



For Immediate Release

September 12, 2023

Contact:

Hilary Crowley

hcrowley@sjgov.org / (209) 468-2997

San Joaquin County Approves Funding for State-of-the-Art Vote By Mail Drop Boxes

Stockton, CA – Today, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors approved \$194,516 for the purchase of 29 new permanent vote by mail ballot drop boxes (ballot drop boxes) to place throughout the County.

Currently, the County employs mobile drop boxes that can be relocated as needed. In the ongoing pursuit of heightened security, the Registrar of Voters (ROV) is procuring new advanced ballot drop boxes that weigh 1,200 lbs. and are constructed from steel. Once installed, they will be securely bolted at their designated locations. These drop boxes will feature fortified locking mechanisms, augmented with tamper seals. During non-election years, these boxes will be sealed for added security.

“San Joaquin County is committed to delivering the most secure methods for conducting elections,” said San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Chair, Robert Rickman. “These state-of-the-art ballot safeguarded drop boxes will be installed in locations throughout the County with 24-hour surveillance so that registered voters are able to conveniently and securely cast their vote no matter where they live in the County. There will also be a strict process for ballots to be retrieved and delivered to the ROV’s office to be counted.”

Based on the current number of registered voters within San Joaquin County, California Elections Code requires San Joaquin County to deploy 14 Ballot Drop Boxes. The ROV currently utilizes 25 ballot drop boxes to ensure voters in rural areas are not disenfranchised and instead enjoy the same opportunity to vote as those residing in more densely populated parts of the County.

Two additional ballot drop boxes will be purchased to serve as backups should an urgent replacement become necessary in the unlikely event of theft or vandalism. In addition, two smaller drop boxes will also be purchased to be used in special, small-scale elections. As a gesture of convenience and assurance for voters, the boxes will also display decals informing them of the option to vote in person as an alternative.

“We’ve heard loud and clear concerns by voters about drop box security and the ROV’s office has, and will continue, to take every reasonable precaution to ensure their protection,” said San Joaquin County Registrar of Voters, Olivia Hale. “Our office will continue to evaluate the distribution of its ballot drop boxes to ensure they are deployed in the most efficient and secure manner possible to further enfranchise all registered voters within San Joaquin County.”

In addition, the Board of Supervisors approved two items that will support the health and lives of mothers, fathers, children, and families in San Joaquin County.

- The Board approved \$1,646,262 for the California Perinatal Equity Initiative Program in San Joaquin County between July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2026. The money will be used to continue the current prevention and early intervention (PEI) program that is an innovative, holistic pregnancy and parenting support model for Black/ African American women in San Joaquin County and their partners. The program raises awareness of the health-related inequities facing Black/ African American women, leading to maternal and infant deaths.

- The Board also approved \$1,113,030 in allocated funds from the California Department of Public Health for the California Home Visiting Program. The money will be used to continue the evidence-based program and fund Family Support Specialists (FSS) who provide home visiting services to families, from time of conception up to the child's third birthday. FSS educate and assists parents by providing them with tools and resources needed to prevent child abuse and neglect by strengthening parent-child relationships.

###