



Voting is a VIBE

A House Party Toolkit
designed by Black Girls Vote



There is Joy in Voting

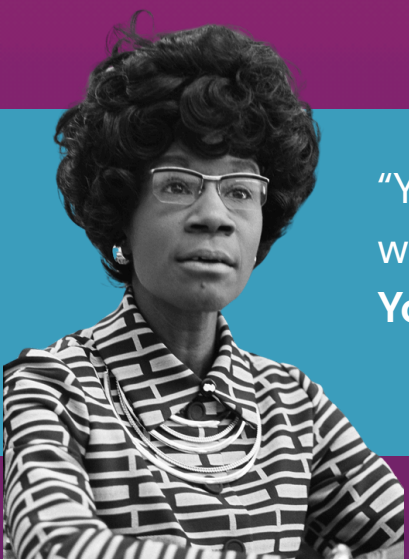
Black Girls Vote is a nonpartisan organization designed to represent the concerns and interests of Black women.

The mission of the Black Girls Vote Advocacy Committee is to organize our membership and community around issues that disproportionately affect black women and girls. We do this by organizing education events, utilizing partnerships and demanding policy changes from elected officials. The Black Girls Vote Advocacy Committee is dedicated to using black women's collective vote and voice to improve the conditions of their lives and the lives of others.

#BGVAdvocacy aims to cultivate a community of well-informed citizens to support policies that align with BGVs strategic aims to:

- Advance Education
- Advance Economic Development
- Advance Environmental Justice
- Advance Health and Wellness
- Advance Voting Rights

Black Girls Vote is dedicated to making sure that our members and larger community members are registered to vote, are educated about the voting process, are getting out to the vote (GOTV) and that our rights to vote are protected!



"You don't make progress by standing on the sidelines, whimpering and complaining.

You make progress by implementing ideas."

– The Honorable Shirley Chisholm

What's at Stake

Elections are a time to make your voice heard about the issues that matter to you and your community. Whether it's a primary, general, or special election, every opportunity to cast your vote is a chance to make sure that the people in elected offices represent your best interest. But far too often, many communities are disconnected from the political process. Below you will find relevant statistics about voting and civic engagement:

- **38%** of Black or African American people frequently discuss politics, societal or local issues with family or friends. (Black Girls Vote)
- **37.7%** of Black women frequently discuss politics, societal or local issues with family or friends
- Gen Z is less socially engaged compared to prior generations, contributing to feelings of isolation and depression. (HIT Strategies)
- **62%** of Gen Z thinks the design and structure of our nation's government needs significant change no matter who we elect to represent us. (HIT Strategies)
- Gen Z voters are politically engaged, but institutionally skeptical. (HIT Strategies)
- The top two emotions across partisanship, gender, race, and key states are anxiety and frustration. (HIT Strategies)

One way to encourage people to engage in elections is focusing on the importance of civic engagement. Civic engagement is actions that individuals or groups can take to address concerns and improve quality of life. These actions can vary and can include protesting, digital activism and even community service. Casting your vote is one of the most important forms of civic engagement and it's a way to connect the issues that matter back to the actions we can take to improve conditions.

5 steps you can take:

Voter Registration — Registering to vote is the first step towards voting. Always check the status of your registration in preparation for any upcoming elections.

Voter Education — Before you cast your ballot, make sure that you are familiar with the choices on your ballot. Review the candidates and ballot measures, understand what is at stake, and make informed choices that reflect your priorities.

Get out the Vote (GOTV) — After you are registered to vote and study your ballot, make sure that you cast your vote. Make a plan to vote early, in person or by mail.

Voter Protection — The right to vote is sacred. If you have any issue voting, call the election protection hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683).

Advocacy after Elections — Votes are earned. Make sure you hold elected officials accountable. Voting is the first step, but not the last!



Hosting a House Party

A house party is a gathering for community members to share information and talk about issues together. Election season is the great time to bring people together and strategize about how to improve communities through the electoral process.

As you prepare to host a house party, please consider the following factors for your event:

- **Identify your purpose:** Spend time thinking about what you want to accomplish at your house party. Make sure you have your state department of elections website, information about voter deadlines and other vital information handy.
- **Identify your audience:** Consider who are your ideal attendees and how many people you would like to attend the event.
- **Secure a date and time:** Make sure you select a date that does not conflict with events that might impact your attendance numbers.
- **Secure a location:** Explore which venues will serve your event best. While a home is recommended, you can also consider a local venue like a coffee shop or restaurant. Modern technology has also allowed for virtual parties as an option!
- **Menu and Refreshments:** No party is complete without food, beverages and snacks! Consider a menu that is well-rounded and mindful of dietary restrictions.
- **Entertainment and Decor:** Are there any special considerations for the space that you need to consider? For example, you might want to play music (Playlist suggestions on [apple music](#) and [spotify](#)) or have a theme for the event. For the decor, you might want to consider balloons, posters and any fun elements to help create the event vibe!
- **Event Invitations:** The invitations should include vital details like the purpose, date, time, location, and RSVP information. Call, text, email, and social media are great outreach tactics.



The Day of the Party

The day of the house party should be reserved for any day of errands, setting up and breaking down the event. Preparation is key and will lead to a great house party! Here are some considerations for the day of the house party:

- **Setting up the event:** Give yourself enough time to set up the event. Volunteers from the community may be helpful with this task.
- **House Party Time:** It's here! Below you will find a sample agenda for the gathering:

- 6:00 pm – Greet your guests, ask them to sign in and direct them to the refreshments
- 6:30 pm – Begin the formal program by sharing the purpose of the house party and share general housekeeping elements (rest room, community norms etc.)
- 6:45 – Allow your guests to introduce themselves and include a fun and relevant ice breaker
- 7:00 – Begin discussing the upcoming election, what's at stake and how the attendees can support each other through the civic engagement process
- 7:45 – Begin wrapping up the house party with next steps
- 8:00 – Conclude the house party

- **Event Reset:** Clean your venue and make sure you collect items that are important for following up with your guests.
- **Attendee Thank You:** Make sure you thank your guest and send relevant election follow up information.



Voting is a VIBE

Black Girls Vote believes that voting is indeed a VIBE and it's okay to be excited about politics! We can acknowledge the state of affairs, and also find joy in the right to vote. We call this duality [#BlackJoyVote](#), which means that we are using voting as a way to address systematic harm to the centers our joy, culture and celebration. For example, Black Girls Vote co-hosted our own [Baltimore x Baltimore Festival](#) on the waterfront to promote the importance of voting and bringing joy to the process.

As we engage in civic engagement, it is vital that our outreach leaves people feeling educated, encouraged and excited to get involved. Check out these commonly used phrases and how open, kind language can begin a positive, energetic conversation about voting!

VIBE CHECK!



Instead of saying things like:

"If you don't vote you can't complain" or "you should be ashamed of yourself for not voting"



Use open and inviting language like:

"Voting changes outcomes for your community and you can be a part of that change" or "Voting is one of the tangible ways to make your voice heard"



When people say:

"My vote doesn't matter" or "I don't have time to vote"



Use curious and kind language like:

"I believe your vote is important, can you tell me why you believe your vote doesn't matter?" or "Voting is an investment in our futures. It may take time but I am here to help make it easier."

And remember:

- Never make assumptions about someone's level of political engagement
- Communicate what is actually on the ballot
- Outreach is the start of a not the end of a relationship, be there when people need you





In conclusion, a house party is one of the many ways to creatively engage the political process. Here are some other examples of organizations making sure that folks are excited and engaged in the electoral process while bringing the #BlackJoyVote vibes!

Black Girls Vote Party at the Mailbox

Black Girls Vote: Black Joy Vote Playlist [Spotify](#) and [Apple](#)

Black Youth Vote/National Coalition on Black Civic Participation

Black Voters Matter

Civic Holidays

DJs at the Polls

Donuts and Democracy

Joy to the Polls

Pizza to the Polls

Rock the Vote

Stroll to the Polls

VOTE HBCU

When We All Vote



State/Territory Election Websites

<u>Alabama (AL)</u>	<u>Kansas (KS)</u>	<u>Northern Mariana Islands (MP)</u>
<u>Alaska (AK)</u>	<u>Kentucky (KY)</u>	<u>Ohio (OH)</u>
<u>American Samoa (AS)</u>	<u>Louisiana (LA)</u>	<u>Oklahoma (OK)</u>
<u>Arizona (AZ)</u>	<u>Maine (ME)</u>	<u>Oregon (OR)</u>
<u>Arkansas (AR)</u>	<u>Maryland (MD)</u>	<u>Pennsylvania (PA)</u>
<u>California (CA)</u>	<u>Massachusetts (MA)</u>	<u>Puerto Rico (PR)</u>
<u>Colorado (CO)</u>	<u>Michigan (MI)</u>	<u>Rhode Island (RI)</u>
<u>Connecticut (CT)</u>	<u>Minnesota (MN)</u>	<u>South Carolina (SC)</u>
<u>Delaware (DE)</u>	<u>Mississippi (MS)</u>	<u>South Dakota (SD)</u>
<u>District of Columbia (DC)</u>	<u>Missouri (MO)</u>	<u>Tennessee (TN)</u>
<u>Florida (FL)</u>	<u>Montana (MT)</u>	<u>Texas (TX)</u>
<u>Georgia (GA)</u>	<u>Nebraska (NE)</u>	<u>Utah (UT)</u>
<u>Guam (GU)</u>	<u>Nevada (NV)</u>	<u>Vermont (VT)</u>
<u>Hawaii (HI)</u>	<u>New Hampshire (NH)</u>	<u>Virgin Islands (VI)</u>
<u>Idaho (ID)</u>	<u>New Jersey (NJ)</u>	<u>Virginia (VA)</u>
<u>Illinois (IL)</u>	<u>New Mexico (NM)</u>	<u>Washington (WA)</u>
<u>Indiana (IN)</u>	<u>New York (NY)</u>	<u>West Virginia (WV)</u>
<u>Iowa (IA)</u>	<u>North Carolina (NC)</u>	<u>Wisconsin (WI)</u>
	<u>North Dakota (ND)</u>	<u>Wyoming (WY)</u>

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.



QR for Vote 411

Research your ballot before you vote!

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

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**:

Voting is a VIBE

A House Party Toolkit
designed by Black Girls Vote

Acknowledgements

Black Girls Vote Advocacy Committee

Strategic Growth and Operations Lead, Black Girls Vote, Author

Natasha Murphy, Chief of Staff, Black Girls Vote, Editor

Maddie Wolf, Toolkit Designer



www.blackgirlsvote.com

Instagram: @blackgirlsvote

Twitter: @blackgirlsvote

Facebook: Black Girls Vote