

BE A REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE VOTER.



THE **AFIYA** CENTER 

TRUST BLACK WOMEN TO MAKE PERSONAL DECISIONS
THAT ARE BEST FOR US AND OUR FAMILIES.

VOTE ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 5.

I AM A
REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE
VOTER

   BLACKWOMENSRJ

 BLACKWOMEN.VOTE

TEXAS 2024 VOTING GUIDELINES

This Voter Guide is intended to be used solely for educational purposes and is not meant to support or oppose any candidate or political party. Any use of this Voter Guide should be for 501(c)(3)-compliant purposes only. This Voter Guide shall not be used for any partisan, political, or electioneering activities by any organization or individual.

Your Plan to Vote should include answers to the following questions:

AM I REGISTERED TO VOTE?

CHECK YOUR REGISTRATION STATUS at eamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do to ensure that you have not been purged from the voter roll in your state.

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINES:

Online registration deadline: Monday, October 7, 2024

Register by mail deadline: Must be received by Monday, October 7, 2024

In-person registration deadline: Must be received by Monday, October 7, 2024

To register to vote in Texas, simply complete a voter registration application and return it to your county election office at least 30 days before the upcoming election date. To complete an application, you may:

- > Complete an application using the SOS ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION. Simply fill in the required information, and then print, sign, and mail the completed application directly to your county election office
- > Request a PRINTED APPLICATION. Our office will mail a postage-paid voter registration application to the address provided, OR
- > Contact or visit your local VOTER REGISTRAR to complete the voter registration process.

HOW WILL I VOTE?

Early Voting:

- > Early voting in Texas begins Monday, October 21, 2024.
- > Early voting in Texas ends Friday, November 1, the Friday before Election Day.

Absentee/Mail-in Voting:

Voting by mail: A ballot by mail is available to voters who meet certain qualifications, including those who are 65 or older.

A list of Early Voting Clerk addresses in each county can be found here: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/voter/county.shtml>

The Early Voting Clerk must receive your marked ballot by 7 p.m. on Election Day, by 5:00 p.m. the first business day after Election Day if the postmarked ballot was mailed within the United States from non-military voters and from any military voters who submitted an Application for Ballot by Mail ("ABBM"), or by the 5th day after Election Day if your ballot is submitted from outside the United States.

Absentee Ballot application by mail or in person must be received by Friday, October 25.

Use an absentee ballot tool to prepare your application.

Find your local election office to drop off or mail your absentee ballot application.

All local election offices will accept mailed or hand-delivered forms.

NOTICE: Do not mail, fax, or email completed applications for Ballot by Mail to the Secretary of State Office. To ensure timely receipt, please send your completed application for a Ballot by Mail to your county's early voting clerk.

Request your absentee or mail-in ballot as soon as possible, and return it immediately. We are recommending you mail your ballot in NO LATER than 3 weeks before November 5 to ensure that your vote is counted.

Please contact your Local Election Office if you have any further questions about the exact process.

In-Person Voting on Election Day: If you are voting in person on November 5, make a plan that allows time for longer lines than usual. Stay in line until you vote, no matter what time it is, and no matter what anyone tells you. If you are in line when the polls close, you are still entitled to vote.

Find your local polling location, map out your route to get there, including parking, and (whenever possible) go vote with other members of your community. Wear comfortable shoes and bring snacks and water.

On Election Day, if your county participates in the Countywide Polling Place Program (CWPP) – commonly referred to as 'Vote Centers' – you can vote at any location in your county of residence. If your county does not participate in the CWPP, you can only vote at the voting precinct assigned to you. Your residence is located in a specific "precinct" or area within the county where you will vote on Election Day. In some cases, precincts may be combined to accommodate joint local elections.* You can find your voting precinct location by using our search site, "My Voter Portal," which will be populated with voting sites two days prior to Election Day. Many newspapers publish Election Day polling locations as well. Election Day voting hours are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at all polling places statewide. For questions regarding polling places, always consult your county elections office.

*Your voting precinct number (Pct. No.) is located next to your year of birth on your voter registration certificate.

HOW IS MY COMMUNITY VOTING?

Share Your Plan To Vote with your family, friends, and community. Help them develop a Plan to Vote. Support each other and vote together, no matter which way you are voting. Send in your ballots on the same day, vote early together or plan on getting in line as a community on November 5.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

- > Election Day is **Tuesday, November 5, 2024.**
- > The deadline for registering to vote by mail (postmarked by) is **Monday, October 7, 2024.**
- > The deadline to register in person to vote is **Monday, October 7, 2024.**
- > The deadline for a request to vote by mail to be received by is **Friday, October 25, 2024.**
- > The early voting period runs from **Tuesday, October 21, 2024, to Friday, November 1, 2024,** but dates and hours may vary based on where you live.

HOW TO VOTE IN TEXAS:

REGISTER TO VOTE:

Register Online: votetexas.gov/register-to-vote

Register to vote in person: <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/vr-with-receipt.pdf>

Check your voter registration: eamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do

WHAT YOU NEED TO VOTE IN TEXAS:

Voting in Person: You will be asked to show a photo ID to vote in Texas. Valid forms of ID in Texas include:

- > Texas Driver's License issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- > Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS
- > Texas Personal Identification Card issued by DPS
- > Texas Handgun License issued by DPS
- > United States Military Identification Card containing your photograph
- > United States Citizenship Certificate containing your photograph
- > United States Passport (book or card)

With the exception of the U.S. Citizenship Certificate, which does not expire, for voters aged 18-69, the acceptable form of photo identification may be expired no more than four years before being presented for voter qualification at the polling place. For voters aged 70 or older, the acceptable form of photo identification may be expired for any length of time if the identification is otherwise valid.

Election Identification Certificates are available from DPS driver's license offices during regular business hours. Find mobile station locations here.

Here is a list of the supporting forms of ID that can be presented if the voter does not possess one of the forms of acceptable photo ID and cannot reasonably obtain one:

- > copy or original of a government document that shows the voter's name and an address, including the voter's voter registration certificate;
- > copy of or original current utility bill;
- > copy of or original bank statement;
- > copy of or original government check;
- > copy of or original paycheck; or
- > copy of or original of (a) a certified domestic (from a U.S. state or territory) birth certificate or (b) a document confirming birth admissible in a court of law which establishes the voter's identity (which may include a foreign birth document).

After presenting one of the forms of supporting ID listed above, the voter must execute a Reasonable Impediment Declaration.

If a voter does not possess an acceptable form of photo ID, cannot reasonably obtain one, and does not have or does not bring a supporting form of ID to present in connection with a Reasonable Impediment Declaration, or if the voter does not possess an acceptable form of photo ID and can reasonably obtain an acceptable form of photo ID, or if the voter possesses, but did not bring with them, an acceptable form of photo ID, the voter may cast a provisional ballot at the polls. However, in order to have the provisional ballot counted, the voter will be required to visit the county voter registrar's office within 6 calendar days of the date of the election to present an acceptable form of photo ID; OR, if the voter does not possess and cannot reasonably obtain an acceptable form of photo ID, follow the Reasonable Impediment Declaration procedure; OR, if applicable, submit one of the temporary affidavits addressed in these FAQs (religious objection or natural disaster) in the presence of the county voter registrar; OR, if applicable, qualify for the disability exemption addressed in these FAQs with the county voter registrar.

Alternatively, a voter who possesses an acceptable form of photo ID, but does not have it at the polling place, or a voter who does not possess an acceptable form of photo ID, and is reasonably able to obtain one, may choose to leave the polling place and return before the close of the polls on Election Day with an acceptable form of photo ID to vote a regular ballot at that time. In addition, a voter who does not possess and would otherwise not be able to reasonably obtain an acceptable form of photo ID, but did not bring a supporting form of ID to the polling place, may choose to leave the polling place and return before the close of the polls on Election Day with said supporting form of ID to fill out the Reasonable Impediment Declaration and, if they otherwise qualify, vote a regular ballot at that time.

Polling locations and times may vary during early voting and Election Day. Check with your County Clerk and Secretary of State for information, including locations and times.

Vote by Mail/Absentee Voting:

Apply for a ballot:

By mail: Download an application, fill it in electronically, or print and fill it in by hand. Or request an application be mailed to you from the Secretary of State's Office or your county's early voting clerk. Once complete, hand-deliver or mail your application to your county's early voting clerk. Forms require first-class postage when mailed.

In person: Request an application from your county's early voting clerk.

NOTICE: Do not mail, fax, or email completed applications for Ballot by Mail to the Secretary of State Office. To ensure timely receipt, please send your completed application for a Ballot by Mail to your county's early voting clerk.

Your application must include your Texas driver's license number, Texas personal ID number, or election ID certificate number (which is different from your Voter Unique Identifier number). If you haven't been issued one of these numbers, you can submit the last four digits of your Social Security number.

Due to COVID and delays in USPS, counties will provide drop-off locations at County Clerk offices or Ballot Drop boxes; see your County Clerk for more information.

RECENT VOTING CHANGES IN TEXAS

Election laws enacted in 2023 have affected several voting rules and processes. Among the changes:

- > Voters with mobility problems can skip the line when voting in person. Polling places must have at least one parking spot for voters who are physically unable to enter the site and want to vote curbside.
- > Ballot-by-mail voters who make errors in their applications or submitted ballots will receive instructions from election officials on how to correct their mistakes when there's enough time to meet voting deadlines.
- > Early voting days and hours at each county's main early voting polling place have been standardized for general elections, with weekend hours required.

A sweeping 2021 state law that banned drive-through and 24-hour early voting, introduced ID requirements for mail-in voters, and prohibited election officials from distributing mail-in ballot applications to voters who didn't request them faces legal challenges. Check back for updates.

Redistricting that went into effect in 2022 redrew the boundaries of certain state legislative and U.S. congressional districts, but litigation over some districts is ongoing. Confirm your district using the state's online My Voter Portal.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

→ **VOTER PROTECTION HOTLINE/ACLU:** aclutx.org/en/know-your-rights/know-your-rights-voting-rights

→ **TEXAS BOARD OF ELECTIONS:** sos.state.tx.us/elections

→ **STATE GENERAL ELECTION RACES:** sos.state.tx.us/elections

BLACK WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE ISSUES

COST OF LIVING: The cost of living is a significant concern for Black women voters in Texas, with 90% of respondents indicating that lowering the cost of living and inflation are extremely or very important when thinking about getting out to vote. This economic burden impacts their ability to provide for their families, secure stable housing, and maintain overall financial stability. These challenges are directly linked to reproductive justice, which emphasizes the right to have children, or not to have children, and to parent the children they have in safe and supportive environments. When the cost of living rises, it limits the resources available to Black women, making it more difficult to exercise these rights freely and without undue burden. Ensuring that Black women in Texas have access to affordable living conditions is not just a matter of economic policy, but it's also a critical element in achieving true reproductive justice. (Source: IOOV 2024 Survey)

HEALTHCARE: Healthcare is a major concern for Black women voters in Texas, with 82% of respondents emphasizing the importance of increasing access to mental health care as a critical issue when thinking about getting out to vote. Additionally, 59% of Black women reported experiencing racial and gender bias within the healthcare system, which further exacerbates their challenges in receiving equitable care. These healthcare concerns are intricately connected to reproductive justice, which advocates for the right to health and bodily autonomy, free from discrimination and bias. Without access to quality, unbiased healthcare, including mental health services and maternal care, Black women are hindered in their ability to make informed and empowered decisions about their reproductive lives. Ensuring that healthcare is accessible, affordable, and free from bias is not only a health issue, but it's also a fundamental component of advancing reproductive justice for Black women in Texas. (Source: IOOV 2024 Survey)

HOUSING COSTS: Housing costs are a critical issue for Black women voters in Texas, with many identifying it as one of their top concerns when thinking about getting out to vote. The rising cost of housing significantly impacts the ability of Black women to secure stable and affordable living conditions for themselves and their families. This issue is deeply tied to reproductive justice, which emphasizes the right to have children, or not to have children, and to raise those children in safe and supportive environments. When housing costs are prohibitively high, it limits the ability of Black women to provide secure and nurturing homes, making it harder to exercise their reproductive rights fully. Addressing the challenge of affordable housing is therefore essential, not only for economic stability, but also for ensuring that Black women in Texas can make autonomous decisions about their reproductive lives without being constrained by financial pressures. (Source: IOOV 2024 Survey)

QUESTIONS TO ASK CANDIDATES ABOUT REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE:

These questions are designed to promote candidates to address the key concerns of Black women voters in Texas while emphasizing the importance of reproductive justice in policy platforms.

- How will you address the rising cost of living in Texas to ensure that Black women and their families can afford stable housing and essential goods, which are crucial for making informed reproductive choices?
- What specific policies will you implement to combat racial and gender bias in Texas's healthcare system, ensuring that Black women receive equitable and quality care that is essential for their reproductive health and overall well-being?
- How do you plan to expand access to affordable housing in Texas, particularly for Black women, to support their right to raise their families in safe and stable environments, a key aspect of reproductive justice?
- What actions will you take to promote racial justice in Texas, understanding that addressing systemic racism is critical to ensuring that Black women can make reproductive choices free from discrimination, and live in supportive communities?
- Given the recent abortion bans and restrictions, how will you protect and expand access to comprehensive reproductive healthcare in Texas, ensuring that Black women have the freedom to make decisions about their bodies and their futures?