



# QUEER ELECTION GUIDE 2026

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# VOTING IS HARM REDUCTION



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KY





**A BALLOT IS A  
TOURNIQUET  
NOT A CURE**



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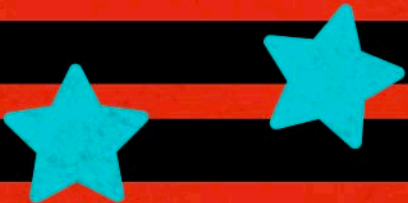




**HARM**  
**REDUCTION**  
**IS HAVING A PLAN**



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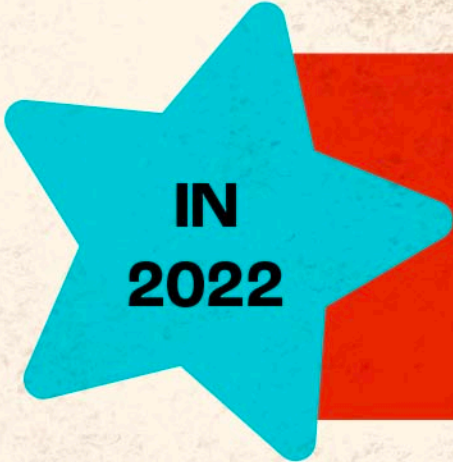
# CHECK YOUR BOXES

- ☐ Are you registered to vote?
- ☐ Check your registration.
- ☐ Find your polling info.

# HARM REDUCTION HAPPENS CLOSEST TO HOME

Federal politicians talk about FLOCK. Your city and county decide whether the cameras are allowed at all, where they go, who gets to look at the footage, and how long the data is kept.

ICE contracts, data centers, surveillance budgets. In Kentucky those are local calls, made by a city council or commission, a fiscal court, or a consolidated government like Lexington or Louisville.



**IN  
2022**

1,477,830 Kentuckians voted for US Senate. Nearly 200,000 of them stopped before they reached the constitutional amendments further down the same ballot. Same voters, same piece of paper.

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**WHAT'S  
ACTUALLY  
ON YOUR BALLOT?**



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# A NOTE ON NAMES



**Names can change by city, county or state but the powers largely remain the same.**

Commonwealth's Attorney or District Attorney?  
Council vs Commission, or did your city/county  
merge into a Metro Council?

Jailers are appointed in some states, elected in  
others (like Kentucky.)

Don't be thrown if it's not a perfect match. It's still  
impacting your life.

Powers move too. In some states the county  
decides these things. In others the state overrides  
local government entirely.



**IF THESE ISSUES PISS YOU OFF**

**THESE ARE THE  
OFFICES TO  
FOLLOW ON  
YOUR BALLOT**



# **FLOCK** CAMERAS



**Local governments control the purse and determine if city/county police forces will have access to Flock, Axon, and similar surveillance equipment, along with what safeguards.**

- **Mayor**
- **City Council/Commission**
- **Judge Executive**
- **County Council/Commission**
- **Sheriff**



# ICE/DHS COOPERATION

## Sheriff

Decides whether people get arrested without criminal charges, whether a traffic stop becomes a deportation, and how local police treat LGBTQ+ people, immigrants, unhoused folks, and sex workers.

## Jailer

The jailer decides whether the jail voluntarily complies with ICE detainers, which are not warrants. The jailer also decides how people who don't speak English can communicate, whether families can get documents signed to protect their children, and how much help reaches people inside. That last one varies wildly county to county.

Also Watch

- **Judge Executive**
- **County Council/Commission**
- **Mayor**
- **City Council/Commission**
- **State Representative**
- **State Senator**



# DATA CENTERS



**Mayor**

**City Council/Commission**

**Judge Executive**

**County Council/Commission**

**State Representative**

**State Senator**



# TRANS RIGHTS



## Health Access

### State Representative / State Senator

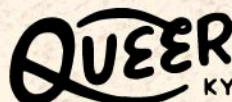
State legislatures are where the anti-trans wave actually started, with gender-affirming care bans and school policies moving through single-party statehouses, sometimes decided by the margin of one flipped seat.

### Jailer

The jail is where gender-affirming care, HIV meds, and PrEP get provided or denied, and where a trans person's safety is decided.

### Mayor

### City Council/Commission





# TRANS RIGHTS



## In School

### School Board

The seat nobody watches.

Book bans, students' names and pronouns, outing kids to parents, bathroom access.

Plus:

- Mayor
- City Council/Commission
- State Representative
- State Senator

## Queer & Trans Families

### Family Court Judge

One judge can decide whether a trans parent keeps their kid, or whether a lesbian mom gets to legally adopt the child she is already raising.



# CRIMINALIZATION OF PROTESTORS & THE UNHOUSED



## **Commonwealth's/District Attorney**

This is where the choice to divert or to cage gets made for drug cases, sex work, protest arrests, and more.

## **County Attorney** (folded into the DA in many states)

Misdemeanors. Which is where homelessness, drug possession, sex work, and protest arrests actually get charged.

## **Coroner**

Cause of death. Decides whether an overdose gets counted, whether a death in jail gets looked at, and whether a trans person is recorded by their own name.

Plus:

- **Mayor**
- **City Council/Commission**
- **Judge Executive**
- **County Council/Commission**
- **State Representative**
- **State Senator**



# HOW TO VET A JUDGE



**Local judges are the hardest races to research. Here is where to actually look.**

- Bar association judicial evaluations, sometimes called a bar poll, where the attorneys who actually work in front of these judges rate them.
- Public defenders, legal aid groups, and court-watch programs, who see these courtrooms every day and sometimes publish scorecards.
- Campaign finance records through your state portal, to see who is funding a judge's race.
- Local court coverage and news archives.
- Candidate questionnaires and forums from the League of Women Voters or Vote411, where you can also submit your own questions.
- Organizational endorsement lists, treated as a signal to research, not gospel.
- Trusted community networks, with what you hear verified before you act on it.



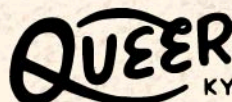
# FEDERAL



## **You can't vote your way out of a federal judge.**

They're appointed for life, and the Senate confirms them. Kentucky has a Senate seat this year that hasn't been open since 1984.

On the other side, the House writes the check ICE spends.



# HOW DO I FIND NEWS I CAN TRUST



**Fake & biased news travels  
faster than real news.**



## **Three questions:**

1. Is this reporting, opinion, or ragebait?
2. Who owns and funds this outlet?
3. Can I find the original source, or just people repeating each other?

## **Before you share it:**

- . See what other outlets say.
- . Check the date.
- . Reverse image search anything striking.
- . Look for independent newsrooms covering this issue.

If you can't verify it, don't share it.



# DO YOUR OWN RESEARCH



**"Just Google it" isn't what it was.**

Click **More**, then **Web**. That strips the AI summary and leaves real links. Open three of them.

Check dates, and check what site you're on. If it looks like a government site, is it actually government, or is it one built to look like one?

Pull your sample ballot at GoVoteKY, write down every name, and find out who funds them.

Ask locals and folks who work in the field with those individuals.

**Verify it yourself. See previous page.**



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# VOTING IS THE FLOOR NOT THE WORK

**Voting doesn't fix this.  
It slows the bleed.**

Nobody has ever been fed by a ballot. People get relief through mutual aid, court support, rides, the phone tree, community pantries. That is where people actually get taken care of. Your ballot decides how much gets thrown in their way.

Show up November 3. Then get back to work.



# CREDITS



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Carol Ann and  
Ralph V. Haile, Jr.

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F O U N D A T I O N

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**CHUNK  
OF CHINA**



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