

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~~ school shall provide sufficient space for use as a ~~polling place~~ VOTING  
11 ~~LOCATION~~ for any city, county or state election when requested by the  
12 officer in charge of elections.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

20        ~~T.~~ J. Except for a voter who is on the active early voting list  
21 prescribed by section 16-544, a voter who requests a onetime early ballot  
22 pursuant to this section or for an election conducted pursuant to section  
23 16-409 or article 8.1 of this chapter, a county recorder, city or town  
24 clerk or other election officer may not deliver or mail an early ballot to  
25 a person who has not requested an early ballot for that election. An  
26 election officer who knowingly violates this subsection is guilty of a  
27 class 5 felony.

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

30        **16-547. Mail affidavit; form**

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

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

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

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

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

9               Name of voter assistant: \_\_\_\_\_

10              Address of voter assistant: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

28       **1. Through 2025, the instructions shall include the following**  
29       **statement:**

30       **~~in order to be valid and counted, the ballot and mail~~**  
31       **~~affidavit must be delivered to the office of the county~~**  
32       **~~recorder or other officer in charge of elections or may be~~**  
33       **~~deposited at any polling place in the county not later than~~**  
34       **~~7:00 p.m. on election day. The ballot will not be counted~~**  
35       **~~without the voter's signature on the envelope.~~**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. FOR A COUNTY THAT DOES NOT PROVIDE 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 RETUNED TO THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER BY ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:

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

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

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

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

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

1       E. The printed instructions prescribed by subsection D of this  
2 section shall also include the following information regarding section  
3 16-1005, subsections H and I in substantially the following form:

4           A person may only handle or return their own ballot or  
5 the ballot of family members, household members or persons for  
6 whom they are a caregiver. It is unlawful under section  
7 16-1005, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, to handle or return the  
8 ballot of any other person.

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

11           16-548. Preparation and transmission of ballot

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

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

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

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

35       B. A PERSON WHO APPEARS PERSONALLY AT AN EARLY VOTING LOCATION  
36 ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SECTION 16-542 DURING THE PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING,  
37 INCLUDING ON THE SATURDAY, SUNDAY AND MONDAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY, SHALL  
38 PRESENT IDENTIFICATION AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION 16-579, SIGN THE EARLY  
39 VOTER AFFIDAVIT, MARK THE BALLOT IN A MANNER THAT THE EARLY VOTER'S VOTE  
40 CANNOT BE SEEN AND RETURN THE VOTED BALLOT TO THE ELECTION OFFICIAL AT THE  
41 EARLY VOTING LOCATION. FOR A COUNTY THAT PROVIDES FOR ON-SITE TABULATION  
42 OF BALLOTS PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 16-579.01 AND 16-579.02 DURING THE  
43 SATURDAY, SUNDAY OR MONDAY IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING ELECTION DAY, THE  
44 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. 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.