal will do the following:

- Rule #1: My Voter Status would present whichever ballot exists in VoteCal for the voter in the following order: VBM, CVR, then regular provisional.
- Rule #2: If there's a tie using Rule #1 (e.g., two VBM ballots with the same return status and date), then My Voter Status presents to the voter the first record received at VoteCal.

15.   Ballot Statistics Report

To ensure that processes outlined in this guidance document are being followed consistently and that accurate data (that can be used by counties and the SOS) is reflected in VoteCal, the SOS and counties will provide checks and balances on this data. This process includes SOS regularly providing a Ballot Statistics Report (BSR) to counties for county verification. The BSR will be sent to counties starting at or before E-15 prior to an election and will continue to be sent throughout at least the canvass period for that election (E+30 for statewide elections and E+10 for special elections). This process will be managed for all statewide and special elections.

This process is critical to counties and the SOS as ballot and voter participation history data is used widely to affirm overall strategy and approach to California elections. This data is specifically used to:

- direct communications to the public and press,
- establish and confirm county logistics,
- provide information to respond to advocacy groups,
- support timely and accurate notifications to voters, and
- provide accurate data to make decisions regarding issuing and counting ballots.

This process includes:

1. The SOS creating a BSR containing ballot and vote statistics and discrepancies by county.
2. The SOS staff distributing the BSR regularly in an email to counties involved in the election.
3. County staff working with their EMS to ensure accuracy and to address any discrepancies.

Statistics included in the BSR for each county are as follows:

- Count of VBMs Issued returned and accepted along with counts for, return type, and rejections by rejection reason.

- Counts for Ballots cast at the polls (including voter centers, ROV offices, early voting locations, and/or ROV satellite offices).
    - These counts include regular polling place / vote center votes, provisional ballots cast, provisional CVR ballots cast, and "Instant CVR".
    - Included are counts of provisional and CVR rejected ballots by reject reason.
- Total unofficial statistics including total turnout rate.
- Discrepancies identified between Ballot and Voter Participation History data sent to VoteCal by counties.
- Discrepancies identified between Statement of Vote data provided by counties and vote totals sent to VoteCal by counties.

It is the SOS's responsibility to prepare and provide these statistics and the Counties responsibility to compare them to local county vote/ballot statistics to ensure the accuracy. Counties are also responsible for resolving any discrepancies identified. If ballot/vote counts discrepancies are identified and cannot be resolved, the county should immediately communicate these to the VoteCal team at VoteCalBallotProcessing@sos.ca.gov and the appropriate EMS support / help desk for support in reaching a resolution.

VoteCal Contact Information:

For questions or to report issues, contact the SOS VoteCal Help Desk at 888-868-3225 or via email at VoteCalHelp@sos.ca.gov.