



April 11, 2023

Honorable Nancy Skinner, Chair  
Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review  
Committee

Honorable Phil Ting, Chair  
Assembly Budget Committee

Honorable Anthony Portantino, Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee

Honorable Chris R. Holden, Chair  
Assembly Appropriations Committee

## **ELECTIONS MANDATES SURVEY – ELECTION YEAR 2022**

The Department of Finance respectfully submits the following Elections Mandates Survey pursuant to Chapter 25, Statutes of 2015 (SB 84).

An electronic copy of the survey can be found on the Department of Finance's website at [Other Reports | Department of Finance \(ca.gov\)](#).

If you have any questions or need additional information regarding this matter, please call Chris Hill, Principal Program Budget Analyst, at (916) 445-3274.

JOE STEPHENSHAW  
Director  
By:

ERIKA LI  
Chief Deputy Director

Attachment

cc: On following page

cc: Honorable Roger W. Niello, Vice Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review  
Committee  
Honorable Vince Fong, Vice Chair, Assembly Budget Committee  
Gabriel Petek, Legislative Analyst (3)  
Elisa Wynne, Staff Director, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee  
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Fiscal Office  
Christopher W. Woods, Senate President pro Tempore's Office (2)  
Christian Griffith, Chief Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee  
Joseph Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus, Office of Policy and  
Budget  
Paul Dress, Caucus Co-Chief of Staff, Assembly Republican Leader's Office  
Katja Townsend, Capitol Director, Assembly Republican Leader's Office  
Jason Sisney, Assembly Speaker's Office (2)  
Mark McKenzie, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Jay Dickenson, Chief Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

# ELECTIONS MANDATE SURVEY

ELECTION YEAR 2022

## BACKGROUND

As required by Chapter 25, Statutes of 2015 (SB 84), the California Department of Finance conducted an anonymous survey of county election officials pertaining to the 2022 statewide general and primary elections. The intent of the survey was to determine whether counties performed requirements set forth in the following state mandates despite the mandates' suspended status:

- (1) Absentee Ballot
- (2) Absentee Ballot - Tabulation by Precinct
- (3) Primary Election
- (4) Permanent Absentee Voters
- (5) Voter Identification Procedures
- (6) Voter Registration Procedures

## SURVEY DETAILS

The survey consisted of six questions regarding the individual mandates listed above, as well as an additional question pertaining to the source of funds used to perform the suspended mandates. An open comments textbox was also included at the end of the survey to allow respondents to add clarifying comments or to provide additional information related to the survey.

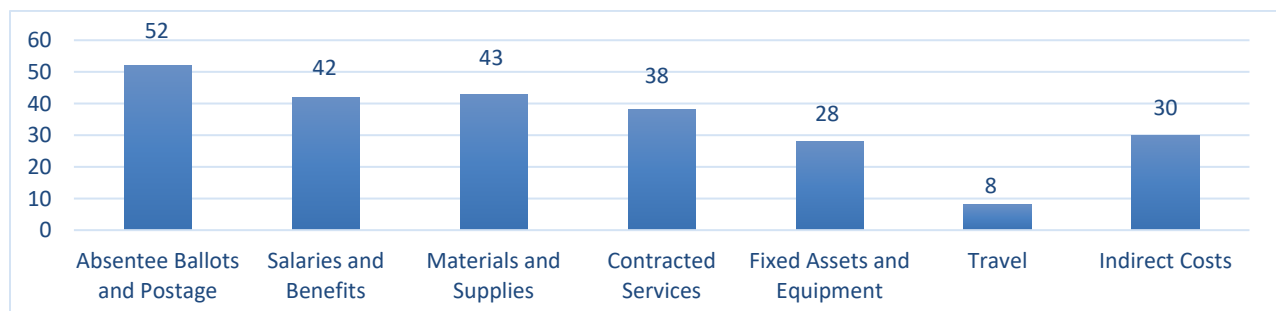
The survey was emailed to all 58 counties on February 27, 2023, and responses were due by March 10, 2023. Reminders to complete the survey were emailed on March 6, 2023 and March 9, 2023. Although Finance requested only one response per county, 67 responses were received. Because the responses were anonymous, Finance could not determine which counties submitted more than one response or which counties failed to respond. Additionally, 16 respondents answered some, but not all seven questions.

## RESULTS

### 1. ABSENTEE BALLOT MANDATE

All 67 respondents answered the question regarding costs incurred relating to the absentee ballot mandate. Respondents were to select all applicable costs. Fifty-two respondents indicated incurring costs associated with increased absentee ballot filings and postage, 43 respondents indicated incurring costs for materials and supplies, and 42 respondents indicated incurring costs for salaries and benefits. In addition, contracted services, fixed assets and equipment, and indirect costs were also significant incurred cost areas. Results are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1: Absentee Ballot Mandate-Costs Incurred**



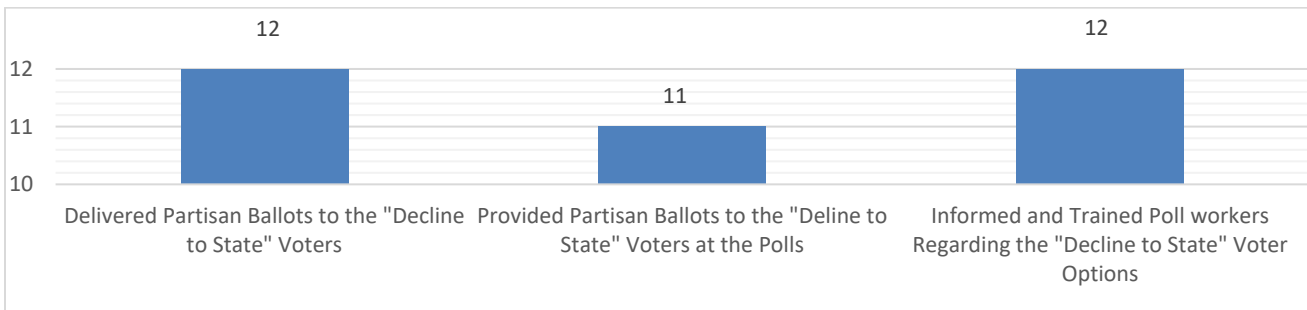
## 2. ABSENTEE BALLOT – TABULATION BY PRECINCT MANDATE

Sixty-two respondents indicated including the precinct of each voter on the election official's list of voters for those who received and voted by absentee ballot, while one respondent indicated they did not include the precinct. Four respondents did not answer this question.

## 3. PRIMARY ELECTION MANDATE

Sixty respondents answered the question regarding the activities performed relating to the primary election mandate. Respondents were to select all applicable activities performed. Twelve respondents indicated delivering partisan ballots to the "Decline to State" voters and informing and training poll workers regarding the "Decline to State" voter options, while 11 respondents indicated providing partisan ballots to the "Decline to State" voters at the polls. Forty-four respondents indicated none of the activities summarized in Table 2 were performed. According to several of the respondents' comments, this question was not applicable as the mandate only applies in Presidential election years. Seven respondents did not answer this question. Results are summarized in Table 2.

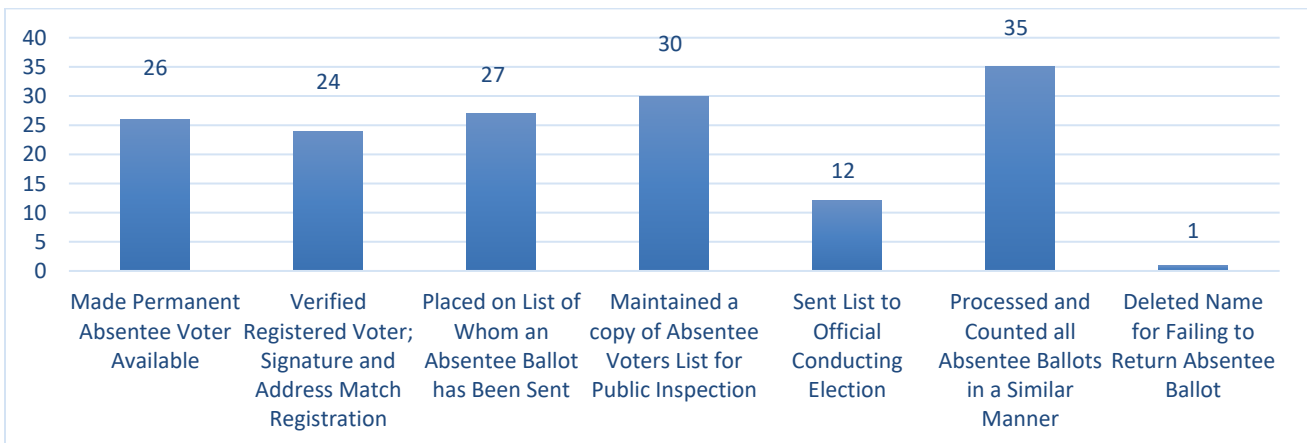
**Table 2: Primary Election Mandate-Activities Performed**



## 4. PERMANENT ABSENTEE VOTERS

Fifty-five respondents answered the question regarding the activities performed relating to the permanent absentee voters mandate. Respondents were to select all applicable activities performed. Thirty-five respondents indicated processing and counting permanent absentee ballots similar to other absentee voter ballots, while 20 respondents indicated they did not perform any of the mandate activities. According to several of the respondents' comments, this mandate question is no longer applicable due to legislation making California a vote-by-mail state beginning in January 2022. Twelve respondents did not answer this question. Results are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3: Permanent Absentee Voters-Activities Performed**



## 5. VOTER IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Fifty-five respondents answered the question regarding the activities performed relating to the voter identification procedures mandate. Respondents were to select all applicable activities performed. Fifty-one respondents indicated they performed voter identification procedures with 45 respondents indicating they rejected ballots that had signatures which did not match voters' affidavits of registration. Three respondents indicated they did not perform any of the mandate activities. Twelve respondents did not answer this question.

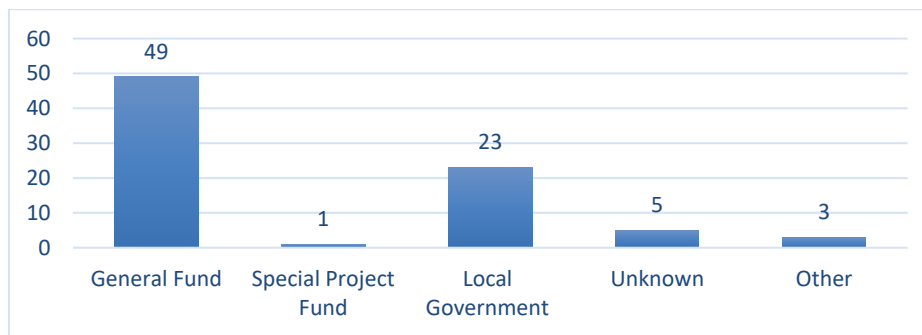
## 6. VOTER REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Fifty-five respondents indicated they processed voter registration affidavits. Twelve respondents did not answer this question.

## 7. FUNDING SOURCE USED TO PERFORM MANDATES

Fifty-three respondents answered the question regarding the funding source used to perform mandate activities. Respondents were to select all applicable funding sources. Forty-nine respondents indicated mandate activities were funded with their county general fund and 23 respondents indicated using funding from other local governments. Fourteen respondents did not answer this question. Results are summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4: Funding Sources**



## CONCLUSION

California counties continue to perform the requirements set forth in the six state mandates, despite the mandates' suspended status.