**News Release**

Santa Cruz County Clerk/Elections

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**“Voting Matters” – Zoom call with Santa Cruz County Clerk**

Our world has changed drastically since the last election, and how we will conduct the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election is also changing. To provide a public forum for feedback, questions, and discussion, Santa Cruz County Clerk Gail Pellerin will hold a “Voting Matters” Zoom session at 6pm, Thursday, August 6.

To join “Voting Matters” on Zoom, go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83963125578?pwd=OHZnTGIyZWJQaCt0cmZidWpJWmRldz09>

To participate via phone, call 1-669-900-9128. The meeting ID is 839 6312 5578 and the passcode is 679197.

“Our lives have become very complicated,” County Clerk Gail Pellerin said. “Registering to vote and voting should not be complicated. We want everyone to have a positive voting experience. It’s important that questions are answered, ideas are shared, and concerns are addressed.”

Pellerin decided to create the “Voting Matters” Zoom event because her office has not been able to do their typical voter outreach events in person due to COVID-19. Also, because of the pandemic, Governor Newsom has issued an executive order requiring elections officials in California to mail ballots to all active registered voters by October 5.

In Santa Cruz County, of the 166,000 registered voters, 120,000 have already signed up to receive their ballot in the mail. There will be 15 ballot drop boxes installed throughout the county for voters to easily return their voted ballots. Voters can also mail their ballots as long as they are postmarked on or before Election Day. In addition, voters may drop their ballot off in person.

In November, instead of the county’s traditional polling places, we will have 17 voting locations where voters can obtain a ballot, turn in a ballot, register and vote on the same day, or vote an accessible or Spanish ballot on the tablet. Any voter can go to any location.

Consolidating voting locations improves the county’s ability to protect health and safety, including implementing physical distancing and wearing masks, disinfecting surfaces and voting equipment, providing hand sanitizer and more, including screening poll workers for symptoms. Voters will be asked to follow these guidelines to protect themselves and to protect others.

The “Voting Matters” Zoom event is open to the public and nonpartisan. Anyone interjecting partisan politics will be muted.

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