



**MARK A. LUNN**  
Clerk-Recorder, Registrar of Voters  
COUNTY OF VENTURA

**September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election  
GENERAL OBSERVER GUIDELINES**

**What Are Observers Responsible For?**

- Checking in at each site, whether a vote center or the central counting site.
- Wearing an identification badge.
- Maintaining a professional manner while observing the election process.
- Ensuring they do not interfere with the election process.

**What Are Observers Allowed to Do?**

- Challenge whether individuals handling vote-by-mail ballots are following established procedures.
- Observe the proceedings at the vote center, including opening and closing procedures.
- Take written notes and watch all procedures.
- View Election Night activities.
- View the canvass of the vote activities following the election.
- View mail ballot and provisional ballot processing.
- Ask questions of the precinct board and elections officials about election procedures.
- Ask questions of supervisors at the central counting site.

**What Are Observers NOT Allowed to Do?**

- Interfere in any way with the conduct of the election.
- Touch any voting materials or equipment, sit at official worktables, or assist in any operations.
- Go near occupied voting booths or approach any voters during the voting process.
- Converse with voters (within 100 feet of the entrance to or inside a vote center) regarding the casting of a vote, solicit a vote, or question a voter regarding his/her qualifications to vote.
- Directly challenge a voter (only the precinct board may do so, based on evidence presented).
- Display any election material or wear campaign badges, buttons, or apparel.
- Wear the uniform of a peace officer, a private guard, or security personnel.
- Use cellular phones, pagers, cameras, video/audio recording devices or two-way radios inside the vote center and/or within 100 feet of the entrance of the vote center.
- Talk to central counting site workers while they are processing ballots.
- Touch voters or election personnel.
- Eat or drink in the vote center or the central counting site.
- Assist in operations at any vote center.
- Talk in a loud voice, intimidate, cause confusion, or congregate inside a vote center. The area between the official table and the voting booths is for voters only and may not be used as an observer post. Voters have the right to report any illegal or fraudulent activity at or near the vote center to a local election official or to the Secretary of State's Office.

**What Is the Central Counting Location Code of Conduct?**

- Observers must sign-in and out at the front office and receive a visitor's badge daily, which must be always worn while in the election's facility. The visitor's badge must be returned to staff at the front counter before leaving each day.

- No food or beverage is allowed in the observation area.
- Scheduled operations and processes continue whether or not an observer is present.
- Observer activity is limited to witnessing whether established procedures are being followed.
- Observers may approach sufficiently close to the observed process to determine reasonably whether a challenge of the process is warranted.
- Observers may approach sufficiently close to observe the vote-by-mail ballot return envelopes and signatures thereon.
- Observers shall not interfere with the observed process: no touching of election- related materials, equipment or elections staff, and no direct questioning of the staff doing the work.
- There may be no more than two observers for each candidate, proponent, or opponent. Each candidate, proponent, or opponent may assign an additional person to act as the group's supervisor.
- Cell phones and pagers must be set to vibrate/silent or turned off and put away at all times. No phone calls, texting or audio/video recording are allowed while inside the observation area.
- Silence is required while inside the observation area.
- Before and during the observed process, you may quietly ask questions of the process supervisor. You may not directly communicate with any staff member who is engaged in the observed process.
- Written questions/comments may be submitted to the process supervisor throughout each process.
- Observers must stay within the designated observation area.

## **What Election Activities Can Be Observed?**

### **Pre-Election Day**

- Voting equipment preparation and testing.
- Logic & Accuracy testing of voting system to conduct central count of vote-by-mail and precinct ballots.
- Vote By Mail operations (verify signature and eligibility; prepare ballots for counting).

### **Election Day & Night**

- Vote center operations.
- Vote tabulation and reporting of semi-official results.

### **Post-Election Day**

- Processing provisional ballots and vote-by-mail ballots received at vote centers.
- Ballot duplication.
- Observe the adjudication process.
- One Percent Manual Tally.

## **COVID-19 Rules:**

- All persons including observers must wear face coverings per County Public Health order.
- Observers must maintain physical distancing of six feet and may be asked to remain in a designated area.
- Observers are asked to take other safety measures such as hand hygiene, cough etiquette and general respect for cleanliness and sanitation.
- Observation is primarily an audio-visual activity, and video, particularly if supplemented by audio, may be an appropriate substitute in some situations for physical attendance during election processes in light of COVID-19.