

LET MY PEOPLE VOTE®

# 2021 BLACK WOMEN'S VOTER GUIDE



# the **guide** to the guide

During the present Black HERstory-in-the-making moment, this independent voter guide is designed to provide quick, important information about what's on our ballot. It contains a description of some elected offices on the Denver and Aurora ballots, information on statewide ballot measures and Denver ballot measures, how and where to register to vote across the state, and where we can find out more information. This guide centers the policy priorities of Black Women by focusing on the issues and policies that shape our lives and communities.

This guide includes a selection of races and ballot measures that are on your ballot, and there may be other races on your ballot that are not included here.



## Soul 2 Soul Sisters

Soul 2 Soul Sisters is a fiercely faith-based, Black Women-led, racial justice 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that focuses on Black healing and Black liberation. Soul 2 Soul Sisters' Let My People Vote (LMPV) program is a Black Women-led, bold, ongoing, collaborative electoral justice program with New Era Colorado that empowers Black people to be politically engaged. You can learn more or sign up to volunteer at [Soul2SoulSisters.org](https://Soul2SoulSisters.org).

## New Era Colorado Foundation

New Era Colorado Foundation is a local nonpartisan nonprofit organization reinventing politics for young people, mobilizing and empowering a new generation to participate in our democracy to make Colorado a better place for everyone. New Era Colorado Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. You can learn more or sign up to volunteer at [NewEraColorado.org](https://NewEraColorado.org).

# How & Where to Register to Vote

Every registered voter will be mailed a ballot starting October 8th. Your voter registration must be updated with your current address to receive a ballot in the mail. To update or register for the first time head to [GoVoteColorado.gov](https://www.govotecolorado.gov). After October 25th, you may go to any in-person Voter Service Center in your county to register, vote, or request a replacement ballot. Many counties are offering curbside ballot pick-up.

All registered voters have the following options for how to vote: mail-in your ballot, drop it off, or vote in-person. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we highly recommend mailing your ballot or dropping it at a nearby dropbox in order to keep you and your community safe. Ballots must be \*received\* by 7pm on Election Day: Tuesday, November 2nd.

# to vote with a mail-in ballot

## **DROP IT OFF**

You can drop off your ballot at any ballot dropbox or Voter Service Center in the state. Your ballot must be \*received\* by 7pm on Election Day.

## **RECENTLY MOVED?**

Update your mailing address at [GoVoteColorado.gov](https://www.GoVoteColorado.gov) by October 25th to receive a mail ballot at your current address.

## **MAIL IT IN**

If you mail-in your ballot, be sure to affix postage. All ballots must be \*received\* by a County Clerk by 7pm on November 2nd. Postmarks do not count, so we recommend mailing your ballot by October 25th.

You may need to include a photocopy (or printed photo) of an acceptable form of ID with your mail ballot— please refer to your mail ballot to see if this is required of you.

# to vote in-person

Visit any Voter Service Center in your county to register, update your address, and vote in-person anytime up to and including Election Day. In-person early voting begins Oct. 25th and ends at 7pm on November 2nd. Note: you \*must\* bring a form of ID to vote in-person; acceptable forms include: CO Driver's License, CO Student ID, Passport, Military ID, or Utility Bill. For a full list of acceptable forms of ID, go to [JustVoteColorado.org](https://www.JustVoteColorado.org).

For a list of locations for registering, voting, or dropping off your ballot: visit [JustVoteColorado.org](https://www.JustVoteColorado.org).

## **RECENTLY MOVED?**

Update your mailing address at [GoVoteColorado.gov](https://www.GoVoteColorado.gov) by October 25th to receive a mail ballot at your current address.

# Your Rights & Some Resources

## to ask **questions** or report problems

Visit [JustVoteColorado.org](https://www.JustVoteColorado.org) to find where to go to vote, FAQs, or to report problems. Call the voter hotline if you have any problems or questions: 1-866-OUR-VOTE.

## **eligibility to vote**

You are eligible to vote in the fall 2021 General Election if you:

- will be 18 years of age or older by November 2nd, 2021
- are a United States citizen,
- have resided in Colorado 22 days immediately before the election at which you intend to vote,
- aren't currently incarcerated for a felony conviction,
- aren't currently on DOC inmate status and living in a community corrections halfway house or on non-residential status

## **getting your vote in on time**

If you're voting with your mail ballot: Your ballot must be \*received\* by your County Clerk by 7PM on Election Day, November 2nd. Postmarks do NOT count, so if it's getting close to November 2nd, drop it off in-person instead of putting it in the mail. If you're voting in-person: It's unlikely that polling centers will have lines, but as long as you're in line by 7PM on Election Day, you have the right to vote. Stay in line!

## **no ID?**

If you don't have the correct ID, you always have the right to vote a provisional ballot. An election official may contact you after the election to square things up so that they can count your ballot.

## **challenges & intimidation**

If anyone challenges your right to vote or intimidates you at the polling place, you still always have the right to cast a ballot.

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CALL THE VOTER PROTECTION HOTLINE WITH ANY PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS:  
**1-866-OUR-VOTE | [JUSTVOTECOLORADO.ORG](https://www.justvotecolorado.org)**

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**Just Vote! Colorado Election Protection is a non-partisan voter assistance project and is not affiliated with or promoting any party, candidate or ballot issue. Just Vote! Colorado is not affiliated with or responsible for the content of this piece**



# OFFICES ON THE 2021 BALLOT

# DENVER SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTORS

## what this office does

The Denver Board of Education is the policy-making body for Denver's school district. Each school district Board of Education is responsible for using its resources in a way that results in the equitable treatment of all students enrolled in the school district, according to their individual needs.

## how this office shapes the lives of Black Women

### Your next School Board Directors can....

Control the type of instruction that happens in the schools of the school district and prioritize curriculum that is anti-racist and culturally relevant. This includes making decisions about the type of educational programs that are available and what textbooks should be assigned for any course of instruction or study in such programs.

Provide Black parents with the opportunity to make an impact on how schools prepare Black children for successful futures by using community feedback to create a blueprint for the education system and determine the skills students need to learn in school in order to be successful after graduation.

Support Black children experiencing homelessness by enacting policies that remove barriers to school access and success for children who are houseless.

# AURORA CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

## what this office does

City Council members are the policy-makers for the city. They also work on setting Aurora's goals, major projects, and long-term challenges such as land use development and strategic planning.

## how this office shapes the lives of Black Women

### Your next City Council can....

Increase police accountability and push the Aurora Police Department to change their policies and practices to protect Black communities and increase our safety when dealing with law enforcement.

Enact policies that support the city in addressing climate effects and preparing to protect vulnerable communities from future climate impacts.

Decide how the city will address housing and houselessness in equitable ways.



# STATEWIDE BALLOT MEASURES

# BALLOT MEASURES

## **amendment 78:** **requirements for spending** **custodial money**

### IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...

Requires the Colorado legislature to disburse all money that the state receives outside of state taxes, such as this federal funding, legal settlements, grants, donations and emergency relief funds. Currently, these funds may be spent at the direction of the executive branch (aka the Governor).

# BALLOT MEASURES

## proposition 119: learning enrichment & academic progress program



### IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...

Increases taxes on retail marijuana users by 5% and uses that money to expand students' learning opportunities outside of the classroom when school is not in session. It also creates the Colorado Learning Authority which would be separate from the State Board of Education and Colorado Department of Education.

# BALLOT MEASURES

## proposition 120: property tax assessment rate reduction & voter approved revenue change

### IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...

Reduces the property assessment tax rate for multi-family and lodging properties. The multi-family property tax assessment rate will lower from 7.15% to 6.5%. The lodging property tax assessment rate will lower from 29% to 26.4%.

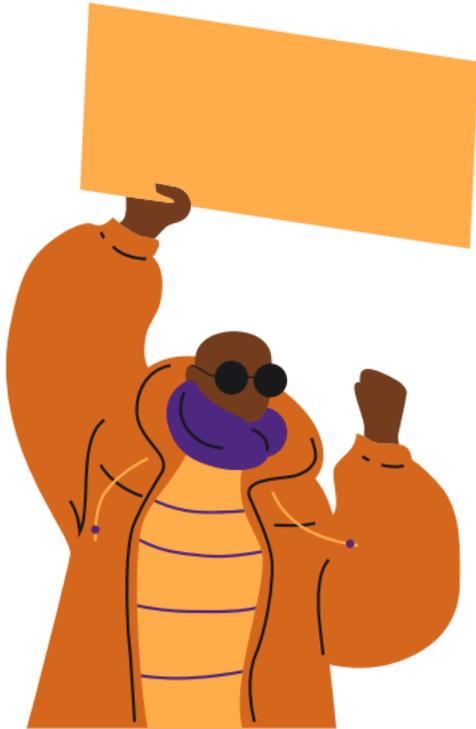
**NOTE: The ballot language is different than what the measure will actually do – this is because during the 2021 legislative session there was a bill (SB21-93) that limits the impact of this ballot measure.**



# DENVER BALLOT INITIATIVES

# ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: POLICING

## Referred Question 2G: Citizen Oversight Board



### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Changes who has the power to appoint an Independent Monitor for the Denver Police Department and the Denver Sheriff's Department. The people who work in this office are responsible for conducting independent investigations into each department's conduct. Currently, the Mayor assigns this position. This measure would give that power to the Citizen Oversight Board.

### **WHAT IT MEANS...**

It adds civilians into the process for investigating police departments and officers.

# ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: HOUSING

## Referred Question 2F: Repeal Ordinance 2020- 0888

### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

In 2020, Denver City Council decided to allow up to five unrelated people to live in one home and increase the number of areas that halfway houses are allowed to operate. This ballot measure would reverse that decision.

### **WHAT IT MEANS...**

Only two unrelated people can live in one home together and halfway homes can only be allowed to set up in industrial zones.

## Referred Question 2B: Denver Housing & Shelters

### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Approves \$38 million to be used for creating new shelters and improving existing shelters for folks experiencing houselessness in Denver.

# ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: HOUSING

## Initiated Ordinance 303: Let's Do Better

### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Requires city officials to enforce the city's camping ban within three days of receiving a complaint and allows people to sue the city for failure to enforce the ban. Also, Ordinance 303 allows Denver officials to create four sanctioned camping sites that are required to have functioning facilities like running water.

### **WHAT IT MEANS...**

People who can't access a shelter and are forced to camp outside are at risk of being forcibly removed by the city.

### **WE SAY VOTE NO BECAUSE...**

This measure would do nothing to address the actual causes of houselessness, while enforcing inequitable and harmful consequences to people who are houseless. It would only increase the criminalization of houseless communities and, since Black folks are at an increased risk of experiencing houselessness, this increases the risk of houseless Black people having harmful interactions with police. This measure guarantees countless lawsuits against the city at a high cost to taxpayers and creates more barriers for the city to fund substantive and positively impactful housing solutions.

# ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY RESOURCES & PUBLIC GOOD

## Referred Question 2A: City Building Improvements

### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Approves \$104 million to be used for various projects on city-owned buildings: repairing the Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver Zoo and other community spaces, building two libraries, creating a youth empowerment center, and making sure all buildings are updated to meet accessibility standards for disabled communities.

# ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY RESOURCES & PUBLIC GOOD

## Referred Question 2C: Denver Transit and Mobility

### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Approves \$63 million for improving transportation and making it easier to move around the city through projects like repairing and creating more sidewalks, adding more bike lanes, and rebuilding Morrison Road to create a cultural arts district.

## Referred Question 2D: City Parks

### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Approves \$54 million for creating a park in Northeast Denver, creating a park in South Denver, repairing the Mestizo-Curtis Park pool, and improving existing parks and playgrounds.

# ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY RESOURCES & PUBLIC GOOD

## Initiated Ordinance 300: Pandemic Research Fund



### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Increases marijuana sales tax by 1.5% and uses the taxes collected to fund pandemic prevention and preparedness research.

# ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY RESOURCES & PUBLIC GOOD

## Initiated Ordinance 301: Parks and Open Space

### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Requires voters to approve all future development and construction that happens on city parks and city-owned land meant for conservation.

**For a more nuanced and detailed explanation, check out this resource from the Denverite.**

## Initiated Ordinance 302: Conservation Easement

### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Changes the definition of “conservation easement” to apply only to projects that have been approved by the Division of Conservation

**For a more nuanced and detailed explanation, check out this resource from the Denverite.**

# ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY RESOURCES & PUBLIC GOOD

## Initiated Ordinance 304: Enough Taxes Already

### **IF PASSED, THIS MEASURE...**

Reduces the aggregate sales and use tax rate in Denver to 4.5% which would reduce the overall budget for the city. This impacts how money gets used for things like Denver's Homelessness Resolution Fund and certain marijuana taxes that go toward affordable housing projects.

## find out more

This independent voter guide is designed to give you the quickest, most important information on what's on your ballot and how to vote. But obviously there's a lot more information out there. If you're looking to read more about what's on your ballot, we encourage you to check out your county clerk's website, New Era Colorado's ballot spotlight, and the Colorado Health Foundation's local ballot measure tracker.



**NEW ERA**  
**COLORADO**