Voter Registration –
Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible to register to vote?

Anyone can register to vote if they are:

- A United States citizen,
- A resident of California,
- 18 years of age or older on Election Day,
- Not currently imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony currently , and
- Not found by a court to be mentally incompetent.

Must a person provide identification when registering to vote?

- Yes. When registering or re-registering to vote, the voter must provide a California driver license or state ID number, if they have one, in the fields provided on the affidavit of registration.
- If the voter does not have a California driver license or state ID number, they must provide the last four numbers of their social security number in the field provided.
- If the voter does not have a California driver license, a state ID card or a social security number, the voter can still register. The county elections official will assign a unique identification number to the voter.
- Item 17 of the affidavit of registration must be completed if the voter has been previously registered to vote.

When is the last day to register to vote for an election?

A person must submit a completed and signed affidavit of registration to their county elections office no less than 15 days before an election to be eligible to vote in that election.

Can inmates register and vote?

A person who is convicted of a felony loses the right to register and vote while they are imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony. Once their state prison term or county jail term (for serving a state prison sentence) and parole period is completed, the person's ability to vote (if they were previously registered) or to register and vote is restored. For more information on the rights of people who have

been incarcerated, please see the Secretary of State's Voting Rights for Californians with Criminal Convictions or Detained in Jail or Prison.

When must a voter re-register to vote?

A voter must re-register to vote:

- Whenever there is a change in residence address. However, if a voter moved into a temporary residence that they do not intend to be their permanent residence, they can continue to use their prior residence where they were previously registered to vote as the address for the purpose of voting.
- To change their political party preference.
- To change their surname.

Upon re-registration, Item 17 of the affidavit of registration must be completed with the voter's previous registration information.

If a voter just moved within their county, do they need to re-register to vote?

If a voter moved to a new address within the same county, they can either re-register to vote or they can update their registration with a written notice to their county elections official.

If a voter did not vote in the last election do they need to re-register?

No. In general, a voter is registered for as long as the voter lives at the same address. However, if a voter has not voted in the last several elections, they may be sent a request to confirm that they have not moved.

If a person does not vote in a primary election, will they be able to vote in the following general election?

Yes.

If a voter is away at school, what address (college or parents') can they use?

A voter may use whichever address they consider to be their domicile, but not both.

If a person is on probation, mandatory supervision, or post-release community supervision can they register to vote?

Yes.

If a wife's husband is out of town but he needs to register, may the wife register him?

No. He must sign the affidavit of registration himself, under penalty of perjury. He can complete the affidavit and mail it from wherever he is. He may also register online at the Secretary of State's website.

If a voter registers to vote can the voter be called for jury duty?

Jury duty lists are compiled from a variety of sources, including the Department of Motor Vehicles records and the voter registration file.