



Black Girls Voting Guide

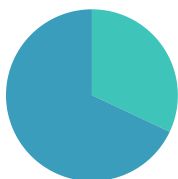
Election 2026

**THE NORTH CAROLINA
EDITION**

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 NC?

You can vote if you are a U.S. citizen, a North Carolina resident, at least 18 years old on or before Election Day, and are registered to vote. You can pre-register starting at age 16..

If you've been convicted of a felony: North Carolina restores your right to vote once you complete your full sentence, including any time on probation, post-release supervision, or parole. Once your sentence is complete, you're eligible to register again.

Registering to Vote

You can register online, by mail, or in person by **October 9, 2026**. If you miss the deadline, you can also register to vote at an early voting site during the early voting period (see below).

How to Vote



Early Voting

Early voting runs from October 15–31, ending at 3 p.m. on the last Saturday before Election Day.



Vote by Mail (Absentee)

Any registered voter can request an absentee ballot. Your request must be received by 5 p.m. on October 20 (two weeks before Election Day). You can return your ballot by mail or in-person to your election office or early voting site.



Vote on Election Day

This is the last day you can vote! Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2026. Polls are open 6:30 a.m.–7:30 p.m. If you're in line by 7:30 p.m., you can still vote!



Scan QR for
more info

North Carolina requires photo ID to vote. Most voters show a North Carolina driver's license, but many other forms are accepted (state ID card, U.S. passport, military ID, tribal ID, or an approved student/employee ID).



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 7:30 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 (Absentee)?

Request your ballot.

Submit your request ASAP by October 20 at 5:00pm.

Follow the instructions.

Read the instructions carefully. Both the inner and outer return envelopes must be properly sealed for your vote to count, and you'll need to include a photocopy of your photo ID with your ballot.

Return your ballot on time.

Your completed ballot must be received by the election office by 7:30 p.m. on November 3. Mailing it by then isn't enough, so return it early. You can mail it, or return it in person to your county board of elections office or an open early voting site.

NC'S GOVERNMENT

North Carolina'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. The 10-member Council of State includes the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Auditor, State Treasurer, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Commissioners of Agriculture, Insurance, and Labor.



Judicial

Interprets state law. North Carolina's system includes the Supreme Court of North Carolina, the North Carolina Court of Appeals, Superior Courts, and District Courts. Unlike states where judges are appointed, North Carolina judges at every level are directly elected by voters in partisan elections.



Legislative

Makes North Carolina's laws. The North Carolina General Assembly is made up of the Senate (50 seats) and the House of Representatives (120 seats).

2026 is a big election year in Georgia!

The entire Council of State (including Governor and Lieutenant Governor), the full General Assembly, all 14 of North Carolina's U.S. House seats, one of North Carolina's two U.S. Senate seats, and four statewide judicial seats are all on the November 3 ballot.

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON & RALEIGH

North Carolinians 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 Raleigh.

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 14 of North Carolina's U.S. House seats are up for election. Every two years, North Carolina's full congressional delegation goes before voters. North Carolina's current delegation is 10 Republicans and 4 Democrats.

Senate

North Carolina has one U.S. Senate seat on the ballot in 2026. Incumbent Senator Thom Tillis is not seeking reelection, making this an open-seat race. North Carolina's other Senate seat, held by Ted Budd, is not up for reelection this cycle.

North Carolina General Assembly

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

Senate: 50 senators

House of Representatives: 120 representatives

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 NORTH CAROLINA

Unlike states where judges are appointed by the governor, North Carolina directly elects its judges. Every North Carolina voter will have four judicial contests on their November ballot this year.



Supreme Court of North Carolina

Seven justices serve eight-year terms in statewide partisan elections. One seat is up in 2026, and every registered voter in the state will see this race on their ballot. If a seat opens mid-term, the Governor appoints a replacement to serve until the next general election.



Court of Appeals

Fifteen judges serve eight-year terms in statewide partisan elections. Three seats are up in 2026.



Superior and District Courts

These trial-level judges are also directly elected in partisan races, serving eight-year and four-year terms respectively — but they're elected by district, so you'll only see these races if a seat covering your area is up this cycle.



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.



NC'S STATEWIDE ELECTED OFFICIALS

North Carolina voters elect ten statewide leaders (known collectively as the Council of State) who oversee state government, manage public dollars, and enforce state laws. Here's what some of these officials do and why their roles matter.



Governor

The Governor leads North Carolina'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 North Carolina's policy priorities.



Lieutenant Governor

Elected independently from the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor presides over the State Senate and steps in if the Governor can no longer serve.



Attorney General

The Attorney General is North Carolina's chief legal officer, representing the state in legal matters and providing legal counsel to state agencies, including on consumer protection and civil rights matters.



Secretary of State

Oversees business registration, notaries, and other state records and works alongside the State Board of Elections (a separate, appointed body) on some election-related functions.

BALLOT QUESTIONS

Candidates aren't the only choices on your ballot! North Carolina 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: State Income Tax Cap

Would lower the maximum individual income tax rate allowed under the North Carolina Constitution from 7% to 3.5%. (The current flat income tax rate is 3.99%. This amendment would lower the constitutional ceiling on how high the legislature could ever raise it, not change today's rate by itself.)

A vote **FOR** would lower the constitutional cap to 3.5%.

A vote **AGAINST** would keep the current 7% cap in place.

Question 2: Local Property Tax Limits

Would require the General Assembly to pass future laws limiting how much local governments can increase property tax levies.

A vote **FOR** would require the legislature to enact property tax increase limits for local governments.

A vote **AGAINST** would leave local property tax authority as it currently stands

Question 3: Photo ID for All Voting Methods

Would expand North Carolina's constitutional photo ID requirement (currently limited to in-person voting) to cover all methods of voting, including absentee/mail ballots.

A vote **FOR** would make photo ID a constitutional requirement for every way of voting in North Carolina.

A vote **AGAINST** would leave the constitutional ID requirement limited to in-person voting

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...

☐ during early voting ☐ on Election Day ☐ by mail

VOTING IN-PERSON PLAN

I will vote on this **day**:

At this **time**:

At this **location**:

.....

VOTE BY MAIL PLAN

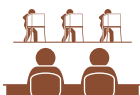
I will **request** my ballot by:

I will **return** my ballot by:



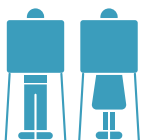
OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

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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