

Registered Voters

Sources: Virginia State Board of Elections and U.S. Bureau of the Census
City/County-level registered voters were downloaded from the Virginia State Board of Elections: <http://www.sbe.virginia.gov> for the November general elections held in each year in May, 2006. Data for 2006 were downloaded with a current date of 11/28/2006.

1999: http://www.sbe.state.va.us/web_docs/election/results/1999/nov/sen/Voter-Turnout-SEN-by-Loc.html
2000: http://www.sbe.state.va.us/web_docs/election/results/2000/nov/nov2000/n00_loc_turnout.html
2001: http://www.sbe.state.va.us/web_docs/election/results/2001/nov2001/html/elec_loc_turnout.html
2002: http://www2.sbe.state.va.us/web_docs/election/results/2002/nov/elec_loc_turnout.html
2003: http://www2.sbe.state.va.us/web_docs/election/results/2003/nov/elec_loc_turnout.html
2004: http://www2.sbe.virginia.gov/web_docs/Election/Results/2004/Nov2004/elec_loc_turnout.html
2005: http://www2.sbe.virginia.gov/web_docs/Election/results/2005/nov2005/html/elec_loc_turnout.html
2006: http://www2.sbe.virginia.gov/web_docs/Election/results/2006/Nov/htm/elec_loc_turnout.html

2000-2004 Voter age population estimates for Virginia cities and counties are from: CC-EST2004-agesex-[ST_FIPS]: Annual Estimates of the Population by Selected Age Groups and Sex for Counties in [STATE]: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2004

File: 7/1/2004 County Characteristics Estimates File for Internet Display

Source: Population Estimates Program, U.S. Bureau of the Census

Release Date: August 11, 2005

Link: http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/asrh/files/cc_est2004_agesex_51.csv

Notes:

- For Virginia Counties, as of July 1, 2001 Clifton Forge city became dependent within Alleghany County. Since Clifton Forge city is not displayed as a separate county level entity, the counties in Virginia do not sum to the state total for April 1, 2000 data.
- Since estimates for 2005 have not yet been posted, 2004 estimates are used as the calculation base for 2005 and 2006 data.
- The sum of city and county population estimates will vary from statewide totals because of Census estimation procedures.

1999 Voter age population estimates for Virginia cities and counties are the sum of persons 18 and older, from: Census: (CO-99-13) Population Estimates for Counties by Age Group: July 1, 1999

Source: Population Estimates Program, Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233

Contact: Statistical Information Staff, Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau (301-457-2422) pop@census.gov (please include a phone number with email correspondence)

Internet Release Date: August 30, 2000

Link: <http://www.census.gov/popest/archives/1990s/co-99-13/cava99.txt>

Notes: The sum of city and county population estimates will vary from statewide totals because of Census estimation procedures.

Definition: This indicator gives number of persons registered to vote in the November general election for each year.

This indicator also serves as the population base for determining voter turnout, the percentage of registered voters who actually voted in the November general election each year.

Calculations: The **percentage** gives the proportion of the selected city(ies) and/or county(ies) within the total population of persons registered to vote. It is calculated as: (# of registered voters in [selected city(ies) and/or county(ies)] / total # of registered voters in Virginia) X 100. The **rate** relates the incidence of registered voters to the selected locality(ies)'s population, resulting in a measure that can be compared among localities, regardless of population size. It is calculated as: (the number registered voters in [selected city(ies) and/or county(ies)] / the voting age population [selected city(ies) and/or county(ies)]) X 100.

Limitations: The *Code of Virginia Code of Virginia*, §24.2-405, does not permit the State Board of Elections to release detailed information on voters. Consequently, information is not provided by age, race and gender groups.

Not everyone age 18 and over can actually vote. Persons who are not citizens, have been convicted of a felony and not had voting privileges restored, are confined (e.g., jail, prison, mental institution populations), etc. may not be eligible to vote. It is not possible to estimate the total number of persons ineligible to vote by city and county. Consequently, this number overestimates the actual number of eligible voters.

The Bureau of Census has not yet posted city/county-level population estimates for 2005. Consequently, 2004 estimates are used as the calculation base for 2005 data.

Data Detail: Importance of voting. Voting not only helps to ensure that the results of an election accurately reflect of the will of the people, but also serves as a measure of how engaged people are in their communities. Low rates of voter participation indicate that citizens do not feel they can make a difference in their lives. It also reflects a lack of commitment to and involvement in their community. These attitudes are risk factors for delinquency, violence and substance abuse.

Influences on voting. Citizens may not register and actually cast their vote if they are disenchanting with government, indifferent to it, or are contented with the way things are.

They are more likely to register and vote the higher the:

- office being elected,
- voter's educational level;
- voter's income;
- voter's age; or
- the voter's employment as a civil servant.

Registration requirements also may impact whether people vote, including:

- registration before election day registration;
- closing dates for registration;
- the length of time at a new residence; and
- convenience of registration.

For More Information:

Voting in Virginia. In Virginia, the State Board of Elections:

- administers election laws;
- ensures compliance with campaign finance disclosure;
- manages the voter registration processes in Virginia; and
- maintains a centralized database of state-wide voter registration and election related data.

Their website provides a variety of helpful information on voting in Virginia:

<http://www.sbe.virginia.gov>

The Virginia Department of Education includes the importance of civic participation and voting in the Standards of Learning to encourage Virginia's youth to become active participants in the voting process:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/History/hist_7.pdf, p. 10
STANDARD CE.3d

The student will demonstrate knowledge of citizenship and the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens by: "examining the responsibilities of citizenship, including registering and voting, communicating with government officials, participating in political campaigns, keeping informed about current issues, and respecting differing opinions in a diverse society."

Additionally, many state agency websites and offices have information to assist the public in registering to vote.

Title 24.2 of the *Code of Virginia* regulates voting practices in Virginia:

<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+TOC2402000>

Voting nationally. General voting information can be found at the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Washington, DC 20005:

<http://www.eac.gov/index.asp?format=none>

Voting behavior over time. The United States Elections Project at George Mason University provides national comparison data on voting: <http://elections.gmu.edu>

Voting as a measure of civic participation. Community attachment as a risk-factor for substance abuse, delinquency and violence is discussed in: Hawkins, J.D. and R.F. Catalano. 1992. *Communities That Care*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Voter registration laws. The impact of voter registration laws on voter turnout is discussed in:
http://election04.ssrc.org/research/2004_perspectives_reg.pdf Highton, Benjamin.
1997.

Easy registration and voter turnout. *Journal of Politics* 59 (2): 565–75.