



California Secretary of State
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Determining California Residency

A voter's residence, for purposes of voter registration, is the address specified by the voter. A voter may have more than one residence but may only register to vote at the residence the voter considers to be their domicile. For example, a voter may have homes in Red Bluff and San Diego, spending a portion of their time in each. In this case, the voter should register at the address they consider to be their principal residence, at which they have the intention of remaining, and to which they, when away, intend to return.

A person's residence status depends on their action and intent. If a person moves to another state or another country but intends to return, they may still claim residency in California. However, they cannot register to vote in another state and also continue to vote in California.

If a person is in the service of the United States or the State of California, that person may retain residency in California for voting purposes if stationed elsewhere. (Elec. Code, § 2025.)

A student who is going to school away from home may register to vote either at the address where they live when going to school or at the address where they live when they are not going to school. If a student is re-registering to vote at their school address, they should fill out the prior registration portion of the card to update their previous registration.

Courts have ruled that a person who is experiencing homelessness may register to vote at a location they state is the place where they spend most of their time. The person must provide a description of the location that is clear enough for the elections official to establish that person's right to vote in a particular precinct. This ensures accurate elections materials can be provided to this voter. In these instances, a mailing address should (but is not required) to be provided in order for the voter to receive election materials.