



CALIFORNIA CANVASS PROCESS

TULARE COUNTY REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

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PURPOSE OF THE CANVASS

The Official Canvass is conducted:

- To verify the accuracy and validity of the votes counted.
- To resolve any discrepancies through review of the official elections materials and unused ballots.
- To complete the official vote count including *Write-in Vote*, *Vote by Mail Ballots* and *Provisional Ballots* not included in the *Semifinal Official Vote Count*.

CANVASS BEGINS & ENDS

- The Official Canvass is open to the public.
- The Official Canvass is to begin not later than Thursday following Election Day.
- The canvass is to continue daily except for Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, not less than six hours each day until completed.
- The Elections official shall prepare a certified statement of the results of the election and submit it to the governing body within 30 days of the election. Elections conducted in November of odd-numbered years, not later than the last Monday before the last Friday of November.

DEFINITIONS

Note: All *italicized words* are defined here.

Vote by Mail Ballot - A ballot cast by a voter in any way other than at the polling place. Elections Code § 300

Surrendered Ballot - A ballot that is not counted because the voter has voluntarily returned it to the precinct officers or Election Official. Elections Code § 14296

Damaged Ballot - Any ballot that is torn or mutilated and is not machine-readable. Elections Code § 15208 & 15210

Governing Body - The Board of Directors of a district or agency or the board or body that governs the activities of the district or agency. Elections Code § 10500(7)

Identifying Marks - Any ballot that is marked in a manner so as to identify the voter. Elections Code § 14287, 15208 & 15154

Index - A list of voters registered in the precinct. Elections Code § 14105, 14108 & 14202

Manual Tally of Votes (1% Hand Count) - The public process of manually counting votes in 1% of the precincts randomly selected by the election official, and in one precinct for each race not included in the randomly selected precincts. Elections Code § 336.5 & 15360

Overvote - Voter voted for more candidates than allowed or voted both 'yes' and 'no' on a proposition or measure. Elections Code § 15302

Precinct Ballot Statement - A ballot reconciliation statement completed by the precinct officers at the polling place. Elections Code § 14420(b) & §14405

Precinct Board - The board appointed by the Election Official to serve at a single precinct or a consolidated precinct. Elections Code § 15302

Provisional Ballot - A ballot voted by a voter whose qualifications or entitlement to vote cannot be immediately established. The ballot will be isolated and researched by the Election Official to determine the voter's eligibility. Elections Code § 14310(a)

EA Tablets and Receipts of Roster - The document signed by the voters at the polling place. Elections Code § 14107

Semifinal Official Vote Count or Semifinal Official Canvass - The process of collecting, processing, and tallying ballots. The Semifinal Official Canvass may include some or all of the Vote by Mail and provisional vote totals. Elections Code § 353.5, 15150 thru 15154

Spoiled Ballot - A ballot on which a voter has inadvertently selected the wrong candidate or measure or has somehow defaced the ballot. Elections Code § 14288

Write-In-Vote - A vote cast by the voter by writing in the name and office of a qualified write-in candidate in the appropriate space provided on or with the ballot. Elections Code § 15342

TASKS OF THE OFFICIAL CANVASS

- An inspection of all of the election materials and supplies returned by the *Precinct Board*.
- A reconciliation of the number of signatures from the EA Tablets with the number of ballots recorded on the *Precinct Ballot Statement*.
- In the event of a discrepancy in the reconciliation of the number of ballots received from each polling place, the ballots are reconciled with the number of ballots cast, as indicated on the *Precinct Ballot Statement*.
- Processing the official polling place *Roster/Index* which includes accounting for all voters who signed the *Roster* on Election Day.
- Update voter history from the *Roster/Index*.
- A reconciliation of the number of ballots counted, *Spoiled*, *Canceled*, or invalidated due to *Identifying Marks* and *Overvotes* with the number of votes recorded, including *Vote by Mail* and *Provisional Ballots*, by the ballot counting system (for example: Optical Scan counting systems, Direct Recording Touch Screen counting systems).
- Processing and counting any valid *Vote by Mail* and *Provisional Ballots* not included in the *Semifinal Official Vote Count*.
- Counting any valid *Write-in Votes*.
- Correct/Duplicate any *Damaged Ballots*.
- Conduct the 1% *Manual Tally of Votes*.
- Reporting final results to the *Governing Board*.
- Certified results transmitted to the Secretary of State as required.

CANVASS OBSERVERS

- Interested parties **may observe** that the Election Official is following proper procedures. The Election Official shall determine the number and placement of observers. (Note: Specific **‘Ground Rules’** can be obtained from each County Election Official.)
- Observers shall not touch or handle any ballots, envelopes, containers or equipment. No observers shall interfere with the orderly process of the canvass.
- Except to challenge a canvass procedure, observers shall not carry on conversations with each other or election personnel or make disruptive comments while in the observation or canvass work area.
- Observers shall not assist in the operations of the canvass.
- The Election Official will determine and establish a reasonable observation distance.
- Failure to follow observer rules will be reported to the Election Official, who will determine appropriate action.

Observation of Vote by Mail ballot Processing and Counting:

- a) The processing of Vote by Mail ballot return envelopes, and the processing and counting of Vote by Mail ballots shall be open to the public, both prior to and after the election.
- b) Any member of the County Grand Jury, and at least one member each of the Republican County Central Committee, the Democratic County Central Committee, and of any other party with a candidate on the ballots, and any other interested organization, shall be permitted to observe and challenge the manner in which the Vote by Mail ballots are handled, from the processing of Vote by Mail ballot return envelopes through the counting and disposition of the ballots.
- c) The Elections Official shall notify Vote by Mail voter observers and the public at least 48 hours in advance of the dates, times, and places where Vote by Mail ballots will be processed and counted.
- d) Vote by Mail voter observers shall be allowed sufficiently close access to enable them to observe and challenge whether those individuals handling Vote by Mail ballots are following established procedures, including all of the following:
 - 1) Verifying signatures and addresses by comparing them to voter registration information.
 - 2) Duplicating accurately any damaged or defective ballots.

- 3) Securing Vote by Mail ballots to prevent any tampering with them before they are counted on Election Day.
- e) No Vote by Mail voter observer shall interfere with the orderly processing of Vote by Mail ballot return envelopes or processing and counting of Vote by Mail ballots, including touching or handling of the ballots.

ELECTIONS CODE REFERENCE

EC 15104 - Observation of Vote by Mail ballot processing and counting

EC 15301 - Time for conducting canvass

EC 15302 - Tasks of the official canvass

EC 15320 - Processing and counting Vote by Mail ballots

EC 15360 - Manual tally when using a voting system

EC 15372 - Certified statement of the results

EC 15375 - Transmit to Secretary of State copy of results