



# **California College Democrats Voter Registration Guide**

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## Why Register Voters?

*“This right to vote is the basic right without which all others are meaningless. It gives people—people as individuals—control over their own destinies”*

*– President Lyndon B. Johnson*

- **It's easy.** College campuses are packed with potential voters. Many students have recently turned 18 or moved, and therefore need to register or re-register.
- **It sticks.** Campuses are a great place to recruit lifelong Democrats. Young voters are overwhelmingly progressive, and research shows that when people develop a party identification, they stick with it.
- **It pays.** Though Rush 2 Reg and the California Democratic Party's bounty program, voter registration can be a great way to earn money for your chapter.
- **It's important.** As students, we're being hit with double-digit fee hikes year after year. With the future of our universities at stake, we must ensure that we are represented in Sacramento.



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## What You Need

Before you get started, make sure you have a few things:

- **Voter registration forms.** These can be picked up at your local library, post office, or county elections office. However, before you use them, pre-register them with the CDP's bounty program. (See below)
- **Clipboards.** These allow you to carry forms, pens, and notes.
- **Permission.** Make sure you know where you're allowed to register voters. Common spaces are usually allowed, but double-check your school's policy for campus buildings.
- **Volunteers.** Volunteers are the backbone of any operation. Rotate them to prevent burnout, and work them in groups to add a social dimension to their experience.



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## Tips and Tricks

While some of this advice is universal, other parts are specific to college campuses, which have unique opportunities and pitfalls. Keep them in mind when designing your voter registration plans.

- 1. Have a designated registration coordinator.** Registration programs can be very complicated, and you need a point person with clear responsibility for their execution.
- 2. Be active.** People won't just bump into you. Be proactive and ask whether they are registered, whether they've moved, etc.
- 3. Be visible.** Use tables, banners, and props to get noticed. For example, life-sized Obama cutouts are a great attention-grabber (and cheap!).



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## Tips and Tricks

**4. Start early.** In their first few weeks, students are far less busy and they congregate at beginning-of-the-year events. Specifically, register freshmen at events such as orientations and club fairs.

**5. Focus on high-traffic areas.** The more people you ask, the more people you will register. Go to crowded places, such as dining halls, farmers' markets, and public transit hubs. You could even make classroom announcements, but have your teachers' permission first.

**6. Make it personal.** You may consider voting a moral obligation, but not everyone's so enlightened. Talk to people about issues that matter to them, such as education.

**7. Work with your student government and other campus organizations.** Some schools are required by law to conduct registration drives, and they can offer you unique resources. Moreover, they may allow you to copy Democratic forms for use in the bounty program.



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## Tips and Tricks

**8. Encourage students to register absentee.** Absentee voters are far more likely to turn out, and they get you more money from the bounty program!

**9. Have a list of dorm addresses.** Many residents don't have their addresses memorized, but they need them to register. Have them handy.

**10. Ask people if they've moved since they last registered.** Colleges students move often, but we need to re-register when we do. However, many of us don't know this.

**11. Reward your volunteers.** Prizes may encourage your members to participate. If you can afford it, consider offering a raffle or reward for volunteers.

**12. Photocopy Democratic forms before you send them in.** Copies are required for Rush 2 Reg and the CDP's bounty program.



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## The Bounty Program: A Short Introduction

Through its Voter Registration “Bounty” Program, the California Democratic Party offers chartered Democratic clubs and central committees money for each Democratic voter they register. Clubs receive **\$3.50 for each generic Democratic registration, \$4 for each Democratic registration with an email address and phone number, and \$4 for each Democratic permanent absentee registration.**

Forms must be submitted at least **100 at a time** (with a few exceptions), and the maximum amount paid to any single club is usually \$10,000.

While the program is a great way to raise money for your chapter, it has many **conditions and stipulations** with which you must comply:

- First, you must submit an [Enrollment Form](#) to register your club and your first set of ballots with the program. Registrations made before this form is approved will not be honored.
- Second, you must register subsequent forms using an [Affidavit Registration Form](#). Again, all forms must be pre-registered to be honored.
- Finally, to collect your bounty, you must submit a [Payment Request Form](#) along with copies of at least 100 Democratic ballots. Requests are honored on a first-come-first-served basis until the Program’s funds are exhausted, so submit early. Also, note that payments take months to arrive.

For more information on the bounty program, visit [the CDP’s website](#).



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## Dates and Deadlines

The last day to register to vote for the November election is **October 18**. The election itself is on **November 2**. For polling locations and hours, visit <http://www.smartvoter.org>.

Rush 2 Reg will accept Democratic forms completed from **August 1 to October 18**.

Be sure to mail back forms within **three business days** of completion. Failure to do so is a misdemeanor.

## Want more help?

If you have any questions or would like more information about voter registration, feel free to contact CCD's Political Director, Nik Dixit, at [ndixit@cacollegedems.org](mailto:ndixit@cacollegedems.org).