

Resource Guide



**STUDENT DIVERSITY
& SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Voter Rights & Suppression

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on the ancestral lands of the Nuwu, Southern Paiute People. We acknowledge the Indigenous People of the lands where UNLV now stands – and recognize that these have always been places of teaching and learning. I wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging – and acknowledge the important role Nuwu, Southern Paiute People, continue to play within the UNLV community.



Marchers at Standing Rock 2016; Photo by Nicholas Ward



SDSJ Mission

Student Diversity & Social Justice advocates with a diverse student population to amplify and affirm student's identities through an intersectional framework to promote student success. We are a student-centered office committed to educating, empowering, and developing UNLV students as leaders to recognize and address societal injustices.



SDSJ at Cultural Leadership Institute 2020; Photo by Unknown

SDSJ Values

Student Centered: Intentionally highlighting, addressing, and including the distinct needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individuals and groups of students.

Empowerment: Engaging fully with freedom to exist unapologetically by creating transformational opportunities to encourage self-determination and inspire change.

Trauma Informed: Trauma-informed is the act of creating a space designed to acknowledge and develop an understanding of one's experience, the dynamics of trauma, and how those dynamics impact one's experience.

Intersectionality: Coined by Black Feminist legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, Intersectionality is a theoretical framework and practice meant to articulate how multiple forms of oppression, domination, and discrimination interact to create a unique form of discrimination for people with multiple marginalized identities.

Community: An environment that denotes a feeling of belonging and constructs a network of individuals that help support the successful navigation of oppressive systems.

Advocacy: A process of supporting and enabling underrepresented people to 1) express their views, 2) access information and services, and 3) defend and promote their rights.



SDSJ at #Yo Soy UNLV Event 2020; Photo by Unknown

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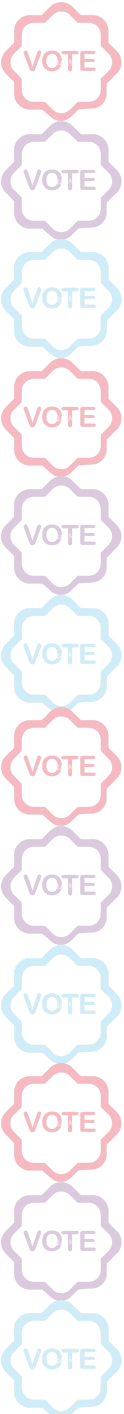
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Introduction



What is voter suppression? As DemandTheVote.com puts it, voter suppression is “any effort, either legal or illegal, by way of laws, administrative rules, and/or tactics that prevents eligible voters from registering to vote or voting.” To put it simply, it’s the active effort to limit citizens’ abilities to vote or register to vote. Voter suppression efforts tend to disproportionately impact minority groups, affecting overall voter turnout. Some examples of voter suppression policies include voter I.D. laws, limiting early voting and gerrymandering. Although voter I.D. laws may seem harmless, it is important to keep in mind that obtaining I.D.s require someone to not only have a car, but to also afford taking a day off from work and paying for any necessary documents as proof of their citizenship. Additionally, limiting early voting makes it difficult for people occupied with work, family matters or other important obligations to find the time to vote, especially considering how long lines can get at polling stations. When it comes to gerrymandering, or the drawing of district lines to favor one party, voters of diverse backgrounds are not reflected into the district they’re put into, restricting the power of their vote. Voter suppression serves only to silence valuable members of our society and rid them of their right to have a voice in government.

Regardless of one’s race, age, gender, sexuality, class, etc., everybody should have an equal opportunity to vote for leaders in government as citizens of the United States. To vote means to have the power to decide which individuals will lead our communities in the coming years. Leaders in government not only have the power to decide which laws or policies take precedence, but also to influence how the government responds in times of hardship—whether that be economic or social. Voting is an integral part of being a U.S. citizen, so why should anybody’s vote be suppressed?

In this resource guide, we hope to inform UNLV students about their rights as a voter and how they can overcome different barriers when trying to vote.



History of Voting Rights

1776 – Only people who own land can vote. Right to vote during Colonial and Revolutionary periods is restricted to property owners – most of whom are white male protestants over the age of 21.



1790 – Citizen=White – 1790 Naturalization Law passed. It explicitly states that only “free white” immigrants can become naturalized citizens.

1848 – The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War and guaranteed U.S. citizenship to Mexicans living in the territories conquered by the U.S. However, English language requirements and violent intimidation limit access to voting rights.



1868 – 14th Amendment is passed, defining and granting citizenship to all native-born Americans, including former slaves. Voters are explicitly defined as male. Although the Amendment forbids states from denying any rights of citizenship, voting regulation is still left in the hands of states.

1869 – 15th Amendment passed. It states that the right to vote cannot be denied by the federal or state governments based on race. However, soon after, some states begin to enact measures such as voting taxes and literacy tests that restrict the actual ability of African Americans to register to vote. Violence and other intimidation tactics are also used.



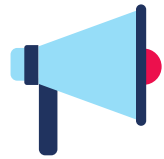
1876 – The Supreme Court rules that Indigenous people, Native Americans, are not citizens as defined by the 14th Amendment and cannot vote. A law passed in 1890 allows Native Americans to apply for citizenship, similar to the process of immigrant naturalization. It wasn't until the Snyder Act was passed in 1924, that all Native Americans were granted full US Citizenship.

History of Voting Rights



1920 – The 19th Amendment is ratified, stating that the right to vote “shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” It was meant to give women the right to vote, many women, especially Black women, were shut out of voting in local and federal elections for decades after the amendment was passed.

1961 – 23rd amendment was passed, which gave citizens of Washington, DC the right to vote in Presidential elections. However, to this day, the district’s residents, most of whom are Black, still don’t have voting representation in the House of Representatives or the US Senate.



1964 – The 24th Amendment was passed, guaranteeing that the right to vote in federal elections will not be denied for failure to pay any tax – finally outlawing poll taxes, which were used as a heavy suppression tactic in the south after the passage of the 14th & 15th Amendments.

1965 – The Voting Rights Act is passed. It forbids states from imposing discriminatory restrictions on who can vote, and provides mechanisms for the federal government to enforce its provisions. The legislation is passed largely under pressure from protests and marches earlier that year challenging Alabama officials who injured and killed people during African American voter registration efforts.



1971 – The 26th Amendment lowers the voting age to 18. The amendment is largely a result of Vietnam War-protests demanding a lowering of the voting age on the premise that people who are old enough to fight are old enough to vote.

History of Voting Rights



2002 – Help America Vote Act (HAVA) passed in response to the disputed 2000 presidential election. Massive voting reform effort requires states comply with federal mandate for provisional ballots, disability access, centralized, computerized voting lists, electronic voting and requirement that first-time voters present identification before voting.



The Electoral College

Voter suppression also has its own history and it still uses different tactics to keep people from voting in our present day. Even one of the founding principles of our election system, the Electoral College, was implemented and still exists today as a voter suppression tool. At the time the Founders decided on our electoral system, the populations in the North and South were approximately equal, but roughly one-third of those living in the South were enslaved. Because of its considerable nonvoting enslaved population, that region would have less clout under a popular-vote system.

The ultimate solution that was chosen was an indirect method of choosing the president, one that could leverage the three-fifths compromise. This was the bargain the founders had already made to determine how congressional seats would be apportioned – each enslaved person would be counted as three-fifths of one person, essentially granting more voting power to the White men who were enslaving people. The three-fifths compromise increased the size of the South's congressional delegation by 42 percent.

The Electoral College

When the time came to agree on a system for choosing the president, it was all too easy for the delegates to resort to the three-fifths compromise as the foundation.

The peculiar system that emerged was the Electoral College. Now, in present day, of course every person living in a given state is counted as one person, but this system that dehumanized enslaved people and gave more power to those enslaving them, still works to disenfranchise voters across the country – granting more electoral power to more rural and less densely populated states, which tend to be more white. To put a number on this issue, the results of 2 of our last 5 presidential elections, the 2000 election and the 2016 election, did not match the popular vote, meaning that more voters cast ballots to elect the candidate that ultimately did not win the election.

Types of Elections

General Election: Political candidates are directly elected to their offices.

- **When does it happen?**

Every four years, the first tuesday after the first Monday in November

- **Who is on the Ballot?**

President, Vice President, U.S senate and House of Representatives, Governor; Lieutenant Governor: Secretary of State; Attorney General; State Treasurer; State Controller; State Senate, Assembly members; State Board of Education members; State Judges, Auditor; Clerk; Commissioner; District Attorney; Sheriff; Treasurer; Judges; County Representatives, Mayor; City Manager; Judges; Council members; School Board members; etc. Ballot Measures and Proposed Legislation.

Midterm Elections: Used to elect federal, state and local offices in the years when the Presidential seat is not up for election. The next midterm elections will take place in 2022.

- **When does it happen?**

Every four years in the two years before/after a General Election. Who is on the Ballot? : Federal: U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, State Offices: Governor; Lieutenant Governor. Municipal Offices: Mayor

Primary Election: Determines the candidate for each political primary prior to the General Election.

- **When does it happen?**

The process typically starts in late January or early February. Who is on the Ballot? Candidates for any political office, including house of representatives, US Senate, State Assembly, County Commission, and School Board.

Types of Elections

Caucuses: A scheduled event set up by the state party officials for members who are a part of a specific political party. Members who attend the caucus event pick presidential candidates to be the represented candidate for the party convention.

- **When does it happen?**

During the primary of the general election.

- **Who or what are we voting for?**

The selected candidates will be represented at the party's national convention.



The Importance of Participation - Why Vote?

- Electoral results are influenced by voting, as many states have a “winner takes all” system where the popular vote determines the state’s electoral votes.
- Voting is an opportunity for people to have influence and power over their government, shaping the policies they wish to have and determine the state/nation’s future direction.
- Voting enforces the advocacy of important policies regarding taxes, healthcare, social security, safety, etc.
- Voting allows us to vote for other elected officials besides the president including:
 - Members of Congress who vote on legislation before they can be passed on to the President to be signed into law. Congressional elections also determine what party will hold the majority for the next two years.
 - State officials including governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, and attorney general. Governors implement state laws, approve state budgets, and can veto different legislative measures.
 - Local officials including mayors, city council members, and county commissioners, making up a legislative body that has jurisdiction over city, town, county, or state levels. Mayors oversee the main departments of a city including education and police and fire departments. City council members review annual budgets, establish tax rates, pass local ordinances, and regulate public health and safety among other things. County commissioners assist in planning and zoning issues, parks and recreation issues, as well as issues associated with welfare.

The Importance of Participation - Why Vote?

- The elected officials we vote for determine policies that affect citizens including:
 - Education issues, including what students learn in school, standardized testing, and school budgets
 - Management of safety net programs including Medicare and Medicaid, and Social Security
 - Tax levels and how they are spread across states, and whether they will be made higher or lower
 - Election policy including but not limited to voter ID laws and redrawing Congressional districts
- State ballot measures can also be voted on, which can include issues like:
 - Minimum wage
 - The death penalty
 - Gun control
 - Bilingual education
 - Tobacco taxes



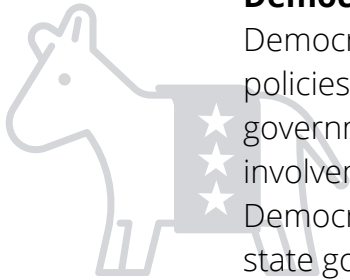
What are political parties?

A political party is an organized group of like-minded people who work together to elect individuals into public office based on their values related to government policies. In the United States, there is a dominant two-party system where the major political parties are Democrats and Republicans. There are also lesser-known third parties such as the Libertarian Party or the Green Party; however, candidates in these parties tend not to dominate in major elections like the Presidential election. When citizens register to vote, they may choose to register to a specific party of their choice, which also allows them to vote in the primaries for their party's candidate. However, for those who do not feel a strong tie to one political party, they can register as "Non-partisan" in Nevada, meaning they are not fully committed to one party.



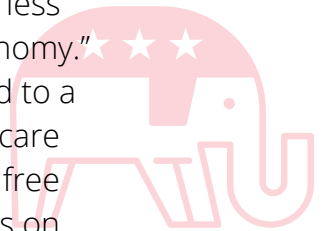
Types of Political Parties

Below lists general explanations for each party's values



Democratic Party (D): As described by [Britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com), "The Democratic Party is generally associated with more progressive policies. It supports social and economic equality, favoring greater government intervention in the economy but opposing government involvement in the private noneconomic affairs of citizens." Democrats value a strong federal government as opposed to strong state governments. Some political issues that Democrats care about include: limiting excessive corporate profit, supporting economic equitable ways, social programs, taxing the wealthy higher rates, increasing minimum wage, public healthcare, renewable energy and civil rights.

Republican Party (R): As described by [History.com](https://www.history.com), "GOP is generally socially conservative, and favors smaller government, less regulation, lower taxes and less federal intervention in the economy." Republicans believe in a stronger state government as opposed to a strong federal government. Some political issues Republicans care about include: the right to bear arms, support for lower taxes, free market capitalism, deregulation of corporations and restrictions on labor unions.

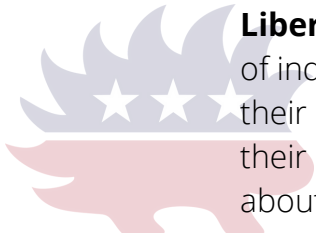


Green Party (GPUS): The Green Party believes in grassroots democracy. They attribute themselves as connected to American social movements. Their Four Pillars are: Peace and Non-Violence, Ecological Wisdom, Grassroots Democracy and Social Justice. To learn more about the Green Party, [check out their website here](https://www.gpus.org).



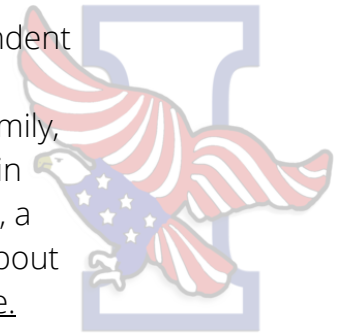
Types of Political Parties (Cont.)

Below lists general explanations for each party's values

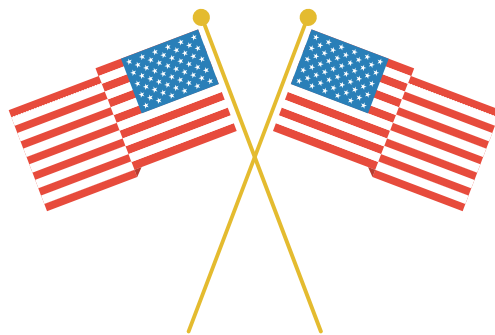


Libertarian Party (LP): The Libertarian Party focuses on the rights of individuals and each person's right to have sole authority over their lives. They strongly oppose any government interference with their personal life, family life and business activities. To learn more about the Libertarian Party, check out their [website here](#).

American Independent Party (AIP): The American Independent Party is a far-right political party with values based on the Constitution. They have strong traditional values, regarding family, patriotism and government. For example, supporters believe in marriage between a man and a woman, pro-life abortion laws, a general "freedom from liberalism" and more. To learn more about the American Independent Party, check out their [website here](#).



For more information on what policies different political parties support, [check out this study by Pew Research Center](#).



The Implications of Voting Third Party

Although there is nothing wrong with aligning with the values of third parties, voting for third-party candidates in the general election ultimately leads to nowhere. During the general election, it is mainly Democrats and Republicans fighting for seats in public offices. Because the two-party system in the U.S. is so dominant, there is hardly any room for third-party candidates to win in the general election. The majority of votes are either in favor of Democrats or Republicans, meaning that it's rare for a third party to win. In fact, in all of American history, no third-party candidate has ever won the presidency, according to the New York Times. In this upcoming presidential election, refrain from voting for third-party candidates. Instead, vote for the Democratic or Republican candidate that best aligns with your values because it will be a battle between those parties. With that being said, it is still possible for third-party candidates to win in other elections like for Congress or local offices. For example, Senator Bernie Sanders, D-VT, was elected as an independent candidate, not identifying with either the Democratic or Republican party.

What Are Your Rights As A Voter In Nevada?

Qualifications to Register to Vote in Nevada

1. Be a citizen of the United States
2. Be 18 years or older by time the election day arrives
3. At least lived in Nevada for 30 days, lived in your precinct 10 days before the election
4. Currently not having illicit contact with the criminal justice system.

Online Voter Registration In Nevada

1. Go to <https://www.registertovotenv.gov/>
2. To register to vote online, you will need a Nevada's Driver's License or Nevada ID. If you do not have a Nevada drivers license or ID, you will need to register to vote through mail
3. You can register to vote online up until Thursday October 29, 2020

Register to Vote through Mail in Nevada

1. You can register to vote using a mail-in registration form, which can be found at <https://www.nvsos.gov/sosvoterregform/>
2. Once you have the form, you would then need to answer the eligibility questions.
3. Enter your personal information in the spaces provided and select 'Generate Voter Registration Form.'
4. Generate Voter Registration Form. Then print your form out and sign it.
5. Lastly, mail the form to the county clerk or registrar of voters in your county.

What Are Your Rights As A Voter In Nevada?

Additional resource to register to vote through mail using UNLV Turbovote:

1. You can register to vote, sign up to receive election reminders, get help with voter registration and voting by mail using this link: [Unlv.turbovote.org](https://unlv.turbovote.org)
2. Click 'Get started' and fill out the name on your state-issued ID.
3. Select how you prefer to receive your election information and fill out the section. Either via text message, email or both.
4. Select if you are registered to vote or if you can't vote.
5. Select where you want to register to vote. All on campus UNLV living and UDistrict apartments are available to choose from.
6. You need a Nevada driver's license or Nevada ID card to use Nevada's online voter registration system. If you don't have a Nevada ID card to use you can still register by mail or by paper. Select which one you prefer.
7. Follow and fill out the remaining steps on how to get your voter registration form and information on the next election date as well as information on how you will be able to vote.
8. All on campus mailing addresses are included and for anyone living off campus, they should double check their address when they put it in.



What Are Your Rights As A Voter In Nevada?

Voting Procedure:

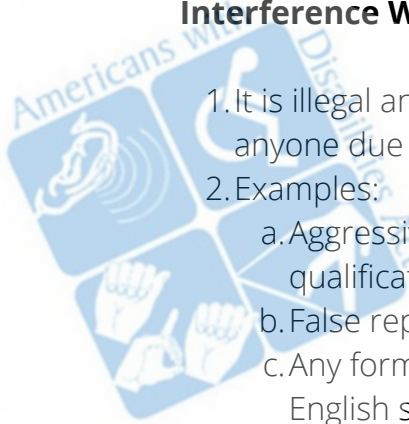
1. If you cannot vote in-person on an Election Day, you will still be able to vote early or vote by an absentee ballot through mail (Some states allow absentee voting, while others have different requirements).
2. If you are in line waiting to vote and the polls close, you are still able to stay in line and wait to vote.
3. You can ask for a new ballot if you make a mistake on the first one.
4. If the machines are down at the polling station, you can ask for a paper ballot instead.
5. If a poll worker says your name isn't on the registered voters list, you are still entitled to a provisional ballot (Election officials will investigate whether you are qualified to vote and registered after Election Day; if you're qualified and registered, your provisional ballot will be counted).

Voting Procedure for Nevada 2020

1. Nevada residents will be mailed their ballots automatically (for Clark County voters this will happen in early October, date still tbd but available on the secretary of state's website)
2. If voting in person, voters in person will have to either a) bring their mail ballot to the polling place and void it with the poll worker or b) sign a document stating they are not using their mail ballot and are only voting in person to avoid folx doubling up – this also aligns with the content around federal crimes to vote twice

What Are Your Rights As A Voter In Nevada?

Interference With Your Right to Vote

- 
1. It is illegal and a federal crime to intimidate, threaten, or force anyone due to purposes of trying to interfere with their right to vote.
 2. Examples:
 - a. Aggressively questioning voters (citizenship, criminal records, qualifications).
 - b. False representation of oneself
 - c. Any form of harassment, particularly harassment towards non-English speaking and voters of color.

Voters With a Disability

1. All polling stations for federal elections must be accessible to older adults and voters with disabilities, under federal law.
2. Curbside voting is not enough at polling stations to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements.
3. Polling stations must have at least one voting system that lets voters with disabilities vote privately and independently during federal elections.
4. Election officials & poll workers must make accommodations as needed to help you vote.
5. Voters with a mental disability can not be turned away at the polls because a poll worker may think they're not 'qualified' to vote.



What Barriers Do Voters Experience?

According to the [American Civil Liberties Union \(ACLU\)](#), some widespread methods of voter suppression include voter ID laws, voter registration restrictions, voter purges, felony disenfranchisement and gerrymandering.

Voter ID laws impact over 21 million U.S. citizens who do not have government-issued identification. Whether this is limited by lack of access, the cost, or difficulty in obtaining documents required to receive an ID, these laws pose barriers to individuals with disabilities, the elderly, people living in rural areas, and people with lower incomes. [The United States Government Accountability Office \(2014\)](#) found that strict voter ID laws decrease voter turnout by 2-3 percent. Additionally, minority voters disproportionately lack government-issued ID with up to 25% of African American citizens lacking this ID compared to only 8% of white Americans lacking this identification. To date, [36 states](#) (except for one with a temporary injunction) require voters to show ID while the remaining 14 states use other methods to verify voter identity. According to the [National Conference of State Legislatures](#), more than half of the states enacting voter ID laws have had to face legal challenges. For those who do not have ID at the time of voting but still wish to vote, a provisional ballot can be requested. Provisional ballots can be used when there is some question about a person's eligibility to vote. For most states, appropriate ID must be provided within a certain time frame in order for a vote to be counted, although this process can give an individual more time if needed to gather information required to obtain an ID. More information regarding provisional ballots and policies associated with each state can be found through the [National Conference of State Legislatures](#). Since 2010, 25 states have implemented new voter registration restrictions that have either required strict photo IDs, made registering to vote harder, or made voting early or as an absentee even harder. Restrictions may include the requirement of documents proving citizenship and limited time windows to register to vote among other things. These restrictions vary across states.

What Barriers Do Voters Experience?

Voting Barriers & Voter Suppression?

Let's start a conversation



21 million Americans do not have government issued IDs required to vote.



Between 2014 and 2016 at least 16 million Americans were eliminated by voting purges.



6 million Americans lost their right to vote due to a criminal record of felony convictions.

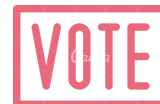


In 2014 more than 24,000 transgender voters were affected by voter ID laws using gender markers.



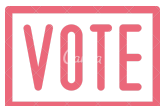
During midterm elections in 2018 about 4,000 absentee ballots were discounted for faulty voting signatures in two states.

Voter purges: States regularly attempt to purge voter lists of ineligible voters or duplicate registration records, but the lists that states use as the basis for purging are often riddled with errors. In an attempt to keep voting rolls up to date states can remove the names of eligible voters by mistake. Voter purges have increased in more recent years, with recent studies finding that nearly 16 million voters have been purged from 2014 to 2016. Additionally, jurisdictions with histories of racial discrimination had significantly higher purge rates than other jurisdictions. Poorly monitored purges incorrectly disenfranchise legitimate voters, leading to delays and confusion regarding voting.

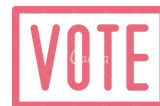


What Barriers Do Voters Experience?

Gerrymandering: is the process by which states are able to redraw district lines every 10 years, based on population data that is gathered through the census. This process can be used to manipulate voting boundaries to favor one party of another, affecting the outcome of elections. To fight against gerrymandering you should: learn how redistricting works, learn what the redistricting laws in your state are, learn about policies, and to push for reform in your state. Additional resources and information regarding how gerrymandering occurs can be found from [Indivisible](#).



Gender markers: that are incorrect can cause problems for transgender people during a variety of activities, including voting. In some states, with strict photo ID laws, transgender voters who have transitioned and do not have updated ID will be required to present an ID at the polls that does not accurately reflect their gender, meaning the ID contains an incorrect name, incorrect gender marker, or both. In this case, poll workers or election officials may decide that the ID presented does not match the voter, which could result in that voter being required to vote using a provisional ballot. The UCLA Williams Institute says that unless the voter can produce an acceptable ID within the specified time frame after the election (within three to five days in most strict photo ID states), their vote may not be counted in the election.



What Barriers Do Voters Experience?



Many homeless and at risk youth do not vote because of a lack of a permanent address.

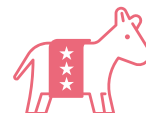


Millions of American voters are affected by gerrymandering or the re-drawing of state lines from census collected data.

Let's stop voter suppression

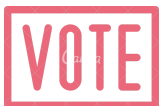


Felony disenfranchisement: laws vary by state in severity and may remove the right to vote from those with past criminal convictions. Six million Americans have lost their right to vote due to previous felony convictions. In only two states, felons never lose their right to vote, even while incarcerated. In Nevada, as of July 1, 2019, any Nevada resident convicted of a felony is “immediately restored the right to vote upon the individual’s release from prison.” Reforms to address felony disenfranchisement are key in restoring the right to vote to those with past convictions. Speaking to local governors, and being educated about candidates' stance on felony disenfranchisement are imperative to ensuring all citizens are granted their right to vote. A template that can be used to reach out to candidates for public office in regards to fighting against felony disenfranchisement can be found from the American Friends Service Committee.

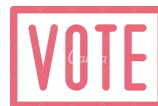


What Barriers Do Voters Experience?

Signature match laws: are disproportionately impacting voters on the margins. Rarely do signatures come under scrutiny. Yet, a number of states are denying people the right to vote because the signature on their absentee ballot – and sometimes even on their application for a ballot itself– doesn't exactly match their signature on the voter registration rolls. And in many cases, the state does not even tell the affected voter that their ballot has been rejected. Ballots being rejected because of a perceived signature mismatch heavily affects voters already at the margins (people with disabilities, trans and gender-nonconforming people, women, people for whom English is a second language, and military personnel). Some states have a process in statute for voters to "cure" these mistakes in time for the ballot to be counted.



Providing an address is often a big concern for students, homeless individuals, incarcerated individuals, and indigenous groups. In some states, voters are not required to provide a permanent address – or any address. They can simply list a landmark, such as an intersection. In Nevada, students may choose to register using their current campus home address. Keep in mind that students may register and vote in only one county/state per election. If you are a student living out of state or outside your voting precinct, it may not be possible for you to get to the polls on Election Day. The best option is to request to vote by mail or absentee ballot. Also, in only two states, Maine and Vermont, all prisoners are eligible to vote. However, some prisoners in Mississippi, Alaska, and Alabama can vote while incarcerated, depending on their convictions. Still, prisoners in 48 states lose the right to vote while incarcerated. Roughly 15 states automatically restore voting rights upon release, but several states such as Alabama and Mississippi ban bar people from voting for life for some crimes.



Voting Barriers in the Latinx Community



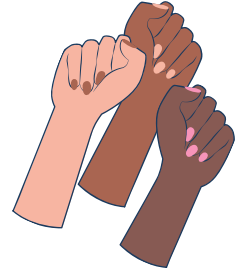
- Voter suppression and barriers to registration have discouraged Latinx voter turnout in recent elections.
- According to the Naleo Educational Fund, citizen verification procedures disproportionately impact Latinx voters.
- Some states have begun to require voters to show citizen documentation in order to become registered to vote (Other states have begun to verify citizenship status after processing registration applications.)
- There are nearly 26 million people in the U.S. with limited English proficiency who face challenges when trying to register to vote, and cast their ballot.
- Various studies and surveys have found that certain jurisdictions and counties fail to provide the necessary assistance at polling places to enable residents to vote, despite having policies such as the Voting Rights Act
- Many states have “English-only” ballots and forms, limiting the ability for the 1 in 3 Latinos who struggle “speaking English very well” from being able to vote.
- Voting by mail poses an even larger challenge, as linguistically accessible voting materials are more readily available at polling places, rather than through mail-in or provisional ballots.



Overcoming Voting Barriers in the Latinx Community

- The Election Assistance Commission (EAC)
 - Offers multiple federal, state, and local jurisdiction [resources](#).
 - Studies and promotes accessibility in voting, registration, polling places and voting equipment.
 - Has developed Glossaries of Election Terminology, Voter's Guides to Federal Elections and the National Mail Voter Registration Form.
- The EAC's [Glossary of Election Terminology](#) and [Glossary of Terms Database](#) are both available in six languages: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.
- [The Voter's Guide to Federal Elections](#) is available in eleven languages. In addition to the basics of ballot-casting, The Voter's Guide to Federal Elections also includes information on eligibility and early voting, as well as the registration and voting process for military and civilians living abroad, and polling place services that make voting more accessible.
- EAC has also translated the [National Mail Voter Registration form](#) into 15 languages. These resources are important in helping election officials provide translated voting materials at a lower cost.





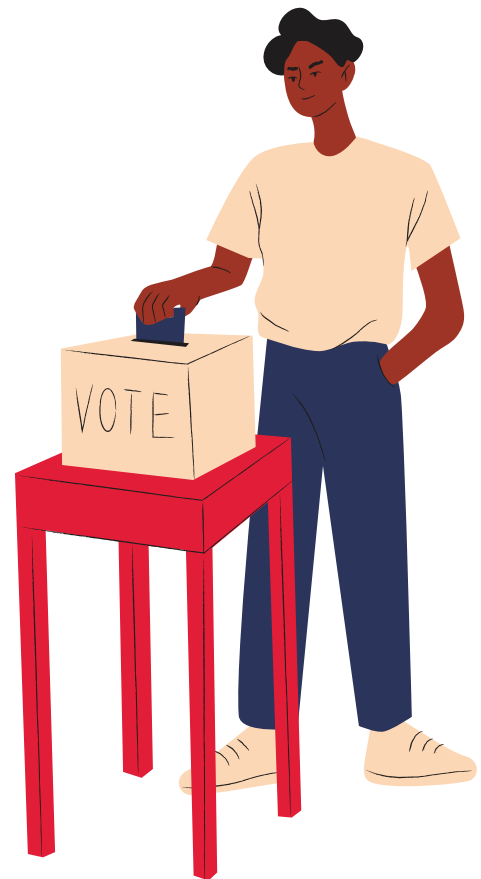
Voting Barriers in the Black Community

- New voter registration qualifications implemented by Southern states in the late 1800s has contributed to detrimental voting barriers in the Black community today.
- Voter purges by election officials systematically disenfranchise certain communities through these actions that impact voters in the state. Certain counties purge votes on the basis of voting frequency which means that some voices are not heard because new voter registration options are unavailable.
- Other barriers that impact the Black community have a history in early white supremacist attempts to advance explicitly racially discriminatory policies.
 - Intimidation and violence are threats that have been historically present in voting for the Black community.
- Felony disenfranchisement laws continue to this day and have had substantial impacts in limiting the voice of these affected voters in political elections from these laws, along with other deleterious policies.
- The political power of Black communities impacted by felony disenfranchisement laws is over one third the population or 2.2 million voters from Black communities are affected by these disenfranchisement laws each year. This means that on a national-level: 1 in every 13 Black voters cannot vote because of a felony conviction, whereas 1 in 56 non-Black voters are disenfranchised as a result of a felony conviction. Some states including Florida, Kentucky, and Virginia have reported that more than 1 in 5 Black voters are excluded because of these laws.
- In 2013, the Supreme Court struck down a provision of the Voting Rights act, ruling that it was unconstitutional to require states with histories of voter discrimination to get federal approval before altering election laws
 - States were able to pass new laws further restricting voting including: the requirement to show a photo ID to vote, reducing polling places, and limiting early voting



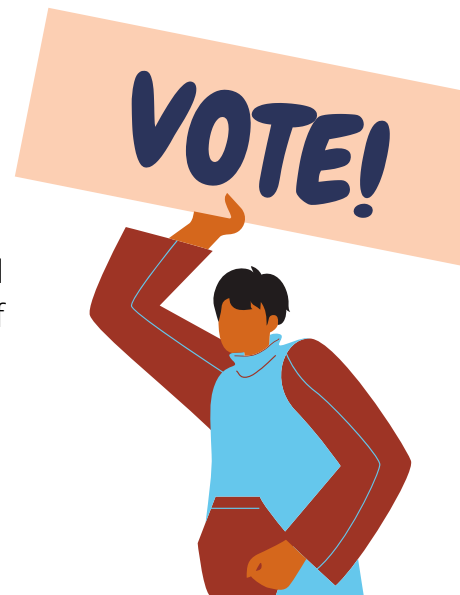
Overcoming Voting Barriers in the Black Community

- Since voting barriers of the black community are rooted in systematic restrictions and laws served to unfairly target the voter engagement of African Americans, it is important to challenge the institutional policies in order to overcome these barriers.
- It is important to take a stand against voter ID laws. This law requires voters to show their IDs and sign a document indicating their identity, resulting in black voters more likely to lack accepted IDs compared to their white counterparts.
- Voter turnout in the black community is also impacted due to unnecessary poll closures. Find and keep updated on information regarding polling locations throughout the nation in order to successfully vote in your state.
- Voter purges (available in 30 states) should also be acknowledged and spoken up against, as they affect African American and low-income voters the hardest. 2020 voter guides and state ballot-measures are available in order to gain more information on voting policies and the availability of voting.



Voting Barriers in the APIME Community

- Asian American voters have reasonably high turnouts in most elections outside the state of Nevada. However, they continue to confront barriers like many other members of the APIME community on election day.
- Asian American voters in Nevada have the lowest turnout of any other racial group. Some forms of discrimination and barriers encountered include prejudicial treatment at polling places, including improper requests for identification, inadequate language assistance, no provisional ballots, being sent to multiple incorrect poll sites, and discrimination against American Muslim women wearing hijabs or niqabs.
- Furthermore, several election officials in the past have deliberately participated in disqualifying absentee ballots belonging to people with “Middle-Eastern sounding” names.
- A major barrier that Middle Eastern and Indian voters face has to deal with being severely undocumented on the census. This means that voting materials are not properly provided to Arabic and Hindi speaking voters alike in some state elections.
- Keep in mind that these are only a few languages representative of what is omitted by the census for these voting populations, identifying as Middle Eastern and Indian here in the United States.
- Other forms of voting suppression include submitting timely applications for absentee ballots or mail-in ballots to election officials and never receiving these ballots to vote in the upcoming election.
- Another factor that affects the voting process for APIME voters in general, involves the review and removal of duplicate names, the names of deceased individuals, or those with standing felony convictions during arbitrary voter roll purges by election officials.
- By far one of the greatest barriers to Asian American and APIME voters is language access because many of these voters are limited English proficient (LEP). In some of these communities, over 50% of voters rely on some form of language assistance to vote.



Voting Barriers in the APIME Community

- Resources are available to ensure that counties and cities, including Clark County provide: written and oral assistance in certain Asian languages as well as some other languages, see [Advancing Justice - LA](#). They advocate for voter rights and protections with the Voting Rights Project because some cities do not provide these resources, even though they are required by laws such as Section 203 of the federal [Voting Rights Act](#).
- Keeping in mind that these resources are here to overcome the barrier of language access, one other additional barrier includes being familiar and prepared for language assistance in both state and local elections.
- Some state election officials require that interpreters may only be either a close family member or registered voter in the same precinct, although these regulations tend to vary on a state to state basis.
- This further illuminates another underlying problem with voter suppression as a result of the overt, deleterious absence of [voter education](#) in these communities.
- Many members of the APIME community that have to take civic tests before becoming American citizens (i.e., providing the right to vote) are not offered comprehensive education about voting and the electoral process.



Overcoming Voting Barriers in APIME Community

- Voting barriers in the APIME community are a result of systemic restrictions on language access and institutional laws that do not equally represent the rights of all voters.
 - Voters in the APIME community should seek to overcome or challenge these barriers when the electoral process does not represent their voice.
 - Some ways that a voter in the APIME community can overcome the barrier of language access is to visit a public library or anywhere for internet access, since Clark county and most states are required to provide language assistance to voters.
 - This is not always the case as a result of systemic barriers and the inadequate training for state government workers or election officials. If the state does not provide you with much information, then try calling a hotline number like the [APIA Voter Hotline](#). If you continue to experience other difficulties with the polling site due to the accompaniment of an interpreter, then please call a legal provider in your state or try the [The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund](#).
 - These lawyers are tasked with defending your voting rights even when unjust policies interfere with your right to vote.
-
- You can also visit Clark county's Regional Justice Center as well for assistance. Always make sure to review your state's policies at polling places beforehand, if you plan to be accompanied by an interpreter. If you cannot find these policies on the state website or if the state refuses to answer your questions, then please ask the interpreter for assistance. These questions can also be answered by the hotline that you call as well.
 - Other resources that you can try to contact in order to make a difference in your state's electoral process are the state Senator's office in your county. You can always call the Senator's office to make any grievances that you may have experienced during your voting process heard.



Overcoming Voting Barriers in APIME Community

- The Senator may not belong to the party that you support or identify with as a voter, however they are required by state legislation to abide by listening to all concerns of the state or county that they represent as elected officials.
- You may need to bring an interpreter in to speak on your behalf, if you need to meet in person. This can happen if their representatives were unable to translate your concerns over the phone. Most state Senator offices do find translators and may call you back, so an in-person appointment might not be necessary.
- Other ways that you can advocate for better voting rights is to advocate for Congress to pass a restored Voting Rights Act with the Senate.
- Another thing to advocate for is that state legislators need to provide more funding to polling localities to administer their elections. Most of these kinds of voting requests can easily be made at the Senator's office in your county on a monthly basis. It does not have to wait until after another election, any voter can protest or raise concerns about voter suppression in a state at any time.
- Sometimes the Senator is able to fix the concerns, but it ultimately depends on state funding and the amount of grievances that they hear on a quarterly basis. The Senator's office has to keep it on record.
- If you feel that the government might not be the right resource to trust for advocating these concerns, then that is a valid response. You can always contact some of the organizations listed in the additional resource page for outside, non-government funded agencies that advocate for voter rights. These are just some of the ways that you can move past voter suppression in your community.



Voting Barriers in Indigenous Communities

- Language barriers: due to many states providing “English-only” materials, many indigenous people are unable to vote or access language assistance with voting-related content.
- Lack of representation: there exists a lack of Native American election workers and a lack of cultural/political inclusion for indigenous communities, resulting in indigenous people becoming hesitant or unable to cast a ballot or vote, due to them not being adequately represented.
- Registration to vote: of the 6.8 million Native Americans in the U.S today, 4.7 million are of voting age. However, 1.5 million indigenous people are unregistered and unable to vote.
- Lack of registration opportunities: there has been a denial of voter registration opportunities due to previous convictions and voter purges. There is also failure in providing opportunities at polling places on election day.
- Rejections of tribal ID: Since it is requested of indigenous people to provide official documentation and meet “identification requirements,” tribal identification tends to get rejected and the nitpicking of IDs serves to restrict indigenous communities from participating in elections.
- Technological barriers: there is unequal access to online registration because of the unavailability of the internet and technology.
- Housing and addresses: multiple indigenous communities suffer from homelessness, housing insecurity, or might have untraditional mailing addresses. This makes it difficult for one to prove their residency within their state, restricting their ability to vote.
- Physical barriers: geographical isolation, poorly maintained/non-existent roads, and distance from government offices or polling places.



*Road
barriers did
not stop
me.*

I voted.

Overcoming Voting Barriers in Indigenous Communities

- Language barriers could be overcome by the U.S Election Assistance Commission (EAC) where they provide resources and language access related to voting material.
- Multnomah County (Oregon) also provides language access relating to their elections
- In order for more Native Americans to be eligible for voting, it is important to register to vote.
- Registration could be completed online, and technological access such as hotspot zones can be found throughout your state.
- In some states, people are allowed to vote without providing a permanent address. In others, one can provide certain addresses to be able to vote, if they do not reside in a permanent, private or fixed structure.

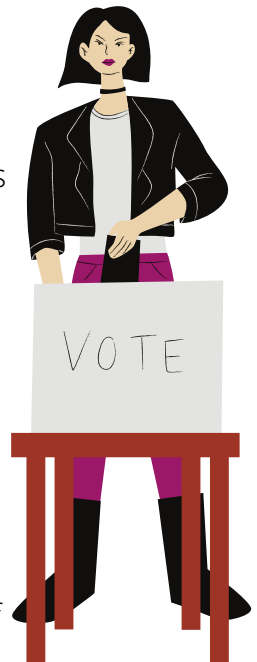


Voting Barriers in LGBTQ Community

- Strict Voter ID Laws
 - With increasingly strict voter ID laws, trans people may face barriers such as obtaining an ID that is accepted or running into misunderstandings/biases when it comes to their gender.
 - Those who may not identify or present themselves as the gender shown on their ID or identification documents may run into problems with registering to vote or voting.
- Factors that make LGBTQ members susceptible to voter suppression schemes aimed to disenfranchise communities likely to vote for Democrats (young people, POC, immigrants, low-income people):
 - People under 30 years of age and people of color are more likely to identify as LGBTQ
 - LGBTQ people are more likely to be part of the disability community than their heterosexual counterparts
 - Low-income people identify with the LGBTQ community at higher rates than people with higher incomes.

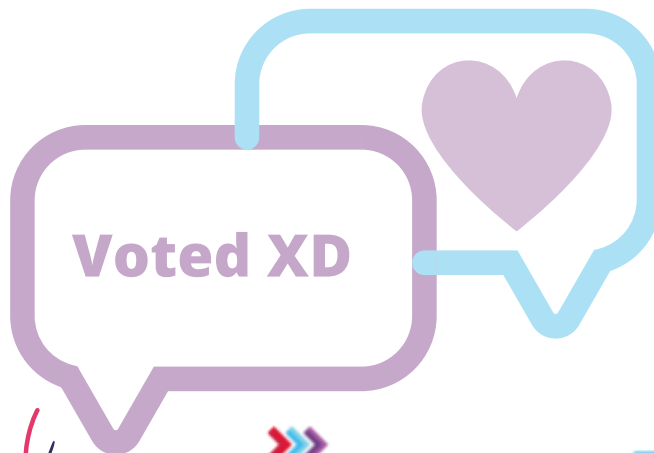
Overcoming Voting Barriers in LGBTQ Community

- Link to "Voting While Trans" checklist to be informed about what your state's laws are, what to expect at the polls, and what to do if your right to vote is challenged
- When your gender does not match the gender on your voter ID or voter registration:
 - Send an information sheet to county election offices that can be used as part of training and make sure that you are fully aware of all the voter ID requirements your state may have.
- If the name on your ID does not match the name on your voter registration:
 - Make sure to be fully aware of all voter ID requirements your state may have.
 - If you legally changed your name since you last registered to vote, make sure voter registration is updated accordingly prior to the registration deadline in your state.
 - If your name change was completed after the voter registration deadline, check state guidelines, some states allow voters to show proof of legal name change at the polls in addition to their ID



Overcoming Voting Barriers in LGBTQ Community

- If you are experiencing homelessness or do not have a stable address:
 - Homeless people in all states can register to vote & designate their place of residence as a street corner, park, shelter, or any location where they usually spend the night. (Not required to live in “traditional dwelling” to be able to register to vote.)
 - Not all states require a mailing address in order to register to vote. Of the states that do, some states allow PO boxes or places like shelters, churches, and advocacy centers to be used as mailing addresses for voter registration.
- If a poll worker denies you access to a regular ballot, you have the right to request a provisional ballot. If you end up casting a provisional ballot, be sure to follow up with your local elections office about the status of your ballot and what you need to do to ensure it is counted.
- If you feel intimidated or are encountering resistance, reach out to the DNC for help. Call us on our Voter Hotline at 1-833-DEM-VOTE (1-833-336-8683).



How can I help?

Additional Voting Resources

If you need to report voting barriers, here are some resources to keep in mind:

General Voting Resources for Nevada

- [Nevada Voter Registration and Updates of Existing Registration](#)
- [Early Voting Locations](#)
- [Mail Ballot Drop Off Locations](#)

APIME Community

- [The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund](#)
- [2020 State Facesheet AAPI of Nevada](#)
- [Asian-American Groups Tackle Language Barriers to Get Out Vote](#)

Black Community

- [ACLU - Fighting Voter Suppression](#)
- [We Vote We Count](#)

LGBTQIA+

- <https://transformthevote.org/votinghttps://transformthevote.org/votinghttps://transformthevote.org/voting>

Latinx Community

- It is against federal law to use intimidation to pressure someone into not voting. If you are being harassed, you can report it to the election protection hotline by calling 1-866-OUR-VOTE or 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA

If you need access to voting rights tools, here are some valuable resources below:

APIME Community

- [The Voting Rights Project](#)
- [APIA Voter Hotline](#)

Black Community

- [Black Voters Matter](#)
- [Black Lives Matter](#)

Indigenous Community

- [Every Native Vote Counts](#)

Latinx Community

- [Voto Latino](#)
- [Latino Community Foundation](#)
- [Latino Community Foundation Voting Guide](#)



If you are interested in voter education, here are some useful articles:

APIME Community

- [Cultural Differences, Lack Of Resources Impede Asian-American Voter Outreach](#)
- [Strengthening the Asian American Electorate](#)
- [EAC Releases New Resources Supporting Language Accessibility in Elections](#)
- [Muslim group asks for probe into potential voter suppression](#)

Black Community

- [Black Voters Continue to Face Voter Suppression 155 Years After Juneteenth](#)
- [Racial Equality Tools](#)
- [Voting Rights for African Americans](#)

Indigenous Community

- <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/elections/right-to-vote/voting-rights-for-native-americans/>

LGBTQIA+ Community

- [https://transformthevote.org/votinghttps://transformthevote.org/votinghttps://transformthevote.org/voting](https://transformthevote.org/voting)
- <https://www.demos.org/blog/voting-rights-lgbtq-issue>
- <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/06/26/trans-voters-will-be-disenfranchised-2020-unless-we-take-action#>
- <https://www.glaad.org/blog/trans-people-are-facing-barriers-polls-heres-what-do-overcome-them>
- <https://medium.com/transequalitynow/7-easy-ways-you-can-transform-the-vote-this-year-4df1b844038a>
- <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/the-2020-lgbt-vote/>
- <https://www.thetaskforce.org/task-force-launches-queer-the-vote-campaign-to-educate-activate-lgbt-supporters-in-this-critical-election-year/>

If you are interested in learning more about voting barriers, here are some links:

- [11 Barriers to Voting](#)
- [The Voting Rights Alliance - 61 Forms of Voter Suppression](#)
- [https://naleo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Latino Voters at Risk 7.pdf](https://naleo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Latino_Voters_at_Risk_7.pdf)



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