



San Mateo County Elections Office: (650) 312-5222

Know Your Voting Rights in San Mateo County



Can I Vote in This Election? How Do I Get Started?

To vote in an election, you must first register to vote! You can register if you are:

- a U.S. citizen;
- a resident of California;
- will be 18 years or older on Election Day;
- not currently in prison or on parole for the conviction of a felony; and
- not found by a court to be “mentally incompetent.”

How Do I Register to Vote?

The deadline is **Tuesday, February 18, 2020**. You can register:

- online at www.registertovote.ca.gov;
- at the DMV, post office, library, or your county elections office; or
- by calling (800) 345-VOTE (8683) to request a voter registration form, which must be in the mail by February 18th (no stamp needed!).

What If I Miss the Voter Registration Deadline?

No problem! You can still use “same-day voter registration” to register and vote at any vote center in San Mateo County. You’ll get a voter registration form and ballot to complete on the spot. That said, registering by the deadline will ensure you receive a ballot in the mail before Election Day along with helpful materials about what is on the ballot.

What If I Don’t Know If I’m Already Registered to Vote?

Check online to see if you are registered at voterstatus.sos.ca.gov. Alternatively, you can always register again. You should always re-register to vote if you have changed your name, your address, or your political party.

Feb 22 - Feb 28
(9 locations)

- **Redwood City Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder Office**
555 County Center
- **San Mateo Elections Office**
40 Tower Road
- **South San Francisco Main Library**
840 West Orange Avenue
- **Daly City City Hall**
333 90th Street
- **East Palo Alto YMCA, City Room**
550 Bell Street
- **Half Moon Bay Emergency Operations Center**
537 Kelly Avenue
- **Redwood City Fair Oaks Community Center**
2600 Middlefield Road
- **San Bruno Senior Center**
1555 Crystal Springs Rd
- **San Mateo Mid-Peninsula Boys & Girls Club, Teen Center**
200 North Quebec Street
- Mobile Vote Center Upon Request

Feb 29 -
March 3
(42 locations)

Go to any vote center to register and vote. All vote centers will be open!
Find the full list of locations here:
www.smcacre.org/vote-center-locations

Feb 19 - Feb 21
(3 locations)

- **Redwood City Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder Office**
555 County Center
- **San Mateo Elections Office**
40 Tower Road
- **South San Francisco Main Library**
840 West Orange Avenue
- Mobile Vote Center Upon Request

Do I Have to Choose a Political Party?

No. If you want to be independent, you can register with “No Party Preference” or leave that section blank. Be careful! Registering with the American Independent Party is not the same as registering as an independent.

If you recently registered or re-registered to vote at the DMV, your party choice may have unintentionally changed. Use voterstatus.sos.ca.gov to double-check this preference and re-register if it is incorrect.

I'm a "No Party Preference" Voter. How Do I Vote for a Presidential Candidate?

The default ballot for No Party Preference (NPP) voters does not have presidential candidates on it. NPP voters need to take extra steps to cast a vote in the presidential primary.

To vote in the American Independent, Democratic, and Libertarian Party primaries:

- You should have received a postcard asking if you want to request a ballot for one of the parties that allows NPP voters to participate in their primaries. You can also call, email, or fax your county elections office with this request. *If you already received a vote-by-mail ballot without presidential candidates, just bring your*

vote-by-mail ballot to any vote center and exchange it for a ballot with presidential candidates on it.

To vote in the Green, Peace and Freedom, and Republican Party primaries:

- **You must re-register to vote and choose a party preference for one of these three parties** to receive a ballot with their presidential candidates on it. If the registration deadline has passed, you can use same-day voter registration at any vote center. You can always re-register after the election to switch back to No Party Preference.

Voting Is Now Easier In Your County!

Registered voters will automatically receive a ballot in the mail with instructions on three ways to vote:

1. **Return your ballot by mail** — no stamp needed!
2. **Drop it off at one of many official ballot "drop boxes"** located throughout the county — again, no stamp needed!
3. **Vote in-person at a "vote center,"** which is like a jumbo, full-service polling place

What is a vote center and what benefits do they offer?

Vote centers will replace polling places. At a vote center, you can access:

- Early voting — Vote centers are open 3 or 10 days before Election Day.
- Location flexibility — You can vote at any vote center in your county, not just the one closest to your home.
- Same-day voter registration — Register and vote on the same day at any vote center, even after the voter registration deadline has passed.
- Support — Vote centers offer translated language assistance and multiple accessible voting machines.

How Do I Vote at a Vote Center?

You can vote at any vote center in your county. You will receive information about vote center locations and hours by mail, or you can check your county elections website: www.smcacre.org/vote-center-locations. Walk into any vote center and give the poll workers your name and address to receive a ballot.

If you prefer voting in Chinese, Spanish, Korean, or Filipino/Tagalog, ask if they have any materials in that language and if any of the vote center workers speak that language.

Do I Need to Show My ID When Voting?

In almost all instances, no. You only need to show documents if you are voting for the first time and you did not include your driver's license number, state ID number, OR Social Security Number when you registered to vote. If this is the case, many documents will work. Call your elections office in advance if you are concerned.

Can I Bring Someone to Help Me Vote?

Yes. California law allows you to bring up to two people to your polling place to help you vote, as long as they do not represent your employer or your union. Bring a family member or friend.



What If I Run Into Problems at a Vote Center?

Do not give up! **Ask to use same-day voter registration** to re-register and vote. If you are unable to do so for some reason, **ask for a provisional ballot**, which is a ballot that will be counted after Election Day if elections officials confirm your eligibility.

Or, call an Election Day voter protection hotline:

- **866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)** for assistance in English.
- **888-API-VOTE (888-274-8683)** for assistance in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, Bengali, Urdu, Hindi, and Tagalog.
- **888-Ve-Y-Vota (888-839-8682)** NALEO Educational Fund toll-free bilingual English-Spanish hotline.

Will I Be Able to Vote in Languages Other than English?

Yes! If you prefer to vote in Chinese or Spanish:

- All elections materials will be available in your language. This includes your actual ballot and the voter information guide that you receive prior to Election Day. If you received English materials in the mail, call the elections office at 888-SMC-VOTE (888-762-8683) and ask them to send you the translated versions.
- There should be bilingual poll workers available to help you at any vote center you go to.

If you prefer to vote in Korean or Filipino/Tagalog:

- You may have access to a “facsimile ballot,” which is a translated reference copy of your ballot you can use to help understand your English ballot. When voting in person, facsimile ballots in these languages may be available in a binder at the check-in station for you to take into the voting booth with you. Vote-by-mail voters may be able to request a facsimile ballot be sent to them ahead of time. Call your elections office at 650-312-5222 for more information.
- There may be bilingual poll workers available to help you at the vote centers. Look for translated signs telling you which languages are spoken by the poll workers at each vote center.