



## ATTORNEY GENERAL BONTA ISSUES CONSUMER ALERT ON THE SPREAD OF ELECTION MISINFORMATION

**OAKLAND** — California Attorney General Rob Bonta today warned Californians to beware of social media posts and other communications that spread election misinformation.

Millions of Californians turn to social media, artificial intelligence, and other internet sources for news and information about upcoming elections. The 2020 general election saw a dramatic increase in the spread of false and misleading claims on social media platforms about where, when, and how to vote, and this trend is expected to continue as the November 2024 general election approaches. Election misinformation is also disseminated and amplified through artificial intelligence tools and other technology, including mass mailings, automated calls, text messages, and television, radio, and internet broadcasts. For example, in January 2024, thousands of registered voters in New Hampshire received scam election robocall voice messages that impersonated the voice of the president, discouraging them from participating in the New Hampshire primary.

“Voting is one of democracy’s most cherished rights, and that right is enshrined in our country’s Constitution,” **said Attorney General Bonta**. “Deceiving, dissuading, or intimidating voters from voting in elections doesn’t just threaten that right — it is illegal. I urge Californians to be on guard against election misinformation and to check their sources before inadvertently re-posting or spreading misinformation.”

California state law prohibits interference with voting rights. The Elections Code makes it a crime to intentionally mislead voters about their eligibility to vote, or about where and when to vote. It also prohibits using coercion or intimidation to get a person to vote or refrain from voting, or to vote or refrain from voting for any particular person or measure. Similarly, it is illegal to agree to vote in a certain way, or to induce others to vote in a certain way, in exchange for something of value. The Elections Code also prohibits, with certain exceptions, the distribution within 60 days of an election of any materially deceptive audio or visual media of a candidate that is intended to injure the candidate’s reputation or to deceive voters into voting for or against that candidate. A candidate whose rights are violated may bring a lawsuit for damages and to enjoin violations of this law.

For the November 2024 general election, all individuals registered to vote will receive a vote-by-mail ballot. Ballots will begin to be mailed out on October 7, 2024. The last day to register to vote in California is October 21, 2024. Early in-person voting at voting centers begins on October 26, 2024.

If members of the public see a post that is false or misleading about where, when or how to vote, they are encouraged to report it to the Secretary of State’s Office by emailing [VoteSure@sos.ca.gov](mailto:VoteSure@sos.ca.gov). Information about voting eligibility requirements is available on the Secretary of State’s website [here](#). Information about a voter’s polling place, nearby vote centers, and authorized ballot drop-off locations is available at the Secretary of State’s Find Your Polling Place webpage [here](#) and from county election offices. For a list of county elections offices and their contact information, visit the Secretary of State’s County Elections Offices webpage [here](#).

On October 4, 2024, the Attorney General issued an [informational bulletin](#) to law enforcement agencies discussing many of the laws prohibiting interference with voting rights and highlighting



sources of information from the California Secretary of State and local elections officials regarding the eligibility requirements to vote and the time and place of voting.

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