

## **PROBLEMS AT THE POLLS**

### **What if I'm not on the voter list?**

First, ask a poll worker to check the list again and to confirm that you're at the right polling place for your address.

If your name is not on the list, ask for a provisional ballot. Just say, "I believe I am registered to vote in this county and I would like to vote using a provisional ballot." Your vote will be counted after elections officials have confirmed that you are registered to vote and that you did not vote elsewhere in that election.

### **What if I go to the wrong polling place?**

Try to go to the right polling place. You can call your county elections office to find your polling place. You can find the phone number and more information on polling places online at:

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/find-your-polling-place/>.

If you can't figure out where you're registered, go to the polling place nearest to you home. If you are not on the list, ask for a provisional ballot.

### **What if someone challenges my right to vote?**

This is extremely rare. Your right to vote may only be challenged by a member of the precinct board and only for the following reasons:

- (1) you are not the person whose name appears on the index;
- (2) you are not a resident of the precinct;
- (3) you are not a citizen;
- (4) you have already voted; or
- (5) you are on parole or under state or county supervision for a low-level felony as defined by the Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011. *Cal. Elec. Code § 14240(a)*.

If challenged for residency or citizenship reasons, a precinct officer will ask you questions about your residence. The officer may also ask other people present to be sworn and answer questions if it is believed they know something. *Cal. Elec. Code §14244 & 14247*.

If challenged for identity or already voting, a precinct officer will administer an oath. If you take the oath, you will be allowed to vote. *Cal. Elec. Code § 14243, 14245 – 46*.

If you or the people present refuse to take the oath, be sworn, or answer questions about your residence or citizenship, then you will not be allowed to vote. *Cal. Elec. Code § 14249*.

If you believe your right to vote is being unfairly challenged, call (866) OUR-VOTE (687-8683).

### **What if someone tries to intimidate or harass me?**

Tell a poll worker right away. If the poll worker is the problem, tell a poll observer, call your county elections office, or call one of the phone numbers listed on the back of this card.

### **What if I am in line when the polls close?**

You have the right to vote as long as you are in line by 8 p.m. Don't leave without voting.

If you believe you have been denied the right to vote or you are aware of election misconduct, call one of the hotline numbers below or contact the ACLU.

#### **Election Protection Hotline:**

866-OUR-VOTE (687-8683)

#### **Disability Rights CA Voter Hotline:**

(800) 776-5764

#### **California Secretary of State Voter Information Hotlines:**

English: (800) 345-VOTE (8683)

Spanish: (800) 232-VOTA (8682)

Chinese: (800) 339-2857

Hindi: (888) 345-2692

Japanese: (800) 339-2865

Khmer: (888) 345-4917

Korean: (866) 575-1558

Tagalog / Filipino: (800) 339-2957

Thai: (855) 345-3933

Vietnamese: (800) 339-8163

#### **U.S. Department of Justice:**

(800) 253-3931

#### **ACLU of California Voter Protection:**

[www.aclusandiego.org/voting](http://www.aclusandiego.org/voting)  
[voting@acluca.org](mailto:voting@acluca.org)

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is a nationwide, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 500,000 members dedicated to defending the principles of liberty and equality embodied in the Constitution and our nation's civil rights laws. The ACLU doesn't endorse or oppose any candidate or party, but we believe that no civil right is more important in our democracy than the right to vote.



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## **CALIFORNIA VOTER EMPOWERMENT CARD**

## **2016 ELECTIONS**

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

**In California, the deadline to register to vote for any election is 15 days before Election Day.**

## **WHO CAN VOTE**

### **Can I vote in California?**

You can register to vote if you are:

- (1) a U.S. citizen;
- (2) a resident of California; and
- (3) will be 18 years or older on Election Day.

You cannot register if you have been declared mentally incompetent by a court or are currently serving a sentence for some felony convictions (see below).

### **What if I've been convicted of a crime?**

A [misdemeanor conviction does not affect your right to vote.](#)

And, if you are on probation, mandatory supervision, or post-release community supervision, you can vote!

The [only time](#) you lose your right to vote is if you are [currently serving a state prison sentence](#) or [currently on parole](#) for a felony conviction. Your right to vote is automatically reinstated when you have completed any of the above sentences, but you must register or re-register to vote at that time

### **What if I'm a student?**

You can register to vote at your current school address. You also have the option of using your permanent residence, such as your parent's address, for voter registration. However, you must vote at the polling site for the address where you register to vote or request an absentee ballot if you cannot get to that polling site on Election Day.

### **What if I'm homeless?**

You don't need a home address to register. Just identify two cross streets where you usually stay on the map provided at the bottom of the voter registration form.

## **REGISTRATION**

### **How do I register?**

You can:

- (1) register to vote online at [www.registertovote.ca.gov](http://www.registertovote.ca.gov);
- (2) get a voter registration form at the DMV, post office, or your county election office; or
- (3) call (800) 345-VOTE (8683) to request a registration form be mailed to you.

### **What's the registration deadline?**

The voter registration deadline is [15 days before the election.](#)

### **How do I know if I'm registered?**

You can check whether you are registered to vote by calling your county election office or, in some counties, on the county website. Find information for your county online at: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/registration-status/>.

### **What if I've moved or changed my name?**

You have to re-register every time you move or change your name. However, if you have moved from your home into a temporary residence, then you can continue to use your prior permanent residence, but you need to vote at the polling site for that address or request an absentee ballot.

If you moved to California from another state and didn't re-register, you won't be able to vote in the upcoming election.

If you moved within California, didn't re-register, and your previous county election office has NOT received notice of the move, then you can vote in your previous county for the last time. If the county election office has received notice, then you won't be able to vote in the upcoming election.

## **VOTING EARLY OR BY MAIL**

### **Can I vote before Election Day in person?**

Some counties allow you to vote in person at the county elections office and other select locations in the weeks before Election Day. Call your county elections office for hours and locations for early voting in your county. Phone numbers can be found at: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/registration-status/>.

### **How do I become a permanent vote-by-mail voter?**

Anyone can become a permanent vote-by-mail voter, which means you will receive your ballot in the mail about a month before Election Day and have the option of returning it by mail or dropping it at a polling site on Election Day.

To become a permanent vote-by-mail voter, check Box 15 on your registration form when you register to vote OR

If you are already registered to vote and want to vote by mail, just complete the vote-by-mail application included in your sample ballot you receive from your county election official a month before Election Day, or you can download a vote-by-mail application at: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/registration-status/>.

### **What's the deadline for returning my vote-by-mail ballot?**

Your vote-by-mail ballot must be received by your county elections office no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. You may also drop it off at any polling place in your county prior to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Remember to sign and seal the envelope.

## **VOTING ON ELECTION DAY**

### **When is Election Day?**

Primary: Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. General: Tuesday, November 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **When are the polls open?**

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. You have the right to vote if you're in line or inside your polling place at 8 p.m. *Cal. Elec. Code § 14401.*

### **Where do I vote?**

On Election Day, you have to vote at the polling place to which you're assigned. The sample ballot you receive from your county elections office prior to the election will list your assigned polling place. You may also contact your county elections office for polling place information.

### **Can I get time off from work to vote?**

Yes. If you do not have sufficient time outside of work to vote, you have the right to take time off from work (up to two hours of which must be paid time off) in order to vote. You have to give your employer at least two working days' notice of your need to take time off, and the time must be taken at the beginning or end of your workday. *Cal. Elec. Code § 14000.*

### **What if my polling place is not physically accessible?**

"Curbside voting" is available at polling places that are inaccessible to people with a disability. Elections officials will bring you a roster to sign, a ballot, and any other voting materials you may need. Contact your county elections office to find out if your polling place is accessible.

### **Can I get a ballot in my native language?**

Depending upon what county you vote in, alternative language ballots may be available. Call your county elections office to find out what languages are available in your county.

If a ballot in your language is not available, you may bring an interpreter with you to the polls (as long as they are not your employer or labor union officer).

### **What if I need help in the voting booth?**

If you cannot mark a ballot due to physical disability or because you can't read the ballot, tell a poll worker when you get to your polling place. You have the right to vote on an accessible voting machine, and you have the right to select up to two people (including a poll worker) to help you in the booth as long as they are not your employer, agent of your employer, or officer or agent of your labor union. *Cal. Elec. Code § 14282(a).*

You have the right to vote in private. You should be instructed as to how to use the voting equipment prior to entering the booth. However, if you need further instructions once you are inside, ask a poll worker for help. They are required to help you. *Cal. Elec. Code § 14272.*

### **Do I have to vote in every contest on the ballot?**

No. Your ballot will be counted for the contests or initiatives you vote on. If you make a mistake on your ballot, you have the right to request another ballot.

## **VOTER ID**

### **You do *NOT* need photo identification to vote in California.**

The **ONLY** time you need to show any documents before voting is if you registered online or by mail AND you did not include your driver's license, state ID or Social Security number AND it is your first time voting. Then you will be asked for documentation showing your name and address. There are more than 30 types of acceptable documentation, including a military or student ID, a utility bill, or a check from the government.

For a list of the more than 30 acceptable forms of identification, contact your county elections office or go online to: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/administration/regulations/current-regulations/elections/help-america-vote-act-identification-standards>.

