

REFERENCE TITLE: elections; early voting; tabulation

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-seventh Legislature
Second Regular Session
2026

HB 2001

Introduced by
Representative Bliss

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 16-411, 16-449, 16-542, 16-547, 16-548, 16-551, 16-552, 16-579.01 AND 16-579.02, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO ELECTIONS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 16-411, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 16-411. Designation of election precincts and polling places;
5 voting centers; electioneering; wait times

6 A. The board of supervisors of each county, on or before October 1
7 of each year preceding the year of a general election, by an order, shall
8 establish a convenient number of election precincts in the county and
9 define the boundaries of the precincts as follows:

10 1. The election precinct boundaries shall be established so as to
11 be included within election districts prescribed by law for elected
12 officers of the state and its political subdivisions, including community
13 college district precincts, except those elected officers provided for in
14 titles 30 and 48.

15 2. If after October 1 of the year preceding the year of a general
16 election the board of supervisors must further adjust precinct boundaries
17 due to the redistricting of election districts as prescribed by law and to
18 comply with this subsection, the board of supervisors shall adjust these
19 precinct boundaries as soon as is practicable.

20 B. At least twenty days before a general or primary election, and
21 at least ten days before a special election, the board shall designate one
22 polling place within each precinct where the election shall be held,
23 except that:

24 1. On a specific finding of the board, included in the order or
25 resolution designating polling places pursuant to this subsection, that no
26 suitable polling place is available within a precinct, a polling place for
27 that precinct may be designated within an adjacent precinct.

28 2. Adjacent precincts may be combined if boundaries so established
29 are included in election districts prescribed by law for state elected
30 officials and political subdivisions including community college districts
31 but not including elected officials prescribed by titles 30 and 48. The
32 officer in charge of elections may also split a precinct for
33 administrative purposes. The polling places shall be listed in separate
34 sections of the order or resolution.

35 3. On a specific finding of the board that the number of persons
36 who are listed as early voters pursuant to section 16-544 and who are not
37 expected to have their ballots tabulated at the polling place as
38 prescribed in section 16-579.02 is likely to substantially reduce the
39 number of voters appearing at one or more specific polling places at that
40 election, adjacent precincts may be consolidated by combining polling
41 places and precinct boards for that election. The board of supervisors
42 shall ensure that a reasonable and adequate number of polling places will
43 be designated for that election. Any consolidated polling places shall be
44 listed in separate sections of the order or resolution of the board.

1 4. On a specific resolution of the board, the board may authorize
2 the use of voting centers in place of or in addition to specifically
3 designated polling places. A voting center shall allow any voter in that
4 county to receive the appropriate ballot for that voter on election day
5 after presenting identification as prescribed in section 16-579 and to
6 lawfully cast the ballot. Voting centers may be established in
7 coordination and consultation with the county recorder, at other county
8 offices or at other locations in the county deemed appropriate.

9 ~~5. On a specific resolution of the board of supervisors that is~~
10 ~~limited to a specific election date and that is voted on by a recorded~~
11 ~~vote, the board may authorize the county recorder or other officer in~~
12 ~~charge of elections to use emergency voting centers as follows:~~

13 ~~(a) The board shall specify in the resolution the location and the~~
14 ~~hours of operation of the emergency voting centers.~~

15 ~~(b) A qualified elector voting at an emergency voting center shall~~
16 ~~provide identification as prescribed in section 16-579, except that~~
17 ~~notwithstanding section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 2, for any voting~~
18 ~~at an emergency voting center, the county recorder or other officer in~~
19 ~~charge of elections may allow a qualified elector to update the elector's~~
20 ~~voter registration information as provided for in the secretary of state's~~
21 ~~instructions and procedures manual adopted pursuant to section 16-452.~~

22 ~~(c) If an emergency voting center established pursuant to this~~
23 ~~section becomes unavailable and there is not sufficient time for the board~~
24 ~~of supervisors to convene to approve an alternate location for that~~
25 ~~emergency voting center, the county recorder or other officer in charge of~~
26 ~~elections may make changes to the approved emergency voting center~~
27 ~~location and shall notify the public and the board of supervisors~~
28 ~~regarding that change as soon as practicable. The alternate emergency~~
29 ~~voting center shall be as close in proximity to the approved emergency~~
30 ~~voting center location as possible.~~

31 C. If the board fails to designate the place for holding the
32 election, or if it cannot be held at or about the place designated, the
33 justice of the peace in the precinct, two days before the election, by an
34 order, copies of which the justice of the peace shall immediately post in
35 three public places in the precinct, shall designate the place within the
36 precinct for holding the election. If there is no justice of the peace in
37 the precinct, or if the justice of the peace fails to do so, the election
38 board of the precinct shall designate and give notice of the place within
39 the precinct of holding the election. For any election in which there are
40 no candidates for elected office appearing on the ballot, the board may
41 consolidate polling places and precinct boards and may consolidate the
42 tabulation of results for that election if all of the following apply:

43 1. All affected voters are notified by mail of the change at least
44 thirty-three days before the election.

1 2. Notice of the change in polling places includes notice of the
2 new voting location, notice of the hours for voting on election day and
3 notice of the telephone number to call for voter assistance.

4 3. All affected voters receive information on early voting that
5 includes the application used to request an early voting ballot.

6 D. The board is not required to designate a polling place for
7 special district mail ballot elections held pursuant to article 8.1 of
8 this chapter, but the board may designate one or more sites for voters to
9 deposit marked ballots until 7:00 p.m. on the day of the election.

10 E. ~~Except as provided in subsection F of this section,~~ A public
11 school shall provide sufficient space for use as a ~~polling place~~ VOTING
12 LOCATION for any city, county or state election when requested by the
13 officer in charge of elections.

14 ~~F. The principal of the school may deny a request to provide space~~
15 ~~for use as a polling place for any city, county or state election if,~~
16 ~~within two weeks after a request has been made, the principal provides a~~
17 ~~written statement indicating a reason the election cannot be held in the~~
18 ~~school, including any of the following:~~

19 ~~1. Space is not available at the school.~~

20 ~~2. The safety or welfare of the children would be jeopardized.~~

21 ~~G.~~ F. Beginning in 2026, the department of administration shall
22 coordinate with state agencies and counties to provide available and
23 appropriate state-owned facilities for use as a voting location for any
24 city, county or state election when requested by the officer in charge of
25 elections.

26 ~~H.~~ G. The board shall make available to the public as a public
27 record a list of the polling places for all precincts in which the
28 election is to be held.

29 ~~I.~~ H. Except in the case of an emergency, any facility that is
30 used as a polling place on election day or that is used as an early voting
31 site during the period of early voting shall allow persons to electioneer
32 and engage in other political activity outside of the seventy-five foot
33 limit prescribed by section 16-515 in public areas and parking lots used
34 by voters. This subsection does not allow the temporary or permanent
35 construction of structures in public areas and parking lots or the
36 blocking or other impairment of access to parking spaces for voters. The
37 county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall post on its
38 website at least two weeks before election day a list of those polling
39 places in which emergency conditions prevent electioneering and shall
40 specify the reason the emergency designation was granted and the number of
41 attempts that were made to find a polling place before granting an
42 emergency designation. If the polling place is not on the website list of
43 polling places with emergency designations, electioneering and other
44 political activity shall be allowed outside of the seventy-five foot
45 limit. If an emergency arises after the county recorder or other officer

1 in charge of elections' initial website posting, the county recorder or
2 other officer in charge of elections shall update the website as soon as
3 is practicable to include any new polling places, shall highlight the
4 polling place location on the website and shall specify the reason the
5 emergency designation was granted and the number of attempts that were
6 made to find a polling place before granting an emergency designation.

7 ~~I.~~ I. For the purposes of this section, a county recorder or other
8 officer in charge of elections shall designate a polling place as an
9 emergency polling place and thus prohibit persons from electioneering and
10 engaging in other political activity outside of the seventy-five foot
11 limit prescribed by section 16-515 but inside the property of the facility
12 that is hosting the polling place if any of the following occurs:

13 1. An act of God renders a previously set polling place as
14 unusable.

15 2. A county recorder or other officer in charge of elections has
16 exhausted all options and there are no suitable facilities in a precinct
17 that are willing to be a polling place unless a facility can be given an
18 emergency designation.

19 ~~K.~~ J. The secretary of state shall provide through the
20 instructions and procedures manual adopted pursuant to section 16-452 the
21 maximum allowable wait time for any election that is subject to section
22 16-204 and provide for a method to reduce voter wait time at the polls in
23 the primary and general elections. The method shall consider at least all
24 of the following for primary and general elections in each precinct:

25 1. The number of ballots voted in the prior primary and general
26 elections.

27 2. The number of registered voters who voted early in the prior
28 primary and general elections.

29 3. The number of registered voters and the number of registered
30 voters who cast an early ballot for the current primary or general
31 election.

32 4. The number of registered voters whose early ballots were
33 tabulated on-site as prescribed in section 16-579.02 in the prior primary
34 and general elections.

35 5. The number of election board members and clerks and the number
36 of rosters that will reduce voter wait time at the polls.

37 Sec. 2. Section 16-449, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
38 read:

39 16-449. Required test of equipment and programs; notice;
40 procedures manual

41 A. Within the period of time before the election day prescribed by
42 the secretary of state in the instructions and procedures manual adopted
43 pursuant to section 16-452, the board of supervisors or other ~~election~~
44 officer in charge OF ELECTIONS, or for an election involving state or
45 federal candidates, the secretary of state, shall ~~have~~ TEST the automatic

1 tabulating equipment and programs ~~tested~~ to ascertain that the equipment
2 and programs will correctly count the votes cast for all offices and on
3 all measures. Public notice of the time and place of the test shall be
4 given at least forty-eight hours ~~prior thereto~~ BEFORE THE TEST by
5 publication once in one or more daily or weekly newspapers published in
6 the town, ~~OR~~ city ~~or village~~ using such equipment, if a newspaper is
7 published ~~therein~~ IN THE TOWN OR CITY, otherwise in a newspaper of general
8 circulation ~~therein~~ IN THE AREA. The test shall be observed by at least
9 two election inspectors, who shall not be of the same political party, and
10 shall be open to representatives of the political parties, candidates, the
11 press and the public. The test shall be conducted by processing a
12 preaudited group of ballots so marked as to record a predetermined number
13 of valid votes for each candidate and on each measure and shall include
14 for each office one or more ballots that have votes in excess of the
15 number allowed by law in order to test the ability of the automatic
16 tabulating equipment and programs to reject such votes. If any error is
17 detected, the cause ~~therefor~~ FOR THE ERROR shall be ascertained and
18 corrected and an errorless count shall be made before the automatic
19 tabulating equipment and programs are approved. A copy of a revised
20 program shall be filed with the secretary of state within forty-eight
21 hours after the revision is made. If the error was created by automatic
22 tabulating equipment malfunction, a report shall be filed with the
23 secretary of state within forty-eight hours after the correction is made,
24 stating the cause and the corrective action taken. The test shall be
25 repeated immediately before the start of the official count of the ballots
26 in the same manner as set forth above. After the completion of the count,
27 the programs used and the ballots shall be sealed, retained and disposed
28 of as provided for paper ballots.

29 B. Electronic ballot tabulating systems shall be tested for logic
30 and accuracy within seven days before their use for early balloting
31 pursuant to the instructions and procedures manual for electronic voting
32 systems that is adopted by the secretary of state as prescribed by section
33 16-452. The instructions and procedures manual shall include procedures
34 for the handling of ballots, the electronic scanning of ballots and any
35 other matters necessary to ensure the maximum degree of correctness,
36 impartiality and uniformity in the administration of an electronic ballot
37 tabulating system.

38 C. Notwithstanding subsections A and B of this section, if a county
39 uses accessible voting equipment to mark ballots and that accessible
40 voting equipment does not independently tabulate or tally votes, the
41 secretary of state in cooperation with the county officer in charge of
42 elections may designate a single date to test the logic and accuracy of
43 both the accessible voting equipment and electronic ballot tabulating
44 systems.

1 D. NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSECTION B OF THIS SECTION, FOR ANY COUNTY
2 THAT PROVIDES FOR ON-SITE TABULATION PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 16-579.01 AND
3 16-579.02, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OR OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS
4 SHALL TEST THE ELECTRONIC BALLOT TABULATING EQUIPMENT TO BE USED PURSUANT
5 TO SECTION 16-579.01 FOR LOGIC AND ACCURACY WITHIN FIFTY DAYS BEFORE
6 ELECTION DAY. THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT AFFECT THE DEADLINES FOR
7 PERFORMING LOGIC AND ACCURACY TESTING ON OTHER EQUIPMENT.

8 Sec. 3. Section 16-542, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
9 read:

10 16-542. Request for ballot: civil penalties: violation:
11 classification

12 A. Within ninety-three days before any election called pursuant to
13 the laws of this state, an elector may make a verbal or signed request to
14 the county recorder, or other officer in charge of elections for the
15 applicable political subdivision of this state in whose jurisdiction the
16 elector is registered to vote, for an official early ballot. In addition
17 to name and address, the requesting elector shall provide the date of
18 birth and state or country of birth or other information that if compared
19 to the voter registration information on file would confirm the identity
20 of the elector. If the request indicates that the elector needs a primary
21 election ballot and a general election ballot, the county recorder or
22 other officer in charge of elections shall honor the request. For any
23 partisan primary election, if the elector is not registered as a member of
24 a political party that is entitled to continued representation on the
25 ballot pursuant to section 16-804, the elector shall designate the ballot
26 of only one of the political parties that is entitled to continued
27 representation on the ballot and the elector may receive and vote the
28 ballot of only that one political party, which also shall include any
29 nonpartisan offices and ballot questions, or the elector shall designate
30 the ballot for nonpartisan offices and ballot questions only and the
31 elector may receive and vote the ballot that contains only nonpartisan
32 offices and ballot questions. The county recorder or other officer in
33 charge of elections shall process any request for an early ballot for a
34 municipal election pursuant to this subsection. The county recorder may
35 establish on-site early voting locations at the recorder's office, which
36 shall be open and available for use beginning the same day that a county
37 begins to send out the early ballots. The county recorder may also
38 establish any other early voting locations in the county the recorder
39 deems necessary. Any on-site early voting location or other early voting
40 location shall require each elector to present identification as
41 prescribed in section 16-579 before receiving a ballot. Notwithstanding
42 section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 2, at any on-site early voting
43 location or other early voting location the county recorder or other
44 officer in charge of elections may provide for a qualified elector to
45 update the elector's voter registration information as provided for in the

1 secretary of state's instructions and procedures manual adopted pursuant
2 to section 16-452.

3 B. Notwithstanding subsection A of this section, a request for an
4 official early ballot from an absent uniformed services voter or overseas
5 voter as defined in the uniformed and overseas citizens absentee voting
6 act (P.L. 99-410; 52 United States Code section 20310) or a voter whose
7 information is protected pursuant to section 16-153 that is received by
8 the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections more than
9 ninety-three days before the election is valid. If requested by the
10 absent uniformed services or overseas voter, or a voter whose information
11 is protected pursuant to section 16-153, the county recorder or other
12 officer in charge of elections shall provide to the requesting voter early
13 ballot materials through the next regularly scheduled general election for
14 federal office immediately following receipt of the request unless a
15 different period of time, which does not exceed the next two regularly
16 scheduled general elections for federal office, is designated by the
17 voter.

18 C. The county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
19 shall mail the early ballot and the envelope for its return postage
20 prepaid to the address provided by the requesting elector within five days
21 after receipt of the official early ballots from the officer charged by
22 law with the duty of preparing ballots pursuant to section 16-545, except
23 that early ballot distribution shall not begin more than twenty-seven days
24 before the election. If an early ballot request is received on or before
25 the thirty-first day before the election, the early ballot shall be
26 distributed not earlier than the twenty-seventh day before the election
27 and not later than the twenty-fourth day before the election.

28 D. Only the elector may be in possession of that elector's unvoted
29 early ballot. If a complete and correct request is made by the elector
30 within twenty-seven days before the election, the mailing must be made
31 within forty-eight hours after receipt of the request. Saturdays, Sundays
32 and other legal holidays are excluded from the computation of the
33 forty-eight-hour period prescribed by this subsection. If a complete and
34 correct request is made by an absent uniformed services voter or an
35 overseas voter before the election, the regular early ballot shall be
36 transmitted by mail, by fax or by other electronic format approved by the
37 secretary of state within twenty-four hours after the early ballots are
38 delivered pursuant to section 16-545, subsection B, excluding Sundays.

39 E. In order to be complete and correct and to receive an early
40 ballot by mail, an elector's request that an early ballot be mailed to the
41 elector's residence or temporary address must include all of the
42 information prescribed by subsection A of this section and must be
43 received by the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
44 not later than 5:00 p.m. on the eleventh day preceding the election. An
45 elector who appears personally not later than 7:00 p.m. on the ~~Friday~~

1 MONDAY preceding the election at an on-site early voting location OR OTHER
2 EARLY VOTING LOCATION that is established by the county recorder or other
3 officer in charge of elections shall be given a ballot after presenting
4 identification as prescribed in section 16-579 and shall be allowed to
5 vote at the on-site location. Notwithstanding section 16-579, subsection
6 A, paragraph 2, at any on-site early voting location the county recorder
7 or other officer in charge of elections may provide for a qualified
8 elector to update the elector's voter registration information as provided
9 for in the secretary of state's instructions and procedures manual adopted
10 pursuant to section 16-452. If an elector's request to receive an early
11 ballot is not complete and correct but complies with all other
12 requirements of this section, the county recorder or other officer in
13 charge of elections shall attempt to notify the elector of the deficiency
14 of the request.

15 F. Unless an elector specifies that the address to which an early
16 ballot is to be sent is a temporary address, the recorder may use the
17 information from an early ballot request form to update voter registration
18 records.

19 G. The county recorder or other officer in charge of early
20 balloting shall provide an alphabetized list of all voters in the precinct
21 who have requested and have been sent an early ballot to the election
22 board of the precinct in which the voter is registered not later than the
23 day before the election.

24 ~~H. As a result of experiencing an emergency between 7:00 p.m. on~~
25 ~~the Friday preceding the election and 5:00 p.m. on the Monday preceding~~
26 ~~the election, qualified electors may request to vote in the manner~~
27 ~~prescribed by the board of supervisors of their respective county. Before~~
28 ~~voting pursuant to this subsection, an elector who experiences an~~
29 ~~emergency shall provide identification as prescribed in section 16-579 and~~
30 ~~shall sign a statement under penalty of perjury that states that the~~
31 ~~person is experiencing or experienced an emergency after 7:00 p.m. on the~~
32 ~~Friday immediately preceding the election and before 5:00 p.m. on the~~
33 ~~Monday immediately preceding the election that would prevent the person~~
34 ~~from voting at the polls. Signed statements received pursuant to this~~
35 ~~subsection are not subject to inspection pursuant to title 39, chapter 1,~~
36 ~~article 2. For the purposes of this subsection, "emergency" means any~~
37 ~~unforeseen circumstances that would prevent the elector from voting at the~~
38 ~~polls.~~

39 ~~I. Notwithstanding section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 2, for~~
40 ~~any voting pursuant to subsection H of this section, the county recorder~~
41 ~~or other officer in charge of elections may allow a qualified elector to~~
42 ~~update the elector's voter registration information as provided for in the~~
43 ~~secretary of state's instructions and procedures manual adopted pursuant~~
44 ~~to section 16-452.~~

~~H.~~ H. A candidate, political committee or other organization may distribute early ballot request forms to voters. If the early ballot request forms include a printed address for return, the addressee shall be the political subdivision that will conduct the election. Failure to use the political subdivision as the return addressee is punishable by a civil penalty of up to three times the cost of the production and distribution of the request.

~~I.~~ I. All original and completed early ballot request forms that are received by a candidate, political committee or other organization shall be submitted within six business days after receipt by a candidate, political committee or other organization or eleven days before the election day, whichever is earlier, to the political subdivision that will conduct the election. Any person, political committee or other organization that fails to submit a completed early ballot request form within the prescribed time is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$25 per day for each completed form withheld from submittal. Any person who knowingly fails to submit a completed early ballot request form before the submission deadline for the election immediately following the completion of the form is guilty of a class 6 felony.

~~J.~~ J. Except for a voter who is on the active early voting list prescribed by section 16-544, a voter who requests a onetime early ballot pursuant to this section or for an election conducted pursuant to section 16-409 or article 8.1 of this chapter, a county recorder, city or town clerk or other election officer may not deliver or mail an early ballot to a person who has not requested an early ballot for that election. An election officer who knowingly violates this subsection is guilty of a class 5 felony.

Sec. 4. Section 16-547, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

16-547. Mail affidavit; form

A. The early ballot shall be accompanied by an envelope bearing on the front the name, official title and post office address of the recorder or other officer in charge of elections and on the other side a printed affidavit in substantially the following form:

I declare the following under penalty of perjury: I am a registered voter in _____ county Arizona, I have not voted and will not vote in this election in any other county or state, I understand that knowingly voting more than once in any election is a class 5 felony and I voted the enclosed ballot and signed this MAIL affidavit personally unless noted below.

If the voter was assisted by another person in marking the ballot, complete the following:

I declare the following under penalty of perjury: At the registered voter's request I assisted the voter identified

in this MAIL affidavit with marking the voter's ballot, I marked the ballot as directly instructed by the voter, I provided the assistance because the voter was physically unable to mark the ballot solely due to illness, injury or physical limitation and I understand that there is no power of attorney for voting and that the voter must be able to make the voter's selection even if the voter cannot physically mark the ballot.

Name of voter assistant: _____

Address of voter assistant: _____

B. The face of each envelope in which a ballot is sent to a federal postcard applicant or in which a ballot is returned by the applicant to the recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall be in the form prescribed in accordance with the uniformed and overseas citizens absentee voting act (P.L. 99-410; 52 United States Code section 20301). Otherwise, the envelopes shall be the same as those used to send ballots to, or receive ballots from, other early voters.

C. The officer charged by law with the duty of preparing ballots at any election shall ensure that the early ballot is sent in an envelope that states substantially the following:

If the addressee does not reside at this address, mark the unopened envelope "return to sender" and deposit it in the United States mail.

D. The county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall supply printed instructions to early voters that direct them to sign the MAIL affidavit, mark the ballot and return both in the enclosed self-addressed envelope that complies with section 16-545, and:

~~1. Through 2025, the instructions shall include the following statement:~~

~~In order to be valid and counted, the ballot and mail affidavit must be delivered to the office of the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections or may be deposited at any polling place in the county not later than 7:00 p.m. on election day. The ballot will not be counted without the voter's signature on the envelope.~~

~~(WARNING - It is a felony to offer or receive any compensation for a ballot.)~~

~~2. 1. Beginning in 2026, FOR A COUNTY THAT PROVIDES ON-SITE TABULATION OF BALLOTS PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 16-579.01 AND 16-579.02, the instructions shall include the following statement:~~

In order to be valid and counted, the mail affidavit that contains the mail ballot must have the voter's signature on the envelope and must be returned to the office of the county recorder by any one of the following methods:

1 (a) ~~Delivering~~ MAILING it to the office of the county
2 recorder or other officer in charge of elections WHERE IT MUST
3 BE RECEIVED not later than 7:00 p.m. on election day.

4 ~~(b) Depositing it at any polling place in the county~~
5 ~~not later than 7:00 p.m. on election day.~~

6 ~~(c) Bringing the ballot to any polling place in the~~
7 ~~county not later than 7:00 p.m. on election day and choosing~~
8 ~~to present valid identification that complies with section~~
9 ~~16-579, subsection A, paragraph 1, Arizona Revised Statutes.~~

10 (b) HAND DELIVERING IT TO THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY
11 RECORDER OR OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS NOT LATER THAN
12 7:00 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.

13 (c) DEPOSITING IT AT ANY VOTING LOCATION IN THE COUNTY
14 BY 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY.

15 (d) AFTER 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY,
16 BRINGING THE BALLOT TO ANY VOTING LOCATION IN THE COUNTY THAT
17 OFFERS ON-SITE TABULATION AND SUBMITTING IT TO THE ELECTION
18 OFFICIALS FOR SEPARATION FROM THE ENVELOPE AND PROCESSING AS
19 REQUIRED BY THE COUNTY.

20 (WARNING — IT IS A FELONY TO OFFER OR RECEIVE ANY
21 COMPENSATION FOR A BALLOT.)

22 2. FOR A COUNTY THAT DOES NOT PROVIDE ON-SITE TABULATION OF BALLOTS
23 PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 16-579.01 AND 16-579.02, THE INSTRUCTIONS SHALL
24 INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

25 IN ORDER TO BE VALID AND COUNTED, THE MAIL AFFIDAVIT
26 THAT CONTAINS THE MAIL BALLOT MUST HAVE THE VOTER'S SIGNATURE
27 ON THE ENVELOPE AND MUST BE RETURNED TO THE OFFICE OF THE
28 COUNTY RECORDER BY ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:

29 (a) MAILING IT TO THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OR
30 OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS, WHICH MUST BE RECEIVED
31 NOT LATER THAN 7:00 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.

32 (b) HAND DELIVERING IT TO THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY
33 RECORDER OR OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS NOT LATER THAN
34 7:00 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.

35 (c) DEPOSITING IT AT ANY VOTING LOCATION IN THE COUNTY
36 BY 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY.

37 (d) AFTER 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY,
38 BRINGING THE BALLOT TO ANY VOTING LOCATION IN THE COUNTY NOT
39 LATER THAN 7:00 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY AND PRESENTING
40 IDENTIFICATION THAT COMPLIES WITH SECTION 16-579, SUBSECTION
41 A, PARAGRAPH 1, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES.

42 (WARNING — It is a felony to offer or receive any compensation
43 for a ballot.)

E. The printed instructions prescribed by subsection D of this section shall also include the following information regarding section 16-1005, subsections H and I in substantially the following form:

A person may only handle or return their own ballot or the ballot of family members, household members or persons for whom they are a caregiver. It is unlawful under section 16-1005, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, to handle or return the ballot of any other person.

Sec. 5. Section 16-548, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

16-548. Preparation and transmission of ballot

A. The early voter shall make and sign the affidavit and shall then mark ~~his~~ THE ballot in ~~such~~ a manner that ~~his~~ THE EARLY VOTER'S vote cannot be seen. The early voter shall fold the ballot, if a paper ballot, so as to conceal the vote, ~~and~~ deposit the voted ballot in the envelope provided for that purpose, which shall be securely sealed and, together with the affidavit, ~~delivered or mailed~~ SHALL BE RETURNED BY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:

1. MAILING THE VOTED BALLOT to the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections of the political subdivision in which the ~~elector~~ VOTER is registered ~~or deposited by the voter or the voter's agent at any polling place in the county~~. In order to be counted and valid, the ballot must be received by the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections ~~or deposited at any polling place in the county~~ ~~no~~ NOT later than 7:00 p.m. on election day.

2. HAND DELIVERING THE VOTED BALLOT TO THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS OF THE POLITICAL SUBDIVISION IN WHICH THE VOTER IS REGISTERED. IN ORDER TO BE COUNTED AND VALID, THE BALLOT MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS NOT LATER THAN 7:00 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.

3. DEPOSITING THE VOTED BALLOT AT ANY VOTING LOCATION IN THE COUNTY. IN ORDER TO BE COUNTED AND VALID, THE BALLOT MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE VOTING LOCATION NOT LATER THAN 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY.

B. A PERSON WHO APPEARS PERSONALLY AT AN EARLY VOTING LOCATION ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SECTION 16-542 DURING THE PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING, INCLUDING ON THE SATURDAY, SUNDAY AND MONDAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY, SHALL PRESENT IDENTIFICATION AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION 16-579, SIGN THE EARLY VOTER AFFIDAVIT, MARK THE BALLOT IN A MANNER THAT THE EARLY VOTER'S VOTE CANNOT BE SEEN AND RETURN THE VOTED BALLOT TO THE ELECTION OFFICIAL AT THE EARLY VOTING LOCATION. FOR A COUNTY THAT PROVIDES FOR ON-SITE TABULATION OF BALLOTS PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 16-579.01 AND 16-579.02 DURING THE SATURDAY, SUNDAY OR MONDAY IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING ELECTION DAY, THE FOLLOWING APPLY:

1 1. THE EARLY VOTER SHALL APPEAR PERSONALLY AT THE ON-SITE
2 TABULATION LOCATION AND SUBMIT THE VOTER'S EARLY BALLOT AND AFFIDAVIT.

3 2. THE ELECTION OFFICIAL SHALL ALLOW THE EARLY VOTER TO TABULATE
4 THE EARLY BALLOT ON SITE AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTIONS 16-579.01 AND
5 16-579.02.

6 C. BEGINNING IN 2027, FOR EARLY BALLOTS THAT ARE CAST IN PERSON
7 PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION B OF THIS SECTION, THE OFFICER IN CHARGE OF
8 ELECTIONS SHALL ENSURE THAT CHAIN OF CUSTODY PROCEDURES FOR THESE EARLY
9 BALLOTS ARE IDENTICAL TO THOSE PRESCRIBED FOR IN PERSON ELECTION DAY
10 VOTING.

11 ~~B.~~ D. If the early voter is an overseas citizen, a qualified
12 elector absent from the United States or in the United States service, a
13 spouse or dependent residing with the early voter or a qualified elector
14 of a special district mail ballot election as provided in article 8.1 of
15 this chapter, the early voter may subscribe to the affidavit before and
16 obtain the signature and military identification number or passport
17 number, if available, of any person who is a United States citizen
18 eighteen years of age or older.

19 Sec. 6. Section 16-551, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
20 read:

21 16-551. Early election board; violation; classification

22 A. The board of supervisors or the governing body of the political
23 subdivision shall appoint one or more early election boards to serve at
24 places to be designated by the board of supervisors or the governing body
25 to canvass and tally early election ballots. Members of early election
26 boards shall be selected in accordance with the provisions for selecting
27 members of regular election boards as provided in section 16-531.

28 B. If an electronic voting system is in use for early voting, the
29 early election board shall consist of at least one inspector and two
30 judges who shall perform the processing requirements in accordance with
31 the rules issued by the secretary of state. The inspector and judges
32 shall be appointed in the same manner by party as provided in section
33 16-531.

34 C. All early ballots received by the county recorder or other
35 officer in charge of elections before 7:00 p.m. on election day and the
36 original mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit of the voter shall be delivered to the
37 early election boards for processing as provided in the rules of the
38 secretary of state. Beginning in 2026, all early ballots that are
39 delivered by a voter to a voting location without presenting
40 identification that complies with section 16-579, subsection A,
41 paragraph 1 must be signature verified. The office of the county recorder
42 or other officer in charge of elections shall remain open until 7:00 p.m.
43 on election day for the purpose of receiving early ballots. Partial or
44 complete tallies of the early election board shall not be released or
45 divulged before all precincts have reported or one hour after the closing

1 of the polls on election day, whichever occurs first. Any person who
2 unlawfully releases information regarding vote tallies or who possesses a
3 tally sheet or summary without authorization from the recorder or officer
4 in charge of elections is guilty of a class 6 felony.

5 D. EXCEPT IN COUNTIES THAT TABULATE EARLY BALLOTS ON-SITE PURSUANT
6 TO SECTIONS 16-579.01 AND 16-579.02, the county recorder or other officer
7 in charge of elections shall count the number of early ballots that are
8 returned at voting locations on election day and shall post on its website
9 those totals with the last unofficial results that are released on
10 election night pursuant to section 16-622. Beginning with the day
11 following the election, the county recorder or other officer in charge of
12 elections shall enter into the county's ballot tracking system, if
13 established, early ballots that were returned at the voting location on
14 election day.

15 E. The necessary printed blanks for poll lists, tally lists, lists
16 of voters, ballots, oaths and returns, together with envelopes in which to
17 enclose the returns, shall be furnished by the board of supervisors or the
18 governing body of the political subdivision to the early election board
19 for each election precinct at the expense of the county or the political
20 subdivision.

21 Sec. 7. Section 16-552, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
22 read:

23 16-552. Early ballots; processing; challenges

24 A. In a jurisdiction that uses optical scan ballots, the officer in
25 charge of elections may use the procedure prescribed by this section or
26 may request approval from the secretary of state for a different method
27 for processing early ballots. The request shall be made in writing at
28 least ninety days before the election for which the procedure is intended
29 to be used. After the election official has confirmed with the secretary
30 of state that all election equipment passes the logic and accuracy test,
31 the election official may begin to count early ballots. ~~No~~ Early ballot
32 results may NOT be released except as prescribed by section 16-551.

33 B. EXCEPT FOR A PERSON WHO VOTES PERSONALLY AT AN EARLY VOTING
34 LOCATION DURING THE PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION
35 16-548, SUBSECTION B, the early election board shall check the voter's
36 mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit on the envelope containing the early ballot. If it
37 is found to be sufficient, the vote shall be allowed. If the mail ~~ballot~~
38 affidavit is insufficient, the vote shall not be allowed. Beginning in
39 2026, for an early ballot that is received and verified as prescribed by
40 section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 4, additional signature
41 verification is not required.

42 C. The county chairman of each political party represented on the
43 ballot, by written appointment addressed to the early election board, may
44 designate party representatives and alternates to act as early ballot
45 challengers for the party. ~~No~~ A party may NOT have more than the number

1 of such representatives or alternates that were mutually agreed on by each
2 political party to be present at one time. If such agreement cannot be
3 reached, the number of representatives shall be limited to one for each
4 political party.

5 D. An early ballot may be challenged on any grounds set forth in
6 section 16-591. All challenges shall be made in writing with a brief
7 statement of the grounds before the early ballot is placed in the ballot
8 box. A record of all challenges and resulting proceedings shall be kept
9 in substantially the same manner as provided in section 16-594. If an
10 early ballot is challenged, it shall be set aside and retained in the
11 possession of the early election board or other officer in charge of early
12 ballot processing until a time that the early election board sets for
13 determination of the challenge, subject to the procedure in subsection E
14 of this section, at which time the early election board shall hear the
15 grounds for the challenge and shall decide what disposition shall be made
16 of the early ballot by majority vote. If the early ballot is not allowed,
17 it shall be handled pursuant to subsection G of this section.

18 E. Within twenty-four hours ~~of receipt of~~ AFTER RECEIVING a
19 challenge, the early election board or other officer in charge of early
20 ballot processing shall mail, by first class mail, a notice of the
21 challenge including a copy of the written challenge, and also including
22 the time and place at which the voter may appear to defend the challenge,
23 to the voter at the mailing address shown on the request for an early
24 ballot or, if none was provided, to the mailing address shown on the
25 registration rolls. Notice shall also be mailed to the challenger at the
26 address listed on the written challenge and provided to the county
27 chairman of each political party represented on the ballot. The board
28 shall meet to determine the challenge at the time specified by the notice
29 but, in any event, not earlier than ninety-six hours after the notice is
30 mailed, or forty-eight hours if the notifying party chooses to deliver the
31 notice by overnight or hand delivery, and not later than 5:00 p.m. on the
32 Monday following the election. The board shall provide the voter with an
33 informal opportunity to make, or to submit, brief statements regarding the
34 challenge. The board may decline to ~~permit~~ ALLOW comments, either in
35 person or in writing, by anyone other than the voter, the challenger and
36 the party representatives. The burden of proof is on the challenger to
37 show why the voter should not be ~~permitted~~ ALLOWED to vote. The fact that
38 the voter fails to appear shall not be deemed to be an admission of the
39 validity of the challenge. The early election board or other officer in
40 charge of early ballot processing is not required to provide the notices
41 described in this subsection if the written challenge fails to set forth
42 at least one of the grounds listed in section 16-591 as a basis for the
43 challenge. In that event, the challenge will be summarily rejected at the
44 meeting of the board. Except for election contests pursuant to section
45 16-672, the board's decision is final and may not be appealed.

1 F. If the vote is allowed, the board shall open the envelope
2 containing the ballot in such a manner that the mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit
3 ~~thereon~~ ON THE ENVELOPE is not destroyed, take out the ballot without
4 unfolding it or ~~permitting~~ ALLOWING it to be opened or examined and show
5 by the records of the election that the elector has voted.

6 G. If the vote is not allowed, the mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit envelope
7 containing the early ballot shall not be opened and the board shall mark
8 across the face of such envelope the grounds for rejection. The mail
9 ~~ballot~~ affidavit envelope and its contents shall then be deposited with
10 the opened mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit envelopes and shall be preserved with
11 official returns. If the voter does not enter an appearance, the board
12 shall send the voter a notice stating whether the early ballot was
13 disallowed and, if disallowed, providing the grounds for the
14 determination. The notice shall be mailed by first class mail to the
15 voter's mailing address as shown on the registration rolls within three
16 days after the board's determination.

17 H. Party representatives and alternates may be appointed as
18 provided in subsection C of this section to be present and to challenge
19 the verification of questioned ballots pursuant to section 16-584 on any
20 grounds allowed by this section. Questioned ballots that are challenged
21 shall be presented to the early election board for decision under the
22 provisions of this section.

23 Sec. 8. Section 16-579.01, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
24 read:

25 16-579.01. Early ballots; on-site tabulation

26 A. Every county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
27 may provide for a qualified elector who appears at that elector's
28 designated polling location or at a voting center AT ANY TIME DURING THE
29 PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING AND on election day with the elector's voted early
30 ballot to have the elector's voted early ballot tabulated as prescribed in
31 section 16-579.02.

32 B. The county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
33 shall do all of the following if the on-site tabulation of early ballots
34 is allowed:

35 1. Designate an area within a precinct or voting center for
36 processing electors with their voted early ballots that is physically
37 separate from the area for voters who are voting pursuant to section
38 16-579.

39 2. Provide adequate poll workers, election officials and equipment
40 necessary to conduct voting pursuant to this section and section
41 16-579.02.

42 3. Categorize and tally separately in the official canvass and
43 other reports electors whose voted early ballots are tabulated at the
44 precinct or voting center. The tally shall be reported by precinct in the
45 official canvass and other voting reports.

1 4. Reconcile for that polling place or voting center the number of
2 electors who appear on the signature roster or ~~e-pollbook~~ **ELECTRONIC**
3 **POLLBOOK** with the number of completed early ballot affidavits and the
4 voted early ballots tabulated on-site.

5 Sec. 9. Section 16-579.02, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
6 read:

7 16-579.02. Early ballot on-site tabulation procedure

8 A. A qualified elector who appears at a voting center or at the
9 elector's designated polling place that allows for the on-site tabulation
10 of early ballots with the elector's voted early ballot shall present
11 identification as prescribed in section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 1
12 and proceed as follows:

13 1. If the elector does not present identification that complies
14 with section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 1, the elector shall ~~either~~
15 ~~deposit the elector's voted early ballot in its affidavit envelope in an~~
16 ~~official drop box or~~ proceed to the area designated for election day
17 voting to surrender the early ballot to the election board for retention
18 and not for tabulating. The elector shall then be allowed to vote a
19 provisional ballot as prescribed in section 16-584. An election official
20 may not allow for the on-site tabulation of an early ballot if the elector
21 does not present identification that complies with section 16-579,
22 subsection A, paragraph 1.

23 2. If the elector presents sufficient identification to comply with
24 section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 1, the elector shall present the
25 elector's early ballot affidavit to the election official in charge of the
26 signature roster, and the election official shall confirm that the name
27 and address on the completed affidavit reasonably appear to be the same as
28 the name and address on the precinct register.

29 3. If the elector's affidavit is not complete, the election
30 official in charge of the signature roster shall allow the elector to
31 complete the affidavit. The election official may not allow for the
32 on-site tabulation of an early ballot until the elector presents a
33 completed early ballot affidavit.

34 B. If the elector's affidavit is complete, the elector's name shall
35 be numbered consecutively by the clerk and in the order of application for
36 early ballot tabulation.

37 C. For precincts in which a paper signature roster is used, each
38 qualified elector shall sign the elector's name in the signature roster as
39 prescribed in section 16-579, subsection D before proceeding to the
40 tabulating equipment.

41 D. For precincts in which an electronic pollbook is used, each
42 qualified elector shall sign the elector's name as prescribed in section
43 16-579, subsection E before proceeding to the tabulating equipment.

1 E. After signing the signature roster or electronic pollbook, the
2 elector shall proceed to the tabulating equipment and while under the
3 observation of an election official, remove the early ballot from the
4 completed affidavit envelope, deposit the empty completed affidavit
5 envelope in the secured and labeled drop box and insert the early ballot
6 into a tabulating machine. An early ballot that has been separated from
7 the elector's completed affidavit envelope may not be removed from the
8 on-site early ballot tabulation area.

9 F. The drop box prescribed in subsection E of this section shall be
10 clearly labeled to indicate that the completed affidavits are from ballots
11 tabulated pursuant to this section and shall be secured in a manner
12 substantially similar to other ballot boxes at that location.

13 G. Any qualified elector who lawfully brings to a polling place or
14 voting center another elector's voted early ballot that is sealed in its
15 affidavit envelope shall deposit the other elector's voted early ballot in
16 the appropriate ballot drop box before entering the on-site early ballot
17 tabulation area for purposes of tabulating the elector's own early ballot.
18 The county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall ensure
19 that a voter is not in possession of another voter's ballot within the
20 on-site early ballot tabulation area.

21 Sec. 10. Severability

22 If a provision of this act or its application to any person or
23 circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other
24 provisions or applications of the act that can be given effect without the
25 invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this
26 act are severable.