<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Confidence level</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Voter Registration</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>California offers automatic, online, and same-day (through Election Day) voter registration. The state does not purge voting lists no matter how many years of nonvoting. There was a moderate number of total purges conducted in 2020. Youth can preregister to vote beginning at age 16. Voting rights are automatically restored to those incarcerated for felonies upon release and 2022 law requires election officials to give notice to returning citizens that their eligibility has been restored.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Voter Identification</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>California requires no photo ID to vote. The state is NOT a member of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) which helps states improve accuracy of voter rolls. Few voters contacted the 1-866-OUR-VOTE legal hotline in 2020 during the last week of the election to report concerns with voter ID requirements or being absent from the voter rolls/database. No laws were enacted in 2021 to impose restrictions nor were any pending in 2022.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Early Voting</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>California offers early in-person voting beginning 29 days before Election Day. The state also provides all-mail or no-excuse absentee ballot voting options.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Safe Voting</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>California has been a vote-at-home state since 2022. State law in 2021 made permanent all vote-by-mail provisions used during the pandemic, but does have some restrictions on who can return the ballot on behalf of the voter. Ballots are mailed to all voters (no applications necessary), ballot return options are robust, prepaid postage is provided, and the state offers accessible electronic vote-by-mail ballots and ballot tracking for voters with disabilities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in California: [VOTE411](#)

Learn about voting laws recently passed or enacted in California: [State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab](#)

If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the [Election Protection Hotline](#) at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683

Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in California: [DemocracyMovement.us](#)
Index 5: Ballot Acceptance - Confidence level - HIGH
California had a low percentage of mail-in ballots returned in 2020, with a very low rejection rate. Its statewide ballot tracking service is statutorily required. The state allows election administrators to preprocess returned ballots, accepts ballots postmarked no later 7 days after Election Day, provides prepaid postage on return envelopes, allows voters to correct for ballot discrepancies, and has a signature verification program. If a voter fails to sign the absentee ballot envelope, they have until the 8th day after the election to submit an unsigned ballot statement. As of July 2022, signature on the voter's registration form will be an option used to validate the signature on the voter's mail ballot. California ranked the best among all states in this index.

Index 6: Logistical Barriers in Voting - Confidence level - HIGH
California allows employees to take up to two hours paid leave to vote. In addition to offering curbside voting and providing some quality accessible voting machine options, the state passed laws in 2021 to increase access for voters with mobility/disability or language challenge issues. California has passed laws advancing the voting rights of Native Americans and college students. In 2020, the state had a fair ratio of poll workers to polling sites and was rated well for investments made in the 2020 elections to improve processes while being cost effective. California ranked second best among all states in this index.

Index 7: Equipment, Security, and Auditing - Confidence level - HIGH
California has a statewide verified paper audit trail. The majority of voting centers use hand marked paper ballots or offer Ballot Marking Devices for voters with accessibility needs. The state does not test the equipment according to federal standards. California received a fair overall election security score in 2018. The state uses traditional and risk limiting audit methods to double-check for machine recording errors, including before election certification and during the statutorily required post-election and administrative audits.
Index 8: Independent Election Administration - Confidence level - HIGH

Although California has established the constitutional right to a secret ballot, it does not prohibit election interference by the legislature. No laws were passed in 2021 nor were any pending in 2022.

Index 9: External Interference in Voting - Confidence Level - MEDIUM

Public opinion surveys showed that California voters had some trust in the 2020 election news coverage, while political scientists gave the state low media integrity ratings. California had a high number of demonstrations during the last week of the general elections and confirmed threats made to election workers, but very few reports from voters with concerns about intimidation or safety issues at polling sites. State law requires all poll workers to be trained, prohibits weapons at polling sites, criminalizes intimidation and false election speech, and authorizes police to be present only by request or on official business. The state also passed media literacy laws requiring instruction or standards on how to evaluate trustworthy media services in public education and has good campaign finance disclosure laws.

Index 10: The Role of Government and Politics – No rating given, information only

California is one of 13 states that has a Democratic trifecta, as well as a triplex - the governor, attorney general, and secretary of state are from the same political party. Based on the last two presidential elections, California is the 5th most Democratic state in the country, with an average Democratic voting margin of 29.6% compared to the national average Democratic voting margin of 3%. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the state’s population grew by 6.1% - its lowest growth rate ever - compared to the national average of 7.4%. California is the 2nd most racially diverse state in the country. During the past decade, Latinos surpassed whites as the largest single ethnic group. With the U.S. Census results, the state lost one congressional seat - also the first time in the state’s history.