



BLACK WOMEN FOR WELLNESS ACTION PROJECT

REBELS
GUIDE
VOTE **2**
CALIFORNIA



Did you know your polling place is going away in 2020? California passed a series of laws called the Voters Choice Act, based on best practices to make voting easier and more accessible. However, that means big changes ahead in 14 counties. This guide provides information on voting in California

WHAT IS THE VOTER'S CHOICE ANYWAY?

Voter's Choice is a package of legislation and processes that California started to enact in 2016. The goal is to make it easier and more accessible to vote in California. This includes creating voter centers, easing the process for mail-in ballots and registering to vote.

Is my county switching to the Voter's Choice Act?

In 2020, fourteen counties will conduct VCA elections: Amador, Butte, El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles, Madera, Mariposa, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Sacramento, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Tuolumne.

California's other counties may choose to implement the VCA in the future. Officials in each county will decide whether to adopt the VCA model

WHAT'S CHANGED?

Polling places we are familiar with are gone. Instead, many counties are switching to voter centers. Voter centers will allow all residents registered within that county to vote at any voter center in the county. This means if you wanted to stop on your way home from work or from school to vote, you can do that at any voter center. Voter centers will also be opened longer, at least the weekend before the election, some opening as much as 10 days before the election.

- Voter centers also allow people to register and vote the same day as well as check your voter registration status.
- Voters also will be able to:
- You will be able to vote at any voting location in LA County. You will no longer have to go to your designated polling place.
- You can vote whenever the centers are open. Vote centers will be open either 4 or 11 days before election day for a minimum of 8 hours per day.
- Same-day voter registration is allowed at vote centers.
- On-site staff can help in multiple languages
- All facilities will be ADA Accessible

Lastly, In all counties except for Los Angeles, every voter will be mailed a mail-in-ballot.

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.



VOTER REGISTRATION

VOTER REGISTRATION IS NECESSARY TO VOTE IN CALIFORNIA. PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO REGISTER TO VOTE IF:

- You are U.S. Citizen
- You are or will be 18 by the time of the election
- You are not currently in prison or parole for a felony conviction.

People who are formerly incarcerated CAN vote in the state of California as long as they are not on parole. This includes post-release, community supervision, or post-sentencing probation for a felony. People who are on parole, but it is not a felony conviction can also register to vote.

- You are not able to register to vote if
- Have been found to be mentally incompetent by a court.
- Are not U.S. citizens.

HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE:

- California residents can register to vote several ways.
- online at <http://registertovote.ca.gov/>
- By filling out by paper registration and turning it into your local registrar office
- At a voting center.

The deadline to register to vote is 15 days before the election. If you have missed this deadline. You can provisionally register and vote at a voter center in your county up until the election.

NEW CHANGES IN VOTER REGISTRATION

Voter registration is becoming easier in California. You can now be automatically registered to vote at the D.M.V.. Eligible applicants completing a driver license, identification (ID) card or change of address transaction online, by mail or in person at the DMV, will be automatically registered to vote by the California Secretary of State, unless they choose to opt-out of automatic voter registration. Voter pre-registration is available for Californians who are 16 or 17 years old. They will automatically be registered to vote when they turn 18.

YOU MAY REGISTER TO VOTE IN ELECTIONS IF YOU:

- Are an inmate;
- Awaiting or on trial for a criminal offense;
- Serving time for a traffic or misdemeanor offense;
- Serving time in a local jail as a condition of probation.
- People who are found mentally incompetent by a court cannot register to vote.

DID YOU DO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING? REASONS TO RE-REGISTER TO VOTE:

- Move to a different address (permanent or semi-permanent)
- Change name (including if you changed your name because of marriage or divorce)
- Change political party affiliation



SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

HOMELESS

If you do not have an address because of homelessness, you can still register to vote and voter. The registration form leaves space for street corners, parks or shelters to use in lieu of a traditional home address.

The best option for a mailing address is to use a shelter that you trust and have access to. Some counties will allow homeless individuals to use their office as a mailing address.

DOMESTIC ABUSE SHELTER

If you are in a domestic abuse shelter, contact the staff about what address to use for registering to vote.

California's Confidential Address Program

If you are in California Confidential Address program, please contact Safe at Home to register to vote. The phone number is 877-322-5227.

JUST MOVED

If you have just moved and want to register to vote in your new city, you will need to re-register to vote. This can be done by filling out a registration form. If you have moved in California, you can re-register at a Voter Center (if it's after the 15 day cut off) or through the traditional process if it's before the 15 days cut off.

BALLOT SECURITY

Want to make sure your ballot was counted. Or are you afraid that something funny happened to your ballot? California will be providing receipts. Starting in 2020, you will be able to track your mail-in ballot to ensure it was delivered and counted. If your ballot is not counted, you will be able to see the reason why. You will also see steps you can take to get your ballot counted.



STUDENTS

I'm a student, how do I vote?

If you are an American Citizen who meets the qualifications of who can vote (see voting registration requirements), you are able to vote either in the city (if it's in America) you are going to school in or the city you are from/permanent address if it is different. You are only able to vote once in an election. You CANNOT vote in two different cities in the same election.

IF YOU ARE A CALIFORNIA RESIDENT BUT GO TO AN OUTSTATE SCHOOL:

Vote in California election: If you will not be in town on election day but still want to take part in the California election. You must register for an absentee ballot at least one week in advance of the election, using your permanent or home address in California.

Vote out of State election: You must register to vote in the county where you reside for school. Be aware that states

can vary in the rules around registration and voting so be sure to check what the particular rules are in your state.

IF YOU GO TO SCHOOL IN CALIFORNIA:

If your permanent address is in California: you can register to vote using your school residence or your permanent one. Please take into the fact where you are going to be during the time of elections, how familiar you are with the local politics in the area. There is always the option of using a mail-in ballot.

If your permanent address is out of state: Students who go to school in California but want to vote in a California's election must register to vote in the local county where they live

LIVING ABROAD

I live abroad? And I need help

HOW TO REGISTER

Option 1: Register or re-register to vote online at <http://registertovote.ca.gov/> and request a Vote by Mail ballot. This option is the more "permanent" option, if you're going to be overseas for multiple election cycles, this might be the better option.

Option 2: Complete the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). You can contain the FPCA at any Voting Assistance Officer at a military base or any US Embassy/ Consulate. It is recommended that you complete this form every year you request an absentee ballot. This option might be better for people that don't have a long

term overseas address or don't know how long they will be overseas.

If you live in Los Angeles - Return your completed FPCA to LA County by mail, fax, or email.

Mail: Los Angeles Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk
Vote by Mail Section P.O. Box 30450 Los Angeles, CA
90030-0450

Fax: (562) 864-6786

Email: militaryoverseasAV@rrcc.lacounty.gov



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FAQ ABOUT MAIL IN BALLOTS

IS MY ONLY OPTION TO VOTE BY MAIL?

No. Many counties in California are using voter centers. These are voting places set up in the community that any registered voter in that county can vote at. The centers will be open at least the weekend before election day.

DOES MY MAIL-IN BALLOT NEED A STAMP?

No. A bill passed in 2018 requires mail-in-ballots to have pre-paid postage. You just need to drop in the mail or designated area.

WHERE DO I TURN IN MY MAIL-IN BALLOT?

- They are three ways to turn in your mail-in-ballot.
- By mail dropping it in the mail at any mailbox or post office. All mail must be postmarked by 8:00 pm on election day.
- Dropping it off at a vote center within your county.
- To an official ballot drop-off location

WHAT IF I CAN'T DROP OFF MY MAIL-IN BALLOT MYSELF?

If you are unable to return the ballot yourself you may designate someone else to drop off your ballot for you at a polling place or voter center or at an official ballot drop-off location.

WHAT IS A DROPBOX ?

A dropbox is a secure, locked structure where voters may deliver their ballots from the time they receive them by mail up to 8 p.m. on Election Day. Election officials will place dropboxes in convenient, accessible locations, including places close to public transportation routes. Voters are encouraged to recommend potential dropbox locations to election officials.

HOW DO I REGISTER TO VOTE BY MAIL PERMANENTLY?

All residents in California are eligible to vote by mail. If you live in a county that is not already switching to mail

in ballot system for all voters (like Los Angeles), you can apply to become a permanent vote by mail person. In order to do that you will need to fill out an application, which is available from your county elections office. When registering or re-registering to vote you have the option of permanent vote by mail.

HELP I AM PERMANENTLY VOTE BY MAIL AND I WANT OFF?

Head over to the county elected office and complete the California Permanent Vote-By-Mail Status Form.

BY WHEN DO I NEED TO APPLY FOR A VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT?

You need apply at least 7 days before the election for vote by mail ballot.

WHEN DO I HAVE TO TURN IN MY BALLOT BY?

You must drop you ballot in the mail by 8 pm on election day. Your ballot must be postmarked by 8 pm on election day.

I'M OUT OF TOWN FOR THE ELECTION WHAT DO I DO?

If you're going to be out of town or know that you can't get to a voter center for the election, and want to vote by mail, you should apply for a mail in ballot. To apply you may use the application printed on the voter information guide that is mailed to you by your county elections office prior to every election. You may also visit your local county elections offices for an application or you may use the California Vote-By-Mail Ballot Application

I'M NOT SURE IF I AM REGISTERED TO VOTE OR IF I NEED TO RE-REGISTER TO VOTE?

If you are unsure if or where you are registered to vote, go to <https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/>. You will need to know the last four digits of your social security number and California ID or Driver's License Number

I WANT TO VOTE IN A PARTY PRIMARY BUT I'M A DECLINE TO STATE, OR NO PARTY PREFERENCE VOTER, HOW DO I DO THAT?

Voters who registered to vote without stating a political party preference are known as No Party Preference (NPP) voters formerly known as “decline-to-state” or “DTS” voters. As a NPP voter during the primaries you will receive a “non-partisan” ballot that does not include presidential candidates as well as other down ballot partisan races. However California is open party voting state, which means any person can vote in any primary they choose.

IF YOU ARE VOTING IN PERSON

You can request a ballot from the political party that you would like to participate in.

If you are voting via mail in ballot

You will need to request your vote by mail ballot by filling the California Vote-by-Mail application. The application needs to be turned in at your county elections office. Remember to do it at least seven days in advance of the election.

I WANT TO PERMANENTLY CHANGE MY POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION.

You will need to re-register to vote.



FORMALLY OR CURRENTLY INCARCERATED

In California, if you have a felony, but no longer behind bars and off of parole, you are able to register and vote in the state of California.

YOU MAY ALSO REGISTER AND VOTE IF YOU ARE

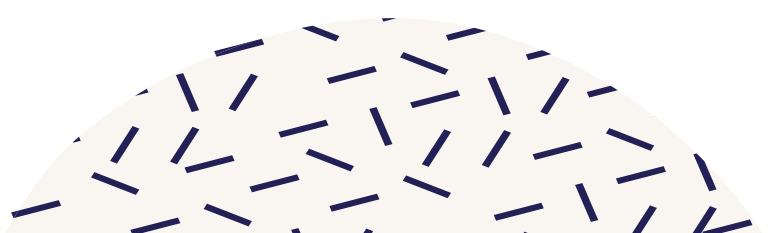
- Awaiting or on trial for a criminal offense;
- Serving time for a traffic or misdemeanor offense;
- Serving time in a local jail as a condition of probation.
- Serving a felony jail sentence in county jail
- On probation
- On mandatory supervision
- On post-release community supervision
- On federal supervised release
- A person with a juvenile wardship adjudication
- Persons with a criminal history that cannot vote:
- Currently imprisoned in:
 - State prison
 - Federal prison
- Currently serving a state prison felony sentence in a county jail or other correctional facility*
- Currently in county jail awaiting transfer to a state or federal prison for a felony conviction
- Currently in county jail for a parole violation
- Currently on parole with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

HOW TO RESTORE YOUR VOTE

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/restore-your-vote/>

Your voter registration application must be received or postmarked at least fifteen (15) days before Election Day to be eligible to vote in that election. In elections conducted by your county elections official, you can “conditionally” register and vote provisionally at your county elections office after the 15-day voter registration deadline.

****California Penal Code section 2910** allows the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to make agreements with local governments to house felons in a county jail or other correctional facility. A person serving a state prison sentence who is housed in a local jail or other facility under these circumstances is not allowed to register and vote





**VOTE
RUN
WIN**

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