

**Voter Messaging in the Time of COVID-19  
Study Report**

**By Mindy Romero, Ph.D.**



**This study was conducted in partnership with the Future of California Elections (FoCE).**

**This research is supported through funding from the Democracy Fund.**

## Acknowledgments

We thank Astrid Ochoa, Executive Director of the Future of California Elections, for her leadership in making this study possible and for her partnership on all aspects of the study's design, review, and dissemination. We thank Eric McGhee, Ph.D., for his contributions to the survey design and analysis, as well as his careful review of the contents of this report. We also thank Jonathan Mehta Stein of California Common Cause for his helpful review of this report. A thank you to Jason Mendez at Snap-shot Media for his graphic design services.

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## About the Center for Inclusive Democracy (CID)

The Center for Inclusive Democracy (CID), formerly known as the California Civic Engagement Project, is part of the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy and is based in Sacramento. CID conducts a range of national and multi-state research initiatives exploring voting behavior, civic engagement, electoral and economic research, the intersection of social justice and democracy, and more. Its research informs and empowers a wide range of policy and organizing efforts aimed at eliminating disparities in social and economic well-being. Now a cornerstone project nested within CID's larger umbrella, the California Civic Engagement Project continues to produce groundbreaking resources and research for California. To learn more about CID's research, visit: [cid.usc.edu](http://cid.usc.edu).

## About Future of California Elections

Future of California Elections is a nonprofit, nonpartisan network of election stakeholders that includes election officials, reform advocates, and civil rights and civic engagement groups from across the state. The FoCE mission is to modernize elections and expand participation which we accomplish by developing shared strategies for impact in the field of elections administration. FoCE staff convenes election stakeholders to ensure our election system serves all of California's diverse electorate, including underrepresented voters, voters with disabilities and limited-English proficient voters. To learn more about FoCE's impact and current priorities, click [here](#).

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## Introduction

In the upcoming 2020 presidential election, California voters will have multiple options for casting their ballot. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, California Governor Gavin Newsom recently issued an executive order and signed into law legislation that requires California's county election offices to mail every active, registered California voter a vote-by-mail ballot (VBM). Voters can choose to return their ballot through the mail, at a ballot drop box, or at an in-person voting location in their county. Robust in-person voting options will also be provided to voters.<sup>1</sup>

The Center for Inclusive Democracy (CID) at the University of Southern California Price School of Public Policy—formerly the California Civic Engagement Project—conducted a statewide representative survey examining the opinions of eligible voters (adult citizens) in California and the likelihood of their electoral participation under this new election administration policy. Understanding Californians' voting preferences is essential to creating effective public education strategies. The results of the study, conducted in partnership with the Future of California Elections (FoCE), will be used to inform the development of educational resources by election officials and non-profit organizations attempting to convey current and changing election-related information to voters.

This report presents our findings on California eligible voters' concerns with regard to voting this November, their preferences on how and when to vote, their trusted information sources, as well as the impact of different types of voting-related messages on their likelihood of casting a ballot. In each of the following sections of the report, we present survey responses for the overall eligible voter population (adult citizens) in California broken out by race, ethnicity, and age group. We also provide these data in the report's appendix for Los Angeles County and the combined counties of the Bay Area Region.<sup>2</sup> We also highlight differences present in the findings for eligible voters with disabilities. Available in the appendix of this report are data broken out for respondents who indicated they would want their mail ballot in a language other than English.

## Survey Methodology

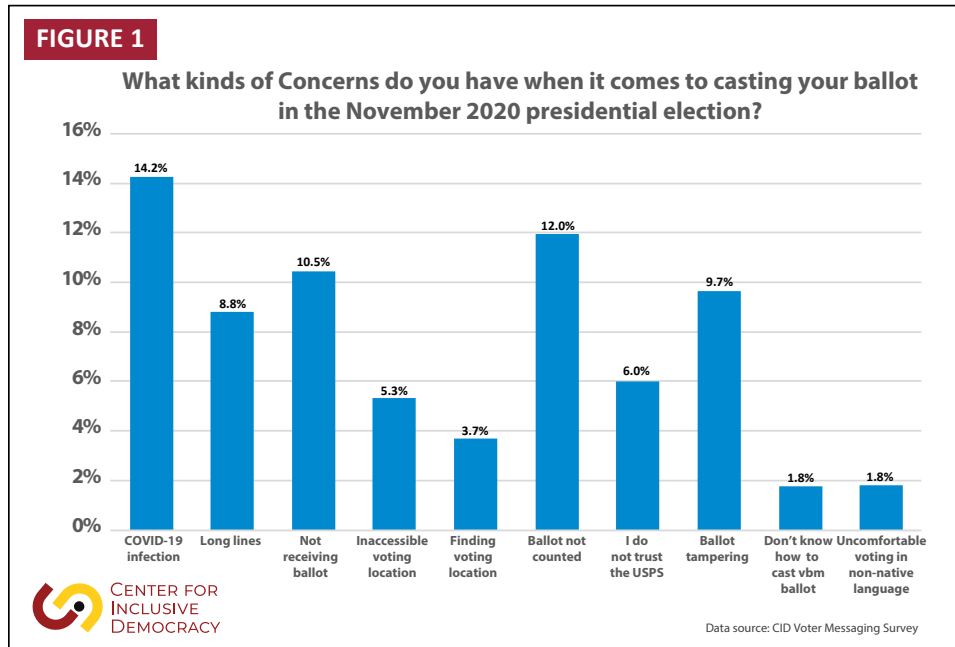
We surveyed a large sample of eligible voters – 11,913 respondents – in order to include outsized numbers of members of the state's largest racial and ethnic groups (self-reported by respondents). Surveys were conducted in both English and Spanish. The margin of error for the total survey sample is +/-2.7%.

We fielded the survey from July 22-29, recording the views of a diverse sample in which 44.5% of respondents are white (non-Latino), 30.9% are Latino, 15.5% are Asian-American, and 9.2% are African-American (these numbers total 100.9% because some Latinos are members of multiple racial groups). Each of these figures are within 0.1 to 2.3 percentage points of the estimates for the state's citizen voting age population reported by the United States Census Bureau. To further ensure that our findings reflect this population, we created survey weights based on the demographic characteristics of this population and report all results using those weights. We included an oversample of eligible voters with disabilities.<sup>3</sup> We should note that the actual behavior of voters at the time of the election could differ from their survey responses (see online appendix for survey instrument).

# 1. Voters' Concerns About the General Election

**Key Takeaways:** More eligible voters of color, youth and those with disabilities are concerned about contracting COVID-19 while voting this November compared to the general eligible voter population. Thirty-one percent of respondents have some type of concern regarding voting. Of this group, almost half are concerned about contracting COVID-19.

## What kinds of concerns do you have when it comes to casting your ballot in the November 2020 presidential election?



We asked respondents if they have concerns when it comes to casting their ballot in the November 2020 presidential election. Respondents could choose all that apply from a list of relevant options with some respondents indicating more than one concern.

Figure 1 shows that 14.2% said they are concerned they would become infected with COVID-19 when casting their ballot, 12.0% are concerned their ballot would not be counted accurately, followed by 10.5% concerned they would not receive their ballot. Sixty-nine percent of eligible voters said they did not have a concern of any kind when it comes to voting in the general election.

Of only those eligible voters who prefer to vote in person in the general election, 9.3% said their concern is that they do not trust the USPS mail service to deliver their mail ballot safely and on time.

When we limit our analysis to only those eligible voters who answered yes to having any type of concern (31% of all respondents), it is clear COVID-19 is top of mind. Nearly half (44.9%) of concerned respondents specifically cited contracting COVID-19 while voting in person in the general election.

## Historically Underrepresented Groups: Voters of Color, Youth and Voters with Disabilities

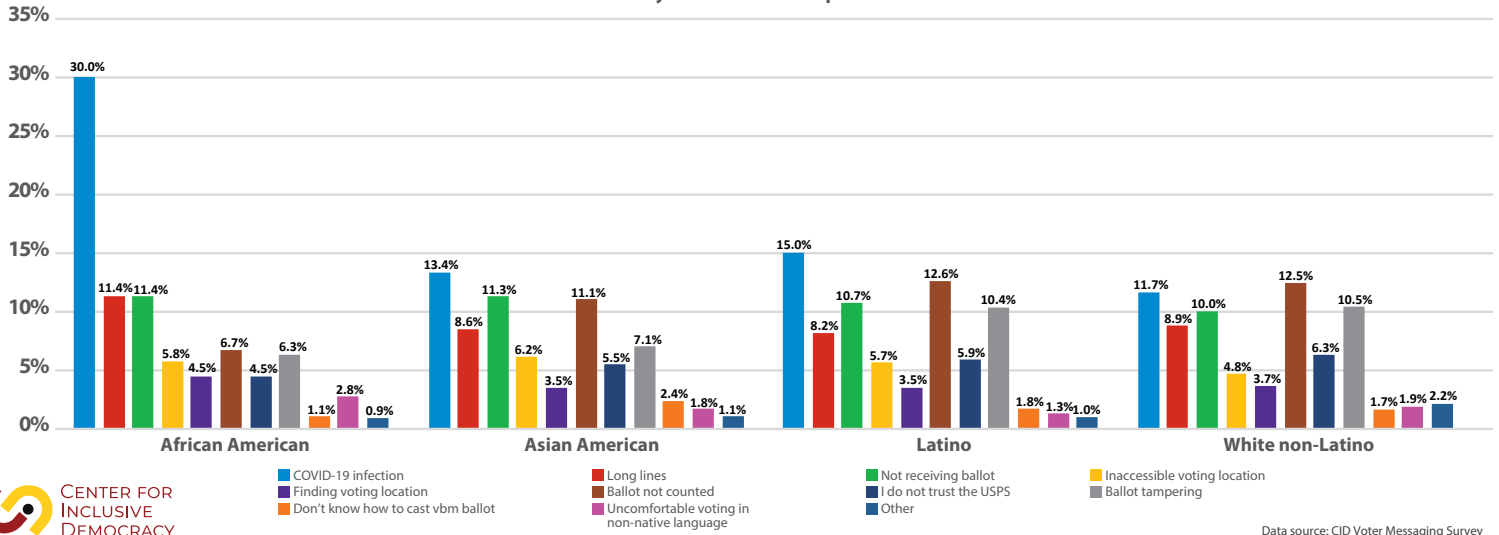
Figure 2 shows that the top three concerns that eligible voters have about casting their ballot in November 2020 vary significantly by race and ethnicity. Most notably, 30.0% of African-American eligible voters indicated they are concerned about contracting COVID-19 while voting in person, while only 11.7% of white, non-Latinos are concerned about COVID-19 and voting. Also, 11.4% of African-American respondents are concerned about long lines – a greater percentage than Asian-American, Latino, and white, non-Latino eligible voters. We also see that more Asian-American, Latino, and white, non-Latino eligible voters are concerned about their ballot not being counted accurately than are African-American respondents.

Many more young eligible voters under age 45 have concerns about contracting COVID-19 while voting this November compared with those 45 and older. The difference is even greater when comparing young eligible voters to those 55 and older. Table 1 shows that approximately 20% or more of each age group under 45 are concerned about contracting COVID-19 while voting but less than six percent of every age group over 55 are concerned.

For eligible voters with a disability, the percentage concerned about contracting COVID-19 while voting is much larger than the overall eligible voter population - nearly a quarter compared to 14.2%. Eligible voters with a disability are also more concerned that they might have to stand in line to cast their ballot in person compared with the overall eligible voter population – 13.3% versus 7.6%. Nearly eight percent are concerned that their in-person voting location might not be accessible (see appendix for these data).

FIGURE 2

What kinds of concerns do you have when it comes to casting your ballot in the November 2020 presidential election?  
By Race/Ethnic Group



Data source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

Table 1. What kinds of concerns do you have when it comes to casting your ballot in the November 2020 presidential election?

	COVID-19 infection	Long lines	Not receiving ballot	Inaccessible voting location	Finding voting location	Ballot not counted	I do not trust the USPS	Ballot tampering	Don't know how to cast vbm ballot	Uncomfortable voting in non-native language	Other
All Eligible Voters*	14.2%	8.8%	10.5%	5.3%	3.7%	12.0%	6.0%	9.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.6%
18-24	18.9%	10.5%	11.3%	6.6%	4.4%	11.3%	6.2%	9.0%	3.9%	1.9%	0.6%
25-34	22.1%	9.5%	14.5%	5.3%	4.5%	11.1%	5.6%	8.4%	1.7%	1.3%	0.7%
35-44	20.5%	12.6%	13.3%	7.7%	7.7%	12.6%	5.7%	10.6%	2.1%	1.7%	0.8%
45-54	12.5%	11.0%	10.0%	5.4%	2.3%	13.2%	6.0%	11.2%	1.7%	2.4%	2.5%
55-64	5.7%	5.1%	7.0%	4.0%	1.3%	11.7%	5.9%	9.6%	0.7%	1.4%	3.1%
65-74	4.1%	3.9%	5.4%	2.9%	1.7%	12.7%	6.3%	9.3%	0.4%	1.8%	2.3%
75+	4.2%	4.0%	7.0%	1.8%	0.7%	11.1%	8.0%	10.0%	0.9%	3.5%	1.9%

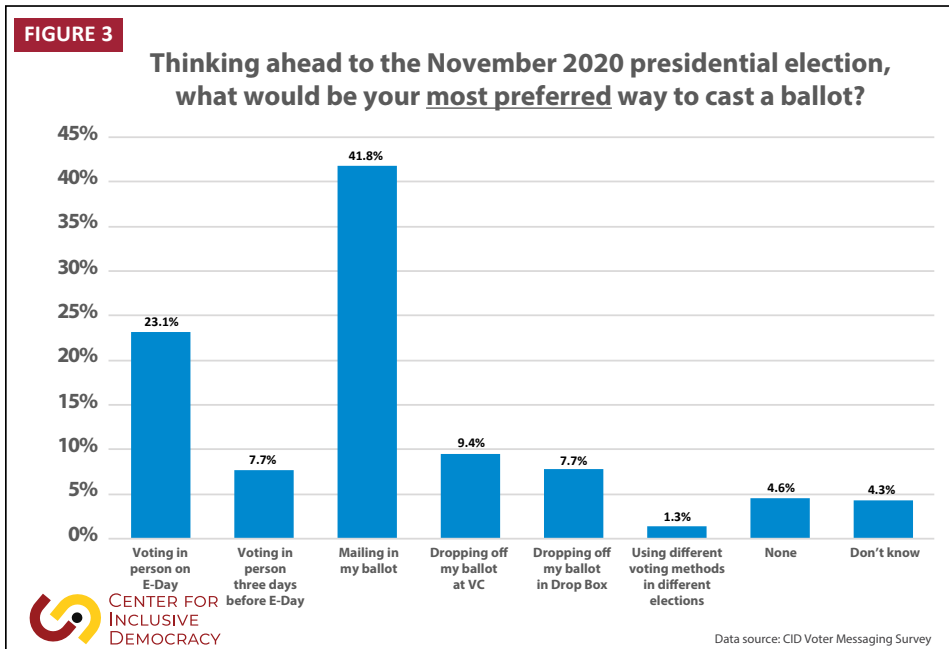
Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

## 2. Eligible Voters' Preferences on How and When to Vote

**Key Takeaways:** Almost a third of California eligible voters prefer to cast their ballot in person, while over 40% of eligible voters prefer to send their ballot through the mail. Greater percentages of African-American, youth and eligible voters with a disability prefer to vote in person in the November election. However, more white, non-Latino eligible voters who plan to vote in person prefer to cast their vote on Election Day.

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would be your most preferred way to cast a ballot?



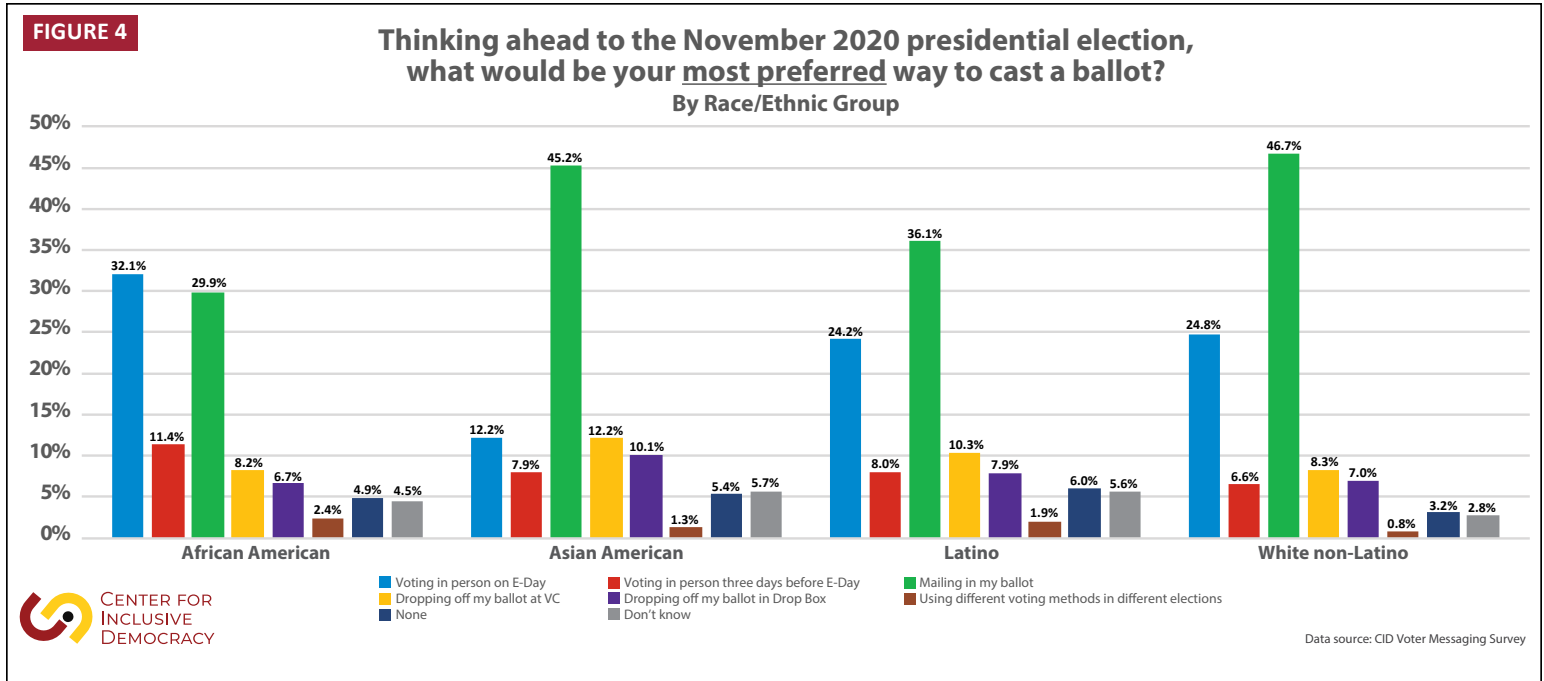
Of California eligible voters surveyed, 41.8% said their most preferred way to cast a ballot in November is mailing in their ballot. However, Figure 3 shows that nearly 31% prefer to vote in person whether on Election Day or three days before Election Day (an option for all counties under Senate Bill 423) and another 9.4% and 7.7% prefer to drop off their ballot at a voting location or drop box, respectively. These numbers translate into nearly half (47.9%) of California eligible voters preferring to cast their vote in the upcoming general election in a way other than through the mail. As reference, 72% of California's votes cast in the 2020 primary were VBM ballots (all return methods combined).<sup>4</sup>

### Voters of Color, Youth and Voters with Disabilities

From Figure 4, we can see that a greater percentage of eligible African-American voters (43.5%) prefer to vote in person in the November election, either on election day or three days prior, than the general eligible voter population. At the same time, lower percentages of Latino (36.1%) eligible voters and even lower percentages of African-American (29.9%) eligible voters prefer to mail in their ballot compared to white, non-Latino (46.7%) and Asian-American eligible voters (45.2%).<sup>5</sup>

Table 2 shows us that more eligible youth (age 18 to 24) also prefer to vote in person (29.2%) in the general election and fewer prefer to mail in their ballot (31.9%) versus older age groups. As with youth, greater percentages of eligible voters with disabilities prefer to vote in person than the overall eligible voter population (see appendix).

Note: We also asked respondents about the method of voting that would give them the most confidence that their ballot would be counted correctly. See appendix for these data.



**Table 2: Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would be your most preferred way to cast a ballot?**

	Voting in person on E-Day	Voting in person three days before E-Day	Mailing in my ballot	Dropping off my ballot at VC	Dropping off my ballot in Drop Box	Using different voting methods in different elections	None	Don't know
All Eligible Voters*	23.1%	7.7%	41.8%	9.4%	7.7%	1.3%	4.6%	4.3%
18-24	18.9%	10.3%	31.9%	10.3%	10.9%	2.4%	7.3%	8.0%
25-34	24.4%	9.4%	37.1%	10.3%	6.8%	1.6%	5.9%	4.5%
35-44	32.7%	8.5%	34.8%	8.7%	5.7%	1.5%	4.9%	3.2%
45-54	26.1%	7.4%	41.4%	9.1%	7.1%	1.2%	2.7%	4.9%
55-64	21.3%	5.6%	49.7%	9.2%	7.3%	0.5%	3.9%	2.4%
65-74	15.8%	4.4%	56.1%	10.0%	9.0%	0.6%	2.0%	2.2%
75+	14.0%	4.1%	61.6%	4.9%	7.5%	0.7%	2.3%	4.9%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
 \* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

### If you vote in person in the November 2020 presidential election, when are you most likely to vote?

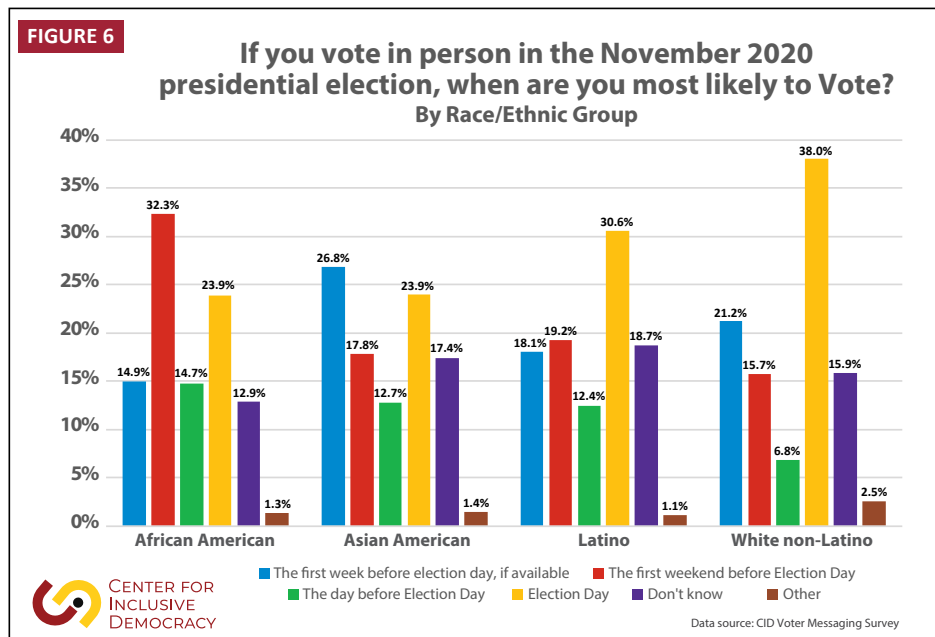
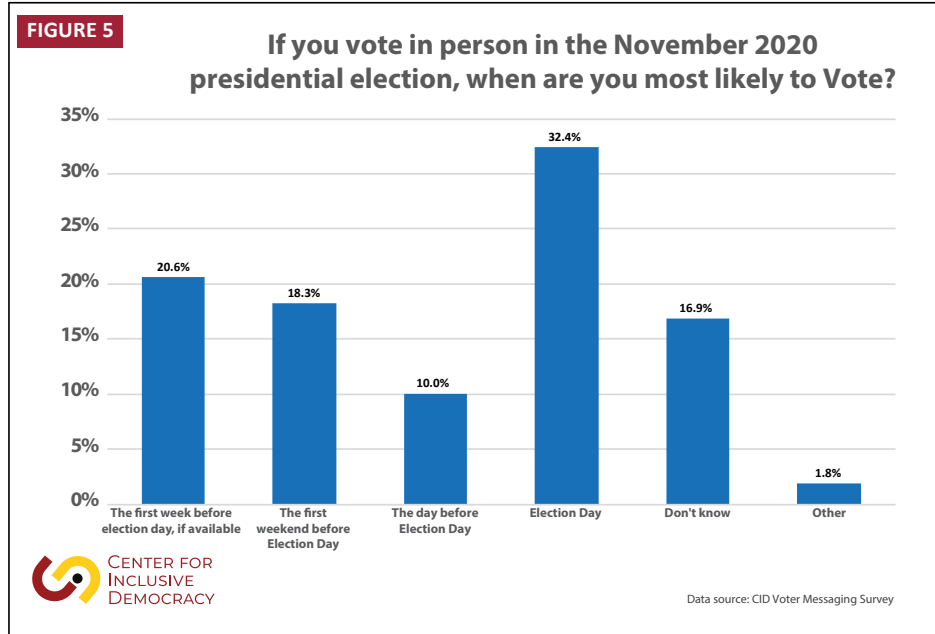
We asked eligible voters planning to vote in person in November 2020 when they are most likely to vote given the legally available options. From Figure 5 we can see that nearly a third (32.4%) said they are most likely to vote on Election Day, while another 10% said they are likely to vote the day before. A combined 38.9% of eligible voters said they were likely to vote on the first weekend or week (if available in their county) before Election Day.

### Voters of Color, Youth and Voters with Disabilities

Figures 6 and Table 3 show that even greater percentages of African-American (47.2%), Asian-American (44.6%), and young, age 18 to 24 (39.4%), in-person voters say they are likely to vote before Election Day compared with the overall population of eligible voters. Many more in-person voters with disabilities (41.9%) are also more likely to vote the first weekend or week before Election Day (see appendix). White, non-Latino in-person voters prefer to vote on Election Day in larger percentages than other racial and ethnic groups.

These findings demonstrate the importance of providing robust early voting options for California voters.<sup>6</sup> Of course, we should note that voters' actual behavior at the time of the election could differ from their survey responses to this question (as well as with their preferred method of voting), particularly given the evolving uncertainties with regard to the intensity and impact of the pandemic.





**Table 3: If you vote in person in the November 2020 presidential election, when are you most likely to vote?**

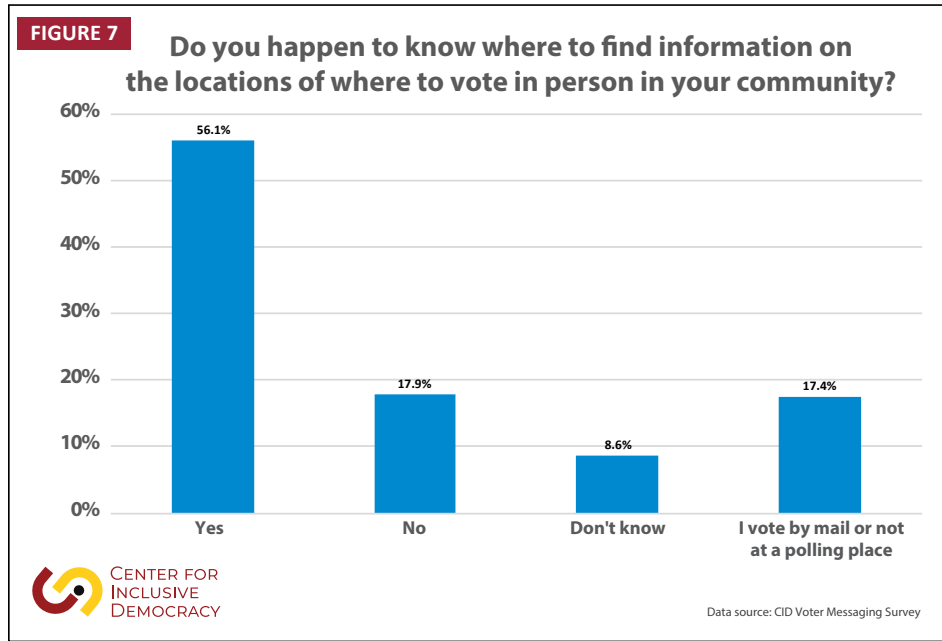
	The first week before Election Day, if available	The first weekend before Election Day	The day before Election Day	Election Day	Don't know	Other
<b>All Eligible Voters*</b>	20.6%	18.3%	10.0%	32.4%	16.9%	1.8%
<b>18-24</b>	18.7%	20.7%	14.1%	23.0%	22.7%	0.9%
<b>25-34</b>	17.6%	23.6%	15.2%	27.1%	15.4%	1.0%
<b>35-44</b>	13.8%	22.6%	12.4%	36.5%	13.6%	1.1%
<b>45-54</b>	21.7%	20.7%	7.0%	35.6%	13.3%	1.7%
<b>55-64</b>	25.4%	12.6%	5.2%	36.2%	18.4%	2.2%
<b>65-74</b>	29.2%	9.2%	4.7%	36.6%	16.4%	4.1%
<b>75+</b>	21.5%	7.3%	5.1%	39.7%	22.2%	4.3%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

### 3. Voter Information Sources

**Key Takeaways:** Over a quarter of California’s eligible voters do not know or are unsure where to find information about in-person voting locations. Knowledge of where to find polling locations varies significantly by race, ethnicity and age. Most California eligible voters locate information about voting through official materials from their county elections office, while others rely on their networks for information. Latinos, in particular, turn to family and friends more than other eligible voters.

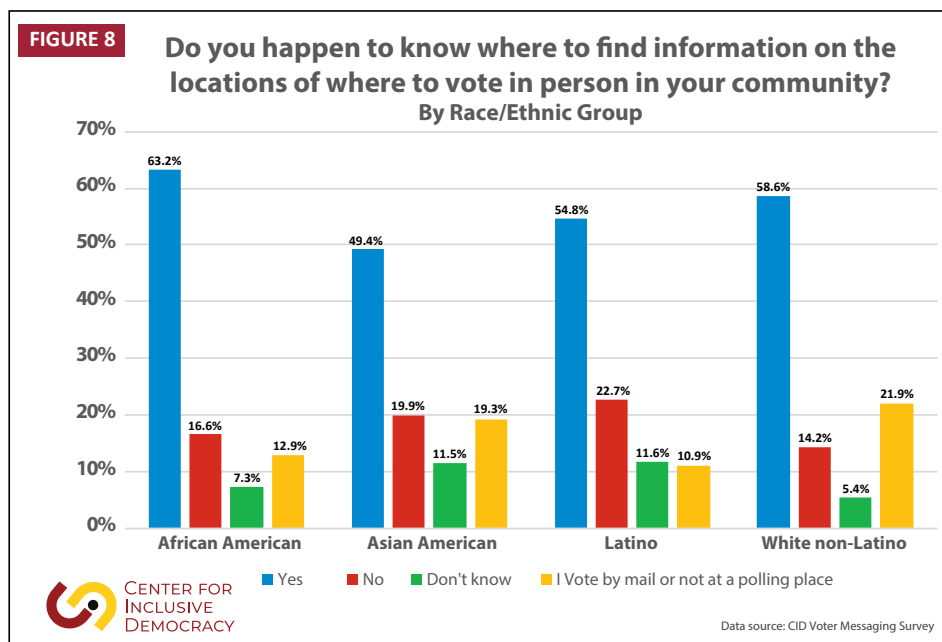
#### Do you happen to know where to find information on the locations of where to vote in person in your community?



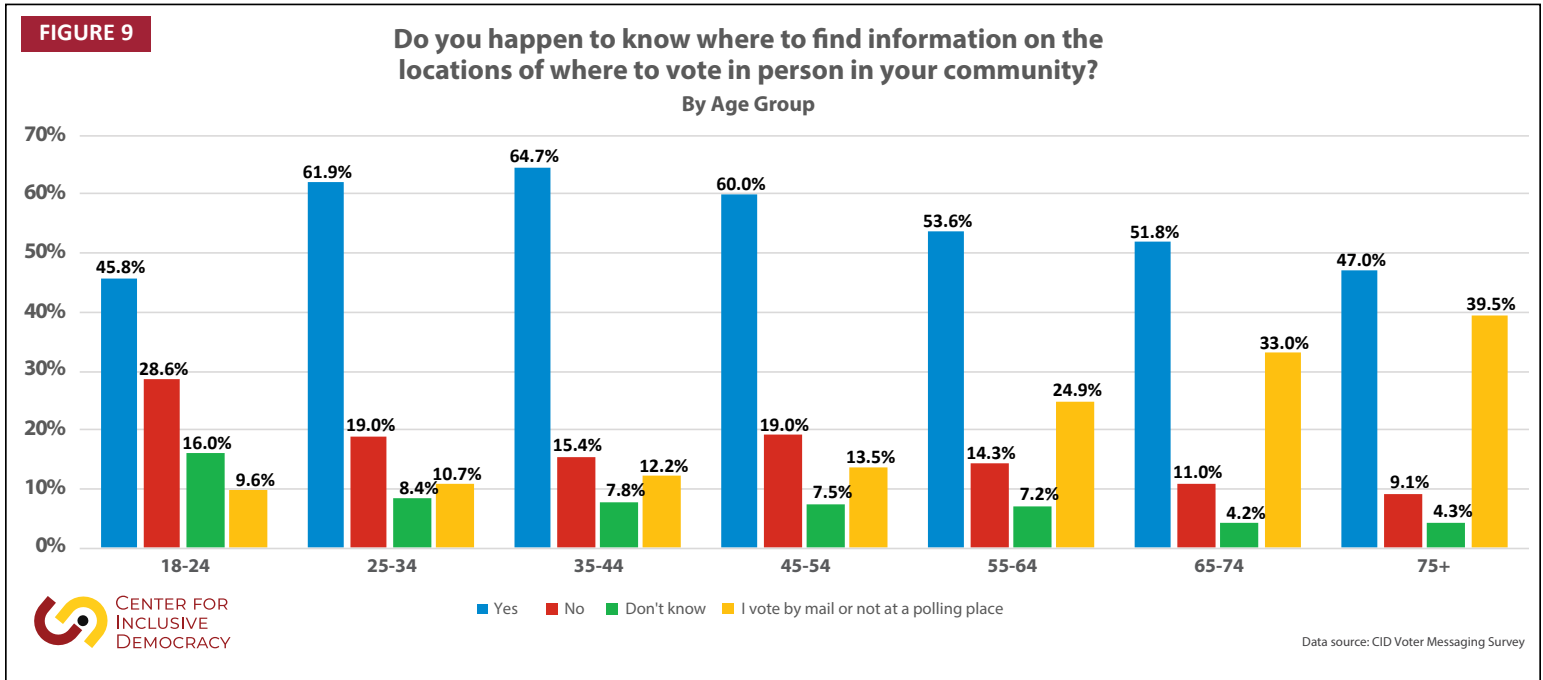
Over a quarter (26.5%) of California eligible voters either do not know or are unsure where to find information on in-person voting locations in their community, compared to fifty-six percent who did know (Figure 7).

#### Voters of Color, Youth and Voters with Disabilities

Knowledge about polling place locations varies significantly by race and ethnicity. Figure 8 shows that more Asian-American and Latino eligible voters reported not knowing where to find their polling place information - 31.4% and 34.3%, respectively while about 24% of African-American respondents said they either do not know or are unsure about knowing this information. Only 19.6% of White, non-Latino eligible voters reported this same lack of polling place knowledge.



Our data also found a significant gap by age with regard to polling place information. Nearly 45% of 18 to 24 year-old eligible voters either don't know or are unsure where to find their polling place information compared with only 13.4% of eligible voters age 75 and older (Figure 9). Nearly 30% of eligible voters with a disability reported not knowing this information.



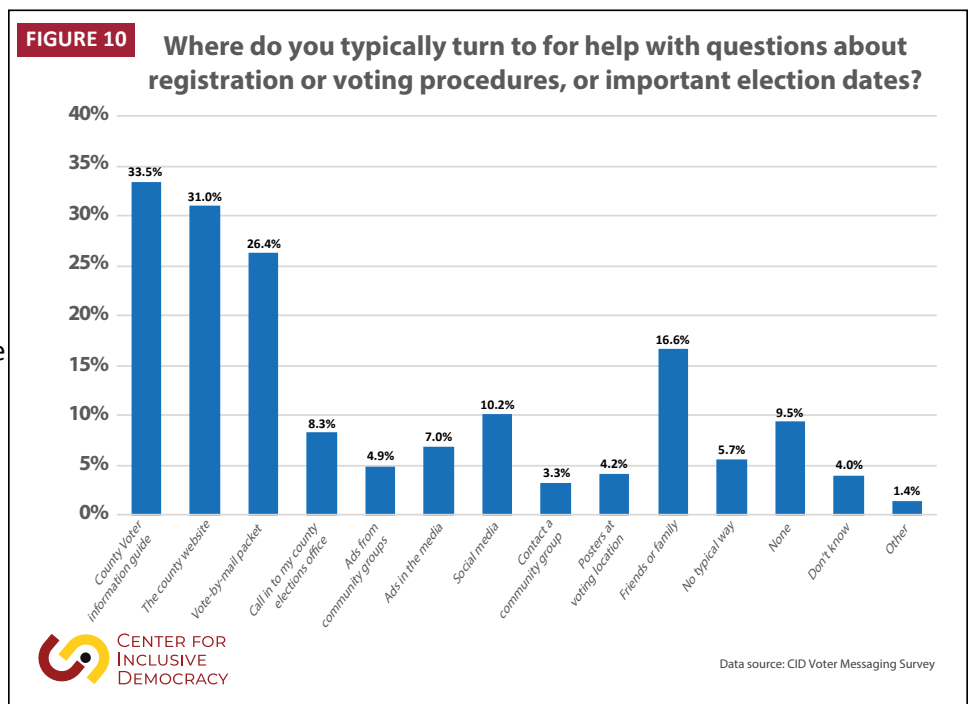
## Where do you typically turn to for help with questions about registration or voting procedures, or important election dates?

We asked eligible voters about where they typically turn to for help with questions on registration, voting procedures or important election dates. This information can be enormously useful to voter education and outreach efforts, particularly for efforts aimed at reaching historically underrepresented voter groups who often receive little to no contact in an election cycle.<sup>7</sup> Respondents could choose all that apply from a list of relevant options with some respondents indicating multiple sources. From Figure 10, we can see that the most cited information sources were the county voter information guide, the county website and the voter's vote-by-mail packets – 33.5%, 31.0% and 26.4%, respectively. Another 16.6% of respondents turn to friends or family for information.

## Voters of Color, Youth and Voters with Disabilities

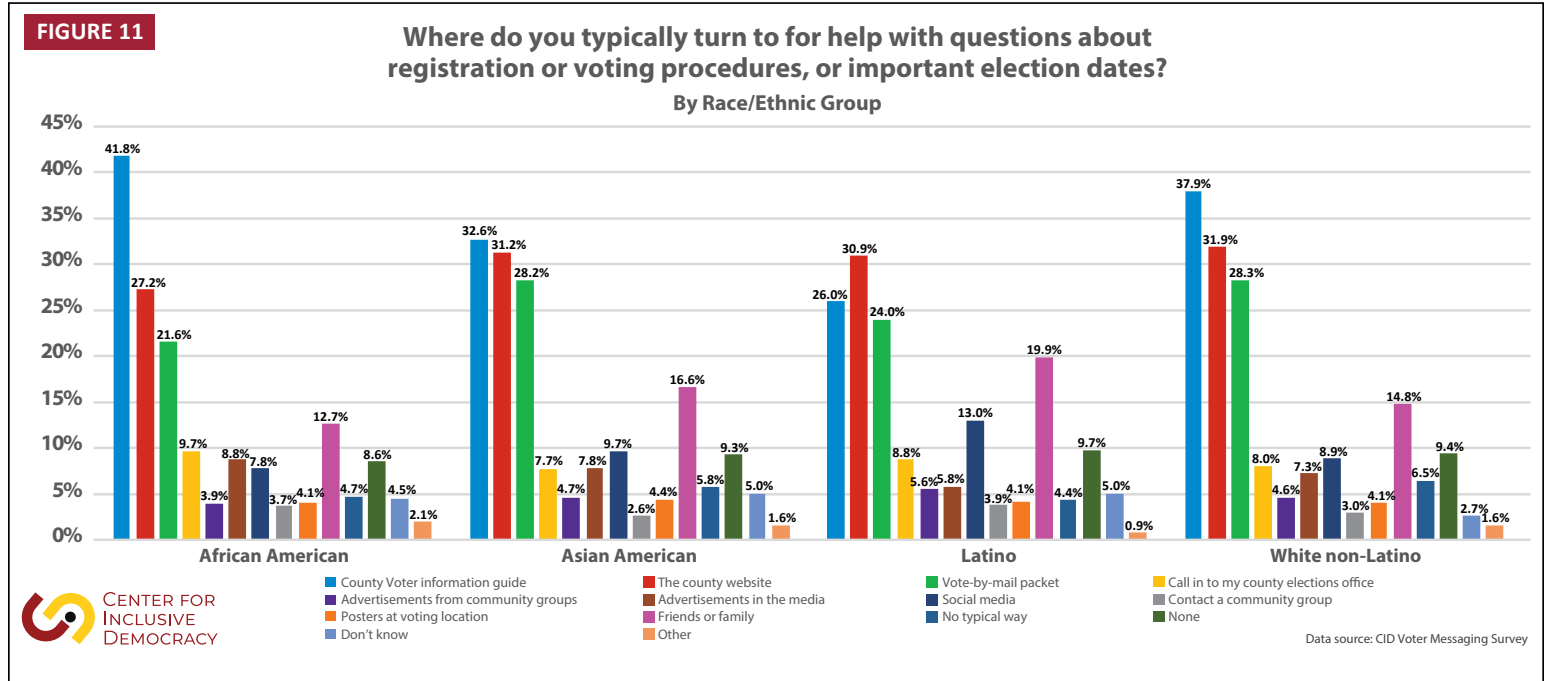
Both African-American and Asian-American eligible voters turn to voting information generated by their county election offices in similar rates as the overall eligible voter population (Figure 11). Latinos turn to these sources in somewhat smaller percentages, while white, non-Latinos due so to a larger degree. Notably, Latino eligible voters rely on friends and family (19.9%) for information more than other eligible voters of color and white, non-Latinos.

Young and senior voters turn to very different voting-related information (Table 4). For example, about 20% of eligible voters age 18 to 24 use the county voter information guide as a resource compared to over 40% of eligible voters age 55 and older. Eligible voters age 18 to 24 also turn to friends and family for voting information at much higher rates than older age groups – 26.0% compared to under 11% for eligible voters age 55 plus.



Eligible voters with a disability rely on voting information generated by their county election offices at somewhat similar rates as the overall eligible voter population (see appendix). However, these voters directly contact (by phone) their county elections office in higher percentages, 12.4% versus 8.3% of all respondents. At 13.7%, eligible voters with a disability also turn to friends and family for voting information less than many other groups and the overall eligible voter population.

The high use of official materials generated by county elections offices, particularly for voters of color and seniors, underscores the importance of the usability (e.g. plain and accessible language, quality translation, readability for voters with visual disabilities) of these materials when voters turn to them for assistance.



**Table 4: Where do you typically turn to for help with questions about registration or voting procedures, or important election dates?**

	County voter information guide	The county website	Vote-by-mail packet	Call in to my county elections office	Advertisements from community groups	Advertisements in the media	Social media	Contact a community group	Posters at voting location	Friends or family	No typical way	None	Don't know	Other
All Eligible Voters*	33.5%	31.0%	26.4%	8.3%	4.9%	7.0%	10.2%	3.3%	4.2%	16.6%	5.7%	9.5%	4.0%	1.4%
18-24	19.7%	24.4%	19.0%	9.7%	7.1%	6.8%	18.3%	4.5%	5.6%	26.0%	4.6%	8.4%	7.5%	1.4%
25-34	26.7%	35.8%	24.3%	9.3%	6.8%	9.8%	13.5%	4.7%	4.4%	17.2%	5.0%	8.5%	3.5%	1.2%
35-44	34.0%	37.7%	27.5%	9.8%	6.7%	11.1%	14.4%	5.2%	6.4%	18.6%	4.8%	7.5%	3.2%	0.8%
45-54	35.4%	31.8%	27.2%	6.7%	3.1%	5.4%	8.8%	2.5%	2.8%	16.8%	6.2%	8.7%	4.4%	1.0%
55-64	43.2%	28.7%	28.9%	5.2%	2.7%	3.6%	2.8%	1.0%	2.6%	10.9%	4.9%	11.7%	2.9%	2.2%
65-74	44.1%	29.3%	32.0%	8.5%	2.5%	4.0%	2.6%	1.4%	3.0%	9.3%	8.2%	11.8%	1.9%	1.8%
75+	41.8%	18.4%	32.6%	9.4%	3.0%	6.3%	1.8%	1.1%	2.6%	9.3%	10.2%	13.3%	4.5%	3.0%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
 \* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

## Did your county change the options for how and when you could cast your ballot in the March 2020 primary election?

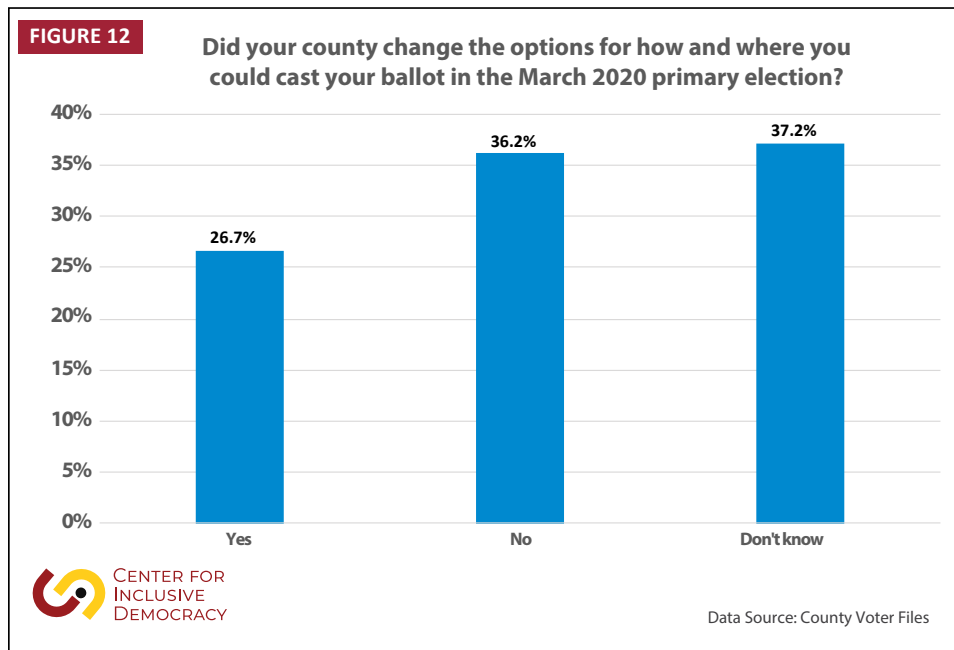
Prior to the new statewide mandate to send every registered voter a vote-by-mail (VBM) ballot, 15 California counties began conducting elections under the Voter's Choice Act (VCA). Under the new voting model neighborhood polling places are replaced with vote centers, while every registered voter is mailed a ballot. Newly established vote centers are distributed throughout the county and available to all voters up to ten days before Election Day (requirement reduced to three days before the 2020 general election under Senate Bill 423).<sup>8</sup>

The following ten counties adopted the VCA for the 2020 election cycle: Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles (LA county chose not to mail all registered voters VBM ballots in the 2020 primary), Mariposa, Orange, San Mateo, and Tuolumne. Five other counties, Madera, Napa, Nevada, Sacramento, and Santa Clara did so in the previous election cycle of 2018. All 15 VCA counties (approximately half the state's registered voter population) have engaged in substantial outreach campaigns, as required by the VCA, to educate voters about the voting changes and to encourage use of the new voting options.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to the significant changes voters experienced in VCA adopting counties, the 2020 primary also saw several other state election reforms (although perhaps less visible to most county voters) that came into effect statewide. These included, most notably, the expansion of conditional voter registration to every polling place in the state.<sup>10</sup>

We asked survey respondents if they knew whether their county changed the options for how and when they could cast their ballot in the March 2020 primary election. Figure 12 shows that only 26.7% said their county changed the options for casting their ballot in the primary. Nearly three-quarters of eligible voters said their county did not make changes or they did not know if this was the case.

### Voters of Color, Youth and Voters with Disabilities

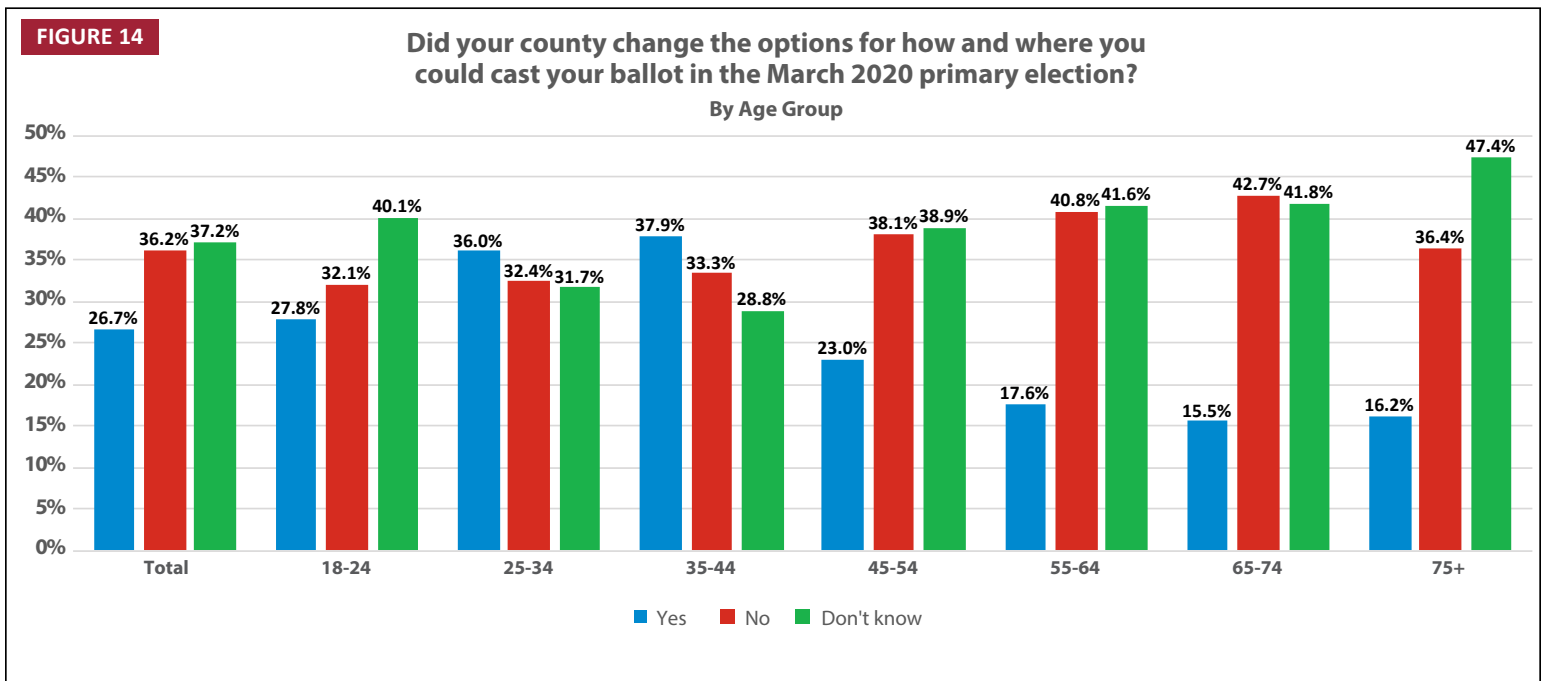
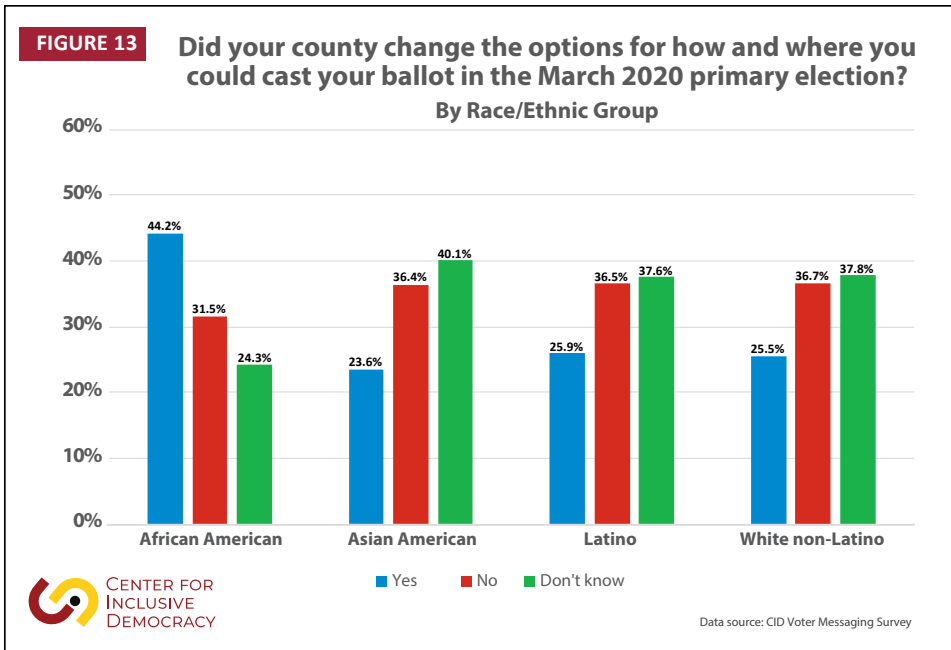


More African-American eligible voters said their county made changes, whereas somewhat smaller percentages of Asian-American, Latino and white, non-Latino eligible voters said the same. Fewer than 20% of eligible voters age 55 and older said their county made changes to how and where they could cast their ballot.

### VCA vs. Non-VCA Counties

Given the voter education campaigns that were conducted by VCA counties, we examined responses to this question broken out for eligible voters in VCA compared with non-VCA counties. A third of respondents in VCA counties had heard of the voting changes, whereas only 21.0% of respondents in non-VCA counties affirmed this. Los Angeles County (a VCA adopting county) alone fared better with 38.4% of eligible voters indicating they had heard of the voting changes in their county.

Our findings show that small percentages of eligible voters knew that changes had occurred in their county, regardless of whether or not it had adopted the VCA. This low level of awareness has occurred despite the presence of a significant voter outreach campaign in each of the counties adopting the VCA and the inclusion of the new voting information in official county elections materials. This finding underscores the immense challenge that is present in educating voters about election changes and can possibly inform expectations for the needed level of outreach this November.



## 4. Voter Messaging Experiment

**Key Takeaways:** Of the six messages the survey tested, those with the largest effect on the likelihood of voting are the core voting options message and the version that is accompanied by community empowerment language. The voting options message with added health and safety language did not have as large of a positive impact on the likelihood of voting as these other messages. However, the effect of the health and safety message was greater when delivered by a trusted messenger.

For this experimental treatment, we randomly divided the survey’s respondents into seven groups: one group did not receive a message of any kind, another received a core message about available options for casting ballots in the upcoming election, while the remaining five groups each received the same core message plus an added message we were seeking to test. The group that did not receive a message was our control group, while the other six groups explored different experimental treatments.<sup>11</sup>

### Survey Control Group

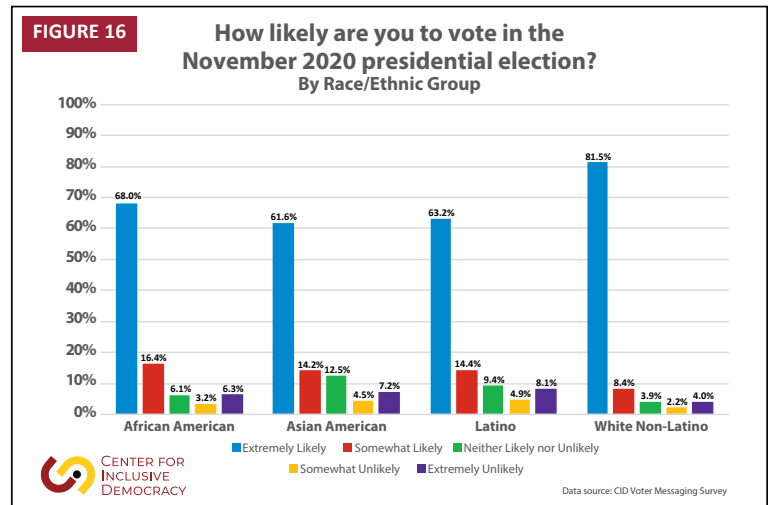
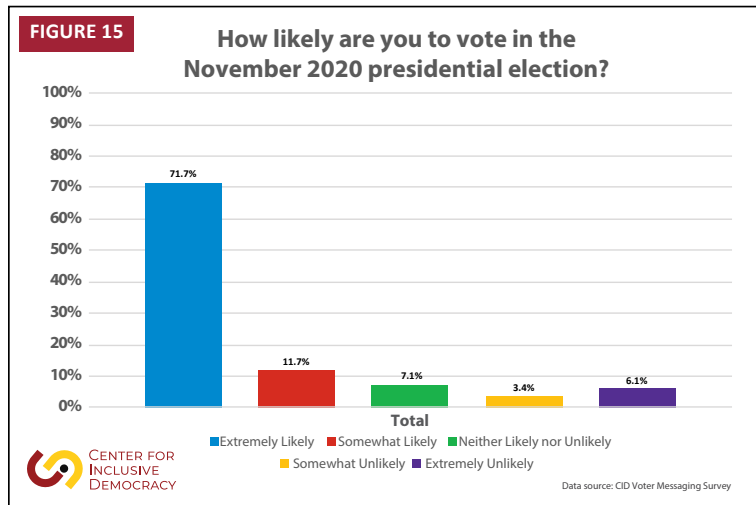


Figure 15 presents the likelihood of voting in the November 2020 general election for control group respondents. Figure 16 shows the variation in the likelihood of voting for this group broken down by race and ethnic group. We should note that it is common in public opinion surveys for respondents to be optimistic about their chances of voting, and the respondents to our survey are no exception. What is important for our analysis is whether survey respondents are more or less likely to vote after receiving the experimental messages.

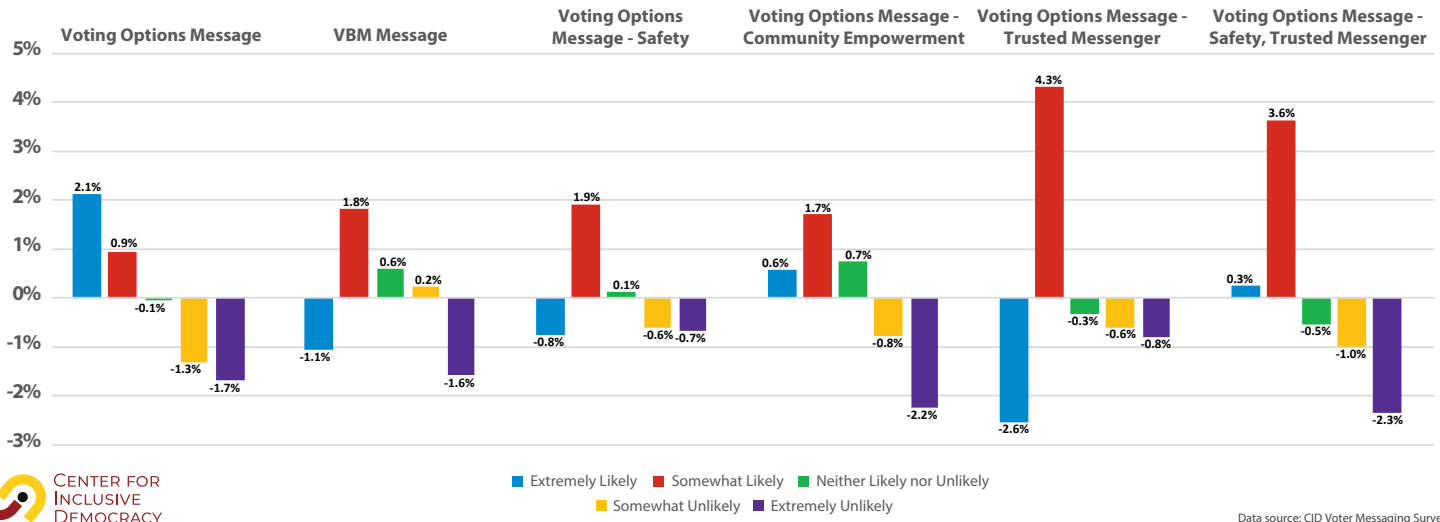
### Voting Options Message

We tested a voter message focused on explaining voters’ options for casting their ballot in November. The “voting options” message was also used as the core component of five additional messages we tested, all with a uniquely added component presented to voters: safety, trusted messenger, trusted messenger with safety message, community empowerment, and a reduction of the voting options to focus only on vote-by-mail. See appendix for the text of all six tested messages.

*Voting is easier than ever before. You choose how and when to vote. Every registered voter in California will automatically get a ballot in the mail, even if they did not request one. You have three options to return your ballot. You can return it by mail, drop it off at a ballot drop-box or a voting location near you. You can also vote in person at a voting location starting the weekend before Election Day and through Election Day.*

FIGURE 17

### Differences in Likelihood of Voting by Type of Voter Message



Data source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

Figure 17 presents the differences in the likelihood of voting for each group of respondents randomly chosen to view one of the six voting messages compared to the control group that did not receive a message.

The percentage of respondents receiving the core “voting options” message who indicated they are extremely likely to vote was higher by two percentage points than the control group. The percentage reporting they are somewhat likely to vote was higher than the control group by one percentage point.

For respondents receiving the “voting options” message with added health and safety language, those extremely likely to vote was lower by about a percentage point than the control group. The percentage reporting they are somewhat likely to vote was higher than the control group by almost two percentage points. However, when respondents received a “voting options” message with a safety emphasis that was delivered by California civil rights organizations (a trusted messenger for many eligible voters) the percentage of this group indicating they are somewhat likely to vote was higher by 3.6 percentage points over the control group.

A “voting options” message with the addition of community empowerment language also produced a positive effect on the likelihood of voting for eligible voters receiving this message – 0.6 and 1.7 percentage points higher for extremely likely and somewhat likely to vote, respectively, than the control group.

Receiving a voting message limited to focusing only on vote-by-mail options also generated a split impact on the likelihood of voting - 1.1 percentage points lower for extremely likely and 1.8 percentage points higher for somewhat likely to vote, respectively, than the control group.



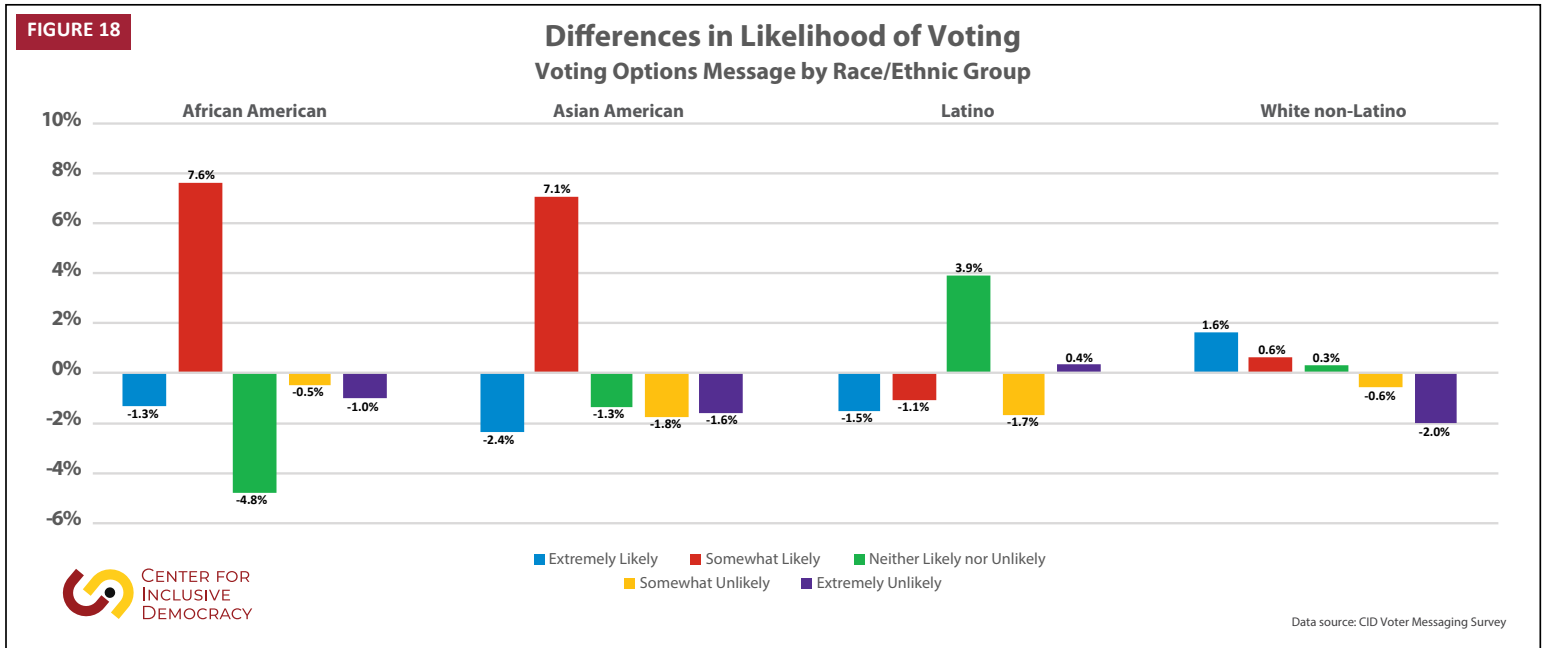


Figure 18 breaks out the effect of the core “voting options” message on the likelihood of voting for racial and ethnic groups in California. Both African Americans and Asian Americans who received this message said they are somewhat likely to vote by more than 7 percentage points than the control group although their reported extreme likelihood of voting is lower. In contrast, the effect of the voting options message was much smaller (in a positive or negative direction) for both Latinos and White, non-Latinos.

### Voter Messaging Survey’s Key Findings

- More eligible voters of color, (age 18 to 24) and those with disabilities are concerned about contracting COVID-19 while voting this November compared to the general eligible voter population.
- Nearly half of California eligible voters prefer to cast their vote in the upcoming general election in a way other than through the mail.
- Greater percentages of African-American, youth and eligible voters with a disability prefer to vote in person in the November election.
- More African-American, Asian-American, youth in-person voters are likely to vote before Election Day compared with the overall population of eligible voters. Many more in-person voters with disabilities are also likely to vote early.
- White, non-Latino in-person voters prefer to vote on Election Day in larger percentages than other racial and ethnic groups.
- Over a quarter of California eligible voters either do not know or are unsure where to find information on in-person voting locations in their community, compared to fifty-six percent who do know.
- Nearly 45% of 18 to 24 year-old eligible voters either don’t know or are unsure where to find their polling place information.
- The most cited information sources were the county voter information guide, the county website and voters’ vote-by-mail packets followed by friends or family.
- Small percentages of eligible voters know that changes had occurred in their county, regardless of whether or not it has adopted the VCA.

## Planning for the 2020 General Election

In the lead up to the 2020 general election, the survey's findings have provided a critical profile of California eligible voters' current concerns regarding voting this November, their preferences on how and when to vote, and their trusted information sources. It is clear that while eligible voters do have concerns about contracting COVID-19 while casting their ballot, a large percentage prefer to vote in person, and many of these voters want to do so early, a few days to a week before Election Day. These findings demonstrate the importance of providing robust early voting options for California voters.

Messaging to voters that explains their options for casting their ballot had a positive effect on the likelihood of their voting in November. When this type of message is accompanied by community empowerment language, the impact is additionally positive. Findings also indicated that the effect of a health and safety message was more significant when delivered by a trusted messenger.

As election officials and community advocacy groups outreach to voters, their efforts should calibrate thoughtfully to account for the significant differences found in underrepresented groups' preferences and informational resources compared to the general population of eligible voters.

The significant changes in the election system that voters will be experiencing this November and concerns around voter health and safety need extensive and targeted voter outreach and education. Aggressive outreach strategies will be critical to voters successfully casting their ballots, regardless of their voting method.

### Notes

1. On May 8, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-64-20 requiring all counties send vote-by-mail ballots to all active registered voters. On June 18, 2020, the Governor signed into law Assembly Bill 860 codifying the same requirement set forth by his executive order.
2. Bay Area Region defined as the following counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma.
3. Eligible voters with a disability defined as respondents reporting difficulties with any of the following activities: hearing, seeing, walking, standing, using your hands, reading, talking, thinking, and remembering.
4. See Senate Bill 423 which requires counties to offer a voting location for every 10,000 voters and allow in-person voting for three days before the election, if they choose to consolidate polling sites. See historical vote-by-mail use at the California Secretary of State's website: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/statistics/voter-participation-stats-county/>
5. Center for Inclusive Democracy. 2014. Disparities in California's Vote-by-Mail Use, Changing Demographic Composition: 2002-2012 <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57b8c7ce15d5dbf599fb46ab/t/58e58499e4fcb5fc935614c6/1491436758841/VBM+Issue+Brief+Revised.pdf>  
See also: Public Policy Institute of California. 2020. Voter Behavior in the Transition to Higher Vote-by-Mail. Forthcoming.
6. In the 2020 general election, every county in California will offer in-person voting options on Election Day from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and all counties will offer some degree of early voting. The times and days of early voting will vary by county. Specific Information is available at: [Vote.ca.gov](http://Vote.ca.gov).
7. For an example of the disparities in voter outreach by race and ethnicity, see: NALEO Educational Fund/Latino Decisions Weekly Political Tracking Poll of Latino registered voters, 2018. See: <http://www.latinodecisions.com/blog/2018/10/22/lack-of-outreach-still-major-issue-for-california-latino-voters-in-election-2018/>
8. Senate Bill 423 allows Voter's Choice Act counties to reduce in-person voting from 10 days to three. For more information on the California Voter's Choice Act, see: [http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=2015201605B450](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=2015201605B450)
9. Center for Inclusive Democracy. 2020. California Voter's Choice Act Implementation Process: Voter Outreach and Education. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57b8c7ce15d5dbf599fb46ab/t/5ea2a8af6542966aa174b297/1587718392152/CCEP-VCA-Brief-4-Final.pdf>
10. See the California Secretary of State's website at: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/same-day-reg/>
11. Center for Inclusive Democracy. 2020. Voter Messaging in the Time of COVID-19: Survey Fact Sheet. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57b8c7ce15d5dbf599fb46ab/t/5f3307ec6569af05af274bb7/1597179885893/CID+Voter+Messaging+in+the+Time+of+COVID-19+-+Fact+Sheet+-+FINAL.pdf>
12. California Common Cause, the Center for Social Innovation. 2020. Reaching Low-Propensity Voters in California's November 2020 Elections. <https://www.commoncause.org/california/wp-content/uploads/sites/29/2020/08/UCR-CSI-CCC-VoteByMail-Aug2020-Report.pdf>

## Appendix

### Voting Messages

#### 1. Voting Options Message

Voting is easier than ever before. You choose how and when to vote. Every registered voter in California will automatically get a ballot in the mail, even if they did not request one. You have three options to return your ballot. You can return it by mail, drop it off at a ballot drop-box or a voting location near you. You can also vote in person at a voting location starting the weekend before Election Day and through Election Day.

#### 2. Voting Options Message – with Safety

Vote Safe California. Voting is safer than ever before. You choose how and when to vote. Every registered voter in California will automatically get a ballot in the mail, even if they did not request one. You have three options to return your ballot. You can return it by mail, drop it off at a ballot drop box or a voting location near you. Voters who can vote-by-mail will help ensure safe physical distancing at voting locations. You can also vote in person at a voting location starting the weekend before Election Day and through Election Day. Social distancing and health measures will be in place at voting locations.

#### 3. Voting Options Message – with Community Empowerment

Voting is easier than ever before. You choose how and when to vote. Every registered voter in California will automatically get a ballot in the mail, even if they did not request one. You have three options to return your ballot. You can return it by mail, drop it off at a ballot drop box or a voting location near you. You can also vote in person at a voting location starting the weekend before Election Day and through Election Day. The future is ours to build by voting together. We have work to do. The first step is to vote. We must vote for our families. Vote for our communities. Vote for our future.

#### 4. Voting Options Message by Trusted Messenger

A message from California civil rights organizations:

Voting is easier than ever before. You choose how and when to vote. Every registered voter in California will automatically get a ballot in the mail, even if they did not request one. You have three options to return your ballot. You can return it by mail, drop it off at a ballot drop box or a voting location near you. You can also vote in person at a voting location starting the weekend before Election Day and through Election Day.

#### 5. Voting Options Message - with Safety by Trusted Messenger

A message from California civil rights organizations:

In order to protect each person's right to vote and offer safe and secure ways to vote, every registered voter in California will automatically get a ballot in the mail, even if they did not request one. You have three options to return your ballot. You can return it by mail, drop it off at a ballot drop box or a voting location near you. You can also safely vote in person at a voting location starting the weekend before Election Day and through Election Day.

#### 6. Voting Options Message – VBM Only

Voting is easier than ever before. Every registered voter in the state will get a ballot in the mail, even if they did not request one. You have three options to return your ballot. You can return it by mail, drop it off at a ballot drop box or a voting location near you through 8pm on Election Day.

## Voter Messaging Survey: Selected Results by Age Group California

What kinds of concerns do you have when it comes to casting your ballot in the November 2020 presidential election?											
	COVID-19 infection	Long lines	Not receiving ballot	Inaccessible voting location	Finding voting location	Ballot not counted	I do not trust the USPS	Ballot tampering	Don't know how to cast VBM ballot	Uncomfortable voting in non-native language	Other
<b>All Eligible Voters*</b>	14.2%	8.8%	10.5%	5.3%	3.7%	12.0%	6.0%	9.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%
<b>18-24</b>	18.9%	10.5%	11.3%	6.6%	4.4%	11.3%	6.2%	9.0%	3.9%	1.9%	0.6%
<b>25-34</b>	22.1%	9.5%	14.5%	5.3%	4.5%	11.1%	5.6%	8.4%	1.7%	1.3%	0.7%
<b>35-44</b>	20.5%	12.6%	13.3%	7.7%	7.7%	12.6%	5.7%	10.6%	2.1%	1.7%	0.8%
<b>45-54</b>	12.5%	11.0%	10.0%	5.4%	2.3%	13.2%	6.0%	11.2%	1.7%	2.4%	2.5%
<b>55-64</b>	5.7%	5.1%	7.0%	4.0%	1.3%	11.7%	5.9%	9.6%	0.7%	1.4%	3.1%
<b>65-74</b>	4.1%	3.9%	5.4%	2.9%	1.7%	12.7%	6.3%	9.3%	0.4%	1.8%	2.3%
<b>75+</b>	4.2%	4.0%	7.0%	1.8%	0.7%	11.1%	8.0%	10.0%	0.9%	3.5%	1.9%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would be your most preferred way to cast a ballot?								
	Voting in person on Election Day	Voting in person three days before Election Day	Mailing in my ballot	Dropping off my ballot at VC	Dropping off my ballot in Drop Box	Using different voting methods in different elections	None	Don't know
<b>All Eligible Voters*</b>	23.1%	7.7%	41.8%	9.4%	7.7%	1.3%	4.6%	4.3%
<b>18-24</b>	18.9%	10.3%	31.9%	10.3%	10.9%	2.4%	7.3%	8.0%
<b>25-34</b>	24.4%	9.4%	37.1%	10.3%	6.8%	1.6%	5.9%	4.5%
<b>35-44</b>	32.7%	8.5%	34.8%	8.7%	5.7%	1.5%	4.9%	3.2%
<b>45-54</b>	26.1%	7.4%	41.4%	9.1%	7.1%	1.2%	2.7%	4.9%
<b>55-64</b>	21.3%	5.6%	49.7%	9.2%	7.3%	0.5%	3.9%	2.4%
<b>65-74</b>	15.8%	4.4%	56.1%	10.0%	9.0%	0.6%	2.0%	2.2%
<b>75+</b>	14.0%	4.1%	61.6%	4.9%	7.5%	0.7%	2.3%	4.9%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would give you the most confidence that your ballot would be counted correctly?								
	Voting in person before Election Day	Voting in person on Election Day	Mailing in my ballot	Dropping off my ballot at VC	Dropping off my ballot in Drop Box	The ability to track my ballot and confirm it was counted	None	Don't know
<b>All Eligible Voters*</b>	8.6%	25.8%	23.1%	8.9%	4.9%	18.5%	5.1%	5.1%
<b>18-24</b>	12.5%	22.6%	17.0%	10.1%	5.5%	16.5%	7.5%	8.3%
<b>25-34</b>	11.0%	25.9%	19.1%	11.7%	5.0%	16.2%	6.5%	4.7%
<b>35-44</b>	10.4%	32.7%	21.4%	8.4%	3.2%	14.7%	5.3%	3.9%
<b>45-54</b>	8.3%	28.4%	22.8%	7.4%	4.4%	19.3%	3.9%	5.5%
<b>55-64</b>	4.7%	24.6%	27.0%	8.1%	5.0%	20.9%	4.6%	5.1%
<b>65-74</b>	3.8%	21.1%	31.1%	7.6%	6.6%	24.5%	2.4%	2.9%
<b>75+</b>	4.6%	20.5%	37.1%	4.6%	4.2%	21.1%	2.7%	5.2%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**If you vote in person in the November 2020 presidential election, when are you most likely to vote?**

	The first week before Election Day, if available	The first weekend before Election Day	The day before Election Day	Election Day	Don't know	Other
All Eligible Voters*	20.6%	18.3%	10.0%	32.4%	16.9%	1.8%
18-24	18.7%	20.7%	14.1%	23.0%	22.7%	0.9%
25-34	17.6%	23.6%	15.2%	27.1%	15.4%	1.0%
35-44	13.8%	22.6%	12.4%	36.5%	13.6%	1.1%
45-54	21.7%	20.7%	7.0%	35.6%	13.3%	1.7%
55-64	25.4%	12.6%	5.2%	36.2%	18.4%	2.2%
65-74	29.2%	9.2%	4.7%	36.6%	16.4%	4.1%
75+	21.5%	7.3%	5.1%	39.7%	22.2%	4.3%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Do you happen to know where to find information on the locations of where to vote in person in your community?**

	Yes	No	Don't know	I vote by mail or not at a polling place
All Eligible Voters*	56.1%	17.9%	8.6%	17.4%
18-24	45.8%	28.6%	16.0%	9.6%
25-34	61.9%	19.0%	8.4%	10.7%
35-44	64.7%	15.4%	7.8%	12.2%
45-54	60.0%	19.0%	7.5%	13.5%
55-64	53.6%	14.3%	7.2%	24.9%
65-74	51.8%	11.0%	4.2%	33.0%
75+	47.0%	9.1%	4.3%	39.5%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Where do you typically turn to for help with questions about registration or voting procedures, or important election dates?**

	County voter information guide	The county website	Vote-by-mail packet	Call in to my county elections office	Advertisements from community groups	Advertisements in the media	Social media	Contact a community group	Posters at voting location	Friends or family	No typical way	None	Don't know	Other
All Eligible Voters*	33.5%	31.0%	26.4%	8.3%	4.9%	7.0%	10.2%	3.3%	4.2%	16.6%	5.7%	9.5%	4.0%	1.4%
18-24	19.7%	24.4%	19.0%	9.7%	7.1%	6.8%	18.3%	4.5%	5.6%	26.0%	4.6%	8.4%	7.5%	1.4%
25-34	26.7%	35.8%	24.3%	9.3%	6.8%	9.8%	13.5%	4.7%	4.4%	17.2%	5.0%	8.5%	3.5%	1.2%
35-44	34.0%	37.7%	27.5%	9.8%	6.7%	11.1%	14.4%	5.2%	6.4%	18.6%	4.8%	7.5%	3.2%	0.8%
45-54	35.4%	31.8%	27.2%	6.7%	3.1%	5.4%	8.8%	2.5%	2.8%	16.8%	6.2%	8.7%	4.4%	1.0%
55-64	43.2%	28.7%	28.9%	5.2%	2.7%	3.6%	2.8%	1.0%	2.6%	10.9%	4.9%	11.7%	2.9%	2.2%
65-74	44.1%	29.3%	32.0%	8.5%	2.5%	4.0%	2.6%	1.4%	3.0%	9.3%	8.2%	11.8%	1.9%	1.8%
75+	41.8%	18.4%	32.6%	9.4%	3.0%	6.3%	1.8%	1.1%	2.6%	9.3%	10.2%	13.3%	4.5%	3.0%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Did your county change the options for how and where you could cast your ballot in the March 2020 primary election?**

	All Eligible Voters*	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Yes	26.7%	27.8%	36.0%	37.9%	23.0%	17.6%	15.5%	16.2%
No	36.2%	32.1%	32.4%	33.3%	38.1%	40.8%	42.7%	36.4%
Don't know	37.2%	40.1%	31.7%	28.8%	38.9%	41.6%	41.8%	47.4%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

## Voter Messaging Survey: Selected Results for Voters with Disabilities\* California

What kinds of concerns do you have when it comes to casting your ballot in the November 2020 presidential election?		
	All Eligible Voters**	Eligible Voters w/ Disabilities
<b>COVID-19 infection</b>	14.2%	24.6%
<b>Long lines</b>	8.8%	13.3%
<b>Not receiving ballot</b>	10.5%	15.3%
<b>Inaccessible voting location</b>	5.3%	7.6%
<b>Finding voting location</b>	3.7%	6.5%
<b>Ballot not counted</b>	12.0%	10.3%
<b>I do not trust the USPS</b>	6.0%	5.3%
<b>Ballot tampering</b>	9.7%	9.3%
<b>Don't know how to cast VBM ballot</b>	1.8%	2.4%
<b>Uncomfortable voting in non-native language</b>	1.8%	2.3%
<b>Other</b>	1.8%	1.8%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* Survey respondents reporting difficulties with any of the following activities: hearing, seeing, walking, standing, using your hands, reading, talking, thinking, and remembering.

\*\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would be your most preferred way to cast a ballot?		
	All Eligible Voters**	Eligible Voters w/ Disabilities
<b>Voting in person on Election Day</b>	23.1%	24.5%
<b>Voting in person three days before Election Day</b>	7.7%	10.1%
<b>Mailing in my ballot</b>	41.8%	36.3%
<b>Dropping off my ballot at VC</b>	9.4%	10.8%
<b>Dropping off my ballot in Drop Box</b>	7.7%	7.4%
<b>Using different voting methods in different elections</b>	1.3%	1.7%
<b>None</b>	4.6%	4.4%
<b>Don't know</b>	4.3%	4.8%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* Survey respondents reporting difficulties with any of the following activities: hearing, seeing, walking, standing, using your hands, reading, talking, thinking, and remembering.

\*\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would give you the most confidence that your ballot would be counted correctly?		
	All Eligible Voters**	Eligible Voters w/ Disabilities
<b>Voting early at an in-person voting location sometime in the three days before Election Day</b>	8.6%	11.9%
<b>Voting at an in-person voting location on Election Day</b>	25.8%	28.0%
<b>Mailing in a ballot that was automatically sent to my home a month before Election Day</b>	23.1%	20.8%
<b>Dropping off my vote-by-mail ballot at an in-person voting location, after having that ballot automatically mailed to my home a month before Election Day</b>	8.9%	9.4%
<b>Dropping off my vote-by-mail ballot in a ballot drop-off box, after having that ballot automatically mailed to my home a month before Election Day</b>	4.9%	4.8%
<b>The ability to track my ballot and confirm it was counted</b>	18.5%	14.4%
<b>None</b>	5.1%	5.1%
<b>Don't know</b>	5.1%	5.5%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* Survey respondents reporting difficulties with any of the following activities: hearing, seeing, walking, standing, using your hands, reading, talking, thinking, and remembering.

\*\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

If you vote in person in the November 2020 presidential election, when are you most likely to vote?						
	The first weekend before Election Day	The day before Election Day	Election Day	The first week before Election Day, if this option was made available	Don't know	Other
<b>All Eligible Voters**</b>	<b>18.3%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>32.4%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
<b>Eligible Voters w/ Disabilities</b>	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>27.0%</b>	<b>18.5%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* Survey respondents reporting difficulties with any of the following activities: hearing, seeing, walking, standing, using your hands, reading, talking, thinking, and remembering.

\*\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Do you happen to know where to find information on the locations of where to vote in person in your community?				
	Yes	No	Don't know	I vote by mail or not at a polling place
<b>All Eligible Voters**</b>	<b>56.1%</b>	<b>17.9%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>
<b>Eligible Voters w/ Disabilities</b>	<b>55.6%</b>	<b>18.3%</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* Survey respondents reporting difficulties with any of the following activities: hearing, seeing, walking, standing, using your hands, reading, talking, thinking, and remembering.

\*\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Where do you typically turn to for help with questions about registration or voting procedures, or important election dates?		
	All Eligible Voters**	Eligible Voters w/ Disabilities
County voter information guide	33.5%	34.8%
The county website	31.0%	28.3%
Vote-by-mail packet	26.4%	27.1%
Call in to my county elections office	8.3%	12.4%
Advertisements from community groups	4.9%	8.1%
Advertisements in the media	7.0%	10.1%
Social media	10.2%	10.6%
Contact a community group	3.3%	4.7%
Posters at voting location	4.2%	4.9%
Friends or family	16.6%	13.7%
No typical way	5.7%	6.4%
None	9.5%	8.4%
Don't know	4.0%	5.4%
Other	1.4%	2.0%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* Survey respondents reporting difficulties with any of the following activities: hearing, seeing, walking, standing, using your hands, reading, talking, thinking, and remembering.

\*\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Did your county change the options for how and where you could cast your ballot in the March 2020 primary election?		
	All Eligible Voters**	Eligible Voters w/ Disabilities
<b>Yes</b>	<b>26.7%</b>	<b>40.6%</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	<b>36.2%</b>	<b>29.4%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>30.0%</b>

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey

\* Survey respondents reporting difficulties with any of the following activities: hearing, seeing, walking, standing, using your hands, reading, talking, thinking, and remembering.

\*\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

## Voter Messaging Survey: Selected Results - Los Angeles County

What kinds of concerns do you have when it comes to casting your ballot in the November 2020 presidential election?						
	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
COVID-19 infection	21.1%	41.1%	17.1%	15.5%	21.3%	7.7%
Long lines	11.6%	11.4%	7.2%	9.6%	14.5%	7.7%
Not receiving ballot	12.4%	14.6%	13.5%	11.0%	13.0%	2.6%
Inaccessible voting location	6.3%	5.7%	6.4%	5.6%	6.8%	10.3%
Finding voting location	5.6%	4.9%	2.4%	3.7%	8.0%	5.1%
Ballot not counted	12.4%	4.5%	8.0%	15.8%	13.5%	7.7%
I do not trust the USPS	6.5%	2.8%	5.2%	7.8%	7.0%	5.1%
Ballot tampering	10.4%	4.9%	6.8%	11.8%	12.0%	7.7%
Don't know how to cast VBM ballot	2.3%	0.8%	2.8%	1.7%	3.2%	0.0%
Uncomfortable voting in non-native language	1.4%	2.4%	2.0%	0.9%	1.3%	0.0%
Other	1.7%	0.8%	0.4%	1.1%	2.6%	2.6%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would be your most preferred way to cast a ballot?						
	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White non-Latino	Other
Voting in person on Election Day	28.1%	41.5%	15.1%	24.2%	31.0%	23.1%
Voting in person three days before Election Day	10.0%	12.2%	9.6%	9.5%	9.9%	12.8%
Mailing in my ballot	37.9%	25.6%	45.8%	36.3%	40.4%	33.3%
Dropping off my ballot at VC	9.7%	7.3%	14.3%	10.2%	8.9%	5.1%
Dropping off my ballot in Drop Box	6.3%	5.7%	6.0%	7.8%	5.4%	7.7%
Using different voting methods in different elections	1.3%	2.4%	1.2%	1.6%	0.9%	0.0%
None	3.3%	3.7%	4.4%	4.8%	1.9%	5.1%
Don't know	3.3%	1.6%	3.6%	5.7%	1.7%	12.8%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would give you the most confidence that your ballot would be counted correctly?						
	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
Voting early at an in-person voting location sometime in the three days before Election Day	11.6%	13.0%	11.2%	14.3%	9.7%	7.7%
Voting at an in-person voting location on Election Day	31.2%	46.7%	19.5%	25.6%	34.3%	28.2%
Mailing in a ballot that was automatically sent to my home a month before Election Day	20.6%	14.6%	27.9%	19.5%	20.9%	23.1%
Dropping off my vote-by-mail ballot at an in-person voting location, after having that ballot automatically mailed to my home a month before Election Day	8.1%	6.9%	8.0%	9.9%	7.0%	10.3%
Dropping off my vote-by-mail ballot in a ballot drop-off box, after having that ballot automatically mailed to my home a month before Election Day	4.0%	4.1%	4.8%	3.9%	3.9%	2.6%
The ability to track my ballot and confirm it was counted	16.0%	8.9%	16.7%	16.3%	17.9%	7.7%
None	4.1%	2.4%	6.8%	5.3%	3.0%	2.6%
Don't know	4.4%	3.3%	5.2%	5.3%	3.3%	17.9%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens



**If you vote in person in the November 2020 presidential election, when are you most likely to vote?**

	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
The first week before Election Day, if available	20.1%	10.6%	25.9%	18.6%	22.4%	15.4%
The first weekend before Election Day	22.2%	45.5%	18.3%	20.8%	18.5%	12.8%
The day before Election Day	10.9%	15.0%	12.7%	12.4%	7.9%	15.4%
Election Day	31.8%	19.1%	25.9%	30.1%	38.3%	25.6%
Don't know	13.6%	8.9%	15.9%	17.1%	11.1%	28.2%
Other	1.4%	0.8%	1.2%	1.1%	1.8%	2.6%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Do you happen to know where to find information on the locations of where to vote in person in your community?**

	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
Yes	62.6%	75.6%	55.4%	56.7%	65.6%	56.4%
No	15.4%	8.9%	20.3%	19.8%	12.7%	12.8%
Don't know	7.9%	5.3%	10.4%	12.9%	4.3%	12.8%
I vote by mail or not at a polling place	14.1%	10.2%	13.9%	10.5%	17.5%	17.9%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Where do you typically turn to for help with questions about registration or voting procedures, or important election dates?**

	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
County voter information guide	35.2%	48.8%	35.5%	28.2%	37.1%	20.5%
The county website	34.8%	28.9%	34.3%	33.6%	37.8%	23.1%
Vote-by-mail packet	26.5%	19.1%	27.1%	22.9%	30.8%	28.2%
Call in to my county elections office	7.4%	6.1%	5.6%	6.8%	8.3%	17.9%
Advertisements from community groups	5.5%	3.3%	4.4%	5.6%	6.3%	5.1%
Advertisements in the media	9.5%	8.5%	10.4%	5.7%	12.4%	5.1%
Social media	12.2%	5.3%	10.4%	11.9%	0.0%	5.1%
Contact a community group	3.7%	3.3%	1.2%	3.1%	5.0%	5.1%
Posters at voting location	4.6%	3.3%	3.2%	4.2%	5.6%	7.7%
Friends or family	16.8%	9.8%	15.5%	19.1%	17.7%	12.8%
No typical way	5.0%	2.0%	4.0%	3.6%	7.2%	2.6%
None	7.7%	5.3%	7.6%	9.0%	7.3%	10.3%
Don't know	3.3%	2.0%	3.2%	5.6%	1.3%	17.9%
Other	1.4%	0.4%	0.8%	1.1%	2.1%	0.0%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Did your county change the options for how and where you could cast your ballot in the March 2020 primary election?**

	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
Yes	38.4%	59.8%	30.3%	28.1%	42.5%	33.3%
Don't know	31.2%	18.7%	39.8%	36.1%	28.3%	41.0%
No	30.4%	21.5%	29.9%	35.8%	29.3%	25.6%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Note: Raw counts are below 100 on some responses presenting with small percentages.

## Voter Messaging Survey: Selected Results - Bay Area Region\*\*

What kinds of concerns do you have when it comes to casting your ballot in the November 2020 presidential election?						
	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
COVID-19 infection	10.2%	10.1%	8.6%	20.9%	7.0%	15.8%
Long lines	6.2%	10.1%	5.8%	9.6%	4.5%	10.5%
Not receiving ballot	8.6%	8.7%	9.9%	11.8%	7.0%	5.3%
Inaccessible voting location	3.5%	5.8%	2.5%	4.8%	3.2%	5.3%
Finding voting location	2.1%	2.9%	2.1%	2.7%	1.5%	10.5%
Ballot not counted	11.3%	11.6%	11.5%	17.1%	9.1%	10.5%
I do not trust the USPS	5.3%	7.2%	5.8%	6.4%	4.3%	10.5%
Ballot tampering	7.6%	13.0%	6.6%	10.7%	6.2%	10.5%
Don't know how to cast VBM ballot	1.3%	0.0%	0.4%	2.7%	1.3%	5.3%
Uncomfortable voting in non-native language	1.4%	2.9%	0.8%	2.7%	0.9%	5.3%
Other	1.4%	0.0%	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%	0.0%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would be your most preferred way to cast a ballot?						
	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
Voting in person on Election Day	6.0%	14.5%	3.3%	9.1%	4.7%	15.8%
Voting in person three days before Election Day	15.4%	15.9%	9.1%	20.9%	16.4%	10.5%
Mailing in my ballot	50.2%	37.7%	52.3%	40.1%	55.1%	31.6%
Dropping off my ballot at VC	8.9%	7.2%	11.1%	11.2%	7.0%	15.8%
Dropping off my ballot in Drop Box	10.2%	10.1%	11.5%	7.5%	10.8%	5.3%
Using different voting methods in different elections	1.0%	1.4%	1.6%	1.1%	0.6%	0.0%
None	4.6%	5.8%	7.8%	4.8%	2.6%	10.5%
Don't know	3.8%	7.2%	3.3%	5.3%	2.8%	10.5%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would give you the most confidence that your ballot would be counted correctly?						
	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
Voting early at an in-person voting location sometime in the three days before Election Day	5.7%	0.9%	15.9%	6.2%	11.8%	0.6%
Voting at an in-person voting location on Election Day	18.9%	1.0%	46.4%	20.2%	55.6%	0.4%
Mailing in a ballot that was automatically sent to my home a month before Election Day	27.2%	1.5%	104.3%	14.4%	84.5%	0.8%
Dropping off my vote-by-mail ballot at an in-person voting location, after having that ballot automatically mailed to my home a month before Election Day	9.9%	0.6%	39.1%	9.5%	24.6%	0.4%
Dropping off my vote-by-mail ballot in a ballot drop-off box, after having that ballot automatically mailed to my home a month before Election Day	6.4%	0.5%	23.2%	7.4%	15.0%	0.0%
The ability to track my ballot and confirm it was counted	23.2%	1.1%	81.2%	12.3%	74.9%	0.9%
None	4.7%	0.5%	27.5%	2.9%	9.1%	0.2%
Don't know	4.0%	0.5%	14.5%	4.1%	8.0%	0.4%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**If you vote in person in the November 2020 presidential election, when are you most likely to vote?**

	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
The first week before Election Day, if this option was made available	20.5%	18.8%	25.1%	17.1%	19.2%	36.8%
The first weekend before Election Day	13.1%	10.1%	14.4%	17.6%	11.7%	0.0%
The day before Election Day	7.3%	10.1%	8.6%	10.7%	5.1%	5.3%
Election Day	28.1%	21.7%	22.2%	28.3%	32.1%	15.8%
Don't know	13.9%	15.9%	15.2%	10.7%	14.0%	21.1%
Other:	3.1%	2.9%	2.5%	0.0%	4.2%	10.5%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Do you happen to know where to find information on the locations of where to vote in person in your community?**

	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
Yes	53.5%	53.6%	44.0%	59.4%	56.6%	31.6%
No	16.6%	21.7%	20.6%	19.8%	12.8%	21.1%
Don't know	7.1%	5.8%	9.1%	9.6%	4.7%	26.3%
I vote by mail or not at a polling place	22.8%	18.8%	26.3%	11.2%	25.8%	21.1%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Where do you typically turn to for help with questions about registration or voting procedures, or important election dates?**

	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
County voter information guide	33.9%	30.4%	34.2%	25.7%	37.7%	15.8%
The county website	30.8%	27.5%	28.8%	29.4%	32.6%	31.6%
Vote-by-mail packet	28.6%	33.3%	28.8%	22.5%	30.6%	15.8%
Call in to my county elections office	8.5%	13.0%	7.8%	10.7%	7.7%	0.0%
Advertisements from community groups	4.0%	2.9%	4.1%	3.7%	4.0%	10.5%
Advertisements in the media	4.9%	8.7%	4.1%	7.5%	3.4%	15.8%
Social media	9.7%	14.5%	9.5%	18.7%	5.5%	26.3%
Contact a community group	3.2%	2.9%	3.7%	3.2%	3.0%	5.3%
Posters at voting location	4.5%	5.8%	4.1%	6.4%	3.4%	15.8%
Friends or family	17.0%	21.7%	19.3%	21.9%	13.4%	21.1%
No typical way	7.0%	5.8%	6.2%	5.3%	7.5%	21.1%
None	9.4%	13.0%	11.5%	5.3%	9.6%	5.3%
Don't know	3.2%	1.4%	2.9%	4.8%	2.8%	10.5%
Other	1.8%	2.9%	2.1%	0.5%	2.1%	0.0%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Did your county change the options for how and where you could cast your ballot in the March 2020 primary election?**

	All Eligible Voters*	African American	Asian American	Latino	White Non-Latino	Other
Yes	18.7%	17.4%	15.2%	29.4%	17.2%	5.3%
Don't know	37.2%	31.9%	41.2%	32.1%	37.5%	47.4%
No	44.1%	50.7%	43.6%	38.5%	45.3%	47.4%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\* All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

\*\*Bay Area Region defined as the following counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma.  
line space

Note: Raw counts are below 100 on some responses presenting with small percentages.

## Voter Messaging Survey: Eligible Voters Who Want Their Mail Ballots in Language Other than English

What kinds of concerns do you have when it comes to casting your ballot in the November 2020 presidential election?		
	All Eligible Voters*	Eligible Voters Who Want Their Mail Ballots in Language Other Than English
COVID-19 infection	14.2%	30.4%
Long lines	8.8%	16.0%
Not receiving ballot	10.5%	18.0%
Inaccessible voting location	5.3%	8.4%
Finding voting location	3.7%	9.6%
Ballot not counted	12.0%	9.4%
I do not trust the USPS	6.0%	4.6%
Ballot tampering	9.7%	8.2%
Don't know how to cast VBM ballot	1.8%	3.3%
Uncomfortable voting in non-native language	1.8%	2.5%
Other	1.8%	.5%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would be your most preferred way to cast a ballot?		
	All Eligible Voters*	Eligible Voters Who Want Their Mail Ballots in Language Other Than English
Voting in person on Election Day	23.1%	32.5%
Voting in person three days before Election Day	7.7%	10.4%
Mailing in my ballot	41.8%	35.5%
Dropping off my ballot at VC	9.4%	10.0%
Dropping off my ballot in Drop Box	7.7%	6.3%
Using different voting methods in different elections	1.3%	1.7%
None	4.6%	1.7%
Don't know	4.3%	2.0%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

Thinking ahead to the November 2020 presidential election, what would give you the most confidence that your ballot would be counted correctly?		
	All Eligible Voters*	Eligible Voters Who Want Their Mail Ballots in Language Other Than English
Voting early at an in-person voting location sometime in the three days before Election Day	8.6%	13.5%
Voting at an in-person voting location on Election Day	25.8%	32.8%
Mailing in a ballot that was automatically sent to my home a month before Election Day	23.1%	27.0%
Dropping off my vote-by-mail ballot at an in-person voting location, after having that ballot automatically mailed to my home a month before Election Day	8.9%	10.1%
Dropping off my vote-by-mail ballot in a ballot drop-off box, after having that ballot automatically mailed to my home a month before Election Day	4.9%	4.7%
The ability to track my ballot and confirm it was counted	18.5%	7.7%
None	5.1%	1.7%
Don't know	5.1%	2.5%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**If you vote in person in the November 2020 presidential election, when are you most likely to vote?**

	All Eligible Voters*	Eligible Voters Who Want Their Mail Ballots in Language Other Than English
The first week before election day, if this option was made available	20.6%	14.9%
The first weekend before Election Day	18.3%	33.1%
The day before Election Day	10.0%	14.9%
Election Day	32.4%	29.1%
Don't know	16.9%	7.1%
Other:	1.8%	1.0%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Do you happen to know where to find information on the locations of where to vote in person in your community?**

	All Eligible Voters*	Eligible Voters Who Want Their Mail Ballots in Language Other Than English
Yes	56.1%	68.9%
No	17.9%	16.5%
Don't know	8.6%	5.4%
I vote by mail or not at a polling place	17.4%	9.3%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Where do you typically turn to for help with questions about registration or voting procedures, or important election dates?**

	All Eligible Voters*	Eligible Voters Who Want Their Mail Ballots in Language Other Than English
County voter information guide	33.5%	33.8%
The county website	31.0%	33.0%
Vote-by-mail packet	26.4%	29.7%
Call in to my county elections office	8.3%	13.4%
Advertisements from community groups	4.9%	9.6%
Advertisements in the media	7.0%	12.5%
Social media	10.2%	15.1%
Contact a community group	3.3%	6.3%
Posters at voting location	4.2%	6.5%
Friends or family	16.6%	15.3%
No typical way	5.7%	4.0%
None	9.5%	4.4%
Don't know	4.0%	1.9%
Other	1.4%	0.5%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens

**Did your county change the options for how and where you could cast your ballot in the March 2020 primary election?**

	All Eligible Voters*	Eligible Voters Who Want Their Mail Ballots in Language Other Than English
Yes	26.7%	52.2%
No	36.2%	28.7%
Don't know	37.2%	19.1%

Data Source: CID Voter Messaging Survey  
\*All Eligible Voters defined as: Adult citizens



CENTER FOR  
INCLUSIVE  
DEMOCRACY