



# SIGNATURE VERIFICATION TRAINING

General Election November 5, 2024



# **Objectives of Signature Verification Training**

- To explain and understand the Signature Verification process
- To ensure a uniformed standard for Signature Verification of mail ballots
- To produce consistent results in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and best practices



### **General Election, November 5, 2024**

- Over 1.1 million registered voters
- 300 Polling Places
- Approximately 3,000 Poll Workers
- Federal, State and Local Contests
- State Propositions
- Local Measures



### **How Will People Vote?**

- Mail in their Ballots
- Vote Early at the Registrar of Voters office or the Early Vote Sites
- Place their Mail Ballots in Drop Boxes and Drop-Off Locations throughout the County
- On Election Day at any polling place in the County



# **Election Day, November 5, 2024**

- What will voters vote on?
  - Paper Ballots
  - Ballot Marking Devices to meet Help America Vote Act requirements
- How will ballots be counted?
  - On high-speed scanners at the Registrar of Voters Office



### **Definitions and Terms**

- Mail Ballot Voter: A voter who receives and submits their ballot via mail rather than voting at a polling place on Election Day.
- Signature Verification: The process of comparing signatures from the returned Official Mail Ballot Return Envelope to the signature on file in the Registrar of Voters voter registration system.
- Official Mail Ballot Return Envelopes: Envelopes used for the return of mail ballots. They contain voter identification information and the voter's signature.



### **Mail Ballot Returns Statistics**

Presidential Primary Election	
March 3, 2020	Voter Count
Total Registered Voters	1,020,924
Total Mail Ballots Issued	680,941
Mail Ballots Returned	265,530
Percent of Mail Ballots Returned	38.99%
Presidential General Election	
Presidential General Election November 3, 2020	Voter Count
	Voter Count 1,092,843
November 3, 2020	
November 3, 2020 Total Registered Voters	1,092,843

### **Mail Ballot Returns Statistics**

Statewide Direct Primary Election	
June 7, 2022	Voter Count
Total Registered Voters	1,149,364
Total Mail Ballots Issued	1,139,045
Mail Ballots Returned	235,085
Percent of Mail Ballots Returned	20.64%
General Election	
General Election November 8, 2022	Voter Count
	Voter Count 1,138,702
November 8, 2022	
November 8, 2022 Total Registered Voters	1,138,702



### **Vote by Mail Ballots**

- All registered voters will receive a Mail Ballot.
- Ballots will start being mailed to voters on E-29.
- We will receive voted Mail Ballots between E-29 to E+7.
- The projected returns is 324,687 Mail Ballots.
- We will begin processing returned Mail Ballots on E-29.
  - Signature Verification can begin
  - No Voter Signature Letters and Unsigned Identification Envelope Statements are sent to voters that did not sign their return envelope.
  - Non-Matching Signature Letters and Signature Verification Statements are sent to voters whose signatures did not compare to the signatures on file.



#### **Voter Signature**

- California law requires each voter to sign their Official Mail Ballot Return Envelope with their <u>own handwriting.</u>
- Registrar of Voters office must then compare that signature to the voter's signature on file.



### **Signature Verification**

- Signature Verification at the Registrar of Voters office is performed by using two similar, but separate, processes:
  - Side-by-side Scanned Image Verification
  - Physical Envelope/Scanned Image Verification
- Both processes are performed in conjunction with the election management system known as DIMS.net

RUNBECK ELECTION SERVICES	DIMS.net Election Management System		
	Login Using:	My Windows Account ~	
	User Name:	Alexandria.Gomez	
	Password:		]
		Login	
Login To: Prod EMS		✓	Close

## **Methods of Signature Verification**

#### Side-by-Side Scanned Image Verification

 This screen in DIMS.net is also called <u>batch mode</u>. It displays the Official Mail Ballot Return Envelope signature and signature on file for the voter.

😴 View AV Sigs	👷 View AV Sigs	👷 View AV Sigs
10040 - 165 (Voter ID = 61875) (AV ID = 65104737) ISABELLE RHEA THOMAS 123 BLACKBERRY AVE SAN BERNARDINO CA 12345 IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Ballots	1040 - 166 (Voter ID =612385(AV ID =73341125) TAYLOR ELIAS PRICE 459 STRAWBERRY IN SAN BERNARDINO CA 12345 IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Balots	1040 - 157 (Voter ID 523496) (AV ID +52411365) ANDREW JAK HALL 18082 BLUEBERRY DR SAN BERNARDINO CA 12345 IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Balots
Isabelle Thomas	Taylor Brice	Amdren Hace
X <u>lsabello</u> <u>Thomas</u> Voter's Signature / Firma doi Votante	X Tac Parton Porton Votante	X Antres Hall
Skip Verfied Signatures? First Page Prev Page Next Page	Skip Verfied Signatures? First Page Prev Page Next Page	Skip Verfied Signatures? First Page Prev Page Next Page

- When comparing signatures, note that the top signature is what we have on file.
- The bottom signature is on the returned envelope that we have scanned.
- <u>Always</u> compare the bottom (envelope) to the top (on file) signature.
- If the bottom signature compares to the top, it is then a valid signature.
- To view more signatures on file, double click on the top signature.
- DO NOT click on the bottom signature. You will get a signature that does not belong to the voter.



# **Signature Verification Process**

# Physical Envelope/Scanned Image Verification:

- This verification process is utilized for elections with low return quantities.
- Signatures on the physical Official Mail Ballot Return Envelopes are compared against the signature on file.

# Physical Envelope/Scanned Image Verification:

 The Signature Verification screen displays the signatures on file that are then compared with the signatures on the physical envelopes.



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#### **Signature Verification Process**

#### According to the California Elections Code:

- The signature verification process "shall be liberally construed in favor of the vote-by-mail voter" (EC3000).
- Presume that the signature on the ballot envelope is the voter's signature.
- When comparing signatures, <u>do not</u> review or consider a voter's party preference, race, or ethnicity (EC3019).

# **Principles of Handwriting**

#### **Three Main Principles of Comparing Handwriting**

- No two skilled writers will have identical handwriting features.
- Every person has a range of natural variation.
- No writer can exceed his, her, or their skill level.



### **Signature Variations**

- Two similar characteristics between a signature being compared and any signature in the voter's registration record are sufficient to determine a signature is valid.
- The voter's registration record contains the signatures from:
  - their voter registration affidavit, DMV, and any forms issued by an elections official that contains the voter's signature.
- Signatures that do not contain the similarities should be challenged.
- In the scenario that the voter signs with just one mark the signature is presumed valid if the voter's record has that mark on file.

- Slant of the signature
- Signature is printed or in cursive
- Size, proportion, or scale
- Individual characteristics, such as how the "t's" and "x's" are crossed, "i's" and "j's" are dotted, or loops are made on the letters b, d, f, g, h, j, p, q, y, or z
- Spacing between the letters within the first and/or last name and between first and last name
- Line direction

- Letter formations
- Proportion or ratio of the letters in the signature
- Initial strokes and connecting strokes
- Similar endings such as an abrupt end, a long tail, or loop back around
- Speed of the writing
- Presence or absence of pen lifts
- Misspelled names

Proportion or ratio of the letters in the signature	× Kirby Star
Initial strokes and connecting strokes	× Kirby Star
Similar endings such as an abrupt end, a long tail, or loop back around	× Kirby Star
Speed of the writing	X Knby Star

Slant of the signature	X Kinber Star
Signature is printed or in cursive	× Kirby Star
Size, proportion, or scale	X Kirbug Star
Individual Characteristics, such as how the "t's" and "x's" are crossed, the "I's" and "j's" are dotted, or loops are made on the letters b, d, f, g, h, j, p, q, y, or z	× Kirby Star

Spacing between the letters within the first and/or last X Kirby Star name and between first and last name TAR Line direction TAR Letter formations Itan Presence or absence of pen lifts Ir by far \* Misspelled names

#### **Signature Variations - Reasons**

- Signature style may have changed over time
- May have been written in haste
- Signature on file may have been written with a stylus pen or other electronic signature tool
- Surface used may have been hard, soft, uneven, or unstable
- A different pen, or the pen may have malfunctioned or ran out of ink
- Age, injury, or disability may have affected a voter's ability to sign

### **Signature Variations - Challenges**

#### Recap:

- Signatures that do not contain at least 2 similarities should be challenged.
- A signature identified by an initial reviewer as having multiple, significant, and obvious differences "...shall only be rejected if two (other) different elections officials unanimously find beyond a reasonable doubt that the signature differs in multiple, significant, and obvious respects from all signatures in the voter's registration record."

#### **Identifiable Similarities – Letters within Signatures**

- The letter "K" and the "I" of the first name
- The letter "G" and the loops of the "N" in the last name

ina Kenn frees Voter's Signature

#### **Identifiable Similarities – Writing Style**

- The cursive loops, and strokes of the signature
- Specifically, the letters "A" and "T"



#### Identifiable (Unique) Similarities – First or Last Name

- The overall body of the signature shows similarities in both the first and last name.
- The signature contains an identifier, the star.



#### Identifiable (Unique) Similarities – Letters within Signatures

- The letters "L" and "D" of the first name
- The letter "A" of the last name

landia Almerida landia Almoipla Voter's Signature / Firma del Votante

#### Identifiable (Unique) Similarities – No Letters

- Pictures or Symbols can be used as valid signatures
- Since we have this symbol on file, it is considered valid



### **Partial or Incomplete Signatures**

#### These signatures contains only the voter's initials.

- Unique similarities in letters within the signatures can be identified.
- The "B" and "G" in the first example.
- In the second example there are no unique similarities.



# **Partial or Incomplete Signatures**

#### This signature contains the voter's maiden name.

- Identifiable similarities in the first but last name is different.
- Specifically, the entire first name.

# **Partial or Incomplete Signatures**

#### This signature only contains a portion of the voter's name.

Identifiable similarities that can be seen:

- The "E" on both signatures is identical.
- The "W" and style of the last name is identical.



# **Example of Bad Signatures on File (BSF)**

- This signature should be challenged as a BSF, because the <u>Voter's Name on File</u> does not match the name on the <u>Signature on File.</u>
- Double-click the <u>Signature on</u> <u>File</u> to make sure there are no other valid signatures.
- If there are no other attached signatures, challenge this as a BSF.

	🥰 View AV Sigs	
Voter's Name On File	10040 – 165 (Voter ID = 61875) (AV ID = 65104737) ISABELLE RHEA THOMAS 123 BLACKBERRY AVE SAN BERNARDINO CA 12345	Find Voter Active
	IN REVIEW Update Sig?	Ballots
Signature on File	Amobren Hall	
	X <u>lsabelle</u> Thomas Voter's Signature / Firma del Votante	
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# **Examples of Bad Signatures on File (BSF)**

- The top signature box contains the signatures attached to the voter's record.
- The 1st example shows there is no signature on file to compare.
- The 2nd example shows the signature on file has been cut off.

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X Manh Manh
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# **Example of Bad Signatures on File (BSF)**

The signature on file is blurry and not readable.



# **Example of Unpaired Signature (UNPRD)**

When you come across a signature that has a completely different name to what's on DIMS.net, but it compares to a signature on a different Envelope, then you have an UNPAIRED (UNPRD).



## **Examples of Signature Variations**

Would you accept these envelopes based on these signatures?

🖳 View AV Sigs	🖳 View AV Sigs
10040 - 165 (Voter ID = 61875) (AV ID = 65104737) JAYDEE DAVIS 123 COUNTY LN SAN BERNARDINO CA 12345 IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Ballots	10201 – 34 (Voter ID = 625435) (AV ID = 56016481) ISABELLE RHEA THOMAS 487 CIRCLE DR SAN BERNARDINO CA 12345 IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Ballots
Jaydee Davis	Isabelle T.
X Jaydee Davis Voter's Schature Firma del Votante	X Indrew Manson Voter's Signature / Firma del Votante
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## **Examples of Signature Variations**

#### **Identifying Mark**

 When a voter is unable to sign their envelope, the voter can make a mark of an "X", however, this mark must also be on file in DIMS.net.



## **Examples of Signature Variations**

#### **Non-Roman languages**

- Some voters may have as their primary language an entirely different set of characters in their alphabet.
- Example: Chinese, Tamil, Arabic, Mediterranean, Greek, Cyrillic alphabets.

#### **Other Marks or Images**

- Cattle brand
- Three cat faces
- Artistic liberty, such as a heart or emoji

## Questions about the

# Signature Verification Process?





## **YOUR TURN!!**

## **REMEMBER:**

\*\* If you have to spend more than a few \*\* seconds reviewing it...

# **CHALLENGE IT!**

abigail Turner. Abigail Turner. Voter's Signature / Firma del Votante









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10040 - 165 (Voter ID = 61875) (AV ID = 65104737) ISABELLE RHEA THOMAS 123 COUNTY LN SAN BERNARDINO CA 12345 IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Ballots	10040 - 165 (Voter ID = 61875) (AV ID = 65104737) TAYLOR ELIAS PRICE 777 LUCKY LN SAN BERNARDINO CA 12345 IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Ballots
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10040 – 165 (Voter ID = 61875) (AV ID = 65104737) AMY BERG 123 Main St. Riałto, CA 12345	10040 – 165 (Voter ID = 61875) (AV ID = 65104737) LINUS C HART 2344 SUNSET ST FONTANA CA
IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Ballots	IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Ballots
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10201 - 36 (Voter ID = 323198) (AV ID = 57108792)			
LINDA LIEHR Find 811 STARDUST DR Voter			
SAN BERNARDINO CA 12345		Declaration of Voter / Declaración del Votante	Authorized Return Agent Agente de Devolución Autorizado
IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Ballots	pe	declare under the Penalty of Perjury under the laws of the State of California that I am the erson whose name appears on this envelope, that I am a resident of the precinct in which I m voling, reside at the address shown, and have neither applied for nor intend to apply for a nail ballot from any other jurisdiction for this election.	A voter who is unable to return the ballot may designed any person to return the ballot to any polling place or drop-off location in California. Unvotante que no sae capaz de devolver la boleta puede designer a cualquier passa para que devuevana la boleta cualquier passa para que devuevana la boleta cualquier passa para que punto de entrega en California.
	qu	leclaro bajo Pena de Perjurio conforme a las leyes del Estado de California que soy la persona uyo nombre aparece en este sobre, que soy residente del distrito electoral en el que votaró, ue resido en la dirección que se muestra, y que no he solicitado ni intentado solicitar una boleta or correo de ninguna otra jurisdicción para estas elecciones.	Print name of the authorized person Normhe en kins de innerents de la Presiden con el volame - Finna de la persona autorizada
	W	farning:	
		Your ballot will not be counted unless you sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must compare to your signature on file at the Registrar of Voters office. Voting twice constitutes a crime.	Ballots that are mailed MUST be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by the Registrar of Voters office no later than 7 days after Election Day.
		<i>ldvartencia:</i> No se contará su boleta a menos que la firme con su propia letra. Su firma debe ser equiparable a su firma registrada en la oficina del Registro de Votantes. Votar dos veces constituye un delito.	Las boletas que se envían por correo DEBEN tener matasellos del Día de la Elección o de antes ys edebar recibir en la oficina del Registro de Votantes a más tardar 7 días deputs de Jía de la Elección.
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11240 - 123 (Voter ID = 621235) (AV ID = 65733434)     Find       RAYMOND ROCK     9987 GOLDWEST AVE     Voter       TRONA CA 95433     Voter     Active       IN REVIEW     Update Sig?     Active	11240 - 123 (Voter ID = 621235) (AV ID = 65733434)         EDWARD ROWE         4052 OFFWHITE CT         SAN BERNARDINO CA 91769         IN REVIEW         Update Sig?
Dr Re	Edward Rowe
Andra Berg Voter'z Signature / Firma del Votonto	Voter's Signature / Firma del Votonto Skip Verfied Signatures? First Page Prev Page Next Page

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10040 - 165 (Voter ID = 61875) (AV ID = 65104737)           VADIRA CHANNING           2052 WALDOFF IN           ONTARIO CA 91762           IN REVIEW           Update Sig?           Balots	10040 - 185 (Voter ID = 81875) (AV ID = 65104737) JAMAL H. CLAME 9857 W LANE 57 ORAND TERRACE CA 92323 IN REVIEW Update Sig? Active Ballots	10040 - 145 (vieter ID = 622375) (AV ID = 65731737)           NACHEL COLMAN           4052 SUMDANCE UN           OHERANIC CA 93762             IN REVIEIN   Update Sg? Active Ballots
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10301 - 21 (Voter ID = 323198) (AV ID = 57128992)     Find       ADELA SAMUEL     Voter       321 HOME ST     Voter       SAN BERNARDINO CA 92407     Active       IN REVIEW     Update Sig?
Adela Iwrner
X Adela Samuel Voter's Signature / Firma del Votante
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# **Thank You!!!**

#### Thank you for participating in today's training and joining our team for the November 5, 2024, General Election

