

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

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# KENTUCKY

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RATIFIED THE 19TH AMENDMENT ON JAN. 6, 1920

1920  2020  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE  
CENTENNIAL  
COMMISSION



1920-2020



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"THE RIGHT OF  
CITIZENS OF THE  
UNITED STATES TO  
VOTE SHALL NOT BE  
DENIED OR ABRIDGED  
BY THE UNITED  
STATES OR BY ANY  
STATE ON ACCOUNT  
OF SEX."

The 19th Amendment

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# ABOUT

*The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission (WSCC) was formed by Congress to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote and the 19th Amendment.*

Throughout 2020, the United States is celebrating the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which secured women's constitutional right to vote. Today, more than 68 million American women vote in elections because of the courageous suffragists who never gave up the fight for equality. This centennial is an unparalleled opportunity to elevate women's history and to commemorate a milestone of American democracy.

**Use this toolkit as your guide to commemorating the centennial in your state and community.**



ALICE PAUL IN FRONT OF THE NATIONAL WOMAN'S PARTY HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON, D.C., 1920.

# LEARN THE HISTORY

## THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

Suffragists began their organized fight for women's equality in 1848 when they demanded the right to vote during the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. For the next 72 years, women leaders lobbied, marched, picketed, and protested for the right to the ballot. The U.S. House of Representatives finally approved the "Susan B. Anthony Amendment," which guaranteed women the right to vote, on May 21, 1919. The U.S. Senate followed two weeks later and voted to approve the 19th Amendment on June 4, 1919. The 19th Amendment then went to the states, where it had to be ratified by three-fourths of the then 48 states to be added to the Constitution. Tennessee became the 36th and final state needed to ratify the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920. On August 26, 1920, the U.S. Secretary of State issued a proclamation declaring the 19th Amendment ratified and officially part of the U.S. Constitution. Today, August 26th is celebrated annually as Women's Equality Day.

## KENTUCKY QUICK FACTS

- Kentucky ratified the 19th Amendment on January 6, 1920.
- In the 19th and early 20th century, women in certain areas of Kentucky won the right to vote on particular issues, such as education.
- The American Woman Suffrage Association Annual Convention was held in Louisville in 1881, the first national suffrage convention held south of the Mason-Dixon line.
- The Kentucky Woman Suffrage Association was the first statewide suffrage organization established in the South.
- After ratifying the 19th Amendment, the Kentucky legislature also passed a measure in March 1920 allowing KY women to vote for U.S. president to ensure they would be able to vote in the 1920 election.
- Suffragists such as Cornelia Beach, Dr. Mary E. Britton, Laura Clay, Mary Barr Clay, Virginia Penny, and Lucie Willmott Smith were active in Kentucky.



SUFFRAGIST AND  
LAWYER INEZ  
MILHOLLAND AT A  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE  
PARADE IN NEW YORK  
CITY, MAY 3, 1913.

## LEARN THE HISTORY

ORIGINAL SOURCE: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**KENTUCKY AND THE 19TH AMENDMENT****RATIFICATION DATE: JANUARY 6, 1920**

Women first organized and collectively fought for suffrage at the national level in July of 1848. Suffragists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott convened a meeting of over 300 people in Seneca Falls, New York. In the following decades, women marched, protested, lobbied, and even went to jail. By the 1870s, women pressured Congress to vote on an amendment that would recognize their suffrage rights. This amendment was sometimes known as the Susan B. Anthony amendment and became the 19th Amendment.

The amendment reads:

*"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."*

Kentucky was on the forefront of the movement for women's suffrage, not just in the South but in the nation. Women who were heads of households and taxpayers won the right to vote on tax and education issues in rural areas of Kentucky in 1838, ten years before the Seneca Falls Convention. That makes Kentucky the first place anywhere in the country where women could participate in the electoral process since New Jersey revoked women's access to the ballot in 1807. In 1894, women won school suffrage in Lexington, Covington, and Newport. The Kentucky legislature reversed itself in 1902 and took away this limited suffrage over fears that African American women voters would support Republican candidates for school board. After a concentrated lobbying campaign by the Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs, women in these cities won school suffrage back in 1912 but with an added literacy test for women voters. Like literacy tests instituted in other states and municipalities around the country, the added requirement was designed to exclude Black voters.

Women in Kentucky were active in organizing for woman suffrage. Virginia Penny of Louisville became Vice President of the American Equal Rights Association in 1867. That same year, women in Glendale organized a local suffrage association, the first in the South. More followed in the 1870s. Mary Barr Clay of Richmond served as vice-president of both the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), the two national suffrage organizations. Daughter of abolitionist Cassius M. Clay, Mary helped bring the AWSA Annual Convention to Louisville in 1881, the first national suffrage convention held south of the Mason-Dixon line. She served as AWSA president from 1883-84. Daughter of abolitionist Cassius M. Clay, Mary helped bring the AWSA Annual Convention to Louisville in 1881, the first national suffrage convention held

south of the Mason-Dixon line. She served as AWSA president from 1883-84. Mary's younger sister Laura Clay founded the Kentucky Woman Suffrage Association which was the first state-wide suffrage organization in the South. Laura was also involved in leadership in the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs, and the Kentucky Equal Rights Association. The Clay sisters also joined the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) when the two national organizations united in 1890. In 1913, Laura Clay became Vice President of the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference, founded by Kate Gordon, to coordinate efforts across the South to win the vote in the states.

The early suffrage efforts in Kentucky included advocacy for equal rights for both African Americans and women. But by the twentieth century, the woman suffrage associations were segregated. Dr. Mary E. Britton, the first African American woman physician in Lexington, was an activist for many civic causes, including women's right to vote. She wrote articles and participated in demonstrations against racial segregation and was president of the local Woman's Improvement Club.

Despite all of the activism, women in Kentucky were not able to expand their enfranchisement beyond school suffrage. This led a few Kentucky suffragists to shift their focus to passage of the federal amendment. Some even joined the National Woman's Party protests at the White House. At least one Kentuckian, Cornelia Beach, was arrested along with other picketers in August 1917.

After decades of arguments for and against women's suffrage, Congress finally passed of the 19th Amendment in 1919. After Congress approved the 19th Amendment, at least 36 states needed to vote in favor of it for it to become law. This process is called ratification.

On January 6, 1920, Kentucky voted to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment. Two months later, on March 29, 1920, the Kentucky legislature also passed a measure allowing women to vote in presidential elections. That law became unnecessary because on August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the 19th amendment, ensuring that in every state, the right to vote in any election could not be denied based on sex.

Source: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/kentucky-and-the-19th-amendment.htm>

# COMMEMORATE ACROSS YOUR STATE

-  **Issue Proclamations or Executive Orders:** Encourage your Governor and Mayors across the state to issue a commemorative proclamation or executive order to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as Women's Equality Day, or designate 2020 as "The Year of Kentucky Women." Find samples and templates at [womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders](https://womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders).
-  **Pass Resolutions:** Encourage your state legislature, city councils, and town councils to pass commemorative resolutions to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as Women's Equality Day, or reaffirm your state's or community's commitment to the 19th Amendment and to uplifting women's voices. Find samples and templates at [womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders](https://womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders).
-  **Join the Forward Into Light Campaign:** On August 26, 2020, buildings and landmarks across the country will light up in purple and gold to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. This nationwide celebration of the centennial is named for the historical suffrage slogan, "Forward through the Darkness, Forward into Light." Work with leaders, organizations, and communities in your state to celebrate women's right to vote in the official suffrage colors of purple and gold, from the State Capitol to skyscrapers to bridges to city halls.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN KENTUCKY

- **The Kentucky Woman Suffrage Project, funded by the University of Kentucky, is an online portal into Kentucky suffrage history and centennial activities.**
- **The Frazier Museum in Louisville will have a suffrage centennial exhibit, Women Vote 100 Celebration, on display from March 2020 to January 2021, and is coordinating centennial celebrations in the city with more than 100 partner organizations.**

# GET INSPIRED

## COMING UP IN 2020



**FORWARD INTO LIGHT**



**PROJECT 19 SKYDIVERS**



**VOTES FOR WOMEN TRAIL**



**CENTENNIAL RIDE**

**Forward Into Light:** As part of the WSCC's Forward Into Light campaign, states across the country will light their buildings and landmarks in purple and gold on August 26, 2020, the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Some states started commemorating the centennial with lightings in 2019, including Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Virginia. Are you in for August 26, 2020? Contact the WSCC for more information.

**Project 19:** Led by the Women's Skydiving Network (WSN), Project 19 is a planned jump of 100 women skydivers in July 2020 outside of Chicago in celebration of the centennial of women's right to vote. The WSN also has a sponsored all-women Professional Demonstration Team, which is scheduling jumps (at no charge!) during 19th Amendment celebrations around the country throughout 2020. For more information, contact Team Captain Melanie Curtis at [mel@melaniecurtis.com](mailto:mel@melaniecurtis.com).

**Votes for Women Trail:** The National Votes for Women Trail is a project led by the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to place historic markers at locations relevant to the history of the women's suffrage movement in all 50 states. The WSCC is partnering with the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to complete the Trail in 2020. Visit [womensvote100.org/votes-for-women-trail](http://womensvote100.org/votes-for-women-trail) to follow the Trail and find historic sites in your state.

**Centennial Ride:** In honor of the centennial of the 19th Amendment, hundreds of women and men will participate in a cross-country motorcycle tour in 2020. Riders will leave from ten different starting cities around the country, and more than 1,000 riders will converge on Washington, D.C. on August 26, 2020. Learn more at [www.centennialride.com](http://www.centennialride.com).

# PLAN AN EVENT



"WE KNOCK AT THE BAR OF JUSTICE, ASKING AN EQUAL CHANCE."

-Mary Church Terrell, suffragist & founder of the National Association of Colored Women, 1898

- **What:** Hold a press conference, reception, or public program commemorating the centennial of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. Keep reading for examples and ideas!
- **Where:** Host an event at your State Capitol or City Hall, or at a historic site, museum, school, university, or community center. Find a list of historic sites and places in Kentucky along the National Votes for Women Trail at [womensvote100.org/get-involved](http://womensvote100.org/get-involved).
- **When:** Events celebrating the centennial can be held anytime throughout 2020, but particularly important dates include Black History Month (February), Women's History Month (March), and June-August 2020, building up to the official centennial date on August 26, 2020.
- **Who:** Invite members of your community to your event, as well as state or local leaders such as your Governor, First Lady/First Partner, Members of Congress, State Legislators, Mayor, or local Council Members. Invite a guest speaker, such as a women's suffrage historian, and invite historic performers to portray famous women of history. Find a list of historians and performers at [womensvote100.org/get-involved](http://womensvote100.org/get-involved).
- **Additional Details:** The suffragists wore white dresses to display their unity, and the yellow rose became a symbol of the movement's ultimate victory. At your commemorative event, decorate the room with yellow roses, suggest your guests dress in white attire, and offer replica Votes for Women pins, which can be provided by the WSCC.

## Relevant Organizations in Your State:

- Frazier Museum: [fraziermuseum.org](http://fraziermuseum.org)
- Kentucky Commission on Women: [women.ky.gov](http://women.ky.gov)
- Kentucky Historical Society: [history.ky.gov](http://history.ky.gov)
- Kentucky League of Cities: [klc.org](http://klc.org)
- Kentucky Woman Suffrage Project: [kentuckywomensuffrageproject.org](http://kentuckywomensuffrageproject.org)

# PLAN AN EVENT

"MEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING MORE; WOMEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING LESS."  
Susan B. Anthony & Elizabeth Cady Stanton, c.1868



## MORE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IDEAS

**Street Renaming:** Through your Mayor's office, change the name of a street in your city in honor of a local suffragist.

**Suffrage Exhibits:** Work with your local historical society to create an exhibit about your community's suffrage story.

**Purple and Gold Fireworks:** At your State Fair, County Fair, or community gathering, feature a display of purple and gold fireworks.

**Musical Performances:** Hold a concert featuring female composers or original music from the suffrage movement, which can be found online through the Library of Congress's searchable archives.

**Film Screenings:** Host screenings of films focused on the suffrage movement or women's empowerment, such as *Iron Jawed Angels*, *Suffragette*, or *A League of Their Own*.

**Suffrage Floats:** Include a suffrage-themed float in state and local parades.

**Community Murals:** Hire a local artist to create a suffrage-themed mural in your community that tells the story of the suffrage movement in your state.

**Suffrage Centennial Races:** Take the lead from the National Park Service's Race to Ratification and hold a suffrage-themed 5K or 10k in summer 2020.

**Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon:** Work with Wikipedia to plan an "Edit-a-Thon" focused on your state and local suffrage history.

**Suffrage Essay or Art Contests:** Hold an essay or art contest for students on topics related to your state and local suffrage history.

**Suffrage Book Club:** Form a book club with a locally owned bookstore to read and discuss books about the women's suffrage movement.

**Plantings of Yellow Roses:** Plant yellow roses in your home, school, or community gardens and share photos on social media using the hashtags #WomensVote100, #SuffrageSisters, and #SuffraGents.

# JOIN THE CONVERSATION

## STAY ENGAGED

- Follow @WomensVote100 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Check out the “Suffrage Sisters” YouTube channel
- Subscribe to our e-newsletter at [womensvote100.org](http://womensvote100.org)
- Keep an eye on our Kentucky page at [womensvote100.org/kentucky](http://womensvote100.org/kentucky)

## FIND RESOURCES

- [womensvote100.org/learn](http://womensvote100.org/learn)
- [womensvote100.org/news](http://womensvote100.org/news)
- [womensvote100.org/states](http://womensvote100.org/states)

Use these hashtags on social media to engage with your community during this historic moment:

**#WomensVote100**  
**#SuffrageSisters**  
**#SuffraGents**

## SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

### Instagram



### Facebook



# THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

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## WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION



# QUESTIONS?

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