

**Precincts:**

Everyone in the County of Ventura lives within the boundaries of a precinct. A precinct contains districts and special districts. A precinct is the smallest civil group in the United States. Precincts do not have their own government. Most precincts have a polling place where voters go to vote, except for mail ballot precincts. Once in a while more than one precinct will use the same polling place. Each precinct not only contains districts, but also contains street and voter records.

**Mail Ballot Precincts:**

By California State Election Code a mail ballot precinct can have no more than 250 voters. Mail Ballot precincts will appear in areas of the county where the population is very low. Because the populations of these areas are so small, the California Election Code does not require the Elections Division to provide a polling place.

In some areas districts overlap, and in other locations they leave gaps of where the districts have no coverage. So consequently coverage is random for each parcel. In some cases a parcel is not in any of the districts, and other parcels may have more than one of the districts.

Because of the range of special districts in the County of Ventura, some precincts in populated areas are mail ballot. These precincts are isolated from their neighbors because they do not have the same districts as their neighboring precincts.

**Districts:**

There are different types of districts, and they all provide some kind of service. Only voters who live within the limits of a district area are allowed to vote for the candidate(s) running for that district office.

**Legislative Districts:**

The House of Representatives and Senate make up Congress. Congress writes bills that may become laws on the federal level, if not vetoed (rejected) by the President of the United States. National level lawmaking has the right to pass laws, declare war, control trade, and direct tax and spending rules.

Where the State Senate and State Assembly propose laws on the State level, they cannot declare war.

The governor has many executive powers on the state level. The governor is the commander in chief of the state militia.

The Governor has the powers to:

- approve state budgets and appropriations
- pass state legislation (laws)
- appoint executive and judicial vacancies
- have legislative oversight of executive branch functions
- pass or veto proposed laws
- approve State budgets
- nominate person(s) to fill vacancies
  - Municipal, superior, appeals and Supreme court judges
  - Advisory committee (cabinet)
  - Appoint boards and commissions
    - Labor
    - Transportation
    - Health care
    - Human services

#### **Local Districts:**

Local districts are the arms of county government. These local districts have corporate powers, tax powers, and police powers. Corporate power means that government can build public works projects like building schools and clinics, and run local public service programs like managing parks and collecting trash. Tax power is the right to collect taxes to pay for the services the district provides. Police power is the right to pass laws regarding zoning land, building, planning and growth and setting speed limits.

#### **Local Districts:**

- County Offices
  - County Supervisor
  - Sheriff
  - Assessor
  - Clerk and Recorder
- Cities
  - Mayor
  - City Council
- Board of Education
  - Schools
  - College

**Special Districts:**

When residents want new or better services that the county does not provide, they can form a Special District. Special Districts have members who are either elected or appointed. Services that are offered by Special Districts are within limited and defined borders, and that may not be offered to the public. The services are paid for through parcel tax assessments, and the governing board. A Special District does not include a city, county, or school district.

**Special Districts**

- Water
- Sanitation
- Drainage
- Community Services
- Parks and Recreation