



THE 19TH AMENDMENT

CELEBRATING OVER 100 YEARS OF WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE



WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT¹

1848 - 1868

Starting in 1848 with the National Women's Rights Convention in New York City, the Women's Suffrage Movement was launched by prominent white and (free) Black female abolitionists and suffragists beginning an initiative to achieve voting rights and equal treatment for all citizens. The US women's rights movement closely aligned with the antislavery movement and as a result Black and white abolitionists and suffragists joined together in common cause. However, as the Civil War came to an end in 1865, arguments for women's suffrage became entwined with debates over the rights of former slaves and the meaning of "citizenship".



THE 15TH AMENDMENT PASSES

1869 - 1912

The 15th Amendment passed, enfranchising Black men by giving *all* men the right to vote. Interracial and mixed-gender alliances began to deteriorate; suffrage advocates were forced to choose between equal rights for all citizens or accepting the Black male suffrage movement. Outraged by the amendment, suffragists such as Susan B. Anthony and Cady Stanton pushed forward an agenda of "universal suffrage" insisting that black men should not have more rights than white women.² Prominent Black suffragists such as Frederick Douglas and Frances Ellen Watkins shifted focus from the movement given the position of Anthony and Stanton.



THE 19TH AMENDMENT PASSES²

1913 - 1920

After monumental events such as the Women's Suffrage Walk in 1913, the 19th Amendment was ratified in 1920, it barred states from denying American women the right to vote on the basis of their sex. Despite the passing of this amendment, Blacks continued to face difficulty actually exercising their right to vote. Jim Crow Laws presented a new (and very much legal) obstacle by allowing states to enforce unrighteous and cruel stipulations surrounding voting privileges.



1920 - 2021

BLACKS STRIVE TO MAINTAIN ACCESS

With state laws posing a new threat to voting abilities for all citizens, Blacks faced an uphill battle despite the passing of the 15th and 19th amendments. Jim Crow laws, established as early as 1865, were a collection of state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation. States imposed laws such as poll taxes, grandfather clauses, and literacy tests to prohibit Blacks from voting. It wasn't until the 1960's when the Civil Rights Act and the Voters Right Act was passed that racist efforts to keep minorities from voting were addressed head-on. Nevertheless, Blacks and other marginalized citizens continue to fight for a fair right to vote.

PRE-VOTERS RIGHTS LAWS 1920 - 1964

1. **Grandfather Clauses** - required one's grandfather to have voted in order for a person to vote
2. **Literacy Tests** - administered differently based on race -- the test required voters to demonstrate their ability to read
3. **Poll Tax** - a tax imposed on citizens to exercise their right to vote
4. **Voter Waiting Periods** - a minimum length of time in between when a voter registered and when they were able to vote

POST-VOTERS RIGHTS LAWS 1965 - 2021

1. **Voter Identification** - requiring specific identification to verify one's identity and eligibility before being able to cast a ballot
2. **Early Voting Restriction** - restrict citizens ability to cast a ballot early despite personal circumstances and public health risks i.e. COVID19
3. **Mail in Voting** - Restrictions put in place to prohibit voters from utilizing mail-in ballots and requiring each vote to be cast in person at polling places
4. **Ballot Box** - Accessing a ballot box in your immediate neighbor



¹ Harley, S., National Park Service. April 19, 2019. African American Women and the Nineteenth Amendment
² Jones, M., Politico. August 26, 2020. What the 19th Amendment Meant for Black Women
³ Interactive Constitution, National Constitution Center. Right to Vote Not Denied by Race. <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/amendment/amendment-xv>

