Vote-by-mail envelope designs for voters, elections, and the USPS

Whitney Quesenbery
Maggie Ollove
Center for Civic Design
@civicdesign

civicdesign.org/projects/vote-by-mail/
What if ballot envelopes had a national brand?

- Instantly recognizable
- Easy to return accurately
- Designed for USPS automation and tracking
- Flexible for envelope systems
- Bilingual layouts
- Option for hidden or exposed signatures
A coherent design system

Outgoing (blue)

General election return (light green)

Special election return (dark purple)
Water District Election
December 15, 2018

General election UOCAVA return (light brown)

El Dorado County
Every envelope that holds a ballot has a color

- **Outgoing**
  - Blue
  - CMYK: c100 m60 y0 k23, r0 g92 b153
  - Hex: #055699

- **Return**
  - Standard: green
  - Alternate: purple

- **Provisional or Election Day Registration**
  - Provisional: pink
  - CVR: yellow

- **UOCAVA envelopes**
  - Standard: brown
  - Alternate: brown

Colors meet accessibility requirements with white text.

Ballots going to voters are blue.

Every other color goes to the election office. Return ballot envelopes are green (+ alternates).
Outgoing envelopes

Vote by mail
Official ballot

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Pat & Voter
3916 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68131

Franklin County Elections Department
4321 Franklin Avenue
Franklin, CA 95999-1234
Voter's Choice Act
You choose when, where, and how to vote

La Ley de Opción del Votante
Usted elige cuando, dónde y cómo votar

Contact Information
Información del contacto

Franklin County Elections
4321 Franklin Avenue
Franklin, CA 95999

Open Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm
Abrir de lunes a viernes, 8am a 5pm

www.frankincounty.gov/elections

elections@frankincounty.gov

Information in English: 111-232-3333
Información en español: 111-232-4444

Fax: 111-232-5555
TTY: 1-222-555-1222

How to return your ballot / Cómo devolver su voto

Drop Box
Drop off your ballot at a secure drop box — no postage required.
Entregue su boleta electoral en un buzón seguro — no se requiere franqueo.

Vote by Mail
Mail your ballot so it is postmarked by Election Day.
Votar por Correo
Enviar por correo su boleta electoral para que sea sellada el Día de Elecciones.

Vote Center
Vote at any vote center in the county.
Centro de Votación
Votar en cualquier centro de votación en el condado.

To find the Vote Center or Drop Box nearest you
www.yourcounty.gov/wherevote
Para encontrar el Centro de Votación o buzón más cercano a usted
www.yourcounty.gov/wherevote

Arapahoe County Elections
has a new website!

Visit www.arapahoevotes.com to:

- Find ballot drop-off locations
- Update your registration
- Track your mail ballot with

Scan this QR code to find your nearest ballot box!

Questions? 303-795-4511 TTY 711 elections@arapahogov.com

Arapahoe County Elections Division Matt Crane, Clerk and Recorder

@ArapahoeClerk ArapahoeVotes
Placer County and Glenn County, CA
2018 Primary
Works for overseas voters

Placer County 2018 Primary
... even if you have a long voter’s declaration

Voter’s declaration I declare that
• I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.
• I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.
• I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature on your voter registration card.
Voting twice in an election is a crime.

Voter, sign here in ink. Power of attorney is not acceptable.

Date / Fecha (MM/DD/YYYY)
Print name / Imprimir nombre
Print your voter registration address / Imprime tu dirección de registro de votante

If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:
Si usted no puede firmar, haga una marca y haga que un testigo firme abajo:

Did you...
☐ Sign the voter’s declaration in your own handwriting?
☐ Put your ballot in the envelope?
Revise si...
☐ Firmó la declaración del votante con su propia letra?
☐ ¿Colocó su boleta electoral en el sobre?

Declaración del votante Yo declaro que:
• Soy residente y votante en el condado, y la persona cuyo nombre aparece en este sobre.
• No he solicitado, ni solicitaré una boleta electoral de voto por correo de ninguna otra jurisdicción en esta elección.
• Declaro bajo pena de perjurio que esto es verdadero a mi leal saber y entender.
Debe firmar de puño y letra. Su firma debe coincidir con la firma en la tarjeta de inscripción del votante.
Votar dos veces en una elección es un crimen.

Franklin County
General Election
November 7, 2018

Pat Q. Voter
3916 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68131
Easy signature form- blank or pre-printed

Voter, sign here in ink. Power of attorney is not acceptable.

Did you...
☐ Sign the voter's declaration?
☐ Put your ballot in the envelope?

Date / Fecha (MM/DD/YYYY)

Print name / Imprimir nombre

Print your voter registration address / Imprime tu dirección de registro de votante

If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:
Witness, sign here / Testigo, firme aquí ___________________
Flexible for envelope shape
Flexible layout for flaps, windows, cutting systems
Designed for IMb tracking

Choose one-way tracking to the voter
Adjust the layout for two-way tracking back to the office.
Outgoing envelope – address showing from inner envelope
Layout with voter signature hidden – return envelope

Voter’s declaration I declare that
• I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose
• I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from
• I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of
You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the
signature on your voter registration card.
Voting twice in an election is a crime.

Valentina Voter
5678 MLK Avenue
Franklin, CA 99999-1234

Print your name
Address
City State Zip
If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:
Witness, sign here

Franklin County Elections
321 Franklin Avenue
Franklin, CA 99999-1234

Print your name
Address
City State Zip
If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:
Witness, sign here
Round trip tracking of vote-by-mail ballots
Designed for voter information

Space on the back of the outgoing envelope for return options and elections office contact.

Sample information for an instructional insert
A hidden advantage: the whole back for information
Model inserts

How to vote
General Election
Tuesday, November 7, 2018

With the Voter’s Choice Act, you choose when, where, and how to vote.

Drop Box
You can drop off your ballot at the 25 secure drop boxes located around the county – no postage required.

Vote by Mail
Mail your ballot so that it is postmarked by Election Day, November 7, 2018. Put 78C postage on the envelope.

Vote Center
You can go to any vote center in the county. 5 Vote Centers will be open for 11 days in a row and 20 will be open for 4 days before Election Day, including the weekend. At every Vote Center you can:
- Vote
- Drop off your ballot
- Vote with an accessible voting machine
- Get help and voting materials in 2 languages
- Register to vote or update your registration

Find the Vote Center or Drop Box nearest you

Mark, seal, and sign your ballot

1. Mark your ballot
   - Follow the directions on the ballot.
2. Seal your ballot
   - Check that you have the Return Envelope with your name on it.
   - Put your ballot into the envelope. Only 1 ballot in each envelope.
   - Seal the envelope.
3. Sign the envelope
   - Date and sign your name on the back of the envelope in ink.
   - Print your name and voter registration address if this information is not already printed on the envelope.

Made a mistake?
If you make a mistake you can get a replacement ballot.
Call 222-555-1212 before Election Day or go to any Vote Center in the County.

Track your ballot
Go to yourcounty.gov/ballot-track or scan the QR code to see the status of your ballot.

50 ways to return your ballot

It’s your choice!
You can return your ballot at any official drop box, vote center, by mail, or at the Elections Office. To find the Vote Center or Drop Box nearest you go to yourcounty.gov/wheretovote

Accessible voting
All Vote Centers have accessible voting machines. Voters with a disability can also use a remote accessible system to mark an electronic vote-by-mail ballot independently at home. The ballot must be printed and returned by mail, at a drop box, or at a Vote Center.
Call 222-555-1212 for assistance or for transportation to a Vote Center during early voting.

Language support
You can get a ballot and election materials in Spanish. El Condado de Franklin ofrece materiales de votación en español. Información en español: 111-222-4444

Need help? Get in touch!
- Your County Elections Office
  78 Washington Avenue
  High Bridge, NJ 99999
- www.yourcounty.gov/elections
- elections@yourcounty.gov
- 111-222-3333
- Fax: 111-222-6666
On the wish list: simpler, voter-centered language

I assert that I am a United States citizen and a qualified and registered elector of the city, township or village named below. I am voting as an absent voter in conformity with state election law. Unless otherwise indicated below, I personally marked the ballot enclosed in this envelope without exhibiting it to any other person. I further assert that this absent voter ballot is being returned to the clerk or an assistant of the clerk by me personally; by public postal service, express mail service, parcel post service, or other common carrier; by a member of my immediate family; or by a person residing in my household.

An absent voter who knowingly makes a false statement is guilty of a misdemeanor.

I assert that

- I am a United States citizen and a qualified and registered elector of the city, township or village named below.
- I am voting as an absent voter in conformity with state election law. Unless otherwise indicated below, I personally marked the ballot enclosed in this envelope without exhibiting it to any other person.
- I further assert that this absent voter ballot is being returned to the clerk or an assistant of the clerk by me personally; by public postal service, express mail service, parcel post service, or other common carrier; by a member of my immediate family; or by a person residing in my household.

An absent voter who knowingly makes a false statement is guilty of a misdemeanor.

I assert that

- I am a United States citizen
- I meet all of the requirements to vote
- I am registered to vote at the address listed below
- I marked my ballot and placed it in this envelope without showing it to anyone.
- I am returning my ballot to the clerk’s office by delivering it myself or a member of my immediate family or household, or sending it by public postal, express mail, or parcel post service, or other common carrier

I understand that knowingly making a false statement is a misdemeanor.

An example of simplification that maintains the meaning of a voter declaration.
What if *everyone* could vote at home?

Secure – not ‘internet voting’
Works with assistive technology
Gives voters with disabilities privacy
Remote accessible vote-by-mail

disabilityrightsca.org
vsap.lavote.net/
fivecedarsgroup.com/
It can be accessible and secure

Principles for remote ballot marking systems
1: Trusted and transparent
2: Consistent with other voting options
3: Access for all voters
4: Minimizes privacy and security risks
5: Supports accurate and secret ballot marking
6: Enables easy review, printing, and packing of the ballot
7: Supports election administration procedures
Principle 8: Tested for usability for all voters
Principle 9: Robust and reliable

civicdesign.org/projects/remote-ballot-marking/
Make it easier to be a voter

A good voting experience for everyone

Elections designed and tested with the people who will use it.

Accessibility designed into our election models
Vote-by-mail envelopes for California
Layouts and design guidelines
civicdesign.org/projects/vote-by-mail/

Civic icons and images
Visual resources for election materials
electiontools.org/tool/civic-icons-and-images/

Field Guides to Ensuring Voter Intent
Design guidelines based on solid research and best practices
civicdesign.org/fieldguides/
Thank you

Whitney Quesenbery
whitneyq@civicdesign.org

Maggie Ollove
maggie@civicdesign.org

civicdesign.org
@civicdesign