

UNLOCK THE VOTE

ARIZONA, PART 3

Jail-Based Voting in Arizona's
November 2020 General Election



PREPARED BY

The Arizona Coalition
to End Jail-Based Disenfranchisement
votefromjail.org

BACKGROUND

Jail based disenfranchisement takes many forms, and goes far beyond policy and procedures. Over the course of gathering this data we have seen first hand the ways in which Arizona jails are silencing and intimidating voters from exercising their rights. We have heard countless stories of applications being ignored, deadlines being purposely and arbitrarily changed, no explanations given for why a person cannot receive a ballot, and even increased scrutiny by jail staff towards those who refused to relinquish their right to vote. While we are proud of the growing number of voters within Arizona jails, and hope to continue this momentum going forward. We also feel it is important to remind the reader that this report is about more than just numbers, and that this fight must continue until all people in Arizona jails have free and fair access to their ballot.



METHODOLOGY

This report serves as a follow-up to our previous analyses of jail-based voting procedures in each of Arizona's 15 counties. In this report, we have gathered data on how many incarcerated voters were successfully able to cast their ballot from jails during the November 3, 2020 General Election. This election was open to all eligible voters that were registered at least 29 days before the election.

For each county, we gathered the estimated population of incarcerated eligible voters in the county's custody on November 3, the number of ballots requested from voters in the county's custody, and the number of ballots successfully voted from voters in the county's custody.

We requested data from all 15 counties on the population of the county jails on November 3, and we received responses from 6 counties. For another 6 counties from whom we did not hear back, we estimated the November 3 jail population through booking lists we obtained from these counties on September 16, either through publicly available documents or via public records requests. For La Paz County, we estimated the November 3 jail population through a booking list obtained on October 10 via a records request, and Santa Cruz's estimate came from an October 20 list. Maricopa's estimate came from two publicly available figures from reporters (sources cited). We note the sources of the population estimate in each county's section.



METHODOLOGY

We then estimated the eligible voter population in each county's jail(s) by multiplying the estimated jail population by 0.6, our conservative estimate of the rate of voter eligibility in Arizona's jails.

We collected data on the number of ballots requested and voted from voters in each county's jail(s) through formal records requests to each county's Sheriff's and Recorder's Offices. You can view which offices responded on Page 16. In some counties, more ballots were requested than were voted. This likely means either 1) the ballot requester was not an eligible voter; 2) the county failed to deliver the ballot to the voter in adequate time; 3) the ballot requester received their ballot but chose not to vote it; or 4) another scenario.

Finally, we determined the participation rate by dividing the number of ballots voted from each county's jails(s) by the estimated population of eligible voters in that county's jail(s).



RESULTS

Arizona voters in jail had an estimated participation rate of 2.9%, compared to an overall state participation rate of 59.0%.

Eligible voters in jail voted at a rate less than 1/20 of that of voters across the state.

We did see a slight increase in the statewide JBV participation rate from the August 2020 election (2.2%) to the November 2020 election (2.9%), and four counties increased their individual rates over that period. Three counties' rates decreased, and one county remained at a 0% participation rate.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of coalition members, for the first time in this report series, we received data from at least one office in each of the 15 counties, allowing us to get a full picture of how many people voted from jail. That being said, there were many offices that still have not responded, or only responded under the threat of legal action. It is absolutely imperative that county offices respond promptly to public records requests, and we will continue to hold them accountable to this responsibility.

Despite the improved response rate, the bottom line still is this: on the whole, Arizona counties failed miserably to provide incarcerated voters with sufficient access to voter registration information, voter education, and ballots.











RESULTS

The responsibility to end jail-based disenfranchisement is shared by multiple entities: county sheriffs, county recorders and election directors, the Secretary of State, and the State Legislature.

We call on each of these offices, especially the Sheriffs, to show integrity and promote democracy by creating and enacting free, fair, and safe jail-based voting procedures.



COUNTY PARTICIPATION RATES

 Apache County	9.7%
 Cochise County	0%
 Coconino County	5.3%
Gila County	6.4%
Graham County	1.7%
Greenlee County	0%
La Paz County	0%
Maricopa County	3.1%
 Mohave County	1.4%
 Navajo County	10%
 Pima County	2.2%
 Pinal County	1.7%
Santa Cruz County	0%
Yavapai County	0.7%
 Yuma County	3.9%
Statewide	3%



Our voter hotline received calls from voters incarcerated in these counties.



HIGHLIGHTING JBV PROCEDURES

While collecting data on the number of jail-based voters in each county, we also asked each county's Recorder and Sheriff for their written JBV procedures. In this section, we highlight two counties -- Apache and Navajo Counties -- that showed innovative and/or thorough procedures on at least one of our best practices categories: voter registration, voter education, access to early voting, and access to Election Day voting.

It is important to note, though, that having a written procedure does not mean that counties are **following** that procedure. Accountability efforts are necessary to ensure counties are implementing their procedures.

APACHE COUNTY: In prior reports, we haven't been able to feature Apache County's procedures, since they failed to respond to our records requests. After finally producing responsive records, however, it's clear that Apache County has one of the strongest jail-based voting procedures in the state. Not only do they have a written policy, something that the majority of counties do not have, it is quite thorough and includes many details that are critical to facilitating jail-based voting.

Among the commendable aspects of their policy:

- A clearly written statement that individuals held in pre-trial detention or convicted of a misdemeanor retain their voting eligibility, their right to vote shall be guaranteed, and it may not be suspended for disciplinary or classification reasons.



HIGHLIGHTING JBV PROCEDURES

- All election-related mail – which is clearly defined – shall be treated as legal mail and expedited.
- Daily communication between the sheriff’s office and recorder’s office, and guidelines to make sure the process of requesting and receiving a ballot is well documented.

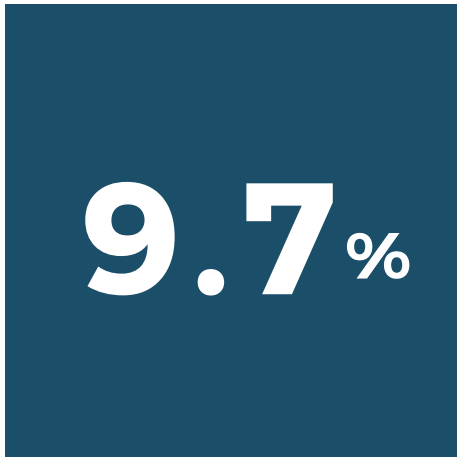
NAVAJO COUNTY: In Navajo County, jail staff asked each individual person if they were registered to vote and wanted to request an absentee ballot. This was a really effective policy: 67 individuals indicated they wanted to vote when asked verbally, whereas only three people made written requests to vote.

Incarcerated individuals face many barriers to voting while in jail, not the least of which is misinformation. People often believe that, if they are in jail, they lack the right to vote – or at least the method by which to do so. A proactive process like this where people are asked if they want to vote, rather than having to make the request, can lead to much higher participation rates, and is something that other counties should implement.



APACHE COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop*.:	41
Ballots Requested:	8
Ballots Voted:	4
Participation Rate:	9.7%



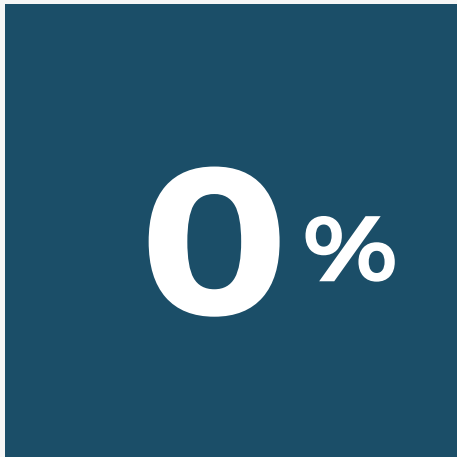
NOTES:

This was our first response with election results from Apache County, and they showed one of the highest participation rates in the state. Despite a total lack of compliance with prior records requests, Apache had the most elaborate written policies on jail-based voting.

**This estimate comes from the population as of 09/16/2020.*

COCHISE COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop*.:	116
Ballots Requested:	1
Ballots Voted:	0
Participation Rate:	0%



NOTES:

This was our first response with election results from Cochise County.

**This number estimate comes from the population as of 11/03/2020.*

COCONINO COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop*.:	167
Ballots Requested:	10
Ballots Voted:	9
Participation Rate:	5.3%

5.3%

NOTES:

Coconino County's JBV participation rate increased from 1.2% in the August 2020 Primary Election to 5.3%. The Recorder's Office showed great commitment to JBV efforts, even delivering a ballot to an incarcerated voter one hour before polls closed on Election Day.

**This estimate comes from the population as of 09/16/2020.*

GILA COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop*.:	94
Ballots Requested:	21
Ballots Voted:	6
Participation Rate:	6.3%

6.3%

NOTES:

Gila County's JBV participation rate increased from 5.9% in the August 2020 Primary Election to 6.3%. From the records provided, at least 8 individuals who requested their ballots were not registered, but it's unclear why the others were ineligible.

**This estimate comes from the population as of 11/03/2020.*



GRAHAM COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop*.: **59**
Ballots Requested: **1**
Ballots Voted: **1**
Participation Rate: **1.7%**



NOTES:

Graham County's JBV participation rate decreased from 31.3% in the August 2020 Primary Election to 1.7%. Ballots voted decreased from 3 to 1, but a significant increase in population size accounts for the dramatic decrease in rate.

**This estimate comes from the population as of 09/16/2020.*

GREENLEE COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop*.: **18**
Ballots Requested: **0**
Ballots Voted: **0**
Participation Rate: **0%**



NOTES:

This was our first response with election results from Greenlee County.

**This number estimate comes from the population as of 09/16/2020.*



LA PAZ COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop*:	33
Ballots Requested:	0
Ballots Voted:	0
Participation Rate:	0%



NOTES:

*This was our first response with election results from La Paz County.
This number estimate comes from the population as of 10/01/2020.

MARICOPA COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop.*:	3270
Ballots Requested**:	121
Ballots Voted:	102
Participation Rate:	3.1%



NOTES:

*This was our first response with election results from Maricopa County.
*This number estimate comes from the average of populations reported on 04/16/2020 and 02/13/2021.
**121 ballots were reported to have been sent to the jails; we did not receive records of how many ballots were initially requested.*



MOHAVE COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop*.:	214
Ballots Requested:	4
Ballots Voted:	3
Participation Rate:	1.4%

1.4%

NOTES:

Mohave County's JBV participation rate decreased from 5.0% in the August 2020 Primary Election to 1.4%.

**This estimate comes from the population as of 11/03/2020.*

NAVAJO COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop*.:	176
Ballots Requested:	68
Ballots Voted:	18
Participation Rate:	10.2%

10.2%

NOTES:

Navajo County's JBV participation rate decreased from 12.5% in the August 2020 Primary Election to 10.2%. However, we commend Navajo County's procedure of verbally asking individuals if they would like to vote, which likely resulted in a high number of requested ballots. Though their participation rate decreased, their policies are among the best we have seen.

**This estimate comes from the population as of 11/03/2020.*



PIMA COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop.*:	833
Ballots Requested:	22
Ballots Voted:	18
Participation Rate:	2.2%

2.2%

NOTES:

Pima County's JBV participation rate increased from 0.8% in the August 2020 Primary Election to 2.2%.

**This estimate comes from the population as of 09/16/2020.*

PINAL COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop.*:	350
Ballots Requested:	11
Ballots Voted:	6
Participation Rate:	1.7%

1.7%

NOTES:

This was our first response with election results from Pinal County.

**This number estimate comes from the population as of 11/03/2020.*



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop.*: 40
Ballots Requested: 0
Ballots Voted: 0
Participation Rate: 0%



NOTES:

Santa Cruz County's JBV participation rate has remained at 0% during both the Primary and General Elections.

**This estimate comes from the population as of 10/20/2020.*

YAVAPAI COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop.*: 293
Ballots Requested: 3
Ballots Voted: 2
Participation Rate: 0.7%



NOTES:

Yavapai County's JBV participation rate increased from 0% in the August 2020 Primary Election to 0.7%.

**This estimate comes from the population as of 09/16/2020.*

YUMA COUNTY

Eligible Voter Pop.*:	208
Ballots Requested:	13
Ballots Voted:	8
Participation Rate:	3.9%



NOTES:

*This was our first response with election results from Yuma County.
This number estimate comes from the population as of 11/03/2020.

RESPONSES

The following chart shows which offices responded to the records request:

COUNTY	RECORDS REQUEST
Apache	Both
Cochise	Sheriff
Coconino	Both
Gila	Both
Graham	Recorder*
Greenlee	Recorder
La Paz	Recorder
Maricopa	Both
Mohave	Both
Navajo	Both
Pima	Sheriff
Pinal	Both
Santa Cruz	Recorder
Yavapai	Recorder
Yuma	Both

RESOURCES

Apache County:

Old Concho Community Assistance

A shelter, food, and clothing resource center

Phone: (928) 337-5047

Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Authority

Support for mental health, physical health, and housing in northern Arizona counties

Phone: (928) 233-8667

Cochise County:

Bisbee Coalition for the Homeless

Guidance and food resource for those who are in unstable living conditions

Phone: (520) 432-7839

Good Neighbor Alliance

Housing and food assistance

Phone: (520) 439-0776

Coconino County:

Housing Solutions of Northern Arizona

Affordable housing organization with several programs in the Flagstaff area

Phone: (928) 214-7456

Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Authority

Support for mental health, physical health, and housing in northern Arizona counties

Phone: (928) 233-8667



RESOURCES

Gila County:

Gila County Community Action Program

Housing and payment assistance program

Phone: (928) 474-7192

Gila House Inc.

Family housing assistance and home repair program

Phone: (928) 402-8693

Graham County:

DIRECT Advocacy & Resource Center

Skills training, mentoring, and transitional help for those with disabilities

Phone: (520) 624-6452

Our Neighbors Farm & Pantry

Food pantry and community garden

Phone: (337) 326-0709

Greenlee County:

Southeastern Arizona Community Action Program

Utility/rental assistance and financial guidance for families

Phone: (928) 428-4653

Arizona@Work Greenlee Office

Job resource and assistance program

Phone: (928) 439-4632



RESOURCES

La Paz County:

Colorado River Regional Crisis Services

Food and housing services centering around survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Also has a clothing and job training program

Phone: (928) 669 8620

Parker Community Garden

Garden and educational program teaching people how to garden and cook, great local source of fresh produce

Phone: (928) 669-1062 Ext. 106

Maricopa County:

Chicano Por La Causa

Resource program that provides behavioral health, housing, education, employment, and financial assistance

Phone: (602) 257-0700

Streets of Joy

Re-entry program based in Mesa, that assists with housing, employment, and counseling

Phone: (480) 757-6921

Mohave County:

Cornerstone Mission Project

Housing and affordable clothing programs

Phone: (928) 757-1535

North Country Healthcare

Affordable healthcare services located in both Kingman and Lake Havasu

Kingman Phone: (928) 753-1177 Havasu Phone: (928) 854-1800



RESOURCES

Navajo County:

ASSIST! to Independence

Disability resource center that focuses on skills training and providing basic support for those with disabilities

Phone: (928) 283-6261

RE:center

Religious outreach re-entry and mentorship program

Phone: (928) 362-8910

Pima County:

Second Chance Tucson

Job and housing resource for those with past convictions on record

Phone: (520) 647-2458

Old Pueblo Community Services

Housing, medical, re-entry, and counseling programs

Phone: (520) 546-0122

Pinal County:

Florence Immigration & Refugee Rights Project

Pro Bono legal, mental health, and immigration assistance programs for immigrants and refugees

Phone: (520) 868-0191

Casa Grand Alliance

Re-entry program along with wide variety of other resources

Phone: (520) 836-5022



RESOURCES

Santa Cruz County:

Crossroads Nogales Mission

Religious shelter with food program, rehab program, and re-entry program

Phone: (520) 264-8434

Community Action Board of Santa Cruz

Resource guide with job, housing, and immigration assistance program

Phone: (831) 763-2147

Yavapai County:

The Coalition for Compassion & Justice

Affordable housing and job programs

Phone: (928) 445-8382

Yavapai Reentry Project

Mentorship program that helps with housing, food, and jobs

Phone: (928) 708-0100

Yuma County:

Saguaro Foundation Community Living Program

Housing and transportation resource for those with disabilities

Phone: (928) 783-6069

Comité de Bien Estar

Housing and financial aid resource

Phone: (928) 627-8559



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to all the members of the Arizona Coalition to End Jail-Based Disenfranchisement for their contributions to this report and to the movement. Special thanks Campaign Legal Center Program Assistant Kate Bock for their work analyzing mountains of data and relentlessly tracking down public records.

Learn more about the Coalition's member organizations:

Mass Liberation Arizona is building power to end mass incarceration and divest from the carceral system in Arizona. We are a directly-impacted people's organization headquartered in South Phoenix with a growing membership in Black communities and inside prison facilities throughout the state. Learn more at masslibaz.org.

American Friends Service Committee-Arizona (AFSC-AZ) works to reduce the size and scope of the punishment system in Arizona using research, documentation, and advocacy to advance sentencing reform, halt prison expansion, and improve conditions of confinement. Learn more at afscarizona.org.

Jamaar Williams and Eleanor Knowles are attorneys with the Maricopa County Public Defender's Office.



All Voting is Local fights to eliminate needless and discriminatory barriers to voting before they happen, to build a democracy that works for us all. It is a campaign housed at The Leadership Conference Education Fund and The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. For more information about All Voting is Local, visit <https://allvotingislocal.org> and follow us on Twitter @votingislocal.

The nonpartisan Campaign Legal Center (CLC) advances democracy through law at the federal, state and local levels, fighting for every American's rights to responsive government and a fair opportunity to participate in and affect the democratic process. [Learn more](#) about us.

Arizona Advocacy Network and Foundation is devoted to defending and deepening Arizona's commitment to democracy. We provide a consistent voice in defense of democracy at the Arizona Legislature, with elections officials, and in our communities. Learn more at azadvocacy.org.

Poder in Action is a human rights organization that builds power to disrupt and dismantle systems of oppression and determine a liberated future as people of color in Arizona.

The Arizona Center for Empowerment educates, empowers and engages our state's working families to create solutions to issues of social and economic justice. Learn more at empoweraz.org.

Arizona Coalition for Change empowers everyday people to transform their community through building civic power, just and equitable schools, and safer neighborhoods.

Learn more about the Coalition's work at votefromjail.org.

