

# KNOW YOUR VOTING RIGHTS!



On **November 8, 2016**, the United States will host the first presidential election in 51 years not covered by the full protections of the Voting Rights Act, namely without Section IV of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA). **Thirty-four states** have introduced new restrictive voting laws ranging from truncating early voting days to multiple ID requirements, despite the lack of evidence of voter fraud.

While some federal and circuit courts have already begun to overturn laws deemed unequally suppressive for people of color, poor people, and the elderly, a majority of states in our country continue to resist the ruling of the court in overturning restrictive voting laws and laws on the books that will work to disenfranchise these communities.

## WHAT CAN? YOU DO?

### Engage with Local & State Election Officials

- Know your polling officer, voting precincts and voting hours.
- Meet with your Mayor, Councilperson or Alderman.
- Be aware of the ballot issues in your community.

### Find Avenues for Civic Engagement

- Participate in canvassing and voter registration drives.
- Volunteer at the polls.
- Serve as an election officer.

### Create a Voting Plan

- Confirm that you are eligible to vote several weeks before Election Day.
- Be aware of the hours that polls open and close.
- Know where your polling location is and how you will get there.
- Decide before Election Day whether you will vote in the morning, afternoon or evening, accounting for work, travel, and childcare needs where applicable.
- Offer to carpool or organize with others if you need transportation.
- Research the options for early voting in your area.
- Become acquainted with the candidates and issues on the ballot.
- For more information on facts to know for federal elections, read "14 Facts about Voting Elections" published by the US Election Assistance Commission.

### Know How to Report a Complaint

- Contact state or local election office for information on procedures specific to your locality. Register a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice at (800) 253-3931 or [voting.section@ysdoj.gov](mailto:voting.section@ysdoj.gov)

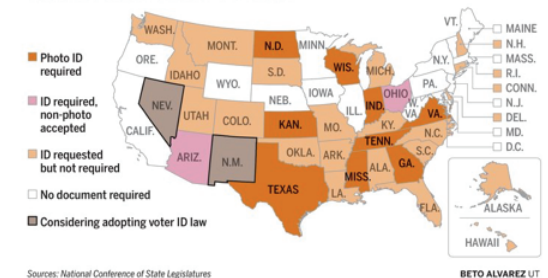
## WHAT IS Voter Suppression?

**Voter Suppression** is a strategy to influence the outcome of an election by discouraging or preventing people from exercising the right to vote. It is present in a variety of ways, such as:

- Truncating early voting days
- Requirements of multiple IDs
- Felon disenfranchisement
- Disinformation about voting procedures

### Voter ID Laws & How They Could Affect You

States with voter ID laws



As of **2016**, **33 states** across the country have enforced some sort of voter identification law. According to multiple studies, the proliferation of these laws raise real concerns for those who believe they are unnecessary and ultimately detrimental to democracy. Critics argue that voter identification laws serve as an effective barrier limiting the legitimate participation of racial and ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups.

# VOTING 101

**Election Day:** Tuesday, November 8, 2016

**Voter Registration:** All states have different voter registration deadlines. Some are a month before the election and others are two weeks before the election. Contact your local board of elections and make sure you are aware of the voter registration deadlines in your state.

**Early Voting:** Any registered voter can vote early (before Election Day). This option is useful for voters who are unable to get to the polls on Election Day. Deadlines for early voting vary. Contact your state board of elections for information about where to go and what is required to vote early. You can also locate this information line by visiting [www.canivote.org](http://www.canivote.org) and selecting "Make your Vote Count: Absentee and Early Voting."

**Absentee Voting:** A registered voter who is unable to be in the precinct or designated polling location in their state on Election Day can still vote using an absentee ballot. This ballot can be mailed to voters and some states allow proxy voting (a voting ballot is submitted by others on your behalf). Eligibility for absentee voting varies by state, visit [www.canivote.org](http://www.canivote.org) and select "Make Your Vote Count: Absentee and Early Voting."

**Provisional Voting:** A voter whose eligibility is in question can cast a provisional ballot. The Help America Vote Act was signed into law in 2002 safeguards this right. Examples of provisional voting include: not updating your voter registration information by the deadline, showing up at the wrong polling location, not being able to provide proper identification.

**Election Day Voting:** If you plan to vote in person Election Day, Tuesday, November 8, 2016, ensure you know the exact location of your polling place. To find your polling place, go to [www.canivote.org](http://www.canivote.org) and click on "Find Your Polling Place."

## FOR MORE...

### Get Engaged & Make A Difference!

The following organizations are dedicated to the inclusion of all people in the areas of voting rights. They provide access to resources and services, and offer state and national voter engagement efforts.

DC Vote  
Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
League of Women Voters  
League of Women Voters Education Fund  
NAACP Legal Defense Fund  
National Election Defense Coalition  
Project Vote  
Rock the Vote  
The American Civil Liberties Union  
The Brennan Center for Justice  
The Fair Elections Network  
The National CAPACD  
The Southern Coalition for Social Justice  
Transformative Justice Coalition  
Voting Rights Alliance  
Voto Latino

### State Voter Registration

To find more information about specific voter registration deadlines in your state, visit your state government website and ask them what to do to get registered to vote or to verify your registration information.

## VOTING RIGHTS TOOLKIT 2016



Preserve, protect, and defend the right  
to vote for all American citizens.

 **Congressional Black Caucus**  
**FOUNDATION**