

REDISTRICTING TOOLKIT

The right to vote is one of the most sacred civil liberties we have as citizens. We believe voting should be easy for every citizen and that each vote should count the same.

Historically, politicians have used gerrymandering, packing and cracking to dilute the influence of Black voters during the redistricting process. We seek to ensure that the current redistricting process allows Mississippi's Black voters the same opportunities as white voters to elect their candidates of choice, regardless of where they live in the state and regardless of who they vote for.

Redistricting is not something best left to the politicians and the experts. Every voter has a vital stake in redistricting because it determines the composition of districts that elect public officials at every level of government.

This toolkit is designed to educate and support citizen input into the redistricting process.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

1) Watch our redistricting 101 virtual training

On August 3rd ACLU of Mississippi, the Mississippi State Conference NAACP, and the Southern Poverty Law Center conducted a lunchtime virtual training on redistricting and its power. Watch the recording, on our Facebook page, to learn the basics of the redistricting process.

[WATCH HERE](#)

2) Listen to ACLU of Mississippi's For All podcast

For All is an ACLU of Mississippi podcast focused on the people and projects that promote civil liberties and rights in our state.

Episode 5 features Amir Badat. Badat is the new Special Voting Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. He explains why Black voting power is at risk, more than ever. He also highlights regions of the state Black voters should be paying extra attention to when the new district maps are proposed.

Episode 6 features former State Representative Tyrone Ellis. After spending nearly four decades in the legislature, Ellis shares what it's like being one of very few Black legislators to be on the redistricting committee.

For All can be found on 17 podcast streaming platforms, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts and Amazon Podcasts.

[LISTEN HERE](#)

3) Organize a group and request an ACLU of Mississippi virtual training session

- Email Maisie Brown at mbrown@aclu-ms.org to make a request.

4) Demand transparency from the Mississippi Legislative Redistricting Committee

The Mississippi state legislature and the governor decide the boundaries of the district maps. The members of a 20-member standing committee called the Mississippi Joint Legislative Redistricting Committee (MJLRC) conduct the bulk of the work that create proposed maps. Demand transparency by reaching out to your representative and/or senator. Ask them to hold public hearings after the maps are drawn but before they are voted on by the legislature.

- Copy ted.booth@peer.ms.gov on all of your comment emails.

Name	District	Email	Phone	County
Rep. Jim Beckett - Co-chair (R)	23	jbeckett@house.ms.gov	(662) 983-7358	Calhoun, Grenada, Lafayette, Webster
Sen. Dean Kirby - Co-chair (R)	30	dkirby@senate.ms.gov	(601) 359-4089	Rankin
Rep. Dan Eubanks (R)	25	deubanks@house.ms.gov	(662) 374-0035	DeSoto
Rep. Edward Blackmon, Jr. (D)	57	eblackmon@house.ms.gov	(601) 859-1567	Madison
Rep. Bo Brown (D)	70	bbrown@house.ms.gov	(601) 366-4774	Hinds
Rep. Kevin Ford (R)	54	kford@house.ms.gov	(601) 218-8185	Issaquena, Warren, Yazoo
Rep. Vince Mangold (R)	53	vmangold@house.ms.gov	(601) 833-9155	Franklin, Jefferson Davis, Lawrence, Lincoln, Pike
Rep. John Read (R)	112	jread@house.ms.gov	(228) 497-3845	Jackson
Rep. Fred Shanks (R)	60	fshanks@house.ms.gov	(601) 540-0041	Rankin
Rep. Cheikh Taylor (D)	38	ctaylor@house.ms.gov	(662) 617-8125	Clay, Lowndes, Oktibbeha
Rep. Jason White (R)	48	jwhite@house.ms.gov	(662) 289-8888	Attala, Carroll, Holmes, Leake
Sen. David Parker (R)	2	dparker@senate.ms.gov	(601) 359-4088	DeSoto
Sen. Angela Turner-Ford (D)	16	aford@senate.ms.gov	(601) 359-3237	Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha
Sen. Briggs Hopson (R)	23	bhopson@senate.ms.gov	(601) 359-3250	Issaquena, Warren, Yazoo
Sen. Derrick Simmons (D)	12	dsimmons@senate.ms.gov	(601) 359-2224	Bolivar, Coahoma, Washington
Sen. Josh Harkins (R)	20	jharkins@senate.ms.gov	(601) 359-2395	Rankin
Sen. Dennis DeBar (R)	43	ddebar@senate.ms.gov	(601) 359-3221	George, Greene, Wayne
Sen. Brice Wiggins (R)	52	bwiggins@senate.ms.gov	(601) 359-3237	Harrison, Jackson
Sen. Jeff Tate (R)	33	jtate@senate.ms.gov	(601) 359-2395	Clarke, Lauderdale
Sen. Hobb Bryan (D)	7	hbryan@senate.ms.gov	(601)359-2220	Itawamba, Lee, Monroe

QUESTIONS FOR THE MJLRC

We strongly recommend you ask these questions to members of the Mississippi Legislative Redistricting Committee.

In general

- What are your primary redistricting goals?
- What are your criteria for drawing districts and how are you weighting them?
- What are the most significant changes from the existing maps that you anticipate?

Data

- Are you using total population, Voting Age Population (VAP), Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP), or something else as your base population metric?¹
- Will incarcerated people be treated as residing where they are incarcerated, where they previously lived, or excluded from redistricting?

Transparency

- How is this public hearing going to affect your redistricting process?
- Will you commit to making your decision-making process public?
- What different ways will the public be able to submit input? Can the public submit comments on drafts, or proposals of our own?
- How much time will be provided for public input between draft and final maps?
- Will additional hearings be held after census data is released?

Undue partisanship

- How will you avoid drawing districts to favor incumbents?
- How will you make districts competitive?
- What will you do to ensure that the boundaries protect against discrimination?

Protecting historically disenfranchised communities

- What are you doing to ensure that communities of interest stay intact?
- What will you do to ensure that boundaries are not drawn for purposes of favoring or discriminating against a political party or minority group?

TALKING POINTS

We strongly recommend you use these issues to consider submitting comments to legislators and sharing on your social media.

- The redistricting process, like much of Mississippi politics, is too secretive, done behind closed doors and ignores the needs of the public. Legislators should make the process public and transparent.
- Legislators have used redistricting throughout history to attack the right to vote and weaken the voting power of certain communities. We need redistricting in Mississippi to ensure all voters are fairly represented, regardless of their race or for whom they vote.
- During the last redistricting cycle, lawmakers used tactics to dilute the power of Black voters to pick their preferred candidates and engage in the political process. If this continues, Mississippi's legislature will be less and less representative of the state. Mississippi cannot progress until the district maps are drawn to equally represent everyone.
- Legislators should not be able to choose their own voters, making it impossible for voters to hold them accountable. Voters should choose their representatives.
- Fair district maps mean all Mississippians are ensured an equal opportunity to elect officials based on shared community interest.