

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY - SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

COLLEGE FACTSHEET

EMPOWER YOUR STUDENTS BY SUPPORTING NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

WHAT IS NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY?

National Voter Registration Day is a nonpartisan civic holiday celebrating democracy by getting every eligible American registered to vote. It was first observed in 2012 and has quickly become a national celebration that has registered **over 6 million Americans** in its lifetime. Volunteers and organizations **nationwide** hit the streets to register voters in front of libraries, school campuses, and other social events.

"In 2012, a group of democracy-dedicated organizations and election officials put their heads together to answer a seemingly simple question: how can we ensure more eligible voters are registered to vote and ready to participate in our nation's democracy actively? The proposed solution: National Voter Registration Day."

Secretaries of State Michael Adams (R-Kentucky) and Steve Simon (D-Minnesota)

National Voter Registration Day Steering Committee
Honorary Co-chairs



WHERE SHOULD STUDENTS REGISTER?

College students attending college out-of-state have dual residency in both their home state and the state where their school is, but they can only be registered to vote in one state. The rules to vote in each state vary; [learn your state's rules](#) and check out the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge [Out-of-State College Student Voter Guide](#) for information that will help students make the right choice for them.

WHY SHOULD COLLEGES PARTICIPATE?

All across the year, Americans have been showing up at the polls to cast their ballots in local elections. In November, Americans of all ages are preparing to head to the polls to vote on the whole gamut of political races that happen in midterm years, from every U.S. Representative and the third of the U.S. Senate to their mayor and school board members. As the future lifeblood of our democracy, Gen Z makes up a vitally important block of that electorate. Yet as a population, they often show some of the **lowest registration** and turnout rates by age-group. **So what gives?**

It might be hard to square with the trope of the politically engaged student activist, but many of these young Americans are **entering our electoral process for the first time** during a very busy period of life that's full of big changes, and would seriously benefit from voter education on the registration and voting process. They also [benefit from information](#) about specific questions relevant to college voters, like whether to register to vote in their home state or their campus address.

That's where you come in: the campus environment is the **perfect** place to get **#VoteReady**, with so many opportunities to encourage students to get registered and engage their peers. And what better way to turn your campus into a hotbed of enthusiastic voter engagement than taking part in the celebration that is National Voter Registration Day? By joining this nationwide day of action on September 16th, you can help our democracy close the participation gap among college students, help students exercise their voting power, and shape the future of our democracy.



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A FEW IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED:

- ◆ **Take Advantage of Becoming an NVRD Partner:** [Sign up as a Community Partner](#) and get free posters and stickers for your National Voter Registration Day event. Make a plan for your event using our [Field Organizer Toolkit](#)—identify event location(s), recruit volunteers, and promote it!
- ◆ **Promote Voter Registration and Education:** Share information and resources about registration during student orientation and class registration. Encourage faculty to promote voter education events at the start of class. Place flyers and informational materials in student centers and distribute them to RAs and RDs to provide to their dorm residents. Put the word out in student-run newspapers. Make use of our [Communications Resources](#) and get inspired by some of these [other strategies for student engagement!](#)
- ◆ **Set Up Voter Registration Tables:** Place tables at campus activities like sporting events, concerts, plays and in other high-traffic areas like dorms, dining halls, student centers, and the center of campus to facilitate easy access to voter registration. If using paper registration forms, get the forms from your local elections office prior to the event. Learn [state-specific rules](#) for handling and turning in registration forms. If training student volunteers to assist with nonpartisan voter registration, ensure they're ready to answer common and student-specific questions (such as choosing which state to register to vote in).
- ◆ **Engage your Administration and Faculty:** Coordinate with Student Life, academic departments, faculty congresses, campus-based religious bodies and other administrative offices to provide ready access to voter registration forms and educational materials.
- ◆ **Collaborate with Student Organizations:** Work with student government, clubs, fraternities, and other campus organizations to organize and promote voter registration drives and events on campus. Encourage them to speak to their members and other students about the importance of voting.
- ◆ **Make Announcements:** Use school-wide announcements and emails from a variety of campus leaders—including the President, Board of Trustees, College Deans, student body leaders, and more—to inform students about registration opportunities and the importance of voting.
- ◆ **Host Informative Events:** Leverage connections with academics, issue experts, and local election officials to host forums and events that contextualize the stakes of the upcoming election and encourage students to take part.
- ◆ **Social Media Engagement:** Share posts and stories highlighting National Voter Registration Day, offering tips on voter registration, and promoting your school's participation. Create a school-specific hashtag to use alongside #VoteReady and #NationalVoterRegistrationDay and encourage your students to post too!

BEYOND NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY:

Registration deadlines vary by state from 30 days before the election to Election Day itself. Know [your state registration deadline](#) and promote voter registration up to your state's deadline. Help students get #VoteReady by raising awareness of **early voting opportunities** and providing info about their polling locations and sample ballots. **Organize transportation and accessibility support** for students to vote on Election Day at polling places near campus.

WHAT ABOUT COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND TRADE SCHOOLS?

Community college students, who accounted for roughly [a third](#) of all U.S. postsecondary students in 2020, saw a **10% lower voting rate that year** compared to students at four-year institutions. Community colleges are also [more diverse on average](#), and, as is often the case, they face more barriers to participation in our democracy. Special consideration to their unique conditions, like commuter status, work schedule, language, and campus dynamic, is needed to ensure your voter registration efforts reach as many students as possible this year.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ◆ [Ask Every Student Playbook](#)
- ◆ [Students Learn Students Vote Coalition](#)
- ◆ [Campus Vote Project](#)

For more information, contact us at info@nationalvoterregistrationday.org



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