



DEBRA BOWEN

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Secretary of State Reminds Voters of Rights, Offers Election Do and Don't List for June 8 Primary

SACRAMENTO – With two weeks left until the June 8 Statewide Direct Primary Election, Secretary of State Debra Bowen today pointed to key voting rights and responsibilities under California law.

“The most important thing you can do as a voter is be equipped with the facts – not only on the issues and candidates, but also on your rights and responsibilities,” said Secretary Bowen, California’s chief elections officer. “For instance, you have the option to vote by mail before Election Day. Also, if you go to your polling place on Election Day and your name is not on the voter roster, you have the right to vote on a provisional ballot.”

June 1 is the last day to apply to vote by mail in the June 8 election. To request a vote-by-mail ballot, a voter can use the application printed on the sample ballot booklet mailed by his or her county elections official or go to www.sos.ca.gov/elections/vote-by-mail/pdf/fill-in-vote-by-mail-app-instruct.pdf.

Decline-to-state (DTS) voters (people who have chosen not to register with a qualified political party) are permitted to vote in the June 8 Statewide Direct Primary Election using Democratic, Republican or nonpartisan ballots. California’s “modified closed primary” system permits each qualified political party to decide whether it will allow DTS voters to participate in its primary election.

The Secretary of State’s Official Voter Information Guide was mailed to every voting household in California and is available in audio and print versions at www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov. Sample ballot booklets, prepared and mailed by county elections offices, offer information about local candidates and measures.

Secretary Bowen also offers a toll-free Voter Hotline at (800) 345-VOTE (8683) that voters can call to ask election-related questions or to confidentially report potential election fraud or voter intimidation.

A list of key election dos and don'ts is attached.

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June 8 Primary Election Do and Don't List

DO: Choose whether to vote at a polling place or vote by mail, and vote by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Any California voter can vote by mail (formerly known as absentee voting). The deadline to request a vote-by-mail ballot from your county elections office is June 1.

If you prefer to vote in person, polls will be open between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on June 8. If you are in line when the polls close, you will be allowed to vote. If you would rather vote by mail, remember that even vote-by-mail ballots must be turned in by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day at a polling place in your county or at your county elections office. Postmarks do not count for vote-by-mail ballots.

DON'T: Offer incentives to voters for agreeing to vote for or against a particular person or measure. This is illegal under state and federal law.

DO: Know that you may take time off from work to vote. California law allows workers up to two hours off to vote, without loss of pay, if they do not have enough time to vote during non-work hours. Workers must give their employers two working days' notice before the election if they need time off to vote.

DON'T: Campaign for votes, solicit petition signatures or wear campaign materials within 100 feet of a polling place. Electioneering in the immediate area around polling places is illegal in California.

DO: Know your voting rights and your polling place. Ask a poll worker for assistance if you don't understand your voting system. If you make a mistake on your ballot, ask a poll worker for a new ballot.

If you are a DTS voter (not registered with a qualified political party), keep in mind that you can choose either a Democratic, Republican or nonpartisan ballot.

If, for any reason, your name is not on the list at your polling place, you have the right to cast a provisional ballot. The provisional ballot will be counted after your county elections office has confirmed that you are registered to vote in your county and you did not already vote elsewhere in the election. If you don't know where your polling place is, or if you have any concerns about your election experience, call your county elections office or the Secretary of State's Voter Hotline at (800) 345-VOTE (8683).

DON'T: Sit on the sidelines during this important election. Consider other ways to get involved in your democracy. Be a poll worker, host a ballot study group with friends, and encourage others to vote.

DO: Be familiar with voting resources. The Secretary of State's office offers a variety of resources in eight languages (English, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese and American Sign Language), as well as online, large-print and audio versions of the Secretary of State's Voter Information Guide. More information on any of these services, as well as voter hotlines, is at www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_multi.htm.