Index 1: Voter Registration - Confidence level - MEDIUM
Virginia closes voter registration 22 days before Election Day. The state offers automatic, online, and same-day voter registration. Youth can pre-register to vote beginning at age 16. Felony disenfranchisement continues until the terms of parole or probation are complete or until voting rights are restored by the governor - determined on a case by case basis. Although Virginia does not purge voters from lists for nonvoting no matter the number of years, it had a moderate number of purges conducted in 2020. A moderate number of Virginia voters contacted the 1-866-OUR-VOTE legal hotline in 2020 during the last week of the election with concerns about voter registration and the handling of provisional ballots. 2022 law improves maintaining updated voter lists in regards to the removal of deceased persons, prohibits publishing the voter registration list searchable online, and requires registrars to notify voters when they have canceled their voter registration via mail and email, if available.

Index 2: Voter Identification - Confidence level - HIGH
Virginia requires no photo ID to vote. The state is a member of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) which seeks to help states improve accuracy of voter rolls. A moderate number of voters in 2020 reported concerns about voter ID or not being on the voting list/database. Restrictive state legislation was pending in early 2022.

Index 3: Early Voting - Confidence level - HIGH
Virginia offers early in-person voting beginning 20 days before Election Day, ending the Saturday before. There is Saturday voting with some optional on Sundays depending on the locality. No-excuse required absentee voting is available. Legislation enacted in 2021 improved voter access. Virginia scored third best state in this index.
Index 5: Ballot Acceptance - Confidence level - HIGH
Virginia had a high percentage of mail-in ballots returned in 2020, with a low rejection rate. There is a statutorily required statewide ballot tracking program, but it is not strong. The state allows election administrators to preprocess returned ballots and provides a codified process for voters to correct for ballot discrepancies. It does not have a signature verification program. Absentee envelopes must be signed by the voter and a witness. Absentee ballots must be received before noon on the 3rd day after an election if postmarked by Election Day.

Learn more about how to vote and voting rights in Virginia: VOTE411
Learn about voting laws recently passed or enacted in Virginia: State Voting Rights Tracker by Voting Rights Lab
If you or anyone you know encounters problems while voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE or 866-687-8683
Learn how to take action to protect voting rights in Virginia: DemocracyMovement.us
Index 6: Logistical Barriers in Voting - Confidence level - MEDIUM

Although Election Day in Virginia is a state holiday, there is no specific law allowing employees to take paid or unpaid leave to vote. The state provides high quality accessible voting machine options. State law in 2021 allows curbside voting for those with disabilities and those with visual impairment can vote using screen reader assistive technology. Measures were also passed to expand the voting rights of the incarcerated through a pending constitutional amendment. There was a moderate number of reports by voters in 2020 with concerns about disability access, COVID-19 protocols, inadequate signage, mishandling of polling sites ballots, and voting equipment. The state had a high ratio of poll workers to polling sites in 2020. Virginia ranked in the top third of all states on how well they invested in the 2020 elections to improve processes while being cost effective.

Index 7: Equipment, Security, and Auditing - Confidence level - MEDIUM

Virginia has a statewide verified paper audit trail. All voting centers use hand marked paper ballots and offer Ballot Marking Devices for voters with accessibility needs. Virginia tests the equipment according to federal standards. Its election security systems received very low overall ratings in 2018. The state uses risk limiting audit methods to double-check for machine recording errors after certification and during the statutorily required post-election period.

Index 8: Independent Election Administration - Confidence level - HIGH

Virginia has established the constitutional right to a secret ballot and its election administration is designed to be nonpartisan by nature. No laws were passed in 2021 on this topic, but legislation pending in 2022 sought to shift election authority, penalize election officials for their decisions, authorize reviews of other elections, authorize an audit of the 2020 elections, and interfere with local election administration. State law passed in 2022 prohibits private funding for voter education, voter registration, or elections administration.
Index 9: External Interference in Voting - Confidence Level - MEDIUM

Public opinion surveys showed that Virginia voters had not much trust in the 2020 election news coverage, while political scientists gave the state low media integrity ratings. The state had a moderate number of demonstrations during the last week of the general elections. Virginia voters were targeted with robocalls to stay home and not vote. There was a moderate number of reports from voters with concerns about political intimidation online and in-person, disinformation, election certification, electioneering, poll worker misconduct, police presence, and public safety. State law requires all poll workers to be trained, bans weapons at polling sites, prohibits obstructing or hindering voters, criminalizes voter intimidation and false election speech, and authorizes law enforcement to be present only by request or on official business.

Index 10: The Role of Government and Politics – No rating given, informational only

Virginia is one of two states, along with Alaska, that has a split legislature and Republican Governor. It has a Republican triplex – the governor, attorney general, and secretary of state are from the same political party. Based on the last two presidential elections, Virginia, which used to be a GOP leaning state, now tilts Democratic, with an average Democratic voting margin of 7.7% compared to the national average Democratic voting margin of 3%. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the state’s population grew by 7.9% compared to the national average of 7.4%. Virginia is as racially diverse as the country as a whole. During the past decade, the white population dropped from 82% to 76%. Virginia has the highest Asian population (7.1%) among east southern states. With the U.S. Census results, the state will neither gain nor lose any representatives in Congress.