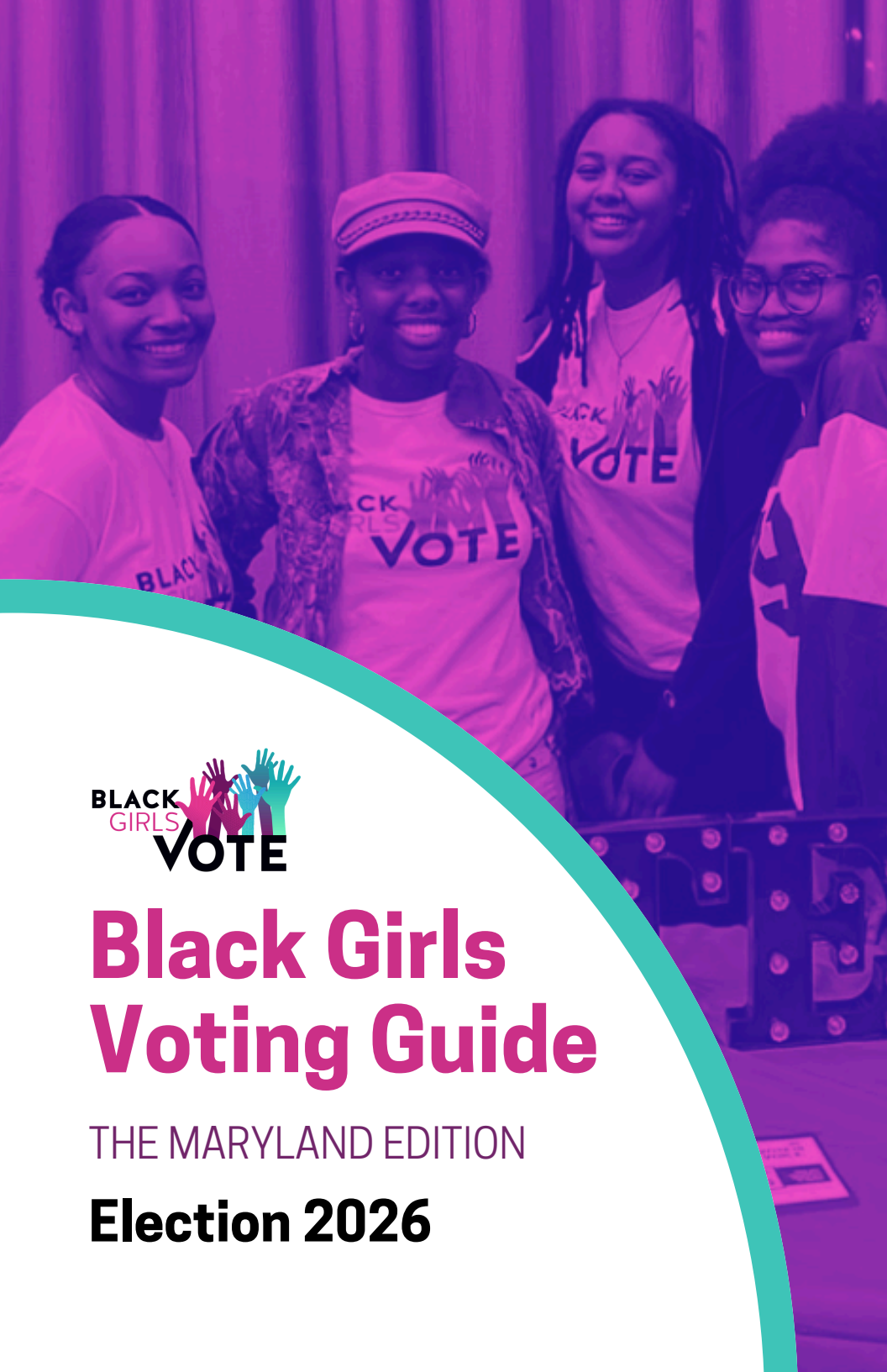




Black Girls Voting Guide

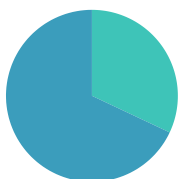
THE MARYLAND EDITION

Election 2026

WHAT IS VOTING AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Voting refers to the process of choosing officials or policies by casting a ballot. The leaders we elect make decisions that affect our daily lives. **Elections are our chance to stand up for what matters most to us** and to have an impact on the issues that affect us, our communities, our families and our future.

Black women have historically faced significant barriers to voting in the United States, and continue to face voter suppression to this day. **Despite these challenges, Black women are one of the most powerful voter blocs in this country** and are at the forefront of voter mobilization efforts.



MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF BLACK WOMEN TURNED OUT TO VOTE IN THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

Source: CAWP/Higher Heights, 2022

“If they don’t give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.”

Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm

First Black Woman Elected to Congress

First Black Woman to Run for President

Black Girls Vote launched on Shirley Chisholm’s birthday, November 30th, 1924.



WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE IN MARYLAND?

You can vote if you are a U.S. citizen, a Maryland resident, at least 18 years old on or before Election Day, and are registered to vote. You can pre-register starting at age 16, so you're ready to vote the moment you turn 18.

If you've been convicted of a crime: Maryland restores your right to vote immediately upon release from incarceration. You do not have to wait until parole or probation ends. Maryland law now requires the state to automatically restore voter registration for people released from state correctional facilities.

Registering to Vote

You can register online, by mail, or in person by October 13, 2026. If you miss the standard deadline, you can still register when you vote during Early Voting or on Election Day with ID and proof of address.

How to Vote



Early Voting

Vote early at any early voting center in your county. Early voting runs from October 22-29.



Vote by Mail

Any registered voter can request a mail-in ballot, no reason required. You can also sign up for the Permanent Mail-In Ballot list to receive one automatically each election.



Vote on Election Day

This is the last day you can vote! Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2026. Polls are open 7 a.m.–8 p.m. If you're in line by 8 p.m., you can vote!



Scan QR for
more info



**Photo ID is not always required in Maryland,
but you should still bring your ID just in case!**



THE VOTING EXPERIENCE

However you choose to vote, knowing what to expect can help you cast your ballot with confidence.

Voting In-Person

Know where to go.

During Early Voting, you can vote at any early voting center in your county. On Election Day, vote at your assigned polling place.

Ask for help.

If you have questions or experience a problem, ask to speak with an election judge before leaving the polling place.

Stay in line.

If you're in line by 8 p.m. on Election Day, stay in line. You can still vote.

Know your rights.

Voter intimidation is illegal. If someone threatens, harasses, or attempts to interfere with your ability to vote, alert an election judge and contact Election Protection at 866-687-8683.

Voting By-Mail?

Request your ballot.

Submit your request by October 27 for delivery by mail or fax, or October 30 for an emailed link to your ballot.

Follow the instructions.

Read the instructions that come with your ballot carefully and complete all required steps before returning it.

Return your ballot on time.

Mail-in ballots must be postmarked by Election Day or returned to an official ballot drop box or voting location by 8 p.m. Mail early to ensure your ballot is postmarked on time.

Track your ballot.

After you return your ballot, check its status to make sure it was received.

MARYLAND'S GOVERNMENT

Maryland's government has three branches with different roles and responsibilities. Knowing how they work can help you better understand the offices and candidates on your ballot.



Executive

Enforces state laws, oversees the state budget, and appoints officials. Led by the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, elected together on one ticket, along with the separately elected Attorney General and Comptroller.



Judicial

Interprets state law. Maryland's system includes the Supreme Court of Maryland, the Appellate Court of Maryland, Circuit Courts, Orphans' Courts, and the District Court.



Legislative

Makes Maryland's laws. The Maryland General Assembly is made up of the State Senate (47 seats) and the House of Delegates (141 seats).

2026 is a big election year in Maryland!

The Governor and Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, the entire Maryland General Assembly, and all 8 of Maryland's U.S. House seats are on the November 3 ballot. Depending on where you live, you may also vote for judges and local officials, giving Marylanders a say in leadership at nearly every level of government.

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON & ANNAPOLIS

Marylanders elect representatives to make laws at both the federal and state levels. Your members of Congress represent you in Washington, D.C., while your state legislators represent you in Annapolis.

U.S. Congress

In U.S. elections, voters elect members to the House of Representatives and the Senate, which together form Congress.

House of Representatives

All 8 of Maryland's U.S. House seats are up for election. Every two years, Maryland's full congressional delegation goes before voters. Maryland's current delegation is 7 Democrats and 1 Republican.

Senate

Maryland does not have a U.S. Senate race in 2026. Senators Chris Van Hollen and Angela Alsobrooks are not up for reelection this cycle.

Maryland General Assembly

The General Assembly makes Maryland's state laws and is made up of two chambers:

State Senate: 47 senators

House of Delegates: 141 delegates

Every seat in both chambers is up for election in 2026. State lawmakers make decisions on issues such as education, health care, housing, transportation, public safety, and the state budget.



Look up your
representatives

VOTING FOR JUDGES IN MARYLAND

You may see judges on your ballot, but not every Maryland judge is elected the same way. Here's what to know about the different ways judges are selected and when voters have a say.



Supreme Court & Appellate Court of Maryland

Judges are appointed by the Governor from a list submitted by a judicial nominating commission. After serving about a year, they appear on the general election ballot for a retention vote. You'll see their name with a simple "yes" or "no" on whether to keep them for a full 10-year term.



District Courts

District Court judges are appointed by the Governor with State Senate confirmation and are not elected. You won't see them on your ballot.



Circuit Courts

Circuit Court judges are also appointed by the Governor to fill vacancies, but then run in contested elections (candidates can appear on both party primary ballots) for 15-year terms.

Judicial decisions can shape people's rights, freedoms, families, and livelihoods. Research the judges and judicial candidates on your ballot so you can make an informed choice.



MARYLAND'S STATEWIDE ELECTED OFFICIALS

Maryland voters elect statewide leaders who oversee state government, manage public dollars, and enforce state laws. Here's what each of these officials does and why their role matters.



Governor

The Governor leads Maryland's executive branch, oversees state agencies, proposes the state budget, and signs or vetoes legislation. The Governor also appoints key state officials and helps set Maryland's policy priorities.



Lieutenant Governor

The Lieutenant Governor supports the Governor, leads initiatives assigned by the Governor, and assumes the governorship if the Governor can no longer serve.



Attorney General

The Attorney General is Maryland's chief legal officer, representing the state in legal matters and providing legal counsel to state agencies. The office also works to protect Marylanders in areas including consumer protection and civil rights.



Comptroller

The Comptroller is Maryland's chief financial officer and oversees the administration of state taxes. The Comptroller also serves on the Board of Public Works, helping make decisions about major state contracts, spending, and public projects.

BALLOT QUESTIONS

Candidates aren't the only choices on your ballot! Maryland voters will consider three statewide constitutional amendments in 2026. Depending on where you live, your ballot may also include additional county or local questions, so be sure to review your sample ballot before you vote

Question 1: Funding Agreements with State Employees

Would require the Governor's proposed state budget to include funding for wages, benefits, and other employment terms agreed to through collective bargaining with state employees.

A vote **FOR** would add this funding requirement to the Maryland Constitution.

A vote **AGAINST** would keep the current rules in place.

Question 2: Commission on Judicial Disabilities

Would allow temporary members to serve on the Commission on Judicial Disabilities when a member cannot participate or leaves the Commission without a replacement.

A vote **FOR** would allow eligible temporary members to fill these vacancies.

A vote **AGAINST** would keep the Commission's current membership rules.

Question 3: Election Districts

Would clarify that the Maryland Constitution's districting requirements apply to state legislative districts and do not apply to congressional districts. It would also allow the General Assembly to authorize the Supreme Court of Maryland to review congressional districting plans.

A vote **FOR** would make these changes to the Maryland Constitution.

A vote **AGAINST** would leave the current constitutional language in place.

MAKE A VOTING PLAN

Election Day will be here before you know it! Take a few minutes now to decide how you'll vote, research your ballot, and make a plan to get to the polls.

Research your ballot before you vote!

You can find a sample ballot with candidates and ballot measures on your state voting site.



QR for Vote 411

MY VOTING PLAN



I WILL VOTE...

☐ by mail ☐ during early voting ☐ on Election Day

VOTE BY MAIL PLAN

I will **request** my ballot by: _____

I will **return** my ballot by: _____

VOTING IN-PERSON PLAN

I will vote on this **day**: _____

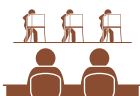
At this **time**: _____

At this **location**: _____



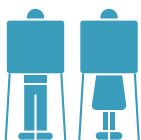
OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

There are many ways you can step up to strengthen our democracy and show up for your community in this election!



Become an Election Judge or Monitor

You can make sure we have safe, fair, and efficient elections for all voters. Step up and become a paid poll worker for the next election today at powerthepolls.org.



Vote together!

When you take someone to the polls with you, you can bring more people into our democracy and make sure your community's voices are heard. Bring a friend, family member, or even an acquaintance with you to vote!



Spread accurate information

Disinformation and misinformation are everywhere. According to Onyx Impact, over **40 million Americans** within Black online spaces may have been given disinformation about the election. Make sure to fact-check everything and spread accurate information to others.



Become a member of BGV!

Black Girls Vote membership is a direct and powerful way to change our communities and stand as a united front for our representation of our women and girls. Learn more at blackgirlsvote.org/membership.



ABOUT BLACK GIRLS VOTE

Black Girls Vote is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization designed to represent the concerns and interests of Black women.

We are not affiliated with any political party. We are invested in ensuring that Black women are empowered to advance education, economic development, quality health care, and improve outcomes.



blackgirlsvote.com



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