

True or false: Only United States citizens have ever been permitted to vote.

Answer: False. From the 1770s until right after the Civil War, the right to vote was contingent on factors other than citizenship such as being a free white male, having resided in a state for a certain length of time, owning property, or paying a certain amount of tax. Many but not all states permitted non-citizen voting through the 1800s and even up until the 1920s in some cases.

This began to change in the 1800s and especially right after the Civil War when the 14th and 15th Amendments to the US Constitution granted citizenship rights to everyone born in the United States and protecting the rights of all citizens to vote. In addition to these amendments which declared that the right to vote could not be denied to citizens but did not restrict the vote to citizens only, new laws began to be passed at the state level to restrict voting to citizens only.

True or false: You can vote without a permanent home address.

Answer: True! You can register to vote using an address that isn't your home, such as a park, the county courthouse, a shelter, or a post office providing service to the area where you reside. The exact requirements vary by state.

Rap legend Snoop Dogg is voting for the first time ever in this election, after incorrectly believing for years that he couldn't vote. Why did he think he couldn't vote?

Snoop had served time in jail for two felony convictions and was led to believe that he was permanently barred from voting because of this. However, in the State of California and many other states, formerly incarcerated people can vote once their jail time is over and they are done with parole.

True or false: All U.S. Military servicepeople and veterans are allowed to vote.

Answer: False.

You do not have to be a U.S. citizen in order to enlist in the military, but you do have to be a U.S. citizen to vote. It can be a way to fast-track citizenship, but it's not a guarantee, and not all non-citizens who enlist undertake the citizenship process.

True or false: Children adopted from abroad by U.S. citizen parents automatically have the right to vote when they turn 18.

Answer: Both. A complicated system of visas for adoptees was simplified by the Child Citizenship Act (CCA) of 2001 which guarantees automatic citizenship to qualifying adoptees born outside of the U.S. under the age of 18. However, the CCA did not apply to adoptees who were over the age of 18 years when the law went into effect in 2001. As a result, an estimated 35,000 adoptees who were legally adopted by U.S. citizens but were over the age of 18 when the CCA went into effect failed to receive U.S. citizenship. Many of these adoptees live in the U.S. susceptible to deportation, unable to travel outside of the U.S. and unable to work legally, and unable to vote.

People from US Territories cannot vote for president in their territories because territories have no representation in the electoral college. However, they can vote in state and federal elections if they reside in one of the 50 states. But there's one exception. People from which US territory cannot vote regardless of where they live in the U.S.?

With one glaring exception, all people born in the United States or its territories are U.S. citizens. The exception are people born in American Samoa — a U.S. territory since 1900 — who hold the status “non-citizen nationals.” Because they are not citizens, they cannot vote in state or federal elections even if they move to one of the 50 states.

What two US states allow people who are currently serving sentences in prison to vote?

Answer: According to the ACLU, in Vermont and Maine, everyone can vote – regardless of incarceration or felony conviction.

In Virginia, Kentucky, and Iowa, on the other hand, all people with felony convictions are permanently disenfranchised.

In California, people in prison and on parole cannot vote. All other people with criminal convictions, including people on probation, can vote.

Across the U.S., nearly 6 million people with criminal convictions, including felonies and misdemeanors, are legally barred from voting.

What must formerly incarcerated people in Florida do in order to be able to vote?

Answer: Pay all fines, fees, and restitution charges associated with their sentence.

In 2018, Florida voters passed Amendment 4 to the State’s constitution. This restored voting rights to formerly incarcerated people who had been convicted of most felonies upon the completion of their sentences.

In 2019, the Florida legislature and Governor Rick DeSantis passed a bill clarifying that the sentence included payment of fines, court fees, and restitution. These fees can amount to thousands of dollars, and there are no exemptions for people unable to pay because of lack of funds. This creates enormous barriers for formerly incarcerated people, many of whom have low incomes and are unable to afford even basic necessities.

The ACLU and other civil liberties groups have challenged the law, saying that it amounts to a modern-day poll tax by preventing those who cannot afford to pay the fines from voting.

The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition is raising money to pay former felons’ restitution fines and fees. You may have also heard about this in the news recently, as former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg has contributed \$16 million dollars to the cause.

Native Americans were granted US citizenship under the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924. In what year were they legally allowed to vote in all states?

Answer: 1948*

Native Americans had been specifically excluded from the 14th Amendment, which extended citizenship rights to all people born on US soil. Although Native people were granted citizenship in 1924,

subsequent challenges and court opinions in some Western states ruled that since they did not pay property taxes their relationship to the US Government was that of “wards to their guardians” rather than as equal members of society. This condescending and demeaning argument also curtailed their rights according to constitutions in several states like Arizona and New Mexico. Native Americans were not legally allowed to vote in all US states until 1948, when court cases *Trujillo v. Garley* and *Laveen v. Harrison* ruled that these guardianship arguments violated the constitutional rights of Native Americans.

What US states allowed women to vote when they were granted statehood?

Answer: New Jersey, Wyoming, Alaska, Hawaii.

The New Jersey constitution allowed all inhabitants of the state who owned property to vote from 1787 until 1807, when voting was restricted to men only. This meant that unmarried women and widows who owned property could vote – married women could not, as under a legal doctrine called coverture their property belonged to their husbands.

Wyoming was the only state admitted to the Union before the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920 that explicitly allowed women to vote when it became a state. Wyoming became a state in 1890, but had allowed women to vote since 1869.

The motivations to allow women to vote were a mixture of wanting to do the right thing and total pragmatism. The Wyoming Territory legislature had the opportunity to enact a popular reform that had been gaining support across the US and its territories since the 1840s - efforts in several states and territories to grant women the vote had failed in the previous decade but by increasingly slim margins. Wyoming was also trying to attract enough population to qualify for statehood, and to bring in potential wives for the men who outnumbered women six to one there. The Wyoming territory legislature came close to revoking women’s right to vote in 1871, but fell one vote short, allowing the law to stand. Women have been able to vote in Wyoming for 150 continuous years.

Alaska and Hawaii were admitted to the Union in 1959, 39 years after the passage of the 19th Amendment.