

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/blog/target-2020/justice-is-on-the-ballot>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

As voters, we have the power and responsibility to shape how justice is served in our communities. We elect federal leaders, district attorneys, mayors, local legislators, and sheriffs/leaders who shape how our communities ensure public safety and secure justice.

Election Day is in six weeks, but in communities across the United States, voting for the 2020 election is already underway.

[In every race, from the federal to the state to the local level, its clear: Justice is on the ballot.](#)

Our votes can help ensure [due process for immigrants](#) facing deportation, address overpolicing in communities of color and [police violence](#) by holding elected officials and law enforcement accountable, and expand [educational opportunities](#) for people in prison.

Our votes and our voices can demand an [end to money injustice](#), practices that criminalize poverty through bail, fines, and fees. They can call for transformational change in the [conditions of confinement](#) behind bars and for leaders to invest in communities, rather than fuel the growth of [rural jail populations](#).

More than six months since the COVID-19 pandemic began, voters can call for swift action to [stop the spread of coronavirus](#) in jails and prisons where there are more than 200,000 cases and at least 1,175 known deaths which leads directly to community spread. In fact, the 10 largest outbreak sites in the United States are in correctional facilities.

Justice is on the ballot. And there has never been a more important time to vote.

Millions of Americans have faced barriers based on race, gender, and conviction history. Far too many barriers still stand in the way.

In 2016, 6.1 million Americans nationwide could not vote in the presidential election because of felony convictions. One in 13 Black Americans was ineligible to vote in 2019 because of a criminal record, compared to one in 56 Americans of all other races combined.

Just this month, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that [Floridians with conviction histories](#) cannot vote unless they pay court fines and fees, which many cannot afford.

But across the country, we're seeing signs of progress:

There is so much work to do.

Commit to vote.

Make a plan to vote.

[Register to vote.](#)

Justice is on the ballot.

SPOTLIGHT

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Transformative change, sent to your inbox.

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