

Table of contents

Executive Summary	2
Why Voting Rights for Incarcerated People Matters: The Background	5
Our Research Approach	11
The Will to Vote: Survey Insights	12
A Blueprint to End Voter Disenfranchisement: Policy Recommendations	21
No Democracy Without Us	25
Methodological Appendix	26
About Initiate Justice	27
Acknowledgements	29
References	30

Executive Summary

Debates over voting rights and political threats to our democracy continue to grow nationwide, and examining California's role and rank in upholding a fair, inclusive democracy is essential to this conversation. At first glance, California has some of the strongest voter protections in the country. However, when it comes to incarcerated people, California has a long way to go to ensure equitable voting rights for all its residents.

According to the ACLU, Human Rights Watch, and The Sentencing Project, the United States disenfranchises more people than almost any other nation—largely due to state laws that restrict voting rights for those with convictions. Voter disenfranchisement and lack of access to civic education in prisons undermine a fully inclusive and equitable democracy in California.

Voter disenfranchisement in its modern form began after the Civil War as a way to suppress Black political power. Since then, voter disenfranchisement has expanded and evolved through legal systems, continuing to silence Black and Brown communities, and dilute the voice and vote of many others.

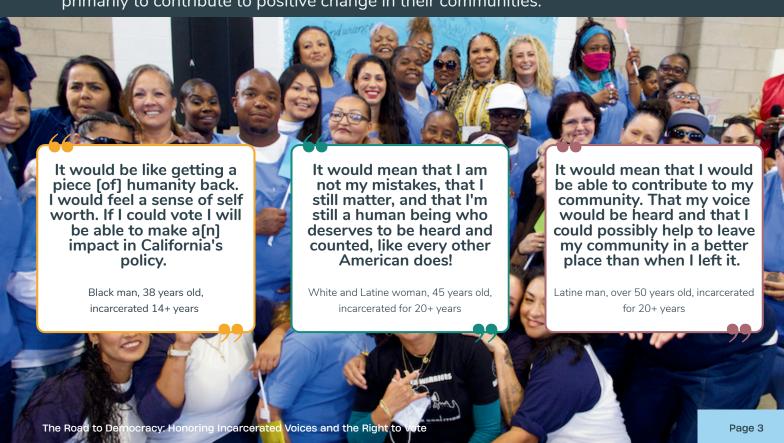
California, compared to other U.S. states, is often seen as a leader in expanding voter access, with reforms like automatic voter registration, early voting, vote-by-mail, and restoring voting rights to people on parole via Proposition 17 (2020). Despite this progress, California's democracy falls short of being fully inclusive as system-impacted communities remain excluded. Moreover, progress like Proposition 17 would not have been possible without the leadership and civic engagement of system-impacted people who are still barred from voting today.



As conversations evolve about the state of our democracy and about how we achieve safer, more equitable communities, it's critical that we ensure everyone's voices are a part of this public discourse. In this report, Initiate Justice explores the attitudes and opinions that incarcerated people hold about voting and our democratic systems. We compare these results to a survey conducted seven years earlier in efforts to illustrate what remains consistent, and what has changed, since our fight to completely end the disenfranchisement of system-impacted people began nearly a decade ago.

The fight for voting rights for system-impacted Californians is not over. In this report, Initiate Justice shares how far California has come, what barriers still remain, and what we learned from a survey of people currently incarcerated—bringing their voices to the center of the conversation on voting rights. The findings are clear: voting helps people feel less isolated, more connected, and more engaged in their communities and civic life. This report examines data collected from some of the over four million people in the U.S. who are disenfranchised due to felony convictions, an estimated 97,000 of whom are in California.²

There is a common misconception that incarcerated people are not interested in voting. This report challenges that narrative, revealing that the overwhelming majority—over 95% of respondents—want to vote. In fact, over 90% express a strong desire to vote primarily to contribute to positive change in their communities.

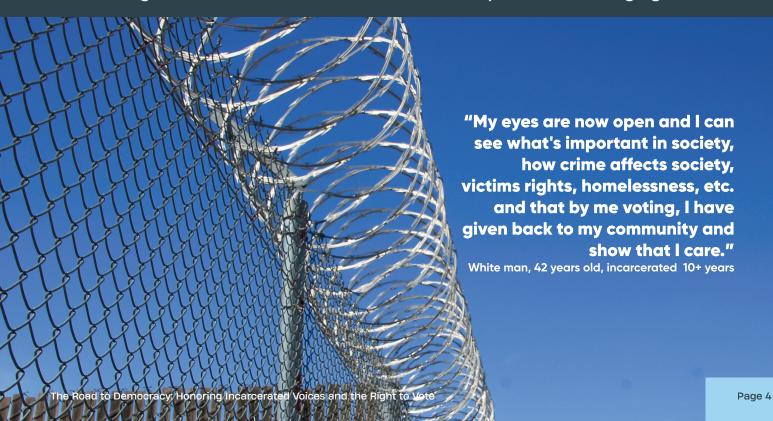


It remains true that the key issues that resonate widely with all people across diverse lines, such as race, age, party affiliation, and socio-economic status, are important to incarcerated people too—education, economic opportunity, healthcare, and preventing crime and harm in our communities. Over 85% of survey respondents ranked education; crime/harm prevention; jobs, fair wages, and workers' rights; and healthcare among the top most important issues to vote on. Other issues ranked as important by over 80% of respondents include criminal justice reforms, ending poverty/economic inequality, and victim/survivor rights and services.

We are reminded by this report that it is parents, veterans, survivors of violence and people who were incarcerated in their youth, who are being denied the right to participate in our democracy. Meanwhile, they are finding and creating ways to achieve positive change in themselves, in others, and in their communities. Over 90% of respondents actively participate in self-help groups and programs, and 55% are leading programs and mentoring their peers.

With these sentiments in mind, we provide recommendations to expand voting rights, enable meaningful access to the ballot, and leverage state resources to support people in exercising their voting rights.

We hope this report can serve as a progressive step on the road to democracy, reminding California leaders and voters about the importance of voting rights for all.



Why Voting Rights for Incarcerated People Matters: The Background

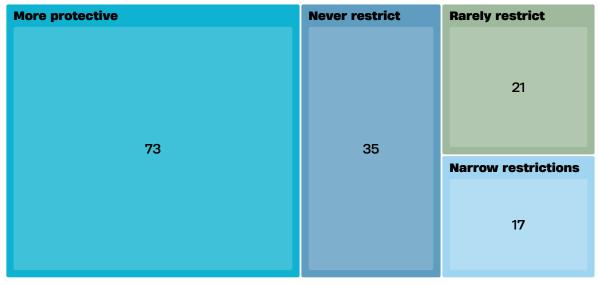
Voter disenfranchisement laws have long been used to deliberately strip political power from oppressed communities.

An estimated 4 million people—or 1 in every 59 adult U.S. citizens—are disenfranchised due to a felony conviction across the United States.⁴ This practice traces back to the 1860s, after the Civil War. After the 13th Amendment was ratified to abolish slavery except as punishment for a crime, Southern states began using this loophole alongside discriminatory criminal laws known as the Black Codes to continue to enslave and disenfranchise Black men.⁴ Despite passage of the 15th Amendment, which granted Black men the right to vote, Black Codes targeted newly freed men by criminalizing specific actions to justify incarceration and, later, voter disenfranchisement. Today, **Black adults are disenfranchised at a rate four times higher than other racial groups.**⁵ Voter disenfranchisement remains deeply rooted in racism and continues to disproportionately affect Black and Brown communities.

Global Scale

Despite the United States' pronouncing itself a democratic country and the progress that has been made to secure voting rights, its policies that exclude voters due to prison sentences remain harsher than that of other nations.

COUNTRIES WITH FELONY DISENFRANCHISEMENT LAWS COMPARED TO U.S.



The ACLU, Human Rights Watch, and the Sentencing Project looked at 138 countries with voter disenfranchisement laws and compared them to our laws. Out of the sample, 73 nations (53%) have laws that are more protective of voting rights for people with criminal convictions than the United States. Thirty-five countries never restrict voting based on convictions, twenty-one rarely do, and seventeen impose narrow or temporary restrictions. Even nations with legal systems similar to those in the United States, such as Australia, Kenya, New Zealand, Uganda, and South Africa, have reformed their disenfranchisement laws. For example, in Kenya, people lose their right to vote if convicted of election crimes, and in Uganda, people never lose their voting rights.

National Scale

Although voter disenfranchisement laws remain common across the United States, several states have taken meaningful steps to restore voting rights. After peaking in 2016, the number of Americans disenfranchised has dropped significantly—falling from 5.9 million in 2016 to 4.0 million in 2024, which is a 31% decrease. This decline is largely the result of recent legal reforms restoring voting rights, pursued by criminal justice and voting rights advocates. Below are some states that have made significant reforms:





Nebraska

In **Nebraska**, the Supreme Court affirmed that formerly incarcerated people are eligible to vote immediately upon completing their sentences following passage of a reform measure in 2024.



Minnesota and New Mexico

In Minnesota and New Mexico, each state's governor signed laws in 2023 restoring voting rights to people with felony convictions automatically upon release from incarceration.



Illinois

In **Illinois**, all formerly incarcerated people's voting rights are automatically restored immediately after release.⁹



Nevada

In Nevada, the legislature restored voting rights to formerly incarcerated people who are on probation or parole.



Washington, D.C.

In Washington, D.C., the legislature expanded voting rights to incarcerated individuals with any felony conviction through the passage of the Restore the Vote Amendment in 2020.¹⁰



Maine and Vermont

There remain only two states that do not have any felony disenfranchisement laws: Maine and Vermont (as well as the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico).

Despite growing momentum for reform, twenty-five states still deny voting rights to many people on probation or parole. Even more troubling, ten states continue to disenfranchise some people who have already completed their full sentences, including parole and probation terms. These policies undermine our principles of democracy and the importance of civic responsibility.

Statewide Scale

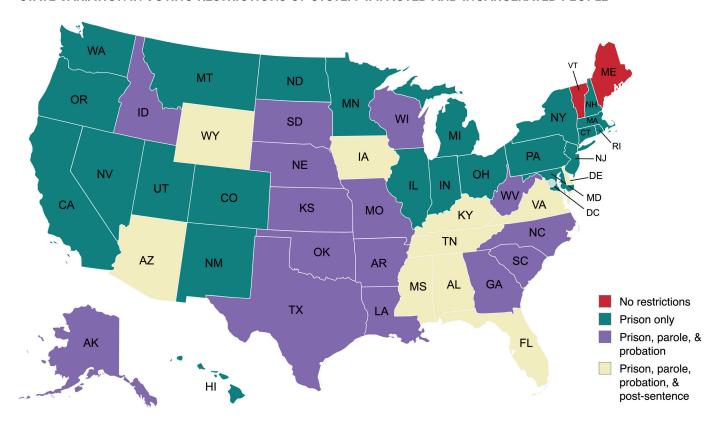
California, often seen as a progressive leader, mirrors the broader national contradictions around voter disenfranchisement. Until 2020, people on parole for felony convictions were barred from voting. That changed when voters approved Proposition 17, a constitutional amendment that restored voting rights to people on parole. 11 This ballot measure brought their voting rights in line with those on probation, who already could vote. As a result, approximately 50,000 Californians regained the right to participate in our democratic processes. 12 In support of this measure, we emphasized that restoring voting rights helps people reintegrate into society and ensures that those directly impacted by the criminal legal system have a voice in shaping the laws and policies that affect them.



Building on this momentum, ACA 4, authored by Assemblymember Isaac Bryan and the CA Free the Vote Coalition, was introduced in 2023.¹³ This measure sought to place on the ballot a proposal to grant voting rights to the nearly 98,000 people incarcerated in California prisons, effectively ending voter disenfranchisement.¹⁴ Unfortunately, it did not pass the legislature, preventing it from reaching voters.

While Proposition 17 represented meaningful progress, the failure of ACA 4 to advance through the legislature underscores a lingering political hesitation to fully embrace voting as an unconditional right. As it stands, California trails behind states that recognize voting not as a privilege dependent on incarceration status, but as a fundamental part of civic belonging.

STATE VARIATION IN VOTING RESTRICTIONS OF SYSTEM-IMPACTED AND INCARCERATED PEOPLE



Note: While states are categorized by their general voting laws, other policies around payment of probation or parole fees, court costs or fines, or restitution can still prevent otherwise eligible people from voting, as seen in Arkansas and other states.

Source: Map adapted from Table 1 in The Sentencing Project's 2024 report titled "Locked Out 2024: Four Million Denied Voting Rights Due to a Felony Conviction."



Bridging Stories and Data

Within this national political debate on who should have the right to vote, incarcerated people continue to maintain their desire for civic engagement. This report offers insights from our new survey that sheds light on the hope to vote and political preferences of incarcerated people in California. Listening to and understanding the voices of incarcerated people is crucial to crafting real and effective policy solutions that are responsive to impacted constituents.

Across the data collected, on theme held true: incarcerated people in California have the will to vote.

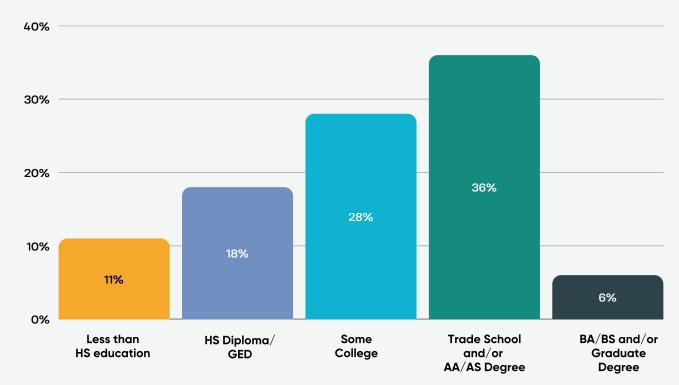


Our Research Approach

The Initiate Justice 2023-2024 report had 1,124 survey respondents, all of whom were incarcerated throughout prisons in California at the time of response. Data was collected from October 2023 to February 2024. Physical paper copies of the survey were disseminated with the help of internal organizers at Initiate Justice. Thirty-three Initiate Justice volunteers read through the surveys and assisted with data entry.

Of all survey respondents, 86% identified as men, 11% identified as women and 3% identified as another gender identity. Additionally, 35% identified as Latine, 32% identified as White, 29% identified as Black or African American, 7% identified as Native American and/or Indigenous, and 5% identified as Asian or Pacific Islander. A substantial number of respondents (13%) identified with more than one racial and/or ethnic identity. As a result, statistics in this report related to racial-ethnic groups highlight non-exclusive group responses. In terms of educational attainment, shown below, most respondents had more than a high school education. In addition to the current findings, we provide juxtaposed data from a previous Initiate Justice survey on similar topics, conducted in 2017-2018. ¹⁵

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

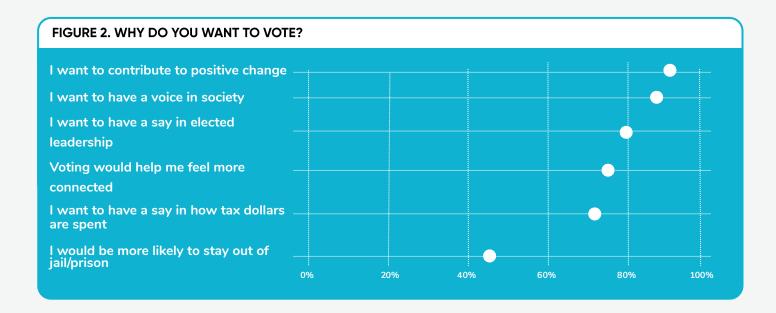
The Will to Vote: Survey Insights

Over 95% of survey respondents indicated that they would vote if they were allowed to vote. Incarcerated respondents overwhelmingly want to vote, and this pattern held true across a variety of sociodemographic characteristics.

FIGURE 1. PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAID THEY WOULD VOTE IF THEY COULD IN 2017-2018 SURVEY AND 2023-2024 SURVEY



We asked respondents to identify the reasons they wanted to vote and over 90% said that voting would help them contribute to positive change. Respondents also indicated that they wanted to have a voice in society. Other reasons that resonated with respondents include wanting to have a say in elected leadership and wanting to feel more connected.



What it Means to Be Heard

We asked survey respondents the following question: "What would it mean to you to have the right to vote?" Responses to this question highlighted community, having a voice, feeling heard, and feeling like one matters.



Voting would allow me to apply the knowledge and growth I have acquired through my lived experience.

Asian and Pacific Islander woman, 39 years old, incarcerated 10+ years





Que mi voto tenga un impacto positivo en mi comunidad y que mi voz sea escuchada.

Latine man, 50 years old, incarcerated 5+ years



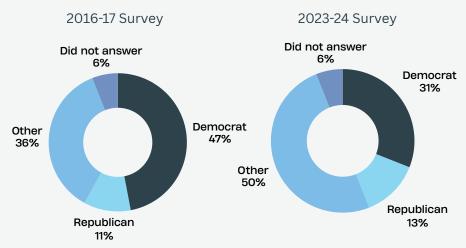
[Voting] would mean to me that I'm connected to my community and that I'm not forgotten.

Latino man, 30-39 years old, incarcerated 17+ years

In the 2023-2024 survey, 31% of respondents identified as
Democrat (this decreased from 47% in the 2016-2017 report), 13% as Republican, 21% as Independent, and 50% identified with another or no party. Of note, the majority of respondents identified with a political preference that does not align

with the two-party system.

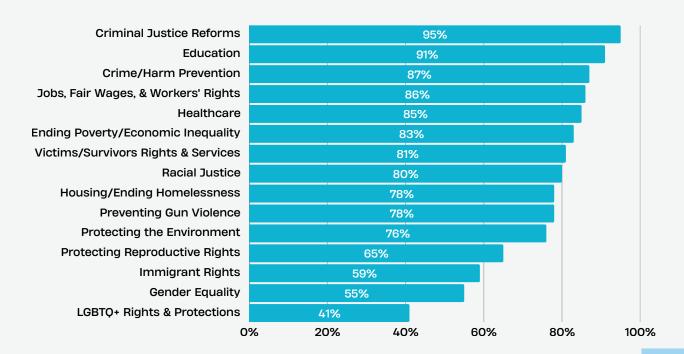
FIGURE 3. POLITICAL AFFILIATION IN INITIATE JUSTICE SURVEY

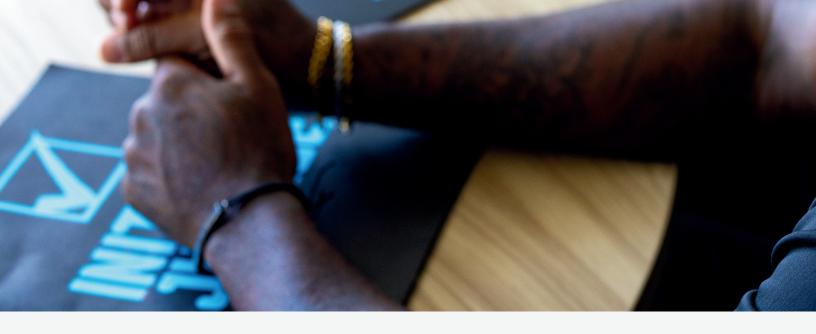


Issues Incarcerated People Care About

We asked respondents which political issues were of most importance to them, providing a list of 15 key political issues. Respondents rated each of those issues as: "Not Important," "Somewhat Important," or "Very Important." The issues that most respondents rated "Very Important" were criminal justice reforms, education, and crime/harm prevention. These were followed by health care, jobs and other economic issues. The top three issues that respondents rated as "Somewhat Important" or "Very Important" were criminal justice reforms, jobs, fair wages & workers' rights, and education.

FIGURE 4. WHAT ARE SOME IMPORTANT ISSUES THAT YOU WOULD VOTE FOR, IF YOU COULD VOTE?





Racial Identity and Issues Incarcerated People Care About

Figure 5 shows the top five issues incarcerated people care about disaggregated by racial-ethnic groups. The top-rated issue was racial justice among Black/African Americans and Asian/Pacific Islanders. Across all groups, "jobs, fair wages, and workers' rights" was rated in the top three issues incarcerated people care about. "Criminal justice reforms" were rated as very important for most groups.

FIGURE 5. RACIAL-ETHNIC GROUPS AND ISSUES INCARCERATED PEOPLE CARE ABOUT

BLACK / AFRICAN AMERICAN	WHITE	ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	LATINE	NATIVE OR INDIGENOUS
Racial Justice	Criminal Justice Reforms	Racial Justice	Education	Jobs, Fair Wages, & Worker Rights
Jobs, Fair Wages, & Worker Rights	Jobs, Fair Wages, & Worker Rights	Criminal Justice Reforms	Criminal Justice Reforms	Crime/Harm Prevention
Education	Education	Jobs, Fair Wages, & Worker Rights	Jobs, Fair Wages, & Worker Rights	Housing/Ending Homelessness
Criminal Justice Reforms	Healthcare	Healthcare	Healthcare	Education
Healthcare	Housing/Ending Homelessness	Crime/Harm Prevention	Crime/Harm Prevention	Healthcare

Political Affiliation and Issues Incarcerated People Care About

Regardless of political affiliation, "criminal justice reforms" was rated as a very important issue. Across all political groups, "jobs, fair wages, and workers' rights" were issues that resonated as a top five issue of importance.

FIGURE 6. POLITICAL AFFILIATION AND ISSUES INCARCERATED PEOPLE CARE ABOUT

DEMOCRAT	REPUBLICAN	OTHER ANSWER	
Criminal Justice Reforms	Criminal Justice Reforms*	Criminal Justice Reforms	
Ending Poverty/Economic Inequality	Education*	Jobs, Fair Wages, & Worker Rights	
Healthcare*	Jobs, Fair Wages, & Worker Rights	Education	
Jobs, Fair Wages, & Worker Rights*	Healthcare	Healthcare	
Education	Ending Poverty/Economic Inequality	Victim/Survivor Rights & Services	

Note: Issues that are marked with an asterisk are tied in their level of importance.



Qualities Incarcerated People Care About in Their Elected Officials

The survey asked respondents: "What qualities do incarcerated individuals want in their elected officials?" We highlight some key responses below:

"Open-minded, seeks equality, protects minority and disenfranchised people, seeks transformative justice instead of imprisonment."

"The MOST important quality an official should have is to keep our youth in mind. Our youth [are]

Latino man 36 years old incarcerated 10+ years

our future leaders."

"Transparency, attention to issues that affect the incarcerated population, and economic disparities."

41 year old man, incarcerated 5+ years, racial identity unreported

"Prison reform, LWOP reform, racial equality and homelessness, along with gang prevention."

White man, 42 years old, incarcerated 20+ years

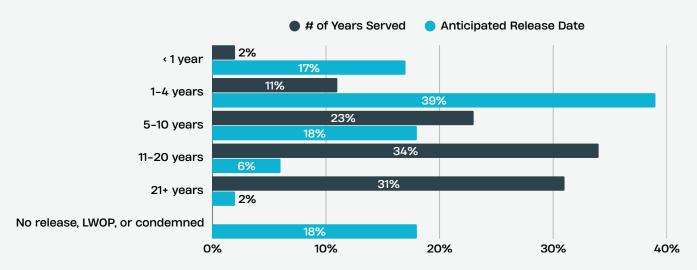
54 years old man, incarcerated 25+ years served, racial identity unreported



When Sentences Become Lifetimes of Silence

The majority of respondents have spent substantial portions of their lives behind bars, with 65% having served more than 10 years in prison at the time of the survey. While their time inside varies, 39% reported expecting to be released within 1 to 4 years, and nearly 1 in 5 (18%) had no release date at all, serving life without parole or being condemned to death row. Only 13% of respondents had been incarcerated for less than 5 years, highlighting the long-term nature of most respondents' imprisonment. These findings underscore how long many people are excluded from the chance to vote and have a voice in our democracy.

FIGURE 7. ANTICIPATED RELEASE DATE



Note: LWOP indicates life without parole. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.



Respondents' Current Civic Engagement

A substantial percentage of respondents were actively engaged in educational advancement opportunities, self-help groups, and work at the time of the survey. Over 90% engaged in self help groups, around 90% worked while incarcerated, and nearly 70% were engaged in college or vocational training. Over half of respondents were a self-help leader.

FIGURE 8. ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATION, WORK, AND SELF-HELP GROUPS







A Blueprint to End Voter Disenfranchisement: Policy Recommendations

Following the examples set by D.C., Maine and Vermont, which are the only three U.S. places thus far to allow people in prison to vote, **Initiate Justice advocates for the complete elimination of voter disenfranchisement in California prisons.** We call for the unconditional restoration of voting rights to all incarcerated people, ensuring that no one loses the right to vote while serving a sentence in prison.

Our policy recommendations center on three key areas:

1
Expanding Eligibility
to Vote

Enabling Voting
Access

3 Ensuring Implementation of Voting Policies

Because voting disenfranchisement is codified in the California State Constitution, restoring these rights requires a constitutional amendment approved by voters.

California Constitution, Article II, Section 4 disqualified people from voting if they are "imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony." Proposition 17 (2020) amended this to restore the right to vote immediately upon release from prison (removing the parole restriction). California Elections Code §2101, §2105.5 codified this into law.

- We urge the California State Legislature to pass a constitutional amendment, by a two-thirds majority in both houses, to restore the right to vote during imprisonment. This would place the issue on the statewide ballot for Californians to vote on.
- We urge California voters to support a ballot initiative to permanently remove all voting restrictions for people in prison, similar to their support of Proposition 17.

1

Expanding Eligibility to Vote

Enabling Voting
Access

2

3 Ensuring Implementation of Voting Policies

In addition to restoring voting rights for people in prison, the Legislature must prioritize ensuring meaningful access to the ballot. Even outside of incarceration settings, voters often face barriers such as limited mail access, language barriers, difficulty obtaining valid identification, and missed ballot deadlines. These challenges are significantly worsened behind bars, where people typically lack personal documents and control over the mailing process. To address these issues, the Legislature should amend election laws to:

- Allow for ballot requests and submissions up until Election Day;
- Enable same-day registration for incarcerated voters;
- Ensure translated ballot and voter information; and
- Accept correctional facility IDs as valid forms of voter identification.





ng Eligibility

Enabling Voting
Access

3
Ensuring
Implementation of
Voting Policies

Finally, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) must foster an institutional culture that supports civic engagement in prisons. New research by the Sentencing Project revealed that despite having the ability to vote, the majority of surveyed eligible voters in Maine and Vermont prisons still did not vote in an election during their incarceration. This was largely due to:

(1) only learning they were able to vote through word of mouth from other incarcerated peers, (2) not knowing how to actually vote, (3) delays in the mail system, and (4) limited information provided about candidates on the ballot.

CDCR should be responsible for informing all people under its supervision, including staff, parole officers, and incarcerated people, of any changes in voting rights. The Secretary of State's office should assist where appropriate in ensuring that incarcerated people have access to and knowledge of their voting rights and process.



ng Eligibility

Enabling Voting
Access

3
Ensuring
Implementation of
Voting Policies

- The Secretary of State's office should promulgate regulations for conducting in-person voter registration across California's prisons.
- The Secretary of State's office should designate existing funding to establish polling stations inside prisons.
- CDCR and local governance authorities should promulgate regulations for notifying incarcerated people of their eligibility to vote, designating ballots as legal mail, providing timely ballots, and ensuring completed ballots are mailed on time.
- Enabling voter access and ensuring implementation of voting policies should also occur across correctional facility settings, as people incarcerated in jails in California retain their right to vote.

To support these policy changes, community-based organizations can collaborate with incarcerated constituents and political candidates to share accessible and non-partisan information about candidates and ballot measures. Additionally, CDCR can work with candidates to hold nonpartisan forums at prisons to engage directly with incarcerated voters. Together, these efforts can foster a more equitable voting environment and strengthen the accountability of elected officials to the incarcerated population.



No Democracy Without Us

The disenfranchisement of voters has deep historical roots in the United States. It was a foundational element of Jim Crow-era segregation in the South, systematically denying African Americans access to full democratic participation. While the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 marked a critical turning point, efforts to suppress the vote—particularly through the criminal legal system—have persisted. In California, people incarcerated in state prisons remain barred from voting.

Voter disenfranchisement today functions as a modern extension of historic injustices. This is especially evident in the disproportionate incarceration of African Americans and other racialized populations, which is driven by longstanding disparities in policing, prosecution, and sentencing. Therefore, voter disenfranchisement perpetuates exclusion from civic life for communities already most impacted by systemic inequities.

"To me, having the right to vote means being able to contribute [to] the direction of our state. It means being able to help my children and my community have a better future. It means fighting for social equity."

Latino man, 47 years old, incarcerated 24+ years

Voting is not a partisan issue. People across the political spectrum are affected by laws and policies, and all deserve representation. Our research affirms that incarcerated people hold diverse political views and priorities. Denying them the right to vote not only strips them of a fundamental democratic right, but also weakens their connection to society and undermines the principle of equal citizenship.

Restoring the right to vote to incarcerated people strengthens democracy by fostering civic engagement, community connection, and personal accountability. When people maintain a stake in civic life, including through voting, they are more likely to successfully re-integrate into society and less likely to commit criminalized acts.¹⁷ **Protecting and expanding voting rights for all Californians, including those serving time for felony convictions, upholds the integrity of our democracy.**

Methodological Appendix

The survey included questions and prompts about their demographic characteristics, as well as their opinions related to voting, important issues, and political preferences. This report highlights key insights of the survey results.

Method

Data entry was conducted on AirTable. Analysis was conducted using the statistical programs STATA and R. For the results presenting data from the IJ survey 2017-2018, some data had to be harmonized in cases where the survey question was not identical across surveys.

Racial Groups

Data on racial group identification included creating a variable for each racial group in the survey and coding it as 1 if the respondent identified with that group or coding at 0 otherwise. If respondents wrote in their racial classification, the qualitative response was recorded into the racial group(s) that corresponded to that text. For instance, if the respondent wrote in Mexican American, they were coded as Latine.

Data Limitations

This report did not follow probability sampling approaches. The sample may not be representative of all individuals who are in California and are incarcerated. We compared the demographics of the incarcerated population to the demographics of the respondents in the 2023-24 survey. In California, Latine individuals are 46% of the prison population and Black or African American individuals are 28%, and White individuals are 20% of the prison population. In addition, compared to the California prison population, women are overrepresented in our survey—4% of California's prison population but 11% of IJ survey respondents.

About Initiate Justice

Initiate Justice is a California-based nonprofit organization working to end incarceration by activating the political power of those most harmed by the criminal legal system. Initiate Justice was founded and is 100% led by people directly impacted by incarceration.

Founded in 2016, we have built a movement of over 750 trained advocates inside and outside of prisons, with over 2,000 members across California communities. Through our political education newsletter, The Inside Journal, we have reached more than 61,000 incarcerated Californians. Collectively, we are leading transformative change across the state to make our communities safer through policy change that is rooted in equity, healing, and empowerment.

We use an "inside-outside" organizing approach through our 12-week organizing training program, the Institute of Impacted Leaders, and our Inside Organizing program, that supports civic engagement training, leadership development, and grassroots organizing both within prison walls and in communities outside. These programs help equip incarcerated people, formerly incarcerated people and their loved ones to engage in statewide policy advocacy, grassroots organizing, and community leadership roles to transform our criminal legal system.

We ground our work in the lived experiences of our organizers, members, staff and community, inside and outside of state prisons, work to shape public education, advocacy strategies, and policy change accordingly. Ultimately, Initiate Justice envisions a California where communities are empowered, restorative justice replaces punitive systems, and those most impacted are at the forefront to guide transformations in criminal justice policy.



Initiate Justice is a California-based nonprofit organization founded and led by people directly impacted by incarceration.

Our Team

Adam Cain — Inside Organizing Program Coordinator

Adrianna Griffith — Statewide Advocacy Manager

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Efrain Ortiz — Membership & Outreach Coordinator

Elizabeth Kim — Policy Director

Lee Gibson — Community Advocacy Manager

Marta Zepeda — Director of Finance & Operations

Michelle Cárdenas — Communications Manager

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Alicia Virani

^{*}This list reflects our newly assembled board of directors effective October 2025, with the (*) indicating outgoing board members whose final board term is concluding October 2025.



Acknowledgements

This report was made possible through the support, leadership, and contributions of many individuals and organizations. Data collection was carried out with the help of Initiate Justice (IJ) staff, volunteers, members, and all survey respondents who generously shared their perspectives. IJ organizers across California played a vital role in completing the survey and sharing it within their communities.

The survey was developed by the IJ team and led by Crystal Cárdenas, Greg Fidel, and Antoinette Ratcliffe. Survey design and implementation was directed by Antoinette Ratcliffe. Survey distribution was coordinated by Lee Gibson. Data management was led by Crystal Cárdenas. Additional support was provided by Adam Cain, Michelle Cárdenas, Greg Fidel, Josefina Flores Morales, Efrain Ortiz, and IJ's Inside Organizers. We are especially grateful to the IJ volunteers who assisted in reviewing paper surveys and entering data into our database management system.

Report Contributors

The research, writing, and design team included **Michelle Cárdenas**, **Shivani Nishar**, **Antoinette Ratcliffe**, and **Alyssa Rodriguez** from IJ, along with **Clayton Rosa** of **Rose Collective**. The team benefitted greatly from the insights and feedback of IJ staff members and members of the California Free the Vote Coalition during data analysis and drafting.

This report was strengthened by the thoughtful review and feedback from our community partners. Thank you to the members of the California Free the Vote Coalition, Campaign Legal Center team members, and Bob Libal and Nicole Porter from the Sentencing Project for helping us refine our findings.

Most importantly, this report would not be possible without the perspectives and expertise of incarcerated people. Their lived experience drives our understanding of the impact of voting disenfranchisement and is foundational to the formulation of this report. We extend our deepest gratitude for their contributions.

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