



REQUIRING PHOTO ID TO VOTE

Mike Vallante | October 18, 2022

REQUIRING A PHOTO ID TO VOTE ENSURES THAT THE VOTER IS WHOM THEY CLAIM TO BE—MAKING IT EASY TO VOTE BUT HARD TO CHEAT

A government-issued photo identification (“photo ID”) is a fundamental requirement of an effective electoral system that protects the validity of every vote and voter. Photo IDs are regularly required in important personal and professional situations to verify that an individual is, in fact, whom he or she claims to be. Given the importance of elections, it is vital to ensure that each voter is properly identified to protect against voter fraud and guarantee a fair outcome. It is also important to make it easy and free for people to obtain a photo ID for the purpose of voting. Doing these things makes it easy to vote but hard to cheat.

THE FACTS

- ★ 85% of Americans support the requirement of a photo ID to prove a person’s identity when casting a ballot. 28 states, plus the District of Columbia, do NOT have any photo ID requirements to vote. Those states are Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, North Carolina, Illinois, Nebraska, New Mexico, Minnesota, Nevada, California, Oregon, Alaska, Hawaii, Washington, Utah, Colorado, Iowa, Oklahoma, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, Delaware, Connecticut, and New Hampshire¹.
- ★ While 22 states require photo ID to vote, 14 of them have workarounds. These workarounds allow a person who does not have his or her photo ID to have other ways to cast his or her ballot without using a photo ID².
- ★ Research from Harvard and the National Bureau of Economic Research recently showed no adverse effect on voter turnout or registration after implementing photo voter ID requirements³.
- ★ Photo IDs are already required to buy alcohol and tobacco, board a domestic flight, drive a car, and open a bank account—all activities that the broader public regularly participates.
- ★ 46 out of 47 European countries require a photo ID to vote⁴.
- ★ Mexico has required all voters to present a photo ID since 1991. Every voter in Mexico must have a tamper-proof photo ID that includes a thumbprint and embossed hologram⁵.

¹ [Voter ID Laws \(ncsl.org\)](https://www.ncsl.org/voter-id-laws)

² [Voter ID Laws \(ncsl.org\)](https://www.ncsl.org/voter-id-laws)

³ [Strict ID Laws Don’t Stop Voters: Evidence from a U.S. Nationwide Panel, 2008–2018 | NBER](https://www.nber.org/papers/w25000)

⁴ [In Europe, Voter ID Is the Norm \(dailysignal.com\)](https://www.dailysignal.com)

⁵ [Voting ID cards in Mexico have multiple security features | G+D Spotlight \(gi-de.com\)](https://www.gd-spotlight.com)

