

REFERENCE TITLE: **early ballots; identification; tabulation**

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-seventh Legislature
First Regular Session
2025

SB 1001

Introduced by
Senator Mesnard

AN ACT

**AMENDING SECTIONS 16-542, 16-547, 16-548, 16-550, 16-552, 16-572, 16-579
AND 16-579.02, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO 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 recorder's office, which
30 shall be open and available for use beginning the same day that a county
31 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

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

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

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

33 E. In order to be complete and correct and to receive an early
34 ballot by mail, an elector's request that an early ballot be mailed to the
35 elector's residence or temporary address must include all of the
36 information prescribed by subsection A of this section and must be
37 received by the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
38 not later than 5:00 p.m. on the eleventh day preceding the election. An
39 elector who appears personally ~~not later than 7:00 p.m. on the Friday~~
40 ~~preceding the election~~ at an on-site early voting location that is
41 established by the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
42 shall be given a ballot after presenting identification as prescribed in
43 section 16-579 and shall be allowed to vote at the on-site location,
44 EXCEPT THAT IF THE COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS
45 IS NOT ABLE TO REVISE PRECINCT REGISTERS AND OTHER ELECTIONS MATERIALS IN

1 A TIMELY MANNER FOR USE ON ELECTION DAY TO INDICATE WHICH VOTERS HAVE
 2 REQUESTED AN EARLY BALLOT, WHICH VOTERS HAVE ALREADY VOTED AND WHICH
 3 VOTERS ARE ON THE INACTIVE VOTER LIST, THE COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER
 4 OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS MAY NOT OPERATE THE ON-SITE EARLY VOTING
 5 LOCATIONS AFTER 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY PRECEDING THE ELECTION.
 6 Notwithstanding section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 2, at any on-site
 7 early voting location the county recorder or other officer in charge of
 8 elections may provide for a qualified elector to update the elector's
 9 voter registration information as provided for in the secretary of state's
 10 instructions and procedures manual adopted pursuant to section 16-452. If
 11 an elector's request to receive an early ballot is not complete and
 12 correct but complies with all other requirements of this section, the
 13 county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall attempt to
 14 notify the elector of the deficiency 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 J. 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. All original and completed early ballot request forms that are
9 received by a candidate, political committee or other organization shall
10 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 L. 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. 2. 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:

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

11 Name of voter assistant: _____

12 Address of voter assistant: _____

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

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

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

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

30 1. ~~Through 2025~~ UNTIL THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AMENDMENT TO THIS
31 SECTION, the instructions shall include the following statement:

32 In order to be valid and counted, the ballot and mail
33 affidavit must be delivered to the office of the county
34 recorder or other officer in charge of elections or may be
35 deposited at any polling place in the county not later than
36 7:00 p.m. on election day. The ballot will not be counted
37 without the voter's signature on the envelope.

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

40 2. Beginning ~~in 2026~~ ON THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AMENDMENT TO
41 THIS SECTION, the instructions shall include the following statement:

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

1 (a) Delivering it to the office of the county recorder
2 or other officer in charge of elections SO THAT IT IS RECEIVED
3 not later than 7:00 p.m. on THE FRIDAY BEFORE election day.

4 (b) MAILING IT TO THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OR
5 OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS SO THAT IT IS RECEIVED BY
6 THE COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS
7 NOT LATER THAN 7:00 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.

8 ~~(b)~~ (c) Depositing it at any polling place in the
9 county ~~not later than 7:00 p.m. on election day.~~ BEGINNING
10 AFTER 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY, THE VOTER
11 MUST PRESENT SUFFICIENT IDENTIFICATION AT THE POLLING PLACE
12 AND SIGN THE SIGNATURE ROSTER OR POLLBOOK.

13 ~~(c)~~ (d) IF A COUNTY IS USING ON-SITE TABULATION
14 PRESCRIBED BY SECTION 16-579.02, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES,
15 bringing the ballot to any polling place in the county not
16 later than 7:00 p.m. on election day and ~~choosing to present~~
17 PRESENTING valid identification that complies with section
18 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 1, Arizona Revised Statutes.
19 (WARNING – It is a felony to offer or receive any compensation
20 for a ballot.)

21 E. The printed instructions prescribed by subsection D of this
22 section shall also include the following information regarding section
23 16-1005, subsections H and I in substantially the following form:

24 A person may only handle or return their own ballot or
25 the ballot of family members, household members or persons for
26 whom they are a caregiver. It is unlawful under section
27 16-1005, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES to handle or return the
28 ballot of any other person.

29 Sec. 3. Section 16-548, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
30 read:

31 16-548. Preparation and transmission of ballot

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

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

1 2. DELIVERED TO THE COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF
2 ELECTIONS OF THE POLITICAL SUBDIVISION IN WHICH THE VOTER IS REGISTERED.
3 IN ORDER TO BE COUNTED AND VALID, THE BALLOT MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE
4 COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS NOT LATER THAN
5 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY PRECEDING ELECTION DAY.

6 3. DEPOSITED BY THE VOTER AT ANY POLLING PLACE IN THE COUNTY.
7 BEGINNING AFTER 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY PRECEDING ELECTION DAY, THE EARLY
8 VOTER MUST PRESENT IDENTIFICATION THAT COMPLIES WITH SECTION 16-579,
9 SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 1 AND SIGN THE SIGNATURE ROSTER OR ELECTRONIC
10 POLLBOOK BEFORE DEPOSITING THE BALLOT AT THE POLLING PLACE. IF THE VOTER
11 DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT IDENTIFICATION WHILE AT THE POLLING PLACE, THE
12 VOTER SHALL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT IDENTIFICATION WITHIN THE TIME LIMITS
13 PRESCRIBED BY SUBSECTION B OF THIS SECTION.

14 4. TABULATED BY USE OF THE ON-SITE TABULATION PROCEDURE PRESCRIBED
15 BY SECTION 16-579.02 IF A COUNTY IS USING THIS PROCEDURE.

16 B. IF A VOTER'S AGENT DELIVERS A VOTER'S BALLOT TO ANY POLLING
17 PLACE IN THE COUNTY, THE VOTER'S BALLOT WILL BE COUNTED AND VALID ONLY IF
18 THE VOTER PRESENTS IDENTIFICATION THAT COMPLIES WITH SECTION 16-579,
19 SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 1 TO THE COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN
20 CHARGE OF ELECTIONS NOT LATER THAN THE FIFTH BUSINESS DAY AFTER A PRIMARY,
21 GENERAL OR SPECIAL ELECTION THAT INCLUDES A FEDERAL OFFICE OR THE THIRD
22 BUSINESS DAY AFTER ANY OTHER ELECTION.

23 ~~B.~~ C. If the early voter is an overseas citizen, a qualified
24 elector absent from the United States or in the United States service, a
25 spouse or dependent residing with the early voter or a qualified elector
26 of a special district mail ballot election as provided in article 8.1 of
27 this chapter, the early voter may subscribe to the affidavit before and
28 obtain the signature and military identification number or passport
29 number, if available, of any person who is a United States citizen
30 eighteen years of age or older.

31 D. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "VOTER'S AGENT" MEANS THE
32 VOTER'S FAMILY MEMBER, HOUSEHOLD MEMBER OR CAREGIVER AS DEFINED IN SECTION
33 16-1005.

34 Sec. 4. Section 16-550, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
35 read:

36 16-550. Receipt of voter's ballot; cure period; tracking
37 system

38 A. Except for early ballots tabulated as prescribed in section
39 16-579.02 or, beginning ~~in 2026~~ ON THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AMENDMENT TO
40 THIS SECTION, received at a voting location after a voter's identification
41 is confirmed as prescribed by section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 4,
42 on receipt of the envelope containing the early ballot and the mail ~~ballot~~
43 affidavit, the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
44 shall compare the signature on the envelope with the signature of the
45 elector on the elector's registration record as prescribed by section

1 16-550.01. If the signature is inconsistent with the elector's signature
2 on the elector's registration record, the county recorder or other officer
3 in charge of elections shall make reasonable efforts to contact the voter,
4 advise the voter of the inconsistent signature and allow the voter to
5 correct or the county to confirm the inconsistent signature. The county
6 recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall allow signatures to
7 be corrected not later than the fifth business day after a primary,
8 general or special election that includes a federal office or the third
9 business day after any other election. If the election is a primary,
10 general or special election that includes a federal office, in addition to
11 the office's regular business hours, the county recorder's and any city or
12 town clerks' offices that have an agreement with a county to be used as
13 locations at which a voter may submit proof of identification shall be
14 open during regular business hours to allow for curing signatures during
15 the Friday and weekend before and the Friday and weekend after the
16 election. Regular business hours include at a minimum 8:00 a.m. until
17 5:00 p.m. If the signature is missing, the county recorder or other
18 officer in charge of elections shall make reasonable efforts to contact
19 the elector, advise the elector of the missing signature and allow the
20 elector to add the elector's signature not later than 7:00 p.m. on
21 election day. If satisfied that the signatures correspond, the recorder
22 or other officer in charge of elections shall hold the envelope containing
23 the early ballot and the completed mail affidavit unopened in accordance
24 with the rules of the secretary of state. Signatures that cannot be
25 verified pursuant to section 16-550.01 or cured pursuant to this section
26 shall be rejected. If the ballot is a conditional provisional ballot, the
27 voter shall provide proof of identification to the county recorder or
28 other officer in charge of elections not later than the fifth business day
29 after a primary, general or special election that includes a federal
30 office or the third business day after any other election. Beginning with
31 the first missing or mismatched signature that is identified after the
32 period of early voting begins through the Monday immediately preceding the
33 election, the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
34 shall submit daily to the political parties that are qualified for
35 continued representation on the state ballot an updated list of all voters
36 whose signatures are missing or inconsistent with the voter's signature on
37 the voter's registration record. Beginning on the Wednesday immediately
38 following the election through the end of the signature cure period after
39 a primary, general or special election that includes a federal office, or
40 the third business day after the election for any other election, the
41 county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall submit daily
42 to the political parties that are qualified for continued representation
43 on the state ballot an updated list of all voters whose signatures are
44 inconsistent with the voter's signature on the voter's registration record
45 and all voters who voted with a conditional provisional ballot. This list

1 of voters whose signatures require curing shall include for those voters
2 all voter information that is provided to the political parties that are
3 qualified for continued representation on the state ballot as prescribed
4 by section 16-168.

5 B. The recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall
6 thereafter safely keep the mail ~~ballot~~ affidavits and early ballots in the
7 recorder's or other officer's office and may deliver them for tallying
8 pursuant to section 16-551.

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

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

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

20 3. Only produce a partial results report or associated files if it
21 is part of the internal preparation for the hand count pursuant to section
22 16-602 or for the logic and accuracy testing required pursuant to section
23 16-449.

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

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

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

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

42 G. This section does not apply to:

1 1. A special taxing district that is authorized pursuant to section
2 16-191 to conduct its own elections.

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

5 Sec. 5. Section 16-552, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
6 read:

7 16-552. Early ballots; processing; challenges

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

17 B. The early election board shall check the voter's mail ~~ballot~~
18 affidavit on the envelope containing the early ballot. If it is found to
19 be sufficient, the vote shall be allowed. If the mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit is
20 insufficient, the vote shall not be allowed. Beginning ~~in 2026~~ **ON THE**
21 **EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AMENDMENT TO THIS SECTION**, for an early ballot that
22 is received and verified as prescribed by section 16-579, subsection A,
23 paragraph 4, additional signature verification is not required.

24 C. The county chairman of each political party represented on the
25 ballot, by written appointment addressed to the early election board, may
26 designate party representatives and alternates to act as early ballot
27 challengers for the party. ~~No~~ A party may **NOT** have more than the number
28 of such representatives or alternates that were mutually agreed on by each
29 political party to be present at one time. If such agreement cannot be
30 reached, the number of representatives shall be limited to one for each
31 political party.

32 D. An early ballot may be challenged on any grounds set forth in
33 section 16-591. All challenges shall be made in writing with a brief
34 statement of the grounds before the early ballot is placed in the ballot
35 box. A record of all challenges and resulting proceedings shall be kept
36 in substantially the same manner as provided in section 16-594. If an
37 early ballot is challenged, it shall be set aside and retained in the
38 possession of the early election board or other officer in charge of early
39 ballot processing until a time that the early election board sets for
40 determination of the challenge, subject to the procedure in subsection E
41 of this section, at which time the early election board shall hear the
42 grounds for the challenge and shall decide what disposition shall be made
43 of the early ballot by majority vote. If the early ballot is not allowed,
44 it shall be handled pursuant to subsection G of this section.

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

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

34 G. If the vote is not allowed, the mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit envelope
35 containing the early ballot shall not be opened and the board shall mark
36 across the face of such envelope the grounds for rejection. The mail
37 ~~ballot~~ affidavit envelope and its contents shall then be deposited with
38 the opened mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit envelopes and shall be preserved with
39 official returns. If the voter does not enter an appearance, the board
40 shall send the voter a notice stating whether the early ballot was
41 disallowed and, if disallowed, providing the grounds for the
42 determination. The notice shall be mailed by first class mail to the
43 voter's mailing address as shown on the registration rolls within three
44 days after the board's determination.

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

7 Sec. 6. Section 16-572, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
8 read:

9 16-572. Delivery and custody of ballots at polling place

10 A. On opening the polls, the inspector shall produce the sealed
11 package of official ballots and publicly open it and deliver one book or
12 block of ballots therein contained to the judges. The **INSPECTOR SHALL**
13 **RETAIN THE** other blocks or books of ballots, if any, ~~shall be retained by~~
14 ~~the inspector~~ until called for by the judges and required for voting.

15 B. One of the judges of election shall keep the ballots within the
16 polling place in plain view of the public and deliver them only to
17 qualified voters.

18 C. A person shall not take or remove a ballot from the polling
19 place before the polls are closed **EXCEPT THAT EARLY BALLOTS RETURNED AT**
20 **VOTING LOCATIONS ON ELECTION DAY AFTER A VOTER'S IDENTIFICATION IS**
21 **CONFIRMED AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION 16-579, SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 4 MAY**
22 **BE REMOVED BY TWO AUTHORIZED ELECTION WORKERS WHO MUST EACH BE A DIFFERING**
23 **MEMBER OF ONE OF THE TWO LARGEST POLITICAL PARTIES, WHO HAVE COMPLETED A**
24 **CHAIN OF CUSTODY LOG MAINTAINED AT THE VOTING LOCATION THAT INCLUDES THE**
25 **TOTAL COUNT OF THE EARLY BALLOTS BEING TRANSPORTED AND WHO DELIVER THE**
26 **BALLOTS TO A DESIGNATED RECEIVING SITE THAT IS AN OFFICIAL ELECTIONS**
27 **FACILITY AND NOT A THIRD PARTY VENDOR. THE CHAIN OF CUSTODY LOG FOR EARLY**
28 **BALLOTS RETURNED AT VOTING LOCATIONS ON ELECTION DAY SHALL BE AVAILABLE**
29 **FOR INSPECTION BY THE PUBLIC, THE POLITICAL PARTIES, COMMITTEES**
30 **REPRESENTING BALLOT MEASURES ON THE BALLOT AND THE CANDIDATES ON THE**
31 **BALLOT WITHIN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS AFTER ELECTION DAY.**

32 Sec. 7. Section 16-579, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
33 read:

34 16-579. Procedure for obtaining ballot by elector; definition

35 A. Every qualified elector, before receiving a ballot, shall
36 announce the elector's name and place of residence in a clear, audible
37 tone of voice to the election official in charge of the signature roster
38 or present the elector's name and residence in writing. The election
39 official in charge of the signature roster shall comply with the following
40 and the qualified elector shall be allowed within the voting area:

41 1. The elector shall present any of the following:

42 (a) A valid form of identification that bears the photograph, name
43 and address of the elector that reasonably appear to be the same as the
44 name and address in the precinct register, including an Arizona driver
45 license, an Arizona nonoperating identification license, a tribal

1 enrollment card or other form of tribal identification or a United States
2 federal, state or local government issued identification. Identification
3 is deemed valid unless it can be determined on its face that it has
4 expired.

5 (b) Two different items that contain the name and address of the
6 elector that reasonably appear to be the same as the name and address in
7 the precinct register, including a utility bill, a bank or credit union
8 statement that is dated within ninety days of the date of the election, a
9 valid Arizona vehicle registration, an Arizona vehicle insurance card, an
10 Indian census card, tribal enrollment card or other form of tribal
11 identification, a property tax statement, a recorder's certificate, a
12 voter registration card, a valid United States federal, state or local
13 government issued identification or any mailing that is labeled as
14 "official election material". Identification is deemed valid unless it
15 can be determined on its face that it has expired.

16 (c) A valid form of identification that bears the photograph, name
17 and address of the elector except that if the address on the
18 identification does not reasonably appear to be the same as the address in
19 the precinct register or the identification is a valid United States
20 military identification card or a valid United States passport and does
21 not bear an address, the identification must be accompanied by one of the
22 items listed in subdivision (b) of this paragraph.

23 2. If the elector does not present identification that complies
24 with paragraph 1 of this subsection, the elector is only eligible to vote
25 a provisional ballot as prescribed by section 16-584 or a conditional
26 provisional ballot as provided for in the secretary of state's instruction
27 and procedures manual adopted pursuant to section 16-452.

28 3. ~~Through 2025~~ UNTIL THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AMENDMENT TO THIS
29 SECTION, if the voter surrenders the early ballot to the precinct
30 inspector and the voter is not otherwise required to be issued a
31 provisional ballot, the voter shall be issued a standard ballot after
32 presenting identification pursuant to this subsection. The precinct
33 inspector shall retain the surrendered early ballot, unopened in its MAIL
34 affidavit envelope.

35 4. Beginning ~~in 2026~~ ON THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AMENDMENT TO
36 THIS SECTION, DURING THE PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING AND ON ELECTION DAY, at
37 any voting location the voter may choose to provide identification when
38 presenting the voter's mailed early ballot OR WHEN THE VOTER IS ISSUED AN
39 EARLY BALLOT, and if so the election official shall:

40 (a) Require the voter to present identification that complies with
41 paragraph 1 of this subsection.

42 (b) Confirm that the name and address on the identification
43 reasonably appear to be the same name and address shown on the voter's
44 registration record.

1 (c) Stamp the signed MAIL affidavit with a stamp that reads
2 "ID verified" and place the stamped MAIL affidavit that contains the early
3 ballot in a secured ballot box that is labeled for VERIFIED early
4 ballots. The stamped MAIL affidavit envelope is not required to be
5 reviewed at the voting location, the voter's early ballot is deemed ready
6 for tabulating and additional signature verification of the completed MAIL
7 affidavit envelope as prescribed by section 16-550 is not required.

8 (d) Maintain a tally of the number of ballots that have been
9 deposited in the secured ballot box THAT IS DESIGNATED FOR VERIFIED EARLY
10 BALLOTS and sign ~~an~~ A MAIL affidavit that includes the election official's
11 name, the polling location, the time and date, the number of early ballots
12 deposited according to the tally maintained by the election official and a
13 statement sufficient to record and maintain the chain of custody for those
14 ballots. IN THE STATEMENT THE ELECTION OFFICIAL SHALL:

15 (i) AFFIRM THAT THE ELECTION OFFICIAL REQUIRED EVERY VOTER TO
16 PRESENT IDENTIFICATION THAT COMPLIES WITH PARAGRAPH 1 OF THIS
17 SUBSECTION.

18 (ii) CONFIRM THAT THE NAME AND ADDRESS ON THE IDENTIFICATION
19 PRESENTED BY EACH VOTER REASONABLY APPEARED TO BE THE SAME NAME AND
20 ADDRESS ON EACH VOTER'S EARLY MAIL AFFIDAVIT.

21 (e) FOR ANY COMPLETED EARLY MAIL AFFIDAVIT THAT IS DEPOSITED IN THE
22 SECURED BALLOT BOX DESIGNATED FOR VERIFIED EARLY BALLOTS PURSUANT TO THIS
23 PARAGRAPH AND THAT IS NOT STAMPED "ID VERIFIED", PROCESS THAT BALLOT AS
24 PRESCRIBED IN SECTION 16-550.

25 B. Any qualified elector who is listed as having applied for an
26 early ballot but who states that the elector has not voted and will not
27 vote an early ballot for this election or surrenders the early ballot to
28 the precinct inspector on election day shall be allowed to vote pursuant
29 to the procedure set forth in section 16-584, except that for elections
30 conducted using an electronic pollbook or similar system with continuous
31 voter usage updates, the following apply:

32 1. If the electronic pollbook or other system indicates that the
33 voter's early ballot has not been returned or accepted by the county
34 recorder and the voter is not otherwise required to be issued a
35 provisional ballot, the voter may be issued a standard ballot after
36 presenting identification pursuant to subsection A of this section.

37 2. If the electronic pollbook or other system indicates that the
38 voter's early ballot has been received or accepted by the county recorder,
39 the voter may not be issued a standard ballot and may only be issued a
40 provisional ballot as prescribed in section 16-584.

1 C. Each qualified elector's name shall be numbered consecutively by
2 the clerks and in the order of applications for ballots. The judge shall
3 give the qualified elector only one ballot and a ballot privacy folder,
4 and the elector's name shall be immediately checked on the precinct
5 register. Notwithstanding any provision of this subsection, an elector
6 shall not be required to accept or use a ballot privacy folder.

7 D. For precincts in which a paper signature roster is used, each
8 qualified elector shall sign the elector's name in the signature roster
9 before receiving a ballot, but an inspector or judge may sign the roster
10 for an elector who is unable to sign because of physical disability, and
11 in that event the name of the elector shall be written with red ink, and
12 no attestation or other proof shall be necessary. The provisions of this
13 subsection relating to signing the signature roster do not apply to
14 electors casting a ballot using early voting procedures.

15 E. For precincts in which an electronic poll book system is used,
16 each qualified elector shall sign the elector's name as prescribed in the
17 instructions and procedures manual adopted by the secretary of state
18 pursuant to section 16-452 before receiving a ballot, but an inspector or
19 judge may sign the roster for an elector who is unable to sign because of
20 physical disability, and in that event the name of the elector shall be
21 written with the inspector's or judge's attestation on the same signature
22 line.

23 F. A person offering to vote at a special district election for
24 which no special district register has been supplied shall sign an
25 affidavit stating the person's address and that the person resides within
26 the district boundaries or proposed district boundaries and swearing that
27 the person is a qualified elector and has not already voted at the
28 election being held.

29 G. EACH POLLING LOCATION THAT IS OPEN FOR EARLY VOTING OR ON
30 ELECTION DAY SHALL INCLUDE A MINIMUM OF AT LEAST ONE SECURE BALLOT BOX FOR
31 A VOTER TO DEPOSIT THE VOTER'S COMPLETED EARLY BALLOT AND AT LEAST ONE
32 SECURE BALLOT BOX FOR A VOTER WHO PRESENTS IDENTIFICATION AND THE VOTER'S
33 COMPLETED EARLY BALLOT PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 4 OF THIS
34 SECTION TO DEPOSIT THE VOTER'S COMPLETED EARLY BALLOT AFTER THE ENVELOPE
35 HAS BEEN STAMPED BY THE ELECTION OFFICIAL. EACH TYPE OF BALLOT BOX SHALL
36 BE PHYSICALLY SEPARATED AND CLEARLY LABELED. THE ELECTION OFFICIAL IN
37 CHARGE OF THE POLLING LOCATION SHALL ENSURE THAT A VOTER WHO DOES NOT
38 PRESENT IDENTIFICATION IS NOT ABLE TO DEPOSIT THE VOTER'S COMPLETED EARLY
39 BALLOT IN THE BALLOT BOX DESIGNATED FOR VERIFIED EARLY BALLOTS PURSUANT TO
40 SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 4 OF THIS SECTION.

41 H. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "ID VERIFIED" MEANS A BALLOT
42 FOR WHICH A VOTER HAS PRESENTED IDENTIFICATION THAT COMPLIES WITH
43 SUBSECTION A, PARAGRAPH 1 OF THIS SECTION.

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

3 16-579.02. Election day early ballot on-site tabulation
4 procedure; fund

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

41 E. After signing the signature roster or electronic pollbook, the
42 elector shall proceed to the tabulating equipment and, while under the
43 observation of an election official, remove the early ballot from the
44 completed affidavit envelope, deposit the empty completed affidavit
45 envelope in the secured ~~and labeled drop box~~ CONTAINER FOR THAT PURPOSE

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

4 F. The ~~drop box~~ SECURED CONTAINER prescribed in subsection E of
5 this section shall be clearly labeled to indicate that the completed
6 affidavits are from ballots tabulated pursuant to this section and shall
7 be secured in a manner substantially similar to ~~other~~ ballot boxes at that
8 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 SECURED ballot ~~drop~~ box before entering the on-site early
13 ballot tabulation area for purposes of tabulating the elector's own early
14 ballot. The county recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall
15 ensure that a voter is not in possession of another voter's ballot within
16 the on-site early ballot tabulation area.