

# Non-citizens Added to States' Voter Rolls Through the Motor Vehicles Department (DMV), Even After Admitting Lack of US Citizenship

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By [Natalia Mittelstadt](#)

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*Non-citizens have been added to several states' voter rolls largely through motor vehicle departments, sometimes even after they have explained that they are not U.S. citizens.*

States have been discovering non-citizens on their voter rolls over the years, with many being added through the "motor voter" process at motor vehicle departments that began with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA). If non-citizens are seeking to become naturalized citizens, then being illegally registered to vote can prevent that from occurring.

An election integrity group has examined states' voter rolls for years, finding many non-citizens who are illegally registered to vote across the country.

## Pennsylvania

J. Christian Adams, president of the Public Interest Legal Foundation (PILF), said on a *Just the News* special report with The Association of Mature American Citizens to be aired Tuesday that non-citizens had been registered to vote in Pennsylvania for decades.

"Pennsylvania had been registering non-citizens, by admission - this wasn't some conspiracy on the internet - and they admitted they had been registering non-citizens for 20 years at PennDOT, and it was a glitch, they called it," Adams said. "So we use the National Voter Registration Act to go in to try to get the records of how bad the problem was, the records of how they fixed the problem, or allegedly fixed it, and they've been stonewalling us for about seven years."

He explained that PILF had oral arguments earlier this month before "the Third Circuit Federal Court of Appeals in Philadelphia, defending our win. Hopefully, eventually, Pennsylvania coughs up the records."

In 2017, Pennsylvania Secretary of State Al Schmidt, a Republican who was a Philadelphia city commissioner at the time, [told a Pennsylvania Senate committee](#) that there were over 100,000 matches of voter registration records to state driver's license numbers with Immigration and Naturalization Service indicators.

The matches don't mean that all of those people were registered to vote, but

Schmidt [argued](#): “We’re not talking about an insignificant number here. We’re talking about a potentially very significant number of thousands and tens of thousands.”

The Pennsylvania Department of State [announced in September 2017](#) that records indicated 1,160 non-citizens since 1972 had requested their voter registrations be canceled.

## California

Meanwhile, in California, PILF [filed a federal lawsuit](#) in February against the Alameda County Registrar of Voters for allegedly violating the NVRA by not disclosing records of foreign nationals registering to vote and voting for more than 20 years.

Non-citizens have been placed on voter rolls through motor vehicle departments by lying about their citizenship, Adams also noted.

“[W]e’ve collected over the years of the data on how non-citizens get in, and it’s largely by not telling the truth in the motor voter process. And it includes people here on green cards, people here legally,” Adams added.

“Most of the people who get registered to vote, according to the data we’ve collected, are actual, legal residents, like 90% of them, 95%. And so they get sucked into the system, through motor voter, through DMV, and they get registered to vote that way, and it’s a big problem,” he continued.

However, sometimes, non-citizens still get on states’ voter rolls despite explaining their citizenship status.

“People get registered to vote when they tell, on their voter registration form, the election officials, that they are not a citizen,” Adams said.

“We have hundreds where they actually mark on the form, ‘hello, not a citizen,’ and they still get registered to vote,” he explained.

PILF has obtained voter registration forms from New Jersey and San Diego County, Calif., that show non-citizens declared their lack of U.S. citizenship but were still registered to vote.

Lauren Bis, PILF director of Communications and Engagement, [told \*Just the News\*](#) in February that most of the non-citizen voters self-reported casting ballots, since they must do so when going through the naturalization process to become a U.S. citizen.

The second most common way for non-citizens to get onto voter rolls is [third-party registration drives](#) by nonprofits, Adams previously told the “*Just the News, No Noise*” TV show.

While non-citizens are [prohibited from voting](#) in federal, state, and most local elections, municipalities in California, Maryland, and Vermont, and Washington, D.C., [allow non-citizens to vote](#) in local elections.

Thousands of non-citizen voters have been discovered on voter rolls this year. Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Louisiana, North Dakota, and Ohio have all included language in their state constitutions that [prohibits non-citizen voting](#). Meanwhile, Iowa, Idaho, Kentucky,

Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Wisconsin all have ballot measures for voters to decide in the November general election whether non-citizens should be prohibited from voting in state elections.

## Arizona

On Tuesday, Arizona Secretary of State Adrian Fontes (D) said that nearly 100,000 voters were [incorrectly registered](#) in the state as providing proof of U.S. citizenship, even though they had not done so.

Fontes explained that there was an error in state systems that labeled the roughly 97,000 voters as providing documented proof of U.S. citizenship, [Votebeat reported](#). The Motor Vehicle Division provides the state's voter registration system with driver's license information, and the error occurred in that process. Affected voters had first obtained Arizona driver's licenses before October 1996 and were issued duplicate replacements before registering to vote after 2004, Fontes said.

The error has occurred for about 20 years and over four administrations, he noted, and was discovered by a Maricopa County worker who found a registered voter who hadn't provided proof of U.S. citizenship but was listed as a voter who could cast ballots in both federal and state elections. The voter had a green card but never cast a ballot, Fontes said.

## Texas

Last month, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) announced that more than [1 million ineligible voters](#) have been removed from voter rolls since 2021. Of those, more than 6,500 non-citizens were found, and about 1,930 of them have voted. The records of those 1,930 voters are in the process of being sent to the attorney general's office from the secretary of state's office for investigation.

## Ohio

In May, Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose (R) [directed](#) all 88 counties to begin a removal process for non-citizens on Ohio's voter rolls following a review by his office's Public Integrity Division and Office of Data Analytics and Archives. The review analyzed data from the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles and found 137 voter registrations of non-citizens who had twice confirmed their lack of U.S. citizenship.

In August, LaRose directed county election officials Thursday to remove another [499 non-citizens](#) registered to vote from the state's voter rolls.

## Illinois and Elsewhere

According to a PILF report from May 2023, [Chicago records](#) show that 394 foreign nationals were removed from the city's voter rolls since 2007, with 20 of them recorded as casting 85 ballots.

In April 2023, [PILF reported](#) that Maricopa County, Ariz., records showed that since 2015, 222 foreign nationals were removed from the county's voter rolls, with nine of them recorded as casting 12 ballots across four federal elections.

According to a February [report](#) by PILF, Pima County has removed 186 non-citizens from its

voter rolls since 2021, with the majority of those registered to vote through third parties.

Of the 186 non-citizen voters in Pima County, seven cast ballots across two federal and local elections. A total of 120 of the records, or approximately 65%, “came from ‘political parties and group drives,’” according to the [information given to PILF](#) by Pima County. The county data didn’t include which third-party drives registered the non-citizens.

The year with the greatest amount of non-citizen voter records created in Pima County was 2022 at 132. The midterm election year of 2022 also had the highest number of non-citizen voters who cast ballots in the county, which was six in total during the general election.

Another [PILF report](#) noted that ahead of the 2014 midterm elections, North Carolina found that 1,454 individuals on state voter rolls were not naturalized U.S. citizens. Of those, 89 registrants appeared at polling places, 24 of which were challenged, with 11 of the challenges sustained.

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