Helping people get ready to vote in California’s November 3, 2020 General Election

September 2020 Edition
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Thank you for your interest in helping more people get educated about voting and making change in their communities. You can use this toolkit to help promote voting in any of your library and literacy activities. Also provided is a complete outline for a 60 to 90-minute voting workshop that you can also break into multiple sessions to suit your audience.

The mission of the Key to Community Project is to provide “learner-friendly” voter education and community engagement skills to help more people grow the good in their communities.

California Library Literacy Services (libraryliteracy.org) supports literacy programs in over 100 library systems in California, including the library you are connected with. These programs provide a range of literacy services to 16,000 adult learners each year.

This toolkit builds on past work of the Key to Community project (keytocommunity.org) begun in 1994 with the Bay Area New Reader’s Council and Common Knowledge (ckgroup.org), a nonpartisan organization committed to accessible civic information and grassroots community leadership. The Key to Community project continues to be co-designed and delivered by California Library Literacy Services learner leaders who have a proven track record of increasing participation among people who are underrepresented in government decision-making.

The Key to Community project is part of the Literacy Initiatives Program which is supported, in whole or in part, by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian. Additional support has been provided by Common Knowledge. We also thank the League of Women Voters of California Education Fund for their collaboration on many aspects of this project.

The Key to Community project team welcomes your questions and suggestions before, during and after you conduct your voter education for this election. Please direct them to info@ckgroup.org or call 415-454-6500.
Libraries play a unique role in every community. Over the past several years, trust has declined in many institutions. A comprehensive study conducted by the Pew Research Center shows that libraries continue to maintain high levels of trust.

**Trust in news and information sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of U.S. adults who trust the following news and information source “a lot”</th>
<th>Eager and Willing (22% of adults)</th>
<th>Confident (18% of adults)</th>
<th>Cautious and Curious (13% of adults)</th>
<th>Doubtful (24% of adults)</th>
<th>The Wary (23% of adults)</th>
<th>All adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local public library or librarians</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care providers</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and friends</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local news organizations</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government sources</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National news organizations</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial institutions</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram (based on social media users)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Mean number information sources trusted “a lot” out of eight listed | 3.05 | 3.43 | 1.07 | 0.80 | 0.61 | 1.72 |

Source: Survey conducted Sept. 29-Nov 6, 2016.
“*How People Approach Facts and Information*”

PIEW RESEARCH CENTER

**Excerpt from How People Approach Facts and Information**: “When people consider engaging with facts and information any number of factors come into play. How interested are they in the subject? How much do they trust the sources of information that relate to the subject? How eager are they to learn something more?... Combining people’s views toward new information – and their appetites for it – allows us to create an “information-engagement typology.”

Two of the five groups in the Pew Research typology most closely align with the profiles of California’s library-based adult literacy students:

**The Eager and Willing – 22% of U.S. adults**: They are not necessarily confident of their digital abilities, but they are anxious to learn. One striking thing about this group is its demographic profile: More than half the members of this group are minorities: 31% are Hispanic; 21% are black and 38% are white, while the remainder are in other racial and ethnic groups.

**The Cautious and Curious – 13% of adults**: They have a strong interest in news and information, even though they do not have high levels of trust in the sources of news and information – particularly national news organizations, financial institutions and the government. But they are interested in growth, with a great deal of interest in improving digital skills and literacy. This group differs very little from the general population’s average, although its members have somewhat lower levels of educational attainment than the mean.
Library Literacy Programs and Voting

In fall 2020 we are facing a significant election during a period of social turmoil. Libraries provide a calm nonpartisan learning space and literacy programs are uniquely well suited to nurture and encourage new voters or less confident voters. Adult learners of all backgrounds are often eager to learn more about voting.

An election presents an opportunity for adult learners to improve their reading and writing skills as well as achieve new accomplishments in the role of Community Member. As they dig into the work of making sense of the voting process and what is on the ballot, tutors and learners can discover links to the role of Family Member and Lifelong Learner. The fall 2020 election also includes issues that speak to the role of Worker. Instead of being an “interruption” to an adult learner’s learning process, participating an election can support ongoing literacy goals while also building momentum with a concrete achievement.

Why it Matters
In the last Presidential election, 4 out of 10 eligible voters in California didn’t cast a ballot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Challenges and Myths</th>
<th>How Key to Community helps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• People are worried about making mistakes.</td>
<td>• Voting is NOT a test; just vote for the things you care about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If your vote is private, you have to do it alone</td>
<td>• You can ask for help and get support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Don’t like politics</td>
<td>• Friendly peer to peer support to let you make up your own mind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Don’t trust government</td>
<td>• Non-partisan information from the library, a trusted source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It’s all so confusing!</td>
<td>• Simpler language; “just enough” information for each step</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learner Leader Insights

The Key to Community Project wants to give people better information to make their own decisions about voting. Learners have shared how good it feels to participate and make choices independently, rather than having to rely on someone else. Over the years, learner leaders have developed insights around the **WHY**, **HOW** and **WHAT** of voting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY Vote</th>
<th>Ways to Vote</th>
<th>WHAT is on the ballot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Learners recommend starting by talking about **what we care about in our communities**. That opens the topic in a friendlier way than talking about “politics” or even about the “rights and responsibilities” of being a citizen.  
  • When people are asked about **positive changes they want to see**, it helps increase their interest in learning about “Who Represents You” in government and how our representatives get elected. |  
  We want to help people grow the good in their communities.  
  Alma Hernandez Miller |  
  • Let people know that they are in control of whether to vote by mail or in-person. **We choose the where and when of how we vote.**  
  • Assure people that **voting is not like taking a test**; you do NOT have to vote on everything on the ballot for your vote to count. Choose the things you care about and focus on those.  
  • Your vote is always private but that doesn’t mean you can’t get help figuring out how you want to vote. New voters who talk to others before making their voting choices are more likely to vote. |  
  Let it be your choice how to use your voice.  
  Faye Combs |  
  • Learners have helped developed the Easy Voter Guide and other handouts with simpler language than official documents and friendlier ways of explaining key concepts. These starting points provide “**just enough**” information for people to decide if they want to learn more.  
  • On the other hand, learner leaders have sidestepped the common pitfall of oversimplifying the issues into sound bites. They know that issues can be complex and that there are usually no easy answers. They want to help other learners be better equipped to develop their own understanding of the issues. |  
  I want to push people’s curiosity and get them asking questions.  
  Resonja Willoughby |
There is a longstanding pattern that the people most likely to vote in elections have higher incomes and higher levels of educational attainment. This has led many people to assume that adults with lower literacy levels don’t vote because they don’t care as much about the issues beyond their daily lives. In our experience, that assumption is not true!

Many library literacy program learners are already help improve quality of life in their communities by supporting their children’s schools, working in their neighborhoods, volunteering in faith communities and more. See video examples of learners in action at the California Library Literacy Services webpage about learner leaders.

The learner leaders who have co-developed the Key to Community project over the years have used this insight to start conversations around “What do you care about in your community?” They found this question to be an effective stepping off point for helping people learn more about elections. By making the process of voting more relevant, more accessible, and less political, they have “busted the apathy myth.”

In fact, the Key to Community voter engagement model co-designed and co-led by learners was shown to double the rate of voting among adult students. This toolkit aims to distill the project’s proud history into a format that can also be used by staff or tutors in whatever format best fits the new virtual reality of fall 2020.

New voters, lapsed voters, new citizens and those who are not yet citizens have all helped to road test the voter education strategies included here. They each found something of value. You too may be connecting with people who are starting from different places. For example:

- Someone who has never voted might register to vote.
- Someone who has voted based on what other people told them to do might commit to learn about the issues more deeply with information from the library.
- Someone not eligible to vote could still encourage others to get informed and vote.

According to Peter Levine at Tufts University, the #1 predictor about voting behavior is whether you grew up in a family that voted. The learner leaders working on this project want to encourage everyone to incorporate activities related to voting into everyday conversations and activities with the young people in their lives.
What is New this Election

- Due to the pandemic, every registered voter will get mailed a ballot if they register by October 19.
- When you register (sign up) online at registertovote.ca.gov, you can also add ballot tracking.
- If you miss the October 19 deadline, you can still sign up after that up to vote in person by election day.
- Your county elections office is going to have fewer polling places and will provide more drop boxes. It is essential to get specific information for your county, and your library might be one of the locations.
  You can find your county’s elections website on this list: [https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/county-elections-offices/](https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/county-elections-offices/)
- There is already a high level of interest in the election and a flood of coverage, including misinformation. A key role for literacy program staff and tutors is to reduce confusion and distrust in the process.

Voting and Your Current Activities

- Support voter education by holding virtual workshops or folding discussion of the issues into existing classes.
- Use any or all of the steps in the voting process as content for one-on-one tutoring sessions.
- Share Key to Community tools and links across your program’s and library’s websites, newsletters, email lists.
- Plan virtual “Let’s talk about Voting” sessions; invite community partners and social service agencies. Send the video link for “Voting and Our Families” ahead of the gathering to spark interest.
- Include “Getting Ready to Vote” and “What is on the ballot” information in your newsletter, tutor trainings and conversations clubs.
- Hand out the Easy Voter Guide and/or other voting information during curbside pickup.
- Include conversations about voting in regular storytimes, family literacy activities, adult and teen services.

Planning a Virtual Voting Workshop

- Choose if you want to do the workshop in one or two Zoom sessions.
- Decide if you want to provide information with the help of local partners, such as the League of Women Voters, and/or your county elections office.
- You can also partner with your local adult school or other community partners to expand your audience.
# Week-by-Week Election Game Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Things to do (and you choose the timing that works best for you)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 21</td>
<td>Register to vote</td>
<td>Share the <a href="https://registertovote.ca.gov">registertovote.ca.gov</a> link with all learners and tutors. Also post and share links to <a href="https://keytocommunity.org">keytocommunity.org</a>, <a href="https://easyvoterguide.org">easyvoterguide.org</a>, and <a href="https://votersedge.org/ca">votersedge.org/ca</a>. Ask tutors and learners to send you an “I signed up!” message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 28</td>
<td>Get your local information ready</td>
<td>If you haven’t already, link to your <a href="https://www.elections.ca">county elections office</a> website to see the location of Drop Boxes, and early voting dates and locations. Check to see if one or more of YOUR library’s branches has been designated for in-person voting or as an official ballot Drop Box location. Contact your local League of Women Voters to see what local candidate debates they are hosting (&amp; note the first <a href="https://www.c-span.org/video/?id=18390-1">presidential debate</a> is Sept 29).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 5</td>
<td>Ballots start getting mailed; share the 3 ways to vote (by mail, drop box or in person)</td>
<td>Printed copies of the Easy Voter Guide should have arrived. Mail them out to your program and local partners (or send the PDF). Suggest watching the <a href="https://www.c-span.org/video/?id=18393-1">vice presidential debate</a> on Oct. 7, as practice for listening to candidates and how they address the issues. Invite people to sign up for the <a href="https://www.keytocommunity.org/roundtable">October 9 3pm Key to Community roundtable</a> – all questions will be welcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 12 through Oct 25</td>
<td>What is on my ballot? Which issues do I care about?</td>
<td>Host a voter workshop or viewing party. You can share the <a href="https://www.keytocommunity.org/what-is-on-my-ballot">What is on My Ballot</a> workshop recording. Include discussion about people’s issues during tutoring sessions and conversations clubs. Use this <a href="https://www.keytocommunity.org/voting-book-list">voting book list</a> for family literacy activities. The voter registration deadline is Oct. 19 to get a mailed ballot. Encourage early voting for people who feel ready.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 26 through Nov 3</td>
<td>Time to vote!</td>
<td>Remind people that if they did not register by Oct 19, they can still vote in person with a “provisional” ballot. All last minute questions are welcome at the <a href="https://www.keytocommunity.org/roundtable">Oct 27 6pm Key to Community roundtable</a>. Ask for “WHY I VOTED!” selfies from people who voted to inspire others. Collect them to motivate future activities as a Community Member. Nov. 4, after the election, send out a message thanking everyone for their participation and invite them to share their voting experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Concepts and Handouts
• The Key to Community project is by the community, for the community.

• We are non-partisan.

• Our goal is to help people get enough information to make up their own minds.

Key to Community Team and Partners

California Key Dates for Nov. 3 election

Oct. 5  Vote-by-mail ballots start being sent to all registered voters; early voting starts

Oct. 19 Registration deadline to get a ballot in the mail. You can still register after that to vote in person.

Oct. 27 Place your vote-by-mail ballot in the mail by this day, if possible

Nov. 3  Election Day!  Vote in person or drop off your vote-by-mail ballot
Talk with others and learn more before deciding

Have conversations that help people learn enough to make their own voting choices.

Voting Conversations Cover 5 Steps

1. Why vote?
2. Sign up to vote
3. Ways to vote
4. What is on Your Ballot?
5. Make your choices and Vote!
Voting Rights: Past 100 Years

- **1920** – Women granted the right to vote
- **1964** – Poll taxes were outlawed
- **1965** – Voting Rights Act; outlawed literacy tests
- **1971** – Voting age lowered to 18

Who is eligible to vote?

You can register to vote if you are:
- A U.S. Citizen
- At least 18 years old by election day
- Not in prison or on parole for a felony

*Voting rights for people convicted of a felony vary by state. In California, once someone has completed their parole they can register to vote.

- Voter registration is managed by the California Secretary of State’s Office.
- County elections offices are responsible for counting ballots and determining when and where you can vote. Find your county elections office using this list.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Who votes? And who doesn’t?

Eligible California Voters (Nov. 2016)

- 59% voted
- 41% did not vote

U.S. Voter Participation by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18–29</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–44</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–64</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and up</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

What are some of the reasons why people choose to vote? Or not to vote? Have a discussion about it:

**Why Vote?**
- To make a change
- To make my voice heard
- For my family
- People worked so hard for my rights
- To feel like I matter
- Elect leaders who share my values
- It’s my responsibility to my community

**Why Not Vote?**
- It is confusing; don’t understand the issues or who is running
- Not happy with the choices
- Do not trust the government
- Not eligible yet
- Don’t like politics
- Very busy
- Hard to get reliable information
2. Sign up: Register online at [RegistertoVote.ca.gov](http://RegistertoVote.ca.gov)

- It’s free! Sign up online or with a paper form.
- Get a paper form by calling **800-345-VOTE** (8683).
- Register or check your registration at [RegistertoVote.ca.gov](http://RegistertoVote.ca.gov).
- The name on your registration needs to match the way you will sign your name when you vote.

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Choosing a political party

- When you register, you can choose whether to join a political party. It is free to join a party.
- Or, you can check the box that says you do not want to choose a political party.
- For the November 3 General Election, you will get the same ballot no matter what you choose.
Every registered voter gets mailed a ballot

*Your ballot packet may look different, depending on where you live:

A voter information guide from the **state**

A voter information guide and sample ballot from your **county**
3. Ways to Vote

- Every registered voter will get mailed a **ballot packet**
- You can **mail your ballot in, drop it off or vote in person**
- Your county elections office website has details about how to vote in your community and about early voting

**Remember:** You can vote early!
Voting starts in October and goes through November 3

Your ballot packet will include:

- Registered voters get their ballot in the mail, along with instructions, a return envelope and an “I Voted” sticker
- This example is from Los Angeles County. The ballot packet from your county may look different.
Sign the **return envelope** (not the ballot) before mailing it in or dropping it off.

If you choose to vote in person:

- Your usual location may have changed. There will be fewer “polling places” and more large “Vote Centers.”
- Find out where to vote on your Sample Ballot or at [votersedge.org/ca](http://votersedge.org/ca)
- Wear your mask. Election workers will also follow safety guidelines.
- Visit your county elections website to find the dates and locations for voting early, before election day.

*Remember:* You can take someone with you to vote. You can ask for help. It is part of the **California Voter Bill of Rights**.
### 4. What is on your ballot?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Proposed Laws</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• President</td>
<td>• 12 State Propositions about:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Congress</td>
<td>o Tax changes; how taxes support schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• State Senate</td>
<td>o Rent control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• State Assembly</td>
<td>o Affirmative action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• County Supervisor</td>
<td>o Changes in bail, parole and sentencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• City Council</td>
<td>o And more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There may be local ballot measures too</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Find out what's on your ballot at Voter's Edge
votersedge.org/ca
Tips for choosing a candidate

- What are their priorities?
- What is their experience?
- Do they care about the same issues that you do?
- Who supports them?

Pay attention to local elections as well as state and national elections.

For new voters and busy voters in California

- You can use the Easy Voter Guide as a starting point to understand the issues.
- Download the 16-page pdf at EasyVoterGuide.org in 5 languages.
- Covers electoral college, all 12 state propositions. New section on Justice.
Which propositions should you pay attention to?

- You can start with the issues that you care about or that will affect you.
- You can also look at which propositions are getting the most attention.
- At VotersEdge.ca.gov you can see who has donated to each campaign for and against.

5. Make your choices and Vote!

- Discussing the candidates and issues with others can help you make your choices.
- You do NOT have to vote for everything!
- Involve your family and friends.
Voting is just one of **MANY** ways to make change in your community

- We elect representatives in government who make important decisions
- AND our local communities rely on how we choose to get involved
- Community members all across the state are **Growing the Good in their Communities**

Visit us at [KeytoCommunity.org](http://KeytoCommunity.org) and on [YouTube](http://YouTube)
Let’s Help Everyone in California
Get Ready for the Nov. 3 Election

Sign up to vote
Register to vote or update your registration to make sure your address is up to date RegistertoVote.ca.gov. This website has many helpful features. If you prefer to register with the paper form, call 800-345-VOTE (8683) to have one mailed to you. Or you can pick up a voter registration form at the post office. If your library is open, they may have forms too.

New this year, every registered voter will get a ballot mailed to the address they put on the voter registration form. If you are already registered in September, your ballot packet will get mailed October 5 and you should receive it 5-7 days after that. The sooner you register, the sooner your ballot will arrive.

If you do not register to vote by the October 19 deadline, you can still register and vote in this election at any Voting Location. If you go to your assigned location, then your ballot will be sure to include every candidate and measure for your area.

Choose which way you want to vote
If you want to vote with the ballot mailed to you, fill it out and put it in the official envelope it came with and sign the envelope. Then you can mail it for free or put it in a county drop box. You can also vote at any of the Voting Locations offered by your county on Election Day, Nov. 3, or during the days before the election.

If you choose to vote by mail, you can see where your ballot is each step of the way by signing up for ballot tracking at WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov. When you check your registration online, you can also easily find your county elections office, which will have details for your area about in-person voting locations and ballot drop boxes.

Understand what is on your ballot
On Nov. 3, voters will make choices about who represents them at all levels of government. Voters will decide on 12 state propositions. Many voters will also see ballot measures from their local governments.

Where you live determines what is on your ballot. Use VotersEdge.org to see a complete list of the candidates and measures on your ballot. Use the Easy Voter Guide to get an overview of the election and the state propositions.

For more resources for this election, visit the Key to Community page at the California State Library literacy website and KeytoCommunity.org. Also see learner leaders on the Key to Community YouTube channel.

The Key to Community project is part of the Literacy Initiatives Program which is supported in, in whole or in part, by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.
Choosing a Political Party

When you sign up to vote, you can join a political party. A political party is a group of people who share the same ideas about how the government should be run and what it should do. They work together to win elections. You can also choose not to join any of the political parties and still be a voter. There is no cost to join a party.

American Independent

We believe in liberty and justice for all under God. We want to keep America independent and safe. We’ll protect the family, marriage and work. We believe in individual responsibility and free enterprise. We must obey our Constitution and promote Declaration of Independence principles.

Top Priorities:
- Protect the right to life and strengthen families
- Secure the border and enforce immigration laws
- Balance the state budget

581,060 members / 707-359-4884 / aipca.org

Democratic

The California Democratic Party believes the role of government is to ensure quality education, housing and healthcare for all; ensure justice for every person; protect the rights of immigrants, women, workers, People of Color and the LGBT community; and create an economy that works for everyone.

Top Priorities:
- Reduce income inequality
- Address the climate crisis
- Protect and expand access to healthcare

8,956,480 members / 916-442-5707 / cadem.org

Green Party

Greens believe that a better world is possible. We can live sustainable, healthier, safer and happier lives, if our government is part of the solution. The Green Party and our candidates take no corporate money, so we work for People, Planet, and Peace over Profits.

Top Priorities:
- Combat climate change and end wars for oil and profit
- Living wages, Medicare for all, free higher education, end student debt
- Strengthen democracy through electoral reforms

90,762 members / 916-549-6788 / cagreens.org

The Libertarian Party

The Libertarian Party stands for personal freedom, economic freedom, and a non-interventionist foreign policy. If you’re socially tolerant and fiscally responsible, you’re a libertarian. You, not the government, should decide how to run your life, finances, education, and family.

Top Priorities:
- Increase individual liberty and responsibility
- Shrink government: reduce taxes and regulation
- Liberate education, commerce and personal choice

171,579 members / 916-446-1776 / ca.lp.org

Peace & Freedom Party

As Socialists, we can use our country’s wealth for the good of all, not profit for the few. We want to protect our earth and halt climate change. Make peace instead of war. Ensure and expand the right to vote.

Top Priorities:
- Tax the rich and corporations to give health care, housing, and education to all
- Provide good jobs at union wages, and support unions for all workers
- Bring the troops home, and end occupation of other countries

90,121 members / 951-456-4595 / peaceandfreedom.org

Republican Party

The California Republican Party is committed to making California affordable for everyone. We want to make California the land of opportunity again, with good-paying jobs, a high quality education education system, affordable home ownership and safe communities.

Top Priorities:
- Solve California’s homelessness crisis
- Address California’s high cost of living & availability of high quality jobs
- Put students and teachers first to improve our education system

5,435,431 members / 916-448-9496 / cagop.org

The statements and priorities were written by the political parties for the March 2020 issue of the Easy Voter Guide. The number of party members listed for each political party is from the Secretary of State’s October 9, 2019 Report of Registration.
This year you have more options to vote safely and easily. The biggest change is that every registered voter in California will receive a ballot in the mail a month before the election.

There are 3 ways to vote. You can choose to mail back your ballot, or drop it off, or you can vote in person at a Voting Location that will be set up for safe voting.

1. **VOTE-BY-MAIL**

   MAIL YOUR BALLOT BACK EARLY! You can fill it in and mail it back as soon as you receive it.

   No stamp? No problem. You do not need a stamp to mail back your ballot.

   Mark your ballot and seal it inside the envelope provided
   Follow the directions on the ballot to mark your choices.
   Check that you are using the return envelope with your name on it.
   Put your ballot into the envelope & seal. Only 1 ballot in each envelope.

   Sign and date the envelope
   Date and sign your name on the back of the envelope using ink.
   Check your signature to make sure it looks like the one on file.
   - If you registered to vote at the DMV or online, the signature will be the one on your Driver’s License or State ID.
   - Uncertain? Re-register with your updated signature.

   Return your ballot on time
   Mail your ballot back early because it must be postmarked by Election Day, November 3.

2. **OR DROP OFF YOUR BALLOT**

   If you decide to hand in your ballot instead of mailing it, you must drop it off no later than 8PM on Election Day, November 3.

   Drop off your ballot at any Voting Location in your county.
   Some counties will also offer secure Ballot Dropboxes.
   For details and locations check caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov.

   * TRACK MY BALLOT

   After returning your ballot, check WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov to find out where your ballot is in the process and when it has been accepted.
Ways to Vote

3 VOTE IN PERSON

Your voting location may be different this year. Counties are working to provide the best options for safe, socially distanced, in-person voting.

At in-person Voting Locations you can:
- Vote in-person.
- Drop off your completed ballot.
- Vote with an accessible voting machine.
- Get help and voting materials in multiple languages.

Early voting, starting before Election Day, will be available in some locations.

Find Early Voting and Ballot Dropbox locations at caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov.

In certain counties you can vote at any voting location. In other counties you must visit a special assigned voting location.

Find your Voting Location at findmypollingplace.sos.ca.gov.

MISSED THE OCTOBER 19 VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE?
NO PROBLEM! YOU CAN STILL VOTE IN THIS ELECTION!

If you missed the deadline, go to any Voting Location. You can register and vote on the same day – all the way up through Election Day.

- If possible, find your assigned location at findmypollingplace.sos.ca.gov. Go to that Voting Location to make sure you get a ballot with all your local contests.
- Same-day register and vote from home. If you need to register after October 19 and want to vote from home, contact your County Elections Office to find out how to register and get a vote by mail ballot through Election Day. Check sos.ca.gov/county-elections-offices.

SPECIAL RULES FOR 15 COUNTIES

Do you live in Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Madera, Mariposa, Los Angeles, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Sacramento, San Mateo, Santa Clara, or Tuolumne County?

You may visit any Vote Center in your county. Many will open starting Saturday, October 31 but some will open earlier. Or drop off your ballot at any secure Ballot Dropbox starting Tuesday, October 6. Check locations and hours at caearlyvoting.sos.ca.gov.

Find out more at voterschoice.sos.ca.gov.

MADE A MISTAKE? YOU CAN GET A REPLACEMENT BALLOT.

To get a new ballot contact your County Elections Office before Election Day or go to your Voting Location when it opens and ask for a replacement.
Voting Workshop: Detailed Outline
Voting Workshop Outline: Fall 2020 Edition

Helping people get ready to vote in California’s November 3, 2020 General Election

Thank you for your interest in helping people get more educated about voting in the upcoming General Election. There are five main content points for discussion:

- Why Vote? (and the history of voting rights)
- Sign Up to Vote
- Ways to Vote – by mail, drop box or in person
- What is on the Ballot
- Making your Choices and Voting

The Key to Community project recommends engaging your learners in multiple conversations about this complex topic. You can use the following outline for a single 90-minute voting workshop on Zoom or any other virtual meeting space or break it into two or three sessions to suit your needs. Tutors can also use this outline to work one-on-one with learners.

Before your Virtual Workshop and discussion(s)

- In your newsletter, explain how this election will be different from years past, due to COVID-19, and encourage patrons to register online or recheck their registration at www.registertovote.ca.gov.
- Provide every tutor in the program with the “key concepts” 1-page summary of Getting Ready to Vote in the November 3 election (see page 9 of this document).
- Check your County elections office for information about voting locations, ballot drop boxes and early voting dates (each county will be different): https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/county-elections-offices.
- Choose if you want to do the workshop in one 90-minute or two 60-minute Zoom sessions.
- Pique interest by sending out links to the videos on the Key to Community YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCVwKvc6scQ8ErTEE4Na5Lmw.
- If you can, mail copies of key handouts and the Easy Voter Guide to everyone who expressed interest in the workshop. Copies can also be distributed during curbside pickup or other library activities. If it is not possible to share hard copies, email materials as PDFs.
- See what voting related books your library has (check out the children’s titles at this Google doc); arrange a storytime or family literacy activity related to voting.
- Decide if you want to work with local partners who will help provide information (like the League of Women Voters, and/or your county elections office). There are over 60 local chapters of the League of Women Voters of California: https://cavotes.org/about/local-leagues. Some of them are more experienced with low-literacy audiences than others.

The Key to Community project is part of the Literacy Initiatives Program which is supported in, in whole or in part, by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.
Workshop-at-a-Glance – Summary of Workshop Goals and Elements

Topics – Let people know if you plan to cover all or just some of these topics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Conversations Cover 5 Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Why vote?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sign up to vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ways to vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What is on Your Ballot?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Make your choices and Vote!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your role as a workshop or conversation leader:
- Put people at ease; let them know that this is a learning conversation
- You are informing people to help them make their own choices
- Let people know that they do not have to vote on everything; voting is not a test
- Encourage people to make a commitment and follow through

You can choose to do this workshop all at once or in two or more sessions.

Introductions (10 minutes)
- Welcome people and share names
- Review the agenda and explain that this is a “nonpartisan” discussion to learn more about voting
  - What is your experience with voting?
  - What do you want to learn today?

1 – Why Vote (20 minutes)
- Review the history of voting rights and who is eligible to vote
- Why Vote/Why Not Vote – time permitting, send people into break-out groups of 4 and then list the reasons people share
- Connect the election to what people care about in their communities

2 & 3 – Sign Up to Vote and Ways to Vote (15 minutes)
- Sign up to vote: Demonstrate the process by screen sharing [www.registertovote.ca.gov](http://www.registertovote.ca.gov)
- Political parties: Share handout or slide
- Choosing When and Where to Vote: You can vote by mail, drop box or in person
4 – What is on your ballot? (20 minutes)
   a) Using your Sample Ballot or Voter’s Edge to see the full list
   b) How to make choices about candidates
   c) How to choose which propositions to pay attention to
   d) What information you can use

5 – Make your choices and Vote! (10 minutes)
   a) How to involve your children
   b) Have discussions with family and friends
   c) Resources for your questions

Connecting it all together and next steps (15 minutes)
   a) Revisit the list of what people wanted to learn; answer what’s left
   b) Go back over the reasons “why not” to vote
   c) Ask people to share their commitments about next steps
   d) Fill out evaluation form and final thank you

Workshop Slides and things to screen share
Plan to have these items ready for your Zoom session:
   • Set of complete slides – note you can customize these or not
   • Links ready to share:
     o www.registertovote.ca.gov
     o Political Party statements
     o Your county elections office
   • Easy Voter Guide PDF (also available in multiple languages at www.easyvoterguide.org)
   • Poll on Zoom or follow up survey
   • Optional: Who Represents You (template provided that you can fill in for your area)

Workshop Leader Detailed Outline
These instructions and suggested comments (in italics) are based on past workshops. Feel free to phrase things in a way that is comfortable for you. You will bring your own style and ideas for how to make the activities engaging.

Before the November 3 General Election, there will be campaign ads and activities trying to persuade people to a point of view. Some of them may be negative or try to use “wedge” issues to get our attention. By leading or participating in a Key to Community Workshop, you will help:

   • Create a calm welcoming place for people to learn
   • Share non-partisan information, and demonstrate how to talk about issues without being political
   • Stop the cycle of fear-based messages
   • Empower people to make their own choices about how to participate
The most important thing is to keep inviting participation from the attendees. You are a facilitator, not just a presenter. Your job is to help people feel comfortable, participating and learning what they want to know about voting. THANK YOU for doing this important work!

Introductions and Agenda (10 minutes)

- Welcome people. Ask everyone to introduce themselves or say their names.
- Walk people through the agenda so they know what will happen during the workshop and how long it will last.
- Let them know that if they still have questions after the workshop, they can get help from their tutor and/or by visiting the many websites that are here to help. Post the phone number and web address for your county elections office; ask participants to write them down. (You can explain that each county has an elections office that is responsible for running elections.)
- Opening question (done via voice or via Zoom poll):
  - We expect that we have some people who have voted and some who have not voted yet. Let’s have a show of hands – who here has voted a lot, a little or not at all.
  - Thank you. Let’s go around the “Zoom room.” Please share something you’d like to learn about today.
- Our goal today is to help you get more information about the November 3, 2020 election so you feel more prepared to vote. And if you are not going to be voting, you can still help everyone by passing this information along to others.
- The California Library is supporting the Key to Community Project which is designed by learner leaders. We are all “nonpartisan.” That means that we don’t take sides [see the description below]. At the library, we are here to educate people about how voting works. We are not here to have a political debate.
  - Non-partisan = neutral information; not having a point of view or trying to persuade one way or the other.

If you like, you can share a slide with a set of conversation guidelines:

- Listen to learn from each other
- Support equal participation; no one dominates
- Treat everyone with respect
- Make room for different experiences
- Your questions are valuable

1 – Why Vote (20 minutes)

a) Review voting rights history and who is eligible – It wasn’t always this way, but now anyone who is 18 and who is a U.S. citizen is eligible to register and vote. (Note: A frequently asked question is can convicted felons vote? Answer – Yes. In California, convicted felons can vote after they have finished serving their sentence, including parole; note that different states have different rules.)

b) Why Vote/Why Not Vote – But many people don’t choose to vote. I’d like to hear your thoughts about:
  - Why do some people choose to vote?
  - And why do some people choose not to vote?

Time permitting, send people into Zoom break-out groups of 4 with these questions posted in the chat. Send a message into the break-outs with a prompt for each person to take a turn of 1 minute.
Why Vote/Why Not Vote – Exercise continued:
When they come back from the break-out room, write their answers on a slide using a “T Chart” which you will come back to later at the end of the workshop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why Vote?</th>
<th>Why Not Vote?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Their answers</td>
<td>Their answers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c) Connect the election to what people care about in their communities
   - *In California we vote for people who are called candidates. We also vote on laws, which are called statewide “propositions” and local “ballot measures.”* Discuss how voting could help make the kinds of changes the group said they care about. You can make change by:
     - Choosing candidates who are committed to working on the issues you and your community care about
     - Voting yes or no on ballot propositions that affect your community or the issues that you care about
   - Remind people that voting is ONE way to create change and doesn’t always get the results you want. However, it is always a valuable way to have your voice counted and let your elected officials (and the people who run campaigns) see that they need to pay attention to you and your interests.

2 & 3 – Sign Up to Vote and Ways to Vote (15 minutes)
a) Sign up to vote – demonstrate the process by screen sharing [www.registertovote.ca.gov](http://www.registertovote.ca.gov)
   - Make sure to register with the name you will use when you vote. The signature you use when signing the ballot envelope or when you sign in at a voting location needs to match your registration.
   - If you have registered before, you only have to register again if you have moved or want to change your name or your political party. But for this unusual election, we suggest that everyone check their registration to make sure they know the name they used (e.g., middle initial or full name)
   - If someone doesn’t have a permanent mailing address, they can still register to vote.
     - For their residence, describe the cross streets or location.
     - For where they want to get mail, see if they have a place or organization that will receive mail for them. They can use any address where they will be able to get their mailed ballot packet and sample ballot.
   - At [www.registertovote.ca.gov](http://www.registertovote.ca.gov) you can:
     - Request to get your voter information in your preferred language
     - Link right to your county elections office
     - Sign up for ballot tracking
b) Political parties – *handout or slide* – You can choose a party, or you can mark the box that says do not want to register with a political party.
   - Let people know that it does not matter what party they register with or they decide “no party” – in the November election, they can vote for any candidate from any party
c) Choosing When and Where to Vote: *handout or slide* – You can vote by mail, you can drop your ballot off at a drop box or vote center, or you can vote in person
   - Share pictures of ballot packet and sample ballot
c) **Choosing When and Where to Vote**: Continued

- Share pictures of ballot packet and sample ballot
- Show your county elections office page and where they can find out the location of drop boxes and vote centers
- Remember you do not have to vote on everything
- If you make a mistake, you can get a new ballot
- If people are using the ballot that came in the mail, explain the importance of:
  - Filling out the bubbles completely on the ballot
  - Signing the outside of the ballot envelope
  - Making sure their signature on the ballot envelope matches the name they registered with

4 – **What is on Your Ballot?** (20 minutes)

a) **Use your sample ballot or** [Voter’s Edge](https://voterguide.voteweb.org) **to see the full list of what will be on your ballot**

- Remind people that, *In California we vote for people who are called candidates. We also vote on laws, which are called statewide “propositions” and local “ballot measures.”*
- Enter someone’s address on the [Voter’s Edge website](https://voterguide.voteweb.org) to scroll through all of the candidate races (note that content from the candidates is still being filled in at Voter’s Edge – but the list of ballot items shows multiple levels of government; try a few addresses to see which has good variety for your area).
- Optional, if you have more time: *There are many people that are elected to represent you and all of us.* Explain the “Who Represents You” handout about the levels of government and who represents you at each level
  - Walk through the three main levels of government: national, state and local
  - Within each level, help people see how the executive and the legislative branch need to work together to get things done (e.g., the governor cannot do it alone, nor can the state lawmakers – and the mayor needs to work with the city council)
- At [www.registertovote.ca.gov](http://www.registertovote.ca.gov) you can:
  - Request to get your voter information in your preferred language
  - Link right to your county elections office
  - Sign up for ballot tracking

b) **How to make choices about candidates**

- What are their priorities? What is their experience?
- Do they **care about the same issues** that you do?
- Who supports them?
- Encourage people to **pay attention to local elections, as well as state and national elections.**

c) **How to choose which propositions to pay attention to**

- You can start with the issues that **you care about** or that will affect you, your family and your community
- You can also look at which propositions are getting the most attention; get curious:
  - Who put it on the ballot?
  - Why do they feel so strongly?
d) **Where will you get your information?**
- Ask people what sources they use now
- Revisit the definition of “nonpartisan”
- Share additional sources, such as the Easy Voter Guide, Votersedge.org and other nonpartisan sources you feel comfortable recommending

5 – **Making Your Choices and Vote! (10 minutes)**

a) **How to involve your children**
- According to Peter Levine at Tufts University, the #1 predictor if someone votes is if they grew up in a family that voted. The learner leaders working on this project want to encourage you to incorporate family-oriented activities and encourage learners to talk about the election with the young people in their lives.
- We have assembled a book list that people can read to their kids – or your program can offer a Zoom storytime or family literacy voting activity.

a) **Have discussions with family and friends**
- Talk about the election during conversation clubs.
- Plan a debate watch party for the presidential debate or local debates.
- Suggest a sample ballot discussion group. Even though your vote is private, it helps to talk through the issues.
- Mark up your sample ballot with your choices, then copy that onto your actual ballot.

a) **Resources for your questions**
- Let everyone know that it is okay to ask for help when you vote.
- Does your library have reference librarians willing to help?
- Invite participants to join Key to Community on [October 9 at 3pm](#) and [October 27 at 6pm](#) for voting discussion roundtables.
- Invite participants to take part in other local discussions hosted by your program, your library or community partners.

**Connecting it all together and next steps (15 minutes)**
- Revisit the list of what people wanted to learn at the beginning of the workshop; answer any remaining questions or offer to get back to people with the answers if you do not have them.
- Go back over the reasons “why not” to vote and make sure all of it was covered. Show that there are no longer any reasons left why not to vote.
- Ask people to think about a commitment they’d like to make based on what they have shared and learned. Invite people one at a time to state their commitment.
- Via poll or emailed survey, have people fill out the workshop evaluation form. Thank everyone for coming and possibly invite people to stay after, if they have additional questions.
- Send 1-2 follow-up reminders at key dates.
- Ask people to send you their “Why I voted” selfies.
Important Links and Helpful Resources

For more information and nonpartisan voter education resources, visit:

- California Secretary of State
  - Register to Vote: [https://registertovote.ca.gov/](https://registertovote.ca.gov/)
  - Apply to be a poll worker: [www.sos.ca.gov/elections/poll-worker-information](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/poll-worker-information)
  - New Citizen’s Voting Guide (multiple languages):
- Easy Voter Guide (5 languages): [www.easyvoterguide.org](http://www.easyvoterguide.org)
- Voter’s Edge – use your address to look up your ballot, get more information about local candidates and see campaign donations: [www.votersedge.org/ca](http://www.votersedge.org/ca)
- Key to Community [www.keytocommunity.org](http://www.keytocommunity.org) and the [Key to Community You Tube Channel](http://www.keytocommunity.org)
- New Readers Press Voting Toolkit:
- League of Women Voters (LWV) of California Education Fund:
  - [https://cavotes.org/](http://www.cavotes.org/)
  - [https://cavotes.org/jails-toolkit](http://www.cavotes.org/jails-toolkit)
  - Find a local LWV chapter near you: [https://cavotes.org/about/local-leagues](http://www.cavotes.org/about/local-leagues)
- CalMatters – See one-minute videos for all state propositions:
  - [https://calmatters.org/election-2020-guide](http://www.calmatters.org/election-2020-guide)
- American Library Association guide to Libraries and Voter Engagement:
- Three quizzes from Ellen Loeb; go to Kahoot.com and click the Play button at the upper right:
  - Pin for Voting History: 06916825
  - Pin for How to Sign Up to Vote: 08886887
  - Pin for What is on my Nov. 3, 2020 Ballot: 0725783
- Key to Community’s list of [Children’s Books about Voting](http://www.keytocommunity.org)
- Support for special audiences: [Basics about Voting](http://www.keytocommunity.org) from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities and the San Jose Public Library and Voting in California Jails, A Community Toolkit.
- Presidential debates website: [https://www.debates.org/](http://www.debates.org/)
  - 2020 debate schedule:
    - Sept 29, 6pm First presidential debate Cleveland, OH
    - Oct. 7, 6pm Vice presidential debate Salt Lake City, UT
    - Oct. 15, 6pm Second presidential debate Miami, FL
    - Oct. 22, 6pm Third presidential debate Nashville, TN

THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING EDUCATION ABOUT VOTING! We appreciate your additions, questions and feedback. Contact us at [info@ckgroup.org](mailto:info@ckgroup.org) or leave a message at 415-454-6500.
### Glossary of Voting Terms

#### Election Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ballot</td>
<td>the form you mark when you vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonds</td>
<td>a way to raise money for public projects; a government sells bonds and then has to repay the bonds plus interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign</td>
<td>work in an organized and active way toward a particular goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>a person who runs for elected office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>the part of our national, or federal, government that makes laws; it has two parts: the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>the document that lays out the basic framework for a government; there is a United States constitution and every state has a constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution</td>
<td>a donation or gift, which may be for a political campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>a formal discussion with opposing arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral College</td>
<td>a body of people representing the states of the US, who formally cast votes for the election of the president and vice president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>a measure that is put on the ballot by the people, not the legislature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislature</td>
<td>the part of our state government that makes laws. It has two parts: the State Assembly and the State Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-partisan</td>
<td>not tied to any political party or point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Party</td>
<td>a group that shares the same views about government and works together to win elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propositions</td>
<td>proposed laws that the public votes on; they can be state or local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td>skills and abilities to do a job or hold a position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register</td>
<td>sign up to vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>someone you choose to look out for your interests if you can’t be there; we have a “representative” form of government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who Represents You

You have representatives that are elected to serve you in national, state and local government. **It is your right to communicate with your representatives.** You can call, write or email them with your thoughts and questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive</th>
<th>Legislative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “Top boss” for government services&lt;br&gt;• Coordinates with lawmakers on policies</td>
<td>• Propose laws and work with each other on priority projects&lt;br&gt;• Approve spending budget</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### National

| U.S. President<br>Donald Trump | U.S. Congress (Works on U.S. laws and budget) |
| U.S. Senate<br>Dianne Feinstein<br>Kamala Harris | U.S. House of Representatives |

### State

| California Governor<br>Gavin Newsom | California Legislature (Works on state laws and budget) |
| State Senate | State Assembly |

### County

| County Board of Supervisors |

### Your City

| Mayor | City Council |

**More Elected Officials:**

You also have elected representatives in your local school district and community college district. Other “special districts” may include park and hospital districts, transportation services and utilities.