



VOTE SAFE IN 2022

Part #10 - What Do I Do IF..... (at the polls)?

Poll workers are individuals just like the rest of us. Most just want to do their best to conduct a fair, honest and lawful election.

But poll workers are limited by the quality of their training, and that varies significantly from county to county. In addition, the way elections are held is quickly changing: new systems, new technology, multiple voting days, new laws and regulations---it's hard to keep up!

Voters need to become educated so they can be the “wind beneath the wings” of poll workers who are doing a very difficult job.

Always be patient and polite, but firmly stand your ground when you know what is right. You have the right to VOTE IN PERSON.

Here are some WHAT IFs to memorize:

WHAT IF I am told (encouraged, arm-twisted, forced) at the polls to just turn in my mail-in ballot in the envelope or if poll workers are reluctant to let me vote in person?

1. As you know from Part 2 of this series, **turning in your ballot in an envelope is not “the same” as voting in person**, even though uninformed poll workers will tell you it is.
2. Thank them for their suggestion but decline, and **restate your intention to vote in person**.
3. **Download a Citizen Incident Statement** <https://www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm>. fill it out and send it immediately to EIPCa as directed.

WHAT IF I am told at the polls that I've already voted?

1. **Always take your mail-in ballot and return envelope with you.** Show it to the clerk, point out the name and address, even show your ID to prove the ballot is yours.
2. Tell the clerk there is some irregularity and ask the clerk to check again.
3. If the answer is the same, **ask the clerk to involve the assistance of the Lead Official**.
4. If the Lead Official cannot resolve the problem, politely say, **“Would you please call your Hotline?”** Once the elections office is on the line, the official or you can explain the situation.

5. **BE PATIENT AND POLITE**, but insist that you are in possession of proof that their “records” are incorrect and that **you expect to vote in person with a regular, non-provisional** ballot.
6. **If you have your ballot in hand**, do NOT accept a provisional ballot without first firmly standing your ground.
 - Make it clear that **if you are not allowed to vote with a regular ballot, you are being disenfranchised and would be forced to file a formal complaint.**
(Use those words.)
7. **Download a Citizen Incident Statement** <https://www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm>. fill it out and send it immediately to EIPCa as directed.

WHAT IF I am told at the polls that I’m not registered to vote?

1. **Always take your mail-in ballot and return envelope with you.** Show it to the clerk, point out the name and address, even show your ID to prove the ballot is yours and that you clearly ARE registered because you were mailed a ballot.
2. If the clerk cannot resolve the issue, ask the Lead Official be consulted.
3. If the Lead Official cannot resolve the problem, politely say, “**Would you please call your Hotline?**” Once the elections office is on the line, the official or you can explain the situation.
4. Poll workers may offer you an opportunity to “same-day register”, called a Conditional Voter Registration (CVR).
5. Since you know (and have proof) that you are registered, the only appropriate resolution is for them to allow you to vote with a regular ballot. Re-registering can create more chaos in the voter rolls.
6. **If you have your ballot in hand**, do NOT accept a CVR or provisional ballot without first firmly standing your ground.
 - Make it clear that **if you are not allowed to vote with a regular ballot, you are being disenfranchised and would be forced to file a formal complaint.**
(Use those words.)
7. **Download a Citizen Incident Statement** <https://www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm>. fill it out and send it immediately to EIPCa as directed.

WHAT IF I am provided a Sharpie to mark my ballot?

1. **Be prepared. Take a black ink pen with you**, and if offered a Sharpie, just use your black pen to mark your ballot. No need to make a fuss. Use it carefully and don’t press hard enough to wear a microscopic hole in the ballot.
2. **Download a Citizen Incident Statement** <https://www.eip-ca.com/incident.htm>, fill it out and send it immediately to EIPCa as directed.

Bottom Line:

- 1. Any issue that arises at the polling place should be addressed first by polite discussion with the Lead Official.**
- 2. If resolution is not reached, remain unruffled. Remember poll workers are doing their best, and deserve respect.**
- 3. Always SMILE and say, “WOULD YOU PLEASE CALL YOUR HOTLINE?”**
- 4. Politely stand your ground if you know you are right, and officials will eventually resolve your problem.**