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SECRETARY OF STATE BILL JONES'

VOTER FRAUD PREVENTION HANDBOOK

A Comprehensive, Easy-to-Understand
Voters' Guide to Safeguard California's
Election Process



*"Ensuring the Integrity of
California's Elections"*



BILL JONES
Secretary of State
State of California

September 1996

Dear Californian:

Our goal is to achieve 100 percent participation by all eligible California voters with a tough zero tolerance policy for fraud.

This first-ever Voter Fraud Prevention Handbook was produced to inform and educate you about the laws regarding the do's and don'ts of campaigning for office and conducting elections in California.







If you have ever signed an initiative petition, voted via absentee ballot, walked a precinct, received political phone calls or met campaign volunteers at your doorstep, in fact, if you have ever cast a ballot in California at all, this book is for you. It will answer the age old question: **Can They Do That?**

It is our hope that this book will help you identify and report abuses of our elections system. Together, we can stop any attempts at election fraud and safeguard the integrity of your vote in California.








P.S. If after reading this book, you believe you have witnessed election fraud or campaign abuses, please contact the Secretary of State's Voter Fraud Hotline at 1-800-345-VOTE.

"Ensuring the integrity of California's election process"

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LEGEND

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REGISTERING TO VOTE



★ I work in a county other than the one in which I reside. I spend the majority of my time in the county where I work, and I'm much more involved in governmental issues there than the "bedroom community" where I sleep. I would prefer to register to vote from my business address? Can I do that?


No, the Elections Code says you must register to vote at your domicile, which is defined as that place where you live, where your habitation is fixed, and where you intend to remain and return to whenever you are absent from it. (EC §349, 2020 - 2034)



My husband and I registered to vote for the first time with different political parties on forms we got from a person signing up voters in front of the local theater. I never got any notice from my county election official, but my husband did, and now I find out my voter registration form wasn't turned in until one week before the election and it's too late for me to be able to vote. I'm furious! Can those people discriminate like that if they're being paid by a political party and I didn't register with their party but my husband did? Can they do that?


No, they can't. Anyone entrusted with turning in a completed voter registration card must, by law,

deliver it to local elections officials within three working days or by the registration cut-off date (EC § 18103), which is 29 days prior to an election. Upon registering each voter will receive a confirmation card acknowledging that the county has received the affidavit (EC § 2155). Voters should watch for that confirmation in order to be sure that they are eligible to vote. If someone helped you fill out your form, he/she has to sign it. If the assistant is paid to register voters, other identifying information must also be printed on the voter registration card. (EC §2159, 18108)


 **When I registered to vote they told me that I must use my actual home address, even though I've protected my privacy by always using a post office box for anything public. But now I'm getting unwanted campaign solicitations at my home mailbox. I thought the information from my voter registration files was highly confidential, isn't it?**

You should be aware that the voter files are confidential, with the exception that they are accessible for election, governmental, scholarly or political research, or journalistic purposes (EC § 2187, 2188, CCR § 19001 - 19009). Political campaigns meet this criteria. Applicants must fill out a form stating that the voter file information will be used for legal purposes only and that they won't share the information with anyone else. (CCR 19001 - 19009) If you believe an individual or group has broken this law, (EC §2194, 18108, GC § 6254.4, and CCR §19007) you may contact the

Secretary of State's Elections Investigation Unit at 1-800-345-VOTE or contact your local elections official.


 **I went to get my driver's license and they asked me if I wanted to register to vote. You don't have to be a citizen to get a California driver's license. Isn't it likely that lots of non-citizens are registering to vote at the DMV?**

The National Voter Registration Act (Motor Voter) requires the Department of Motor Vehicles and certain social services agencies to offer their customers the opportunity to register to vote. The registration forms are highlighted, as are the instructions, to point out the necessity of being a U.S. citizen in order to be eligible to register. (EC § 2150) If DMV has documentation from the applicant that indicates non-citizenship, employees are instructed to remind the applicant of the legal requirements and also make a notation on the card for the elections official to investigate. In addition, the Secretary of State's office has developed an official working relationship with the Immigration and Naturalization Service to check their files to ensure that non-citizens are not included on the voter registration files.

 **★ I saw a lady set up an ironing board in front of the hardware store with a sign that said "Democrats, Register Here." I didn't want to register with any party; I wanted to register**


independent, but they wouldn't give me a voter registration card to fill out. Can they do that?

No, the law says that any citizen or organization that distributes voter registration cards shall give a voter registration card to any elector requesting it, provided that the citizen or organization has a sufficient number of cards. (EC §2158(b)) Refusal to give you a card may be punishable by a fine of up to \$200 per infraction. (EC §18107)

 **I re-registered a few months ago and don't remember filling in any information about where, or if, I was registered before. Can't someone use my "old" registration to cast an illegal vote? How can I tell the counties involved to just remove me from the old place and register me at the new?**

Although every voter registration form contains a space to provide your former voter registration address, the type of situation you describe does happen and, you're right, it does increase the potential for fraudulent votes to be cast. To ensure that duplicate registrations like yours are discovered and corrected, cancellations and residency confirmation mailings are conducted periodically in an attempt to clean up the voter rolls. However, if you've moved into a different county, and wish to be certain that the records are accurate, you could write a letter to the county elections official where you were formerly registered and ask them to delete your registration

from their rolls. As a result of legislation sponsored by Secretary Jones, soon there will be a statewide system, called Cal VOTER, that will make it easier to update the voter registration files. (EC § 2114-2120, 2225-2228)

 My college-age son was approached by a political party to register voters as part of his summer job. The party said they'd pay him \$2 for every person he registered with their party. Can people really get paid to register voters and, if so, can they really just pay them for people registering with a particular party? Doesn't this leave the door open for temptation to forge registrations or to alter party affiliations of cards completed by legitimate registrants after they fill out the forms and leave?

People who are paid to register citizens to vote are referred to as "bounty hunters." While it is actually legal for bounty hunters to be paid per registrant and/or per registrant with a particular party, there are strict requirements imposed on them in order to provide an "audit" trail in case there are irregularities. They must disclose the name of the organization paying them and include his/her and that organization's telephone number and address, as well as signing the voter registration form in the space provided for this purpose (box 13 on the card). Failure to comply with these provisions may bring both fines and/or imprisonment. (EC § 2159, 18108)

👉 Someone told me that because my neighbors were born in Europe, they can't vote. Isn't it true that once they've become U.S. citizens they can vote?

Once naturalized, if they are at least 18 years of age, residents of California, not in prison or on parole for conviction of a felony, and not judicially determined to be mentally incompetent to register and vote, they are, indeed, eligible to register and vote. (EC § 321, 2101, 2208) In fact, any person naturalized after the 29th day prior to an election but on or before the seventh day before that election can go to their county elections official's office with proof of residence and citizenship, and register and vote. (EC § 331, 3500-3501)

👉 I was married in October, right before the last election. Since I wanted to make sure that I was registered to vote under my new name, I re-registered. Not only did I receive a sample ballot pamphlet with my new name on it, I got another one with my maiden name on it! How can I make sure I only receive one sample ballot pamphlet?

The situation you describe is one of the most common causes of duplicate registrations on the rolls. In your case, you should contact your local elections official and make clear to them which name and address you are currently, legally using and ask them to remove the other from the voter rolls. New brides, and anyone who changes


his/her name from one election to the next should be sure to fill out the box on the voter registration card that asks for previous registration information. This will allow cancellation of the previous registration on file.

Q I noticed that there are 30 people registered to vote at the local homeless shelter. Surely this isn't their permanent residence. Can they register to vote at a temporary location like that?


Both state law and judicial rulings are in support of the right of homeless persons to register to vote. As long as they maintain a fixed location where they can receive mail and at which they can be properly assigned a precinct, they may register to vote. (EC § 2027)

Q My son just moved to his college campus and wants to transfer his registration in order to vote there instead. Can he do that?

Yes. He should fill out a voter registration card for his new residence and be sure to fill in the prior registration information so his current registration will be canceled. Or he may, if he wishes, remain registered at his permanent residence, such as your home, and request an absentee ballot from his county of residence be sent to him at college. (EC § 349, 2020-2024, 2032)


 **We're retired, and spend half the year at our home in central California and the other half of our time at our beach cottage on the coast. From which residence address are we legally entitled to register and vote?**

In this type of situation, the decision as to where you register and vote is up to you, but you must choose one. Generally, your domicile is where your family lives, where you physically reside, the place you intend to return to whenever you are gone from it, where your driver's license says you live, where you claim your homeowner's property tax exemption or renter's tax credit, etc. (EC §349, 2020-2034)

 **The person who helped me fill out my voter registration card took it back to turn it in for me after I filled it out and then marked a political party for me that I'm not sure I wanted to register with. I suspect he was being paid by that party, because he certainly was lobbying in their behalf. Can they campaign that way, and isn't it likely they're altering our cards to satisfy the people who are paying them to register voters?**

No they legally cannot, and if you have good reason to believe they have done so, you should report it to our Elections Investigations Unit or your local elections official immediately. Persons assisting others to register, whether they are being paid for that activity or not, are prohibited from altering your affidavit or pre-marking it before they

give it to you. If they are being paid to register voters, they must also follow very strict guidelines to ensure they conduct themselves properly. (EC § 2159, 18106, 18108)

 Believe it or not, when I was signing the roster at the polls before I went into the voting booth, I saw the name of my neighbor's dog on the rolls. It's incredible that someone could register a pet and then request an absentee ballot in the pet's name in an effort to help someone win an election! What can I do to report this terrible act?

You are certainly right that this is an outrageous situation. State law specifically makes it illegal to register a nonexistent person. (EC §18100 - 18102). If you believe voter registration or voter fraud has occurred, you should report it to your local elections official or the Secretary of State's Elections Investigation Unit immediately at 1-800-345-VOTE.

VOTING

ON ELECTION DAY AT THE POLLS

★ I applied for my absentee ballot on a form I got in the mail from one of the campaigns. The day before the election the campaign called and said the county elections office hadn't received my voted absentee ballot back, so I'd better go to the polls to vote in person instead. I mailed my ballot three days earlier. What if it arrives tomorrow and I vote in person too – won't I be guilty of voting twice? Can I do that?

It is clearly against the law to intentionally vote or try to vote both by mail and in person. If you received and mailed back an absentee ballot but still are concerned it won't arrive before the polls close on Election Day, you may go to the polls and vote what is known as a provisional ballot. Then, if your absentee ballot does arrive in time, it will be counted and your provisional ballot will be voided. (EC §18500, 18560, 18561) Ballot counting and reconciliation such as this occurs in the days following Election Day as part of the official vote counting canvass.

★ My union representative told me I could have up to two hours paid time off to vote,

since I work a 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. shift, and I live 45 miles from where I work. Can I do that?

Yes. State law provides up to two hours of paid time off if you do not have sufficient time outside of working hours to get to the polls and vote in a statewide election. Those two hours you take off must be at the beginning or end of your normal shift, and you must notify your employer at least two working days before the election that you will need to exercise this right. Not less than 10 days before a statewide election, your employer also is supposed to post a notice about this in a conspicuous location. (EC §14000 - 14002)

★ **The local radio station is offering free donuts for anyone who shows up at their door and proves they've voted in the election next Tuesday. Can they do that?**

Not if there is a federal office on the ballot (President, U.S. Senate or House of Representatives), because federal law clearly outlaws giving anything of value for having voted. State law is less clear, and generally covers "considerations for voting" when someone is urged to vote or refrain from voting for a particular candidate or measure, rather than simply voting in general. (EC § 18520-18523)(42 U.S.C. 19731(c))

★ **I am an elderly widow who isn't very mobile anymore. My local Assembly candidate's campaign called and offered to**

take me to the polls on Election Day. Can they do that?

Yes, but they cannot attempt to influence you or offer you any type of reward or thing of value for voting, or talk to you about how you intend to vote. (EC §18370, 18500, 18520, 18521, 18522, 18524)

My friend is conducting a write-in campaign and is printing peel-off labels for us to put on our ballots to vote for him. Will my vote count if I use his sticky label?

No, your write-in vote will not count if you use peel-off labels, stamps or stickers. Voters must write the name of the candidate and of the office on the ballot or write-in envelope for the write-in vote to be counted. (EC §15353)

I recently moved from one side of town to the other. My friend said I could go back and vote at my old polling place or I could go to the new polling place. Which one is the right polling place for me?

It actually depends on how recently you've moved. If you moved before the registration deadline, which is 29 days prior to the election, the wisest action would be for you to re-register at your new address. You will be assigned to a polling place near your new home and receive your sample ballot pamphlet there. If you've moved within the same county, the National Voter Registration Act (Motor Voter) allows you to go to

the polling place for your new residence or to the county elections officials' office to vote. But, if you exercise this "fail safe" provision, as a result of regulations recently passed by the Secretary of State to tighten loopholes that could result in fraud, you will be required to produce identification with two proofs of residence that indicate your new location. If you've moved less than 29 days before the election, you also have the legal right to return to your old polling place just for this one election. (EC § 2035,14311)

The lady in line in front of me at the polls last election had two rowdy, noisy kids with her. I found it very distracting! After she signed in and got her ballot, these kids went into the voting booth with her. Can they do that?

If her children were under the age of 13 years, they are allowed to go into the voting booth with her if she is not able to find temporary care for them while she's casting her ballot. (EC §14222, 14224, 14281)

The other day I got a mailing from my State Senate candidate reminding me to vote and telling me where my polling place is. What they said and what's printed on my sample ballot pamphlet are two different places. Who do I believe and are they breaking some law telling me to go to the wrong place? Imagine how many angry and frustrated voters might give up voting

completely if they go to the wrong place to vote! Can they do that?

It was probably an honest mistake, but you should rely on the information on the back side of your sample ballot pamphlet. Circumstances can occur which cause polling locations to change at the last minute before an election and sometimes campaigns have outdated information. If someone has intentionally directed you to the wrong polling location, he/she can be charged with a misdemeanor offense. Contact the Secretary of State's Elections Investigation Unit at 1-800-345-VOTE or your local elections official if you have reason to believe this is the case. (EC §18302)

When I went into my polling booth, I noticed a little pencil with a candidate's name on it urging voters to be sure and mark the box for him. Can they do that?

No, it is illegal to have pencils or other items with a candidate's name on them in the polling place. Sometimes a prior voter leaves such materials in the voting booth. Any "electioneering" must be conducted from a minimum of 100 feet from the place where people are voting. (EC §18370)

The lady working at my polling place last Election Day was wearing a T-shirt that said "Down with Liberals" on it. Can she wear that?

Although inappropriate, such a t-shirt doesn't actually advocate voting for or against a particular candidate or measure, so it's not considered electioneering. However, if the shirt had urged voting for or against something specific, it would not be allowed within 100 feet of the polls. In any case, if the elections official is aware of the situation, he or she will likely request that the woman cover it up or change into something that does not cause the slightest appearance of partisanship. (EC §18370, 18541, 18546)

I saw the name of my deceased uncle on the index when I went to the polls last week with an "AV" marked next to his name! He's been dead for more than two years, but doesn't "AV" mean he was sent an absentee ballot? Who do I report this violation to, because I'm afraid that someone is voting in my beloved uncle's name?

You should report the suspected illegal absentee vote to the Secretary of State's Elections Investigation Unit at 1-800-345-VOTE and to your local elections official immediately. To prevent situations like this from occurring, the Secretary of State's office has established new regulations requiring local coroners' offices to provide death notices to election officials, which are then used to reconcile with names on the voter files.

I am, as are many of my neighbors, a naturalized U.S. citizen, but I'm more comfortable reading election materials in my native language. Just because I ask for voting materials in Spanish, can someone harass me or make me prove my citizenship?

No. The federal Voting Rights Act requires minority language materials to be available where there are a significant number of people who speak that language. Just make sure you sign your voter registration card under penalty of perjury stating that you are a citizen. (EC § 2150) And remember, it's against the law to intimidate voters, which this type of harassment could be considered. (EC §18540, 18541)



VOTING




BY ABSENTEE BALLOT




★ **The campaign for my party's U.S. Senate candidate sent me an absentee ballot application, and said to return it to them after I filled it out. They even offered to GET my absentee ballot and bring it to me at my house some evening and help me fill it out. Can they do that?**


While it is not illegal for a campaign to help you apply for an absentee ballot, your vote is secret and you should not let anyone handle your ballot in any way. If you want to vote absentee, and you want to be sure your ballot is counted, you can obtain a ballot by filling out the application printed on the back of your sample ballot pamphlet and returning it to your local elections official. If you don't think your ballot will arrive at the elections office in time to be counted, you or an authorized relative, may take it to any polling place in your county on Election Day. Pay close attention to deadlines, and under no circumstances permit any campaign workers to handle your ballot or fill in your choices. Be sure to refuse any offer from them to return your ballot for you. If they offer to do so, they are breaking the law. (EC § 18371, 18403, 18577)

 ★ **My co-worker is fit as a fiddle, and only works an 8-to-5 shift, so she has plenty of time to go vote on her way to or from the office. Yet, she always votes an absentee ballot. I thought you had to have some legitimate excuse for voting by mail. Can she do that?**


Yes, she can. Voters do not need to provide a reason when requesting an absentee ballot – it is an option available to any qualified registered voter in California who properly applies for one. (EC § 3003)

 ★ **One of the campaigns came door-to-door with blank absentee ballot application forms, and even offered to help me fill mine out and return it for me. Part of the form was already filled out in my name – it looked like a computer had generated a form for all of us who are registered on this street! Can they do that?**

Portions of the application form for an absentee ballot may be pre-printed, but you must personally fill in the address where you want the ballot sent, and sign it yourself. This application must also conspicuously state that you have the right to return the application to your county elections official directly. Campaigns may collect and return completed applications in your behalf, but they must do so within 36 hours or before the deadline for applying for the mail-in ballot. (EC § 3006, 3008, 18402)


 **Somebody told me I could get an absentee ballot sent to me over the Internet. Can this possibly be true? It sounds dangerous and I think it could open the doors for lots of people to illegally vote. Can they do that?**

You cannot get a ballot over the Internet. You can, however, download an application form for an absentee ballot from, among the sites, the Secretary of State's election home page, complete it and mail it to your local elections official. (<http://www.primary96.ca.gov>) Elections officials in all 58 counties do not yet have the capability to verify your signature electronically if it were transmitted via the Internet. Your signature is a necessary part of the absentee ballot application process.


 **My neighbor's husband applied for an absentee ballot and then suddenly died four days before the election. Their son told me that his mom voted and returned the ballot for her late husband because she knew how he was going to vote, so she did it in his honor and memory. Is this legal? How could I prove she did that, or find out if it's really true?**

This is clearly illegal; she cannot vote for him even if she knew his intentions. By doing so, she has specifically violated Elections Code §18578, a crime which should be reported to your local elections official or the Secretary of State's

Elections Investigation Unit at 1-800-345-VOTE. It is possible that the man actually cast his ballot before he passed away (the absentee voting period opens 29 days before the election) and his wife just mailed it back after his death, so be cautious with any allegations you might make. However, every signature on an absentee ballot envelope is compared against the signature on their voter registration form. If it does not match the ballot, it is not opened and/or counted.

 I understand that the list of people who apply for an absentee ballot is public record. But can a campaign really go door-to-door and offer to collect the voted absentee ballots and return them in the voter's behalf? I mean, they're even offering to provide the stamp for mailing it back in, or to hand deliver it to the elections office! Can they do that?

No. A campaign or political party, or any third party, may not return your voted absentee ballot on your behalf, according to both state law and judicial rulings. The only conditions under which someone else could return your mail ballot is if they are a blood relative and you designate them to return it because of illness or other physical disability which prevents you from returning it yourself. Under special circumstances, the voter may designate a non-relative, in writing, to return an absentee ballot if it was obtained under the emergency provisions (between 1-6 days before the election) stated in the Elections Code. (EC §3017, 3021, 18577)

 **My best friend's brother is in state prison. He's applied to vote an absentee ballot from there. Can he do that?**

No. A person who is in prison or on parole for the conviction of a felony can't register or vote. In fact, to ensure that felons are not on the voter rolls and voting, the Secretary of State's office regularly receives criminal record updates from the state Department of Corrections to check against current voter registration files.(EC § 321, 2000, 2101, and Cal. Const. Article II §2)



COUNTING THE BALLOTS



★ I don't trust computers. Never have, and never will. Therefore, I am most interested in watching how ballots get counted on election night. Is this process open to the public?


Yes, the entire process, from the opening of absentee ballot envelopes to the counting of ballots on election night is open to the public. (EC § 15004, 15054) Contact your local elections official for more information on observing the process on election night. Additionally, prior to the official certification of election results, each county elections official must conduct a public manual recount of the ballots cast in one percent of the precincts, chosen at random by the elections official. (EC §15645)



After I voted my ballot, I handed it back to the precinct inspector to put it into the ballot box. She tore off the stub and handed it to me, but I never actually saw her put my ballot into the ballot box. In fact, the box didn't even look like it was securely sealed. Aren't there procedures they're supposed to follow to guarantee our ballots are secret and are ultimately counted?

Yes, there are very clear procedures set forth in state law about who handles ballots, protecting the secrecy of ballots, and reconciliation of all

precinct supplies when the polls close at 8 p.m. on election night. (EC § 14405 et. seq. and 14291 et. seq., as well as 18002, 18562, 18563) If you believe your ballot was improperly handled, you should report it immediately to your local elections official or contact the Secretary of State's Elections Investigations Unit at 1-800-345-VOTE.

 **You hear all these stories about states where the precinct ballot box is switched for another on the way to the county elections official's office. Can this happen in California?**

California elections officials, on a county by county basis, employ several security measures to protect against any ballot box switching. Among the many steps taken to make sure that the ballot box that leaves the precinct is the same one that arrives at the central counting location is for the precinct board to seal each box after all the supplies (the ballots, rosters, etc.) are put inside, along with the reconciliation pages. That way, in order to swap a box, the new box would have to have the identical, duplicate contents that are in the sealed box. And, rest assured, there are always at least two people watching this process and that each poll worker must sign the reconciliation sheet. In addition, each box is identified in most larger counties by a bar code. If you suspect a ballot box has been tampered with, contact your local elections official or the Secretary of State's Elections Investigations Unit at 1-800-345-VOTE immediately.

Q I wanted to stay after the polls closed at 8 p.m. to see for myself that the ballot box was sealed and there was no funny business going on at my precinct. But one of the poll workers told me that I had to leave as soon as the polling place closed. I thought I could stay and watch the process of reconciling the votes. Can I?

Yes, you can stay after the polls close to watch the reconciliation process. Although, in almost all counties, the raw number of ballots cast is counted at the precinct, the actual votes cast are counted at a central receiving area, like the county elections office. And you are welcome to watch there if you want, too.

Q With all these computer hackers out there breaking into the Pentagon and other places, how can I be sure that no one is tinkering with the computer programs that count the ballots on election night?

All voting systems are certified by the Secretary of State. Each county, before and after counting ballots, must run a number of pre-marked ballots, or "test deck," through the computer as part of a legally required test, known as the "Logic and Accuracy" check. The test deck has a known number of votes for candidates, and the computer output must match that exactly. In addition, each county must file their Logic and Accuracy tapes with the Secretary of State, as well as escrow a

copy of their software. These safeguards are designed to test the system before the actual counting of the real ballots on Election Day.

Q The candidate who I supported for a local office here in my community lost his election by a handful of votes. I have reason to believe something fishy was going on in his opponent's camp. I even have a couple of leads that might prove my theory that my guy should have won! Isn't there some way to prevent his opponent from taking office?

After the votes are all counted, and the results are certified, anyone can contest an election by filing papers to do so in a court of law within 30 days from the day the election is certified. The papers must indicate the reason why, which can include poll worker fraud, election official misconduct, faulty computers, etc. Generally, a judge will look to see if the allegations involve a number of votes sufficient to change the outcome of an election as a threshold step to proceeding. If the case proceeds, all the records of the election, including precinct supplies, rosters, ballots, voting equipment, software, absentee envelopes, etc., are made available to the attorneys representing both the plaintiff as well as the defendant.



CAMPAIGN DO'S AND DON'TS



★ The other day I got a mailing that looked very official, complete with a copy of the state seal on the envelope. It turned out to be campaign literature. I thought campaigns had to tell you they printed and mailed out this stuff, and that they couldn't use our state's seal. Can they do that?

You're right, the campaigns can't legally do that. Every page of a simulated sample ballot pamphlet must clearly state it is not an official document, and the mailing may not have an official government seal on the envelope or contents because it is misleading. (EC §18301, 20009)



★ There's a ballot measure coming up that directly affects my profession and livelihood. In last month's pay envelope, the boss included a flyer urging me to vote for the proposition. Can he do that?

No. Including any type of campaign literature which directly or by implication urges you to vote for or against a candidate or measure or in any way even appears to threaten you in order to influence your political action or opinion is expressly prohibited. (EC §18542)

👉👈 I had a yard sign up for the city council candidate I am supporting, and then it disappeared. I suspect that it was stolen by the opponent's camp. What can I do?

Although this seems like an elections-related offense, this crime is strictly considered a "petty theft," best handled by local law enforcement authorities. You can report the theft to your local police or sheriff's department.


👉👈 A volunteer for one of the presidential candidates told me if I promised to vote for his candidate, he'd be sure I was on the slate of electors to go to the Electoral College if his candidate wins. This strikes me as kind of a bribe to get me to vote in a particular way. Can he do that?

No, he cannot. It is against the law to offer any kind of consideration to get people to vote, or not vote, in any particular manner. (EC § 18520 - 18522)


👉👈 My neighbor is running for city council and in her candidate's statement in the voter's sample ballot pamphlet, she claims to be a college graduate. I happen to know that she dropped out of high school. Can she get away with purposely misrepresenting her qualifications?

If a candidate knowingly falsifies information on the candidate's statement, he/she can be fined up to \$1,000. (EC §18351) Elections Code § 13307 provides that authors are not exempt from any civil or criminal action or penalty because of any false, slanderous or libelous statements contained in the voter's pamphlet. There is an opportunity to challenge the contents of the candidate's statement printed in the voter's sample ballot pamphlet during the public display period provided for in EC § 13314.

THE INITIATIVE PROCESS

 ★ A guy stopped me in front of the supermarket and asked me to sign a petition. When I asked what the petition was for, he didn't describe it accurately, and he covered up the printed summary at the top of the petition. Can he do that?

No, you must be allowed to see the official summary of the petition. A circulator is breaking the law and can be fined or put in jail if he misrepresents the contents and purpose of the petition. (EC § 18600, 18601, 18602) If you have reason to believe that the circulator is breaking the law, gather as much information on him as possible, such as the location the circulator was working, a description of him and the purpose or proponents of the petition you were asked to sign. Remember to report anything unusual to your local elections official or to the Secretary of State's Elections Investigations Unit at 1-800-3345-VOTE.

 I'm circulating a petition to recall a local elected official, and would like to collect signatures for the drive on Election Day in front of my local polling place. After all, I know the people going in or coming out of the polls are registered voters, so it's a ready-made target audience. Can I solicit signatures right outside the door of the polling place?

No. While it might seem to be the ideal location, state law expressly states that you must remain at least 100 feet from the room where voters are signing the roster and casting their ballots. (EC §18370)

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

County of Alameda

Bradley J. Clark
Registrar of Voters
510-272-6973

County of Alpine

Barbara K. Jones
County Clerk
916-694-2281

County of Amador

Sheldon D. Johnson
Registrar of Voters
209-223-6465

County of Butte

Candace J. Grubbs
County Clerk-Recorder
916-538-7761

☎ County of Calaveras

Karen Varni
County Clerk, Elections Dept.
209-754-6376

☎ County of Colusa

Kathleen Moran
County Clerk-Recorder
916-458-0500

☎ County of Contra Costa

Stephen L. Weir
County Clerk
510-646-4166

☎ County of Del Norte

John D. Alexander
County Clerk
707-464-7205

☎ County of El Dorado

Michele MacIntyre
Registrar of Voters
916-621-7480

☎ County of Fresno

Susan B. Anderson
County Clerk/Registrar
of Voters
209-488-3375

☎ County of Glenn

Carolyn Davis
County Clerk-Recorder
916-934-6414

☎ County of Humboldt

Lindsey McWilliams
County Clerk
707-445-7678

☎ County of Imperial

Dolores Provencio
County Clerk-Recorder
619-339-4226

☎ County of Inyo

Beverly J. Harry
County Clerk-Recorder
619-878-0224

☎ County of Kern

Hugh Denton
Chief Deputy Registrar
805-861-2625

☎ County of Kings

Joan L. Bullock
County Clerk-Recorder
209 582-3211 EXT. 2433

☎ County of Lake

Judy Murray
County Clerk-Auditor
707-263-2372

☎ County of Lassen

Theresa Nagel
County Clerk
916-251-8217

☎ County of Los Angeles

Conny McCormack
Registrar - Recorder
310-462-2748

☎ County of Madera

Rebecca Martinez
County Clerk-Recorder
209-675-7720

☎ County of Marin

Howard Hanson
County Clerk
415-499-6442

☎ County of Mariposa

Don Z. Phillips
County Clerk
209-966-2007

☎ County of Mendocino

Marsha A. Young
County Clerk-Recorder
707-463-4371

☎ County of Merced

James L. Ball
County Clerk
209-385-7541

☎ County of Modoc

Maxine Madison
County Clerk
916-233-6201

☎ County of Mono

Renn Nolan
County Clerk-Recorder
619-932-5241

☎ County of Monterey

Anthony E. Anchundo
Registrar of Voters
408-755-5085

☎ County of Napa

Kathleen Bonds
County Clerk-Recorder
707-253-4321

☎ County of Nevada

Bruce C. Bolinger
County Clerk
916-265-1298

☎ County of Orange

Roz Lever
Registrar of Voters
714-567-7600

☎ County of Placer

Jim McCauley
County Clerk
916-889-7088

☎ County of Plumas

Judith Wells
County Clerk
916-283-6305

☎ County of Riverside

Delfina E. Franco
Chief Deputy
909-275-8700

☎ County of Sacramento

Ernest R. Hawkins
Registrar of Voters
916-366-2051

☎ County of San Benito

John R. Hodges
County Clerk
408-637-3786

☎ County of San Bernardino

Ingrid Gonzales
Registrar of Voters
909-387-8300

☎ County of San Diego

Mikel Haas
Registrar of Voters
619-565-5800

☎ City and County of San Francisco

Germaine Q. Wong
Registrar of Voters
415-554-4375

☎ County of San Joaquin

Larry O. Tunison
Registrar of Voters
209-468-2885

☎ County of San Luis Obispo

Julie Rodewald
County Clerk
805-781-5228

☎ County of San Mateo

Warren Slocum
County Clerk-Recorder
415-312-5222

☎ County of Santa Barbara

Kenneth A. Pettit
County Clerk-Recorder
805-568-2200

☎ County of Santa Clara

Dwight Beattie
Registrar of Voters
408-299-8639

☎ County of Santa Cruz

Richard W. Bedal
County Clerk-Recorder
408-454-2060

☎ County of Shasta

Ann Reed
County Clerk
916-225-5730

☎ County of Sierra

Mary J. Jungi
County Clerk-Recorder
916-289-3295

☎ County of Siskiyou

Lisa Chandler
County Clerk
916-842-8086

☎ County of Solano

Pat Kemper
Registrar of Voters
707-421-6675

☎ County of Sonoma

Janice Atkinson
Chief Deputy Registrar
707-527-1800

☎ County of Stanislaus

Karen L. Mathews
County Clerk-Recorder
209-525-5200

☎ County of Sutter

Lonna B. Smith
County Clerk-Recorder
916-822-7122

☎ County of Tehama

Mary Alice George
County Clerk-Recorder
916-527-8190

☎ County of Trinity

Dero B. Forslund
County Clerk-Recorder
916-623-1220

☎ County of Tulare

Candy Lopez
Chief Deputy-Elections
209-733-6275

☎ County of Tuolumne

Tim R. Johnson
County Clerk/Elections Dept.
209-533-5555

☎ County of Ventura

Richard D. Dean
County Clerk-Recorder
805-654-2266

☎ County of Yolo

Tony Bernhard
County Clerk
916-666-8133

☎ County of Yuba

Frances Fairey
County Clerk-Recorder
916-741-6341

**☎ Secretary of State's
Elections Division**

John Mott Smith
Chief of Elections
916-657-2166
Elections Hotline: 1-800-345-VOTE

**Sources: *California Elections Code (EC)*
United States Code (USC)
California Code of Regulations (CCR)
*California Constitution (Cal. Const.)***

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**Voter Registration & Voter Fraud Hotline
1-800-345-VOTE**

Internet: www.ss.ca.gov