



# COUNTY OF YOLO

ELECTIONS OFFICE  
625 COURT STREET, ROOM B-05, WOODLAND CA 95695  
(P) 530.666.8133 (F) 530.666.8123

**JESSE SALINAS**  
REGISTRAR OF VOTERS



Dear Chair of the Board and Fellow Board Members,

In 2016, Senate Bill 450 created the Voter's Choice Act (VCA). In the VCA model, every voter receives a vote-by-mail ballot, and vote centers replace traditional polling locations. Under the traditional polling place model in the March 2020 Presidential Primary Election, Yolo County had 96 polling places open for one day. Due to COVID-19 pandemic-related regulations, Yolo County successfully replaced those traditional polling locations with Voter Assistance Centers for the November 2020 Presidential General Election and the September 2021 Gubernatorial Recall Election. Each Voter Assistance Center was open for four days.

The tremendous success of our VCA-like pilot during the last two elections demonstrated that fewer poll workers and pieces of equipment were needed to implement this model compared to the traditional polling place model, resulting in significant upfront cost savings of over \$1.2 million. In addition to experiencing a 30-year voter turnout high for the November 2020 Presidential General Election during a pandemic, we established new partnerships with schools, local grocery markets, and cities. This success makes the complete transition to the VCA model a logical next step. As Yolo County moves to the VCA model, my staff and I are committed to an inclusive process that protects the integrity of the vote and maintains a transparent, accurate, and fair election process.

Under the Voter's Choice Act, Yolo County will have a minimum of 13 Vote Centers, with three open for 11 days and ten open for four days, including weekends, holidays, and Election Day. An additional 15 secure Ballot Drop Boxes will be open under the VCA model that will be open for 30 days, including Election Day. Yolo County voters can vote by mail or at any of the 13 Vote Centers, which will provide a higher level of service than regular polling places, including ballot on-demand and voter registration.

This new way of holding elections has many benefits for voters, as demonstrated in the pandemic elections. The new election model will help the community by increasing access and convenience to voter participation opportunities, including accessibility to voters with disabilities. The transition to this model will also bring upfront cost savings as presented to the Board on October 26, 2021, with over \$1.2 million in equipment savings with 13 Vote Centers versus 96 assigned polling places. Although the ongoing annual cost of the VCA model will be higher, we project that it will take an estimated five fiscal years to catch up to the initial cost saving associated with this new model. Given the typical four-to-five-year cycle of computer equipment replacement in the county, the election office will likely be looking to purchase new equipment, which means the cost savings already realized once can begin anew with this model.

Furthermore, the office will continue to monitor the extra cost of being required to have three sites open for 11 days. Suppose data continues to show that opening Vote Centers for those additional days is not a successful strategy for voter turnout and fiscal responsibility, which in Yolo County brings the extra expenses to just over \$27,000. In that case, we will work with other Registrars across the state to help explore other more fiscally reasonable voting access opportunities in the future.



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The table below provides the election expenses of the last traditional election and the projected cost of this next election under the VCA model.

<b>Yolo County Election Expenses</b>	<b>2020 Presidential Primary Election (Actual)</b>	<b>2022 Direct Primary Election (Projected)</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Election Type	Traditional Poll Place Model	Full VCA Model	Fiscal Impact
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 617,322.00	\$ 561,500.00	(\$55,822.00)
Consumable Election Supplies	\$ 6,047.00	\$ 13,500.00	\$7,453.00
Communications	\$ 6,038.00	\$ 4,000.00	(\$2,038.00)
***Postage	\$ 53,351.00	\$ 188,250.00	\$134,899.00
Transportation, Election-Related	\$ 2,643.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$2,357.00
***Printing	\$ 221,752.00	\$ 337,000.00	\$115,248.00
Other	\$ 81,972.00	\$ 142,000.00	\$60,028.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 989,125.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,251,250.00</b>	<b>\$262,125.00</b>

\*\*\*Assembly Bill 37, passed into law in 2021, requires county election officials to send a vote-by-mail ballot to every active registered voter. Thus, the estimated difference in postage cost (\$134,899.00) and printing cost (\$115,248.00), totaling \$250,147.00, is mandated and would need to be appropriated regardless of the voting model.

We look forward to obtaining the support of the Board of Supervisors by accepting this full transition to the Voter's Choice Act Model in Yolo County.

Very truly yours,

/s/

Jesse Salinas  
Yolo County Registrar of Voters