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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

NEWS RELEASE
Registrar of Voters

CONTACT:
Valerie Nevarez
Communications Officer
(909) 665-3351
Valerie.Nevarez@rov.sbcounty.gov

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San Bernardino County counting ballots faster through technology and expand operation

With more than 1.2 million registered voters and hundreds of thousands of mail ballots cast each election, counting ballots in San Bernardino County is a major operation — and it is getting faster.

The Registrar of Voters processed and counted 98% of all ballots within six days of the Nov. 3, 2026, election.

The improvement comes as the county continues to serve more voters and process more ballots. Registered voters increased 10% from 2022 to 2026. Mail ballots remain the preferred way to vote, accounting for 86% of ballots cast in the 2026 General Election. At the same time, voter turnout increased from 40% in 2022 to 50% in 2026.

More ballots counted sooner
One of the clearest measures of progress came on election night.

The Registrar of Voters included 282,137 mail ballots in the first unofficial results — representing 52% of mail ballots counted in the election. In 2022, just 37% were included in the initial results.

Among mail ballots received before Election Day, 91% were processed and included in the initial election night results, compared with 71% in 2022.

The fast pace continued after Election Day.

Two days after the election, the Registrar of Voters counted 58,329 ballots, compared with 32,127 ballots at the same point in 2022 - an increase of 82%.

Technology and expanded operations
The improvements reflect the Registrar of Voters' continued modernization of ballot processing.

Automated signature verification technology allows the Registrar of Voters to process the large volume of mail ballot return envelopes more efficiently while maintaining required verification safeguards before ballots can be counted.

Ballot processing continued around the clock for four days during the first week after Election Day, allowing ballots to be processed and counted 24 hours a day. The expanded operation was made possible through one-time state funding.

Together, these changes allowed the Registrar of Voters to move more ballots through the required processing and into the count sooner.

Earlier returns mean earlier results
Voters also play an important role in how quickly ballots can be included in election results.

Mail ballots received before Election Day can begin signature verification and other required processing before polls close. By the day before the 2026 General Election, the Registrar of Voters had received 56% of all mail ballots returned for the election.

Ballots returned at polling places and official ballot drop boxes on Election Day undergo the same safeguards, but processing cannot begin until those ballots are collected, secured and transported to the department.

Returning a mail ballot earlier gives it a greater opportunity to complete required processing and be included in the first unofficial Election Night results.

Fast counting, with time for every eligible vote to be counted
Counting ballots quickly does not eliminate the safeguards designed to ensure eligible ballots are counted.

After most ballots have been processed, the Registrar of Voters continues reviewing provisional ballots, conditional voter registration ballots and mail ballots requiring additional verification.

California law also gives voters time to correct, or "cure," certain issues, including a missing signature or a signature that does not compare with the signature in the voter's record. For Nov. 3, 2026, General Election, 4,500 ballots still need to be cured, and voters have until 5 p.m. on Nov. 25 to submit the required cure statement.

The results of the 2026 General Election demonstrate how San Bernardino County's election operation continues to evolve: more voters, more ballots and faster processing and counting.

Through technology, improved procedures and expanded operations, the Registrar of Voters is counting ballots sooner while maintaining the accuracy, security and transparency required throughout the election process.

Learn more at Elections.sbcounty.gov.

About San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters: The San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters is responsible for all aspects of the election process for the county's residents. It administers local, state, and federal elections in San Bernardino County, including the management of voting systems, the employment and training of poll workers, election ballot processing, and vote tallying. The Registrar of Voters also performs all voter registration functions, including the storage and maintenance of voter registration records. It also provides voting-related services to voters, elected officials, campaigns, and other voting interest groups.

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