



# Michigan Bureau of Elections

## Only U.S. citizens can vote

In Michigan, and in every state, only U.S. citizens are eligible to register to vote or cast a ballot in any state or federal election.

There is no evidence to support claims that large numbers of noncitizens have voted in past elections or are registering to vote. In fact, the name of everyone who registers or votes in an election is a public record – it would be very easy to see if noncitizens were registering or voting in large numbers.

### ***Registering to vote***

Federal law requires people to state under penalty of perjury that they meet the eligibility requirements – including being a citizen of the United States – at several critical points:

- When they register to vote
- When they apply for an absentee ballot
- When they return an absentee ballot
- When they apply for a ballot in person

### ***The right to cast a ballot is tightly guarded***

The National Voter Registration Act states that it is illegal to lie on voter registration forms, ballot applications, or ballot submission forms. These are public documents and are saved after each election, creating a preserved record. Penalties for false statements may include prison time, fines, and deportation.

Having a Michigan driver's license or state ID does not mean a person is registered to vote. Michigan's system for driver's license and state ID applications does not allow an applicant to be registered to vote if they provide noncitizen documents – it's not even an option.

Research shows attempted voting by noncitizens in federal elections is extremely rare. For example, a study by the Brennan Center for Justice analyzing 23.5 million votes across 42 jurisdictions in the 2016 general election, concluded that there were about 30 instances of noncitizens casting votes – 0.0001% of the vote in those jurisdictions.

Any reported instance of illegal voting by noncitizens in Michigan has been investigated and referred to law enforcement for prosecution. There is no evidence that these votes – or any other instance of voter fraud – have happened at any significant scale.

To learn more about the rules for voting in Michigan, visit [Michigan.gov/Vote](https://Michigan.gov/Vote)