



REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

Extracting and Reviewing Vote-by- Mail Ballots

PROCEDURE DOCUMENT – Version 3.0

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9/7/2023

Extracting and Reviewing Vote-by-Mail Ballots

Scope

Extraction and Review is the act of manually removing each ballot from its VBM envelopes, visually inspecting the ballots for physical damage, ensuring that all cards are accounted for, that it is a San Bernardino County ballot, and that it is for the current election.

Supplies Needed

1. One **white box** (to hold empty extracted envelopes)
2. One **Green tray** (for extracted ballots)
3. One **Red tray** (to hold challenged ballots/envelopes)
4. One **mail tray** (supply of un-extracted, cut envelopes to extract)
5. **Red Pen**
6. Gloves (you are required to wear gloves when handling any ballots or envelopes)
7. One **mail tray** (under table to place VBM Wraps)

Preparing for Extraction and Ballot Review

This process may be done with one or two team members at one table. See the pictured layout below for reference. The most important thing to keep in mind is that Extraction **MUST** be limited to one tray at a time and one envelope/ballot at a time. The reason for this is if there is any reason to challenge a ballot (damage or otherwise), you must be able to pair the ballot back with its envelope. Being organized, cautious, and efficient is all of high importance.

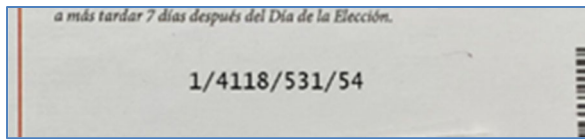


Inspecting the Ballot Envelope

Once you have received the tray of envelopes from the runner, review each envelope inside the tray to locate any of the following issues:

1. **The envelope has a message written by the voter** (e.g., an address correction, a notice of cancellation, notice of deceased, and so on).
 - i. Write the code “NOTIF” on the envelope whitespace, along with your initials, using your red pen and place the envelope in the red tray.

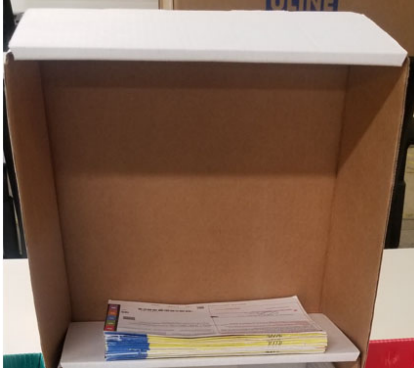
2. **The envelope is missing the Bluecrest inkjet.**



- i.
 - ii. Write the code “BC Unseen” on the envelope whitespace, along with your initials, using your red pen and place the envelope in the red tray.
3. **The envelope is empty.**
 - i. Write the code “BME” on the envelope whitespace, along with your initials, using your red pen and place the envelope in the red tray.

Inspecting the Ballots and Envelope Contents

1. Pull the ballot cards from the envelope.
2. Place the extracted envelope in the white box in front of you, signature side up, with the opening of the envelope facing the back of the box.



3. Unfold the cards and inspect them for challenges (see the Challenges section). As you find challenges, return the ballot cards to the envelope, write the challenge code on the envelope whitespace, along with your initials, using your red pen, and place the envelope in the red tray.

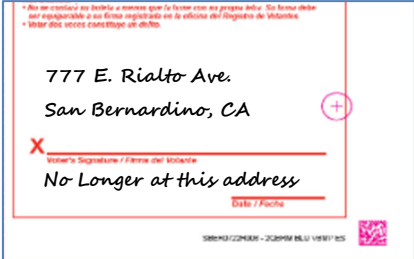
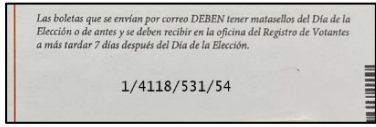
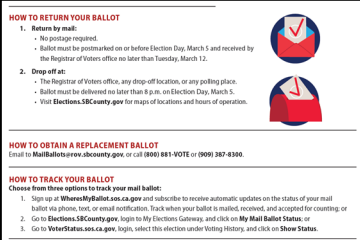
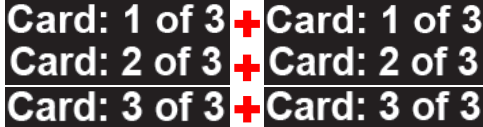


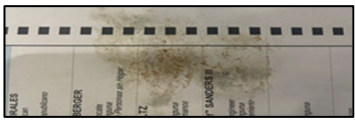



4. Place cards *without* challenges in the green tray.



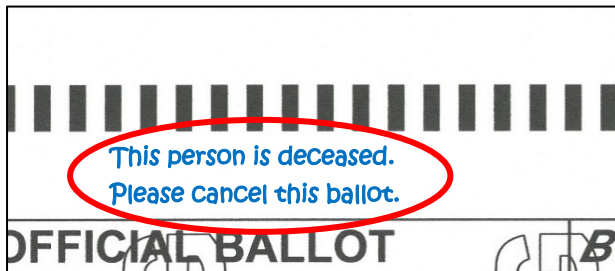
- 5.

Challenges

<p>NOTIF: Voter wrote something on their ballot, envelope, or a hand-written letter. Examples: No longer live at this address or moved, name is misspelled or changed last name</p>	
<p>BC Unseen: The envelope does not show Election ID, Tray Number and Sequence Number printed on it from the Bluecrest sorting machine.</p>	
<p>VBM Wraps: Paper is the same size as ballot cards, needs to be separated for shredding. The ballot may be extracted as normal and placed in the green tray.</p>	
<p>BME: Ballot Missing from Envelope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No ballot in the envelope Sample Ballots 	
<p>MRE: Multiple ballots are returned in the envelope You see identical ballot cards Return ALL ballot cards to the envelope!</p>	
<p>Red Ink: Voter used red ink, or any shade or red, such as purple or pink.</p>	
<p>Cut: Torn or cut ballot that will interfere with the timing mark on the ballot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cut is more than half an inch (1/2 inch) 	
<p>Stuck/Stain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ballot is glued to the envelope and cannot be removed. Stains that make the ballot unreadable. 	
<p>PII: Voter signs or writes their name, initials, phone number, address, or something that can connect them to the ballot.</p>	

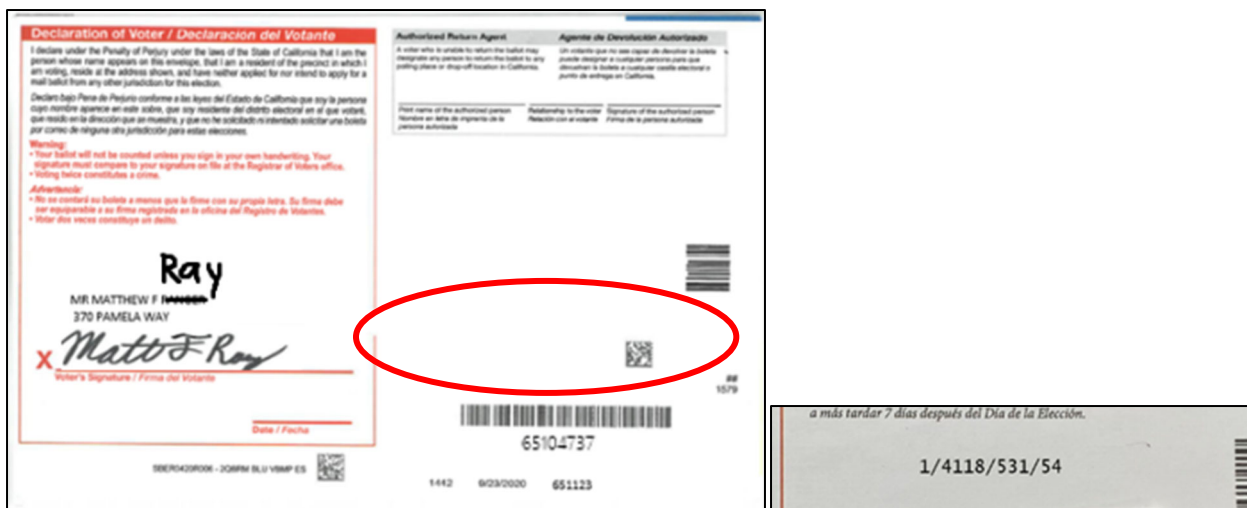
Voter Notification (NOTIF)

This includes any written information on the envelope or the ballot.



Unseen by Bluecrest (BC Unseen)

If the envelope was never seen by the Bluecrest sorting machine, we can't verify whether the envelope is challenged. It must have the election ID, tray number, and sequence number from the sorting pass.





VBM Wraps

Wraps are required to be included with ballots as part of their mailing. They include information about the batch the ballots came from, as well as a variety of instructions for the voter. Some voters will send these back, but they do not serve any function for the Ballot department. Place these wraps in the tray underneath the table.

HOW TO RETURN YOUR BALLOT

- 1. Return by mail:**
 - No postage required.
 - Ballot must be postmarked on or before Election Day, March 5 and received by the Registrar of Voters office no later than Tuesday, March 12.
- 2. Drop off at:**
 - The Registrar of Voters office, any drop-off location, or any polling place.
 - Ballot must be delivered no later than 8 p.m. on Election Day, March 5.
 - Visit [Elections.SBCounty.gov](https://www.elections.sbcounty.gov) for maps of locations and hours of operation.



HOW TO OBTAIN A REPLACEMENT BALLOT

Email to MailBallots@rov.sbcounty.gov, or call (800) 881-VOTE or (909) 387-8300.

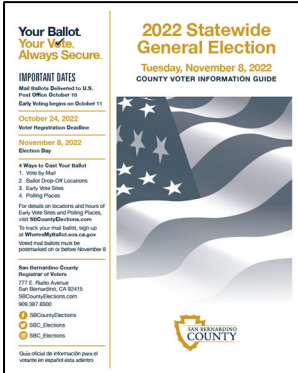
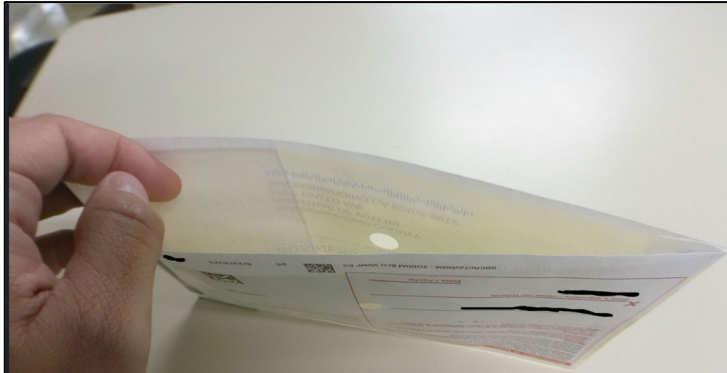
HOW TO TRACK YOUR BALLOT

Choose from three options to track your mail ballot:

1. Sign up at WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov and subscribe to receive automatic updates on the status of your mail ballot via phone, text, or email notification. Track when your ballot is mailed, received, and accepted for counting; or
2. Go to Elections.SBCounty.gov, login to My Elections Gateway, and click on **My Mail Ballot Status**; or
3. Go to VoterStatus.sos.ca.gov, login, select this election under Voting History, and click on **Show Status**.

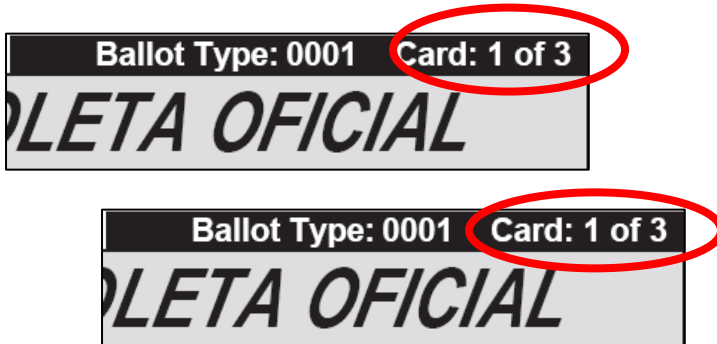
Ballot Missing from Envelope (BME)

An empty envelope is an indication of a missing ballot. In addition, voters may send other paperwork or objects in their envelope instead of a ballot, including pens, paperclips, sticky notes, sample ballot guides, and money.



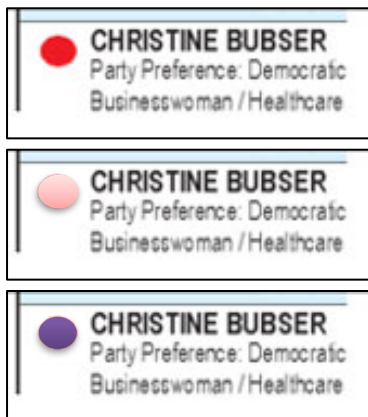
Multiple Ballots Returned (MRE)

Receiving two or more of the same card (e.g. Card 1 with another Card 1) in the same envelope is an MRE challenge. Both cards must be placed back into the same envelope prior to the envelope going to the red tray.



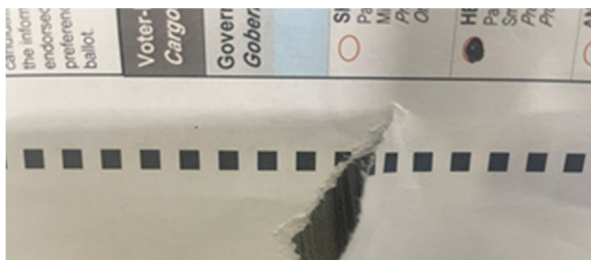
Red Ink

The tabulation machines are unable to read red, so any ballots that are voted with red ink (of any shade, including pink and purple) must be duplicated.



Cut

Any ballots cut over half an inch, or that intersect with a timing mark, cannot be scanned by the tabulator.



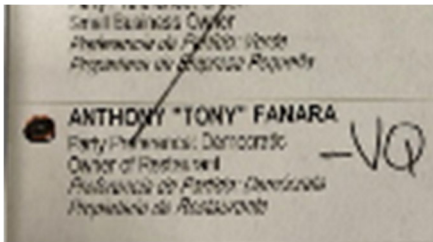
Stuck/Stain

Any ballot that has a sticky material (including glue, food, and other undesirable materials) or that has a stain that interferes with a voting bubble or timing mark cannot be read by the tabulator and must be challenged.



Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

A voter may sign or write their name or put their initials when attempting to correct a mistake on a ballot, or sometimes leave more sensitive information, such as phone numbers and addresses. Ballots cannot contain personal information and must be challenged. The only exception is if a voter has written their name into a write-in field!



Other Issues

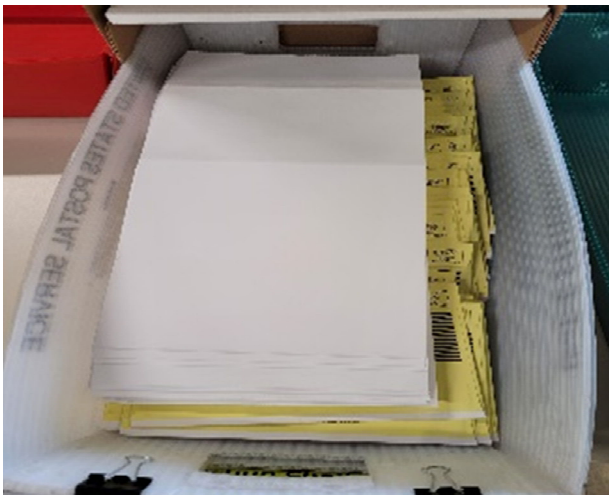
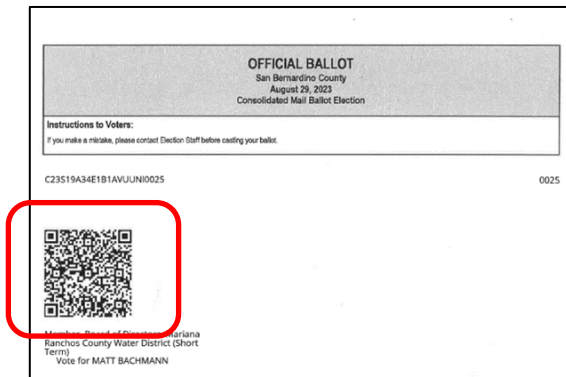
If you run into *any* other questions about a ballot and whether it can be extracted, raise your hand to speak to one of the runners.

Finishing Up

1. Once you have finished extracting all ballots from your tray, place all the empty envelopes from your white box back into the white tray on the table.
2. Place all the extracted ballots from the green tray on top of the envelopes in the white tray.
3. Place ballots from Ballot Marking Device on top of the stack *

Ballot Marking Device (BMD) Ballot

Ballot marking devices print 8.5" x 11" special cardstock papers that contain a voter's selections for a ballot, as well as a QR code. These ballots must be placed in their own box to prevent scaling issues before and after they are tabulated.



4. Raise your hand to receive a new tray from a runner.

Authorization

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