

# VOTING 101



## What are the eligibility requirements to vote?

You can register and vote if you are:

- a United States citizen and a resident of California,
- 18 years old or older on Election Day,
- not currently in state or federal prison for the conviction of a felony, and
- not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court.

## How do I register to vote?

You can [register to vote online](#) or at the DMV, public assistance offices, your local post office, public library, or your [local county elections office](#) if you want to vote in an election that is more than 14 days away.

[Same-day voter registration](#) (also called conditional voter registration) is available if the election is within 14 days. Eligible individuals can register or re-register and vote at their county elections office, polling place, or vote center. These ballots are processed and counted once the county elections office has verified the voter's eligibility.



## How do I get election materials in my preferred language?

County elections offices provide election materials in various languages, in addition to English. Please [contact your county elections office](#) directly to ask whether your county's voting-related materials are available in your preferred language.

## When is the last day to register to vote?

In California, you can now register to vote or change your registration at any time, including on Election Day.

- If it is at least 15 days before the next local, state, or federal election, you can [submit your registration online](#) or by mailing in an application. You can register to vote at the DMV or public assistance offices, or you can pick up a paper voter registration application at post offices, libraries, or your local elections office.
- If it is 14 days or less before the next election, you can register or re-register to [vote at your local elections office](#), polling place, or vote center.

## When is Election Day?

Be sure to check your local elections office [website](#) for additional special or local elections in your area.

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## How do I vote?

In California, you can vote in two ways:

### 1. **Vote-By-Mail ballot.**

You can return a completed vote-by-mail ballot by:

- Mailing it to your local elections office — mail ballots must be postmarked no later than Election Day. Remember to sign your vote-by-mail envelope. There is **no postage required** to return a California vote-by-mail ballot but it must be postmarked on or before Election Day.
- Dropping it off at a ballot drop box, local elections office, polling place, or vote center.

### 2. **Voting in-person at your local polling place, vote center, or county elections office.**

Your polling place or nearest vote center will be listed on the sample ballot you receive in the mail once you are registered to vote as well as on your county elections office’s website. You can vote in person at one of these places:

- **Polling Place** — a designated place to vote in your neighborhood that is open on Election Day from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- **Vote Center** — [29 counties in California](#) have opted to adopt vote centers. Vote centers will be open at least 3 days before and on Election Day. You can vote early in person, drop off your ballot, get a replacement ballot, vote using an accessible machine, get assistance in multiple languages, and register to vote at *any* vote center in the county. All vote centers are open on Election Day from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- **County Election Office** — each [county has an office for elections](#) where you can vote early or on Election Day from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

You can also [check here online](#) or call your [county elections office](#) to find out where you vote.

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## If I am in line when the polls close can I still vote?

**Yes!** If you are in line at a voting location by 8 p.m. on Election Day, you have the right to vote.

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## How do I find my voting location?

Once you are registered to vote, you can vote at your local elections office, local polling place, or any vote center in your county on Election Day from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Vote centers will be open at least 3 days before and on Election Day.

Your local polling place or nearest vote center could change between elections. Updated information will be listed on the sample ballot you receive in the mail before the next election as well as your county elections office website. You can [look-up your polling place or find vote center information online](#).

You can call your [county elections office](#) to find out where you vote.

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## Where can I find more information about candidates and issues?

[Vote411 California](#) and [Ballotpedia](#) are comprehensive, nonpartisan online guides to elections covering federal, state, and local races in the state of California. Users can see their personalized sample ballot by entering their address and can get information on candidates, measures, and who supports them.

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## Where can I find more information about voting?

Call the California Secretary of State 1-800-345-VOTE (English), 1-800-232-VOTA (Spanish), or visit their [election website](#). Visit your [local county elections office’s website](#) for local information.

Visit [LetMeVote.org](#) to learn more about voting rights for people impacted by the criminal legal system.