



Queer the Vote 2020

Voter Guide

The 2020 elections are crucial for the progressive LGBTQ community. Nearly every issue discussed this cycle has a disproportionate impact on our community. It is critical that legislative and administrative policy goals of whoever is elected includes the impact and consequences on our community from the start of the drafting.

Many LGBTQ people have multiple marginalized identities – we are people of color, we are low-income, we live with disabilities, we were raised in a minority faith tradition. We are immigrants and union members; we have been involved with the criminal legal system and the child welfare system. No matter what marginalized identities we hold, we deserve protection from discrimination, access to quality healthcare, safe schools, and community support.

We need candidates that will work on those LGBTQ-specific policy changes that impact our community in unique ways. We also need candidates who understand the LGBTQ policy implications in every issue they address – from immigration and criminal justice to economic and reproductive justice.

The current Administration's attacks on our communities have shown that today, more than ever before, it is essential for LGBTQ people to Queer the Vote in 2020. Below are just a few steps you can take to be a part of our democracy:

Pledge to Vote

- Your vote matters! There are an estimated **10 million** LGBTQ citizens over the age of 18 who are possibly eligible to participate in the 2020 election. Check your registration status; and if you're not registered, register to vote! If you are ineligible to vote (if you're too young, not a citizen, criminal injustice laws prevent you, etc.) there are still plenty of opportunities for you to be involved by getting active on the issues you care about and know are important. You can also push loved ones to get registered and vote on your behalf.
- There are more candidates running for president than any other time in recent history. With so many candidates to choose from, the LGBTQ community will have an important voice not only in the general election, but in key Democratic primary and caucus states as well.

Learn About the Issues!

- As a voter, it's essential that you educate yourself by researching the issues you're passionate about. That's why we've written this guide – to give LGBTQ people and allies information about some of the issues that progressive-minded voters may encounter or should consider at the polls. Take this guide, read it, and share it with others at school, work, home, civic groups, places of worship, etc.



NATIONAL LGBTQ TASK FORCE ACTION FUND

Key Points to Remember:

- ❑ Confirm that you're **registered to vote** under your **current** name and address. If you have moved or recently changed your name remember to update it with your local elections' office. Look up where your local polling place is.
- ❑ Know when your primary election or caucus takes place. The 2020 elections are critical for the LGBTQ community and voting in your primary election or caucus can help shape the election in November. (Look it up here: <https://tinyurl.com/primarycaucus>)
- ❑ If someone in your household will be 18 or have their voting rights restored before the general election on November 3rd, help them register to vote! If they have moved or changed their name help them update their registration and learn where their new polling locations are in the neighborhood. (Find polling places here: <https://www.vote.org/polling-place-locator/>)
- ❑ **Know your rights** about voting BEFORE you go to the ballot box. If someone attempts to turn you away ask for a provisional ballot. After you've voted, call **866-OUR-VOTE** (866-687-8683) to report the incident and get help ensuring that your vote counts
- ❑ If you're voting in person, make a plan to get to the polls, especially if transportation is an issue. Many groups provide free rides to get people to the polls. Remember, different counties have different options from voting by mail, voting early, and voting on election day. Confirm the options available to you by looking up your county's local elections office and looking at their website or by giving them a call.

The Issues

Immigration – Does your candidate support comprehensive immigration reform? Immigration detention facilities are unsafe for everyone, but for transgender people, pregnant people, and people with disabilities, immigration detention can be especially harmful. Transgender people - especially transgender women of color - being held by ICE, face alarming rates of mistreatment, denial of necessary medical care, and even death while in custody. The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund supports the immediate release of people in immigration detention that are at a high risk for harm, legal protections for undocumented LGBTQ immigrants, and enforceable safeguards for the physical and mental health and safety of people in ICE custody. Additionally, the National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund supports the ability of LGBTQ migrants to claim asylum based on their experience as a member of the LGBTQ community in their home countries.

Healthcare – Does your candidate support nondiscrimination protections in healthcare based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability? This administration has taken steps to degrade the civil rights in the Affordable Care Act, and to reduce access to health care for people with disabilities and people with language access needs. At the same time, they have worked to limit the number of people with access to healthcare through the ACA and Medicaid. The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund supports strong healthcare nondiscrimination and increased access to healthcare for all.



Faith – Does your candidate support broad religious exemptions that gut nondiscrimination laws?

Members of the religious far right continue to attempt to use faith as a wedge issue to oppose LGBTQ rights and abortion access. However, according to the Public Religion Research Institute, a supermajority of people of faith support and affirm LGBTQ rights and protections. The same research amplifies that people of faith do not believe it is a value of their faith to permit discrimination in businesses, public accommodations, healthcare, education, etc. The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund supports legislation that would protect people from minority faiths and codify strong and effective nondiscrimination protections.

Criminal Justice – Does your candidate support an end to mass incarceration? LGBTQ people – and especially LGBTQ people of color -- are disproportionately likely to be arrested and incarcerated. In fact, up to 40% of young people and women who are incarcerated identify as LGBTQ. The majority of incarcerated LGBTQ people are also people of color. That’s why the National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund supports the decriminalization of HIV, sex work, homelessness, and drug use – all of which contribute to the mass incarceration of LGBTQ people.

Environment – Does your candidate have a clear plan to impact climate change? LGBTQ individuals are more likely to experience homelessness, poverty, and a lack of access to healthcare; all of these inequities are likely to be exacerbated by climate change. The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund supports solutions to climate change that are mindful of the specific challenges faced by members of the LGBTQ and other marginalized communities.

Education – Does your candidate have a strategy for reducing bullying and harassment in schools without contributing to the school-to-prison pipeline? LGBTQ students continue to be the targets of harassment and violence in our nation’s schools, yet the Trump administration has withdrawn vital Department of Education guidance directed at protecting transgender students. At the same time, LGBTQ students, students of color, and young people with disabilities are more likely to face to be funneled into the juvenile justice system for school-related incidents of harm or violence. The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund supports school harassment and violence prevention programs that don’t rely on law enforcement as an implementation tool.

Housing – How does your candidate plan to address homelessness and housing instability? LGBTQ people lack explicit protections from housing discrimination under federal law, and there are still 27 states where LGBTQ people can be denied housing because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Our community recognizes this as a crisis: 73% of LGBTQ people indicated that they are “strongly concerned” about housing discrimination in a recent survey. Even though the LGBTQ community disproportionately faces homelessness, the Trump administration has suggested the EPA sue California on the grounds that homeless individuals are an environmental problem. They have also talked about using police to round up people experiencing homelessness and holding them in detention centers. The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund supports efforts to protect members of the LGBTQ community from discrimination in housing. Additionally, the National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund works to create resources designed to decrease homelessness and reduce the criminalization of homelessness.



Disability – Does your candidate have a plan to address police and non-police violence against people living with disabilities? LGBTQ people, especially transgender people, are about 10% more likely to identify as having a disability than their heterosexual counterparts. Yet, people with disabilities are disproportionately the victims of gun violence and police brutality. At the same time, they’re routinely scapegoated by being blamed for mass shootings. The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund works to provide resources to LGBTQ individuals with disabilities while also working to combat damaging messaging about people with disabilities.

Census/Democracy – How does your candidate plan to ensure that marginalized communities are included in democratic processes, like voting and the Census? LGBTQ people are less likely to be counted in the Census, despite the fact that we’re more likely to need the services and supports that are funded using Census data – like Medicaid, public housing, and food stamps. At the same time, many LGBTQ people are prevented from voting because of prior criminal convictions or lack of access to identification. Because our communities need to build political power to fight for the government we want to see, the National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund supports strong voting rights protections and a complete count on federal surveys.

Reproductive Rights/Health/Justice – Does your candidate understand the reproductive health needs of LGBTQ people? LGBTQ individuals need access to reproductive health care; including contraception, abortion, assisted reproductive services, HIV care, pregnancy care, parenting resources, sexual education resources, and more. Issues of reproductive justice and LGBTQ rights are often intertwined. Currently, the religious far right has used religion as a scapegoat for discrimination against LGBTQ people and people seeking access to reproductive health services. The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund works with faith communities to counter the harm done in the name of religion while also working to advocate for LGBTQ inclusive reproductive rights, health, and justice policies.

ⁱ <https://www.270towin.com/2020-election-calendar/>