

Young Voter Engagement Guide

Overview

Election Protection (EP) is the nation's largest non-partisan voter protection coalition, working throughout the year to help ensure all eligible American citizens have the opportunity to cast a meaningful ballot and have that vote counted. We combine grassroots field programs with legal rapid response to respond in real time to voters' questions and push for pro-voter advocacy. There are 47 million 18- to 29-year-olds who are eligible to vote in the 2020 election, and 15 million of them have turned 18 since the last presidential election. Below are resources and volunteer opportunities for young voters to learn, organize and mobilize around the November 3, 2020 election.

Ways to Get Involved

- Volunteer with Election Protection
 - Opportunities include:
 - being a [poll monitor](#)
 - for law students, answering voters' questions by being a [hotline](#) volunteer, or creating an on-campus Election Protection field program by emailing volunteer@866ourvote.org
- Volunteer as a poll worker
 - If you are located in:
 - [Arizona](#)/ [Florida](#)/ [Georgia](#)/[Maryland](#)/ [New Mexico](#)/[Ohio](#)/[Pennsylvania](#)/[South Carolina](#)/[Texas](#)
 - All other states click [here](#)
- Host a voter engagement or voter education event
- Submit a #WhyIVote video
 - Get creative and tell your followers why you vote by creating and uploading a 30 second or less video to Twitter, Instagram or TikTok. More information on how to do this below.

Resources

- 866-OUR-VOTE website (866ourvote.org): The official Election Protection Website has a plethora of resources, whether you are looking for state-specific voter information, need materials for your Election Protection program, or want to connect with other organizations in the Election Protection coalition.
- [Voter Engagement and Voter Education Event Planning Guide](#): This document provides event ideas, tools and resources to get your campus prepared and excited to vote!
- [#WhyIVote Video Submission Guidance](#): Here you will find tips and tricks on how to capture your video, what to include and how to be featured on the official 866OURVOTE Twitter & Instagram!
- Our Vote Hotline website (<https://ourvoteline.org/>): The Our Vote Hotline website allows you to easily get connected to state-specific voter information.

Frequently Asked Young Voter Questions

Disclaimer: This guide is designed for informational purposes only. It is not legal advice and is not intended to create an attorney-client relationship. The Election Protection Coalition does not warrant any information contained in this guide, nor does the Coalition suggest that the information in this guide should be used as a basis to pursue legal advice or decision-making.

Note: This FAQ is not exhaustive. Situations or inquiries may arise that are not answered below. In those circumstances, contact 866-OUR-VOTE for assistance.

1. How do I register to vote?

To get registered to vote, you'll need to complete a voter registration application for the state that you currently reside in. If you are enrolled in college away from your typical home address, you can register at either address. The voter registration form can either be completed online or by mailing in a paper form, depending on the state you are registering in. The form collects basic information and needs to be submitted or returned to your local Board of Elections or County Clerk's office on or before the voter registration deadline of your state. Some states allow you to register on Election Day or during Early Voting right before casting your vote. To find your state's voter registration information click [here](#) and select your state.

2. When should I register to vote? Do I have to register more than once?

You should either register to vote, update your registration information, or check your voter registration status in advance of every election you wish to participate in. If you have already registered before, you will want to double check that your registration is correct, and if it is not you will need to fill out a new registration form to correct your information, or go in person to update your address. You need to update your voter registration everytime you change your address.

3. Should I register with my campus address? How will that impact my voting?

Students can register to vote using their campus/university address or their home address (away from campus). This choice is ultimately up to you as a voter, but it is worth considering whether you will be on or away from campus when an election is scheduled. It may be more difficult to cast a ballot on or away from campus depending on where you will be living in November for the general election or during primaries throughout the rest of the calendar year. Check out this [2020 College Voter Registration Guide](#) from Fair Elections Center and Campus Vote Project for more information.

4. If I registered to vote using my campus/university address, how can I vote if I'm not living on or near campus?

Students who registered to vote using their campus/university address have two options if they are unable to vote in-person at their local campus or off-campus polling place: (1) re-register to vote at their home address; or (2) request and subsequently mail-in an absentee or mail-in ballot from the election authority corresponding

with their campus address. Check out this [2020 College Voter Registration Guide](#) from Fair Elections Center and Campus Vote Project for more information.

5. I think I'm registered to vote, what do I do now?

If you believe that you are already registered to vote, you should check your registration status by going to [your local Board of Elections or Secretary of State's website](#) to verify. It is important to double check that your address is up to date and that all the information on your voter registration record is correct.

6. What's on the ballot in my state? Where can I even look for that?

What is on your ballot will vary depending on the state and county and the election. For the November 3, 2020 election, all ballots will include the candidates for US President and Congress, as well as state and local candidates. For more information on what is on your ballot, please look up your state-specific voter page.

7. Where can I find the deadline for my state to mail in an absentee ballot?

You can find your absentee or mail-in ballot deadlines by going to either your Secretary of State or your county Board of Elections/Clerk's website. We strongly encourage you to return your ballot as early as possible, or if possible to drop off your ballot in person if you are close to the deadline in order to ensure your ballot is counted.

8. Should I trust applications to register or receive a ballot online? What if my absentee ballot gets hacked?

Please use your state-, county-, or city-specific voter website to register to vote or request your absentee or mail-in ballot. Absentee and mail-in ballots are only available in paper form and must be returned by mail or a drop box -- there is no such thing as casting your vote online!

9. How can I help others in my home and school communities register to vote and successfully cast their vote?

There are many ways to get involved. You can host a voter engagement or voter education event at your college or even high school -- most states allow citizens who will be 18 by Election Day to register to vote while they are still 17 or 16. You can also volunteer with Election Protection or as a poll worker -- see above for more info.

10. I'm not a U.S. citizen, but I still care about these issues. Are there ways I can help?

Yes! There are a myriad of ways to get active this election season. Please consider joining 866-OUR-VOTE in becoming a poll monitor. If you are a law student, join us as a legal volunteer to staff our remote hotline that assists voters throughout the country!

HBCU Pull Out Page

"So long as I do not firmly and irrevocably possess the right to vote I do not possess myself. I cannot make up my mind — it is made up for me. I cannot live as a democratic citizen, observing the laws I have helped to enact — I can only submit to the edict of others." - Martin Luther King Jr

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are instrumental in the fight to secure and expand civil rights for African Americans, specifically voting rights. The sole purpose of HBCUs were to provide educational opportunities for African Americans -- a demographic of people who experienced the effects of systemic racism and discrimination in all facets of life. Founded in 1837, The Institute of Colored People (presently Cheyney University of Pennsylvania), the nation's first HBCU, set the precedent for the intersection of student life and political action. Like Cheyney, educational institutions were anchoring a call to action for their students to get involved in the issues that mattered most to them. Students such as Octavius Catto, an activist and scholar, were actively involved in securing civil rights, such as the right to vote, as demonstrated by the passage of the 15th Amendment in 1870, granting African American men the right to vote. However, it wasn't until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that all African Americans were able to formally exercise their right to vote without the interference of unjust institutional barriers.

With an emphasis on political and social action, HBCUs became the epicenter for the founding of organizations that continued to advance civil rights. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated was founded in 1913 on the campus of Howard University, years preceding the historic passage of the 20th Amendment that granted women the right to vote. During the height of the women's suffrage movement, members strategically organized informational meetings and galvanized black women from across the country to get involved. Their participation in the suffrage movement spoke to an unwavering truth: liberation of any kind is deeply connected to the progression of the most marginalized, namely black women.

The nation witnessed the boldness of HBCU students leading up to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Whether it was through the strategic organizing of Freedom Riders in Mississippi; the non-violent sit-ins at segregated lunch counters in Georgia; or the march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, HBCU students did it all. Leaders and organizers demanded institutional change although few lived to see the fruits of their labor. Rep. John Lewis, alumni of Fisk University, led the historic Selma to Montgomery march as a student and later served as the representative of Georgia's 5th Congressional District. Like many others, Rep. Lewis accredited his passion for public service to his work as a student at his HBCU.

In the present day, the work of HBCU students remains vital in the fight to advance voting rights. Protecting the right to vote is one of the most sacred acts of humanity. The work of HBCU students continues to propel us forward and for that, we are immensely grateful.