



MEMORANDUM

Date: September 18, 2020

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **Vote Safe Campaign to Reduce Possible Public and Poll Worker Exposure to COVID-19 on Election Day**

As Pima County and the Country continue to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, additional ways to slow the spread of the virus have been researched and adopted. One of these is through the promotion of ballot-by-mail voting. Working in coordination with the Pima County Recorder's Office, Pima County Communications has launched the Vote Safe campaign to allow voters to avoid polling places as a way to minimize their risk of being infected with the coronavirus or spreading it to others.

In accordance with Arizona Department of Health Services and Pima County Health Department recommendations, the Vote Safe effort is aimed at helping residents minimize their exposure to the virus by avoiding crowded public places as much as possible. Some of the busier polling places can see thousands of voters on Election Day and may require people to wait in line for periods of time.

Elections workers too, risk infection, as they can come into contact with hundreds or more people a day while working at polling places. While Pima County Elections staff have adopted health and safety protocols for polling places on Election Day to protect them and the public, the Vote Safe campaign seeks to add to the safety measures by increasing public awareness on the option of ballot by mail.

Ballot-by-Mail has been in practice in Arizona and Pima County since the 1990s and has proven to be an accurate, safe, and popular method for voters to cast their ballots. Statistics from the Pima County Recorder's Office and Elections Department show the recent Primary Election saw 226,552 of the 248,137 ballots cast were ballots by mail that were either returned through U.S. Postal Service delivery, dropped off at early voting sites, or hand delivered to polling places on Primary Day. Slightly more than 91 percent of ballots cast in the August Primary were early ballots, or ballots-by-mail. ([Official Canvass](#), Primary Election, August 4, 2020, pg. 46.)

The Honorable Chairman and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
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September 18, 2020
Page 2

Working to increase the number of Pima County voters who request ballots by mail in the General Election, the Vote Safe campaign has launched a page on the County's Website (pima.gov/VoteSafe) where voter information already present across various County and state elections sites is combined in one easily navigable location. This includes information on registering to vote, checking registration status, locating early voting locations, finding polling places, and requesting ballots by mail as well as tracking your ballot to make sure it was counted. The site also will include informational videos covering frequently asked elections and ballot questions, and public service announcement messages as these messages are produced.

The Vote Safe campaign also will include an extensive advertising component to include radio and television public service announcements; print and digital advertising in regional news publications; social media advertising; and outdoor advertising. Many components of the advertising campaign also will be in Spanish.

Vote Safe informational efforts also will include daily posts on Pima County social media pages to remind the public of important election related deadlines approaching, including registering to vote, requesting ballots by mail, and returning ballots by mail.

CHH/mp

c: The Honorable F. Ann Rodriguez, Pima County Recorder
Chris Roads, Chief Deputy Recorder/ Registrar of Voters
John Voorhees, Assistant County Administrator
Brad Nelson, Director Elections Department