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## AB-930 Elections and voting procedures. (2025-2026)

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### Assembly Bill No. 930

#### CHAPTER 282

An act to amend Sections 4103, 15620, 15621, 15622, 15624, 15625, 15626, 15627, 15628, 15630, 15631, and 15632 of, and to repeal and add Section 15633 of, the Elections Code, relating to elections.

[ Approved by Governor October 03, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 03, 2025. ]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 930, Ward. Elections and voting procedures.

(1) Existing law provides that ballots cast in all-mailed ballot elections, as specified, are considered timely cast if they are received by the voter's elections official by mail no later than 3 days after election day and additional, specified conditions are satisfied.

This bill would extend the above deadline for mailed ballots to be timely cast to 7 days after election day.

(2) Existing law establishes requirements for the conduct of recount elections, including with respect to the order in which precincts must be recounted, procedures for special recount boards, and notices issued by elections officials with respect to the commencement and results of a recount. If the votes subject to recount were cast or tabulated by a voting system, existing law requires that the voter requesting the recount, for each set of ballots cast or tabulated by a type of voting system, select whether the recount will be conducted manually or by means of the voting system used originally. Existing law allows only one method of recount to be used for all ballots cast or tabulated by the same type of voting system.

This bill would allow a voter requesting a recount to specify the order in which votes are recounted by the batch in which ballots were scanned or, in the case of a recount that involves more than one county, the order in which counties will conduct the recount within the jurisdiction. The bill would prohibit unauthorized access to the voting system in use by the elections office and impose other protections on access to a voter's personal identifying information. The bill would require the requester to reimburse the county for the cost of each member of a recount board. The bill would require that a member of a special recount board be eligible to register to vote in California if they are required to tally any ballots as part of their role on the board. The bill would set qualifications for an official appointed to supervise a special recount board. The bill would impose specified requirements for notices issued by elections officials. The bill would, if the recount is to be conducted manually and the voting system has the capability to display ballot images, require the voter requesting the recount to select whether the recount will be conducted by use of paper ballots or the official ballot images. If more than one voter requests a recount for the same office or measure and at least one request is for the recount to be conducted by use of paper ballots, the bill would require the county elections official to conduct only a manual recount of the paper ballots, the result of which would be controlling.

(3) This bill would incorporate additional changes to Section 15621 of the Elections Code proposed by Assembly Bill 1513 to be operative only if this bill and Assembly Bill 1513 are enacted and this bill is enacted last.

(4) By increasing the duties of local elections officials, the bill would create a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

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## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

### **SECTION 1.** Section 4103 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**4103.** (a) Notwithstanding Section 3020, ballots cast under this chapter shall be returned to the elections official from whom they were obtained no later than 8 p.m. on election day.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), any vote by mail ballot cast under this chapter shall be timely cast if it is received by the voter's elections official via the United States Postal Service or a bona fide private mail delivery company no later than seven days after election day and either of the following is satisfied:

(1) The ballot is postmarked on or before election day or is time stamped or date stamped by a bona fide private mail delivery company on or before election day, or it is otherwise indicated by the United States Postal Service or a bona fide private mail delivery company that the ballot was mailed on or before election day.

(2) If the ballot has no postmark, a postmark with no date, or an illegible postmark, and no other information is available from the United States Postal Service or the bona fide private mail delivery company to indicate the date on which the ballot was mailed, the vote by mail ballot identification envelope is date stamped by the elections official upon receipt of the vote by mail ballot from the United States Postal Service or a bona fide private mail delivery company, and is signed and dated pursuant to Section 3011 on or before election day.

(c) For purposes of this section, "bona fide private mail delivery company" means a courier service that is in the regular business of accepting a mail item, package, or parcel for the purpose of delivery to a person or entity whose address is specified on the item.

### **SEC. 2.** Section 15620 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15620.** (a) Following completion of the official canvass, any voter may, within five calendar days thereafter but not later than 5 p.m. on the fifth day, file with the elections official responsible for conducting an election in the county wherein the recount is sought a written request for a recount of the votes cast for candidates for any office, for slates of presidential electors, or for or against any measure, if the office, slate, or measure is not voted on statewide. The request shall specify on behalf of which candidate, slate of electors, or position on a measure (affirmative or negative) it is filed.

(b) If an election is conducted in more than one county, the request for the recount may be filed by any voter within five calendar days but not later than 5 p.m. on the fifth day, beginning on the 31st day after the election, with the elections official of, and the recount may be conducted within, any or all of the affected counties.

(c) For the purposes of this section, "completion of the official canvass" shall be presumed to be that time when the elections official signs the certified statement of the results of the election except that, in the case of a city election, if a city council canvasses the returns itself and does not order the elections official to conduct the canvass, "completion of the official canvass" shall be presumed to be that time when the governing body declares the persons elected or the measures approved or defeated.

### **SEC. 3.** Section 15621 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15621.** (a) Following completion of the official canvass any voter may, within five calendar days beginning on the 31st day after a statewide election, file with the Secretary of State a written request for a recount of the votes cast for candidates for any statewide office or for or against any measure voted on statewide. The request filed pursuant to this section shall specify in which county or counties the recount is sought and shall specify on behalf of which candidate, slate of electors, or position on a measure (affirmative or negative) it is filed.

(b) The Secretary of State shall forthwith send by registered mail one copy of the request to the elections official of each county in which a recount of the votes is sought.

(c) All the other provisions of this article apply to recounts conducted under this section.

**SEC. 3.5.** Section 15621 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15621.** (a) Following completion of the official canvass any voter may, within five calendar days beginning on the 31st day after a statewide election, file with the Secretary of State a written request for a recount of the votes cast for candidates for any statewide office or for or against any measure voted on statewide. The request filed pursuant to this section shall specify in which county or counties the recount is sought and shall specify on behalf of which candidate, slate of electors, or position on a measure (affirmative or negative) it is filed.

(b) The Secretary of State shall forthwith send by electronic delivery one copy of the request to the elections official of each county in which a recount of the votes is sought, and the elections official shall confirm receipt of the copy in writing by electronic delivery to the Secretary of State.

(c) All the other provisions of this article apply to recounts conducted under this section.

**SEC. 4.** Section 15622 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15622.** The request may specify the order in which votes are recounted by precinct or by the batch in which the ballots were scanned. In the case of a recount that includes more than one county, the request may specify the order that counties will conduct the recount within the jurisdiction.

**SEC. 5.** Section 15624 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15624.** The voter or the campaign committee, as defined in Section 82013 of the Government Code, represented by the voter filing the recount request, or the voter's designee, shall, before the recount is commenced and at the beginning of each day following, deposit with the elections official a sum as required by the elections official to cover the cost of the recount for that day. The money deposited shall be returned to the depositor if, upon completion of the recount, the candidate, slate of presidential electors, or the position on the measure (affirmative or negative) for which the declaration is filed is found to have received the plurality of votes cast which it had not received according to the official canvass or, in an election where there are two or more candidates, the recount results in the candidate for whom the recount was requested appearing on the ballot in a subsequent runoff election or general election who would not have so appeared in the absence of the recount. The depositor shall be entitled to the return of any money deposited in excess of the cost of the recount if the candidate, slate, or position on the measure has not received the plurality of the votes cast or, in an election where there are two or more candidates, the recount does not result in the candidate for whom the recount was requested appearing on the ballot in a subsequent runoff or general election as a result of the recount. Money not required to be refunded shall be deposited in the appropriate public treasury.

**SEC. 6.** Section 15625 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15625.** (a) The recount shall be conducted under the supervision of the elections official. The elections official shall convene special recount boards consisting of four individuals appointed by and at the discretion of the elections official. The requester shall reimburse the county for the cost of each member of a recount board.

(b) If an individual appointed to a special recount board is required to tally any ballots as part of their role on the special recount board, that individual shall be eligible to register to vote in this state pursuant to Section 2101.

(c) If the office of the elections official is the subject of the recount, the governing body shall appoint an officer, other than the elections official, to appoint and supervise the special recount boards. The appointee shall possess demonstrable experience necessary to conduct a machine or manual recount, including, but not limited to, years of experience as an elections official in the state, experience with current voting systems, and knowledge of the voting system's key functions. This section does not prevent the office of the elections official that is subject to the recount from taking necessary steps to prepare for the recount during the period in which an alternative qualified officer is sought.

**SEC. 7.** Section 15626 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15626.** (a) The recount shall be commenced not more than seven business days following the receipt by the elections official of the request or order for the recount under Section 15620, 15621, or 15645 and shall be continued daily, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays excepted, for not less than six hours each day until completed.

(b) If the office of the elections official is the subject of the recount, the recount shall commence not more than seven business days following the appointment of an officer in accordance with subdivision (b) of Section 15625.

(c) The recount shall not be commenced until the first day following notification of the individuals specified in Section 15628.

**SEC. 8.** Section 15627 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15627.** (a) If the votes subject to recount were cast or tabulated by a voting system, the voter requesting the recount shall, for each set of ballots cast or tabulated by a type of voting system, select whether the recount shall be conducted manually, or by means of the voting system used originally. Only one method of recount may be used for all ballots cast or tabulated by the same type of voting system.

(b) (1) If the recount is to be conducted manually and the voting system has the capability to display ballot images, the voter requesting the recount shall select whether the recount shall be conducted by use of paper ballots or the official ballot images.

(2) If more than one voter requests that a recount be conducted manually for the same office or measure, and at least one request is for the recount to be conducted by use of paper ballots, the county elections official of a county subject to multiple requests as described in this subdivision shall conduct only a manual recount of the paper ballots, the result of which shall be controlling.

**SEC. 9.** Section 15628 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15628.** Not less than one day prior to commencement of the recount, the elections official shall post a notice as to the date and place of the recount and shall notify the following persons of it in person, by email, or by any federally regulated overnight mail service:

(a) All candidates for any office the votes for which are to be recounted.

(b) Authorized representatives of presidential candidates to whom electors are pledged, if the votes to be recounted were cast for presidential electors.

(c) Proponents of any initiative or referendum or persons filing ballot arguments for or against any initiative, referendum, or measure placed on the ballot by the governing body the votes for which are to be recounted.

(d) The Secretary of State in the case of a recount of the votes cast for candidates for any state office, presidential electors, the House of Representatives of the United States, the Senate of the United States, or delegates to a national convention, or on any state measure.

**SEC. 10.** Section 15630 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15630.** (a) All ballots, whether voted or not, and any other relevant materials, as specified in regulations adopted by the Secretary of State, may be examined as part of any recount if the voter filing the declaration requesting the recount so requests in writing, specifying the relevant materials before the commencement of the recount.

(b) The examination of any ballot shall not include touching or handling the ballot without the express consent of the elections official or the elections officer supervising the special recount board. A ballot shall not be touched or handled during the examination unless the elections official or the elections officer supervising the special recount is present to observe the examination.

(c) Except as provided in this section, a ballot shall not be touched or handled by any person during the recount unless that person is the elections official, a person acting at the direction of the elections official, a member of the special recount board, or by order of the superior court.

(d) No part of the voting system in use by the elections office shall be accessed, touched, or handled by any person during the recount unless that person is the elections official or authorized by order of the superior court.

(e) A person shall not photograph or distribute a digital image of any material with personal identifying information of the voter.

**SEC. 11.** Section 15631 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15631.** On recount, ballots may be challenged for incompleteness, ambiguity, or other defects, in accordance with the following procedure:

(a) The person challenging the ballot shall state the reason for the challenge.

(b) The official counting the ballot shall count it as the official believes proper and then set it aside with a notation as to how it was counted.

(c) The elections official or appointee pursuant to Section 15625 shall, before the recount is completed, determine whether the challenge is to be allowed. The decision of the elections official is final.

**SEC. 12.** Section 15632 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

**15632.** In lieu of the returns as reported in the official canvass, upon completion of the recount showing that a different candidate was nominated or elected, that a different presidential slate of electors received a plurality of the votes, or that a measure was defeated instead of approved or approved instead of defeated, the result of the recount in each precinct affected shall, for all purposes thereafter, be the official returns of those precincts for the office, slates of presidential electors, or measure involved in the recount. If the office, slates of presidential electors, or measure are not voted on statewide, the results of any recount which is not completed by counting the votes in each and every precinct in the jurisdiction within which votes were cast on the candidates for the office, on the slates of electors, or on the measure in question shall be declared null and void. If the office, slates of presidential electors, or measure are voted on statewide, the results of any recount will be declared null and void where there is not recounted each vote cast statewide for the office, slates, or measure.

**SEC. 13.** Section 15633 of the Elections Code is repealed.

**SEC. 14.** Section 15633 is added to the Elections Code, to read:

**15633.** Not more than one day after the conclusion of the recount, the elections official shall post a copy of the results of any recount conducted pursuant to this chapter conspicuously in the office of the elections official or on the elections official's internet website for a period of 30 days following the final day of recount activities. The elections official shall notify the following persons of it in person, by email, or by any federally regulated overnight mail service:

(a) All candidates for any office the votes for which were recounted.

(b) Authorized representatives of presidential candidates to whom electors were pledged, if the votes recounted were cast for presidential electors.

(c) Proponents of any initiative or referendum or persons filing ballot arguments for or against any initiative, referendum, or measure placed on the ballot by the governing body the votes for which were recounted.

(d) The Secretary of State in the case of a recount of the votes cast for candidates for any state office, presidential electors, the House of Representatives of the United States, the Senate of the United States, or delegates to a national convention, or on any state measure.

**SEC. 15.** Section 3.5 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 15621 of the Elections Code proposed by both this bill and Assembly Bill 1513. That section of this bill shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2026, (2) each bill amends Section 15621 of the Elections Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after Assembly Bill 1513, in which case Section 3 of this bill shall not become operative.

**SEC. 16.** If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.