



Guidance: National Change of Address

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Beginning in May 2015, as counties came online with VoteCal, forwarding addresses obtained from the National Change of Address (NCOA) for voter's residential and mailing addresses began to be processed in VoteCal and received by the local county Election Management Systems (EMSs) as NCOA Potential Address Change EMS Messages (referenced in this document as "NCOA Message"). VoteCal's August 2020 code release shepherded in changes on how NCOA potential address changes are processed.

This guidance document describes how VoteCal obtains NCOA potential address changes for an active voter's residential and mailing address, how VoteCal provides the NCOA potential address change to the counties via their EMS, and the options counties have to respond to the NCOA potential address change for a voter's residential and mailing addresses via their EMS system. Please contact your EMS vendor for specifics on processes, terminology, screens, and usage pertaining to NCOA processing in your EMS.

For the purposes of this guidance document:

- County A is the voter's current county.
- County B is the county where the NCOA forwarding address is located.
- County C is another county where NCOA forwarding address may actually be located.

The NCOA functionality includes:

- Secretary of State (SOS) requesting NCOA extract files of active registered voters' residential and mailing addresses from VoteCal for each county. The active registered voters are voter registration records with a voter status of "Active".
- SOS sending NCOA extract files of residential and mailing addresses to the Employment Development Department (EDD) to produce NCOA response files using address changes provided by the United States Postal Service (USPS).
- SOS receiving NCOA response files from EDD.
- VoteCal evaluating the results from the NCOA files and rejecting invalid results, such as address changes previously received and address changes that are older than most recent changes applied for a voter.
- VoteCal sending an NCOA Message to county's EMS.
- County responding to a voter's NCOA Message via their EMS.
- VoteCal processing the county's response and based on county's NCOA disposition, updating the voter record accordingly.

County's EMS receives the following information in each NCOA Message from VoteCal:

- The voter's VoteCal ID and the current county for the voter.
- An indication if the NCOA forwarding address provided was from the voter's residential or mailing address.



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- The voter's address that was sent to EDD/NCOA to match against the NCOA database of USPS forwarding addresses.
- The standardized address used by EDD/NCOA to match against the NCOA database of USPS forwarding addresses.
- The forwarding address found in the NCOA database for the voter's residential or mailing address.
- The forwarding address effective month and year per the NCOA database.
 - please refer to the Updating Voter Registration Dates guidance document revision date June 10, 2021 which indicates the effective registration date for a residential address update, based on an NCOA Message, is the first day of the month and year provided as the forwarding address effective date.

Each NCOA Message sent to the county EMS requires a response. The county determines which NCOA disposition code (aka county action) to apply to each NCOA forwarding address found for a voter's residential and/or mailing address. Listed below are the valid VoteCal NCOA disposition codes.

Please note that your county EMS may have local verbiage and processes that correspond to these VoteCal NCOA disposition codes and may have automated some or all of the response process for specific scenarios. Please reach out to your EMS to understand your EMS's terminology and functionality as it relates to these VoteCal NCOA disposition codes:

1. **Move Ignored** – County chooses not to use the NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's residential or mailing address because county has newer information than the NCOA Message provides by the time the county works the NCOA Message.
2. **In-County Move** – County accepts the new NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's residential address which moves the voter to a new residential address within the same county.
3. **Potential Move Out of State** (previously known as Potential Out of County Move) – County accepts the NCOA forwarding address for a voter's residential address that is in another state which inactivates the voter.
4. **Address Not In County** – County A (or B) notices that the forwarding address for a voter's residential address is not in their county, selects a new county (County B or C) which sends the NCOA Message to County B (or C). This can happen when Accumail determines an incorrect county based on the forwarding address or when another county has forwarded the NCOA Message to an incorrect county. If County A is selecting this disposition, a new county (County B) must be chosen. If County B is selecting this disposition and declines to provide a "send to" county (County C), the NCOA Message will be sent to the voter's current county (County A).
5. **Address Rejected** – County has determined that the NCOA forwarding address, for a voter's residential address received for a voter not yet in their county, is an address within their county but cannot be used as a voter's residential address. For example, the address is to a PO Box. The NCOA Message will be sent to the voter's current county (County A).



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6. **Potential Move No Forwarding Address** – Voter's current county (County A) determines that the forwarding address for a voter's residential address is not a valid residential address or is unable to precinct address, or another county (County B or C) has rejected the forwarding address for a residential address for a voter in County A or determined address not in County B or C and no forwarding county can be determined. County A is encouraged to reach out to the voter via phone or email, if available, or per NVRA, County A inactivates voter and sends 2225c notice/8d2 card.
7. **Cross County NCOA Accepted** – County B (or C) determines that the NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's residential address is a valid address in their county. County assigns precinct and indicates the Cross County NCOA is accepted. VoteCal moves voter from County A to County B.
8. **Mailing Address Update** – County A updates mailing address because forwarding address is based on voter's mailing address or forwarding address is based on voter's residential address where county decides to update mailing address instead of residential address. EMS will update voter's mailing address based on the NCOA address and send the mailing address update to VoteCal.

The following four (4) figures depict and further detail the steps and flow of the NCOA process:

- **Figure 1: NCOA Processing at VoteCal**– describes the extraction of the voter information from VoteCal through VoteCal evaluating the results received from EDD/NCOA.
- **Figure 2: NCOA Processing – VoteCal Determines which County to Send NCOA Message** – describes how VoteCal determines to which county to send the NCOA Message.
- **Figure 3: NCOA Processing – County A Possible Responses** – depicts the flow based on the six (6) potential NCOA responses that voter's current county (County A) can select (County Actions) to an NCOA Message.
- **Figure 4: NCOA Processing – County B (or C) Possible Responses** – depicts the flow based on the four (4) potential NCOA responses that County B (or County C) can select (County Actions) to an NCOA Message.

After the figures, **Table 1 - NCOA Activities** provides more details on the specifics of what happens and the interaction between counties and VoteCal based on the county action.



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Figure 1: NCOA Processing at VoteCal

Voter Extract, EDD / NCOA Processing to Obtain Potential Address Forwarding, VoteCal Initial File Processing

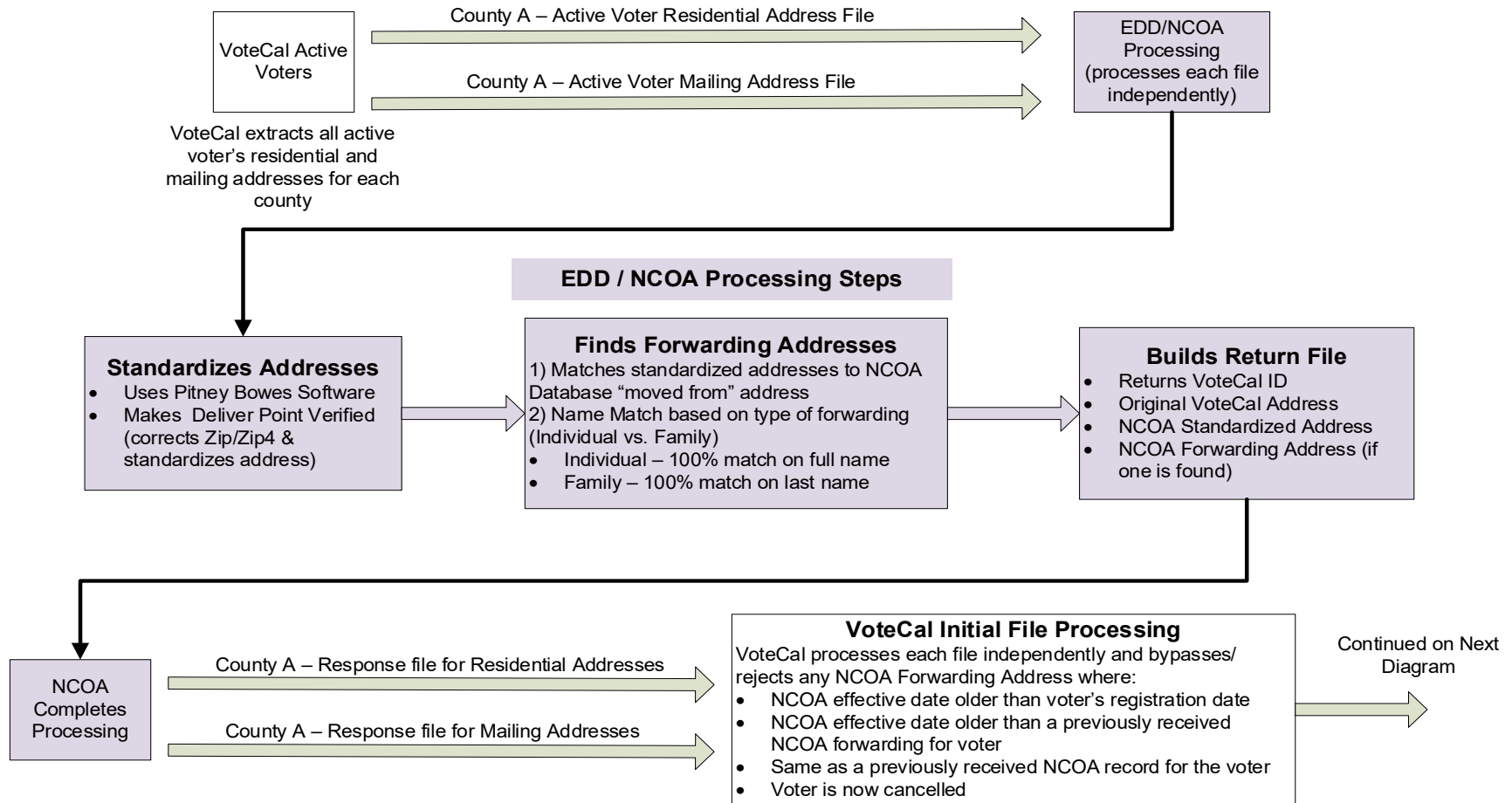


Figure updated on 3/17/2021



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Once VoteCal completes the initial file processing and determines NCOA Message needs to be sent to a county, it must determine to which county to send. Figure 2 describes how VoteCal determines to which county to send the NCOA Message:

Figure 2: NCOA Processing – VoteCal Determines which County to Send NCOA Message

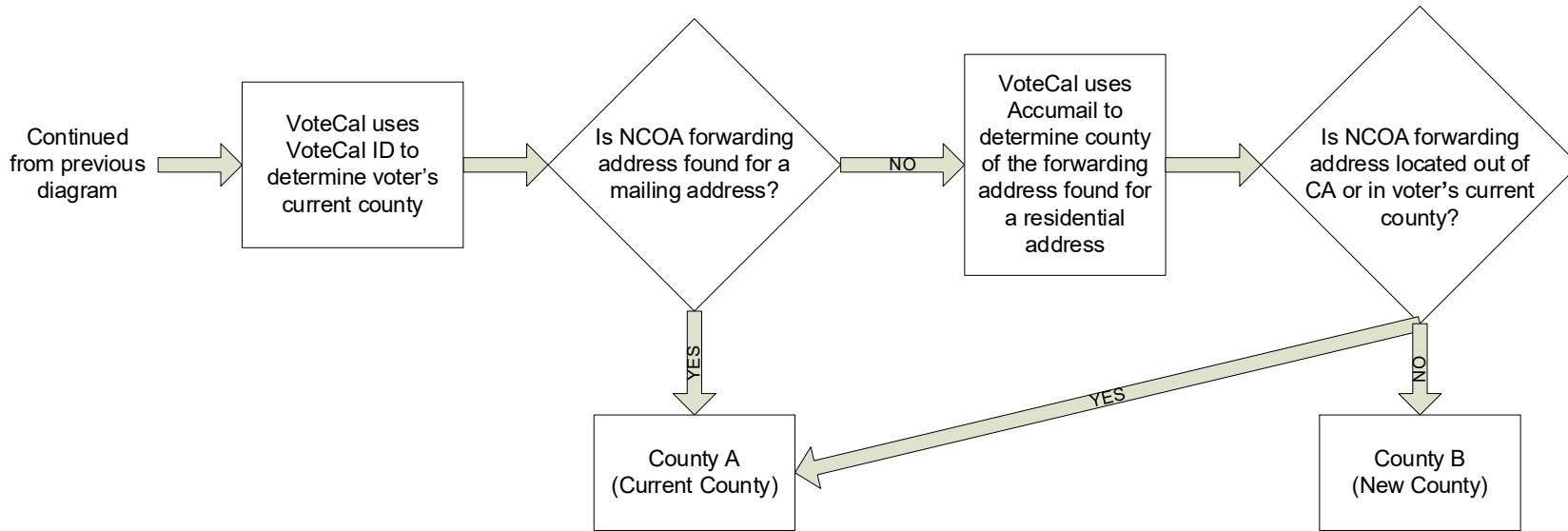


Figure updated on 3/17/2021

- If the NCOA forwarding address file contains voter mailing addresses, the NCOA forwarding address obtained from the voter's mailing address will be sent to the county who currently has the voter (County A).
- If the NCOA forwarding address file contains voter residential addresses, VoteCal determines the county that receives the forwarding address information based on the location of the forwarding address provided by NCOA.
 - If the forwarding address indicates the voter is moving within their current county or out of the State, VoteCal sends the NCOA Message to the voter's current county (County A).
 - If the forwarding address indicates the voter is moving to another county within the state, VoteCal sends the NCOA Message to the county of the forwarding address (County B).



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Please note that since VoteCal extracts the voter's residential and mailing addresses separately and receives forwarding addresses for each of these addresses separately, it is possible for a County EMS to receive two separate NCOA Messages for the same voter (one forwarding address for voter's residential address, and another forwarding address for the voter's mailing address). The voter may have chosen to forward both their residential and mailing address to the same new address indicating that the voter has moved and is no longer choosing to have a mailing address separate from their residential address. The voter may also have chosen to forward both their residential and mailing addresses to different new addresses. When both a voter's residential and mailing address receive forwarding addresses during the same month, it may be helpful to review both NCOA Messages together.

Figure 3 depicts the flow based on the six (6) potential NCOA responses that voter's current county (County A) can select (County Actions) to an NCOA Message:



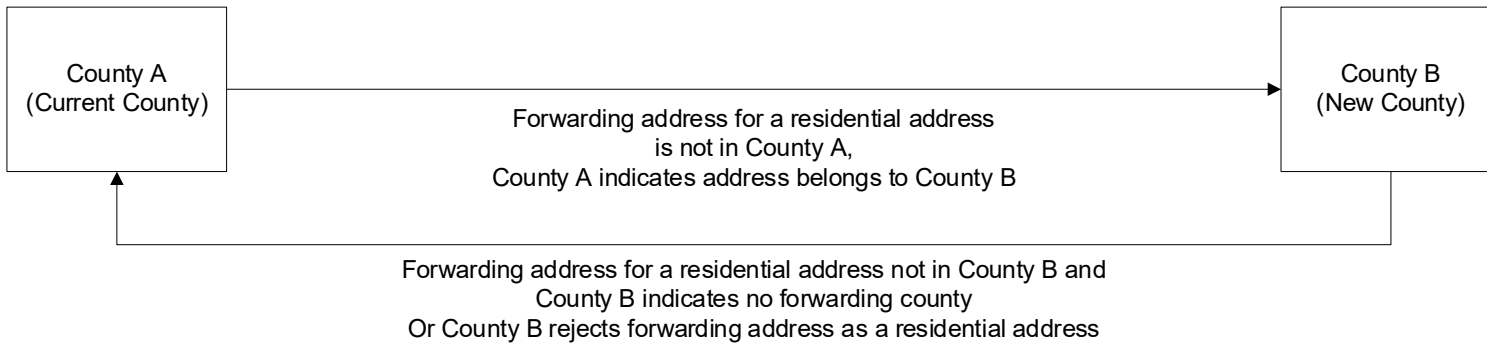
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Figure 3: NCOA Processing – County A Possible Responses



NCOA responses that County A can select (County Actions):

- **Move Ignore** – County A chooses to ignore NCOA Message because voter’s registration or address information is newer than the NCOA Message address by the time the county works the NCOA Message. No notice sent.
- **In-County Move** – County A accepts the NCOA Message’s forwarding address for a voter’s residential address and assigns precinct which will move the voter to a new residential address within the county. County A sends 2225b notice.
- **Potential Move Out of State** – County A accepts the NCOA Message’s forwarding address for a voter’s residential address that is in another state. County A sends 2225c notice/8d2 card.
- **Address Not In County** – County A notices that the forwarding address for a voter’s residential address is not in their county and sends the NCOA Message to the correct county (County B). County A must include county to forward to (County B). No notice sent by County A.
- **Mailing Address Update** – County A updates mailing address because forwarding address is based on voter’s mailing address or forwarding address is based on voter’s residential address where county decides to update mailing address instead of residential address. EMS will update voter’s mailing address based on the NCOA address and send the mailing address update to VoteCal.
- **Potential Move No Forwarding Address** – County A determines that the forwarding address for a voter’s residential address is not a valid residential address or County A is unable to precinct address, or County B has rejected address or determined address not in County B and no forwarding county can be determined. County A is encouraged to reach out to the voter via phone or email, if available, or per NVRA, County A inactivates voter and sends 2225c notice/8d2 card.

Figure updated on 3/17/2021



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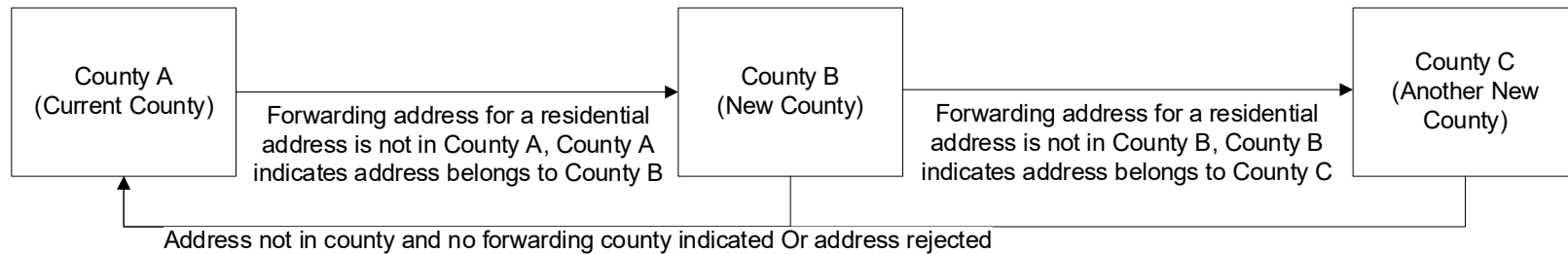
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Figure 4 depicts the flow based on the four (4) potential NCOA responses that County B (or County C) can select (County Actions) to an NCOA Message. The NCOA Message may come directly from VoteCal to County B if forwarding address for a voter’s residential address is found to be in a county (County B) other than the voter’s current county (County A) or may be sent by County B to County C if County B discovered the forwarding address was not in their county but belonged to a neighboring county (County C).

Figure 4: NCOA Processing – County B (or C) Possible Responses



NCOA responses that County B (or C) can select (County Actions):

- **Cross County NCOA Accepted** – County B (or C) determines the NCOA Message’s forwarding address for a voter’s residential address is a valid residential address in their county. County assigns precinct and indicates the Cross County NCOA is accepted. VoteCal moves voter from County A to County B (or C depending on county accepting the new address). County B (or C) sends 2225b notice.
- **Move Ignore** – County B (or C) chooses to ignore NCOA message because voter’s registration or address information is newer than the NCOA Message address by the time the county works the NCOA Message. No notice sent by County B (or C).
- **Address Not In County** – County B (or C) notices that the forwarding address for a residential address is not in their county and either sends the NCOA Message to the correct county (County C or another county), or indicates address not in their county without specifying a new county and NCOA record sent back to County A. No notice sent by County B (or C).
- **Address Rejected** – County B (or C) determines forwarding address for a residential address is in County B (or C) but cannot be precincted (e.g., the address is a P.O. Box). County B (or C) rejects NCOA record which is then sent back to County A. No notice sent by County B (or C).

Figure updated on 3/17/2021



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Table 1 provides more details on NCOA activities and interaction between counties and VoteCal. Some of the county steps in the “Process” column may be automated by the local county EMS, such as assigning a precinct and standardizing addresses. This table also indicates what happens at VoteCal when a county selects each of the NCOA disposition options.

Table 1 - NCOA Activities

ACTIVITY	PROCESS
SOS Requests NCOA Extract from VoteCal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly, SOS VoteCal Helpdesk (VCHD) staff requests NCOA extracts of active registered voters from VoteCal for each county. VCHD extracts the county files throughout the month based on a set schedule. Depending on the county, voters may be extracted in the first, second or third week of the month. • VoteCal produces two extract files per county: one containing residential addresses for each active voter in the county and the other containing mailing addresses for each active voter in the county. • VCHD staff sends the two extract files per county to EDD.
EDD/NCOA Processes each County File against the NCOA Database of USPS Forwarding addresses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDD/NCOA processes each file received individually. • EDD/NCOA standardizes and matches each address provided in each file against the NCOA database containing the last 18 months of NCOA forwarding data from USPS, searching for matches of the voter record to the address change data. • EDD/NCOA matches the standardized address against the “moved from” addresses on the NCOA database, and voter’s name based on the type of forwarding address (Individual vs. Family): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual – matches to voter’s full name ○ Family – matches to voter’s last name • EDD sends the NCOA response files back to SOS providing a forwarding address if one is found.
VoteCal Processes NCOA Response Files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VoteCal evaluates the results from the NCOA processing and rejects invalid results, such as address changes previously received and address changes that are older than the most recent changes received for a voter. • VoteCal sends a message to the appropriate county EMS with the potential address changes for each voter’s address that was found as a NCOA match. • A single voter may have up to two (2) NCOA Messages, one forwarding address found for the voter’s residential address and another forwarding address found for the voter’s mailing address. • The following types of forwarding addresses are sent to the voter’s current county: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forwarding address found for a voter’s mailing address.



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ACTIVITY	PROCESS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Forwarding address found for a voter's residential address when the forwarding address is determined to be in the voter's current county or out of state.● When the forwarding address found for a voter's residential address is determined to be in a California county other than the voter's current county, the address is sent to the county of the forwarding address. <p>The EMS message type is "NCOA Potential Address Change", referred to in this document as "NCOA Message".</p>
County Determines NCOA Disposition is MOVE IGNORED	<p>County reviews NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's residential or mailing address and determines that county has more current information for the voter than is on the NCOA message. This can happen if voter record is updated before county works NCOA message. County via their EMS responds with a VoteCal NCOA Disposition of "Move Ignored".</p> <p>County:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives NCOA Message.2. Compares the address forwarding information and effective date to the voter registration record.3. Determines that the NCOA Message is no longer current and that the voter's residential or mailing address will not be updated.4. Marks the NCOA Message as VoteCal NCOA Disposition "Move Ignored". This NCOA disposition is available for forwarding addresses for a voter's residential or mailing address. <p>VoteCal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives the NCOA Message response from the county EMS and notates that the NCOA Message was given a disposition of "Move Ignored".2. Notates the county's NCOA response in the voter activity log for that registrant with NCOA Disposition of "Move Ignored".
County Determines NCOA Disposition is IN-COUNTY MOVE	<p>County reviews NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's residential address and determines that the voter has moved to a new address within their county. The county standardizes the new residential address and provides a precinct. County via their EMS responds with a VoteCal NCOA Disposition of "In-County Move".</p> <p>County:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives NCOA Message.2. Compares the forwarding address information and effective date to the voter registration record.3. Determines that the NCOA Message forwarding address is a valid in-county move.



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ACTIVITY	PROCESS
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Marks the NCOA Message as VoteCal NCOA Disposition “In-County Move”.5. Provides a standardized address and voter precinct.6. County EMS sends voter update and NCOA Message response to VoteCal. <p><u>VoteCal:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives the NCOA Message response and voter updates from the county EMS and notates that the NCOA Message was given a disposition of “In-County Move”.2. VoteCal updates voter residential address and precinct based on the NCOA Message response information.3. Updates the Registration date using the 1st day of the NCOA effective month and year indicated in the NCOA Message consistent with the Update Registration Date Guidance Document.4. Updates the Registration Source Code to “National Change of Address (NCOA)”.5. Notates the county’s NCOA response in the voter activity log for that registrant with NCOA Disposition of “In-County Move”.
County Determines NCOA Disposition is POTENTIAL MOVE OUT OF STATE	<p>County reviews NCOA Message’s forwarding address for a voter’s residential address and determines that the voter has moved to a new address outside of the state. The county via their EMS responds with a VoteCal NCOA Disposition of “Potential Move Out of State”. This NCOA disposition is only available to the voter’s current county (County A) for forwarding addresses obtained from a voter’s residential address.</p> <p><u>County:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives NCOA Message.2. Compares the forwarding address information and effective date to the voter registration record.3. Determines that the NCOA Message forwarding address is a valid out of state move.4. Marks the NCOA Message as VoteCal NCOA Disposition “Potential Move Out of State”.5. Inactivates voter and sends 2225c/8d2 Notice to voter.6. County EMS sends voter update and NCOA Message response to VoteCal. <p><u>VoteCal:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives the NCOA Message response and voter updates from the county EMS and notates that the NCOA message was given a disposition of “Potential Move Out of State”.2. Flags that a “Move out of State” Change of Address (CAN) notice is required (aka 2225c/8d2).



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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Notates the county's NCOA response in the voter activity log for that registrant with NCOA Disposition of "Potential Move Out of State".
County Determines NCOA Disposition is ADDRESS NOT IN COUNTY	<p>County reviews NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's residential address and determines that the voter's forwarding address is not in their county. County via their EMS responds with a VoteCal NCOA Disposition of "Address Not in County". This NCOA disposition is available for forwarding addresses obtained for a voter's residential address. When the County A uses this disposition, the "send to" county (County B) must be provided. If Accumail has sent the NCOA Potential Address Change to County B, the "send to" county (County C) does not need to be specified. When County C is not specified, the NCOA Message is sent to County A.</p> <p>County:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives NCOA Message.2. Determines the forwarding address for the residence address is not in county.3. Marks the NCOA Message as VoteCal NCOA Disposition "Address Not in County".4. If county taking action is County A, "send to" county (County B) must also be specified. Otherwise "send to" county is optional and can be provided if county knows the correct county for the forwarding address.5. County EMS sends NCOA Message response to VoteCal. <p>VoteCal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives the NCOA Message response from the county EMS and notates that the NCOA Message was given a disposition of "Address Not in County".2. If "send to" county has been indicated, VoteCal sends the NCOA Message to the "send to" county.3. If "send to" county is not indicated, VoteCal sends the NCOA Message to the voter's county (County A).
County Determines NCOA Disposition is ADDRESS REJECTED	<p>County B reviews NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's residential address and determines that although the forwarding address is in their county, the address cannot be precincted as a voter's residential address (such as a PO Box or an address that is not a valid residence address). County B, via their EMS, responds with a VoteCal NCOA Disposition of "Address Rejected". This NCOA disposition is only available for use by a county other than the voter's current county.</p> <p>County:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives NCOA Message.2. Determines the forwarding address for the residence address is in county but county is not able to determine a precinct.3. Marks the NCOA Message as VoteCal NCOA Disposition "Address Rejected".



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	<p>4. County EMS sends NCOA Message response to VoteCal.</p> <p><u>VoteCal:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receives NCOA Message response message from the county EMS and notates that the NCOA Message was given a disposition of "Address Rejected". 2. VoteCal Sends the NCOA Message to the voter's county (County A).
<p>County Determines NCOA Disposition is POTENTIAL MOVE NO FORWARDING ADDRESS</p>	<p>County A reviews NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's residential address and determines that the forwarding address is not a valid residential address or is unable to precinct address. The NCOA Message may have received a disposition in another county (County B or C) to be "Address not in County" or "Address Rejected" and returned to the voter's county (County A). County A, via their EMS, responds with a VoteCal NCOA Disposition of "Potential Move No Forwarding Address". This NCOA disposition is only available to County A for forwarding addresses obtained from a voter's residential address. County A is encouraged to reach out to the voter via phone or email, if available, or per NVRA, County A inactivates voter and sends 2225c notice/8d2 card.</p> <p><u>County:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receives NCOA Message. 2. Compares the address change information and effective date to the voter registration record. 3. Determines that the forwarding address found for a residential address is not valid. For example: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. County B or C indicated address was in their county but rejected the address as it was not able to be precincted (such as a PO Box or address invalid as a residence). b. County B or C, as determined by Accumail, indicated address not in their county and the county of the forwarding address cannot be determined. c. County A is not able to precinct the forwarding address in their county. 4. County A determines not to updated voter's mailing address with the NCOA forwarding address from a voter's residential address (e.g., voter already has an existing mailing address and determines not to replace the mailing address with the NCOA Message forwarding address). 5. Marks the NCOA Message as VoteCal NCOA Disposition "Potential Move No Forwarding Address". 6. County A is encouraged to reach out to the voter via phone or email, if available, or per NVRA county inactivates voter and send 2225c notice/8d2 card. 7. County EMS sends NCOA Message response to VoteCal. <p><u>VoteCal:</u></p>



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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives NCOA Message response message from the county EMS and notates that the NCOA Message was given a disposition of "Potential Move No Forwarding Address".2. Receives the voter update and applies all changes to VoteCal.3. Notates the county's NCOA response in the voter activity log for that registrant with NCOA Disposition of "Potential Move No Forwarding Address".
County Determines NCOA Disposition is CROSS COUNTY NCOA ACCEPTED	<p>County B or C reviews NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's residential address (for a voter that is not currently in their county) and determines that the voter has moved to a new address within their county. County B or C standardizes the new residential address and provides a precinct for the new address. County, via their EMS, responds with a VoteCal NCOA Disposition of "Cross County NCOA Accepted". This disposition is only valid if the county is not the voter's current county (County A).</p> <p>County:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives NCOA Message.2. Determines that the NCOA Message forwarding address is a valid residential address in County.3. Marks the NCOA Message as VoteCal NCOA Disposition "Cross County NCOA Accepted".4. Provides a standardized address and voter precinct.5. County EMS sends voter update and NCOA Message response to VoteCal. <p>VoteCal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives the NCOA Message response from the county EMS and notates that the NCOA Message was given a disposition of "Cross County NCOA Accepted".2. VoteCal moves the voter to County B or C, letting County A's EMS know voter has moved out.3. VoteCal updates voter residential address and precinct based on the NCOA Message response information.4. Updates the Registration date using the 1st day of the NCOA effective month and year indicated in the NCOA Message consistent with the Update Registration Date Guidance Document.5. Updates the Registration Source Code to "National Change of Address (NCOA)".6. Flags voter as needing a CAN Notice (2225b).7. Notates the county's NCOA response in the voter activity log for that registrant with NCOA Disposition of "Cross County NCOA Accepted".
County Determines NCOA Disposition is	County A reviews NCOA Message's forwarding address for a voter's mailing address and determines that the voter has indicated a new mailing address for a voter in the county. This disposition may also be



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MAILING ADDRESS UPDATE	<p>used if County A determines a forwarding address for a residential address should be the voter's mailing address (e.g., the forwarding address for a residential address is a PO Box or a place of business). County A, via their EMS, responds with a VoteCal NCOA Disposition of "Mailing Address Update".</p> <p><u>County:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives NCOA Message.2. Determines that the NCOA Message forwarding address should become a mailing address update.3. Marks the NCOA Message as VoteCal NCOA Disposition "Mailing Address Updated".4. County, via their EMS, updates the voter's mailing address.5. Updates Registration Source Code and Registration Method Code to "National Change of Address (NCOA)".6. Updates Registration Form Type to "Change of Address Notification".7. County EMS sends voter update and the NCOA Message response to VoteCal. <p><u>VoteCal:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receives the NCOA Message response from the county EMS and notates that the NCOA Message was given a disposition of "Mailing Address Update".2. Updates the voter's record based on the voter updates provided by the EMS.

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.