

HOW PRECLEARANCE PROTECTS NEW YORK VOTERS

The NYVRA protects your rights as a New York voter

The 2022 John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York sets a new standard for protecting voters of color at the state level. To learn about all its key provisions, visit www.naacpldf.org/new-york-voting-rights-act/.

What is preclearance?

- Preclearance is a way to stop voting discrimination before it happens. For decades, preclearance was the heart of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965.

What does preclearance do?

- Under the NYVRA, preclearance requires local governments with a recent history of suppressing voting rights or other kinds of discrimination to get approval from New York's Attorney General or a court before changing voting rules or procedures. Voting changes can only be "precleared" if the local government shows that they will not harm voters of color.

THE NEW YORK VOTING RIGHTS ACT



Why is preclearance important?

- Preclearance can prevent many discriminatory election rules or procedures from going into effect and can help to increase transparency and public involvement around important decisions that affect the right to vote.

Why isn't the federal Voting Rights Act enough to protect my voting rights?

- In 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court weakened the federal Voting Rights Act by immobilizing the preclearance program, leading to a flood of anti-voter laws in states across the nation.
- Since then, new federal legislation has been stalled in Congress, leaving communities of color vulnerable to restrictive laws that undermine equal access to the ballot.
- Where federal laws are insufficient to protect your rights, your state can pass laws to help.

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Why is preclearance so important for New Yorkers?

- Despite its progressive reputation, New York's voting laws and practices have long made it harder for voters of color and people whose first language is not English to participate in our democracy, especially at the local level.
- The NYVRA's preclearance program will now prevent certain election rules or procedures from harming New Yorkers, and empower all New Yorkers to exercise their right to vote.

YOUR NEW RIGHTS UNDER THE NYVRA EXPLAINED. PRECLEARANCE IS IMPORTANT.

What kinds of election procedures need preclearance approval?

- Those changes that are known to have a risk of discrimination, like removing people from the voter rolls or moving polling locations.

How can voters use this protection?

- Voters can raise concerns about discriminatory voting rules or procedures to community-based organizations, civil rights lawyers, voting rights groups, or the New York Attorney General -- they can all help you challenge voter suppression in court.
- Voters can also make public comments about proposed changes that are subject to preclearance through submissions to the New York Attorney General's Civil Rights Bureau.

How will preclearance protect voters?

- Preclearance can block harmful election practices from going into effect, preventing discrimination before it can harm voters.
- Preclearance also helps to ensure that unintended problems are identified and resolved in advance, and that local governments use best practices that promote equal access to the ballot.

LEARN ABOUT THE KEY PROVISIONS OF THE NYVRA:
naacpldf.org/new-york-voting-rights-act