

VOTING RIGHTS & THE 2026 ELECTIONS

What has changed — and what voters should know

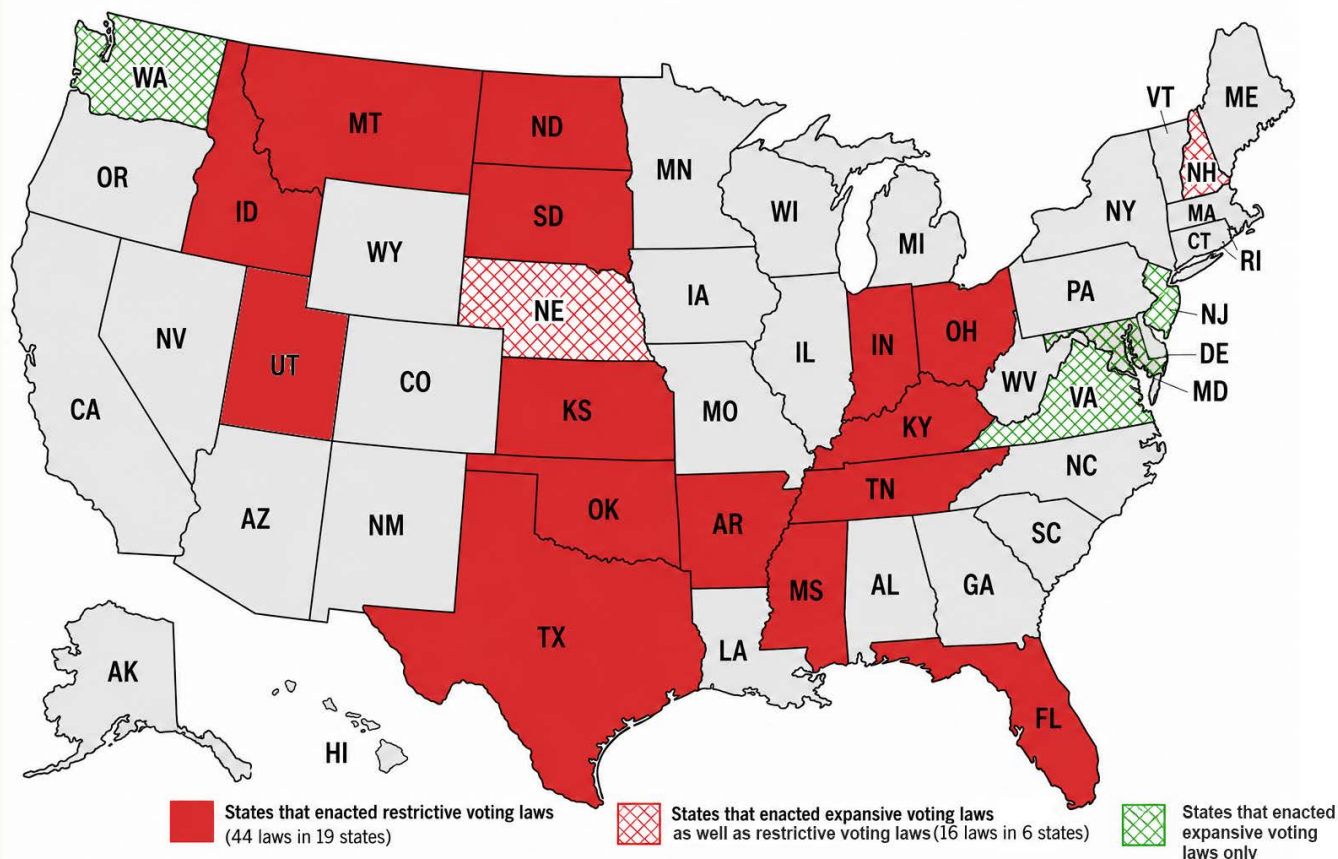
Updated September 1, 2026

At least 44 restrictive voting laws were enacted in 19 states

during the 2025–2026 federal election cycle, according to the Brennan Center's latest comprehensive roundup.

Thirty-one of the 32 laws enacted in 2025 were slated to be in effect for the 2026 midterms.

Because courts may block or modify laws, voters should verify current rules with their state or local election office.



REGISTRATION & ID

South Dakota and Utah now require documentary proof such as a passport or birth certificate for some registration. Other 2026 laws narrow acceptable IDs or expand voter challenges.

MAIL & ABSENTEE VOTING

Ohio, Kansas, North Dakota and Utah changed deadlines or rules affecting mail ballots. Federal mail-ballot rules are also being litigated; a federal judge temporarily blocked a USPS rule on Aug. 28.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

2025 laws in several states give partisan officials new authority over local election administration or recounts. States have also enacted protections against intimidation, misinformation and election interference.

Not all 2026 changes restrict voting.

Between Jan. 1 and May 1, 2026, at least 6 states enacted 16 expansive voting laws; 14 were slated to be in effect for the midterms. Examples include expanded early voting, mail-ballot cure procedures, and stronger protections for voters of color.

BE PREPARED TO VOTE

Check your registration, ID requirements, early-voting dates and mail-ballot deadlines with your state or local election office.

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