



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY'S ROLE DURING ELECTIONS

An **InfoPeople** Webinar

August 11, 2020


Presented by **Haley Samuelson & Nate Gass**





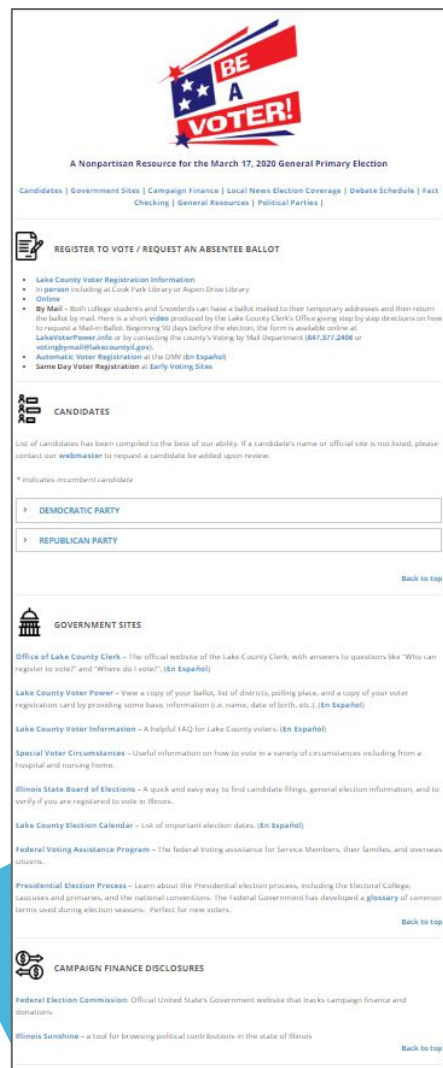
SESSION OBJECTIVES

Be able to...

- ★ Identify your community's voter education needs.
 - ★ Curate and design a helpful voter education resource.
 - ★ Identify other voter groups and initiatives.
- 

HOW WE TACKLED VOTER EDUCATION

We decided the best approach would be an **Online** voter education resource specially curated for our service community - a “One-Stop Shop” for all things related to voting and elections.





DEVELOPING GUIDELINES

- ★ Mission
- ★ Purpose
- ★ Target Users
- ★ Scope
- ★ Content Guidelines
- ★ Style Guide
- ★ Promotion

Be A Voter Guidelines

Mission

To help citizens within the library's service community navigate the voting process from start (registration) to finish (casting their ballot) by:

- Consolidating and curating easy access to information on national and local elections in a non-partisan and timely manner.
- Guiding users to authoritative information they need about public officials and election candidates in order to vote knowingly.
- Instilling confidence in our district residents that they are knowledgeable of the voting process and voting for candidates and issues that represent their values.

Purpose

The "Be A Voter" page is a logical extension of the library's mission and purpose statements to connect our diverse community to resources that educate.

In the United States of America, public libraries are a trusted institution and central to the communities they serve. An [August 2017 Pew Research study](#) reported that most Americans, and especially Millennials, say the library "helps them find trustworthy information, learn new things, and make informed decisions."

About eight-in-ten adults (78%) feel that public libraries help them find information that is trustworthy and reliable and 76% say libraries help them learn new things. Also, 56% believe libraries help them get information that aids with decisions they have to make.

Citizens look to the library and librarians for guidance when seeking reliable information on every facet of their lives (health, parenting, hobbies, technology, pleasure reading, etc.) and voter education is a natural addition directly related to the library's role and function within a community.

The BAV page was created to provide the public with a central place to easily access information, that might otherwise take time to find, about the voting process, their candidates, and to navigate the news landscape.

Target Users

Library district patrons and the communities to which the library offers services.


Scope

Be A Voter will provide information specific to our library district on national, state, and local elections that have been sanctioned and overseen by official governmental. Our service community's official governmental bodies are the Lake County Clerk's Office and the Illinois Board of Elections.



**VOTER EDUCATION IS MORE
IMPORTANT THAN EVER.**

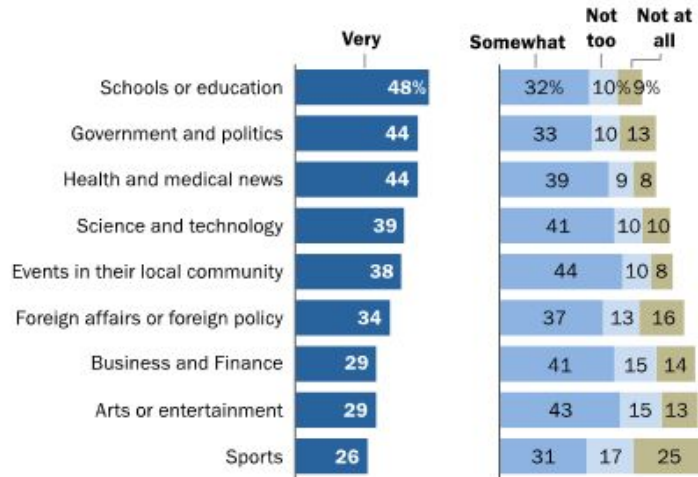
**LIBRARIES AND VOTER EDUCATION
ARE A PERFECT MATCH.**



Americans are interested in *politics* and trust the *library*.

Education, politics and health news top the list of subjects that interest people

% of U.S. adults who are ___ interested in news and information about the following subjects

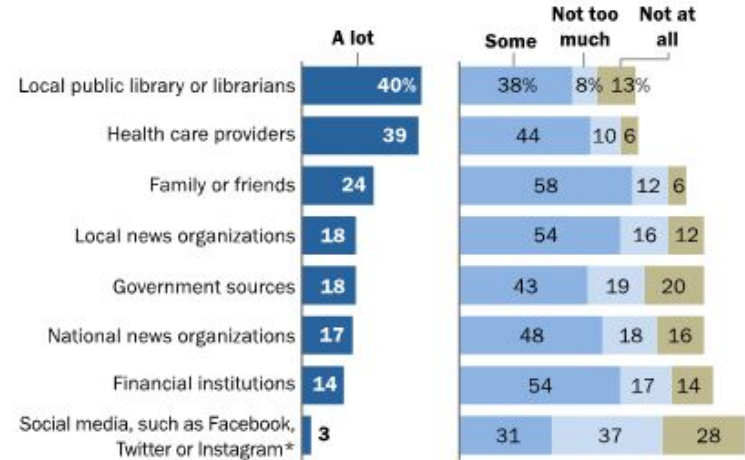


Source: Survey conducted Sept. 29-Nov. 6, 2016.
"How People Approach Facts and Information"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Americans are not fully trusting of information from key sources. Libraries and health providers top the list

% of U.S. adults who trust information from the following sources ...



*Among social media users

Source: Survey conducted Sept. 29-Nov. 6, 2016.
"How People Approach Facts and Information"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



118,537,867*

Whoa! That's a lot of people looking for information!

* McDonald, Michael P. 2018. "2018 November General Election Turnout Rates" *United States Elections Project*. May 30, 2019.





WHY LIBRARIES?

We're Trusted

“About eight-in-ten adults (78%) feel that public libraries help them find information that is trustworthy and reliable and 76% say libraries help them learn new things. Also, 56% believe libraries help them get information that aids with decisions they have to make.”

[Pew Research 2017](#)

Lack of Exhaustive Resources

There are many single subject resources but no nonpartisan exhaustive resources.

Covid-19 Pandemic

Mail in voting

Voter Registration Services

Many states offer voter registration at local libraries.

Voter Education efforts are a natural extension of an existing library service.



Fake News Epidemic

“Americans struggle to determine what news and information sources they should trust and how to discern reliable information online. They worry that fake news is sowing confusion about current events. And many express a desire to get help.”

[Pew Research 2017](#)



MAIL-IN VOTING MISINFORMATION



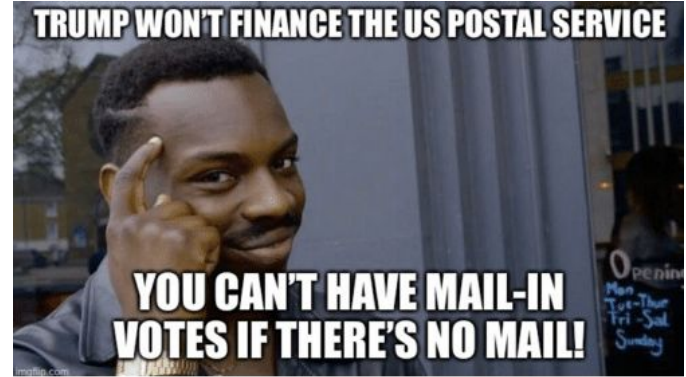
Donald J. Trump ✓
@realDonaldTrump

There is NO WAY (ZERO!) that Mail-In Ballots will be anything less than substantially fraudulent. Mail boxes will be robbed, ballots will be forged & even illegally printed out & fraudulently signed. The Governor of California is sending Ballots to millions of people, anyone.....



Get the facts about mail-in ballots

8:17 AM · May 26, 2020 · Twitter



WHEN POLITICIANS LET YOU GO OUT FOR GROCERIES AND HARDWARE, BUT DEMAND A MAIL-IN-VOTE, YOU CAN BE CERTAIN THEY'RE NOT REALLY CONCERNED WITH KEEPING YOU SAFE FROM A VIRUS.

MAIL-IN VOTING FACT CHECK



It is more likely that an American will be struck by lightning than that they will impersonate another voter at the polls.

-Brennan Center
[Debunking the Voter Fraud Myth](#)

In the recent California primary the bigger risk was not being counted. 102,428 ballots were disqualified. The most common problem was missing ballot deadlines.

- [PBS NewsHour](#)

“The Postal Service has ample capacity to deliver all election mail securely and on-time in accordance with our delivery standards, and we will do so,”

-Postmaster General
[Louis DeJoy](#)



2.

MEETING YOUR COMMUNITY'S VOTER EDUCATION NEEDS



WHERE TO START

Who administers Elections in your state?

Secretary of State

Board of Elections

Other Statewide Elected Official

And your county?

County Clerk

County Auditor

Other Countywide Elected Official

Don't know? Start here: [State Election Centers](#)

What you'll find:

Voter Registration Guidelines

Election Calendar

Sample Ballots

Absentee Ballot Information

Guidelines for Candidates

Election Laws

Information translated into other languages

WHAT INFORMATION DOES YOUR COMMUNITY NEED?

- ★ Educating voters: **date**, time, place of election
- ★ Voter Registration (including verifying registration status)
- ★ Important dates leading up to the election
- ★ Vote By Mail or other Covid-19 impacts especially deadlines
- ★ Government Sites (highlight unique voting circumstances)
- ★ Reliable candidate information (especially offices like judges. Local and State Bar associations have rankings)
- ★ Campaign finance disclosure
- ★ Fact Checking Resources
- ★ Reliable news sources
- ★ Educational resources (basic definitions, etc)



COLLECTING INFORMATION

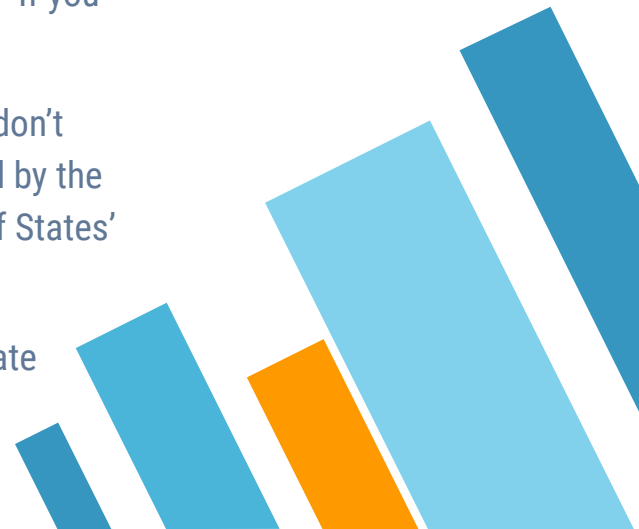
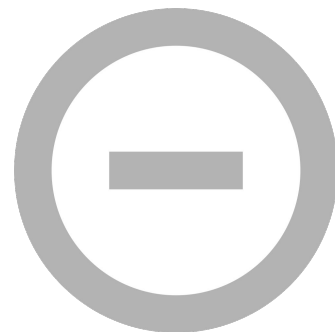


- ★ Determine the main purpose of your site. Don't lose focus.
- ★ Beware of repetitive information.
- ★ Can a site do double duty? (e.g. campaign websites will cover specific topics and highlight local events)
- ★ Who are today's voters? What information will they need to confidently cast their vote? Pay special attention to [Voter ID laws](#) in your state which disproportionately impact BIPOC, low income, and young voters.
- ★ What are questions that come up again and again from your library users? Your resource will help staff too!
- ★ What type of coverage are your local papers providing?
- ★ Link to the page with specific information rather than general site. Especially if the site is particularly dense.



STAYING NEUTRAL

- ★ Our job is to provide sources that educate not try to change minds.
- ★ You know your community and library users: If you live in a deep blue district or a ruby red district your resource can reflect that reality. If you live in a purple district you'll need to tread more lightly.
- ★ The amount of quality sites with varying focus are abundant but don't discount government sites as the information provided is curated by the administrators of elections. (National Association of Secretary of States' #TrustedInfo2020 campaign highlighting election officials.)
- ★ When considering sites be aware of buzz words that subtly indicate political leanings.






Impact of Covid-19 on Elections

- ★ Library messaging and communication methods
- ★ Location of the polls (combined or relocated?)
- ★ Expanded Vote by Mail
 - Deadlines
 - Procedures (How to request, fill out, return, etc.)
 - Eligibility (33 states currently have no excuse absentee ballots)
 - Postal Service changes like hours or delays



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3.

DESIGNING YOUR ONLINE RESOURCE.



WHAT CMS/PLATFORM TO USE?

Can your voter guide be designed on your current website?

- ★ Do you have editing capabilities?
- ★ Is your website mobile-friendly?

Other considerations?

- ★ Budget
- ★ Ease-of-use
- ★ Accessibility (language translation/text resize)
- ★ Is it consistent w/ library branding?



WORDPRESS



Google docs

FINDING A HOME ON THE WEBSITE

The screenshot shows the Memorial Public Library District website. At the top is the library logo and a search bar labeled "SEARCH CATALOG" with an "Advanced Search" link. Below the search bar is a navigation menu with links: ABOUT, EVENTS, BOOKS/MOVIES/MUSIC, eLIBRARY, RESEARCH, TEENS, KIDS, SERVICES, and CONTACT. The main content area features a large "BE A VOTER!" graphic with the text "Find reliable information on the 2018 General Midterm Elections at cooklib.org/be-a-voter". To the right of this graphic is a "QUICK LINKS" section with links: Get a Library Card, Reserve a Study Room, Print From Your Phone/Computer, Fall Ins & Outs Newsletter, and Digital Studios. Below the quick links is an "UPCOMING EVENTS" section with tabs for ALL, ADULTS, TEENS, and KIDS. The "ALL" tab is selected, showing a list of events: Fall Reading Club (birth to grade 6), Teen Zone: Players' Choice Gaming, and Family Fun: Duct Tape Pumpkins!. At the bottom of the page are three small images: "SHELF LIFE", "BE A VOTER!", and "Aspen Drive Library Expansion News".

Memorial Public Library District

SEARCH CATALOG [Advanced Search](#)

ABOUT EVENTS BOOKS/MOVIES/MUSIC eLIBRARY RESEARCH TEENS KIDS SERVICES CONTACT

BE A VOTER!

Find reliable information on the **2018 General Midterm Elections** at cooklib.org/be-a-voter

QUICK LINKS

- Get a Library Card
- Reserve a Study Room
- Print From Your Phone/Computer
- Fall Ins & Outs Newsletter
- Digital Studios

UPCOMING EVENTS

ALL ADULTS TEENS KIDS

Fall Reading Club (birth to grade 6)
When: Monday, October 15, 2018 - All Day Where: Cook Memorial Public Library District - All branches Sign up for...

Teen Zone: Players' Choice Gaming
When: Monday, October 15, 2018 - 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM Where: Aspen Drive Library at Meeting Room A and B We have Ninj...

Family Fun: Duct Tape Pumpkins!
When: Monday, October 15, 2018 - 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Where: Aspen Drive Library at Meeting Room A and B Bring a pum...

[calendar view](#)
[view/cancel your registrations](#)

SHELF LIFE A COOK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT BLOG

BE A VOTER!

Aspen Drive Library Expansion News

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Cook Memorial Public Library District

LOG IN / MY ACCOUNT

Catalog Articles Website

SEARCH CATALOG [Advanced Search](#)

ABOUT EVENTS BOOKS/MOVIES/MUSIC eLIBRARY RESEARCH TEENS KIDS SERVICES CONTACT

Home / Research

Research

Filter by Subject

Government & Law (12)

Government & Law

[Affordable Care Act Registration in Lake County](#)

Be A Voter

Nonpartisan resource guide to the November 6, 2018 midterm general election.

Driving-Tests.org

Practice for the Illinois drivers license, permit, and senior citizens' refresher tests. Also includes motorcycle and CDL practice tests.

Encyclopedia of the American Presidency

Guide to the role of the President. Spans relationship between the executive and other branches of government, court cases, elections, political opponents, scandals, and more.

RESEARCH

GENEALOGY

LOCAL HISTORY

DATABASES FOR KIDS

Featured Database

Driving-Tests.org

Practice for the Illinois drivers license, permit, and senior citizens' refresher tests. Also includes motorcycle and CDL practice tests.

Encyclopedia of the American Presidency

Guide to the role of the President. Spans relationship between the executive and other branches of government, court cases, elections, political opponents, scandals, and more.

BE A VOTER!

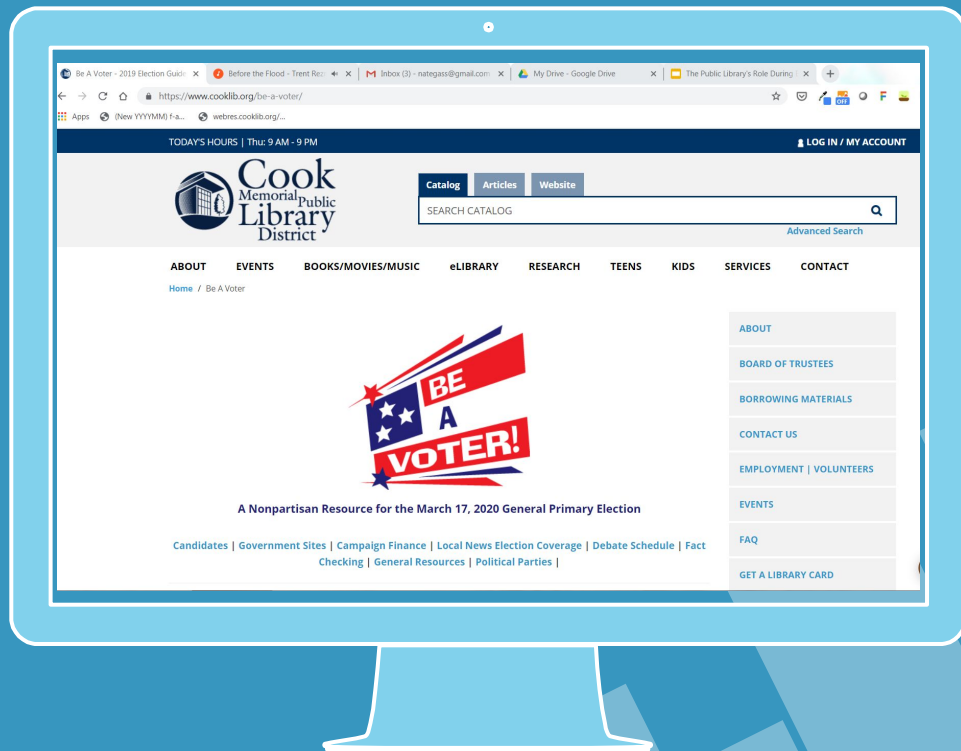
A Nonpartisan Resource for the November 6, 2018 Midterm General Election.

How we organized our resource

Looking for other ways to engage voters? Check out [ALA's Voter Engagement Guide](#)

DESKTOP VERSION

Incorporating the resource into our library's website maintains library branding.



COUNTERING PERCEIVED BIAS

▼ VERNON HILLS

Village Board of Trustees

- [Karimar Brown*](#)
- Michael Marquardt*
- David Oppenheim*
- [Stacey Pristas](#)

Hawthorn School District 73

- [Robin Cleek*](#)
- [George Fievet](#)
- [Joel Finfer](#)
- Victoria Helander-Heiser*
- [Michael Murphy](#)
- [Lenny Nieves](#)
- Sonali Patil*

Community High School District 128

- James Batson*
- Elizabeth Bruckner
- Don Carmichael
- Lisa Hessel*
- [Loubna Kilouine](#)
- [Katherine "Casey" Rooney*](#)

Vernon Hills Park District Commissioner

- Cynthia Kessler*

▼ DEMOCRATIC PARTY

In alphabetical order

Michael Bennet	Campaign Website
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Joe Biden	Campaign Website
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Cory Booker	Campaign Website
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Pete Buttigieg	Campaign Website
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Julian Castro	Campaign Website
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John Delaney	Campaign Website
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Tulsi Gabbard	Campaign Website
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Kirsten Gillibrand	Campaign Website
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Mike Gravel	Campaign Website
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Kamala Harris	Campaign Website
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John Hickenlooper	Campaign Website
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Jay Robert Inslee	Campaign Website
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Amy Klobuchar	Campaign Website
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AFTER THE ELECTION



A Nonpartisan Resource for the November 6, 2018 Midterm General Election

[Government Sites](#) | [Campaign Finance](#) | [Local News Election Coverage](#) | [Fact Checking](#) | [General Resources](#) | [Political Parties](#)



ELECTION RESULTS

[Lake County Clerk's Office](#)

[Chicago Sun-Times](#)

[Chicago Tribune](#)


[Back to top](#)



GOVERNMENT SITES



WHAT ARE OTHER LIBRARIES DOING?


Naperville Public Library


Catalog Website Submit

Events
Books & More
Resources & Services
About Us
My Account

Be A Voter: 2020 Election Guide



Be A Voter: 2020 Election Guide

A Nonpartisan Resource for Voters




General Election: final election for a political office with a limited list of candidates. The candidates in the general election are the people who won their party's primary election. General elections happen at a local, state, and national level. The winner of the general election will serve in that office.

When
How
Where
Sample Ballots
Resources





How
Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
Sunday

Wood River Public Library
ABOUT US
FOIA
RESOURCES
THINGS TO DO
CITY OF W

MY ACCOUNT

Search SHARE catalog for:
GO!
MAKE A PAYMENT
Click here to make a payment online!


BE A VOTER



BE A VOTER!

A Nonpartisan Resource for the Tuesday, November 3, 2020 General Election

General Election: A final election for a political office with a limited



eResources
Technology
Learn
Research
Browse
Attend
Outreach


Voter Information

Home / Research / Voter Information

The Indiana Primary Election was held on June 2, 2020!

Follow [local election results](#) at this *Journal and Courier* page.

Follow [state election results](#) at this *Indianapolis Star* page.



f
@
+
MY ACCOUNT

CATALOG
SITE

YOUR LIBRARY
ESERVICES
PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Library Catalog
Home » eServices » Voter Information


Voter Information

[Vote Early. Vote Often. Vote Smart.](#)
[We Can Help!](#)

- Library Catalog
- Manage Account
- Readers' Advisory
- eLibrary
- Digital Services
- Business & Finance
- Genealogy & Family History
- Health & Medical

[Register to Vote](#) | [Find Your Polling Place](#) | [Cast Your Ballot](#) | [Know Your Rights](#) | [Know the Candidates](#) | [Know the Facts](#) | [Know the Parties](#) | [Know the Results](#)

Below, we've compiled information and resources about how, when, and where to vote. This page is by no means exhaustive. If you have questions, ask a librarian at our Adult Info Desk, call 262-242-2593 x320, or email ref@fwlib.org.





Avon Voter Resource

File Edit View Tools Help

Request edit access

A Nonpartisan Resource for the Tuesday, July 7, 2020 Primary Election

[Voter Registration](#) | [Important Dates](#) | [Candidates/Ballot Measures](#) | [Government Sites](#) | [Campaign Finance Disclosures](#) | [News Coverage of Election](#) | [Debates](#) | [Fact Checking](#) | [General Resources](#) | [Political Parties](#)

Voter Registration

- [Monmouth County Voter Registration Information](#)
- [Check your registration status](#)
- Register by Mail – download this [Voter Registration Form](#) to complete online and print.
 - Registration Forms are also available at Borough Hall and at the Avon Public Library.
- Automatic Voter Registration – Automatic Voter Registration is a bipartisan initiative that establishes electronic voter registration at [multiple New Jersey state agencies](#), including the Division of Motor Vehicles.
- [Restoration of Voting Rights after a felony conviction](#).
- Once you have registered to vote, you can download this [Application for a Vote-by-Mail \(Absentee\) Ballot](#) to print and complete.

[Back to top](#)

Important Dates

June 16, all day	Last day to register to vote by mail to be eligible for the Primary Election.	Add to Calendar
June 30, all day	Last day to request a vote-by-mail (absentee) ballot by mail (must be received by County Clerk by	Add to Calendar



[Check Your Status](#) [Register to Vote](#) [Absentee Ballots](#)


Do you hate waiting in long lines on Election Day? We do, too! To help voters navigate Election Day successfully, Vigo County Public Library is collaborating with the Vigo County Clerk's Office to launch Vote Vigo.

Vote Vigo, a non-partisan organization which seeks to make voting easier for Vigo County residents, will be providing regular updates on the lines and wait times at all voting centers. To





SESSION OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Identify your community's voter education needs.
 - ✓ Curate and design a helpful online resource.
 - ★ Identify other voter groups and initiatives.
- 



4.

WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING?



National Organizations



[National Voter Registration Day](#)

Celebrated on the fourth Tuesday of September, National Voter Registration Day will next take place on September 22, 2020. The holiday has been endorsed by the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED), the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC), and the National Association of Election Officials (The Election Center). Free posters, stickers, and planning guides.



[Democracy Class - Civic Education](#)

Democracy Class is a free, nonpartisan curriculum that educates high school students about the importance and history of voting and pre-registers and registers them to vote. ALA is a sponsor.



[Vote Early Day | October 24th | Vote Early Day](#)

Vote Early Day is a movement of nonprofits, businesses, election administrators, and creatives working to ensure all Americans know their options to vote early. Like National Voter Registration Day it is an one day event with free resources.

Single Issue Focused Organizations



**NEWAMERICAN
VOTERS2020**

[New American Voters 2020: Home](#)

NewAmericanVoters 2020 is a digital campaign that encourages the millions of newly naturalized citizens to vote in upcoming elections. The National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA) is a national multiethnic, multiracial partnership. Who represent the collective power and resources of the country's 37 largest regional immigrant and refugee rights organizations in 31 states.

**Restore
Your Vote**
A PROJECT OF CAMPAIGN LEGAL CENTER

[Restore Your Vote: I have a felony conviction. Can I vote?](#)

Many people wonder "can I vote with a felony conviction?" and assume the laws have restricted their rights. But that's not true! While many states have some restriction on felon voting rights, most states restore the right to vote to citizens after they complete their sentences. Completely anonymous.

**National
Coalition
for the Homeless**

[You Don't Need a Home to Vote - National Coalition for the Homeless](#)

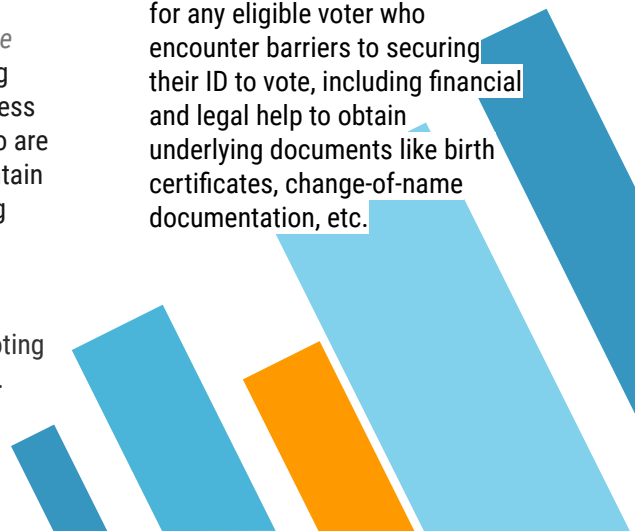
The *You Don't Need a Home to Vote Campaign* seeks to promote voting access for low income and homeless persons to ensure that people who are economically disadvantaged maintain an active role and voice in shaping their future. [The National Low Income Housing Coalition](#) has developed a series of webinars including one on the barriers of voting while experiencing homelessness.

OUR HOMES, OUR VOTES
2020
BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS
* * * *

VoteRiders™
Have ID, Will Vote


[Voter ID In Your State](#)

VoteRiders offers **free assistance** for any eligible voter who encounter barriers to securing their ID to vote, including financial and legal help to obtain underlying documents like birth certificates, change-of-name documentation, etc.





VOTER EDUCATION GOALS

- ✓ Identify your community's voter education needs.
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 - ✓ Identify other voter groups and initiatives.
- 



5.

QUESTIONS





THANKS!

Any questions?

Haley Samuelson
Reference Librarian
hsamuelson@cooklib.org

Nate Gass
Emerging Technology Librarian
ngass@cooklib.org

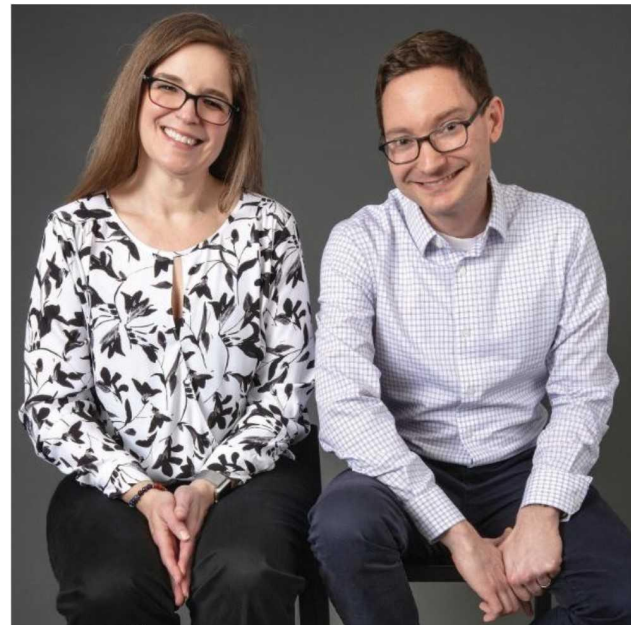


Photo by Bob Schatz, Nashville

