California’s Likely Voters

More than eight in ten eligible Californians are registered to vote.

- As of February 2023, nearly 22 million of California’s 26.7 million eligible adults (82%) were registered to vote.
- The current registration rate is 3 percentage points higher than it was in February 2019 (79%), the year preceding the last presidential election.
- Voter registration and enthusiasm will play a big role in the statewide primary in March and the general election next November.

Likely voters lean Democratic and are ideologically mixed.

- Among likely voters in our surveys over the past year, 49% are Democrats, 26% are Republicans, 21% are independents, and 4% are registered with other parties. Of those we consider infrequent voters, 44% are Democrats, 34% are independents, 19% are Republicans, and 3% are registered with other parties.
- Ideologically, 38% of likely voters are politically liberal, 32% are moderate, and 30% are conservative. Among infrequent voters, 31% say they are liberal, 45% are moderate, and 24% are conservative.

Independent likely voters and unregistered adults lean Democratic, but many say they gravitate toward neither major party.

- Among independent likely voters, 46% lean toward the Democratic Party, while 26% lean toward the Republican Party and 28% volunteer that they lean toward neither major party or are unsure.
- Among independent infrequent voters, 35% lean Democratic, 23% lean Republican, and 42% lean toward neither party or are unsure.
- Among unregistered adults—including noncitizens—43% lean Democratic, 18% lean Republican, and 39% lean toward neither party or are unsure.

Independent likely voters and unregistered adults most often lean Democratic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Registered independent likely voters</th>
<th>Registered independent infrequent voters</th>
<th>Not registered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither/Don’t know</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39</td>
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</tbody>
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Sources: Six PPIC Statewide Surveys from September 2022 to July 2023, including 10,566 adults, 6,717 likely voters, 2,226 infrequent voters, and 1,570 unregistered adults.

Likely voters are disproportionately white.

- Whites make up only 39% of California’s adult population but 52% of the state’s likely voters. In contrast, Latinos comprise 36% of the adult population but just 25% of likely voters. Asian Americans make up 16% of adults and 13% of likely voters, while 6% of adults and 6% of likely voters are African American. “Other race” and multiracial adults make up 4% of the adult population and 4% of likely voters.
- Nearly six in ten unregistered adults, including noncitizens, are Latino (57%); fewer are white (21%), Asian American (17%), or African American (3%).
Latinos are dramatically underrepresented among likely voters

Likely voters tend to be older, more educated and affluent, homeowners, and US born.

- Californians age 55 and older make up 35% of the state’s adult population but constitute half (50%) of likely voters. Young adults (age 18 to 34) make up 31% of the population but only 18% of likely voters, while adults age 35 to 54 account for 34% of the population and 32% of likely voters.
- About eight in ten likely voters either have some college education (38%) or are college graduates (41%); 21% have no college education.
- Fifty-four percent of likely voters have annual household incomes of $80,000 or more, while 26% earn between $40,000 and $79,999 and 21% earn $40,000 or less.
- A strong majority of likely voters are homeowners (69%), while 31% are renters. In contrast, 68% of unregistered adults and 59% of infrequent voters are renters.
- Eighty-four percent of likely voters and 80% of infrequent voters were born in the United States, compared to just 35% of unregistered adults.
- Women (50%) and men (50%) make up equal shares of California’s likely voters.

Likely voters tend to be older and more affluent

Sources: Six PPIC Statewide Surveys from September 2022 to July 2023, including 10,566 adults, 6,717 likely voters, 2,226 infrequent voters, and 1,570 unregistered adults. US Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey.

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Notes: “Likely voters” are registered voters meeting criteria on interest in politics, attention to issues, voting behavior, and intention to vote; “infrequent voters” are registered voters who do not meet these criteria. A full description of these criteria is available here.