



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **IT'S ALMOST ELECTION DAY! HOW AND WHEN ARE VOTES COUNTED AND REPORTED AND WHEN MIGHT THE ELECTION BE CERTIFIED?**

For the past three weeks, the County Election Team has processed approximately 7,800 Vote by Mail (VBM) ballots. There were 30,707 VBM ballots mailed out to voters in the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District on March 20<sup>th</sup>. More are expected to be returned leading up to Election Day!

Below is a brief reminder as to how the results are reported on Election Night and the days after, as well as an explanation as to when the election will be certified.

#### **Election Night - Close of Polls 8:00pm**

- The first results are posted shortly after the close of polls at 8:00 pm - these are the Vote by Mail ballots that were returned and processed prior to Election Day.
- Each of the 17 precincts will begin to complete their closing paperwork, account for all voted, unvoted and spoiled ballots, pack up their supplies, and transport all the required ballots and supplies to the Collection Center - this can take over an hour.
- As the return of the precinct ballots arrive at the San Luis Obispo Main Elections Office from the Collection Center, their ballots are tabulated and compiled into the results.
- The results are updated in intervals of every two-hours and posted to the website [www.slovote.com](http://www.slovote.com).
- When all precinct ballots have been tabulated, counting on Election Night will conclude; however, there are still more ballots to count and a lot more work to do before the results become official (see below).

#### **What ballots are counted after Election Day?**

- **Vote by Mail Ballots:** Vote by Mail ballots that arrive the day before or on Election Day either by mail, returned at a polling place or deposited in a Ballot Drop Box, are processed, and counted in the days after Election Day and therefore are not included in the election night results reporting. However, they will be processed and counted within the canvass period.

- **Postmarked Vote by Mail Ballots:** Under California law, ballots may be counted even if they arrive after Election Day, as long as they are received by mail no later than 7 days after the election (April 25<sup>th</sup>) and are postmarked on or before Election Day.
- **Provisional Ballots:** These are the last ballots counted because they must be researched and verified. Depending on how many provisional ballots have been received, it may take a few days or even weeks to process, but every valid vote will be counted.
- **Missing or Mismatched Signature:** A voter's signature on the returned vote-by-mail identification envelope must compare with the signature(s) in the voter's registration record. If the voter did not sign the ballot envelope, or if the elections official has determined that the signature on the envelope does not compare to the signature(s) of the voter in the voter's record, the elections official/staff will, provide the voter with the applicable notice to cure the missing or mismatched signature. This notice must be returned to the Elections Office **no later than 2 days** prior to the certification of the election. This process will be on-going throughout the semi-official (March 20 – April 18th) and official canvass (April 19th – May 18th).

**It is important to know that for this election, there is a very good chance that we certify much sooner than May 18<sup>th</sup>, which means any voter that receives a cure letter should return it as soon as possible.**

### **When will the election be certified?**

Depending on the number of VBM ballots on Election Day and postmarked on or before Election Day and received by the 7<sup>th</sup> day after the election, here are the possibilities of when the election could be certified:

- If all VBM ballots have been verified, processed and counted by April 27<sup>th</sup>, then I would anticipate certifying on May 5<sup>th</sup>.
- If there are still a significant number of VBM ballots to process through May 1<sup>st</sup>, then I would anticipate certifying on May 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Regardless, the certification of the election must happen on or before May 18<sup>th</sup>.

There are many factors that go into making this determination, most of which are the number of VBM's left to process and how close to Election Day they are received. With an election this size and the trends of the voters, it's really hard to predict.

All updates will be posted on our website [www.slovote.com](http://www.slovote.com).

Should there be any questions, please contact Elaina Cano, County Clerk-Recorder at [ecano@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:ecano@co.slo.ca.us).