BOULDER COUNTY ELECTIONS

Election Champions

Understanding the 2026 Election Landscape





What is an Election Champion?

You don’t need to be an election expert. As a trusted messenger in your community, you can help people:

- **Understand how elections work**
- **Evaluate election information critically**
- **Find accurate, reliable information**
- **Answer questions when they arise**

BOULDER COUNTY ELECTIONS

Election Calendar

November 2026 General Election

September

15	National Voter Registration Day
18	Ballots Mail to Military / Overseas voters
29-30	Logic and Accuracy Test - Pre-election testing of ballots / voting system

October

2	Stateside/local ballots begin to mail
19	Vote Centers begin to open
22	Ballot Processing Center Tours begin
26	Last day to register & be mailed a ballot & last recommended day to return a ballot via USPS
27	National Vote Early Day

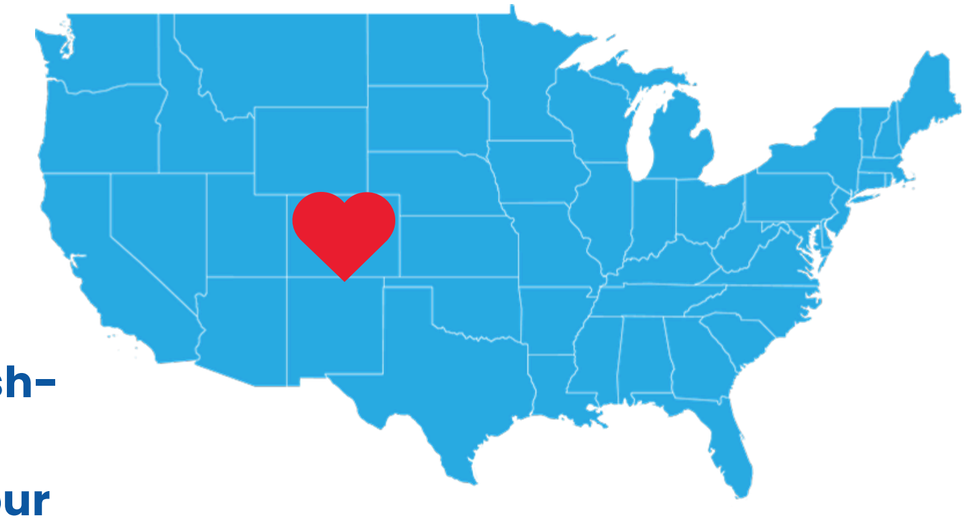
November

3	Election Day! Ballots must be received by 7pm
4-5	Ballot processing continues; Unofficial results posted daily at end of day
12	Deadline for UOCAVA & last day to cure a ballot envelope
13	Last set of unofficial results posted
17-19	Risk Limiting Audit (Weds & Thurs contingency & Round 2, if needed)
24	Canvass Board Meeting / Expected certification of results



What Makes Colorado Elections so Accessible?

We're an all-options state...



- **Voters get a ballot in the mail**
- **Voters can also choose to go vote in person and they can go to ANY Vote Center in their county***
- **Some counties, including Boulder, offer a Spanish-language ballot in person at Vote Centers (Additionally, Boulder now offers by mail - call our office to request by Oct. 26).**
- **Voters can register and vote on the same day, including on Election Day (ID Required)**

***Note:** You can vote a statewide-only ballot in any Colorado in-person voting location (ID required)

BOULDER COUNTY ELECTIONS

Colorado Election Model



- Same-day registration
- Paper ballots
- Security surveillance - ballot processing & drop boxes
- Chain of Custody requirements
- Bi-partisan oversight
- Signature verification
- Statewide Risk-Limiting Audit



Federal Election Activity Under the Trump Adminstration

Federal election activity can take several forms:

- **Support and resources**
- **Executive orders**
- **Agency actions**
- **Court decisions**

A headline doesn't necessarily tell you what a policy would do – or whether it's currently in effect.

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Early 2025–2026: A Shift in Federal Election Support

- **President Obama designated election infrastructure as critical infrastructure in January 2017. President Trump created the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) in November 2018, providing:**

  Cybersecurity • Threat information • Security assessments • Training and coordination

- **During his second administration, Trump significantly cut back funding for CISA.**

- **Trump also terminated the remaining commissioners of the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) in July 2026 (just months before the midterms).**

- **State and local officials continue to administer secure elections, but with less federal support.**

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March 2025: Executive Order on Federal Elections

President Trump issued an executive order directing federal agencies to take actions involving:

- **Citizenship documentation**
  Requiring documentary proof on national Voter Reg form
- **State voter-registration data**
  Providing to DOGE to find non-citizens
- **Mail-ballot deadlines**
  To be received by Election Day

Blocked by the courts.

Why?

The President lacks authority to unilaterally change election procedures.

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Who Has Authority?
The Elections Clause

ARTICLE 1, SECTION 4 of the U.S. Constitution:

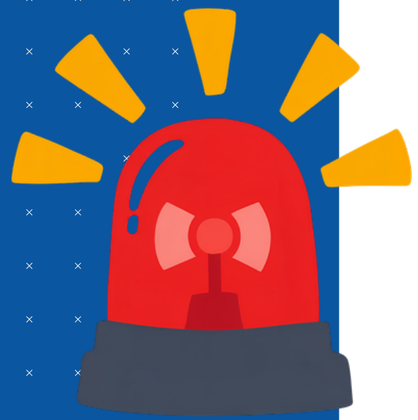
The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.

States – Prescribe election rules

Congress – May make or alter those rules

The President? – Has no granted authority

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Can the President Declare an “Election Emergency”?

NO

In August, conservative commentator Wayne Allyn Root suggested President Trump could declare a “national emergency for elections” and impose voting restrictions without Congress.

Trump responded:
“Stranger things have happened. We’ll leave it at that.”

The National Emergencies Act of 1976 established the framework for how presidents can declare national emergencies. It doesn’t give the president the power to change elections.

No president has canceled or postponed a federal election. We’ve held elections during:
The Civil War • Two World Wars • Pandemics • National Disasters

2025-2026: Federal Requests for Voter Data

- **The DOJ demanded that states turn over unredacted voter-registration lists, including:**
  Date of birth • Partial SSN • Driver license/state ID number (The “Holy Trinity” of identity theft)
- **Many states, including Colorado, refused, citing privacy concerns and challenging federal authority to request such information.**
- **Federal law authorizes only states to conduct list maintenance. DOJ can require states to have a list maintenance program but can’t tell them how to do it.**
- **The DOJ has sued 30 states + Washington, DC. All cases have been lost/dismissed in federal court.**
- **The DOJ has also lost many cases at the appellate level. Federal judges – including many appointed by Republicans – have universally rejected the DOJ’s claims.**
- **Despite these losses, appeals are ongoing.**

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What Happens to My Voter Information?

- **Some voter information is public**
  Name • Address • Birth year • Party affiliation • Voting history

  **** Voting history means whether you participated, not how you voted. ****

- **Some voter information is protected**
  SSN • DL/State ID # • Electronic Signature • Email Address • How you voted

Your voter record ≠ Your voted ballot

Public voter information ≠ All voter information ≠ How you voted

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Claim:
Noncitizens are voting

Reality

- **Documented cases of noncitizen voting exist.**
- **Available evidence indicates they're extremely rare.**
- **White House and DHS data even confirms this.**
- **68 million records analyzed found 0.04% possible noncitizens.**
- **States have the tools we need for list maintenance without federal interference.**

From 16,000 to 185 to Zero: Trump's Claims of Illegal Voting in Nevada Fizzle.

It was the Trump administration's latest stumble in its effort to find proof of widespread noncitizen voting, despite decades of evidence that it is extremely rare.

Less than 0.1% of registered voters in SCORE (Colorado's statewide voter registration system) are lacking a driver's license or SSN.

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February 2026: Save America Act

The House of Representatives passed legislation that would require:

- Documentary proof of citizenship to register
- Photo ID to vote
- ID requirements for mail voting
- Federal access to certain voter-registration information

This is a deeply flawed piece of legislation that:

- Imposes costly, unfunded mandates on local goverments
- Would have included criminal penalties for election administrators
- Erects unnecessary barriers for many voters
- Is based on a false premise – noncitizen voting has not been demonstrated at scale

Tools already exist to support citizenship verification:

- Automatic voter registration
- Affirmations
- SAVE

The SAVE Act was first passed by the House in April 2025, but did not move to the Senate.

It was later repackaged & reintroduced as the SAVE America Act.

The new bill passed the House but remains stalled in the Senate.

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Claim:
Mail ballots are fradulent

Former Colorado postal employee admits to stealing ballots ahead of 2024 election

By Tom Hesse · May. 5, 2025, 1:27 pm

Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump · Follow

There is NO WAY (ZERO!) that Mail-In Ballots will be anything less than substantially fraudulent. Mail boxes will be robbed, ballots will be forged & even illegally printed out & fraudulently signed. The Governor of California is sending Ballots to millions of people, anyone.....

6:17 AM · May 26, 2020

The New York Times

Trump, Who Calls Mail-in Voting 'Cheating,' Just Voted by Mail

President Trump has long fixated on mail-in voting to bolster his baseless claims of widespread voter fraud. But he recently used the method in a Florida special election.

Reality

Documented mail-voting fraud exists and has been caught and prosecuted.

Available evidence indicates it's extremely rare.

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2026: USPS Establishes New Rules for Mail Ballots

- **In response a second Executive Order in March 2026, USPS created new rules to improve processing and tracking of federal ballot mail:**
  - Envelope design
  - Unique barcodes
  - Federal ballot mail portal
  - Voter-data submission/verification requirements
- **Implementation Hurdles:**
  - System readiness
  - Election procedures
  - Testing
  - Training
  - Time
- **Blocked by the Supreme Court**
- **The Supreme Court upheld lower courts' block of the new USPS rules for the November General Election, but left the door open for future elections.**

The question isn't always, "Can we do it?"

Sometimes it's "Can we do it well in the time available?"

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July 16, 2026: Trump's Prime Time Speech

Trump dropped four "bombshells" about election fraud. What did the evidence show?

- **China had U.S. voter data**

  This was public voter data, known in 2020. No evidence that votes or voter records were changed.

- **Voting machines have vulnerabilities**

  Theoretical vulnerabilities exist. Paper ballots and audits mitigate the risk. No evidence cited that vulnerabilities changed votes.

- **Michigan voter registration scheme**

  Investigated by the FBI and dismissed. No improper votes resulted.

- **278,000 Potential noncitizens voting**

  Potential database matches, not confirmed noncitizen voters. No evidence of illegal voting. Jurisdictions are reviewing, and this claim is not holding up.

September 2026: Federal Voter-Eligibility Database

- DHS expanded the SAVE (the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements) program to link with data from the Social Security Administration and passport records
- SAVE, intended for establishing eligibility for public benefits, could now be used by states to cross-reference their voter registration lists to check for noncitizens
- Lower courts ruled against the modifications, citing breach of federal privacy laws and data inaccuracies that led to eligible voters being erroneously removed from voter rolls
- On September 25, the Supreme Court put that ruling on hold, allowing states to continue using SAVE while litigation continues

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ICE at Voting Locations



- **Know your rights**
  Federal law prohibits voter intimidation and restricts armed **federal** agents at places where elections are held.

- **Verify before you share**
  You may not know whether someone is ICE or local law enforcement.
  False reports can cause panic and discourage people from voting.

- **Report it**
  Alert our elections office and call 911 if you feel unsafe.

- **De-escalate and redirect (but don't engage with ICE directly)**
  De-escalation reduces the risk of mass crowds/potential harm.
  Redirect voters to other voting locations – multiple vote centers and drop boxes throughout the state.

- **Vote early if possible**
  Make a plan to vote early or by mail.

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What is the Real Impact?

Even when these actions are blocked or never take effect, they still have consequences.



- **Confusion**
  What are the rules? What's actually in effect?
- **Suppression and Doubt**
  Can I trust my election?
- **Disruption**
  Election officials must divert time and resources to respond.
- **Hopelessness**
  Does my vote even matter?
- **Fear**
  Election workers face threats, harassments, and concerns about their safety.
- **Laws actually change**
  State lawmakers change election law based on rhetoric.

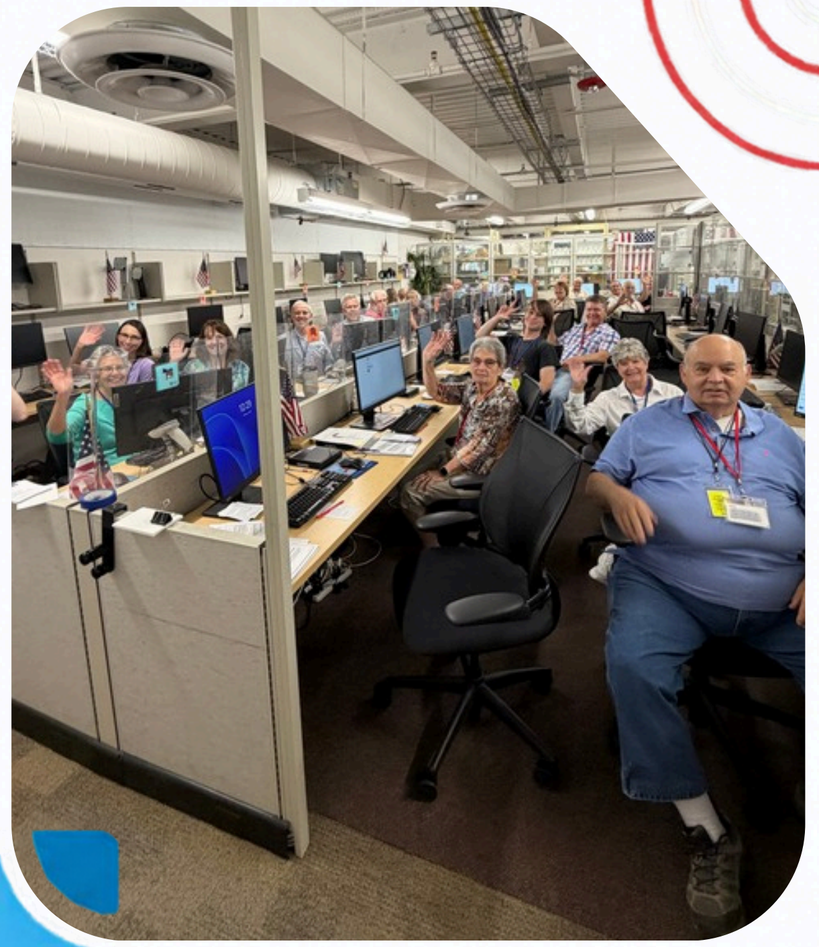
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The Good News:

It Isn’t Working.

Despite extraordinary pressure on elections:

- Election officials are still doing their jobs.
- Courts are still enforcing limits on government power.
- States are still exercising their constitutional authority.
- Voters are still voting.



The Bottom Line: Our elections are still working.

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How to Evaluate Election Claims and Proposals



Why

What problem is this intended to address? What does the evidence show?



Who

Who has authority?



What

What does it actually require?



When

Is there enough time to implement it well?



Where

Where does it stand right now?

Remember: Proposed ≠ Passed ≠ In effect

BOULDER COUNTY ELECTIONS

Common Practices in Election Administration Nationwide



Ongoing Training

Election officials and workers receive ongoing training and preparation.



Bipartisanship

Elections are run by your neighbors. Bipartisan teams provide checks and balances throughout the process.



Audits

States test and approve voting equipment before it is used. After elections, all 50 states conduct audits to verify the accuracy of the results.

BOULDER COUNTY ELECTIONS

Voting in Colorado?

We ♥ Early Voters

Make a plan. Vote early.

Did you get your mail ballot?

Ballots were mailed out on Friday, October 2. Check/update your mailing address at **GoVoteColorado.gov** and update by October 26 to get a new ballot mailed to you.

Live in a CU residence hall? See mailing address instructions on our website: **BoCo.org/StudentVoting**

Return your ballot early

October 26 is the last recommended day to mail your ballot. After that, please use a drop box or Vote Center. Voting early gives you time to address a signature issue or any other unexpected problems.

Add an email address to your voter registration and track your ballot

Update your voter record at **GoVoteColorado.gov**.

Voting in person

Vote Centers begin to open on October 19. Bring valid ID (CU students can use their Buff OneCard).

All ballots must be received by 7 p.m. on Election Day – November 3

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Empower Friends and Family in Other States to Vote

Election rules vary by state

You don't need to know every state's rules.
Help them find their own answers.

- **Check registration and deadlines**
  Is it current? Is their mailing address correct?
- **Know the options**
  Mail • Early in-person • Election Day
- **Check deadlines**
  What are the deadlines to register?
  To request or return a mail ballot?
- **Go to the source**
  Encourage them to check their local election office's website for key dates and public tours or events.

Helpful Websites

Vote.org

One-stop voter resource

Vote.gov

Official federal voter resource





Come See It For Yourself

Don’t just take our word for it

- Attend a Ballot Processing Center Tour
- Join an **Election Webinar**
- Observe the **post-election audit**

Learn more

BoCo.org/ElectionEvents

Want to get more involved? Become an election watcher!

- Get appointed by an authorized political party, candidate, or registered issue committee
- Training required for certain election activities
- Observe voting, ballot processing, tabulating, and more
- Find more information at **BoCo.org/ElectionWatcher**

BOULDER COUNTY ELECTIONS

Finding Trustworthy Election Information & Updates



Your local Elections Office

In Boulder County: **BoulderCountyVotes.gov**

Your Secretary of State's Office

In Colorado: **GoVoteColorado.gov**

Your state's County Clerk's Association

The Colorado County Clerk's Association (CCCA): **ClerkandRecorder.org**

Votebeat.org

Non-partisan local reporting on elections and voting.

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Your Role as an Election Champion



You don’t need to be an election expert.

	Pause	Evaluate election information critically.
	Check	What actually happened? What does the evidence show? What is the current status?
	Report	Report any election misinformation, intimidation, or voting concerns to our **Election Alert Hotline: ElectionAlert@bouldercounty.gov** or **720-729-7667**
	Explain	Share accurate information. Point people to reliable resources. Share what you’ve seen firsthand.

Together, we can restore clarity and reinforce confidence in our elections.

BOULDER COUNTY ELECTIONS

Thank You Very Much!

Follow Us!

@BoulderCountyElections

@BoulderCountyClerk

@BoulderCountyClerk

@BoCoClerk

A Few Reminders...

- **Track Your Ballot**
  - Include your email address in your voter registration
  - Visit GoVoteColorado.gov to update your record
  - Sign up for BallotTrax directly at BoCo.org/BallotTrax
- **Come to a Ballot Processing Center tour**
  - Find info and RSVP: BoCo.org/ElectionEvents

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