

A Comprehensive Gen Z Election Guide:

Generation Z is defined by the [Pew Research Center](#) as anyone born between 1997-2012. As of now, Gen Z voters born between 1997-2002 are eligible to vote. For decades college age students have been known to be some of the most politically outspoken out of the entire American population, unfortunately it has been mostly talk with little action. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, roughly 21% of the voting population is made up of young voters (18-29 years of age). This is a large percentage of voters who are new to the process of voting, which can be both intimidating and challenging, but it does not have to be.

The election of 2020 is fast approaching. The country is going through one of the most if not the most historical years in the past decade. There is so much being mixed in the pot right now and it is just waiting to boil over- with months of protests urging against police brutality, the continuing spread of COVID-19, recent efforts to combat climate change, arguments over immigration, the first major shift in education in over a century, and so much more, the thoughts of and most importantly the votes of Gen Z are essential to shed a light on how the next generation of America will want to address these pressing issues. Who will Gen Z elect to lead them into a better tomorrow? What

are the issues that are most important to them? How does the generation view the state of America and its leaders? What are your views?

	United States	
Label	Estimate	Margin of Error
▼ Total:	235,418,734	±159,764
18 to 29 years	49,554,247	±47,409
30 to 44 years	56,305,720	±72,447
45 to 64 years	77,246,978	±71,089
65 years and over	52,311,789	±39,157

TableID: B29001 from the U.S. Census Bureau

The following is a list of all candidates who may show up on your ballot this November. I say may, because it differs from state to state who shows up on your ballot. That's right, it's not standardized! I was shocked too. You of course will see the candidate elects for the Democrat and Republican parties because in November is the general election, which is different from another election you might have heard of called the primaries. So, there are [many different types of elections](#)- The main one you probably learned about in your high school History class is the general election, 'the one for President', that happens every four years. Although this is an important cycle to pay attention to, and the one to be the most televised, it is not the only one! There are election cycles every two [\(midterms\)](#) and four years- elected officials from [your local sheriff and school board officials](#) to [your state's senators](#) and yes, even the President of the United States.

Presidential Candidates in the 2020 Election:



Democratic Party:

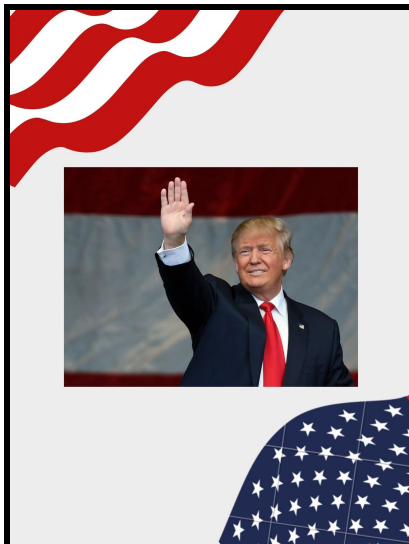
President- Joseph R. Biden

Vice President- Kamala D. Harris

Working Families Party:

President- Joseph R. Biden

Vice President- Kamala D. Harris



Republican Party:

President- Donald J. Trump

Vice President- Michael R. Pence

Conservative Party:

President- Donald J. Trump
Vice President- Michael R. Pence



Green Party:

President- Howie Hawkins
Vice President- Angela Nicole Walker



Libertarian Party:

President- Jo Jorgensen
Vice President- Jeremy Cohen

**Presidential Candidates that might also be on your ballot
(differs by state):**



Independence Party:
President- Brock Pierce
Vice President- Karla Ballard



Birthday Party/ Independent:
President- Kanye West
Vice President- Michelle Tidball



Constitution Party:
President- Don Blankenship
Vice President- Bill Mohr



American Solidarity Party:
President- Brian T. Carroll
Vice President- Amar Patel



Alliance Party:

President- Roque "Rocky" De La Fuente

Vice President- Darcy Richardson



Socialist Workers Party:

President- Alyson Kennedy

Vice President- Malcolm Jarrett



Party for Socialism and Liberation:

President- Gloria La Riva

Vice President- Sunil Freeman

(or Leonard Peltier, depending on when the ballot was printed)

I know what you're thinking, "Okay great, I have options to choose from- But what are their actual platforms (stances/ views on different issues)? And what if I like a candidate that isn't on my state's ballot?" Well, if you don't feel confident in any of the presented candidates you can always do a write in. The following is a list of top issues most important to Gen Z. I have included quotes from the main four candidates' websites as well as links to their available platforms.

Issues Most Important to Gen Z:



Issue includes: Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ+ rights, prison reform, voting rights, hunger and food insecurity, accessible education, human trafficking, marital laws, community safety

Candidates:

Joe Biden:

“Appoint Native Americans to high-level government positions.”

“Ensure fulfillment of federal trust and treaty obligations including by working to address chronic underfunding of unmet federal obligations to Indian Country.”

Donald Trump:

“In 2017, the Administration provided nearly \$500 million to States to prevent and treat opioid abuse. The President’s FY 2018 Budget requests another \$500 million.”

“The Administration provided nearly \$500 million to states to prevent and treat opioid abuse. Another \$500 million was requested in the 2018 FY Budget.”

Howie Hawkins:

“Restore Affirmative Action to Provide Equal Opportunities”

“Reparations for African-Americans”

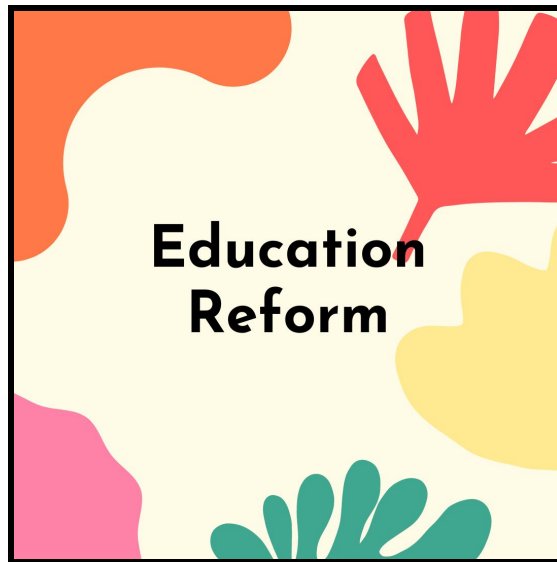
“Honor Indian Treaty Rights”

“Rights for Farm Workers Under Fair Labor Standards Act”

Jo Jorgensen:

“As your President, I will defund federal involvement in policing. I will defund the DEA and keep federal agencies out of local police matters unless called upon by state authorities.”

I will end civil asset forfeiture prior to conviction, which authorizes police departments to steal billions from Americans every year and to keep the proceeds to fund their own departments. In most cases, people whose assets are seized are never even charged with a crime and cannot afford the expensive legal battles necessary to get their possessions back.”



Issue includes: Online learning, standardized testing, increasing teacher pay, choice and charter schools, increased school funding (locally or federally), rise in cost of tuition

Candidates:

Joe Biden:

“Support our educators by giving them the pay and dignity they deserve”

“Invest in resources for our schools so students grow into physically and emotionally healthy adults, and educators can focus on teaching”

“Ensure that no child’s future is determined by their zip code, parents’ income, race, or disability”

“Provide every middle and high school student a path to a successful career.

Start investing in our children at birth”

Donald Trump:

“President Trump’s proposed budgets have made school choice a priority”

“The Trump Administration successfully implemented the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to empower states with the flexibility they need to educate their students”

“The Trump Administration has reformed The Free Application for Federal Student Aid to make the program more accessible to students”

Howie Hawkins:

Not included on the official campaign website. Information included sourced from [On the Issues](#):

“Free college tuition for qualified students; abolish loans”

“Increased funding for the arts as essential”

“Lifelong, tuition free public education at any age”

“Free public education from pre-K through college”

“Guarantee a quality education to everyone”

Jo Jorgensen:

“I want an education marketplace that provides parents of all backgrounds the opportunity to choose from among cyberschools, parochial schools, private schools, homeschooling, or any other option, to decide which is best for their children’s futures. A zip code should not trap a family in an inescapable cycle of poverty.”



Issue includes: Red flag laws, extent of background checks, training and handling requirements, accessibility, registration of illegal weapons, psychological evaluations, firearm owning limitations (capacity and number of owned weapons)

Candidates:

Joe Biden:

“Ban the manufacture and sale of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, regulate possession of existing assault weapons under the National Firearms Act, and buy back the assault weapons and high-capacity magazines already in our communities.”

“Require background checks for all gun sales and close other loopholes in the federal background check system, including the “boyfriend loophole,” the “gun show and online sales loophole,” the “hate crime loophole,” and the “Charleston loophole.”

“Hold gun manufacturers accountable so they can be held civilly liable for their products.”

“End the online sale of firearms and ammunitions”

Donald Trump:

Not included on the official campaign platform.

“President Trump signed legislation to repeal an Obama administration policy that hindered elderly citizens’ ability to exercise their Second Amendment rights.”

Howie Hawkins:

Not included on the official campaign platform. Information included sourced from his [former Governor campaign website](#):

“Gun Rights: Defend the individual right of law-abiding citizens to own pistols, rifles, and shotguns for self-defense, hunting, and sport shooting.”

“Gun Safety: Defend the public right to regulate the ownership and operation of guns in the interests of public safety.”

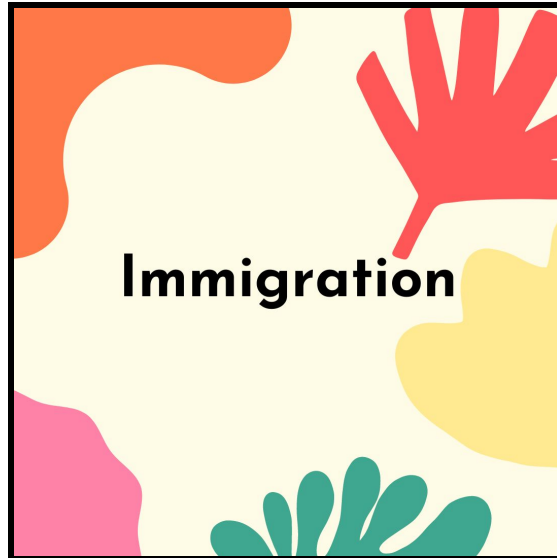
[Jo Jorgensen:](#)

Not included on the official campaign platform.

“Jo Jorgensen's campaign website says she opposes additional restrictions on the process of purchasing a gun. She also opposes allowing victims of gun violence to sue firearms dealers and manufacturers.”

“Q: Should teachers be allowed to carry guns at school?

A: Yes”



Issue includes: The recent call to abolish ICE, DACA, undocumented workers, family separations, asylum and refuge in the US, condition of detention centers, sanctuary cities

Candidates:

Joe Biden:

“Take urgent action to undo Trump’s damage and reclaim America’s values”

“Modernize America’s immigration system”

“Welcome immigrants in our communities”

“Reassert America’s commitment to asylum-seekers and refugees”

“Tackle the root causes of irregular migration”

“Implement effective border screening”

Donald Trump:

“Upon entering office, President Trump called on Congress to fully fund a wall along the Southern border, to close legal loopholes that enable illegal immigration, to end chain migration, and to eliminate the visa lottery program.”

“Under President Trump’s leadership, the Department of Homeland Security took action to wind down the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in an orderly fashion, following the assessment of the Department of Justice (DOJ) that DACA lacks legal authorization.”

Howie Hawkins:

Not included on the official campaign platform, but discussed in [Green Party Of Colorado Questionnaire](#):

“Howie Hawkins' campaign website says, "The federal government should end its defense in court of Trump’s executive order attempting to end the DACA program. The federal government should start properly administering the program.”

Jo Jorgensen:

“As President, I will dismantle all tariffs and any other trade barriers which prevent the flow of goods and services into our country. Americans deserve the best, and it does not matter from where the best may come. It’s about making sure that the American economy is working smarter rather than harder. Rather than wasting valuable resources and trying to match countries who are better able to perform in certain industries, our economy should be geared toward what we do best.

Our policies on immigration should be just as free and open. While the ethnicities and countries of origin have changed, the American legacy of what immigration is supposed to be remains the same: different cultures held together by the values of inclusion and acceptance; a shining city upon a hill welcoming the tired, poor, and huddled masses.”



Issue includes: Sexual and reproductive health, economic inequality, trauma-centered feminism, access to equal opportunity, job security, diligent maternity and paternity leave, affordable childcare

Candidates:

Joe Biden:

“Improve economic security.”

“Expand access to health care and tackle health inequities.”

“Help women navigate work and families.”

“End violence against women.”

“Protect and empower women around the world.”

Donald Trump:

No explicit section was included on website, information sourced from Social Programs section:

“In his first week in office, President Trump reinstated and expanded the Mexico City Policy that prevented \$9 billion in foreign aid from being used to fund the abortion industry.”

“President Trump worked with the Congress to sign a bill overturning an Obama midnight regulation that prohibited States from defunding abortion service providers.”

“Reinstated the Mexico City Policy to ban any U.S. foreign aid to organizations that perform abortions.”

“Signed a Congressional Review Act bill to allow states to restrict Planned Parenthood Funding.”

Howie Hawkins:

No explicit section was included on website, information pieced together from various sections of website (Health Care and Criminal Justice):

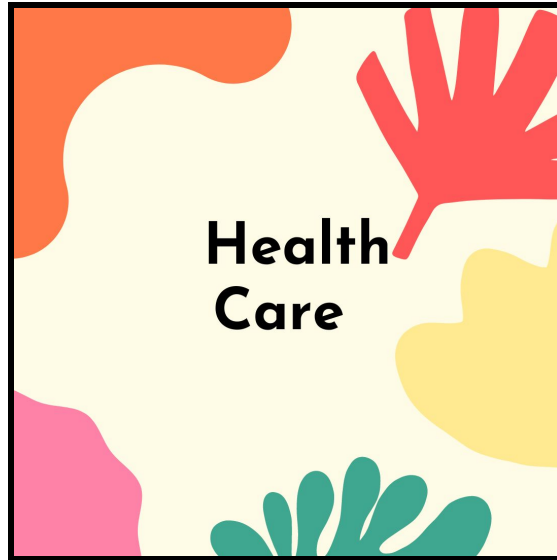
“Defend Abortion Rights”

“Decriminalize Sex Work”

Jo Jorgensen:

No explicit section was included on website, information below sourced from [Texas Free Press](#):

“I do not believe that abortion should be a litmus-test issue for Libertarians. As our platform states it: “Recognizing that abortion is a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on all sides, we believe that government should be kept out of the matter, leaving the question to each person for their conscientious consideration.” I have supported and voted for pro-life Libertarians like Ron Paul and pro-choice Libertarians like Gary Johnson. And of course, I fully supported my 1996 running mate, Harry Browne, who personally opposed abortion, but believed that the state should be kept out of the matter. Among our past Libertarian presidential candidates, my views are probably closest to Harry Browne’s. Like Harry, I am personally opposed to abortion, but am unwilling to vote to use the power of the state to impose my views on other women.”



Issue includes: COVID-19, current available treatments, the growing need for mental health professionals, costly medical bills, the extent of how long one can be on their parents' health insurance

Candidates:

Joe Biden:

"Give every American access to affordable health insurance."

"Giving Americans a new choice, a public health insurance option like Medicare."

"Increasing the value of tax credits to lower premiums and extend coverage to more working Americans."

"Expanding coverage to low-income Americans."

"Middle class families will get a premium tax credit to help them pay for coverage."

Donald Trump:

"The Department of Agriculture provided more than \$1 billion in FY2017 to be used to improve access to health care services for 2.5 million people in rural communities. The Trump administration expanded access to Association Health Plans (AHPs) allowing small businesses to pool risk across states. The Trump Administration allows for Short-Term Limited Duration plans to be extended up to 12 months."

Howie Hawkins:

Information sourced from COVID-19 Emergency Measures for the Duration of the Crisis section:

"Medicare to Pay for COVID-19 Testing and Treatment and All Emergency Health Care"

"Defense Production Act to Rapidly Plan the Production and Distribution of Medical Supplies and a Universal Test, Contact Trace, and Quarantine Program to Safely Reopen the Economy"

“An OSHA Temporary Standard to Provide Enforceable PPE Protection for Workers”

“\$2,000 a Month to All Adults Over Age 16 and \$500 per Child”

“Loans to All Businesses and Hospitals for Payroll and Fixed Overhead To Be Forgiven If All Workers Are Kept on Payroll”

“Moratorium on Evictions, Foreclosures, and Utility Shutoffs”

“Cancel Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Payments; Federal Government Pays Those Bills; High-income People Pay Taxes on this Relief”

“Suspend Student Loan Payments with 0% Interest Accumulation”

“Federal Universal Rent Control”

“Aid to State and Local Governments Sufficient to Keep Essential Services Running”

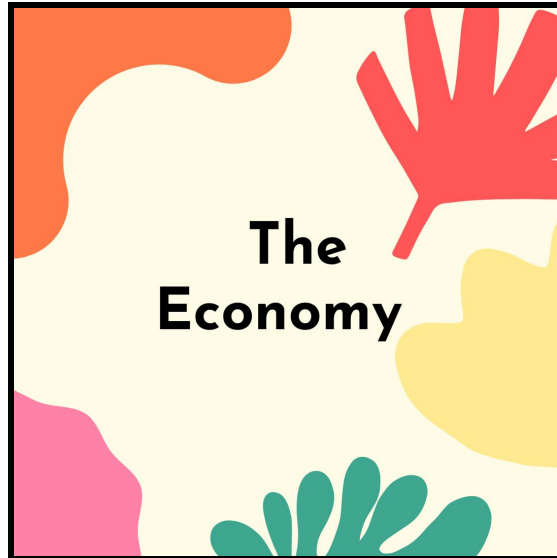
“A 10-Year, \$42 Trillion Ecosocialist Green New Deal for Economic Recovery through a Just Transition to 100% Clean Energy by 2030”

“Universal Mail-in Ballots for the 2020 General Election”

Jo Jorgensen:

“Why would we want to fashion our health-care system after the failing “Medicare for All” type systems of Canada and the United Kingdom, when a system closer to the free market is so successful in Singapore? The FDA is also a problem. Currently, only those companies with enough money and resources are able to even get FDA approval, and it costs about a billion dollars to bring a drug to market, because the FDA imposes a process that drags on for over ten years for every drug produced. Meanwhile, patients suffer, desperately waiting for drugs that just might save their lives.

For example, hearing-aid prices have skyrocketed, but an affordable alternative called Personal Sound Amplification Products (PSAPs) sell for as little as \$20.00 from some vendors. But the FDA prohibits PSAPs from being marketed as providing the same service as hearing aids, and hearing-aid makers have worked to regulate them out of the market. When I am your president, I will get rid of the FDA’s efficacy requirement, if not the entire FDA, so that new medicines and procedures get to patients as quickly and safely as possible. I will also make more drugs available over the counter.”



Issue includes: Job loss due to COVID-19, lack of job security, minimum wage, universal basic income, the rise of contract jobs, monopolistic-like media companies, work-life balance, rebuilding after recession

Candidates:

Joe Biden:

“Provide state, local, and tribal governments with the aid they need so educators, firefighters and other essential workers aren’t being laid off”

“Extend COVID crisis unemployment insurance to help those who are out of work”

“Provide a comeback package for Main Street businesses and entrepreneurs”

“Mobilize American ingenuity to build a modern infrastructure and an equitable, clean energy future”

Donald Trump:

“Under President Trump’s leadership, Congress passed historic tax cuts and relief for hard-working Americans.”

“U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth has soared under President Trump, topping 3% in 4 quarters under his administration.”

“President Trump is unleashing economic growth and jobs. Since his election, the Trump administration’s pro-growth policies have generated 6 million new jobs, the unemployment rate has fallen to its lowest point in 50 years, and wages have grown at more than 3% for 10 months in a row.”

Howie Hawkins:

“Job Guarantee”

“Guaranteed Minimum Income Above Poverty”

“\$20 Minimum Wage”

“Affordable Housing for All through Universal Rent Control and Public Housing”

“Medicare for All—A Community-Controlled National Health Service”

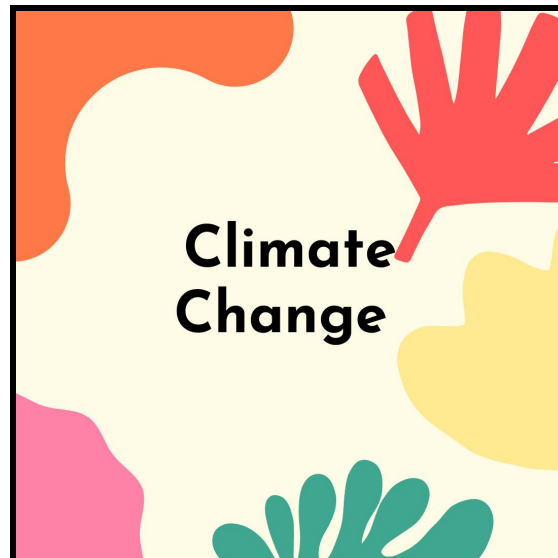
“Lifelong Free Public Education—Pre-K through College”

“Secure Retirement—Double Social Security Benefits”

Jo Jorgensen:

“I trust the American people, who are far more capable than politicians and bureaucrats when it comes to deciding what measures to take to prevent disease while making the proper trade-offs between caution and economic harm.”

“As a result of the shutdowns, our economy has suffered great losses. America needs a swift economic recovery. We can accomplish this by ending the many ways in which the government stands in the way of job creation.”



Issue includes: Government and State responses to Natural Disasters, California wildfires, fracking, electric vehicles, vehicle and factory emissions, crops and farming, deforestation, natural disaster relief for victims (money, supplies, counseling, etc.)

Candidates:

Joe Biden:

“Ensure the U.S. achieves a 100% clean energy economy and reaches net-zero emissions no later than 2050.”

“Rally the rest of the world to meet the threat of climate change.”

“Stand up to the abuse of power by polluters who disproportionately harm communities of color and low-income communities.”

“Fulfill our obligation to workers and communities who powered our industrial revolution and subsequent decades of economic growth.”

“The Biden plan will make a historic investment in our clean energy future and environmental justice, paid for by rolling back the Trump tax incentives that enrich corporations at the expense of American jobs and the environment.”

Donald Trump:

“The Department of the Interior proposed its largest oil and gas lease of over 78 million acres in the Gulf of Mexico.”

“President Trump signed an Executive Order to expand offshore oil and gas drilling and open more leases to develop offshore drilling.”

“President Trump has approved the infrastructure and provided the resources needed to unleash oil and gas production in the U.S.”

Howie Hawkins:

“Public Ownership and Planning in Energy, Manufacturing, and Transportation”

“Zero-to-Negative Carbon Emissions by 2030”

“100% Clean Energy by 2030”

“Ban Fracking and New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure”

“No Nukes”

“Zero-Waste Manufacturing and Recycling”

“Electrified Rails: Freight, Inter-City High-Speed, and Intra-City Trolleys”

“Heat Pumps to Heat and Cool Buildings”

“Regenerative Organic Agriculture”

“Parity Pricing and Supply Management for All Agricultural Commodities”

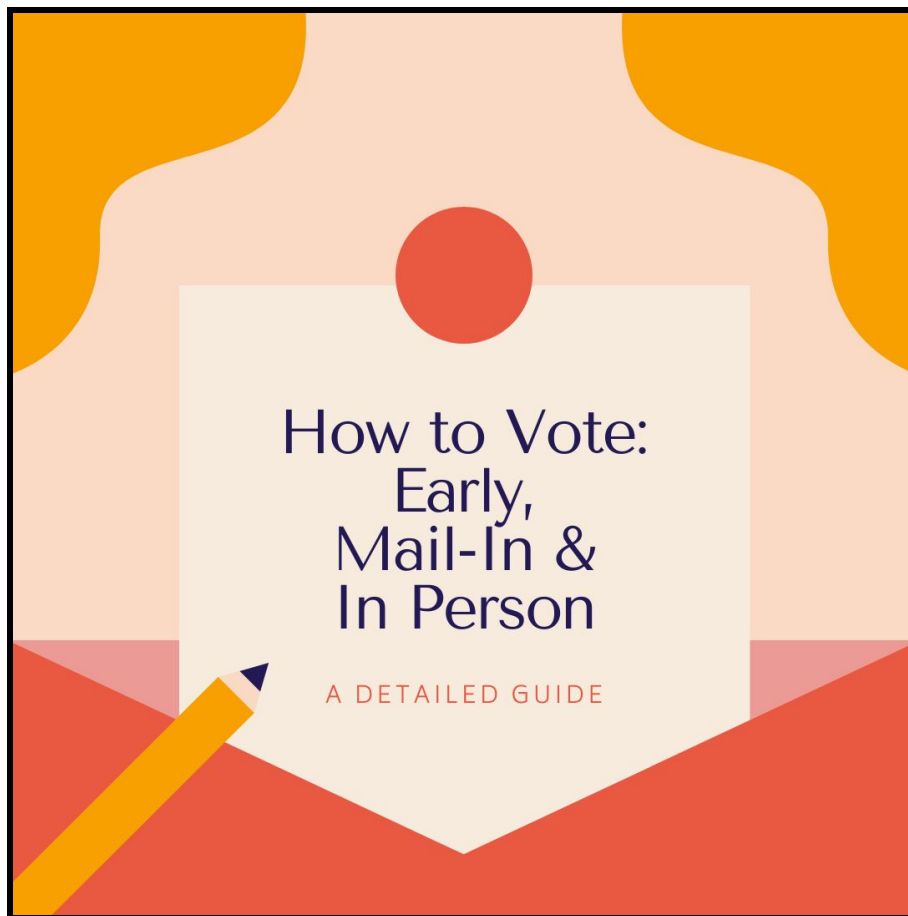
“Civilian Conservation Corps for Forest, Wetland, and Habitat Restoration”

Jo Jorgensen:

“I will work to remove government barriers to replacing coal burning and oil burning power plants in the United States with safe, non-polluting, high-tech nuclear power plants and allowing off-grid use of solar power. Worldwide, I believe we need to consider all scientific and economic knowledge to care for our environment and not cherry-pick data to support a predetermined outcome. Most pollution is generated in developing countries, so reducing pollution worldwide requires cost-efficient, zero-emission energy sources like nuclear.”

Now, you may be thinking, “Alright, I think I’m ready to cast my ballot... But how do I do that? Do I have to go in-person or I requested a mail-in ballot but I’m nervous I’m going to mess it up somehow.” Don’t worry! I can also guide you through actually voting.

The first time I voted my ballot was rejected because I voted at the wrong polling location. You can NOT vote at just any polling place. You have to vote at your assigned location- learn from my mistake.



First thing's first, registration! [Are you registered to vote?](#) Once you are registered, you can look up what your voting district and polling location is. Here is the New York State database: <https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/> Below is a sample of the information you will be able to see once you've entered in your information:

Voter District Information	
Election District : 42	Congressional District : 12
County Legislative District : 0	Town : NEW YORK
Senate District : 28	Ward :
Assembly District : 73	

If you feel up to voting in person, please remember to wear your mask and to leave any political merchandise at home. If you have a small purse or backpack I would suggest bringing a bottle of water and a snack that isn't too messy or obnoxious (beef jerky, pretzels, a granola bar, etc). Also wear comfortable shoes, the line length can

vary from a few minutes to hours so be prepared for both. Don't let that discourage you though, especially if you've missed the mail-in deadline!

Let's be real, social settings are not what they used to be. If you want to vote from home because of COVID, or you're not anywhere near your polling place (college students I'm looking at you), good news is you can vote by mail!

In order to vote by mail, you need to [request a ballot](#) from your state's Board of Elections. It will take a few weeks to receive your ballot in the mail. The upside to voting by mail in comparison to in-person is that you have more time and freedom to research (or double check) candidate's platforms. When you vote at the polls you're not allowed to have your phone out, so there isn't the opportunity to research a candidate or position you weren't prepared for- say local judges. If you were not aware of their candidacy beforehand, you wouldn't have been able to know in advance who you'd like to vote for.

When voting by mail, it is important to read all the directions included and to cast your vote as a strong dark mark. Fill out the bubble entirely, and refrain from making stray marks, using a black pen is best. The format is similar to a test scantron that you might have used while in school. A machine will read your ballot, so it is important to make your submission as perfect as possible in order for the best results.

[Early voting](#) is just about the same as in person, you just will have to find a polling place near you that may not be your regular polling site. You will also have to take the same precautions because of COVID-19- wear a mask, maintain social distancing, and bring wipes or hand sanitizer if you can. The polling site will be open only on specific days and at certain times. You can't just go whenever, you'll have to plan for it.

NY State Examples:

State Senator (28th Senatorial District):



Democratic Party:

[Liz Krueger](#)

First elected to the New York State Senate in a Special Election in February 2002, Liz Krueger is currently the Chair of the Senate Finance Committee. She is also a member of five other committees: Elections; Higher Education; Housing, Construction and Community Development; Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities; and Rules.

Senator Krueger is a strong advocate for tenants' rights, affordable housing, improved access to health care and prescription drug coverage, social services, more equitable funding for public education, and animal welfare. She has made reforming and modernizing New York State's governmental processes, electoral system, and tax policy central goals of her legislative agenda.



Republican Party:
[Michael Zumbluskas](#)

Michael Zumbluskas has been a leader in the independent political movement in New York and nationwide for the past 25 years. He is committed to “practical government that works for all” and reforming the electoral system. Mike has led voter registration and party enrollment drives and worked as a campaign advisor for many Independent, Republican and Democratic candidates.

Mike has appeared on many TV programs as a panelist on electoral reform and grassroots activism. He currently works as a resource management analyst for the New York City Department of Transportation.

NYC Local Examples:

Member of the Assembly (73rd Assembly District):



Democratic Party:
[Dan Quart](#)

After graduating from SUNY Binghamton and St. John's School of Law, Dan dedicated his time to pro-bono advocacy. For years, he volunteered on behalf of rent controlled and stabilized tenants who were facing eviction by unscrupulous developers. Following his work in the community, Dan was honored as one of New York City's top pro-bono attorneys by New York State's Chief Judge.

Dan currently serves as the State Assemblymember for the seventy-third district of New York, representing the Upper East Side, Midtown East, Turtle Bay, and Sutton Place. Since being elected in 2011, he's been a staunch advocate for criminal justice reform and fighting for working families.



Republican Party:
[Judith Graham](#)

Judy graduated from Virginia Tech in 1976 with a degree in Communications, and spent the next four years on tour, performing in local clubs, cabarets, and restaurants throughout the midwest, Boston and Florida before deciding to settle in NYC permanently. Ever since then, Judy's acquired a variety of skills and accomplishments.

She's performed in commercials, daytime TV dramas, trade shows, taught at FIT, sold real estate for eight years, had her first book published, and eventually started her own business: Beauty By Judy, an on-location hair, makeup and styling service for brides on their wedding day.

Conclusion:

Being an informed and active Gen Z voter is an important task. You should be proud of yourself. Don't let this election be the end all be all to your activism, strive to continue being an active member in your community (both locally and nationally) by keeping abreast on what's happening in politics. Your duty to vote is crucial because who you elect to represent you affects your day to day. Don't let policy and pushback discourage you from being involved, voting for who you want, and having your voice heard. It is an American right and duty to vote so be sure that you do and encourage others to do the same.