

REFERENCE TITLE: **early voting; ballot deadlines; certificates**

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

SB 1011

Introduced by
Senators Petersen: Angius, Bolick, Carroll, Dunn, Farnsworth, Gowan,
Hoffman, Kavanagh, Leach, Payne, Rogers, Shamp, Shope, Werner;
Representative Jones

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 16-411, 16-542, 16-547, 16-548 AND 16-552, 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 16-411, 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. 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. The board shall make available to the public as a public record
29 a list of the polling places for all precincts in which the election is to
30 be held.

31 I. Except in the case of an emergency, any facility that is used as
32 a polling place on election day or that is used as an early voting site
33 during the period of early voting shall allow persons to electioneer and
34 engage in other political activity outside of the seventy-five foot limit
35 prescribed by section 16-515 in public areas and parking lots used by
36 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 J. 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. The secretary of state shall provide through the instructions
22 and procedures manual adopted pursuant to section 16-452 the maximum
23 allowable wait time for any election that is subject to section 16-204 and
24 provide for a method to reduce voter wait time at the polls in the primary
25 and general elections. The method shall consider at least all of the
26 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 **BE OPEN AND AVAILABLE FOR USE ON THE SATURDAY AND MONDAY**
27 **BEFORE ELECTION DAY AND SHALL** require each elector to present
28 identification as prescribed in section 16-579 before receiving a ballot.
29 Notwithstanding section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 2, at any on-site
30 early voting location or other early voting location the county recorder
31 or other officer in charge of elections may provide for a qualified
32 elector to update the elector's voter registration information as provided
33 for in the secretary of state's instructions and procedures manual adopted
34 pursuant to section 16-452.

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

1 federal office immediately following receipt of the request unless a
2 different period of time, which does not exceed the next two regularly
3 scheduled general elections for federal office, is designated by the
4 voter.

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

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

26 E. In order to be complete and correct and to receive an early
27 ballot by mail, an elector's request that an early ballot be mailed to the
28 elector's residence or temporary address must include all of the
29 information prescribed by subsection A of this section and must be
30 received by the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections
31 not later than 5:00 p.m. on the eleventh day preceding the election. An
32 elector who appears personally not later than 7:00 p.m. on the ~~Friday~~
33 ~~MONDAY~~ preceding the election at an on-site early voting location ~~OR OTHER~~
34 ~~EARLY VOTING LOCATION~~ that is established by the county recorder or other
35 officer in charge of elections shall be given a ballot, ~~SHALL COMPLETE AN~~
36 ~~EARLY VOTING CERTIFICATE~~ after presenting identification as prescribed in
37 section 16-579 and shall be allowed to vote at the on-site location
38 ~~WITHOUT ISSUING OR COMPLETING A MAIL AFFIDAVIT ENVELOPE~~. Notwithstanding
39 section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 2, at any on-site early voting
40 location the county recorder or other officer in charge of elections may
41 provide for a qualified elector to update the elector's voter registration
42 information as provided for in the secretary of state's instructions and
43 procedures manual adopted pursuant to section 16-452. If an elector's
44 request to receive an early ballot is not complete and correct but
45 complies with all other requirements of this section, the county recorder

1 or other officer in charge of elections shall attempt to notify the
2 elector of the deficiency of the request.

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

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

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

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

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

40 ~~⌚~~ I. All original and completed early ballot request forms that
41 are received by a candidate, political committee or other organization
42 shall be submitted within six business days after receipt by a candidate,
43 political committee or other organization or eleven days before the
44 election day, whichever is earlier, to the political subdivision that will
45 conduct the election. Any person, political committee or other

1 organization that fails to submit a completed early ballot request form
2 within the prescribed time is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$25 per
3 day for each completed form withheld from submittal. Any person who
4 knowingly fails to submit a completed early ballot request form before the
5 submission deadline for the election immediately following the completion
6 of the form is guilty of a class 6 felony.

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

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

17 16-547. Mail affidavit; early voting certificate; form

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

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

29 If the voter was assisted by another person in marking
30 the ballot, complete the following:

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

41 Name of voter assistant: _____

42 Address of voter assistant: _____

43 B. The face of each envelope in which a ballot is sent to a federal
44 postcard applicant or in which a ballot is returned by the applicant to
45 the recorder or other officer in charge of elections shall be in the form

1 prescribed in accordance with the uniformed and overseas citizens absentee
2 voting act (P.L. 99-410; 52 United States Code section 20301). Otherwise,
3 the envelopes shall be the same as those used to send ballots to, or
4 receive ballots from, other early voters.

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

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

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

15 1. Through 2025, the instructions shall include the following
16 statement:

17 In order to be valid and counted, the ballot and mail
18 affidavit must be delivered to the office of the county
19 recorder or other officer in charge of elections or may be
20 deposited at any polling place in the county not later than
21 7:00 p.m. on election day. The ballot will not be counted
22 without the voter's signature on the envelope.

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

25 2. Beginning in 2026, the instructions shall include the following
26 statement:

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

31 (a) Delivering it to the office of the county recorder
32 or other officer in charge of elections not later than
33 7:00 p.m. on election day.

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

37 ~~(c) Bringing the ballot to any polling place in the~~
38 ~~county not later than 7:00 p.m. on election day and choosing~~
39 ~~to present valid identification that complies with section~~
40 ~~16-579, subsection A, paragraph 1, Arizona Revised Statutes.~~

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

43 E. BEGINNING IN 2026, A PERSON WHO APPEARS PERSONALLY AT AN EARLY
44 VOTING LOCATION DURING THE PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING, INCLUDING ON THE
45 SATURDAY AND MONDAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY, SHALL BE GIVEN A BALLOT AFTER

1 PRESENTING IDENTIFICATION AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION 16-579, SHALL COMPLETE
2 AN EARLY VOTING CERTIFICATE AND SHALL BE ALLOWED TO VOTE AT THE EARLY
3 VOTING LOCATION WITHOUT ISSUING OR COMPLETING A MAIL AFFIDAVIT ENVELOPE.
4 THE EARLY VOTING CERTIFICATE SHALL BE IN SUBSTANTIALLY THE FOLLOWING FORM:

5 EARLY VOTING CERTIFICATE

6 I, _____, A QUALIFIED
7 ELECTOR FOR THIS ELECTION AND REGISTERED VOTER IN
8 _____ COUNTY, ARIZONA, DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR OR
9 AFFIRM THAT I AM THE PERSON LISTED ON THE VOTER REGISTRATION
10 ROLLS OF _____ COUNTY AND THAT I RESIDE AT THE
11 LISTED ADDRESS. I UNDERSTAND THAT IF I COMMIT OR ATTEMPT TO
12 COMMIT FRAUD IN CONNECTION WITH VOTING, VOTE A FRAUDULENT
13 BALLOT OR VOTE MORE THAN ONCE IN AN ELECTION, I COULD BE
14 CONVICTED OF A FELONY AND FINED OR IMPRISONED, OR BOTH. I
15 UNDERSTAND THAT MY FAILURE TO SIGN THIS CERTIFICATE
16 INVALIDATES MY BALLOT.

17 ~~F.~~ F. The printed instructions prescribed by subsection D of this
18 section shall also include the following information regarding section
19 16-1005, subsections H and I in substantially the following form:

20 A person may only handle or return their own ballot or
21 the ballot of family members, household members or persons for
22 whom they are a caregiver. It is unlawful under section
23 16-1005, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, to handle or return the
24 ballot of any other person.

25 Sec. 4. Section 16-548, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
26 read:

27 16-548. Preparation and transmission of ballot

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

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

42 2. DELIVER THE VOTED BALLOT TO THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OR
43 OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ELECTIONS OF THE POLITICAL SUBDIVISION IN WHICH
44 THE VOTER IS REGISTERED. IN ORDER TO BE COUNTED AND VALID, THE BALLOT

1 MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE COUNTY RECORDER OR OTHER OFFICER IN CHARGE OF
2 ELECTIONS NOT LATER THAN 7:00 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.

3 3. DEPOSIT THE VOTED BALLOT AT ANY VOTING LOCATION IN THE COUNTY.
4 IN ORDER TO BE COUNTED AND VALID, THE BALLOT MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE
5 VOTING LOCATION NOT LATER THAN 7:00 P.M. ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE ELECTION
6 DAY.

7 B. A PERSON WHO APPEARS PERSONALLY AT AN EARLY VOTING LOCATION
8 DURING THE PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING, INCLUDING ON THE SATURDAY AND MONDAY
9 BEFORE ELECTION DAY, SHALL PRESENT IDENTIFICATION AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION
10 16-579, SIGN THE EARLY VOTER CERTIFICATE, MARK THE BALLOT IN A MANNER THAT
11 THE EARLY VOTER'S VOTE CANNOT BE SEEN AND RETURN THE VOTED BALLOT TO THE
12 ELECTION OFFICIAL AT THE EARLY VOTING LOCATION. A MAIL AFFIDAVIT ENVELOPE
13 MAY NOT BE REQUIRED.

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

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

24 16-552. Early ballots; processing; challenges

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

34 B. EXCEPT FOR A PERSON WHO VOTES PERSONALLY AT AN EARLY VOTING
35 LOCATION DURING THE PERIOD OF EARLY VOTING AS PRESCRIBED BY SECTION
36 16-548, SUBSECTION B, the early election board shall check the voter's
37 mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit on the envelope containing the early ballot. If it
38 is found to be sufficient, the vote shall be allowed. If the mail ~~ballot~~
39 affidavit is insufficient, the vote shall not be allowed. Beginning in
40 2026, for an early ballot that is received and verified as prescribed by
41 section 16-579, subsection A, paragraph 4, additional signature
42 verification is not required.

43 C. The county chairman of each political party represented on the
44 ballot, by written appointment addressed to the early election board, may
45 designate party representatives and alternates to act as early ballot

1 challengers for the party. No party may have more than the number of such
2 representatives or alternates that were mutually agreed on by each
3 political party to be present at one time. If such agreement cannot be
4 reached, the number of representatives shall be limited to one for each
5 political party.

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

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

1 election contests pursuant to section 16-672, the board's decision is
2 final and may not be appealed.

3 F. If the vote is allowed, the board shall open the envelope
4 containing the ballot in such a manner that the mail ~~ballot~~ affidavit
5 thereon is not destroyed, take out the ballot without unfolding it or
6 permitting it to be opened or examined and show by the records of the
7 election that the elector has voted.

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

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