

Opportunities for Engagement

Emory Votes Initiative | Fall 2020

Casting a ballot isn't the only form civic engagement takes in a vibrant democracy. Here are a few ideas beyond voting to spark your thinking: working the polls, helping others vote, and joining student organizations.

Poll Workers Needed

A lot of longtime, older poll workers are sitting this year out, so bright, young, fresh folks are desperately needed to fill the shortage, [especially in Georgia](#) but really all across the land. Set up machines, check voters in, etc. The training and long day of service will even net you a little cash!

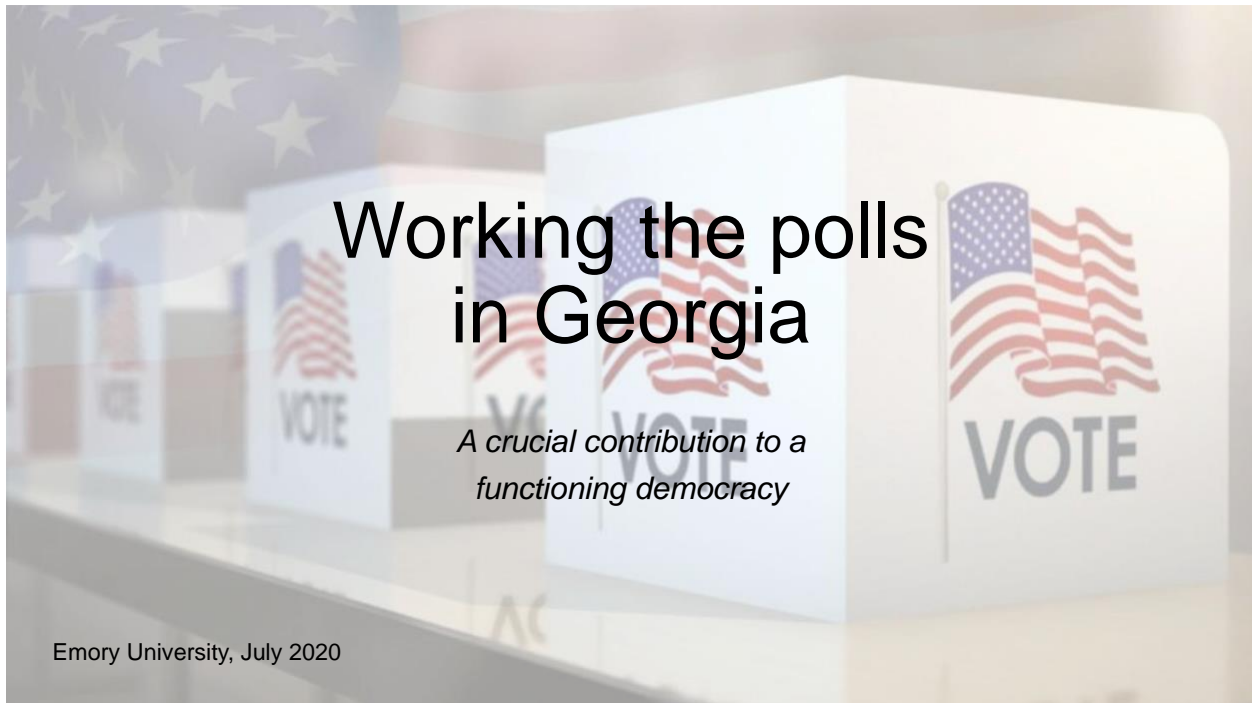
Working the polls can only be done in person, of course. EVI does not presume to tell you what risks are worth taking. Please consider carefully whether this is a safe enough choice for you and those you live with, and keep in mind any university policies limiting off-campus activities.

In all states: [Power the Polls](#) directs you to poll worker information for any location. You can also find your state's official poll worker information through the [U.S. Election Assistance Commission](#).

In Georgia: You must be a citizen, age 16 and up, and apply in your county of residence. Other details vary by county. You can sign up directly with a county yourself (e.g., [DeKalb](#), [Fulton](#), [Gwinnett](#)) or go through an organization. EVI suggests two in particular.

- The [ACLU of Georgia](#) suggests signing up with both them (put "Emory Votes Initiative" as your organization) *and* your county. The ACLU sometimes groups teammates together to "adopt" a polling place, and they work with counties to give ACLU trainees priority in hiring.
- New in town is the [Georgia Youth Poll Work Project](#), with its Push for 5k initiative to recruit 5,000 student poll workers in the metro Atlanta area. This initiative by 2020 Georgia State graduate Evan Malbrough was [mentioned](#) in the New York Times. [@ga_youth_pollworkers](#)

Renard Sexton, Emory assistant professor of political science, fleshes out the local need and process [in this presentation](#).



Working the polls in Georgia

*A crucial contribution to a
functioning democracy*

Emory University, July 2020

Other Voting-Related Opportunities

Got time on Election Day or before? Help *others* vote. With face-to-face voter registration and canvassing on campus off the table, read on for other election-related volunteering ideas.

- Within the Emory community, share this **Emory Votes Initiative** [website](#). Encourage others to sign up for [TurboVote](#) and register to vote, the sooner the better, or change or update their information. Help others figure out how to get and return absentee ballots.
- Be a **poll watcher or monitor** (not to be confused with a poll worker) through Election Protection's [Protect the Vote](#) or other nonpartisan or partisan efforts. Training required.
- **Get out the vote** in the larger community by phoning, texting, or writing postcards from home. There are many partisan and nonpartisan efforts out there. Some focus on particular communities, e.g., in Atlanta, the Center for Pan-Asian Community Services (CPACS) or the Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials (GALEO). [GoVoteGA](#) is a good starting point.
- Get trained to answer the **Election Protection** coalition's nonpartisan **voter hotline** at [866ourvote](#) and head off problems at the polls. Political parties may also run their own voter helplines.
- Other possibilities:

- [Vote Riders](#) helps people navigate **voter ID** requirements. [Spread the Vote](#) also helps folks who need ID get it.
- **“Warm the line”** on Election Day. Volunteer with a local organization or on your own to safely bring food, water, or even chairs or umbrellas to those waiting in line to vote.
- On your evening walk at the end of Election Day, snap and upload pictures of your precinct’s publicly posted **poll tapes**. [Protect Our Votes](#) is organizing this Photo Finish effort in states including Georgia, Tennessee, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Connecticut.

Student Organizations

Civic engagement starts with taking part in your immediate community. Consider joining student organizations such as these, to name a few:

Emory College

- APIDAA (Asian, Pacific Islander and Desir American Activists)
- Black Student Association
- College Republicans
- Hillel
- Latino Student Organization
- NAACP Emory
- Pi Sigma Alpha (political science honor society)
- Students for Justice in Palestine
- Young Americans for Freedom
- Young Democrats

Oxford College

- Oxford College Republicans
- OxFirst - first generation/low-income student group
- OxMUN
- OxPride
- Pre-Law Society
- Race- and ethnicity-based organizations: OLE (Organización de la Lengua Española), Black Student Alliance, African Caribbean Students Union, Asian Culture Club, Indian Cultural Exchange, Hindu Student Association, Chinese Student Association, Muslim Student Association, Korean American Student Association
- Turning Point USA
- Young Democrats