

# Engaging Housing-Insecure Voters in the Voting Process

Future of California Elections Conference

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# Panelists



**Cathy Darling Allen**  
County Clerk and Registrar of  
Voters  
Shasta County



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Director of Communications  
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**Eric Montoya**  
Outreach Coordinator  
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**Aaron Nevarez**  
Assistant Registrar-  
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LA County Registrar-  
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**Michelle Tonn**  
Executive Director  
Alexandria House



Moderator:  
**Kim Alexander**  
President & Founder  
California Voter Foundation

# California Voter Foundation (CVF)

- Our mission: *The California Voter Foundation is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working through research, oversight, outreach and demonstration projects to improve the election process so that it better serves the needs and interests of voters.*
- Website: <https://www.calvoter.org/>
- Twitter handles: [@calvoterfdn](#), [@kimalex3](#), [@samabelove](#)



# California Voter Foundation (CVF)

- **CVF promotes and supports every Californian's full and equal access to opportunities to participate in the voting process.**
  - CVF is committed to ensuring that California voters, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, ability, age, income, education or the county in which they live, enjoy equal access and opportunities to participate in the voting process.
  - CVF supports legislative reforms and policies that will ensure those elected to serve Californians and the laws they enact are shaped by Californians of a diversity comparable to the state's population.
  - It is in the interest of all Californians for those currently underrepresented among voters to feel they are stakeholders and that voting matters.

# Do you need an address to register to vote?

- There is no federal law stating that unhoused people cannot vote.<sup>1</sup>
- Several court cases tried in the mid-1980s and early 1990s clarified that a physical address is not required to vote.<sup>2</sup>
- In California, you can use cross streets, a park, or just describe the location where you live so it is clear enough for your county elections official to find your voting precinct.<sup>3</sup>

1. <https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voting-for-all-americans-people-experiencing-homelessness637647105.aspx>
2. <https://nationalhomeless.org/projects/vote/court.html>
3. <https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdfs/covid-19-resources/votesafe-homelessness.pdf>

# Housing-Unstable Californians by the Numbers

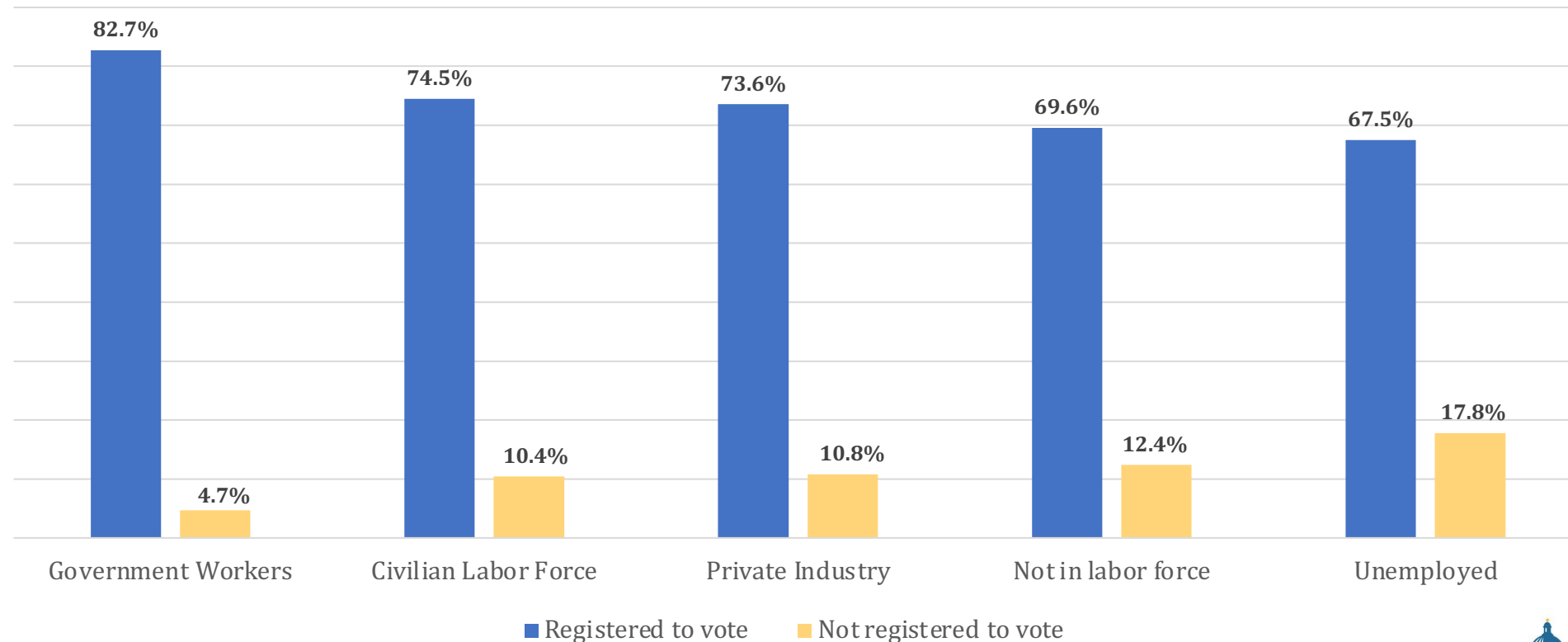
- As of January 2020, at least 161,000 people in California were unhoused.<sup>1</sup>
- In November 2020, Proposition 17 restored the right to vote to nearly 50,000 Californians who completed their prison term.<sup>2</sup>
- There are over 2.6 million college students living in California.<sup>3</sup>

1. <https://calmatters.org/housing/homeless/2022/03/california-homeless-count/>

2. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/california-voters-approve-prop-17-restoring-voting-rights-people-who-have>

3. <https://www.univstats.com/states/california/student-population/>; this does not include the number of students living outside of California

# Voter Registration Rate by Class of Worker in U.S. November 2020 General Election



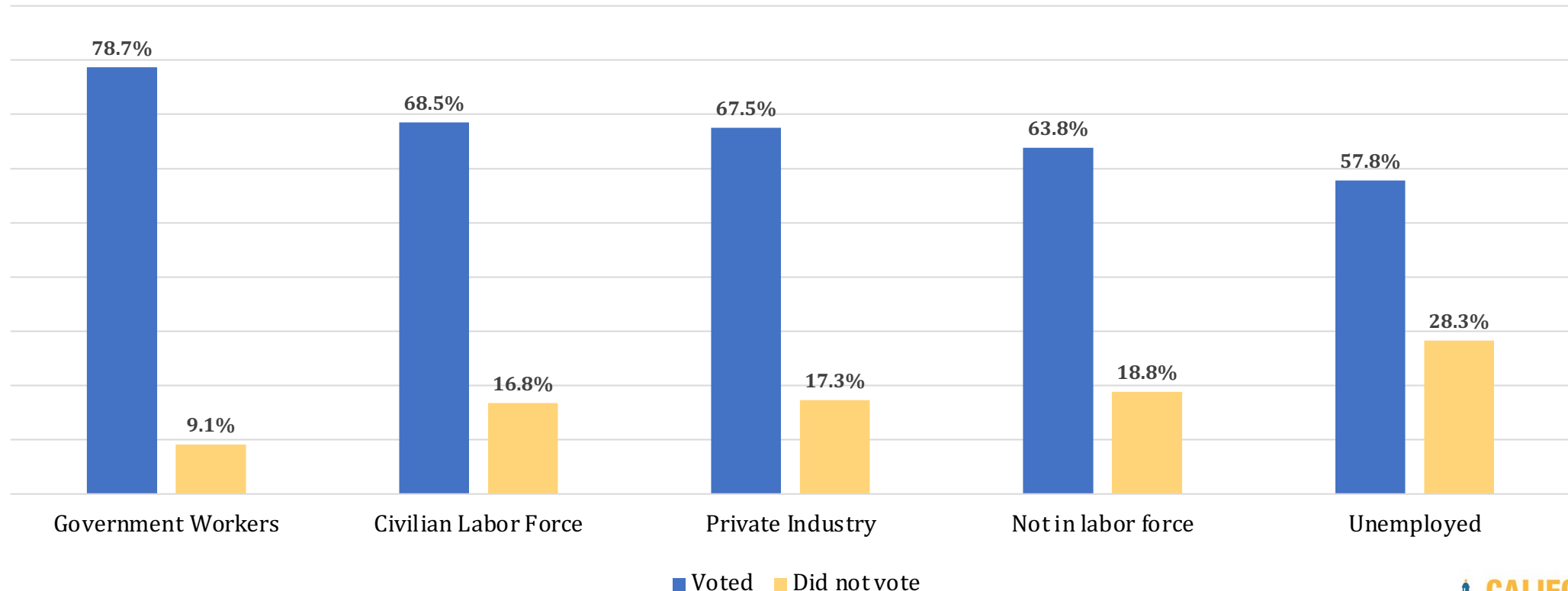
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2020.

\*All responses are self-reported.

\*16.2% "No Response" rate, which includes those who were not asked if they were registered as well as those who responded "Don't Know," and "Refused."



# Voter Participation Rate by Class of Worker in U.S. November 2020 General Election



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2020.

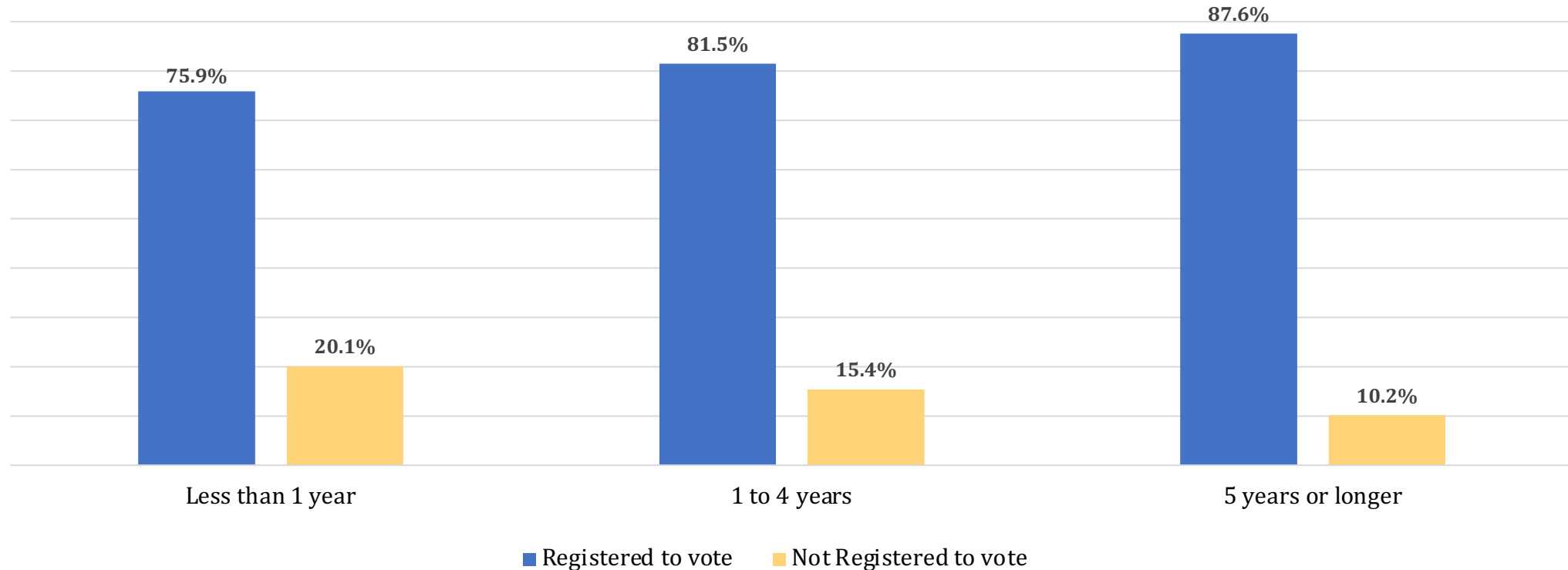
\*All responses are self-reported.

\*15.7% "No Response" rate, which includes those who were not asked if they were registered as well as those who were not asked if they voted as well as those who responded "Don't Know," and "Refused."





# Voter Registration Rate by Duration of Residence in U.S. November 2020 General Election

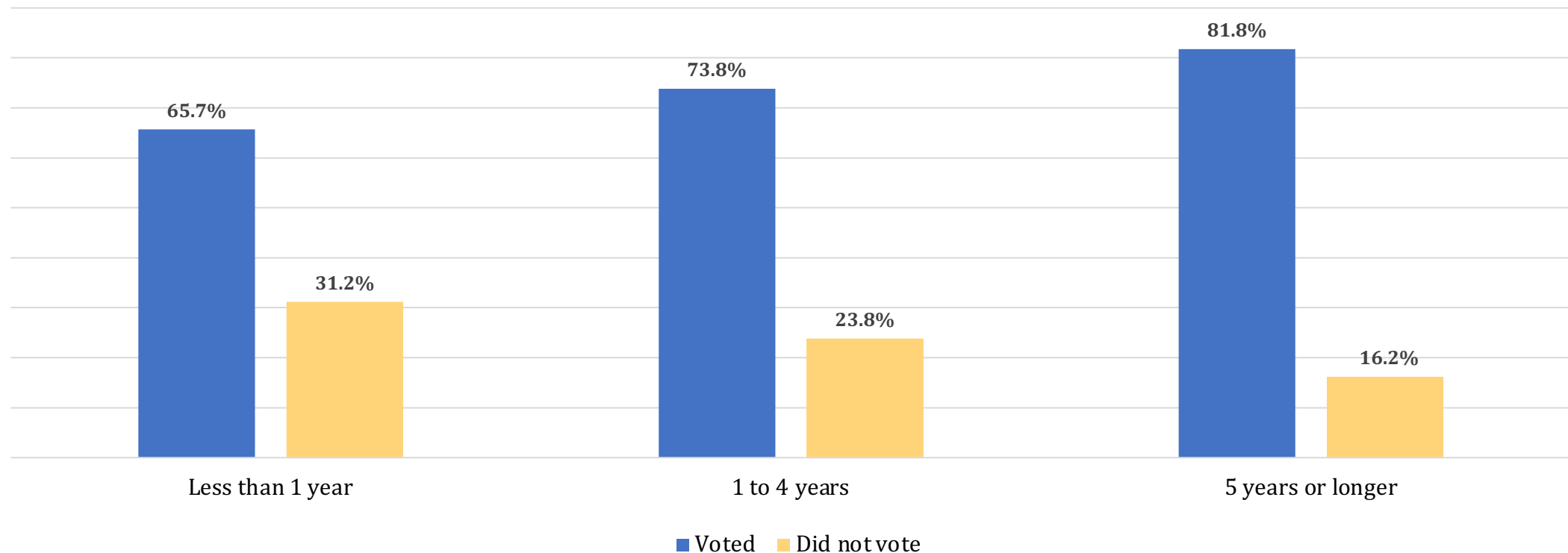


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2020

\*All responses are self-reported.

\*16.2% "No Response" rate, which includes those who were not asked if they were registered as well as those who responded "Don't Know," and "Refused."

# Voter Participation Rate by Duration of Residence in U.S. November 2020 General Election



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# Key Questions

- What is the administrative process election officials use when registering someone to vote who is unhoused?
- What are the administrative challenges election officials face when facilitating voting for people who are unhoused?
- What are the most effective strategies to overcoming the barriers and constraints unhoused people experience during the voting process?
- What are the sensitivities that people should be aware of when trying to engage this community?
- Where are there opportunities to increase voter engagement among housing-insecure Californians?