

50% of California ballots already returned

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Body

Nov 02, 2020(CalMatters: <https://calmatters.org> Delivered by Newstex) ;; Good morning, California. It's Monday, November 2. Gearing up for the big dayVoters wait in line to cast their ballots at the Wiltern Theater in Los Angeles on Oct. 24, 2020. Photo by Tash Kimmell for CalMatters Tomorrow is Election Day — and a record 22,047,448 Californians are registered to vote[1]. That represents about 88% of eligible citizens, the highest percentage heading into a general election in the past 80 years, according to the secretary of state[2]. They — you — will decide the fate of 12 statewide propositions[3], the makeup of the state Assembly[4] and Senate[5], and California's delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives[6]. The presidential race is a foregone conclusion in California: former Vice President Joe Biden is on track to notch the largest victory margin[7] for a Democratic presidential candidate in state history.Gov. Gavin Newsom traveled to Reno, Nevada[8] on Sunday to drum up votes for Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris.

On Friday, he told Fox 11[9] how he believes the outcome of the presidential election would affect California. Newsom[10]: 'We're consistently playing defense; all the headwinds coming out of Washington, D.C. And while we've established a good working relationship[11] (with the Trump administration) the reality is that's tenuous at best. A Biden administration? No headwinds. Tailwinds.' A staggering 50% of California registered voters[12] had returned their ballots as of Sunday — obliterating the state's past early-voting record[13]. She isn't alone. About 88% of California voters think violence is likely[14] if the outcome of the presidential election is in dispute. Cities from San Francisco to Beverly Hills are preparing for potential unrest by boarding up shop windows[15], blocking off certain streets[16], and ensuring law enforcement officers are available[17]. Still, election officials say they don't expect voter intimidation[18] at the polls, and elected officials say violence in general is unlikely. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti[19]: 'I don't want to buy into a narrative that there's going to be chaos during our election. We prepare for the worst, but we are hoping and expect generally the best.' For all your last-minute election questions, check out CalMatters' voter guide[20]._____The coronavirus bottom line:As of 9 p.m. Sunday night, California had926,534 confirmed coronavirus casesand17,667 deathsfrom the virus, according toaCalMatters tracker[21].Also:CalMatters regularly updates this pandemic timeline tracking thestate's daily actions[22]. And we'retracking the state's coronavirus hospitalizations by county[23].Vertiginous blue spires on the urban coast and crimson plateaus stretching from the Central Valley to suburban SoCal — this is thepresidential racefor California cash, in 3D[24]. Advertisement <https://community.csq.com/en/rsvp-demystifying-dc-webcast>Other stories you should know 1. Latino teens could get biggest share of new voting rights Students register to vote outside Rancho Cucamonga City Hall on April 20, 2018. Photo by Stan Lim, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG California's largest-ever electorate could grow still larger if voters pass Prop. 18[25], which would allow 17-year-olds to vote in primaries and special elections if they're 18 and otherwise eligible to vote by the time of the next general election. The most-impacted demographic would be Latinos, who make up the majority of California youth under 18,

CalMatters' Elizabeth Aguilera reports[26]. Such an expansion of the electorate could change the dynamics and demographics of primary elections, where voters tend to be white and older — as long as young voters turn out. Sixty-nine percent of California voters over 65 have already turned in their ballots this election[27], compared to 36% of Californians between 18 and 34. And 55% of white voters have returned their ballots, as opposed to 38% of Latino voters. Danielle Cendejas, spokesperson for Yes on 18: 'This is an important signal for our community to participate in the democratic process and start participating at an early age as well.'

2. Unemployment department director retiring Image via iStock Sharon Hilliard, the director of California's unemployment department, will retire Dec. 31, the Employment Development Department announced Friday[28]. Hilliard's retirement comes less than a year after Newsom appointed her to lead the department[29], which has come under fire amid the pandemic for leaving millions of workers unable to access their benefits[30]. Hilliard has also faced the wrath of lawmakers, who in August demanded Newsom completely overhaul the department[31] — which they characterized as 'an organization directed by a small inner circle of long-serving bureaucrats unable to drive reform.' Hilliard[32]: 'It has been my privilege to be part of the EDD team since the day I walked into the EDD building over 37 years ago. I retire knowing that EDD is on a great path to success.' Hilliard's successor will face myriad challenges, including overseeing a new ID-verification tool[33], implementing dozens of recommendations[34] from Newsom's strike team, handling fraud investigations[35], and meeting a Jan. 27, 2021 deadline[36] of clearing nearly 1 million backlogged claims[37]. Hilliard is the latest high-ranking state official to step down amid the pandemic. The director of California's public health department[38] and three top Newsom aides[39] resigned in August, and two top executives responsible for running the state's power grid announced their retirements in October[40].

3. Newsom's kids return to school Newsom with First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom and their youngest son, Dutch, at the Capitol on Dec. 15, 2019. Photo by Anne Wernikoff for CalMatters Newsom's four children have returned to in-person classes at a Sacramento County private school, the governor said Friday. The school is currently using a hybrid model that combines online and in-person learning, but it plans to resume in-person classes full-time next month, according to Politico[41]. Newsom[42]: My children are 'phasing back into school and we are phasing out of our very challenging distance learning that we've been doing, so many parents are doing up and down the state.' The governor's admission will likely up the ante of the increasingly tense battle[43] over school reopenings. It could also increase pressure on Newsom to address glaring inequalities[44] resulting from the state's reopening guidelines, which well-resourced private schools are able to meet more easily than public schools. Citing these inequities, a group of state lawmakers last week demanded Newsom release more specific guidelines to reopen schools[45], and the mayors of California's 13 biggest cities last month urged Newsom to reopen all schools as soon as possible[46]. Meanwhile, parents are growing increasingly frustrated with teachers unions[47] digging in their heels amid reopening negotiations.

4. California unveils new testing lab Newsom, center, tours the new COVID-19 testing facility on Oct. 30, 2020, in Valencia. Photo by Marcio Jose Sanchez, AP Photo/Pool California will soon be able to double its testing capacity thanks to a \$25 million lab Newsom opened in Santa Clarita on Friday. The lab, run by Massachusetts-based diagnostics company PerkinElmer, will process 40,000 tests daily before ramping up to 150,000 a day by March, CalMatters' Ana Ibarra reports[48]. The company is contractually obligated to provide test results within 24 to 48 hours. Newsom: 'Instead of pointing fingers and reflecting on the fact that we could have, would have, should have had a national testing strategy in this country, we decided to take a little bit of responsibility.' The new lab comes amid a statewide uptick in coronavirus cases and hospitalizations[49] — as well as California's first reported co-infection of COVID-19 and the flu[50]. Despite having the lowest positivity rate of any large city in the U.S. — and being the first large county in California to move into the least restrictive reopening tier — San Francisco decided Friday to halt its reopening plans[51] to ward off a potential surge in cases. Meanwhile, on Thursday, Los Angeles recorded its highest one-day case increase[52] not connected to a reporting backlog since August.

Advertisement <https://mattressrecyclingcouncil.org/programs/california/> CalMatters columnist Dan Walters[53]: Regardless of Prop. 15's outcome, the never-ending debate on California education will continue — but it should be about more than money. Keep Latino momentum going: After Election Day it will be more important than ever to recruit and mentor the next generation of Latino leadership, write Abram Diaz and Alma Barreras, co-chairs of the California Latino Capitol Association Foundation[54]. How to close the digital divide: California should take a page from the Works Progress Administration's playbook, argue Larry Foundation of United Parents and Students and Ana Ponce of Great Public Schools Now[55]. Importance of Delta tunnel project: The State Water Project's 1960-era infrastructure needs to be upgraded to meet California's climate challenges, writes Jennifer Pierre of State Water Contractors[56]. Other things worth your time These two Californians think they're close to changing the electoral

college. // Los Angeles Times[57]Pandemic slows legal voting in California jails. // CalMatters[58]Column: Latino ambivalence about affirmative action could doom Prop. 16. // Los Angeles Times[59]Asian American college students in California divided over affirmative action. // CalMatters[60]To do politics or not do politics? Silicon Valley tech startups are divided. // New York Times[61]America's political future is a California-Texas duel. // USA Today[62]Potential transfers out of San Quentin raise dire concerns for inmates. // San Francisco Chronicle[63]In San Francisco, virus is contained but schools are still closed. // New York Times[64] PG&E may be fined \$166 million for 2019 shutoff missteps. // San Francisco Chronicle[65]Southern California Edison responsible for destructive 2018 Woolsey Fire, report says. // CNN[66]See you tomorrow.Tips, insight or feedback? Email Emily@calmatters.org [67].; Follow me on Twitter: @emily_hoeven[68]Subscribe to CalMatters newsletters here[69]. Follow CalMatters on Facebook[70] and Twitter[71]. CalMatters is now available in Spanish on Twitter[72], Facebook[73] and RSS[74]. 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