CALIFORNIA MOTOR VOTER

California Motor Voter automatically registers all eligible Californians who complete a driver's license, identification card (ID), or change of address transaction online, by mail, or in person, unless they opt out. The program streamlines the voter registration process at the DMV and makes registering to vote more convenient for Californians.

What are the benefits of automatic voter registration programs like California Motor Voter?

Automatic voter registration is a common-sense modernization reform that streamlines the current voter registration process at the DMV. It can improve voter roll accuracy, increase registration of eligible voters, and boost voter turnout among first-time voters. Automatic voter registration is also more cost-efficient.

What is unique about the California Motor Voter program?

California Motor Voter can be distinguished from other states' automatic voter registration programs in several key ways:

- Individuals must confirm their eligibility before they are registered to vote at the DMV
- The voter registration questions will be offered in 10 languages
- Eligible 16 and 17-year-olds applying for a learner's permit, driver's license, or ID will automatically be pre-registered to vote, meaning they will automatically be registered to vote on their 18th birthday
- Individuals will have a chance to opt out of voter registration or pre-registration at the DMV, before they are registered to vote

Who will be registered to vote at the DMV?

All eligible DMV customers who are completing a driver's license, ID card, or change of address transaction will be automatically registered or pre-registered to vote, unless they opt out. To register, a person must be:

- A U.S. citizen and California resident
- At least 18 years old (16 or 17 years old for pre-registration)
- Not currently in state or federal prison or on parole for the conviction of a felony
- Not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court

What if I want to opt out of voter registration?

If you are completing a driver's license, ID, or change of address transaction and don't want to be registered to vote, you can choose to opt out.

What if I want to register to vote before my DMV transaction?

If there is an election around the corner and you'd like to get registered, visit the California voter registration page at registertovote.ca.gov.

Are there other changes coming to DMV transactions?

The April 16th launch will incorporate several other changes. These include:

- The option to initiate your driver's license or ID application online before visiting the DMV. You can save time by pre-filling your application on your computer, tablet, or smartphone – this includes the voter registration questions. All new applicants must complete their DMV transaction in person at a DMV office. You will not be registered to vote until you complete this step. Access the online application at eDLapp.dmv.ca.gov.
- Accessible computers will be available in all DMV offices to allow individuals with disabilities to privately and independently complete their transactions

What other states have adopted some version of automatic voter registration?

There are 13 states including California that have adopted programs to automatically register voters:

- Alaska
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Maryland

- Oregon
- Rhode Island
- Utah
- Vermont
- Washington
- West Virginia

Our Role

California Common Cause supported passage of the California Motor Voter bill, AB 1461 (Gonzalez), helping to work out policy concerns and build a coalition. After the bill's passage, we worked with the Secretary of State and DMV to provide feedback on implementation, assist with program testing in the field, and organize review of the translations in 9 languages by community volunteers and county staff.

To learn more, visit the Secretary of State's page on California Motor Voter at motorvoter.sos.ca.gov.

And remember, you can always register to vote or update your voter registration at registertovote.ca.gov.