Voter's Choice Act Research Brief Series

California Voter's Choice Act Implementation Process: Election Administration Plan and Vote Center Siting

In the 2018 election cycle, California counties under the California Voter's Choice Act (VCA) were provided the option of adopting a new voting model that includes replacing neighborhood polling places with vote centers and mailing Vote-By-Mail (VBM) ballots to all registered voters (Los Angeles County will not automatically send VBM ballots until 2024). Under the new voting model, vote centers offer a variety of services including in-person voting, accessible voting options, language assistance, mailed ballot drop-off and conditional voter registration. They are distributed throughout the county and available to all voters up to ten days before Election Day.[1]

A key component of the VCA is its requirement of adopting counties to develop a county election administration plan (EAP) for the implementation of the new voting model (*see glossary, page 10*). Included in this plan is identification of the county's vote center and drop box locations. Before the plan is finalized, counties must consult with the public and community organizations, particularly ones serving voters with disabilities and those seeking or advocating for language assistance (*see text box, page 10*).

With the goal of informing VCA implementation in 2020 and beyond, this brief, the third in a series, examines two research questions related to this early phase of the VCA implementation process:

1. How should county election officials engage community stakeholders in the development of their election administration plan?

2. Which factors in the vote center and drop box siting process did election officials and community stakeholders find most important?

To address these questions, we draw on findings from an extensive study of the five counties (Figure 1) that adopted the VCA in 2018. The study was designed to understand the challenges faced by these counties and lessons learned. We conducted 40 confidential in-depth interviews with election officials, statewide voter advocacy groups, and community groups involved in implementing the VCA. Twelve of these interviews were conducted with election officials from VCA and non-VCA adopting counties, some of whom have had an implementation advisory role at the statewide level. Another nearly 30 interviews were conducted with statewide and community voter advocacy groups. We further administered six focus groups with statewide voter advocacy groups, community groups, and other stakeholders.

About the Voter's Choice Act

The California Voter's Choice Act provides an optional new voting model to counties. In counties choosing to adopt the new model, every registered voter is mailed a Vote-by-Mail (VBM) ballot, which voters can either mail in, or return at a ballot drop box or a newly established vote center.
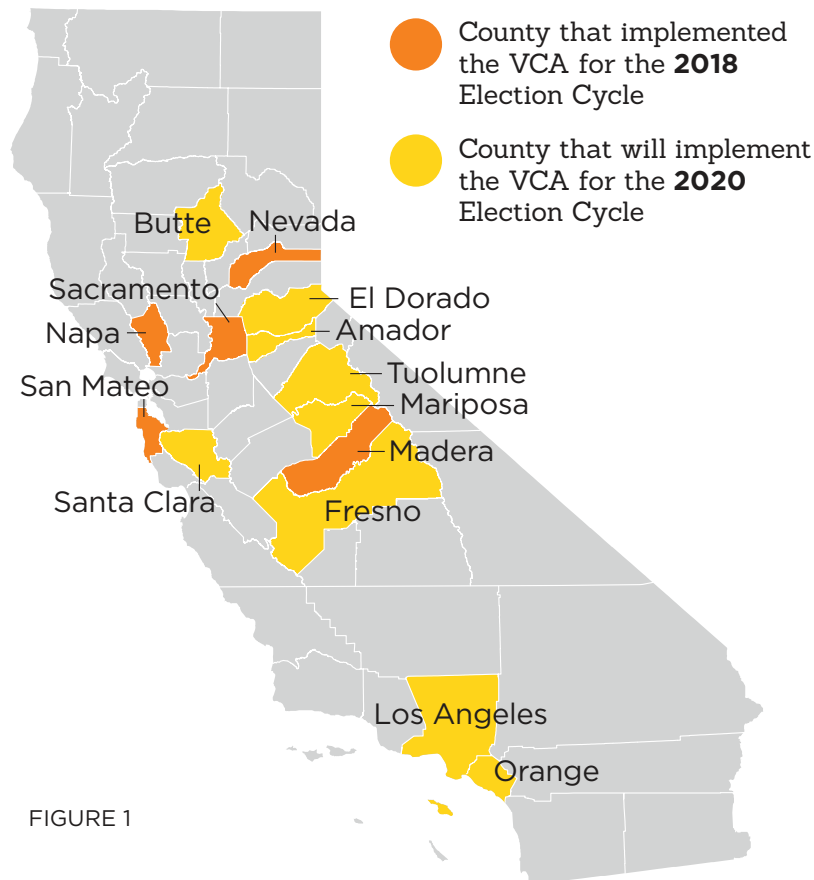

FIGURE 1

At vote centers, which replace traditional neighborhood polling places, voters can cast their ballots in person, drop off their completed VBM ballots, access conditional voter registration, receive replacement ballots, and access additional resources, such as language assistance and accessible voting machines. While there are fewer vote centers than polling places by design, vote centers are open to voters for up to ten days prior to Election Day and available for all voters to utilize countywide. The expectation is that voters could choose to cast their vote by mail or drop box, and those desiring an in-person experience (e.g., using an accessible voting system, location convenience or for a sense of community) would have numerous dates to do so rather than just one.

Fourteen of California's 58 counties were eligible to adopt the model for the 2018 election cycle, and five counties did so — Madera, Napa, Nevada, Sacramento and San Mateo. All other California counties are eligible to adopt the model in 2020. In 2020, Los Angeles County will opt in to the model but will not be required to mail all registered voters VBM ballots until 2024.[2] In addition to Los Angeles County, the following counties have publicly announced (as of this brief's publication) that they will adopt the VCA for the 2020 election cycle: Amador, Butte, El Dorado, Fresno, Mariposa, Orange, Santa Clara and Tuolumne (see Figure 1). In total, fourteen California counties will be conducting elections under the Voter's Choice Act in 2020—approximately half the state's current registered voter population.[3]

1. How should county election officials engage community stakeholders in the development of their election administration plan?

The VCA established guidelines on the development and timing of a county's election administration plan (EAP). VCA county election officials are required to draft EAPs in consultation with the public and with a county's Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) and Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC). County officials must give public notice and accept public comment for at least 14 days prior to a public hearing on the draft EAP and, upon adopting the final plan, submit the EAP's sections on voter education and outreach to the California Secretary of State for approval. The California Secretary of State provides toolkits and technical assistance to counties to assist with public consultation (see the Secretary of State's VCA Starter Kit for EAP guidelines and suggested timelines).

a. Challenges in Engaging Community Members

Most election officials interviewed for this study emphasized that successful development of the EAP, as a whole, requires a major investment of staff time. We also heard from many election officials about the positive contributions made by community members. However, several election officials described the challenges of soliciting meaningful collaboration with the community while operating under the VCA's required deadlines for creating an EAP and identifying appropriate voting and drop off locations.

One election official explained that, "Election administrators have very strict unforgiving and statutory deadlines. Most stakeholder groups don't operate in that type of environment, so the need for immediate decisions, immediate answers, and timely responses often played a significant role in limiting the ability for collaboration."

While many advocates and election officials agreed that starting collaboration earlier would be helpful, there was also some recognition that in this first election cycle under the VCA, it was not very clear to all election officials how early they would need to start community engagement.

We also heard from election officials that engaging community input at the high level required by the VCA (beyond what is typically seen in elections) can be very challenging due to the skill sets of their staffs. As one election official noted,

> "I think the lesson learned is that the EAP process is really important and it would be important to engage community members or community leaders in that space. For election officials, I think that they've learned that community engagement requires a specific skill set that they either have to develop internally or start hiring to increase staff capacity for community engagement."

At the same time, one election official noted that they faced challenges in engaging the community far in advance of the election, explaining, "Once we made the decision [to implement], I'll be very honest, collaboration was limited. Folks aren't as engaged in the election process four, five, six, seven, eight months in advance of an election as they are, say, 45 days before an election. It makes collaboration difficult."

We also heard from election officials that future implementation in counties choosing to adopt the VCA would strongly benefit from previously established relationships with community groups.

For some counties, the tight timeline for implementation (once a county committed to adopting the VCA), perhaps compounded by a lack of pre-established community partners, meant that the most efficient way to begin the EAP process, from their perspective, was to first create a draft before presenting it to the community for input.

However, not all election officials took this approach, as one election official explained about the 2018 election cycle, "There are some counties out there doing an EAP first and then going to the public. I don't get it, because the code pretty much says, we want you to get feedback from the public and then draft the EAP. It kind of makes more sense that way to me."

Election officials interviewed also reported they received guidance on community engagement strategies and activities from the election community beyond their own counties. These included their peers in other counties, as well as the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO) sponsored meetings and trainings, and the California Secretary of State's Office.

Future of California Elections (FoCE), a nonpartisan nonprofit organization, supported VCA implementation statewide through their Voter's Choice California (VCC) project. VCC also worked to support county elections offices and community organizations that were transitioning to the new voting model under the VCA (see VCC Community Engagement Resources.)

See CCEP VCA Study Briefs 1 and 2 for further discussion of the challenges in community engagement for election officials. It should be noted that counties adopting in 2020 and beyond will likely have more lead time to prepare and develop their EAPs beyond the minimum requirements.

b. Community Advocates' Concerns on EAP Process

Many community advocates interviewed indicated that the EAP development process leading up to the Primary Election appeared hurried to them, resulting in an inadequate amount of time and space for community input. Some interviewees indicated that county efforts to get their EAP done quickly and minimize resulting operational changes created an impression that their election officials were not very open, at least initially, to community input.

> "I think that the hardest part for us [with the EAP], was the county not releasing those fast enough so that we, as community members, had enough time to make comments and really give them feedback. We as a [VCA] coalition didn't have enough time to have a conversation about the whole plan. Maybe we could have provided more feedback."

Many community members discussed experiencing a degree of frustration in their lack of ability to effectively influence the final EAP plan. One interviewee explained in their county,

> "We felt like by the time we knew about it, I even remember one last meeting we had with the elections office where we went in with some other ideas only to hear that the EAP had been finalized, and we thought that it was still open for comment. So it was kinda like, okay, well, you know, guess we really didn't need to have this meeting after all. So that was, yeah. That was a big, big surprise to us."

At the same time, we also heard from many community advocates, that despite some initial frustrations, they were able to develop productive working relationships with county elections offices in terms of outreach efforts (see CCEP VCA Study Brief 2 for discussion of election official and community collaboration in VCA outreach). One interviewee explained, "I don't think it [frustration] had any long-term impacts on working with the county. Because I think we could easily separate this as a management decision but the people that we're working with are very dedicated and very much want to do whatever they possibly can. So I mean, again, I don't think it had any long term impact on what we did in terms of outreach."

One VCA community coalition member highlighted that during the 2018 General Election, their county had more time to incorporate feedback from the coalition, as opposed to the Primary Election (see CCEP VCA Study Brief 2 for a discussion of VCA coalitions in each county). Both county election officials and community advocates suggested that the collaborative process could be improved by developing a coalition engagement plan that includes a clear timeline for community feedback, far in advance of the EAP deadlines. Several VCA community coalition members noted the importance of being included in the EAP and vote center/drop box feedback process early, because once these plans were set in motion they became "hardened" and more impervious to community input.

2. Which factors in the vote center and drop box siting process did election officials and community stakeholders find most important?

As a key component of their draft EAPs, VCA counties must identify the locations of vote centers and drop boxes. Through the public comment period, community members and groups can provide feedback and suggestions on locations that they believe would best serve the needs of the county's voters, as well as those eligible to vote but not yet registered. In every VCA county, (except Los Angeles) the minimum number of required 11-day vote centers is 1 per 50,000 registered voters and 1 per 10,000 registered voters for 4-day vote centers. Drop boxes are required to be placed at a minimum of 1 per 15,000 registered voters. In 2020, for Los Angeles County, the minimum number of required 11-day vote centers is 1 per 30,000 registered voters and 1 per 7,500 registered voters for 4-day vote centers. Every city in the county with at least 1,000 registered voters will have at least one vote center.[4]

In the 2018 election cycle, VCA counties selected locations based on these minimum numbers, with some counties providing a few additional locations. When selecting the location of vote centers and drop boxes, the Voter's Choice Act specifies that county election officials consider, at a minimum, the following 14 criteria:

- *Proximity to public transit*
- *Proximity to communities with historically low vote by mail usage*
- *Proximity to population centers*
- *Proximity to language minority communities*
- *Proximity to voters with disabilities*
- *Proximity to communities with low rates of vehicle ownership*
- *Proximity to low-income communities*
- *Proximity to communities of eligible voters that are not registered*
- *Proximity to geographically isolated populations (i.e. Native Reservations)*
- *Access to free parking*
- *Time and distance a voter must travel to reach a location*
- *The need for alternate voting methods for voters with disabilities*
- *Traffic patterns*
- *The need for mobile vote centers in addition to those established by the VCA*

Each VCA county elections office approached somewhat differently how they addressed the fourteen siting criteria built into the law depending on available data resources, minimum number of required vote centers and drop boxes, their past experiences with serving county voters and the input received from community groups. While all counties referenced voter and census population data, some, such as Sacramento County, used more advanced data analysis methods than other VCA counties (see Sacramento County Voter's Choice Act GIS mapping site). Additionally, each VCA county reported accessing the California Civic Engagement Project's Vote Center Siting Tool to inform their vote center and drop box siting process.

i. Election Officials Emphasize the Complexity Involved in the Siting Process

Every VCA county election official we interviewed stressed the complexity of the vote center and drop box siting process, involving factors such as legal requirements around accessibility, lack of available sites fully aligned to accessibility requirements and other required considerations, network connectivity, size of facilities, input of community groups, constrained timelines and limited staff resources.. For some election officials, these factors, at times, resulted in siting options that could be difficult to balance. As one election official summarized,

> "There are a whole bunch of issues that come into play with vote centers. The size, connectivity, the layout for the actual vote center operation, the computers to voting machines to conditional voter registration to where you're going to house your supplies and equipment, and organizing all of that. That comes up to a reality check also. So, when you put all that together, not every community that wanted a vote center for the period of time that they wanted it could get it."

a. Short Timeline

In advance of the 2018 Primary Election, each VCA county was under a tight timeline (between their formal decision to adopt and the election itself) to implement all aspects of the VCA in their county. Several election officials interviewed explained the necessity, in particular, of beginning the search for vote center locations as early as possible. One election official noted,

> "When we first started looking at vote centers before we knew that we were officially going VCA, we wanted to get out to our facilities and let them know this is what we're looking at. To start getting on the calendar to reserve a facility for 11 days or 4 days is very challenging. It was definitely more challenging securing…vote centers than it was…polling places."

Several election officials interviewed explained that reaching out to existing polling places was an important first step, but that many were unable to commit to serving as a vote center for reasons such as the longer commitment (4 or 11 day) or the greater amount of space that was requested for election operations. This was particularly impactful with regard to churches and schools, two common types of facilities for polling places across California counties. In addition, many previous polling places (as well as other possible sites) did not legally qualify as accessible for voters with disabilities leading to a further reduction in potential vote center sites. One election official detailed their approach as follows, "We started with those facilities we used as polling places first. We contacted over…locations. About half were straight up nos. From there we had some more maybes and ifs."

b. Facility Size

Nearly every VCA county election official interviewed said they needed more space at vote centers, more parking, and more equipment on election day (as most vote center traffic occurred that day) in 2018 than they had expected. In particular, the size of vote center facilities and their resulting capacity for voters, voting privacy and voting equipment was a factor in the formation of lines, especially in the processing of conditional voter registration.

In discussing needs around facility size, one election official emphasized, "Just whatever you think is big enough, isn't." Another election official elaborated, "The hardest part was figuring out what space we would need for a vote center. So there were some facilities that were willing to give up space, but the space was a 20x20 room and we knew that would be too small for a vote center. Our ideal space initially started as 50x50 feet. We knew we weren't getting anywhere near that. So we dropped it to 40x40, then 30x30. Our average vote center space is 30x20. And we learned this year that's too small. It's just not big enough."

c. Vote Center and Drop Box Locations

Across VCA counties, there was notable variation in the types of facilities that were utilized as vote centers and which hosted drop boxes. With vote centers, most VCA counties used a combination of types of facilities that are commonly used as polling places; such as community centers, schools, libraries and other government buildings.

In Nevada and Napa counties, hotels were also utilized as vote centers. Napa, Sacramento and San Mateo Counties each also located vote centers on college (community and/or 4-year colleges) campuses. Only Sacramento and San Mateo counties utilized churches as vote centers.

Most vote center counties had set hours in which their vote centers were open (although they differed by the day of the week). Sacramento County was an exception as their vote center hours were staggered based on the facilities availability and perceived voter needs.

With regard to drop boxes, most VCA counties also located these in places such as community centers, libraries and other government buildings. Nevada County placed most of their drop boxes at grocery stores. All other VCA counties placed some drop boxes at grocery stores, with San Mateo using one grocery store as a drop box. All VCA counties placed at least some of their drop boxes externally (available 24 hours), while Napa County was the only VCA county with all external drop boxes. As one VCA election official noted, "A grocery store was our most popular drop box. So we're gonna look for more grocery stores."

d. External vs. Internal Drop Box Locations

In several VCA counties, election officials began with a preference for locating drop boxes inside buildings. This was due, at least in part, to cost and security limitations involved with external placements. One election official explained some of the challenges,

> "Not only do you have to purchase the box, but you have to go through the expense of having it installed in such a way that somebody can't just pick it up, throw it in the back of a truck, and drive off with it. So, you have to locate, you know, figure out where you can put them, and get permission from the property owner. Can we stick this here? And can we bolt it into the sidewalk, so that it's secure?"

Several other election officials also recognized that locating drop boxes indoors limited hours and days that voters could access them. These election officials noted a desire to extend access to voters during the day and possibly into the evening. Consequently, for several VCA election officials, there was a balance needed in their approach to drop box siting. As one election official explained, "We looked for locations in the ideal areas that provided either one: a secure and reliable external location, or an internal location with extended hours. I say extended to mean that we don't believe that eight-to-five is real conducive to voter participation. So we looked for places that were open before eight, and well after five to accommodate voters."

For at least one VCA county election official, the use of external drop boxes was considered a success,

> "The utilization of an outside external drop box that was available 24/7 seemed to us to be more successful. It affords, I think, some more convenience for voters. Let's face it, elections have changed tremendously over the past 50 or 60 years. I think being able to drop it off on the go and not getting out of your car, those things are more appealing to the public than they may have been in the past."

e. Community Involvement in the Siting Process

We also heard from VCA election officials that community members informed the siting of both vote center and drop boxes. To illustrate this, an election official provided the following example, "We had started looking at internal locations [of drop boxes], mostly at city clerks offices. We were looking at internal locations for security reasons but here, the community partners were very, very helpful and we decided to pick exterior locations which were 24 hours, 7 days a week which was very successful."

ii. Community Advocates Experience Challenges in the Siting Process

In the 2018 election cycle, many community advocates noted wanting more input on the vote center and drop box siting process, some additional locations (above the minimum required), and more county voter education about available locations. Some community advocates also expressed frustration over the timing of when counties would make available their preliminary lists (or maps) of vote centers and drop box locations. Most advocates who addressed this topic indicated they wanted access to these lists as early as possible and, where possible, to work with their counties to help generate them.

VCA community coalition members reported that, in some cases, they were able to have an influence on vote center and drop box placement after leveraging their collective power. Several interviewees noted that counties with election staff who were very open and responsive facilitated feedback around the accessibility of vote centers and drop boxes. In some cases, coalition members were able to support the election staff and leverage their own relationships with people who had facilities to offer as vote centers. Their relationships in the community helped recruit facilities to be used as vote centers and helped negotiate terms of use, such as hours of operation.

However, many advocates also expressed frustration that they were not able to influence the siting process more, while, at the same time, acknowledging the constraints faced by election officials. As one community advocate explained, "I know that the elections office has its own kind of timeline and they are dealing with a certain number of constraints in terms of finding feasible vote center locations. However, if they seriously do want to make sure that these vote centers are accessible to people, then I think it's important that they reach out to community organizations who understand the needs of their community most, and actively take the time to try to incorporate that feedback into their search process."

Some advocates also had hoped to see longer hours for vote center locations in order to better align with voters' schedules. For example, one community advocate noted,

> "When it came to the vote centers, probably the biggest thing is, ideally, that they should've been opened from Friday before the election at minimum and the weekend and should be 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, and that would help to accommodate people that have to commute."

a. Types of Vote Center Facilities and Drop Box Locations

In advance of the 2018 Primary Election, community advocates in several VCA counties expressed concerns around the proposed locations of vote centers and drop boxes in government building such as city halls. They asserted that some community members, particularly those from historically underrepresented groups, could feel uncomfortable, and possibly fearful, voting in these types of locations.

Some community groups worked with their county election officials to move vote centers and drop boxes from government locations with limited success. Several interviewees attributed the movement they achieved to the strength of their county VCA advocacy coalition, "Once the community organizations and the community hub that [were] commenting on the voter's choice act had sort of been established and had made clear what the problem was with city halls, there was some flexibility and discussion [from election officials] around dealing with that issue."

At the same time, one VCA election official noted that their approach to compromising with community groups regarding government locations was also informed by the support they heard in favor of vote centers in government buildings from some attendees of county public meetings.

b. Voter Education on Siting

Many community advocates interviewed emphasized a direct connection between the siting of voter centers and drop boxes and the quality and reach of voter education efforts, noting that well placed locations (i.e. grocery stores) are only useful if voters are aware of them. Among interviewees, there was a recognition that, in every county, the reach of voter education efforts (by both elections offices and community stakeholders) needed to be greater, particularly for voters from historically underrepresented groups. As one community advocate noted, "When something is placed inside of a grocery store, for instance, it needs to be really clear where it is. And I'm not so sure that that was well done in all places. I think it was well done in some places, not in all places."

Applying the Study's Findings

i. Meaningful Community Engagement on the EAP

A key task for VCA election officials in the 2020 election cycle will be the meaningful engagement of community stakeholders in the development of their election administration plan. To achieve this, election officials and community groups interviewed suggest the following action steps:

- *Provide extensive staff time and resources towards creating the Election Administration Plan (EAP) and seeking community input on the EAP;*
- *Conduct early outreach toward community groups to ensure they are aware of the EAP's development and can contribute prior to the creation of a draft;*
- *Meet with community groups well before the Election Administration Plan is developed to ensure the initial plan more closely meets the community's needs before it is published and before the public comment period;*
- *Engage with a broad cross section and number of organizations representing different communities, demographics and types of organizations;*
- *Consider developing a VCA community coalition engagement plan that includes a clear timeline for community feedback, far in advance of statutory deadlines.*

ii. Important Factors in the Siting Process

Election officials and community advocates interviewed suggest that the following are important factors to consider in the vote center and drop box siting process:

- *County elections offices invest extensive time and resources in seeking meaningful community input on locating vote centers and ballot drop box sites;*
- *County elections offices begin working early in the siting process with community partners to secure locations;*
- *Election officials work with community members and organizations on recruitment of vote centers in the siting process;*
- *Community groups work together to form VCA collaborative coalitions to provide coordinated input on the siting process to county election officials;*
- *County elections offices secure facilities that are a sufficient size to meet the administrative and voter needs of the VCA, including the processing of conditional voter registration;*
- *County elections offices work with community members to address concerns about vote center placement in government buildings;*
- *County elections offices consider providing external drop boxes with extended availability to voters;*
- *Election officials and community groups collaboratively conduct wide-reaching outreach efforts to inform voters of vote center and drop box locations.*

Glossary

- **Conditional Voter Registration (CVR):** CVR allows eligible voters to register or update their voter registration information after the deadline. CVR ballots are counted once the county election official has verified the registration. CVR is also commonly referred to as Same Day Registration.

- **Provisional Ballot:** Any voter whose registration cannot be confirmed while voting in person has the right to vote using a provisional ballot. Provisional ballots are counted if election officials have verified that the voter is registered to vote in the county and has not already voted.

- **Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC):** VCA-adopting counties are required to establish a county LAAC to advise the county elections office as it relates to access to the electoral process for voters with limited English proficiency. Some non-VCA counties also have a LAAC.

- **Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC):** VCA-adopting counties are required to establish a county VAAC to advise the county elections office as it relates to access to the electoral process for voters with disabilities. Some non-VCA counties also have a VAAC.

- **Election Administration Plan (EAP):** VCA-adopting counties are required to establish an Election Administration Plan, which details how the county intends to meet all requirements of the VCA, including how the elections office will engage the public and conduct outreach. The county must open the EAP for public comment before it is finalized. See the California Secretary of State's VCA Quick Start Guide.

California Voter's Choice Act Requirements on Community Consultation

- VCA county officials are required to draft an election administration plan (EAP) in consultation with the public.

- These draft plans must be developed in consultation with a Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) and a Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC).

- These advisory committees must be established by October 1 prior to an election year, and they are required to hold their first meeting by April 1 of the election year.

- VCA county officials are encouraged to develop, recruit, launch, and utilize input from their LAAC and VAAC prior to the public consultation period for the Election Administration Plan (EAP).

- County officials must give public notice and accept public comment for at least 14 days prior to a public hearing on the draft EAP and, upon adopting the final plan, submit the EAP's sections on voter education and outreach to the California Secretary of State.

- The Secretary of State shall "approve, approve with modifications, or reject a voter education and outreach plan" within 14 days of receiving it.

- The county shall post the draft plan, amended plan, and adopted final plan for election administration on its web site, with language translations and in a format that is accessible for people with disabilities.

Notes

1. For more information on California Senate Bill 450, The Voter's Choice Act, see:
   http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB450
2. See above, Note 1.
3. See the California Secretary of State Report of Registration - February 10, 2019:
   https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/report-registration/ror-oddyear-2019/
4. See above, Note 1.

Available Resources for the VCA Implementation Process

California Secretary of State: VCA Quick Start Guide

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vca/2020/toolkit/sos/quick-start-guide-1.0.pdf

California Secretary of State: VCA Starter Kit

https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/vca/2020/toolkit/sos/vca-starter-kit-1.0.pdf

Voter's Choice California: Strategies for Voter Education and Outreach Under the Voter's Choice Act VCC

https://voterschoice.org/wp-content/uploads/VCA-Report-1.pdf

Voter's Choice California: Resources

https://voterschoice.org

The New Electorate Study: How Did the Voter's Choice Act Affect Turnout in 2018?

https://newelectorateproject.org

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USC Price School of Public Policy California Civic Engagement Project

USC Price School of Public Policy California Civic Engagement Project The California Civic Engagement Project was established at UC Davis in 2011 and moved to the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy in Sacramento in 2018. The CCEP conducts research to inform policy and on-the-ground efforts for a more engaged and representative democracy, improving the social and economic quality of life in communities. The CCEP is engaging in pioneering research to identify disparities in civic participation across place and population. Its research informs and empowers a wide range of policy and organizing efforts in California aimed at reducing disparities in state and regional patterns of well-being and opportunity. Key audiences include public officials, advocacy groups, political researchers and communities themselves. To learn about the CCEP's national advisory committee or review the extensive coverage of the CCEP's work in the national and California media, visit our website at http://ccep.usc.edu/.