



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

HB 26-1113: MODIFICATIONS TO ELECTIONS

Prime Sponsors:

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Sen. Wallace; Weissman

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Fiscal note status: This revised fiscal note reflects the reengrossed bill, as amended by the Senate State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee.

Summary Information

Overview. The bill makes several modifications to election laws.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas on an ongoing basis starting in FY 2026-27:

- State Expenditures
- State Revenue
- Local Government

Appropriations. For the FY 2026-27, the bill requires an appropriation of \$10,000 to the Department of State.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts

Type of Impact	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
State Revenue (Cash Funds)	\$0	up to \$715,300
State Expenditures (Cash Funds)	\$10,000	\$715,300
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	up to \$715,300
Change in State FTE	0.0 FTE	0.0 FTE

Summary of Legislation

The bill makes several modifications to the election laws in Colorado. Among its many changes, the bill:

- sets additional communication standards for institutes of higher education concerning ballot drop off locations and voting resources;
- reduces the number of days voting service and polling centers (VSPC) need to open in certain university campuses;
- requires all VSPCs that experience a shortage of election supplies, such as ballots, to remain open, and may remain open after 7:00 pm;
- requires county clerks to report to the Secretary of State (SOS) about excess wait times and delays at VSPCs on election day, and requires the Secretary of State to hold a hearing based on this report;
- adds a timeline by which county clerks must adopt modifications to the SOS written plan for mail ballot elections, and for the Secretary of State to review that plan;
- removes the requirement that election judges be sent certificates of acceptance by mail prior to their appoint, and provides additional flexibility on the method for election judges to accept an appointment;
- increases the number of days before an election that ballots must be mailed from 22 days before the election to 29 days before the election;
- increases the number of days before an election that drop boxes may accept ballots from 15 days before the election to 22 days before the election;
- changes the requirements for voting in county jails and detention centers to be based on the number of beds in the facility;
- allows preregistered voters who will be eighteen six months before the next election to update their voter information;
- integrates geographic information to the statewide voter registration system;
- allows the governor to declare a disaster emergency, and create an election emergency advisory group, if the state is unable to comply with the Uniform Election Code;
- repeals the requirement that voluntary ballot markings be redacted;
- clarifies that a person cannot be a candidate for more than one office to be voted on in the same election;
- modifies and clarifies various election-related criminal offenses, including inference with elections, voter intimidation, unlawfully carrying a firearm, among others; and
- adds additional provisions regarding the court's jurisdiction in elections cases, including continuing jurisdiction over voter intimidation cases through the date of the relevant election, requiring expedited hearings and allowing emergency relief, and allowing complaints against unknown individuals and their employers.

Comparable Crime Analysis

Legislative Council Staff is required to include certain analysis in the fiscal note for any bill that creates a new crime, or that either reclassifies or creates a new factual basis for an existing crime. This section identifies comparable crimes and discusses assumptions on future conviction rates resulting from the bill.

Prior Conviction Data and Assumptions

This bill makes various clarifications and changes to election-related offenses in sections 61 through 66 of the bill, which are misdemeanor offenses. From FY 2022-23 to FY 2024-25, zero offenders have been sentenced and convicted for these offenses; therefore, the fiscal note assumes that there will continue to be minimal or no additional criminal case filings or convictions from the changes to these offenses under the bill. Because the bill is not expected to have a tangible impact on criminal justice related revenue or expenditures at the state or local levels, these potential impacts are not discussed further in this fiscal note. Visit the [Fiscal Notes website](#) for more information about criminal justice costs in fiscal notes.

State Revenue

The bill is estimated to increase fee revenue to the Department of State by up to \$715,300 in FY 2027-28 only. It may also affect court filing fees.

Fee Impact on Businesses

Colorado law requires legislative service agency review of measures which create or increase any fee collected by a state agency. Under current law, the Department of State (DOS) is authorized to adjust fees so that the revenue generated approximates its direct and indirect costs. The DOS is primarily funded through business filing fees. To cover the costs described in the State Expenditures section below, fees will likely need to be raised in FY 2027-28 by up to \$715,300 to cover all or some of the costs of this bill. The fees affected, the timing of any increase, and the actual amount of fee charges will be set administratively by the DOS based on cash fund balance and total program costs.

Court Filing Fees

To the extent additional civil cases are brought concerning elections, filing fees to the trial courts in the Judicial Department may increase. Any impact is assumed to be minimal.

State Expenditures

The bill is expected to increase one-time state expenditures in the Department of State by \$10,000 in the FY 2026-27 and about \$715,000 in FY2027-28. There is also minimal workload in the Department of Higher Education and the Judicial Department. These costs are described below.

Table 2
State Expenditures
Department of State

Cost Component	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
Computer Programming	\$10,000	\$712,800
Geocoding Updates	\$0	\$2,500
Total Costs	\$10,000	\$715,300
Total FTE	0.0 FTE	0.0 FTE

Department of State

Computer Programming

The DOS must make changes to allow preregistered voters to edit their voting record. This is estimated as a one-time cost of 80 hours at a rate of \$125 an hour. In addition, DOS must update the statewide voter registration system starting in FY 2027-28 to allow for geographical information and geocoding addresses for all voters. This will require a one-time cost about \$713,000 for 5,280 hours of programming at a rate of \$135 an hour.

Geocoding Updates

DOS will need to use a cloud service to geocode all addresses into the voter registration system. This will be an initial cost of \$2,500 starting in FY 2027-28 for inputting the current voters, and an ongoing cost to update the records.

Department of High Education

Institutions of higher education already provide versions of the communication requirements of the bill. Any changes to current practices are minimal and absorbable within the current workload of the schools.

Judicial Department

To the extent additional election-related litigation is brought under the bill, additional cases are heard in an expedited manner, or the court have jurisdiction over a case for longer, workload will increase for the trial courts in the Judicial Branch. Given that election-related issues and cases are already highly litigated and often heard in an expedited manner currently, it is assumed that any impact can be managed within existing resources and appropriations.

TABOR Refunds

The bill is expected to increase the amount of state revenue required to be refunded to taxpayers by up to \$715,000 in FY 2027-28. This estimate assumes the March 2026 LCS revenue forecast. A forecast of state revenue subject to TABOR is not available beyond FY 2027-28. Because TABOR refunds are paid from the General Fund, increased cash fund revenue will reduce the amount of General Fund available to spend or save in FY 2027-28.

Local Government

The bill results in both increased costs and savings for counties. Clerks in certain counties will be able to decrease the number of VSPCs in universities, as well as decrease the total number of hours certain jails operate a VSPC. Certain counties will also save costs they pay to redact ballot markings, and will have savings from no longer needing to mail certificates to election judges.

Costs will increase from opening and staffing ballot boxes earlier. There may also be increased costs for additional staffing hours for VSPCs that runs low on supplies, and increased workload from filing reports and holding hearings for any voting delays.

The exact costs and savings vary by each county and have not been estimated in this fiscal note.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

State Appropriations

For FY 2026-27, the bill requires an appropriation of \$10,000 from the Department of State Cash Fund to the Department of State.

State and Local Government Contacts

Secretary of State

Counties

Department of Higher Education

Judicial

County Clerks