How to Choose a Political Party

When you sign up to vote, you can join a political party. A political party is a group of people who share the same ideas about how the government should be run and what it should do. They work together to win elections. You can also choose not to join any of the political parties and still be a voter. There is no cost to join a party.

How to choose a political party:

- Choose a political party that has the same general views you do. For example, some political parties think that government should do more for people. Others feel that government should make it easier for people to do things for themselves.
- If you do not want to join a political party, mark that box on your voter registration form. This is called “no party preference.” Know that if you do, you may have limited choices for party candidates in Presidential primary elections.
- You can change your political party registration at any time. Just fill out a new voter registration form and check a different party box. The deadline to change your party is 15 days before the election.

If you are not registered with a political party and want to vote for a Presidential candidate from a party that lets you vote with their ballot, you must ask for that ballot when you go to your polling place on election day. If you plan to vote by mail, you must write on the application the name of the political party whose ballot you want to use.

Some parties require you to be registered in their party to vote for their candidates in a Presidential primary. If you want to vote for one of these candidates, fill out a new registration form to join that party by the registration deadline 15 days before the election. You can register to vote online through the Secretary of State’s website, registertovote.ca.gov.

No Party Preference

If you do not want to register with a political party (you want to be “independent” of any political party), mark “I do not want to register with a political party” on the registration form. In California, you can still vote for any candidate in a primary election, except for Presidential candidates. Each political party will decide before the election whether you may vote in their Presidential primary.
**AMERICAN INDEPENDENT**

We believe in liberty and justice for all under God. We want to keep America independent and safe. We'll protect the family, marriage and work. We believe in individual responsibility and free enterprise. We must obey our Constitution and promote Declaration of Independence principles.

**TOP PRIORITIES:**
- Protect the right to life and strengthen families
- Secure the border and enforce immigration laws
- Balance the state budget

510,486 members / 707-359-4884 / aipca.org

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**DEMOCRATIC**

Democrats believe the role of government is to ensure quality education and healthcare for all citizens; ensure justice for every person; protect the rights of immigrants, women, People of Color and the LGBT community; and create an economy that works for everyone, not just the most fortunate.

**TOP PRIORITIES:**
- Reduce income inequality
- Combat climate change/protecting the environment
- Protect and expand access to healthcare for everyone

8,700,440 members / 916-442-5707 / cadem.org

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**GREEN**

Greens know that we can have healthier, safer and happier lives, and our government can help if it is uncorrupted. The Green Party takes no corporate money, and so Greens work for both environmental and social justice, and for peace.

**TOP PRIORITIES:**
- Implement living wages, Medicare for all, no student debt
- Promote clean environment and justice for all
- Improve democracy with ranked choice voting and open debates

94,720 members / 916-549-6788 / cagreens.org

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**LIBERTARIAN**

The Libertarian Party stands for personal freedom, economic freedom, and a non-interventionist foreign policy. If you're socially tolerant and fiscally responsible, you're a libertarian. You, not the government, should decide how to run your life, finances, education, and family.

**TOP PRIORITIES:**
- Increase individual liberty and responsibility
- Shrink government: reduce taxes and regulation
- Liberate education, commerce and personal choice

141,461 members / 916-446-1776 / ca.lp.org

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**PEACE AND FREEDOM**

We stand for equal rights and a good standard of living for everyone. We want to protect our earth, promote peace, and defend our rights. Let's practice democracy and cooperation. We can use our country’s wealth to make life better for everyone.

**TOP PRIORITIES:**
- Bring all troops home now
- Provide good jobs at higher pay
- Tax the rich to give health care, housing, and education to all

76,021 members / 951-787-0318 / peaceandfreedom.org

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**REPUBLICAN**

California Republicans believe in listening closely to the people and caring about their concerns. We believe in a back-to-basics approach, to meet the basic needs of citizens like good roads, good schools, good jobs, a clean environment and safe communities.

**TOP PRIORITIES:**
- Put students and teachers first to improve our education system
- Provide quality and affordable healthcare for all Californians
- Ensure everyone can attain a high quality job

5,027,714 members / 916-448-9496 / cagop.org

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The statements and priorities were written by the political parties for the 2017 issue of this publication. The number of party members listed for each political party is from the Secretary of State’s February 10, 2017 Report of Registration.