



## Democracy & Health

How Colorado Supports Voter Access & Remaining Barriers  
to Civic Engagement



# Elements of a Healthy Democracy

- Trust In government
  - Confidence in our institutions
  - Inclusive of all citizens
  - Equal opportunity to vote and be heard
  - Civic participation – voting, staying informed, advocating for needs and priorities
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# Public Institutions

- Efficient and accessible
  - Ability to meet the basic needs of the population (health, safety, education)
  - Voting as a public health issue
  - Speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves
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Voting Access & Barriers

**Communities with more inclusive voting policies have more social cohesion, stronger community conditions, and better health.**

- Health & Democracy Index



# Voting in Colorado

- All mail voting
  - Extensive network of VSPC and ballot drop boxes
  - Automatic Voter Registration
  - Online voter registration & updates
  - Voter registration permitted through election day
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# What barriers remain?

- Population specific – some groups more likely to experience difficulty voting
    - First-time & young voters
    - Low-income & historically marginalized populations
    - Elderly voters & voters with disabilities or mobility issues
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Voting in Colorado – 2020 General Election

**Colorado had one of the highest voting participation rates in the U.S.  
(76%)**

**Youth turnout in Colorado was also among the best in the nation  
(64% among 18-29 year olds)**

**But....nearly a quarter of eligible voters didn't participate. How do  
we change this?**

- CO Department of State; Tufts University Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning  
& Engagement



# Voter Education & Mobilization are Key

- Increasing voter participation rates among young people
    - Online voter registration, pre-registration (16 yrs), and updates
    - Public high schools must designate staff member to be trained in voter registration to assist students
    - CO colleges & universities are treated as a national voter registration agency
    - Voter outreach; commit to vote postcards/text messages
    - Text2Cure
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# Voter Education & Mobilization are Key

- Increasing voter participation rates among marginalized or low-income voters
    - Online voter registration and updates
    - Voter registration through TANF or food stamps application
    - Onsite voting in jails
    - Vote Center Siting Tool
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# Voter Education & Mobilization are Key

- Increasing voter participation rates among elderly or disabled voters
    - Online voter registration and updates
    - Onsite voter registration at assisted living facilities; mobile VSPCs
    - Electronic voting for those with print disabilities
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## 2024 General Election Deadlines

**Ballots mailed beginning Oct. 11; must be received by 7:00 pm on Nov 5**

**Oct 21 – Nov 5 – VSPCs and drop boxes open to voters**

**Nov 7 – County Clerks to notify voters of need to cure**

**Nov 13 – Deadline for voters to cure any ballot issues**

- CO Department of State

# Ballot Initiatives

- **Ballot initiatives ask voters to decide important issues that impact our health & wellbeing. Examples include:**
    - **Amendment 79 (2024) – Constitutional Right to Abortion**
    - **Proposition EE (2020) – Nicotine Tax to Fund UPK**
    - **Proposition 118 (2020) – Paid Family & Medical Leave Program**
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