

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

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# MASSACHUSETTS

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RATIFIED THE 19TH AMENDMENT ON JUNE 25, 1919

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.

## MASSACHUSETTS QUICK FACTS

- Massachusetts ratified the 19th Amendment on June 25, 1919.
- In 1850, the first National Woman's Rights Convention met in Worcester. Speakers included Sojourner Truth and Lucy Stone.
- After the Civil War, the American Equal Rights Association, a predecessor of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, held its first meeting in Boston.
- In 1879, Massachusetts women won the right to vote for school committee members.
- Massachusetts had one of the country's strongest anti-suffrage groups, the Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women.
- Suffragists in Massachusetts included Lucretia Mott, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, and Katharine Morey.
- The Massachusetts Woman Suffrage Association, New England Women's Club, and Woman's Era Club were some of the leading suffrage organizations in the state.



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

## MASSACHUSETTS AND THE 19TH AMENDMENT

## RATIFICATION DATE: JUNE 25, 1919

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."*

Although Seneca Falls is widely recognized as a turning point in the women's rights movement, the 1848 convention was organized quickly and drew attendees from the regional area. Two years later in 1850, the first National Woman's Rights Convention met in Worcester, Massachusetts at Brinley Hall. Over 250 women and men from across the country attended the two-day conference. Among the speakers were Sojourner Truth and Lucy Stone. A second national convention held a year later in Worcester drew supportive letters from around the world. After the Civil War, the American Equal Rights Association held its first meeting in Boston. The mission of AERA was to work for equal rights and suffrage for both African Americans and women. The organization fell apart a few years later and suffragists split into two rival national organizations, the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA).

Massachusetts women joined both national associations as well as local suffrage groups including the New England Women's Club and the Woman's Era Club founded by Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin. Although the Massachusetts State Constitution limited voting rights to men, it had no such restriction on the qualifications for holding office. Women were elected to positions on the school committees in several Massachusetts towns beginning in 1868. In 1879, women won the right to vote for school committee members as well, and Louisa May Alcott was the first woman to register in her town of Concord. Her mother, Abigail Alcott, had authored a petition seeking equal rights for women, including suffrage, in 1853.

Twice, woman suffrage was put to Massachusetts voters and both times it was defeated. In 1895, women were permitted to vote along with men on a non-binding referendum to gauge public opinion on

enfranchising women in municipal elections. Only four percent of eligible women voters participated but they overwhelmingly voted in favor of the measure. Sixty-eight percent of the male votes were cast against. Woman suffrage went down in defeat again in 1915. Massachusetts had one of the country's strongest anti-suffrage groups, the Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women (later called the Women's Anti-Suffrage Association of Massachusetts), founded in 1895 by several of the state's prominent women. Like the pro-suffrage organizations, the anti-suffrage movement published newsletters and pamphlets, hosted speakers, and organized effective publicity campaigns.

Massachusetts women joined the fight for passage of the federal woman suffrage amendment as well. One Brookline woman, Katharine Morey, had the distinction of being among the first and the last protesters with the National Woman's Party (NWP) arrested for her activism. Morey and NWP co-founder Lucy Burns were arrested on June 22, 1917 for refusing to surrender their banners as they picketed the White House. They were quickly released. Over the next several months, hundreds more women were arrested for continuing the protest. More than 150 of them served time in prison with sentences ranging from several days to a few months. Among the suffrage prisoners was Katharine's mother, Agnes Morey. Katharine was arrested again along with twenty-one other women on February 24, 1919 in Boston for protesting a parade held in Woodrow Wilson's honor. The protesters served their sentences in the Charles Street Jail.




After decades of arguments for and against women's suffrage, Congress finally passed an amendment to the U.S. Constitution enfranchising women 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 June 25, 1919, Massachusetts ratified the Nineteenth Amendment. By August of 1920, 36 states (including Massachusetts) ratified the amendment, ensuring that the right to vote could not be denied or abridged based on sex.

Source:

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/massachusetts-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 Massachusetts 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 MASSACHUSETTS

- **The nonprofit organization Suffrage100MA is planning statewide commemorations of the centennial of the 19th Amendment.**
- **The Suffrage Centennial Committee, a collaboration of historic sites and institutions across the state, is planning 100 Events for 100 Years for the centennial.**

# GET INSPIRED

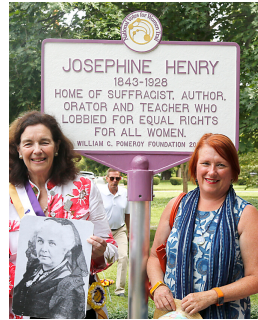
## COMING UP IN 2020



**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 Massachusetts 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:

- Boston Women's Heritage Trail: [bwht.org](http://bwht.org)
- Commonwealth Museum: [sec.state.ma.us/mus](http://sec.state.ma.us/mus)
- Greater Boston Women's Vote Centennial: [boston.gov/civic-engagement/greater-boston-womens-vote-centennial](http://boston.gov/civic-engagement/greater-boston-womens-vote-centennial)
- Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women: [mass.gov/orgs/Massachusetts-commission-on-the-status-of-women](http://mass.gov/orgs/Massachusetts-commission-on-the-status-of-women)
- Massachusetts Historical Society: [masshist.org](http://masshist.org)
- Massachusetts Municipal Association: [mma.org](http://mma.org)
- Suffrage Centennial Massachusetts: [celebratesuffrage.org](http://celebratesuffrage.org)
- Women's Suffrage Celebration Coalition of Massachusetts: [suffrage100ma.org](http://suffrage100ma.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 Massachusetts page at [womensvote100.org/Massachusetts](http://womensvote100.org/Massachusetts)

## 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?

CONTACT KIMBERLY WALLNER,  
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