



# Toolkit to Impact Elections

February 2020

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## Why Get Involved with Elections?

At our country's founding, only property-owning white men could vote. Decades of organizing, protest, and advocacy have since expanded voting rights to African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and women. However, a number of barriers, including voter suppression laws, language hurdles, limited campaign outreach to voters of color, and few opportunities for civics education lead to dramatic disparities in who turns out to vote. In California, Latino and Asian American voters have historically voted in lower numbers than the electorate at large. In fact, this gap got worse, not better, between the 2014 and 2018 general elections.<sup>1</sup>

Despite a diverse California population that is majority minority (non-white),<sup>2</sup> our electorate fails to reflect that diversity. In other words, a non-representative part of our state's population elects the politicians who decide how tax dollars are spent, which laws pass, and which communities are heard. In order to equitably tackle the issues that our communities face, we must first have a seat at the table.

There is a lot of work to be done to ensure our democracy works for everyone and all voters have access to the information and support they need to exercise this fundamental right. But keep in mind -- voting is only *one* of the many ways that people can influence elections to ensure our communities have a say about the politicians and laws that govern us.

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<sup>1</sup> California Civic Engagement Project. "California's Latino and Asian-American Vote: November 2018 General Election." USC Price, February 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Ramakrishnan, Karthick. "Civil Society in a Majority-Minority America? California Offers Both Hope and Caution." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 2 August 2018, [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/civil\\_society\\_in\\_a\\_majority\\_minority\\_america\\_california\\_offers\\_both\\_hope\\_and\\_caution](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/civil_society_in_a_majority_minority_america_california_offers_both_hope_and_caution). Accessed August 2019.

# Ways to Impact Elections

## Increase Voter Registration

### Encourage Your Community to Register to Vote

#### *Level of Engagement: Low*

In order to vote, one must first register to vote. However, more than 20% of eligible California voters did not register to vote in the 2018 general election. And, between 2010 and 2018, California saw dramatic voter registration disparities between Latinos and Asian Americans on the one hand and non-Latinos and Asian Americans on the other.<sup>3</sup> One way to change this is by educating your friends, family members, and community about the importance of voting and how to register to vote.

While you need to be a U.S. citizen and at least 18 years old in order to register to vote yourself, neither requirement applies when registering others! You do not need to be a U.S. citizen to register your friends and family to vote, and youth can and do register many people to vote every year.

You can make in-person announcements about voter registration in community settings (schools, sports leagues, and places of worship, etc.) that you are a part of. You can also write postcards, letters, emails, texts, and social media posts explaining why it's important to register and reminding people to register far in advance of the standard voter registration deadline (15 days before Election Day). If someone does not register before this deadline, however, let them know that they can still register to vote and vote in person on Election Day by visiting any voting site in California.

### Join or Organize a Voter Registration Drive

#### *Level of Engagement: Medium to High*

Another way to increase voter registration is by organizing or joining a voter registration drive. Some basic steps to organizing a voter registration drive include selecting a time and location, picking up voter registration cards from your county elections office (or using an electronic device with reliable wifi), gathering volunteers to help you register people on your chosen day, and publicizing your drive.

You can organize a voter registration drive at work or school, your place of worship, at popular community events, and more. If you have never registered people to vote before, reach out to your county elections office to get familiar with voter registration drive guidelines. If you would prefer not to host your own voter registration drive, reach out to local civic engagement organizations or a League of Women Voters chapter near you to find out how you can support their efforts. Voter registration is a great opportunity to boost civic engagement in your community and you do not need to be a citizen or registered voter in order to register someone else to vote.

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<sup>3</sup> California Civic Engagement Project. "California's Latino and Asian-American Vote: November 2018 General Election." USC Price, February 2019.

# Support a Candidate or Proposition Campaign

Electoral campaigns offer a fast-paced, exciting learning environment. By participating in an electoral campaign, you can learn more about a candidate or proposition, gain valuable skills, engage directly with voters, and feel part of a larger effort. Whether there are propositions on the ballot that you want to see pass or candidates whose priorities you support, there are plenty of opportunities to contribute and different levels of engagement to choose from.

## Volunteer for an Electoral Campaign

*Level of Engagement: Medium to High*

You probably have seen flyers, mailers, and tv ads during election season. For every message and point of contact, there is a team of passionate individuals working to spread the word about that particular candidate or campaign. If you are interested in joining an electoral campaign, use the following considerations and worksheet to help decide *which* campaigns to volunteer for.

### 1. Identify Your Top Issues

Before you research potential campaigns to join, first identify the top three issues that are important to you. For instance, if you care about poverty, climate change, and immigrant rights, your stances on these issues can guide your search for a campaign. Use campaign websites and trusted news sources to learn about candidates or ballot propositions that are leading the fight on the issues you care about most. Check in with your local [League of Women Voters chapter](#) to see if they have information to help you research. Community organizations that work on the issues you care about may give you insight into which local, state, and federal candidates they consider allies and which ballot propositions they consider highly important.

### 2. Choose a Campaign: Candidate vs. Proposition

Secondly, identify whether you would like to volunteer for a candidate campaign, in which you help someone get elected into office, or a proposition campaign, which involves supporting a ballot measure that would make a specific policy change or raise funding for a specific cause or program. When volunteering for a proposition campaign, you will focus much more narrowly on a particular set of issues. With a candidate campaign, you are promoting the potential of a candidate to bring about change in multiple areas once they reach office.

### 3. Determine Your Scale: Local, Regional, or National

From local city council and school board races all the way to the presidential ticket, there are electoral campaigns you can volunteer for at every level of government. Campaigns for presidential candidates begin at least a year in advance of the general election, state senator and assembly campaigns usually pick up the summer beforehand, and local races need the most support in the months leading up to Election Day. When selecting a geographic level of engagement, think about where you feel most passionate about seeing change. Are there issues in your community or city that you want to see addressed or are you more concerned with national affairs? Your experience as a volunteer might also vary depending on the geographic scope of the campaign. Local campaigns will have fewer resources and may be less organized than national campaigns, but you may have access to facetime with a candidate and the opportunity to take on greater responsibility.

# Worksheet: How to Choose an Electoral Campaign

## Identifying Issues

Issue	Issue #1	Issue #2	Issue #3
Why do I care?			
Where do I stand on this issue?			
Which campaigns address my top issues and share my values?			

## My Campaign Criteria

### What type of campaign?

- Candidate
- Proposition

### What scale do I want to work on?

- Local
- State
- National

### What type of tasks do I want to do?

- Door knock
- Leave door hangers and flyer
- Phone bank
- Social media
- Data entry
- Create materials
- Other

Once you identify a potential campaign to volunteer for, reach out through their website, stop by their office if there's one in your area, or attend a campaign event to learn more. Typically, campaigns have two buckets of volunteer roles available to you. The first bucket is voter contact, which involves direct outreach to register voters or encourage them to vote for your campaign. You may be tasked with flyering at events, distributing window signs, promoting the campaign on college campuses, door-knocking, leaving door-hangers, phone calling, or text-banking. Campaigns should provide you with the training and materials that you will need! If you prefer tasks that do not involve reaching out directly to voters, many campaigns also have administrative roles at their office. You may support with staffing the front desk, data entry, preparing packets, making yard signs/posters, helping with social media, and more.

Ultimately, by volunteering for an electoral campaign, you can get to know your city and fellow residents better, learn about campaign strategy, and feel like you are actively taking part in building a better democracy.

## Digital Advocacy and Social Media Campaigns

### *Level of Engagement: Low*

Although one of the most effective forms of voter outreach is in-person outreach, you can also support a campaign digitally. This may look like writing an op-ed to your local paper explaining why you support a specific candidate or proposition. It may involve posting graphics, memes, and messages on your social media channels to spread the word about that campaign. For those who feel less comfortable doing direct voter outreach, social media is another great way to help publicize an electoral campaign.

## Support a Campaign Financially

### *Level of Engagement: Low*

Although electoral campaigns rely heavily upon volunteer time and people power, they also require funding. If you are a fundraising guru, this role may be for you. You can coordinate or host community fundraising events, pop-up dinners, and house parties to highlight a proposition or a candidate. Or, if you have the capacity, you can also donate money directly to a campaign you care about.

## Education

### Organize an Educational Event

#### *Level of Engagement: High*

Another way to spread the word about elections is to coordinate and host an educational event. This may involve putting on a candidate forum or ballot initiative workshop at your home, a local cafe, a community center, or a nearby place of worship (think Ballots + Boba). When election season comes around, so much information is available that it can be confusing and time-consuming for people to choose who and what to vote for. Hosting a small informational gathering creates an opportunity to get to know your neighbors, challenge your assumptions, and get more familiar with the ballot.

## Checklist: Planning an Education Event Around the Elections

### Items to Keep in Mind When Planning Any Community Event

1. Time and Date
  - Choose a time and date that allow working folks to attend (i.e. after 6 pm on weekdays or on weekends)
  - Choose a time and date that allow candidates and presenters to attend
2. Location
  - Choose somewhere that is centrally located or in a part of town where historically there is less campaign outreach. If possible, choose a location people can access via public transit.
  - Other things to consider: Is the space itself accessible for people with disabilities? Does the space layout allow people to interact easily? Is the space quiet enough so everyone can listen? Is it family friendly?
3. Other Event Logistics
  - Food - if you meet close to a traditional meal time, will food be made available?
  - Childcare - can you offer childcare so more parents can attend?
  - Technology - will you need a laptop, projector, or microphone (and have you tested them)?
  - Materials - will you need poster paper and markers, a clipboard, a sign-in sheet?
4. Publicize Your Event
  - Create a Facebook event and share widely
  - Publicize in neighborhood newsletters, on NextDoor, via paper flyers, word of mouth, etc.

### Items to Keep in Mind When Planning Two Common Types of Election Events

#### **Candidate Forum**

##### *Identify and Invite Candidates*

- Identify which candidates you want to learn more about
- Reach out to campaign staff to invite and secure their participation

##### *Develop Program*

- Research candidates and work with your community to generate questions
- Determine event format - will you use a panel? Small group discussions? Presentations?
- Develop a schedule (agenda) for the event with time estimates per section
- Assign people to serve as greeters, facilitators, emcees, timekeepers, etc.
- Invite community members, especially those who may benefit the most from the upcoming election, to ask the candidates questions

#### **Ballot Proposition Party**

##### *Develop Program*

- Research propositions and select the most important, controversial, or confusing ones
- Assign different people to present on one or two ballot propositions each (what it does, pros/cons, who supports it, etc.)
- Develop a schedule (agenda) for the event with time estimates per section
- Assign people to serve as greeters, facilitators, emcees, timekeepers, etc.

# Template: Ballot Proposition Party - Agenda

Time and Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

## GOALS

- Encourage GOTV and get folks excited about the election
- Give people an opportunity to get to know their neighbors and take on leadership roles
- Create a low-stress, accessible opportunity for people to learn about campaigns and ballot measures

## AGENDA

Time	Item	Led by
6:00 - 6:15 pm (15 min)	Sign in and Welcome	Alex
6:15 - 6:25 pm (10 min)	Introduction and Opening Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduce event organizers</li> <li>● Icebreaker: In groups of 3-4, folks share their name, what brought them here, and how they feel about the upcoming election</li> </ul>	Kristina
6:25 - 6:30 pm (5 min)	Framing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Goals for the night: Dig into local ballot measures and encourage GOTV!</li> </ul>	Chika
6:30 - 7:45 pm (1 hour 15 min)	Discuss Local Ballot Measures: Props A, B, D, G, H <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Present ballot measure (3 min)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What the measure does</li> <li>○ Basic pro &amp; con arguments</li> <li>○ Who is for and against</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Breakout pairs (2 min)</li> <li>● Clarifying questions and discussion in large group (8 min)</li> </ul>	Prop A: Jessica Prop B: Raul Prop D: Karen Prop G: Yasmin Prop H: Peter
7:45 - 8 pm (15 min)	Wrap up and Socialize <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Announce campaigns and upcoming volunteer opportunities or ways to get involved</li> <li>● Reminders on voter deadlines!</li> </ul>	Terry



## Plan a Candidate Forum or Ballot Proposition Party

### *Level of Engagement: High*

Working with a group of friends, you can begin by identifying a date and place. Reach out to local cafes, pubs, and libraries to see if they have space or availability for you to host the event. If you are putting on a candidate forum, reach out to each candidate's campaign manager to invite the candidate to participate. Then, in collaboration with community members, develop a program, generate a list of questions to ask the candidates, and identify community members who can ask the questions and play various roles as needed.

Although not all community members can vote for their representatives, candidate forums offer a powerful opportunity for all members of the community, regardless of citizenship status, to directly ask candidates important questions to ensure they are accountable to their needs.

Alternatively, if you are hosting a ballot initiative event, you can select some of the most confusing, controversial, or significant ballot measures to discuss. Research the pros and cons of each by reviewing the county voter information guide available on your county election office's website and checking voter guides and news sources you trust. [VotersEdge.org](http://VotersEdge.org), a website run by the League of Women Voters, provides helpful, unbiased information. Split up this task amongst friends so that each person is responsible for deeply researching and presenting just one or a few of the ballot measures. Finally, create a Facebook event page and conduct active outreach to your networks on social media. You can also draft a simple flyer by hand or on free design software like Canva to publicize the event. Pass out your flyer at community gatherings or markets and post it in highly visible public spaces.

Organizing an event can be particularly important if you are bilingual. While many elections materials are available in languages other than English, too few voters know this. If you speak English and another language, invite family members and community members who speak little to no English and help them understand what they will be voting on.

## Get Out The Vote

### *Level of Engagement: Medium*

As the election nears, countless organizations and campaigns will be in full Get Out The Vote (or GOTV) mode to ensure registered voters send in their vote by mail ballots or make it to polling places on Election Day. Join an organization or campaign you support. You might make phone calls or walk door to door to speak with voters. Other ways that you can help get out the vote is by offering to give voters rides to their nearest polling place so that voting is more accessible, especially for those who lack a car, are elderly, or who have a disability. Or you might offer to provide childcare to make it easier for working parents to vote. You can also share know your voting rights information with your community so they know how to vote and feel prepared leading up to Election Day.

## Language Access

In California, roughly 3 million eligible voters identify as limited English proficient (LEP).<sup>4</sup> Thanks to the federal Voting Rights Act, the largest language minorities are eligible to receive fully translated election materials. Smaller language minority communities in California may only be eligible to receive facsimile ballots, which are translated reference copies of the ballot that can be used to help fill out an English ballot, in qualifying areas.

Despite the availability of translated materials, LEP voters may require additional language assistance for a number of reasons. At least 220 languages are spoken by California's diverse communities,<sup>5</sup> which means numerous language minority communities are not eligible to receive translated voting materials under either state or federal law. Also, elections offices may fail to fully comply with language assistance requirements under the law. For instance, during the November 2016 general election, 25% of polling places across 17 California counties were missing translated ballots required by law.<sup>6</sup> Lastly, many limited English proficient individuals may have trouble finding or reading translated voting materials and might benefit greatly from in-person verbal language assistance.

If you speak a language other than English, there are multiple ways that you can help ensure limited English proficient voters in your community can fully access the vote.

### Review Translations of Election Materials

#### *Level of Engagement: Medium*

Elections offices are responsible for producing countless translated materials, including the official ballot, facsimile ballots, provisional ballots, signage, and more. Community review of their translations can help ensure that these translations are accurate and make sense for your community. You can reach out directly to the elections office to ask what languages they will provide translated materials in and to offer to review any translations for the languages you read and speak.

### Offer In-Person Language Assistance and Interpretation

#### *Level of Engagement: Medium*

You can help limited-English speaking members of your family and community access translated voting materials if they are available. Regardless of whether you have access to translated voting materials, you can use your language skills to help them understand the ballot before Election Day. And on Election Day itself, every voter in California is allowed to take up to two assisters to help them vote in person, as long as they do not represent the voter's employer or union. If you know a friend, family member, or other community member who might need assistance voting an English ballot, you can accompany them to the polling place and explain the various ballot measures and candidates to them in their preferred language.

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<sup>4</sup> "Citizenship Status By Age By Language Spoken At Home And Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years And Over." *2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*, United States Census Bureau, 2017, [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_17\\_1YR\\_B16008&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_17_1YR_B16008&prodType=table). Accessed 10 January 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Dolan, Maura. "With 220 languages spoken in California, courts face an interpreter shortage." *Los Angeles Times*, 5 September 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-court-interpreter-20170905-story.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Asian Americans Advancing Justice - California. "Voices of Democracy."

Alternatively, you can also offer live interpretation at campaign events, community gatherings, or voter education events. You can lead voter registration drives and canvassing efforts in areas that are home to a large limited-English speaking population that might benefit from your language skills.

## Other Ways to Offer Language Support

### *Level of Engagement: Medium to High*

Below are other ideas for how to use your language skills to impact elections:

- Hold a community meeting/event before Election Day in which you help people who speak little or no English understand what is on the ballot
- Serve on an advisory committee (i.e. Language Access Advisory Committee) that guides your county elections office on serving limited-English speaking voters
- Serve as a poll worker
- Serve as a poll monitor

## Serve on an Elections Advisory Committee

### *Level of Engagement: High*

Many California counties have formed Language Access Advisory Committees (LAACs) and Voting Accessibility Advisory Committees (VAACs) to help them meet the needs of limited English proficient voters and voters with disabilities. These bodies are open to both members of the public and community organizations to join at any time. VAAC and LAAC members have the opportunity to provide substantive feedback around key aspects of the elections process. For instance, LAAC members may be asked to review mailers, comment on the placement of polling places and vote centers, and provide input on preferred ethnic media channels.

In some counties, such as Sacramento and San Mateo counties, elections offices have also formed Voter Education and Outreach Advisory Committees (VEOAC). Different from the LAAC and VAAC, this body is charged with giving the elections office feedback regarding their outreach and education plans, including event outreach, social media, and more. Go to your county elections website to find out when the next VAAC, LAAC, or VEOAC meeting takes place and how you can get involved.

## Become a Poll Worker

### *Level of Engagement: High*

One of the most rewarding ways to engage in the electoral process is by serving as a poll worker on or leading up to Election Day. Poll workers help open and close the polling place, assist voters, process ballots, and more. As a poll worker, you have the opportunity to create a safe, culturally sensitive, welcoming environment for voters, especially those who are voting for the first time or who are limited-English proficient. Bilingual poll workers are in high demand. If you speak a language other than English, you can use this valuable skill to assist limited-English proficient voters and may receive an additional stipend for your language skills. Some counties may also recruit volunteers who are paid stipends to greet voters and help with traffic flow on Election Day.

Poll workers are paid for their service on Election Day and, in some counties, during the early voting period. To be eligible to become a poll worker, you must speak English and be either a U.S. citizen or

a legal permanent resident. High school students who are 16 and older also are eligible to serve as poll workers. All poll workers must first go through training before staffing a polling place on Election Day. To allow enough time for the onboarding and training process, submit your application at least 3-4 weeks before Election Day. Contact your local elections office or go to their website to find out more information.

## Protect the Right to Vote and Become a Poll Monitor

### *Level of Engagement: High*

If you are passionate about protecting the right to vote on Election Day, you can volunteer as a non-partisan poll monitor. Also called election observers, poll monitors observe the voting process to ensure that elections offices are in compliance with voting rights requirements, including requirements to offer language assistance and access for voters with disabilities. They work with poll workers and voters to address issues that arise that might otherwise disenfranchise voters. They also gather valuable data that can lead to an improved voting experience in the future.

If serving as a poll monitor interests you, reach out directly to the Voting Rights team at [Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus](#). Asian Law Caucus trains and sends hundreds of poll monitors into the field on Election Day in California to monitor for compliance with language access laws, accessibility requirements, and so much more. Check out our [“Voices of Democracy”](#) report to learn about the findings from our 2016 poll monitoring program. Alternatively, you can contact the [national Election Protection coalition](#) to find other opportunities to monitor the polls.

## Register to Vote and Vote

There are countless ways to get involved in your democracy and make a change in your community regardless of your age or citizenship status. If you are a U.S. citizen, you also have the opportunity to make your voice heard by voting. You can find translated voting rights factsheets and resources by visiting Asian Law Caucus' [Voting Rights Resources](#) page.

All citizens who are residents of California, older than 18 on Election Day, not currently in prison or on parole for a felony, and not found by a court to be “mentally incompetent” can vote. Voting is your fundamental right. Through voting, you have the opportunity to influence which lawmakers will represent you and determine where your public tax dollars go. In other words, voting is one way for you to have a direct say in the systems, decision-makers, and policies that govern your daily life. However, in California, the old are making decisions for the young and white voters are making decisions for communities of color. In the 2018 general election, 28% of young eligible voters voted whereas 69% of eligible baby boomers voted.<sup>7</sup> In that same election, 33% of eligible Asian Americans and 36% of eligible Latinos voted compared to more than 60% of everyone else.<sup>8</sup> If you want your community and generation to have a voice, you have to vote. Don't give up this important opportunity to build power for your community!

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<sup>7</sup> California Civic Engagement Project. “California’s Youth Vote: November 2018 General Election.” USC Price, February 2019.

<sup>8</sup> California Civic Engagement Project. “California’s Latino and Asian-American Vote: November 2018 General Election.” USC Price, February 2019.

## Register to vote

Typically, elections occur in even years with occasional special elections in odd years. During an election year in California, you can vote in March or June for the primary election to narrow the field of candidates in each party and again in November for the general election to elect a final candidate into office. Presidential elections happen every four years and gubernatorial (governor) races happen in the years in between. Go to your county elections office website to find out when the next election will take place.

Before you vote, you must register (or sign up) to vote. For the smoothest voting experience, register before the standard voter registration deadline, which is 15 days before the election. In California, you can register to vote [online](#) or via paper form in ten languages. You can obtain a paper form at the DMV, your local post office, the library, and the elections office. To make sure your voter registration form is fully counted, don't forget to add your signature and date. And, keep an eye out for some important but often missed sections of the form. For instance, when registering to vote, you can indicate that you prefer to receive your voting materials in a language other than English and sign up as a vote-by-mail voter. Drop your completed voter registration form in the mail -- no stamp required!

If you don't remember if you already previously registered or have changed your address or your name since you last registered, register again. It takes less than five minutes online.

In California, if you miss the standard voter registration deadline, which is 15 days before Election Day, you can also register to vote and vote the same day at all voting sites on Election Day and at some designated locations prior to Election Day.

## Get prepared

Before you vote, take the time to research the candidates and propositions that will be on your ballot. Once you are registered, state and county elections offices will send sample ballots and voter information guides that describe in detail what you will be voting on. You can find nonpartisan information at [VotersEdge.org](http://VotersEdge.org). Additionally, look to local organizations and news outlets you trust to see whether they have produced voter guides or published their endorsements online. You might contact your local [League of Women Voters chapter](#) to find out if any ballot measure forums are being held in your area. You can also plan an educational event such as a candidate forum or ballot proposition party. You might decide to have participants research and then present on various ballot measures or host a more informal event where you review and work on your ballots together. See the *"Organize an Educational Event"* section to learn more.

## Go vote!

If you prefer to vote by mail, election offices will begin sending out your vote-by-mail ballot around one month before Election Day. In some counties, you must actively request to receive a vote-by-mail ballot but some counties automatically send you a vote-by-mail ballot in the mail if you are registered to vote. Contact your [county elections office](#) to find out which applies to your county.

Once you receive your vote-by-mail ballot, fill it out, seal the envelope, and sign the back of the envelope. Then, drop your ballot off in any mailbox, post office, or drop box (no postage needed).

Your ballot must be postmarked (in other words, stamped and processed by the post office) by Election Day, so to be safe drop your ballot in the mail *before* Election Day.

If you prefer to vote in person, find your nearest voting site on your county voter information guide or search [online](#). If need be, notify your employer in advance that you will need to take time off work to vote. By law, you are allowed two hours on Election Day to vote and can bring up to two people to assist you. On or before Election Day (some counties may offer early voting), go to your assigned voting site when it is open. Elections office staff will find your name on their roster and hand you a paper ballot or direct you to an electronic ballot marking device.

If any issues come up when you try to vote in person on Election Day (for instance, your name is not on the roster), request to re-register to vote. That should fix most problems. If that doesn't fix your problem, ask for a provisional ballot, which will be accepted once the elections office has checked to make sure you are eligible to vote in that county and that you have not already submitted a ballot.

## Guide: 3 Steps to Vote

### 1. Register to Vote

I'm not sure if I'm registered



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

I'm not registered yet



Register at <https://registertovote.ca.gov/> or pick up a voter registration card at any library, DMV, or post office

I'm already registered



If you have changed your name or address since you last registered, update your registration by re-registering

### 2. Do Your Research

Use the following materials and resources to understand the candidates and propositions in advance:

- Read your county and state voter information guide (automatically sent to you via mail about a month before Election Day, for free, if you register to vote)
- Go to [Voter's Edge](#) for nonpartisan information from the League of Women Voters:
- Check out candidate websites and voting guides from organizations and trusted news sources
- Attend educational events and candidate forums
- Talk to family and friends

### 3. Make a Plan and Vote

#### Vote By Mail



Select a time and date when you will vote - block it out on your calendar!



Fill out your vote by mail ballot, seal the envelope, and sign.



Drop off your ballot at any mailbox or post office before Election Day (no stamp needed). If you run out of time, you can drop your vote-by-mail ballot at any polling place on Election Day.

#### Vote in Person



Check your voter information guide or go online to find the location of your polling place or vote center.



Find out what hours and days your voting site is open, and select a time and date when you will vote. Identify how you will get there.



Arrive at your voting site during open hours and vote!

## Conclusion

This toolkit describes just *some* of the many ways to impact elections. Whatever level of engagement feels right for you, we all have a role to play. Regardless of where you choose to begin, encourage friends and family members to join you. Not only will your impact be wider if you collaborate with others, but you also have the chance to build community in the process. Now is the time - don't wait! You already have the knowledge and capacity needed to help build a more equitable democracy that serves everyone.