

Evaluating political candidates

- Step 1: Determine what you are looking for in a candidate** - Evaluate the positions they take on issues and the leadership qualities and experience they would bring to the office.
- Step 2: Get familiar with who is running** - Visit mvi.sos.state.mi.us/Voter/Index to find your voter information and sample ballot.
- Step 3: Research and collect information about the candidates** -
- Visit bridgedetroit.com, bridgemi.com, detroitvotes.org, and lwv.org for analysis and information.
 - Review direct mail letters, flyers and postcards
 - Candidate social media accounts
 - Evaluate online, radio and tv ads
 - Research candidate endorsements by individuals, organizations and news outlets
 - Listen to candidates' speeches
 - Watch and attend candidate debates, online forums and town halls
- Step 4: Evaluate candidates' positions on issues** - In a local race, interviews with the candidates can be helpful. For incumbents, a look at their voting records on issues important to you, which you identified in Step 1. Ask yourself the following questions:
- Does the information you collected give an overall impression of the candidates?
 - What specific conclusions can you draw about the candidates' positions on issues?
 - Record what you have learned about where they stand on your priority issues from each source you review in Step 3.



- Step 5: Learn about the candidates' leadership abilities**
- Look at the candidates' background and their experience. Do they seem qualified for the job?
 - Observe the candidates' campaigns. Do they give speeches to different groups (even those who may disagree with them)? Do they accept invitations to debate? Do the campaigns emphasize media events, where the candidates can be seen but not heard?
 - Review the campaign website, social media content, and materials. As you watch the campaign develop, consider information that provides insights into candidates' personalities and leadership qualities.
- Step 6: Learn how other people view the candidate**
- Seek the opinions of others in your community who are affected differently by decisions of political leadership.
 - Learn about endorsements and why groups may be supporting a candidate.
 - Look into campaign contributions on opensecrets.org.
- Step 7: Put together a candidate report card**
- Which candidate's views on the issues do I agree with the most?
 - Who ran the fairest campaign?
 - Which candidate demonstrated the most knowledge on the issues?
 - Which candidate has the leadership qualities I am looking for?

Credit: League of Women Voters

Who We Are

BridgeDetroit launched in 2020 as a daily news and engagement organization. The purpose: To build deep connections with Detroiters and provide critical journalism that helps residents better understand and participate in their civic lives.

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PARTNERS



Election 2026: What you need to know

Date: Nov. 3, 2026 | Type: General

Key dates

- **Thursday, Sept. 24:** First day for absentee ballot voting
- **Monday, Oct. 19:** Last day to register to vote in person at the clerk's office or online
- **Saturday, Oct. 24:** First day of early in-person voting in Detroit
- **Tuesday, Nov. 3:** Michigan statewide general election

Key Contacts

- Election Protection Hotline: 866-687-8683
- Office of Detroit City Clerk Janice Winfrey: 313-224-3270
- Office of Wayne County Clerk Cathy M. Garrett: 313-224-5525



Everything you need to know about voting in the general election

bridgedetroit.com/2026-michigan-voter-guide-what-to-know

Information presented in this publication is accurate as of September 11, 2026.
Information may be subject to change after the publication date.



Credit: Paul Sancya, Associated Press

Statewide races

Governor: John James (R), Jocelyn Benson (D), Anthony Hudson, (Libertarian), Donna Brandenburg, (U.S. Taxpayers), Douglas Campbell (Green)

Attorney General: Doug Lloyd (R), Eli Savit (D), Jason Dye (Libertarian), John Ludtke Jr. (U.S. Taxpayers), Jeff Polonowski (Green)

Secretary of State: Anthony Forlini (R), Garlin Gilchrist II (D), Christine Sloan (Libertarian), Scott Aughney (U.S. Taxpayers), Eric Borregard (Green)

US Senate: Mike Rogers (R), Abdul El-Sayed (D), Lydia Christensen (Libertarian), Tim Long (U.S. Taxpayers), Douglas P. Marsh (Green)

U.S. House - 12th District: James D. Hooper (R), Rashida Tlaib (D)

U.S. House - 13th District: T.P. Nykoria (R), Donovan McKinney (D)

To see all statewide races, including justices, the State Board of Education and university boards, scan the QR code:



Local races

State Senate district seats

District 1

- Patrick O’Connell (R)
- Justin Onwenu (D)

District 2

- Harry Sawicki (R)
- Abbas Alawieh (D)
- Larry Darnell Betts (Working class)

District 3

- Mark Ashley Price (R)
- John Conyers III (D)
- David Roehrig (Working class)

District 6

- Joi Pokerwinski (R)
- Mary Cavanagh (D)

District 7

- Anthony R. Paesano (R)
- Jason Hoskins (D)

District 8

- Kenneth Massey (R)
- Dayna Polehanki (D)

District 10

- Michelle Nard (R)
- Natalie Price (D)

District 11

- Johnnie S. Townsend (R)
- Veronica Klinefelt (D)

District 12

- John Goldwater (R)
- Kevin Hertel (D)

State House district seats

District 1

- Valerie Whittaker (R)
- Tyrone Carter (D)

District 4

- Everett Davis (R)
- Regina Ross (D)

District 5

- Chris Venable (R)
- Candace Calloway (D)

District 7

- Reginald Moorer (R)
- Tonya Myers Phillips (D)

District 8

- Bruce P. Langran (R)
- Chris Gilmer-Hill (D)
- Stephen Boyle (Green)

District 9

- Michele Lundgren (R)
- Willie Burton (D)
- Jahdante John Smith (Green)
- Logan Ausherman (Working Class)

District 11

- Matthew Stafford (R)
- Kimberly Fisher (D)

District 16

- Brian M. Duggan (R)
- Stephanie A. Young (D)

District 17

- Ken Crider (R)
- Laurie Pohutsky (D)

To see all candidates for all county and local races, scan this QR code:



Detroit Board of Education

There are five seats up for election on the Detroit Board of Education. Here’s a full list of candidates, provided by the Detroit clerk’s office.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| • Theresa Arleen Williams | • Clement Ogden Lett |
| • La’Vonne Bien-Aime | • Phillip E. Lloyd, II |
| • Steve Bland, Jr. | • Aliya Rebekah Moore |
| • Michelle Rene’ Broughton | • Darius Lamar Morris |
| • Katrina Lanise Brown | • Liana Stern Mulholland |
| • Cidney Julia-Angela Calloway | • Tyshea Elaine Pope |
| • Bobby Lee Christian | • Danetta Lynese Simpson |
| • Nicole Marie Conaway | • Tawanna Simpson |
| • Vilma Vateria Escamilla-Duran | • Jameel Montgomery Smith |
| • Daniel Franklin Ferguson, III | • Calesther J. Smith-Arnold |
| • Duane Larry Grisby, Jr. | • Iris Alice Taylor (Dr. Taylor died July 30, 2026) |
| • Bessie Lee Harris | • Shandria Alise Vaughn |
| • David Dwayne Harris, II | • Terry Eugene Whitfield |
| • Henrietta Ivey | • Elizabeth Ann Williams |
| • Christopher Allen Hubbard | |
| • Ijazz Johnnay Jackson | |
| • Tabrian Chas Joe | |
| • Shinese DeCarol Johnson | |
| • Theodore Rhett Jones | |
| • Georgia Mae Lemmons | |
| • LaMar Demetri Lemmons | |

For information on each candidate, scan the QR code:



Ballot proposals

Detroit museum millage: The Detroit Historical Society and Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History have launched the “Yes to Our Story” campaign, a proposal seeking a 10-year, 0.2 mill levy in Wayne and Oakland counties. The tax would amount to \$30 per year for the owner of a home with an average value of \$300,000. In return, residents of both counties would receive free admission to the Wright Museum and the Historical Society. Additionally, the millage would cover free transportation for students and seniors, new curriculum and training for teachers and the publicly-owned collections for both museums would be permanently protected.

Read more here:



Money out of politics: This proposal would prohibit certain organizations and individuals — such as regulated electric and gas utilities, contractors with over \$250,000 annually in government contracts, and people and organizations with substantial connections to those utilities or contractors — from making direct or indirect contributions to those who run for office, and also provide further regulations for campaign finance laws and spending on political communications.

Read more here:



Also on the ballot:

- **Proposal 2026-01:** A proposal to convene a constitutional convention for revising the state Constitution. This appears as a ballot proposal every 16 years.
- **Wayne County Zoological Authority:** A renewal and restoration of the millage supporting the Detroit Zoo. It would be a 0.10 mill on taxable real and personal property for ten (10) years.