The overall score and rank were calculated based on how a state performed in the 9 index criteria. The map above provides insight into voter confidence across all 50 states and the District of Colombia.

www.democracyinitiative.org
Voter Registration Scores by State

Components of this index include voter registration modalities, deadlines, frequency of voter list purges, and access to same day voter registration or automatic voter registration.

www.democracyinitiative.org

30% of states and DC earned a high confidence rating

32% of states received a moderate confidence rating

38% of states received a low confidence rating
Concerns: Voter registration deadlines continue to present a barrier to potential voters regardless of how they choose to register. Online and automatic voter registration methods make it easier to register, however, many states have not embraced modernization. Voting list purging also presents problems, as states differ in how they choose to remove inactive voters from registration lists, leaving eligible voters confused and/or disenfranchised.

Question: How confident can I be to register in my state and remain registered to vote?

Here are components that we examined for our evaluation of a state's voter registration and voter roll processes. State practices were assessed on the types of elements present or absent that influence how effective and positive the processes from a voter's perspective.

- Voter registration deadlines – same day for Election Day and early voting, weeks before Election Day
- Voter registration methods – paper filing, online, automatic
- Laws pertaining to the purging of inactive voters from lists
- Felony disenfranchisement
- Pre-voter registration for youth
- Concerns reported by voters in 2020 about voter registration problems
- Voter list accuracy

Voter Registration by National Conference of State Legislatures
Voter Registration List Maintenance by National Conference of State Legislatures
State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab
Best Practices: Accessible Voter Registration by U.S. Election Assistance Commission

If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683
Components of this index include whether states require voters to present identification, how often voters must present an ID, and acceptable forms of identification.

Experts have long criticized the use of Voter ID laws as discriminatory against elderly, disabled, and low-income voters. Obtaining identification for these voters presents bureaucratic and unnecessary burdens requiring a potentially prohibitive investment of time, travel, and money.

Voter Identification Scores by State

- **HIGH RATING**
- **MEDIUM RATING**
- **LOW RATING**

34% of states earned a high confidence rating
32% of states and D.C. received a moderate confidence rating
34% of states received a low confidence rating

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Question: If it is required, will I have confidence in my ability to provide adequate identification to vote?

Concerns: Experts have long criticized the use of voter ID laws as discriminatory against elderly, disabled, and low-income voters. States can vary widely in the forms of ID required to vote. Even when states provide a free government ID, the cost can still be prohibitive for the voter who needs time and funds to gather the correct documentation and present the ID at a certain location. There is also the time and training of poll workers on which type of voter IDs are acceptable.

Here are components that we examined regarding policies on voter ID requirements. State practices were assessed on the types of elements present or absent that influence how effective and positive the processes from a voter's perspective.

- Types of identification required – signature guidelines, photo/non-photo, limited/expansive options
- State is a member of Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)
- Concerns reported by voters in 2020 with problems with voter ID requirements, provisional ballot processes at polling sites
- State laws passed since 2020 general election to impose harsher ID or stricter signature requirements, or to ease requirements

Know more about voter ID requirements in your state and what laws are in place:

- voter ID Laws by National Conference of State Legislatures
- Voter ID Laws by State – Ballotpedia
- State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab
- Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights / Voting Rights

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in your state: VOTE411

Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in your state: DemocracyMovement.us

If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683
Early voting, also known as “in-person absentee,” “advanced voting,” or “early in-person voting,” allows voters to cast a ballot in person some time prior to Election Day. As voters continue to seek this method of voting, states must increase their locations and options.

Components for this index include how early a state allows early voting, the length of early voting period, availability of weekend voting, and state legislation making early voting harder or easier since the last general election.

44% of states earned a high confidence rating
34% of states and DC received a moderate confidence rating
22% of states received a low confidence rating

www.democracyinitiative.org
Index 3: Early Voting

Know more about early voting options in your state and what laws are in place:

- Early In-Person Voting by National Conference of State Legislatures
- Early Voting by State by Vote.org
- State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab
- How Easy is it to Vote Early in Your State by Center for Election Innovation & Research?

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in your state: VOTE411

Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in your state: DemocracyMovement.us

If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683

Concerns: While early voting is popular, the days, times, and locations vary widely. Recent polling shows a growing divide between the two major political parties on voter access, but there appears to be increasing bipartisan support for early vote options. The pandemic encouraged states to temporarily expand early vote options in 2020. Codifying those changes into permanent options will make voting convenient, especially for voters who are generally unable to vote in their precinct on election day due to work, family, or travel obligations. As voters continue to seek this method of voting, states must increase their locations and options.

Here are components that we examined on how states are expected to provide early voting options, with elements present or absent that influence how effective and positive the process from a voter’s perspective.

- Forms of early voting
- Length of early voting
- Availability of weekend voting
- State laws passed since the 2020 general election making early voting harder or easier
Safe Voting Scores by State

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly changed the way Americans were expected to vote and how state and local election officials were expected to respond to their needs. Vote-by-mail (VBM), also called absentee voting, is a necessary and safe tool to help voters who face barriers to in-person voting.

Components of this index include the ability of voters to cast ballots outside of polling sites, ease in applying for/or receiving mailed ballots, and access to ballot drop off sites with or without the assistance of another person submitting the ballot.

18% of states and DC earned a high confidence rating
40% of states received a moderate confidence rating
42% of states received a low confidence rating

www.democracyinitiative.org
Index 4: Safe Voting – Access to vote-by-mail or absentee voting

Question: Can I have confidence in participating in the voting process in 2022 if I choose to vote at home by mail or via a ballot drop off site due to work/travel/health restrictions and/or safety concerns?

Concerns: Many states passed temporary measures in 2020 to increase access to voting outside of poll sites in response to the pandemic. In 2021, some states chose to codify these provisions. Alarmingly, many states are seeking limitations or bans affecting absentee voting processes, such as drop-off boxes, which will make it harder for voters to safely cast their ballots during a prolonged pandemic.

Here are components that we examined on how states are expected to conduct vote-by-mail or absentee mail election options, with elements present or absent that influence how effective and positive the process from a voter's perspective.

- Process – vote-by-mail, no-excuse absentee voting, or excuse-only absentee voting
- The ease in applying for an absentee ballot, if necessary
- The ease in receiving a ballot
- The availability of ballot return options
- Laws allowing how one may receive assistance from another person in returning a ballot
- Ease of staying on a permanent absentee ballot list

Know more about safe voting options in your state and what laws are in place:
- State Profiles by National Vote at Home
- Voting Outside the Polling Place by National Conference of State Legislatures
- State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab
- Universally Accessible and Racially Equitable Vote by Mail by Demos

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in your state: VOTE411
Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in your state: DemocracyMovement.us
If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683
Components of this index include whether ballot return and rejection rates in 2020 and whether states have mechanisms in place to decrease rejections related to pre-paid postage, postmark acceptance, ballot tracking, signature verification, cure process, and ballot preprocessing.

Ballot Acceptance Scores by State

Effective vote-by-mail programs give voters notice and time to cure a mistake, which increases confidence in the ballot acceptance process. It also allows as many registered voters as possible to participate in our democracy. States should ensure the rules for ballot acceptance are clear and can be easily followed.

28% of states and DC earned a high confidence rating
46% of states received a moderate confidence rating
26% of states received a low confidence rating

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**Index 5: Ballot Acceptance**

**Question:** Can I have confidence in participating in a vote-by-mail or absentee in which my ballot will be accepted?

**Concerns:** Vote-by-mail or absentee voting is a multiple step process, which carries a higher risk that a ballot can be rejected for differences in name spelling, presence of an initial, differing signatures, failure to include required identification and lack of/or misplaced signature or insufficient postage. Effective vote-by-mail programs give voters notice and time to correct, or cure, a mistake which increases confidence in the ballot acceptance process. Since 2020, we are seeing new laws that expand reasons ballots can be rejected that have a disproportionate impact on communities of color.

Here are components that we examined regarding ways states accept ballots.
- Ballot return and rejection rates in 2020
- Mechanisms in place to decrease rejection rates
- Mechanisms in place for having pre-paid postage
- Postmark acceptance laws of mailed ballots
- Forms of ballot tracking and signature verification
- Ease in correcting a mistake by the voter in the ballot (cure process)
- Existence of a ballot preprocessing program

Learn more about the ballot acceptance process in your state and what laws are in place:
- State profiles by National Vote at Home
- State Ballot Tracking Tool by Vote.org
- State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab
- State-by-State Ballot Tracking Tools for Voters by HealthyElections.org

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in your state: [VOTE411](#)

Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in your state: [DemocracyMovement.us](#)

If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the [Election Protection Hotline](#) at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683.

[Image of a person voting with links and resources]
Logistical Barriers to Voting

The presence or absence of basic logistics to allow fair access to the voting process influences whether voters are willing or able to cast their ballots. Advocates are raising alarms that certain communities will continue to rely upon in-person voting and that more must be done to improve the voter experience at the polling sites.

Components for this index include taking paid or unpaid leave to vote; finding meaningful assistance at the polling sites to address disability, mobility, literacy, and language proficiency challenges; ensuring participation of those residing in facilities or isolated communities; and accessing polling sites with functional equipment, sound processes, and adequate staff.

20% of states and DC earned a high confidence rating
60% of states received a moderate confidence rating
20% of states received a low confidence rating

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Index 6: Logistical Barriers to Voting

Question: Can I have confidence in the voting process without concerns about logistical barriers in accessing or participating at the polling site?

Concerns: The presence or absence of basic logistics to allow fair access to the voting process influences whether voters are willing or able to cast their ballots. If adverse experiences of 2020 voters have not been adequately addressed, states risk having fewer voters returning in 2022 to cast their ballots. Even with investments in vote-by-mail and absentee voting, disabled or displaced voters, and people who rely on same-day registration, will continue to rely upon in-person voting and that more must be done to improve the voter experience at the polling sites.

Here are components that we examined to determine whether states will engage in practices that promote positive voting experiences from the voter’s perspective.

- Ability for voters to take paid or unpaid leave to vote in-person
- Assistance with mobility issues – curbside, alternatives if polling site is inaccessible, priority in voting lines
- Accessible voting machines options for those with disabilities and language challenges
- Concerns about inadequate signage, delayed opening/early closing, long lines, mishandling of polling site ballots, ballot shortages, voting equipment, systems check-in, inadequate polling site staff, public health issues, and public safety
- Identifying polling site availability for tribal communities, college students, voters with housing instability, temporarily detained

Learn more about assistance for in-person voting and polling sites in your state and what laws are in place:

- State Voting Guides by American Association of People with Disabilities
- Polling Places by the National Conference of State Legislators
- State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab
- States Must Maintain and Expand In-Person Voting Locations by Center for American Progress

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in your state: VOTE411

Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in your state: DemocracyMovement.us

If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683

Know more about assistance for in-person voting and polling sites in your state and what laws are in place:
Components reviewed for this index include the use of voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT), e-pollbooks, Voting Systems Test Laboratory (VSTL) standards, security best practices, protection of voter information from hackers, and the conduction of official nonpartisan post-election audits.

Voters expect their vote to be counted properly, with established safeguards in place leading to a clear candidate winning. The assessment of ballot integrity includes three key components: equipment, security, and auditing.

Components reviewed for this index include the use of voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT), e-pollbooks, Voting Systems Test Laboratory (VSTL) standards, security best practices, protection of voter information from hackers, and the conduction of official nonpartisan post-election audits.

www.democracyinitiative.org
Question: Can I have confidence in the voting process without concerns about functioning equipment, ballot security, and checking and correcting any errors (auditing)?

Concerns: The assessment of ballot integrity includes three key components: equipment, security, and auditing. Thanks to over $1.1B of federal funding for new equipment as well as state election officials’ coordination with Homeland Security and the National Institutes of Standards, reports confirm that the 2020 Election was safe and secure. With states continuing to mandate election reviews and allowing improper access to voting machines, the security of election equipment remains a concern.

Here are components that we examined to determine whether states are using the best practices for equipment and security, as well as the process for auditing an election that is clear and fair to all.

- Use of voter-verified paper audit trail (VVPAT) and e-poll books
- Use of voting systems test laboratory (VSTL) standards
- Use of election security best practices
- Conduction of official non-partisan post-election audits

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in your state: VOTE411
Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in your state: DemocracyMovement.us
If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683

Know more about the equipment your state is using and what laws are in place:
- Voting System Standards, Testing, and Certification by National Conference of State Legislatures
- Election Day Equipment - November 2022 by the VerifiedVoting.org
- State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab
- It's Official: The Election Was Secure by Brennan Center for Justice
Components of this index include whether states have passed legislation to shift election authority away from the chief election officer or created partisan committees to review election results.

The independent administration and nonpartisan certifications of elections is a hallmark of a fair and inclusive democracy. Since 2020, state legislatures have given themselves the power to influence and even override the will of the voters.

44% of states earned a high confidence rating
28% of states and D.C. received a moderate confidence rating
28% of states received a low confidence rating

www.democracyinitiative.org
Question: Can I have confidence in the voting process without concerns about partisan actors overtaking election administration and certification process?

Concerns: In 2021, 13 states enacted legislation shifting election authority with the potential to make the certification process more partisan. The result is an erosion of confidence in the outcomes of elections in states where legislatures have given themselves the power to override the will of the voters.

Here are components that we examined to determine whether there should be concerns of partisan interference in election results:

- Academic analysis of the fairness and accuracy of 2020 general election
- Whether the state have a constitutional right to a secret ballot
- Whether the state election authority is bipartisan in nature
- State laws passed since 2020 general election to make election administration more partisan
- State laws pending in 2022 to make election administration more partisan

Learn more about attempts to make election administration more partisan and what laws are in place:

- Interference with Election Administration by States United Democracy
- Election Administration at the State Level by the National Conference of State Legislators
- State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab dealing with Election Interference
- State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in your state: VOTE411

Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in your state: DemocracyMovement.us

If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683
Components include the perceived trustworthiness of mainstream media’s election coverage, disinformation and intimidation spread online and by telephone, threats and intimidation experienced at the polling sites, and measures states have taken to help mitigate these discouraging influences.

External Interference in Voting

To counter external interference seeking to manipulate and deceive voters, public education campaigns will be necessary for voters to better understand their rights as well as be aware of action or inaction taken by state legislatures to promote accessible, safe, and transparent elections.

10% of states earned a high confidence rating
62% of states and D.C. received a moderate confidence rating
28% of states received a low confidence rating
**Index 9: External Interference in Voting**

**Question:** Can I have confidence in participating in the voting process without concerns about being influenced by biased media, disinformation campaigns, and/or intimidation or threats of violence?

**Concerns:** Previous voting experiences influence voters' decisions to participate again, specifically voters who felt manipulated, unsafe, or deceived in the last election cycle. Callers to the 1-866-OUR-VOTE legal hotline during the last week of the 2020 election reported concerns with threats and intimidation both at the polling sites and online. Although there are some states that have passed measures in attempts to counter such interference, more need to do so.

Here are components that we examined to assess voter experiences during the 2020 election cycle and whether the presence or absence of state laws will determine confidence levels of voters in 2022.

- Perception of trust in election media coverage
- Reported targeted interference or unrest in the states leading up to the 2020 Election Day
- Forms of intimidation and threats of violence against poll workers and voters experienced at polling sites in 2020
- Measures taken to mitigate external influence –

**Links and Resources**

Know more about safety at polling sites, disinformation campaigns, and what laws are in place:

- Electioneering Prohibitions by National Conference of State Legislatures
- Polling Places by the National Conference of State Legislators
- State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab
- As a Matter of Fact: The Harms Caused by Election Disinformation by Common Cause

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in your state: VOTE411

Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in your state: DemocracyMovement.us

If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683.
## Partisan Influences within the Political Climate

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<th>Overall Confidence Scores</th>
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Americans responded positively to the range of voting options offered during the global pandemic. Voters in most states will head to the polls in a highly-polarized environment, fueled by a growing cultural and political divide.

Components reviewed for this index include the current political representation of the state legislature, governorship, attorney general, and secretary of state. Census data from 2020, including their diversity index, is examined. Also considered in this index are key statewide races held in 2022, their significance to the national political landscape, and the average margins of victory for the last two presidential races.
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Partisan Influences within the Political Climate

Current U.S. Gubernatorial Races

Overall Confidence Scores

**HIGH RATING**
- CA
- CO
- NV
- MD
- OR
- HI
- VT

**MED RATING**
- AK
- ID
- WY
- NY
- CT
- MI
- NE
- OH
- IA
- IL
- RI
- MN
- NM
- MA
- NH
- GA
- PA
- AR
- AZ
- KS
- WI

**LOW RATING**
- AL
- OK
- SC
- FL
- SD
- TN
- TX

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Components reviewed for this index include the current political representation of the state legislature, governorship, attorney general, and secretary of state. Census data from 2020, including their diversity index, is examined. Also considered in this index are key statewide races held in 2022, their significance to the national political landscape, and the average margins of victory for the last two presidential races.

www.democracyinitiative.org
Concerns: 2020 saw a significant increase in threats of death or violence against election officials, workers, and their relatives in eight of the most contested battleground states. This trend, taken together with increased voter suppression laws in states that became more racially diverse, raises concerns that there will be a greater investment of resources into disinformation, threats and violence to undermine confidence in the election process in state and local elections that impact the national political landscape.

Question: Is there a correlation between one party controlling the legislative and executive branches of government and this contributes to restrictions or protections of voters?

Here are components that we examined to determine whether states are using their political dominance to enact more voter restrictions or identifying more ways to expand voting options to Americans.

- Whether the state has a trifecta (one political party controls both branches of the legislature and the governorship)
- Whether the state has a trifecta plus (one political party controls both legislature and governorship, and the majority of members of the state’s highest court share that same party)
- Whether a state has a triplex (the governor, attorney general, and secretary of state are of the same political party)
- The margin of victory in the state for the last two Presidential races
- The state’s Diversity Index