



Michigan's Safeguards to Prevent Noncitizen Voting

In Michigan, U.S. citizens who apply for a driver's license or state ID are automatically registered to vote unless they choose to opt out.

While noncitizens who are legally present may also apply for a driver's license or state ID, multiple safeguards are in place to prevent them from being registered to vote.

State law requires individuals to provide proof of legal presence in the United States—such as a birth certificate, Social Security number, permanent resident card, or passport—when obtaining a license or State ID. The Secretary of State's computerized system uses this information to allow only U.S. citizens to be registered. It blocks voter registration for anyone submitting noncitizen documentation, and staff cannot override these protections. If an individual is registered for the first time or has their registration updated through automatic voter registration, they will receive a mailed notice at their registration address informing them of the changes and their rights.

Additional safeguards have been enacted by the Michigan Legislature, including a 2025 mailing to registered voters explaining eligibility requirements and emphasizing that individuals must decline registration if they are not eligible.

Research consistently shows that noncitizen voting is extremely rare. A Brennan Center for Justice study examining 23.5 million votes across 42 jurisdictions in the 2016 general election identified approximately 30 cases of noncitizens casting ballots—just 0.0001% of votes.

In Michigan, any suspected instance of illegal voting is investigated and referred for prosecution. There is no evidence that noncitizen voting—or any form of voter fraud—occurs at a meaningful scale.