

Voter's Guide

June 2022

CALIFORNIA
INDIAN
LEGAL SERVICES

Native Americans registering to vote circa 1948.

Bettmann Archive/Getty Images

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This Guide is separated into parts to provide information for specific voters. While most information will be contained in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section, the Guide attempts to focus on issues pertinent to specific demographic groups. We encourage readers of this Guide to review the FAQs.

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01

Introduction

Growing up on the Navajo Reservation, I remember driving back from my parents' voting precincts listening to the Navajo radio station to hear election results. I don't know if it was common everywhere, but civic engagement was important to my family. My paternal grandfather served as a grazing committee official and as a local elected official, he reiterated the importance of our voice and our vote. Today, I want to make sure every Native voter takes the time to vote. Voting is imperative to the democratic process and was a right hard fought by many Native Americans before us.

When we sat down to prepare this Guide, staff attorney Jay Petersen and I wanted to make sure that California Native voters had information about **the 2022** California voting process. This Guide will not tell you who or what you should vote for, instead we hope this Guide will answer any questions you have about the election process.

California Indian Legal Services (CILS) strives to protect the California Native vote and voting process as an extension of protecting tribal sovereignty and self-determination. Throughout history and even presently, Native American voters experienced barriers to exercising their right to vote. Voting is often seen as an act of personal freedom and self-autonomy, but for Native Americans, the collective voice of Native voters can foster material changes in a political culture that is fundamentally biased against Native people and tribal rights. In our community, voting is act of political necessity. CILS encourages everyone to make an effort to cast a ballot in the upcoming election. We hope this guide will ease that effort. Thank you!

Mica Llerandi (Diné) - Staff Attorney Escondido

"MASK OR MAIL"
- CALIFORNIA NATIVE VOTE PROJECT

History of Native American Voting 02

The Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states that all citizens of the United States have the right to vote regardless of their “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” However, up until 1957, many Native Americans were barred from voting. This was despite the fact that in 1924 all Native Americans were granted citizenship when the United States Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act.

In *Matter of Heff* (1905), the United States Supreme Court held that when Native Americans accepted their land allotments, they were American citizens eligible to vote. The battle was not over as California's first Constitution reserved the right to vote exclusively to white male citizens. In 1907, Pomo Indian Ethan Anderson lived off-reservation and attempted to vote in Mendocino County. He was denied, but the decision was overturned by the California Supreme Court in *Anderson v. Matthews* (1907).

Battles continued in other states and in two Arizona cases, Native Americans tried to register to vote, but were denied. In *Porter v. Hall* (Ariz. 1928), the Arizona Supreme Court held that since Native Americans were “under guardianship” of the federal government (citing seminal Indian case *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*), they were not allowed to vote. 20 years later, in *Harrison v. Laveen* (Ariz. 1948), WWII Veteran Frank Harrison challenged the denial and United States’ attorneys argued that if Native Americans are able to uphold democratic principles during war as soldiers, then they should be allowed to vote. The Arizona Supreme Court agreed, holding that Native Americans can vote.

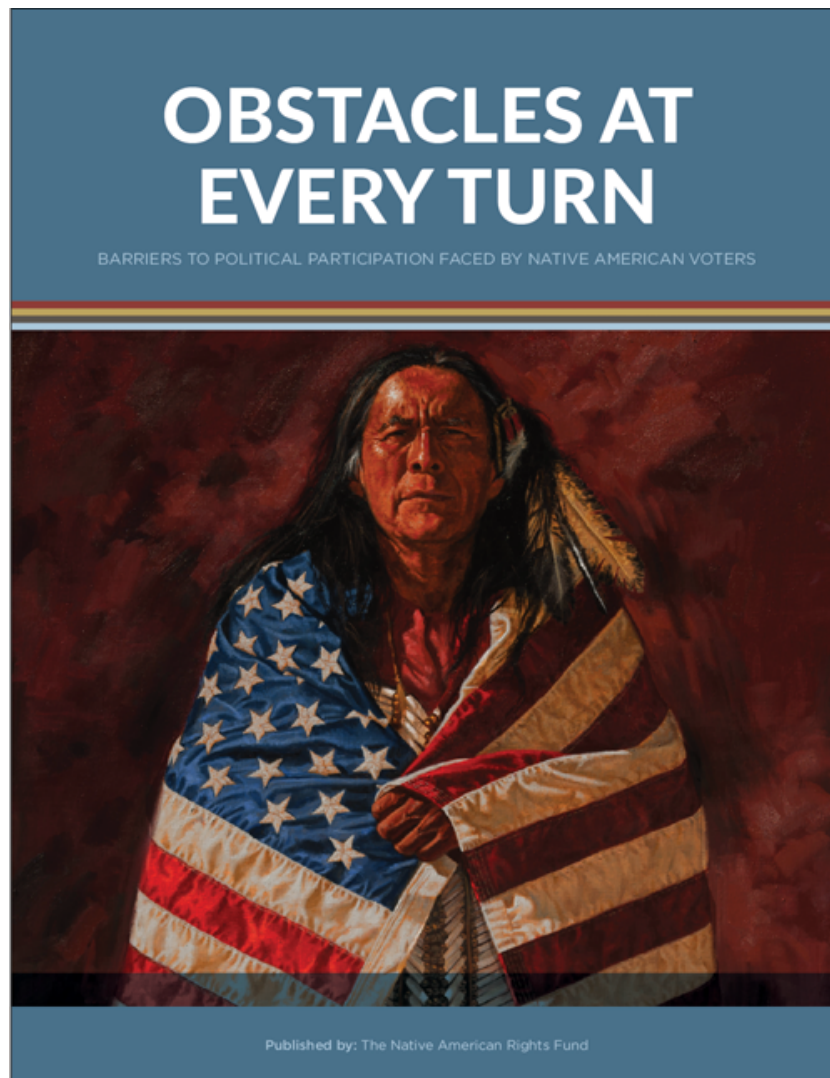
At the same time, in *Trujillo v. Garley* (1948), a New Mexico federal court held that New Mexico discriminated against Native Americans and Native Americans had a right to vote. The last state to allow Native Americans to vote was Utah. In *Allen v. Merrell*, a Ute man was barred from voting and he appealed to the US Supreme Court. Before the case was heard, Utah repealed their offending statute, allowing Native Americans to vote in 1957.

Today, California has its first California Native member of the State Assembly, James C. Ramos, San Manuel, (D-Highland). Governor Newsom also signed AB2314 (introduced by Assembly member Ramos), establishing a Native American Accessibility Advisory Committee. This progress signals a new day in the history of California Native voting and looks to empowering the California Native Vote.

Thanks to the efforts of individual Native American voters,
today all Native Voters have the right to vote!

Obstacles at Every Turn Report

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Obstacles at Every Turn: Barriers to Political Participation Faced by Native American Voters was released on June 4, 2020. The report was prepared by the Native American Voter Rights Coalition, which was founded by the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), and gathered testimony from nine public hearings held by the Coalition. The focus of the public hearings to understand the systemic practices designed to prevent Native Americans from exercising their vote. A copy of the 176-page report can be found here: <https://vote.narf.org/obstacles-at-every-turn/>. In the following pages, we have provided a summary of some issues from the Report that relate to California Native American voters.

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Obstacles at Every Turn Report

Issues Affecting California Native American Voters:

- **Physical Barriers:** California tribal communities may be isolated. The three examples from the report are:
 - For Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, in southern CA, the closest county polling place, was at least 40 minutes away;
 - Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians, in northern CA, is located about 45 minutes each way from the Lake County seat; and
 - The Karuk tribal members who live in Yreka have to travel 80 miles on a road that follows the Klamath River to Happy Camp on a very mountainous, treacherous drive.
- **Lack of Internet or Broadband Services:** Tribes in CA lack broadband access and some cases, cellular service. California Secretary of State Alex Padilla notes the challenges saying, "If you have a weak or no Internet connection, ... accessing important election information from the Secretary of State's Web site or a county elections office Web site can be a challenge." Without access to reliable internet services, many CA Native Americans struggle with even registering to vote.
- **Illiteracy:** Members of the Yurok Tribe explained illiteracy rates are high because the tribe follows oral tradition. Most voting material is provided in written form and rarely in audio, which would provide greater access to folks.
- **Socio-economic barriers:** The report notes that there is a "very large body of scholarly research that shows that economic sociodemographic factors are closely related to electoral participation." *Report*, pg. 37. Generally, Native Americans have higher poverty rates, which affects their ability to participate in the process, whether through lack of transportation or employment challenges.
- **Difficulty obtaining a mailing address:** The Report noted that in northern California, Native Americans may permanently live in Recreational Vehicles (RVs) and county officials see RVs as temporary housing. This distinction makes it difficult for Native Americans to obtain a permanent address.

Obstacles at Every Turn Report 05

- **Unequal Access to In-Person Voting:** Native American voters must travel longer distances to vote and when tribal communities work to obtain a polling place in their communities, there are more barriers. For example, a lot of tribal buildings are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and their requests to host a polling place are denied due to the ADA. Often, funding is a huge challenge in updating tribal buildings to meet ADA requirements. Similarly, tribes have been denied because the county cannot afford to have a polling place for a low-density population place, which are often tribal communities.
- **Concerns with Voting-by-Mail:** Many Native American voters expressed concerns with voting-by-mail, with the common concern being that they don't know where the ballots go. The report highlights that Native American voters were often concerned with listing their address on the ballots for fear that their address would be used to discriminate against the voter. *Report*, pg. 94. Other concerns include the perception that with voting-by-mail is that it is less secure than voting in-person. Additionally, many Native American voters noted they do not check their mail regularly, many months without access to their mail, have to travel long-distances to pick-up their mail, or report that mail service was unreliable. *Report*, pg. 96. *This year in California, you can track your ballot or use drop boxes to allay these concerns. *See Pages 8 and 9 for more information.*
- **Discrimination against Native Americans:** In addition to challenges above, many voters highlighted discrimination against Native Americans. In California, the report documents the statement of an elected Orange County official who said, "The Native vote in Orange County is powerless. We have no fear of you ... So you can do whatever you want, but we're not going to meet with you." Statements like this demonstrate why Native voters are often disengaged in the political process.

The barriers listed here are just a sampling of barriers listed in the report. All Native American voters are encouraged to read the report. While there are many barriers to voting, there are many efforts by Native American voters and organizations in fostering greater Native American voting. As in all facets of life, representation matters. Make sure your voice is heard and that you continue to protect this invaluable right to vote.

06 Important Dates

May 9: Ballots mailed out to all registered voters

Voters do not need to request a vote-by-mail ballot. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, all register California voters will receive a ballot by mail.

May 23: DEADLINE to register to vote (same day registration available).

June 14, 2022: Last day to request a Vote-by-Mail ballot.

Suggested deadline to mail in ballots to ensure ballots received on time.

June 7: ELECTION DAY - polling places, ballot drop boxes, and vote centers are open statewide 7 AM – 8 PM

Requirements to Vote

To be eligible to vote you, must be:

- A United States Citizen and resident of California;
- 18 years or older on Election Day*
- Not currently in state or federal prison or on parole for conviction of a felony**; and
- Not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court.***

*High school students - check out Section 11 for more info.

**For more information, check out Section 14 for more info.

***Check out History of Section 02 - History of Native Voting for more information.

Register at: www.RegisterToVote.ca.gov or request a registration card by calling 1-800-345-VOTE (8683) or by emailing elections@sos.ca.gov

07 FAQs: Registration

Where can I check my voter registration?

On the California Secretary of State's website at:

<https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov>

Do I need a CA Driver's license or CA Identification card to register to vote?

No. If you don't have a CA Driver's license or ID card number, the website will create a pre-filled voter registration application for you to print, sign, and mail. If you do this, you may need to provide some form of identification when voting for the first time.

What if I am displaced?

This year, everyone will receive ballot by mail, but your ballot cannot be forwarded to a new address. If you are not at your home address, you must change with local county official. You can send ballot to your work, to a friend's house, or send out a one-time address change. Voters can vote in person – checkout local county elections website for local vote center, or can go to local election office.

More info at : **<https://tinyurl.com/y9pb2xcd>**

Can Military, Overseas, and Out-of-State California Residents Vote?

Yes! Even though all California Registered Voters will be receiving a ballot by mail, California Secretary of State recommends that military and overseas voters register or complete an absentee ballot request at:

www.RegisterToVote.ca.gov
or **<https://tinyurl.com/mbnukke>**

What are reasons to re-register?

- If you moved.
- If you changed your name.
- If you wish to update your political preference.
- Have recently regained the right to vote.
- Change your preferred language.

Can I vote if I am unhoused?

Yes. You may register to vote at a location where you spend most of your time. You must describe the location clearly enough for the elections official to establish your right to vote in a specific area. Provide a mailing address (if available) to receive election materials; this can be any place you receive your mail.

Register at:

www.RegisterToVote.ca.gov


FAQs: Provisional Ballots

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Can I register to vote on Election Day?

Yes! You can conditionally register to vote and cast a provisional ballot. Your provisional ballot will be counted when your County Elections Official verifies your voter registration.

Will I be required to provide an ID?

If you registered without a CA Driver's License or CA Identification Card, you may be asked for verification of your identity. You may use other documents to verify your identity. A list of these documents can be found: 

What if I didn't bring any other identifying documents?

You can still submit a provisional ballot, which will be counted if the signature on your ballot matches the signature on your registration form.

Never leave the polling place without voting. If someone tells you that you can't vote for any reason, demand a "provisional ballot" and vote as you planned.

If you feel you are being harassed or someone is telling you that you cannot vote, please call (866) OUR-VOTE/ (866) - (687-8683).

What counts as approved identification?

California Code of Regulations § 20107 allows for numerous documents which may include:

1. Document with current and valid photo ID.

- Tribal ID,
- Driver's License or ID from another state,
- Passport,
- ID card provided by commercial establishment, Military ID,
- Credit or Debit Card,
- Student ID, and more.

2. Other document with name and address:

- Utility bill,
- Voter notification card issued by governmental agency,
- Vehicle registration,
- ID Docs issued by governmental homeless shelters, and more.

For a complete list, see:
<https://tinyurl.com/y6v2fuxk>

09 FAQs: Voting

Am I required to vote by mail this year?

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, every registered voter in California will be sent a vote-by-mail ballot for the election.

No. You will also have the option to vote in person at a polling place, vote center, or county elections office. Specific locations to vote will be printed on your sample ballot and available on your county elections office website.

Can I vote in person?

Yes! *If you decide to vote in person, take your ballot with you. You will need it to prove that you haven't already sent in your ballot. Check your local county election's office to see your voting options. Not all counties will have polling places or vote center, see Section 20 for more info.*

- Polling Place - a designated place to vote in your neighborhood that is open on Election Day from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Polling places will be open for 4 days.
- Vote Center - Vote centers will be open at least 3 days before and on Election Day (**May 28th**).
 - 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.

How do I vote by mail?

You can return a completed ballot by:

- Mailing it to your local elections office - no postage required. Ballots must be postmarked **June 7th, 2022** - Election Day.
Remember to sign your vote-by-mail envelope.
- Dropping it off at a ballot drop box, local elections office, polling place, or vote center.

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.

When will all the votes be certified?

Within 30 days of the election, all votes must be certified by the county registrar. More info: <https://tinyurl.com/y5oenusc>

FAQs: 10 Miscellaneous

Can someone else drop off my ballot?

Yes! You can let someone else return your ballot for you if they aren't being paid. Just fill out the authorization section on your ballot envelope.

Can I get time off work to vote?

Yes! Your employer may require advanced notice and may ask for you to take the time off at the beginning or end of your shift. Employees can be given as much time off to vote as needed but only a max of two (2) hours is paid.

<https://tinyurl.com/hqk8rv2>

How can I be sure my ballot is counted?

You can track your ballot by visiting:

<https://tinyurl.com/y3opwus2>

What happens if my signatures don't match or I forget to sign my ballot envelope?

Before your ballot is rejected due to a missing or mismatched signature, pursuant to Every Vote Counts Act (SB 759), the county must notify you at least 8 days before the election results are certified and allow you to correct the issue to ensure your ballot is counted. You can turn in a signature verification form at the polls or to the election office by mail, fax, email no later than 2 days before the election result is certified for your ballot to be counted.

All voters should check that their vote-by-mail ballots have been tallied. To check the status of whether your vote was tallied, contact your local county elections office at this link:

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-status/>.

Where can I find more information about candidates and issues?

Ballotpedia ([https://ballotpedia.org/Sample Ballot Lookup](https://ballotpedia.org/Sample_Ballot_Lookup)) and Voter's Edge (<https://votersedge.org/ca>) are comprehensive, nonpartisan online guides to elections covering federal, state, and local races in the state of California. Users can get information on candidates, measures, and who supports them.

Please take advantage of early voting through your County Election Office. Starts May 9th through June 6th.

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Voter's Choice Act (VCA) of 2016

What is it?

SB 450 was approved by California lawmakers in 2016 and seeks to expand voters' options for how, when, and where they cast their ballots. The VCA is an optional law which allows counties to decide if they will transition into the new voting model. 15 counties have adopted VCA: Madera, Napa, Nevada, Sacramento, San Mateo, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles, Mariposa, Orange, Santa Clara and Tuolumne.

How does the new voting process work?

In VCA counties, every registered voter will receive a ballot in the mail one month before the election. In all counties, voters will have three options to return their mail ballot: (1) return their ballot by mail, postmarked no later than Election Day, (2) place it in one of the secure drop boxes located throughout their county, or (3) vote in person at a vote center. All vote centers will be open from the Saturday before Election Day through Election Day at 8 p.m. Some vote centers will be open a full 11 days, including the two weekends before Election Day.

What if I'm not registered to vote?

You will not receive a ballot in the mail, but if you are eligible to vote, you may still do so. Visit any vote center in your county, and you will be able to register and vote the same day.

Why VCA?

VCA seeks to increase voter participation by providing voters with increased flexibility to vote when and where is most convenient for them. For example, voters will be able to vote on weekends, at any vote center in their county, and by mail without requesting a mailed ballot in advance. If you lose your ballot or make a mistake, under the VCA you can visit a vote center and request a replacement ballot.

Moving and Voting in VCA Counties.

You might not receive a ballot in the mail, but you may still vote. Visit any vote center in your county, and you will be able to register at your new address and vote.

Voting for Older Adults (50+ years) 12

Older adults have a higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 and it is recommended that they take advantage of alternatives to in-person voting. Alternatives include returning ballots by mail, using a county drop-off box, or dropping off at an early voting location. Find location closest to at:

<https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/>.

Can someone else drop off my ballot?

Yes! California Election Code § 3017 says you can let someone else return your ballot for you if they aren't being paid based on how many ballots they return. Just fill out the authorization section on your ballot envelope.

High school students, did you know you can pre-register when you are 16 years old?

Pre-registration does not change the voting age, which is 18, but it allows eligible Californians ages 16 or 17 to complete the online voter registration form providing sufficient time and opportunity to get ready to vote. To pre-register: **www.RegisterToVote.ca.gov**

If I have problems pre-registering or have additional questions who should I

contact? Call the Secretary of State's toll-free voter hotline at **(800) 345-VOTE (8683)** or contact your county elections office.

Curbside Voting

If you need to vote in-person, check to see if your county is offering curbside voting:

<https://tinyurl.com/ybupbcql>.

If you vote in person, remember to take your ballot to prove you haven't already mailed it.

High School Students

What happens when I turn 18?

When you turn 18 years old, the county elections office will mail a confirmation postcard to you stating that your voter registration is now active. At the time of the next election, your county elections official will automatically mail your election related materials to your registered address. If your confirmation postcard is returned undeliverable, possibly because you have moved, the county elections office may inactivate your record until a new Voter Registration Application is submitted.

For more info: **<https://tinyurl.com/y74dth5t>**.

13 Voting with Disabilities

Remote Accessible Vote-By-Mail (RAVBM)

RAVBM allows individuals with disabilities to vote independently and privately in the comfort of their own home by using adaptive technology or RAVBM.

A video about RAVBM is at:

<https://tinyurl.com/y7g4aj3d>

More info about RAVBM is at:

<https://tinyurl.com/yxl5duy2>

If you have questions about RAVBM, you can call the Disability Rights California Voting Hotline at (888) 569-7955.

Please check the Secretary of State's Website for up-to-date info:

<https://tinyurl.com/y9kt6xgo>.

If you must vote in-person, here is some important information:

Accessible Voting Machines: Counties may vary in the type of machine they use. If you have questions, contact your local county elections office for more information:

<https://tinyurl.com/yba293kh>

You can find your county's step-by-step guides for voter accessible machines at:

<https://tinyurl.com/yc89farn>.

Curbside Voting: This allows you to park as close as possible to the voting area and elections officials will bring you a roster to sign, a ballot, and any other voting materials you may need, whether you are actually at a curb or in a car.

If you vote in person, remember to take your ballot to prove you haven't already mailed it

Late Vote-by-Mail: If you are unable to go to the polls because of conditions resulting from your absence from the precinct, you may apply in writing for a late vote-by-mail. This application must be provided in person to your county elections office by the voter or the voter's representative. Application is at:

<https://tinyurl.com/yyvoau53>.

14 Domestic Violence and Safe at Home Program

Survivors of domestic violence face unique obstacles in the voting process, such as isolation from important election information and materials; intimidation and violence for asserting their voting preferences; and privacy concerns related to voter registration. Advocacy groups recommend address confidentiality programs to provide survivors with an avenue to safeguard a survivor's address while providing the survivor with security of a private voting process.

California's Safe at Home program is a confidential address program for survivors of domestic violence, stalking sexual assault, human trafficking, and elder and dependent abuse. Safe at Home is most effective when used as a part of an overall safety plan. Safe at Home offers individuals a substitute mailing address to receive first class, certified, and registered mail. This address is also accepted by California state, county, and city government agencies in lieu of a residential or other mailing address where a survivor can be physical located. This confidential address works to keep the survivor's residential address confidential and out of the hands of someone who might want to harm the survivor.

Eligibility: The applicant must be a resident of California who is:

- a victim of domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, and human trafficking;
 - a household member of a victim listed above; or
 - a reproductive health care facility employee, provider, patient, or volunteer;
- AND
- is in fear for his/her own safety or the safety of a minor child or incapacitated adult.

This program is provided free of charge to California residents who qualify as participants.

To Apply: Find an enrolling agency at: <https://tinyurl.com/y8fpulcp>, call the Safe at Home Program toll-free at (877) 322-5227, or email: safeathome@sos.ca.gov.

Incarcerated or Recently Released

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A person cannot vote if the following applies:

- Currently imprisoned in state or federal prison;
- Currently on parole with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Once a person is done with parole, their right to vote is restored, but they must register or re-register to vote.

If a person is released from custody, the

person can still vote by going to the polling place of their home address or any polling place in the county and vote using a provisional ballot. See *Page 07 for more info about provisional ballots.*

A person who is incarcerated or was formerly incarcerated can vote in these circumstances:

- If you are in a county jail:
 - Serving a misdemeanor sentence (a misdemeanor never affects your right to vote);
 - As a condition of probation (misdemeanor or felony);
 - Serving a felony jail sentence.
- If you are on probation, mandatory supervision, post-release community supervision, or federal supervised released;
- If you are finished with parole; or
- If you are pre-trial or awaiting trial for any crime.

How do you vote in jail?

Most people do not know that if someone is in jail, they still have a right to vote. But the biggest challenge is making sure persons who are incarcerated and eligible to vote are able to register. Every county jail facility will handle voter registration differently - we encourage folks to review the Voting in California Toolkit prepared by the ACLU of Northern California. The toolkit can be found at:

<https://tinyurl.com/y3bkfman>

Organizations like the ACLU recommend that people in jail who are eligible to vote register using their home or permanent mailing address when registering.

After a person is registered, making sure their ballot is mailed or delivered is another challenge. Check with the local jail facility to ensure ballot mailed.

Check out the ACLU Jail Voting Toolkit and Let Me Vote's Toolkits at:

https://www.aclunc.org/sites/default/files/Jail_Voting_Toolkit_Final.pdf
and **<https://www.letmevotecalifornia.org/toolkit/>**.

16 Safety at the Polls

If you are feeling sick or had recent contact with a person with COVID-19, the CDC recommends you stay home. *See Section 17 on creating a Voter Plan.*

Voters should use masks while in the polling locations. Masks are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.

Voters should leave space between themselves and others - stay at least 6 feet apart. Polling places may provide signs or other visual cues such as floor markings, decals, or chalk marks to help voters maintain social distance. Refrain from greeting others with physical contact (e.g., handshakes).

Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in lined trash cans.

Avoid Crowds. Use early voting, if available, or vote at off-peak times, such as mid-morning.

Consider voting alternatives available in your location that minimize contact. Options may include mailing in your ballot, dropping of your ballot at a drop box, or at your county elections office. Alternatives to in-person voting can limit your exposure and help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Practice proper hand hygiene and wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Most in-person voting locations may not provide access to soap and water. **Carry an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for use at each step of the voting process.**

****Be aware that alcohol-based hand sanitizers may damage electronic voting equipment and paper ballots. Make sure your hands are completely dry before handling these items. Do not disinfect or wipe down voting equipment on your own.**

CA Voter's Bill of Rights

17

The right to vote if you are a registered voter.

*See Section 05: Voting Requirements and Section 06: FAQs -
Registration for more information.*

The right to vote if you are a registered voter, even if your name is not on the list.

*You will vote using a provisional ballot. Your vote will be counted
if election officials determine that you are eligible to vote.*

The right to vote if you are still in line when the polls close.

The right to cast a secret ballot.

*You have the right to vote without anyone bothering you or telling
you how to vote.*

The right to get a new ballot if you have made a mistake.

If you have not already cast your ballot, you can:

- *Ask an election official at a polling place for a new ballot,*
- *Exchange your vote-by-mail ballot for a new one at an
elections office, or at your polling place; or*
- *Vote using a provisional ballot.*

The right to get help casting your ballot.

*You can choose anyone to help you cast your ballot, except your
employer or union representative.*

The right to drop off your completed vote-by-mail ballot at any polling place in California.

**The right to get election
materials in a
language other than
English if enough people
in your voting precinct
speak that language.**

**The right to ask
election officials
questions about
election procedures
and watch the
election process.**

**The right to report any
illegal or fraudulent
election activity to an
election official or
the Secretary of State's
office.**

**If you believe you have
been denied any of these
rights, or you are aware
of any election fraud or
misconduct, please call
the confidential toll-
free Voter Hotline at
(800) 345-VOTE (8683).**

Voter's Bill of Rights can be found at:

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-bill-rights/>

18 Creating a Voting Plan

In order to ensure your vote is counted, it is important for you to develop a voting plan. Voting plans are meant to help voters think through how they will exercise their right to vote and planning ahead. Use this checklist to ensure you are ready to vote.

Voting Plan Checklist

- ☐ **Confirm you registered to vote and that your voter information is correct.**
 - Check your status at: <https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/>
- ☐ **Get your registration updated as soon as possible.**
 - Register or update your registration at: www.RegisterToVote.ca.gov
- ☐ **Research Ballot Initiative and Local Races**
 - State Guides can be found here: <https://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/>.
- ☐ **Learn your options for voting:** voting-by-mail or in-person.
- ☐ **Locate your county ballot drop-off locations**
 - Link to find your local drop-off locations: <https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/>
- ☐ **Locate your polling place or voting center.**
 - Link to locate your in-person voting using your address can be found here: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/polling-place>
- ☐ **Choose how to submit your ballot & make a back-up plan!**
- ☐ **Vote early and confirm your ballot was received.**
 - Track your ballot at: <https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/>
- ☐ **Know your voting rights.**
 - Voter Bill of Rights at: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-bill-rights>
- ☐ **Make sure your friends and family have a voting plan**

Be Prepared and Resources

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If you are going to vote in person, be prepared:

- ☐ Bring the ballot that was mailed to you; the in-person voting staff will need to verify you haven't already cast your ballot.
- ☐ Check your voting location and requirements in advance - they may have changed due to COVID-19.
- ☐ Make sure you have all necessary documents to avoid delays at the polling location.
- ☐ If possible, complete any registration forms prior to arriving at the polling location.
- ☐ Where possible, review or complete a sample ballot at home to speed the process of casting your ballot at the polling location.
- ☐ Bring your own black ink pen.
- ☐ Bring a stylus or similar object for use with touchscreen voting machines. Please check with poll workers before using your own.

**CALL THE ELECTION PROTECTION HOTLINE AT
1-866-OUR-VOTE TO REPORT ANY CONCERNS REGARDING
THE VOTING PROCESS.**

Resources:

www.LetMeVoteCA.org – for persons impacted by the criminal legal system

Courage California Voter Guide - <https://tinyurl.com/yd675yog>

Check your voting status here: <https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/>

Center for Inclusive Democracy: <https://ca.cidsitingtool.org/>

County Election Offices: <https://tinyurl.com/ycngyuh8>

Election Protection: <https://866ourvote.org/state-information/california/>

NARF - Report: <https://vote.narf.org/advocacy-actions/>

www.CANativeVote.org

20 Definitions

Early Voting: A voter may pick up and/or vote a vote-by-mail ballot at this location. This process will begin May, but depends on the county. Check your county's website for more information.

Voting Centers: A polling place where any individual in a county can vote. "Voting Centers" were authorized under the California Voter's Choice Act of 2016. Check with your county to see if your county will have vote centers. Voting centers will be open by May 28th.

Polling Place: This is a voting location that is unique to you and your address. Voters in counties that have not enacted the California Voter's Choice Act must cast their in-person ballots at their polling place. To locate your polling place visit: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/polling-place>.

Same Day Voter Registration: Voters can conditionally register and vote after the 15-day voter registration deadline at their voting location. For more information please go to: <https://tinyurl.com/wg2l9yt>

Ballot Drop-Off: A secured box where vote-by-mail ballots may be dropped off. Ballot drop-offs have specific requirements in counties that have implemented the California Voter's Choice Act of 2016. Just like voting centers, Governor Newsom, under Executive Order N-67-20 authorized non-VCA counties to provide ballot drop-off locations. <https://caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov/>

County Election Office: County Election Offices are responsible for managing elections in California. The County Election Office can answer questions related to registration status, sample ballots/voter information guides, polling place, drop box and vote center locations, and voting by mail. Please note, your County may provide online options for voters to check their registration status, vote-by-mail ballot status, polling place location, and sample ballot.