

**We're the  
People:**

# **SOUTH DAKOTA VOTER GUIDE**

**ELECTION DAY: NOVEMBER 8TH, 2022**

[www.werethepeople.org](http://www.werethepeople.org)

# VOTING IN SOUTH DAKOTA

## Through a variety of measures, there are many ways to Be a Voter in South Dakota:

### **Vote-by-Mail:**

In South Dakota, anyone can request to vote by mail with an absentee ballot as long as the request is received the day before the election. The ballot needs to be returned by November 8th.

### **Absentee Ballot Return:**

You can return your ballot to your county election official, either by mail or personal delivery.

### **Polling Places:**

Prefer to vote in person? No problem! You can head into a Polling Place and cast your ballot in person.

### **Voter ID Needed:**

You will need to show an ID when it's time to cast your ballot. If you don't have a photo ID, you can sign a personal ID affidavit.

### **Paid Time Off to Vote:**

You are entitled to two hours to vote during your shift if you do not have two consecutive hours to vote outside of work.

LINKS AND MORE INFO ARE AVAILABLE AT:  
[WWW.WERETHEPEOPLE.ORG/SOUTHDAKOTA](http://WWW.WERETHEPEOPLE.ORG/SOUTHDAKOTA)

# WE'RE THE PEOPLE

## MISSION

We're the People is a completely nonpartisan organization working to help make Election Day as easy as possible.

We are dedicated to sustained voter turnout through voter education.

### What Sets Us Apart

By focusing on education (and staying completely nonpartisan), we believe we aren't just turning out voters for a single election but working together to build a habit of service and voting.

## EDUCATION-BASED VOTER GROWTH

We want to make smarter, stronger, more habitual voters - and education is the key that unlocks all of that. As we continue to develop an ambitious K-12 program that brings civic education to a whole new level, we are making materials available to students and teachers in all grades to help lower the barrier of entry to voting. Additionally, any voter (or would-be voter) is able to get the information they need through our programming (that neither speaks down to the voter nor assumes knowledge) to help make them the most prepared, and regular, voter possible.

## WWW.WERETHEPEOPLE.ORG

We have built the site to be a hub of information - whether someone wants to know when their next election is, what the voting laws are in their state, or how to contact their elected officials.

We are working on adding more educational pieces to continue to be a knowledgeable home base for all.

## VOTER PLEDGE

The Voter Pledge Program is a unique peer-to-peer voter turnout program. We work with future voters to answer any questions they have about the process of voting while keeping them apprised of deadlines and on track to cast their ballot in every single election.

# 53.1%

SOUTH DAKOTA  
VOTER TURNOUT

IN THE 2018 MIDTERMS

# VOTER GUIDE

While we'd never tell you who to vote for, we want to help you research your ballot by making sure you understand exactly what the positions you're voting on actually do.

## Federal:

### United States Senate

- There are 100 Senators in the U.S. Senate, two from each state.
- Each term lasts six years and there are no term limits for a U.S. Senator.
- Each Senator gets one vote and, in the event of a tie, the Vice President (who also serves as the Senate President) will cast a tie-breaking vote.
- The Senate has the sole power to confirm Presidential appointments that require confirmation. They also provide advice and consent to ratify treaties (though the House must also approve appointments to the Vice Presidency and any treaty involving foreign trade).
- In order for legislation to make it to the President's desk, it first must pass through the Senate and House. (A 2/3 vote in each chamber can override the President's veto.)
- Together with the House, only Congress can declare war.
- The House serves as prosecutor in any impeachment trials, the Senate serves as jury and judge. So, while the House can impeach a president, only the Senate can remove them from office.

### United States House of Representatives

- There are 435 Reps in the U.S. House. The number each state has is based on population, with each state having at least one.
- Each term is two years and there are no term limits for a U.S. House Rep.
- In addition to originating revenue bills, the biggest business of the House happens in their various committees, which prepare bills and hold hearings before they make it to the full House for a vote.
- In order for legislation to make it to the President's desk, it first must pass through the Senate and House. (A 2/3 vote in each chamber can override the President's veto.)
- Together with the Senate, only Congress can declare war.
- The House serves as prosecutor in any impeachment trial. If the House votes to impeach, the Senate will then vote whether the impeached can keep their job.

# Statewide:

## Governor

The Governor is responsible for implementing state laws. They also oversee legislative proposals and vetoes, executive budgets, and can implement executive orders.

## Lieutenant Governor

This is the second-highest ranking official of the state executive office. The Lieutenant Governor is the first successor to the Governor. They're also the presiding officer of the State Senate but can only vote to break a tie.

- Although their roles are sort of similar, unlike the Vice President of the United States, the Lieutenant Governor does not run with the Governor.

## Secretary of State

The Sec of State is responsible for maintaining state records. They are also the state's Chief Elections Officer.

## Agriculture Secretary

This position oversees state regulatory functions related to agriculture.

## Attorney General

The chief legal advisor and law enforcement officer of the state.

## Controller

This position oversees State funds, including auditing financial claims for legality, warrants for State obligations, and offering fiscal guidance to local governments.

## Land Commissioner

While regulating all state-owned land (including forests, coastal waters, and recreation areas) this position ensures safety, sustainability, wildlife protection, and revenue generation.

## Mine Inspector

The State Mine Inspector oversees the safety and regulation of active and inactive mines within the state.

## Railroad Commissioner

Also known as State Utility or Public Service Boards, the Railroad Commissioner is responsible for regulating the rates and services of electric, natural gas, and/or water utilities.

## **Public Accounts Comptroller**

Also known as State Controller, this position oversees State funds, including auditing financial claims for legality, warrants for State obligations, and offering fiscal guidance to local governments.

## **Railroad Commissioner**

Also known as State Utility or Public Service Boards, the Railroad Commissioner is responsible for regulating the rates and services of electric, natural gas, and/or water utilities.

## **State Equalization Board**

Also known as the State Tax Commissioner, they are responsible for supervising all assessors of taxes, enforcing tax laws, setting rates, and collecting statewide taxes.

## **State House Rep (Also known as State Assembly Member)**

State House Representatives begin the legislation process, offer amendments, and serve on committees.

## **State Senate**

Its primary responsibility is to write the laws of the state. It is also responsible for drafting the state's plan for public spending. Each year, before January 11, the Governor must submit his or her proposed State Budget for consideration by the Senate and Assembly.

## **Treasurer**

The chief financial officer of the state, which means tracking state budgets, managing investments, and receiving/depositing money for the state.

## **Superintendent of Public Instruction**

Responsible for overseeing/coordinating the state's schools (elementary through high school, aka secondary school).

## **State Equalization Board**

Also known as the State Tax Commissioner, they are responsible for supervising all assessors of taxes, enforcing tax laws, setting rates, and collecting statewide taxes.

# Local:

## Assessor

The County Assessor locates all taxable property in the county, identifies ownership, and establishes its tax value.

## Attorney (City or District)

The City/District Attorney litigates all civil actions on behalf of the City/District and represents the City/District (including its boards and officers) in all civil trials and legal proceedings, for both state and federal court.

## Auditor/Controller

This position oversees the tax roll, calculates the tax rates, and accounting for property tax receipts.

## Board of Supervisors

This is the governing body of your county and works as both the executive and legislative head of the county.

## Clerk (County or District)

The position maintains and provides records (including birth, marriage, civil union, and death certificates). They also issues permits and licenses.

## City Council

*(Name can vary by location. The position is also known as City Commission or Village Council)*

As the elected body, adopts legislation, sets policy, adjudicates issues and establishes the budget of the City.

## County Commission

As the elected body, adopts legislation, sets policy, adjudicates issues and establishes the budget of the County.

## Mayor

The Mayor is the chief executive officer, centralizing executive power. The Mayor directs the administrative structure by appointing and removing department heads. While the Council has legislative power, the Mayor has veto power. The Council does not oversee daily operations.

## Public Administrator

Also called Register of Probate, this position is responsible for keeping records of wills and estate matters filed with the county.

## **Recorder**

Also called Register of Deeds, or Register of Mesne Conveyance, this position is responsible for keeping records of vital statistics, notarized deeds of trust, or other deeds affecting property.

## **Sheriff**

The sheriff's department provides general-service law enforcement to unincorporated areas of the county, as well as holding jurisdiction over county-operated facilities (such as local parks and government buildings). They also provide marshal services, operate the county jail system, and train smaller law enforcement agencies in the county.

## **School Board**

The role of the school board is to ensure that school districts are responsive to the values, beliefs and priorities of their communities.

- While the School Board focuses on schooling through high school, there are also elected boards that focus on higher education. Those positions include Board of Regents, Board of Trustees, and Board of Governors

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# Judicial:

## State Supreme Court

The State Supreme Court is the highest state court in the U.S. state court system.

## Court of Appeals

The Court of Appeals is responsible for evaluating appeals to decisions made by lower courts.

## District Court

Also known as a Circuit Court, the District Court is responsible cases in Civil and Criminal Courts at the trial-level.

## Family Court

The Family Court is responsible for domestic or family law cases in Civil and Criminal Courts at the trial-level.

## Municipal Court (aka Court-at-Law)

Local, or Municipal Courts, are responsible for cases in civil and criminal courts at the trial-level, such as small-claims court or drug court.

## Probate Court

This Court is responsible for adjudicating cases in Civil and Criminal Courts at the trial-level in the certain specific areas of probate or surrogate matters.

## Chief Justice vs Associate Justice

The Chief Justice presides over the Court, while the other members are called Associate Justices. The Chief Justice's vote carries the same weight as those of the Associate Justices.

## Justice of the Peace

In addition to being able to perform marriages, a Justice of the Peace Court Judge is responsible for handling minor offenses such as traffic offenses and misdemeanor criminal offenses.

# Nonpartisan Resources:

To make sure you're getting a nonpartisan look at your ballot, we highly recommend the following sources:

- <https://www.ballotready.org/>
- <https://ballotpedia.org/>

# Voter Resources:

For questions about voting, we are easily reachable through the following ways:

- **Email:** [voter@werethepeople.org](mailto:voter@werethepeople.org)
- **Texting:** (818) 293-2885
- **Social Media DMs:** @werethepeople (Twitter), @werethepeopleorg (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok)

If you run into any problems (voter intimidation, voter suppression), when you go to vote:

- Call: 866-Our-Vote ((866) 687-8683) to talk to a lawyer and know your rights

South Dakota Secretary of State:

- Main Phone Number: (605) 773-3537
- Elections Office: (605) 773-3537