

REFERENCE TITLE: early voting; tabulation; ballot deadlines

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-seventh Legislature
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2025

HB 2703

Introduced by
Representatives Hendrix: Chaplik, Heap, Keshel, Kolodin, Marshall,
Montenegro, Olson, Pingerelli, Powell; Senator Hoffman

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 16-411, 16-542, 16-547, 16-548, 16-551, 16-552,
16-579.01 AND 16-579.02, 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 16-411, 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:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 political activity shall be allowed outside of the seventy-five foot
2 limit. If an emergency arises after the county recorder or other officer
3 in charge of elections' initial website posting, the county recorder or
4 other officer in charge of elections shall update the website as soon as
5 is practicable to include any new polling places, shall highlight the
6 polling place location on the website and shall specify the reason the
7 emergency designation was granted and the number of attempts that were
8 made to find a polling place before granting an emergency designation.

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

15 1. An act of God renders a previously set polling place as
16 unusable.

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

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

27 1. The number of ballots voted in the prior primary and general
28 elections.

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

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

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

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

39 Sec. 2. Section 16-542, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
40 read:

41 16-542. Request for ballot; civil penalties; violation;
42 classification

43 A. Within ninety-three days before any election called pursuant to
44 the laws of this state, an elector may make a verbal or signed request to
45 the county recorder, or other officer in charge of elections for the

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

34 B. Notwithstanding subsection A of this section, a request for an
35 official early ballot from an absent uniformed services voter or overseas
36 voter as defined in the uniformed and overseas citizens absentee voting
37 act (P.L. 99-410; 52 United States Code section 20310) or a voter whose
38 information is protected pursuant to section 16-153 that is received by
39 the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections more than
40 ninety-three days before the election is valid. If requested by the
41 absent uniformed services or overseas voter, or a voter whose information
42 is protected pursuant to section 16-153, the county recorder or other
43 officer in charge of elections shall provide to the requesting voter early
44 ballot materials through the next regularly scheduled general election for
45 federal office immediately following receipt of the request unless a

1 different period of time, which does not exceed the next two regularly
 2 scheduled general elections for federal office, is designated by the
 3 voter.

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

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

25 E. In order to be complete and correct and to receive an early
 26 ballot by mail, an elector's request that an early ballot be mailed to the
 27 elector's residence or temporary address must include all of the
 28 information prescribed by subsection A of this section and must be
 29 received by the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
 30 not later than 5:00 p.m. on the eleventh day preceding the election. An
 31 elector who appears personally not later than 7:00 p.m. on the **Friday**
 32 **MONDAY** preceding the election at an on-site early voting location **OR OTHER**
 33 **EARLY VOTING LOCATION** that is established by the county recorder or other
 34 officer in charge of elections shall be given a ballot after presenting
 35 identification as prescribed in section 16-579 and shall be allowed to
 36 vote at the on-site location. Notwithstanding section 16-579, subsection
 37 A, paragraph 2, at any on-site early voting location the county recorder
 38 or other officer in charge of elections may provide for a qualified
 39 elector to update the elector's voter registration information as provided
 40 for in the secretary of state's instructions and procedures manual adopted
 41 pursuant to section 16-452. If an elector's request to receive an early
 42 ballot is not complete and correct but complies with all other
 43 requirements of this section, the county recorder or other officer in
 44 charge of elections shall attempt to notify the elector of the deficiency
 45 of the request.

1 F. Unless an elector specifies that the address to which an early
2 ballot is to be sent is a temporary address, the recorder may use the
3 information from an early ballot request form to update voter registration
4 records.

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

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

25 ~~i. Notwithstanding section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 2, for~~
26 ~~any voting pursuant to subsection H of this section, the county recorder~~
27 ~~or other officer in charge of elections may allow a qualified elector to~~
28 ~~update the elector's voter registration information as provided for in the~~
29 ~~secretary of state's instructions and procedures manual adopted pursuant~~
30 ~~to section 16-452.~~

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

38 ~~k.~~ I. All original and completed early ballot request forms that
39 are received by a candidate, political committee or other organization
40 shall be submitted within six business days after receipt by a candidate,
41 political committee or other organization or eleven days before the
42 election day, whichever is earlier, to the political subdivision that will
43 conduct the election. Any person, political committee or other
44 organization that fails to submit a completed early ballot request form
45 within the prescribed time is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$25 per

1 day for each completed form withheld from submittal. Any person who
2 knowingly fails to submit a completed early ballot request form before the
3 submission deadline for the election immediately following the completion
4 of the form is guilty of a class 6 felony.

5 ~~I.~~ J. Except for a voter who is on the active early voting list
6 prescribed by section 16-544, a voter who requests a onetime early ballot
7 pursuant to this section or for an election conducted pursuant to section
8 16-409 or article 8.1 of this chapter, a county recorder, city or town
9 clerk or other election officer may not deliver or mail an early ballot to
10 a person who has not requested an early ballot for that election. An
11 election officer who knowingly violates this subsection is guilty of a
12 class 5 felony.

13 Sec. 3. Section 16-547, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
14 read:

15 16-547. Mail affidavit; form

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

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

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

29 I declare the following under penalty of perjury: At
30 the registered voter's request I assisted the voter identified
31 in this MAIL affidavit with marking the voter's ballot, I
32 marked the ballot as directly instructed by the voter, I
33 provided the assistance because the voter was physically
34 unable to mark the ballot solely due to illness, injury or
35 physical limitation and I understand that there is no power of
36 attorney for voting and that the voter must be able to make
37 the voter's selection even if the voter cannot physically mark
38 the ballot.

39 Name of voter assistant: _____

40 Address of voter assistant: _____

41 B. The face of each envelope in which a ballot is sent to a federal
42 postcard applicant or in which a ballot is returned by the applicant to
43 the recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall be in the form
44 prescribed in accordance with the uniformed and overseas citizens absentee
45 voting act (P.L. 99-410; 52 United States Code section 20301). Otherwise,

1 the envelopes shall be the same as those used to send ballots to, or
2 receive ballots from, other early voters.

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

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

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

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

15 In order to be valid and counted, the ballot and mail
16 affidavit must be delivered to the office of the county
17 recorder or other officer in charge of elections or may be
18 deposited at any polling place in the county not later than
19 7:00 p.m. on election day. The ballot will not be counted
20 without the voter's signature on the envelope.

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

23 2. Beginning in 2026, the instructions shall include the following
24 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) Delivering it to the office of the county recorder
30 or other officer in charge of elections not later than
31 7:00 p.m. on election day.

32 (b) Depositing it at any ~~polling place~~ VOTING LOCATION
33 in the county not later than 7:00 p.m. on THE FRIDAY BEFORE
34 election day.

35 ~~(c) Bringing the ballot to any polling place in the~~
36 ~~county not later than 7:00 p.m. on election day and choosing~~
37 ~~to present valid identification that complies with section~~
38 ~~16-579, subsection A, paragraph 1, Arizona Revised Statutes.~~

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

44 (WARNING – It is a felony to offer or receive any compensation
45 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. 4. 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~~ RETURN THE VOTED BALLOT BY ONE OF THE
18 FOLLOWING METHODS:

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

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

31 3. DEPOSIT THE VOTED BALLOT AT ANY VOTING LOCATION IN THE COUNTY.
32 IN ORDER TO BE COUNTED AND VALID, THE BALLOT MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE
33 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 DURING THE PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING, INCLUDING ON THE SATURDAY AND MONDAY
37 BEFORE ELECTION DAY, SHALL PRESENT IDENTIFICATION AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION
38 16-579, SIGN THE EARLY VOTER AFFIDAVIT, MARK THE BALLOT IN A MANNER THAT
39 THE EARLY VOTER'S VOTE CANNOT BE SEEN AND RETURN THE VOTED BALLOT TO THE
40 ELECTION OFFICIAL AT THE EARLY VOTING LOCATION. FOR A COUNTY THAT
41 PROVIDES FOR ON-SITE TABULATION OF BALLOTS PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 16-579.01
42 AND 16-579.02 DURING THE SATURDAY OR MONDAY IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING ELECTION
43 DAY, THE FOLLOWING APPLY:

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

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

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

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

16 Sec. 5. Section 16-551, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
17 read:

18 16-551. Early election board; violation; classification

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

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

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

1 tally sheet or summary without authorization from the recorder or officer
2 in charge of elections is guilty of a class 6 felony.

3 ~~D. The county recorder or other officer in charge of elections~~
4 ~~shall count the number of early ballots that are returned at voting~~
5 ~~locations on election day and shall post on its website those totals with~~
6 ~~the last unofficial results that are released on election night pursuant~~
7 ~~to section 16-622.~~ Beginning with the day following the election, the
8 county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall enter into
9 the county's ballot tracking system, if established, early ballots that
10 were returned at the voting location on election day.

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

17 Sec. 6. Section 16-552, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
18 read:

19 16-552. Early ballots; processing; challenges

20 A. In a jurisdiction that uses optical scan ballots, the officer in
21 charge of elections may use the procedure prescribed by this section or
22 may request approval from the secretary of state for a different method
23 for processing early ballots. The request shall be made in writing at
24 least ninety days before the election for which the procedure is intended
25 to be used. After the election official has confirmed with the secretary
26 of state that all election equipment passes the logic and accuracy test,
27 the election official may begin to count early ballots. No early ballot
28 results may be released except as prescribed by section 16-551.

29 B. EXCEPT FOR A PERSON WHO VOTES PERSONALLY AT AN EARLY VOTING
30 LOCATION DURING THE PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION
31 16-548, SUBSECTION B, the early election board shall check the voter's
32 mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit on the envelope containing the early ballot. If it
33 is found to be sufficient, the vote shall be allowed. If the mail ~~ballot~~
34 affidavit is insufficient, the vote shall not be allowed. Beginning in
35 2026, for an early ballot that is received and verified as prescribed by
36 section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 4, additional signature
37 verification is not required.

38 C. The county chairman of each political party represented on the
39 ballot, by written appointment addressed to the early election board, may
40 designate party representatives and alternates to act as early ballot
41 challengers for the party. No party may have more than the number of such
42 representatives or alternates that were mutually agreed on by each
43 political party to be present at one time. If such agreement cannot be
44 reached, the number of representatives shall be limited to one for each
45 political party.

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

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

42 F. If the vote is allowed, the board shall open the envelope
43 containing the ballot in such a manner that the mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit
44 thereon is not destroyed, take out the ballot without unfolding it or

1 permitting it to be opened or examined and show by the records of the
2 election that the elector has voted.

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

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

20 Sec. 7. Section 16-579.01, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
21 read:

22 16-579.01. Early ballots; on-site tabulation

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

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

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

36 2. Provide adequate poll workers, election officials and equipment
37 necessary to conduct voting pursuant to this section and section
38 16-579.02.

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

43 4. Reconcile for that polling place or voting center the number of
44 electors who appear on the signature roster or ~~e-pollbook~~ **ELECTRONIC**

1 POLLBOOK with the number of completed early ballot affidavits and the
2 voted early ballots tabulated on-site.

3 Sec. 8. Section 16-579.02, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
4 read:

5 16-579.02. Early ballot on-site tabulation procedure; fund

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

42 E. After signing the signature roster or electronic pollbook, the
43 elector shall proceed to the tabulating equipment and while under the
44 observation of an election official, remove the early ballot from the
45 completed affidavit envelope, deposit the empty completed affidavit

1 envelope in the secured and labeled drop box and insert the early ballot
2 into a tabulating machine. An early ballot that has been separated from
3 the elector's completed affidavit envelope may not be removed from the
4 on-site early ballot tabulation area.

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

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

17 Sec. 9. Legislative findings

18 The legislature finds that:

19 1. Arizona takes far longer than most other states to report its
20 final vote tabulations for elections.

21 2. The most significant causal factor in Arizona's delayed vote
22 count is matching signatures to the signatures in the voter file for
23 envelopes for early ballots that are returned on or shortly before
24 election day, sometimes called "late early ballots".

25 3. Another cause of administrative delays in Arizona elections is
26 the recent surge in emergency voting during the weekend before election
27 day. Originally intended to accommodate voters with bona fide last-minute
28 emergencies that would otherwise interfere with voting, emergency voting
29 has recently shifted to an unauthorized expansion of the early voting
30 period without any meaningful confirmation that voters are, in fact,
31 burdened by a last-minute emergency that would otherwise prevent them from
32 voting. This recent expansion of emergency voting diverts scarce
33 resources from elections officials' offices at the very end of the
34 election cycle, when time and manpower are most precious, that otherwise
35 could be used to fully process early ballots, ensure smooth operations on
36 election day and facilitate the prompt reporting of election results.

37 4. Arizona's delayed results are sometimes perceived as evidence of
38 election worker incompetence or inefficiency or as an opportunity for
39 unscrupulous participants to affect the ballot tabulation process
40 improperly. In this way, Arizona's delay in reporting final numbers
41 reduces public confidence in Arizona's voting system.

42 5. By decentralizing and streamlining the process for confirming
43 voter identity associated with late early ballots and eliminating
44 emergency voting during the days immediately before election day, Arizona

1 can substantially reduce administrative burdens, speed up the ballot
2 tabulation process and increase confidence in the electoral system.

3 6. By enlarging the overall early voting period and maintaining
4 other voting rights and processes such as in-person early voting,
5 in-person election day voting, early voting by mail through the Friday
6 before election day, special election boards, accessible voting systems
7 and translations for protected language groups, the proposed changes in
8 Arizona election administration processes will not have a substantial net
9 effect on either access to or the ease of voting in Arizona.