

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Short title. This measure is known as the "Universal Voting Rights for Citizens Sixteen and Older Amendment".

SECTION 2. In the constitution of the state of Colorado, amend section 1 of article VII as follows:

Section 1. Qualifications of electors. Only a citizen of the United States who has attained the age of sixteen years, has resided in this state for such time as may be prescribed by law, and has been duly registered as a voter if required by law must be qualified to vote at all elections, including federal, state, county, municipal, school district, and special district elections.

SECTION 3. In the constitution of the state of Colorado, repeal section 10 of article VII as follows:

Section 10. Disfranchisement during imprisonment. (Repealed)

SECTION 4. In the constitution of the state of Colorado, add section 13 to article VII as follows:

Section 13. Absolute right to vote — citizens — sixteen and older.

(1) Fundamental right.

(a) The right to vote is a fundamental, inherent, and inalienable right of all citizens of the United States who are residents of the state of Colorado.

(b) This section supplements, and does not repeal, section 5 of article II of this constitution, which guarantees free and open elections.

(2) Voting age. Every citizen of the United States who is a resident of the state of Colorado and has attained the age of sixteen years is eligible to register and vote in all elections held in this state, including federal, state, county, municipal, school district, and special district elections.

(a) To the extent that federal law is interpreted to restrict voting to those eighteen years or older in federal elections, the state must provide for serial or separate ballots so that citizens aged sixteen and seventeen may still participate fully in all state and local elections.

(3) Non-disenfranchisement. No citizen may be denied or restricted from voting based on incarceration, parole, probation, criminal conviction, residence status, mental competence, or unpaid financial obligations.

(a) "Mental competence" means a person's ability to understand and participate in voting, and may not be restricted by civil disability statutes unrelated to voting.

(b) "Unpaid financial obligations" means any fees, fines, restitution, or other debts owed to government.

(c) "Residence status" means the nature, stability, or type of a person's residence in the state, including but not limited to homelessness, lack of a fixed address, temporary or transitional housing, or institutional residence such as nursing homes or group homes. This does not include immigration or citizenship status, which is governed by subsections (1) and (2) of this section.

(4) Prohibition of infringement. No law, regulation, administrative action, or government policy may impose conditions, qualifications, or limitations that impair or unreasonably delay the exercise of the right to vote.

(a) Nothing in this subsection prevents the enactment of laws pursuant to section 11 of article VII to secure the purity of elections, provided such laws are narrowly tailored and do not unnecessarily impair the right to vote.

(5) Strict scrutiny. Any state action materially burdening voting rights is subject to strict scrutiny, and the burden is on the state to prove the measure is the least restrictive means to achieve a compelling governmental interest.

(6) Implementation. The general assembly must enact laws to ensure secure, universal access to voter registration, ballots, and election information, including for citizens in detention and correctional facilities. Verification of citizenship, residence, and age may be required by law, provided such requirements are the least restrictive means to confirm eligibility.

(7) Self-execution and repeals. This section is self-executing. All provisions of law inconsistent with this section, including but not limited to section 10 of article VII, are repealed to the extent of their inconsistency.

SECTION 5. Effective date. This act takes effect upon the date of the official declaration of the vote and the proclamation of the governor, in accordance with section 1 (4)(a) of article V of the Colorado constitution.