

REFERENCE TITLE: early ballots; registration signatures; curing

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-seventh Legislature
Second Regular Session
2026

SB 1568

Introduced by
Senator Hoffman

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 16-542 AND 16-550, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO
THE CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

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

2 Section 1. Section 16-542, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 16-542. Request for ballot; civil penalties; violation;
5 classification

6 A. Within ninety-three days before any election called pursuant to
7 the laws of this state, an elector may make a verbal or signed request to
8 the county recorder, or other officer in charge of elections for the
9 applicable political subdivision of this state in whose jurisdiction the
10 elector is registered to vote, for an official early ballot. In addition
11 to name and address, the requesting elector shall provide the date of
12 birth and state or country of birth or other information that if compared
13 to the voter registration information on file would confirm the identity
14 of the elector. If the request indicates that the elector needs a primary
15 election ballot and a general election ballot, the county recorder or
16 other officer in charge of elections shall honor the request. For any
17 partisan primary election, if the elector is not registered as a member of
18 a political party that is entitled to continued representation on the
19 ballot pursuant to section 16-804, the elector shall designate the ballot
20 of only one of the political parties that is entitled to continued
21 representation on the ballot and the elector may receive and vote the
22 ballot of only that one political party, which also shall include any
23 nonpartisan offices and ballot questions, or the elector shall designate
24 the ballot for nonpartisan offices and ballot questions only and the
25 elector may receive and vote the ballot that contains only nonpartisan
26 offices and ballot questions. The county recorder or other officer in
27 charge of elections shall process any request for an early ballot for a
28 municipal election pursuant to this subsection. The county recorder may
29 establish on-site early voting locations at the COUNTY recorder's office,
30 which shall be open and available for use beginning the same day that a
31 county begins to send out the early ballots. The county recorder may also
32 establish any other early voting locations in the county the recorder
33 deems necessary. Any on-site early voting location or other early voting
34 location shall require each elector to present identification as
35 prescribed in section 16-579 before receiving a ballot. Notwithstanding
36 section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 2, at any on-site early voting
37 location or other early voting location the county recorder or other
38 officer in charge of elections may provide for a qualified elector to
39 update the elector's voter registration information as provided for in the
40 secretary of state's instructions and procedures manual adopted pursuant
41 to section 16-452.

42 B. Notwithstanding subsection A of this section, a request for an
43 official early ballot from an absent uniformed services voter or overseas
44 voter as defined in the uniformed and overseas citizens absentee voting
45 act (P.L. 99-410; 52 United States Code section 20310) or a voter whose
46 information is protected pursuant to section 16-153 that is received by

1 the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections more than
2 ninety-three days before the election is valid. If requested by the
3 absent uniformed services or overseas voter, or a voter whose information
4 is protected pursuant to section 16-153, the county recorder or other
5 officer in charge of elections shall provide to the requesting voter early
6 ballot materials through the next regularly scheduled general election for
7 federal office immediately following receipt of the request unless a
8 different period of time, which does not exceed the next two regularly
9 scheduled general elections for federal office, is designated by the
10 voter.

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

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

32 E. In order to be complete and correct and to receive an early
33 ballot by mail, an elector's request that an early ballot be mailed to the
34 elector's residence or temporary address must include all of the
35 information prescribed by subsection A of this section and must be
36 received by the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
37 not later than 5:00 p.m. on the eleventh day preceding the election. **THE**
38 **COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS MAY MAIL AN EARLY**
39 **BALLOT TO AN ELECTOR ONLY IF THE ELECTOR'S VOTER REGISTRATION RECORD**
40 **CONTAINS A HANDWRITTEN SIGNATURE THAT WAS OBTAINED WITHIN THE FIVE YEARS**
41 **IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE MAILING OF THE EARLY BALLOT.** An elector who
42 appears personally not later than 7:00 p.m. on the Friday preceding the
43 election at an on-site early voting location that is established by the
44 county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall be given a
45 ballot after presenting identification as prescribed in section 16-579 and
46 shall be allowed to vote at the on-site location. Notwithstanding section

1 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 2, at any on-site early voting location
2 the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections may provide
3 for a qualified elector to update the elector's voter registration
4 information as provided for in the secretary of state's instructions and
5 procedures manual adopted pursuant to section 16-452. If an elector's
6 request to receive an early ballot is not complete and correct but
7 complies with all other requirements of this section, the county recorder
8 or other officer in charge of elections shall attempt to notify the
9 elector of the deficiency of the request.

10 F. Unless an elector specifies that the address to which an early
11 ballot is to be sent is a temporary address, the COUNTY recorder may use
12 the information from an early ballot request form to update voter
13 registration records.

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 Sec. 2. Section 16-550, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
22 read:

23 16-550. Receipt of voter's ballot; cure period; tracking
24 system

25 A. Except for early ballots tabulated as prescribed in section
26 16-579.02 or, beginning in 2026, received at a voting location after a
27 voter's identification is confirmed as prescribed by section 16-579,
28 subsection A, paragraph 4, on receipt of the envelope containing the early
29 ballot and the mail affidavit, the county recorder or other officer in
30 charge of elections shall compare the signature on the envelope with the
31 signature of the elector on the elector's registration record as
32 prescribed by section 16-550.01. **THE COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN**
33 **CHARGE OF ELECTIONS MAY COMPARE THE SIGNATURE ON THE ENVELOPE WITH THE**
34 **ELECTOR'S VOTER REGISTRATION ONLY IF THE ELECTOR'S VOTER REGISTRATION**
35 **RECORD CONTAINS A HANDWRITTEN SIGNATURE THAT WAS OBTAINED WITHIN THE FIVE**
36 **YEARS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE MAILING OF THE EARLY BALLOT.** If the
37 signature is inconsistent with the elector's signature on the elector's
38 registration record, the county recorder or other officer in charge of
39 elections shall make reasonable efforts to contact the voter, advise the
40 voter of the inconsistent signature and allow the voter to correct or the
41 county to confirm the inconsistent signature. The county recorder or
42 other officer in charge of elections shall allow signatures to be
43 corrected not later than the fifth business day after a primary, general
44 or special election that includes a federal office or the third business
45 day after any other election. If the election is a primary, general or
46 special election that includes a federal office and there are outstanding

1 ballots that require identification or ballot signatures to be corrected
2 or confirmed, in addition to the office's regular business hours, the
3 county recorder's and any city or town clerks' offices that have an
4 agreement with a county to be used as locations at which a voter may
5 submit proof of identification shall be open during regular business hours
6 to allow for curing signatures during the Friday and weekend before and
7 the Friday and weekend after the election. Regular business hours include
8 at a minimum 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. If there are no ballots remaining
9 that require identification or signatures to be cured, the county recorder
10 and city and town clerks are not required to be open during the weekend.
11 If the signature is missing, the county recorder or other officer in
12 charge of elections shall make reasonable efforts to contact the elector,
13 advise the elector of the missing signature and allow the elector to add
14 the elector's signature not later than 7:00 p.m. on election day. If
15 satisfied that the signatures correspond, the recorder or other officer in
16 charge of elections shall hold the envelope containing the early ballot
17 and the completed mail affidavit unopened in accordance with the rules of
18 the secretary of state. Signatures that cannot be verified pursuant to
19 section 16-550.01 or cured pursuant to this section shall be rejected. If
20 the ballot is a conditional provisional ballot, the voter shall provide
21 proof of identification to the county recorder or other officer in charge
22 of elections not later than the fifth business day after a primary,
23 general or special election that includes a federal office or the third
24 business day after any other election. Beginning with the first missing
25 or mismatched signature that is identified after the period of early
26 voting begins through the Monday immediately preceding the election, the
27 county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall submit daily
28 to the political parties that are qualified for continued representation
29 on the state ballot **AND TO ANY CANDIDATE, PRECINCT COMMITTEEMAN OR THIRD-**
30 **PARTY ORGANIZATION THAT REQUESTS THE LIST IN WRITING FOR THE PURPOSE OF**
31 **ASSISTING VOTERS IN CURING SIGNATURES** an updated list of all voters whose
32 signatures are missing or inconsistent with the voter's signature on the
33 voter's registration record. Beginning on the Wednesday immediately
34 following the election through the end of the signature cure period after
35 a primary, general or special election that includes a federal office, or
36 the third business day after the election for any other election, the
37 county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall submit daily
38 to the political parties that are qualified for continued representation
39 on the state ballot an updated list of all voters whose signatures are
40 inconsistent with the voter's signature on the voter's registration record
41 and all voters who voted with a conditional provisional ballot. This list
42 of voters whose signatures require curing shall include for those voters
43 all voter information that is provided to the political parties that are
44 qualified for continued representation on the state ballot as prescribed
45 by section 16-168.

1 B. The recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall
2 thereafter safely keep the mail affidavits and early ballots in the
3 recorder's or other officer's office and may deliver them for tallying
4 pursuant to section 16-551.

5 C. Processing and tabulation of individual ballots may begin
6 immediately after the envelope and completed mail affidavit are processed
7 pursuant to this section and delivered to the early election board and
8 shall continue without delay until completed. Until election day, the
9 early election board and the county recorder or other officer in charge of
10 elections shall:

11 1. Not access an aggregated complete results file of early voting
12 and vote by mail ballots that were processed and tabulated by the end of
13 the early voting period.

14 2. Not produce for internal or external use an aggregated results
15 report or associated files of complete results.

16 3. Only produce a partial results report or associated files if it
17 is part of the internal preparation for the hand count pursuant to section
18 16-602 or for the logic and accuracy testing required pursuant to section
19 16-449.

20 4. Not publicly release complete or partial results, whether for
21 internal or external use, until all precincts have reported or one hour
22 after the closing of the polls on election day, whichever is earlier.

23 D. The county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
24 shall post on its website within forty-eight hours after all ballot
25 tabulation is complete all system log files and other similar files from
26 the election management system that verify compliance with subsection C of
27 this section.

28 E. The county recorder shall send a list of all voters who were
29 issued early ballots to the election board of the precinct in which the
30 voter is registered.

31 F. For a county that uses early ballots, the county recorder or
32 other officer in charge of elections shall provide an early ballot
33 tracking system that indicates whether the voter's early ballot has been
34 received and whether the early ballot has been verified and sent to be
35 tabulated or rejected. The county recorder or other officer in charge of
36 elections shall provide voters with access to the early ballot tracking
37 system on the county's website.

38 G. This section does not apply to:

39 1. A special taxing district that is authorized pursuant to section
40 16-191 to conduct its own elections.

41 2. A special district mail ballot election that is conducted
42 pursuant to article 8.1 of this chapter.