LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF EVANSTON

The Intercom

Special edition for all voters in the November 3, 2020 General Election

MISSION STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

What Is the Fair Tax Amendment?

The Fair Tax Amendment reforms the state constitution to eliminate the requirement that Illinois tax income at a single rate, allowing instead for higher rates for higher incomes and lower rates for people with low and moderate incomes.

WHY DO WE NEED FAIR TAX REFORM?

The old way of taxing income in Illinois is unfair and inadequate.

The old way is unfair because taxes fall too heavily on working people. Low-income households now pay almost double what the wealthiest pay in taxes as a share of their income. That's wrong!

The old way is inadequate because it doesn't properly fund public services. That causes budget deficits at every level of government, pushing up property taxes and forcing harmful cuts to education, human services, health care, infrastructure, public safety and jobs.

WHAT DOES THE FAIR TAX AMENDMENT MEAN FOR ME?

Fair Tax reform will lift the burden from the middle class and those struggling to get there: 97% of taxpayers will get a tax cut or pay no more than they do now.

The Fair Tax will require wealthy people to pay their fair share, only increasing taxes on those who make more than $250,000 a year. The vast majority of the increases will be paid by millionaires and billionaires.

Fair Tax reform will raise more than $3 billion a year that can help to fund education, health care, human services, state and local government and responsibly pay the state's bills.

HOW DO WE WIN THE FAIR TAX FOR ILLINOIS?

We win the Fair Tax by voting YES on the constitutional amendment on the ballot for the November 2020 general election. A 'yes' vote of more than 50% of those voting in the election or more than 60% of those voting on the question is required for passage. Following is the wording you will see on your ballot:

> The proposed amendment grants the State authority to impose higher income tax rates on higher income levels, which is how the federal government and a majority of other states do it. The amendment would remove the portion of the Revenue Article of the Illinois Constitution that is sometimes referred to as the "flat tax," that requires all taxes on income to be at the same rate. The amendment does not itself change tax rates. It gives the State the ability to impose higher tax rates on those with higher income levels and lower income tax rates on those with middle or lower income levels. You are asked to decide whether the proposed amendment should become a part of the Illinois Constitution. (YES NO)

www.YesForFairTax.org @yesforfairtax

Dear Reader,

This very special edition of LWVE's Intercom *is intended to help everyone – members and non-members alike – to be informed voters. We don't need to tell you that voting is important, but this year you may need more than the usual information to navigate the election process. Providing information and encouraging citizen involvement in government is our mission!*

While we are confident that most readers of this Intercom *are registered to vote and are overwhelmingly likely to vote, we offer information about new options for casting your ballot as well as information and resources for candidates and issues. Just as important, we are providing some tools for you to help distribute information and encourage others to register and vote. We encourage you to share this* Intercom *with new voters, family members, neighbors and other organizations. You can share the link, download it as a PDF and print or refer people to our website or Facebook page.*

If you know individuals who aren't inclined to vote, we have included a list of half a dozen reasons why it's so important. Please use these for "why voting matters conversations" and help increase voter registration and turnout.

If, after reading this issue, you still have questions, contact us!

We also encourage you to consider and spread the word that paid election judges and polling place technicians and additional volunteer jobs will be essential for ensuring voter access! This year students 16 years of age or older are eligible to be poll workers.

Remember that just as "Your Vote Is Your Voice" there are many additional ways to exercise your voice and advocate for good government between elections. Our country is a constant work in progress. It is within our power to strengthen it to be one in which every voice is heard and every vote is counted. Your active participation is needed to protect our democracy.

Why Vote?

It's your right.

People have died defending this right. Don't take it for granted! Voting is more than just electing a candidate, it's choosing the right policies and people who have your best interests in mind when making decisions that will affect our community, state and nation.

Elections have consequences.

You have the power to decide on the quality of life you want for yourself and future generations. When you vote, you are taking an active role in deciding issues regarding health care, immigration, equal opportunity, voting rights, infrastructure, jobs, education, social security, neighborhood safety, taxes, etc. This is your life, so take the time to help decide what's best.

Not voting is giving up your voice.

Elections are decided by the people who go out and vote. Take some time and learn about the measures and the candidates. If you don't vote, someone else will make the decision for you. Your power is in your vote.

It's your money.

You pay taxes, but do you know ***how*** *that money is being used? Most people don't. Voting is your chance to choose how your tax dollars are spent – such as funding for health care and social services.*

Voting is an opportunity for change.

Do you want to make a positive impact? Voting gives you that chance. Support the candidates and ballot measures that can help your community, state and even the nation for the greater good. Make your voice heard in these elections.

The community depends on you!

Our communities are made up of friends, loved ones, neighbors and children. Some may not know how important voting is, while others don't have the privilege. Make the decision to vote for yourself and those around you.

Registering to Vote

The Basics

To register to vote you must:

- be a U.S. citizen; be 18 on or by the next general election;
- live in your election precinct for at least 30 days prior to election day; and,
- not claim the right to vote anywhere else.

ID needed to register:

In person two forms of ID must be shown to register. One must have your current address. Neither needs to be a photo ID. If you register online or by mail you may be asked to show ID at the polls.

Examples of acceptable ID:

passport, driver's license, utility bill, FOID card, school/work ID, social security card, pay stub

You can register to vote online, by mail, or in person:

Online: OVA.Elections.il.gov.

Register by October 18, 2020.
You will need either your IL driver's license or State ID.

By Mail: Print forms found at **CookCountyClerk.com/rtv**.

Fill it out and deliver/mail it in by October 6. Your signature on this form will be used to identify you when you vote.

In person: With a deputy registrar by October 6, 2020 at a city clerk, county clerk, or secretary of state's office, at an early voting site from October 19 to November 2, 2020 or at your polling place on election day. You will need two forms of ID.

Frequently Asked Questions

What ID do I need to register to vote?
You'll need two pieces of identification. One must have your current address. Neither needs to be a photo ID. A list of acceptable IDs can be found at **CookCountyClerk.com/service/when-voters-do-and-dont-need-identification-id**.

How do I know if I'm registered to vote?
After registering to vote a voter identification card will be sent to your registered address. Suburban cook county voters can check their registration status at **CookCountyClerk.com/service/your-voter-information**.

What if I've moved or changed my name since I registered?
If you have moved within 30 days of the election, you will need to vote at your old polling place.

If you moved or changed your name more than 30 days before election day, you will need to complete a new registration form.

I'm a college student from another state. Can I register to vote here?
Yes. College students may use their dorm address or school address to register to vote.

Can I use a P.O. box as my address when I register to vote?
No. You must provide a physical address as it is used to determine your polling place.

I'm currently on probation/I have a criminal record. Can I register to vote?
Yes.

Can I register to vote if I'm homeless?
Yes. A mailing address where mail can be received should be provided and will determine your polling place. A shelter or drop-in center's address is permissible.

League of Women Voters® of Evanston

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2020-2021 ELECTED OFFICERS

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VP Voter Services Mary Keefe Kelly
VP Membership Valerie Krejcie
Secretary Linda LaBuda
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Development Karen Hunt
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Communications Katie O'Neil

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Membership Kathleen O'Malley
Voter Services Mary Rothschild
Special Initiative, *The Intercom* Editor Mark Tendam

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Chair Sue Calder
Member Birch Burghardt

ADDITIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Webmaster Mary Lewis
Office Coordinator Kate Todd

The Intercom is the newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Evanston

Candidates in the 2020 General Election

President of the United States

The President is the chief executive of the country, possessing many powers including signing bills into law, vetoing legislation, appointing federal judges and executive department heads, issue executive orders and conducting foreign policy.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN
Democrat
Running mate: Kamala D. Harris

DONALD J. TRUMP
Republican
Running mate: Michael R. Pence

BRIAN CARROLL
American Solidarity Party
Running mate: Amar Patel

HOWIE HAWKINS
Green
Running mate: Angela Walker

JO JORGENSEN
Libertarian
Running mate: Jeremy "Spike" Cohen

GLORIA LA RIVA
Party for Socialism and Liberation
Running mate: Leonard Peltier

U.S. Senate

The U.S. Senate is one of two chambers of the federal legislature. Senators are responsible for writing and passing legislation, approving presidential appointments and ratifying treaties with foreign countries.

DAVID F. BLACK
Green

MARK C. CURRAN JR.
Republican

RICHARD J. DURBIN
Democrat

DANNY MALOUF
Libertarian

WILLIE L. WILSON
Willie Wilson Party

U. S. House of Representatives

The U.S. House of Representatives is one of two chambers of the federal legislature. Representatives begin the legislation process, offer amendments and serve on committees.

Illinois 9th Congressional District

SARGIS SANGARI
Republican

JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY
Democrat

Illinois Assembly

The Assembly's legislative authority and responsibilities include passing bills on public policy matters, setting levels for state spending, raising and lowering taxes and voting to uphold or override gubernatorial vetoes.

Senate

District 7 (uncontested)

HEATHER STEANS
Democrat

Illinois House of Representatives

District 16 (uncontested)

DENYSE WANG STONEBACK
Democrat

District 17

JENNIFER GONG-GERSHOWITZ
Democrat

CHRISTOPHER KRUGER
Green

YESOE YOON
Republican

District 18

ROBYN GABEL
Democrat

SEAN MATLIS
Independent

Cook County State's Attorney

The County State's Attorney is the chief legal prosecutor of the county.

BRIAN DENNEHY
Libertarian

KIM FOXX
Democrat

PATRICK "PAT" W. O'BRIEN
Republican

Judges

See next page for information about judges.

Clerk of the Circuit Court, Cook County

IRIS Y. MARTINEZ
Democrat

BARBARA BELLAR
Republican

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commission

The Commission is responsible for stormwater and wastewater management in an 883 square mile area including Chicago and 125 suburban municipalities. It monitors and sustains 76 miles of the Chicago Area Waterways System and 1,300 small streams. (Vote for 3)

EIRA L. CORRAL SEPULVEDA
Democrat

M. "CAM" CAMERON DAVIS
Democrat

KIMBERLY NEELY DUBUCLET
Democrat

TROY ANTONIO HERNANDEZ
Green

TAMMIE FELICIA VINSON
Green

RACHEL WALES
Green

Constitutional Amendment 1

Illinois Graduated Income Tax

This proposal would repeal the Illinois constitutional requirement that state income taxes be set at a flat rate and would allow the General Assembly to enact graduated income tax rates.

Judges

Judges have the power to make decisions about guilt and innocence, to take away someone's freedom, to interpret or overturn state laws and to correct or perpetuate injustices.

Voters elect judges for the Illinois Supreme Court, the Illinois Appellate Court, the Circuit Court of Cook County and the suburban judicial Subcircuits. Cook County judges sit for six-year terms, while Illinois Appellate Court judges and Supreme Court Justices sit for ten-year terms. Cook County Circuit Court and Subcircuit judges are chosen for the ballot in the partisan primary but will run without party designation in the general election. Voters were tasked with choosing from an overwhelming 177 judicial candidates for 37 judicial vacancies during the Illinois primary election, March 17, 2020.

To provide a non-partisan outlet for voters to understand and stay informed about complex judicial issues, Chicago Appleseed created **VoteForJudges.org** with support from the Committee to Elect Qualified Judges. The VoteForJudges.org website reports the results of 13 bar groups, which receive information about and evaluate candidates' performances and recommend whether he or she is qualified to be or remain a judge. The Alliance of Bar Associations (Alliance) includes 12 bar associations which work collaboratively, but publish independent results.

VoteForJudges.org also includes the judicial evaluation results of the Chicago Bar Association and the judicial endorsements of the *Chicago Tribune*.

For more information about judicial evaluations, visit VoteForJudges.org. You may also contact their Executive Director, Malcolm Rich, at malcolmrich@chicagoappleseed.org or 312-988-6552.

To stay updated about judicial elections and the functioning of the Cook County and Illinois courts, please follow Chicago Appleseed on Twitter (@ChiAppleseed), Facebook (www.facebook.com/ChicagoAppleseed), and LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com/company/ChicagoAppleseed), or visit **ChicagoAppleseed.org**.

Key 2020 election dates

September 24

The clerk's office will begin mailing vote by mail ballots

October 6

Last day to register to vote in person

October 7

First day for "grace period registration" and voting at election authority only (downtown Chicago and Skokie Courthouse)

October 18

Last day to register online

October 19

First day of early voting; secure drop boxes available at Evanston Civic Center and Skokie early voting site (Oakton Community College on Lincoln Avenue, doors 22 and 23)

November 2

Last day of early voting

November 3

Election Day

Quick Links

to referenced sources:

IllinoisVoterGuide.org
Non-partisan election information resource powered by the League of Women Voters® of Illinois

LWVE.org
Website for the League of Women Voters of Evanston

ChicagoAppleseed.org
Information about judicial evaluations

CampusVoteProject.org
Information about student voting

CookCountyClerk.com
Information for suburban Cook County residents

VoteForJudges.org
Information about judicial elections

YesForFairTax.org
Information about the graduated income tax amendment

More Voting Basics

Three ways to vote:

Vote by mail: No reason or excuse is needed to vote by mail. Voters can apply for a ballot online. All requests for a mail ballot must be received by October 29, 2020. Suburban Cook County voters may request a mail ballot at **CookCountyClerk.com/agency/vote-mail**.
Vote in person during the early voting period: Early voting begins October 19 and ends November 2. Early voting sites will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends and holidays.

Vote in person on election day: Lookup your polling place at cookcountyclerk.com/service/your-voter-information.

Will I need to show ID at the polls?
Usually no.

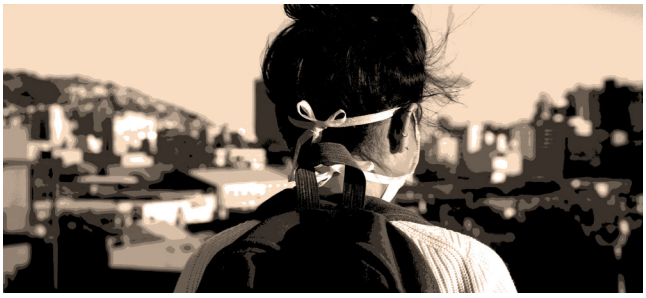
Visit **CookCountyClerk.com/service/when-voters-do-and-dont-need-identification-id** for more information.

If voting by mail be sure to sign your ballot with the same signature you used to register to vote as they will need to match.

Can I see what the ballot will look like before I vote?
Yes.

Visit **CookCountyClerk.com/service/your-voter-information** or **IllinoisVoterGuide.org** for a sample ballot.

Can I take notes with me to the polling place?
Yes. You can take notes or a completed sample ballot with you into the voting booth.

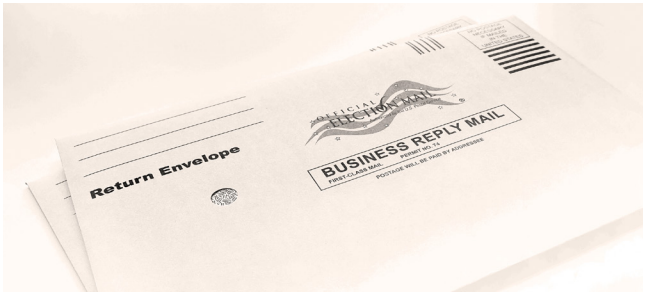


What's New Due to Covid -19?

Illinois has passed a new Vote By Mail (VBM) law to make voting safer and more accessible during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Voting basics:

- All registered voters who have voted in the 2018 general, 2019 consolidated or 2020 primary elections will be sent a mail ballot application.
- Election authorities will begin sending requested ballots on September 24. Ballots must be returned or postmarked by November 3.
- In person voting is still available during the early voting period from October 19 through November 2 and on election day November.
- Election day, November 3 is a state holiday.



How do I apply for a mail-in ballot?
Visit **CookCountyClerk.com/agency/vote-mail**.

Where/how do I cast my VBM ballot?
You can return your completed VBM ballot by USPS mail, by dropping it in a secure ballot box at an early voting site or by returning it to your local election authority.

Is VBM Safe? Is fraud a problem?
Voting by mail is safe. Currently 5 other states conduct their elections entirely by mail and 28 states allow any voter to vote by mail if they choose. Election authorities have tools to combat fraud attempts, such as looking for statistical irregularities and signature matching.

Voting by Mail: Frequently Asked Questions

How do I apply for a mail-in ballot?
Suburban Cook County voters should visit **CookCountyClerk.com/agency/vote-mail**. When you apply through the Cook County Clerk's website you will receive a url that allows you to track your ballot.

What if I get a VBM ballot and then decide to vote in person or my ballot doesn't arrive on time?
You can surrender your ballot at your polling place and vote in person. If you do not have your ballot with you, you'll be asked to sign an affidavit and vote provisionally.

How do the drop boxes at early voting sites work?
Ballots will be picked up daily, secured and delivered to the mail-in ballot processing center. The ballots will be stamped with the day's date.

I'm a first time voter that registered online. Can I vote by mail?

Yes. The signature on file with the Secretary of State (your ID signature) will be used for signature matching if you registered online.

I'm a first time voter that registered by mail. Can I vote by mail?
Yes, if you provided both your Illinois State ID/license number AND the last four digits of your social security number. The signature on file with the Secretary of State (your ID signature) will be used for signature matching.

If you did NOT provide both, your Illinois State ID/license number AND the last four digits of your Social Security number or submit a copy of identification along with your registration form, then you must vote in person the first time you vote.

Voting: Frequently Asked Questions

Can I vote if I have a criminal record?
Yes, you can register and vote. While there are states with restrictions on voting rights for the formerly incarcerated, in Illinois there is no distinction between formerly incarcerated community members and their fellow citizens.

I'm a college student from another state. Can I vote here on campus?
Students have a choice about where to vote. You can register and vote at your college address. Being an out-of-state student for tuition purposes doesn't prevent you from choosing to register and vote on campus. Voting at your college doesn't affect your status as a dependent on your parents' taxes or your federal financial aid. For more information about student voting visit **CampusVoteProject.org**.

The other option is to vote at your home address by requesting an absentee ballot if you have previously registered to vote there. You may only be registered and vote at one location.

Can non-English speakers vote?
Yes. In 1975, Congress expanded the Voting Rights Act to protect language minorities from voting discrimination. All election information that is available in English must also be available in the minority language.

Voting Informed: Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I find information about the candidates?
IllinoisVoterGuide.org
Ballotpedia.org

Where can I find information about the judges?
For most judicial offices, the Illinois State Bar Association will provide an evaluation or a poll rating. **ISBA.org/judicialevaluations**.

Another website for information about judicial elections is **VoteForJudges.org**.

If I don't know enough about one or more of the candidates running for an office, can I skip that on the ballot and just not vote for that office?
Yes. You are not required to vote for every office listed on the ballot. The candidates you want to vote for will still be counted.

Voting: Troubleshooting Problems at the Polls

If I'm in line when the polls close can I still vote?
Yes. On election day, you can cast your ballot after the polls close if you are in line at the time listed as closing.

If there is a problem at my polling place and my right to vote is challenged, what should I do?
If your name does not appear on the rolls, or if you do not have ID (in the few circumstances where ID is required), or your right to vote is challenged for any reason, you are entitled to a provisional ballot.

Provisional voting allows you to vote on election day even if your ability to vote has been questioned. Be sure the poll worker gives you instructions about the steps you need to take in order to ensure that your ballot is counted.

If you encounter problems while voting, call the electionprotection hotline at 1-866-687-8683 (866-OUR-VOTE), administered by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

VOTER HOTLINE
224-297-5052

Get answers to your questions regarding registration, voting by mail, what's on the ballot, polling place locations and more.

If no answer, leave a message and we will return your call as quickly as we can.

League of Women Voters of Evanston

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facebook
https://www.facebook.com/LWVEvanston

twitter
https://twitter.com/lwvevanston

Check the LWVE website for access information to the Illinois 9th Congressional Candidates forum.

2020 General Election Candidate Forum

Sponsored by the Leagues of Women Voters of Evanston, Glenview/Glencoe and Wilmette

Illinois State Representative
17th District

Candidates

Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz
Democrat

Christopher Kruger
Green

Yesoe Yoon
Republican

The forum was recorded on September 15, 2020 and is available on the League of Women Voters of Evanston website, **LWVE.org**.

For more candidate information, visit **IllinoisVoterGuide.org**

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