

# AUGUST 26 IS WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY!

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*On August 26, 2023 we commemorate Women's Equality Day—a day to recognize the 103rd anniversary of the 19th Amendment, solidifying the right to vote for millions of women. Though an important milestone in history, the 19th Amendment did not secure universal suffrage, as millions more women of color were excluded. In recognition of Women's Equality Day and the continued fight for women's rights, we've gathered six historical facts about women's suffrage.*



LENOX HILL NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE  
SINCE 1894

1. Women's Equality Day, as it's known today, was established in the 1970s following pressure from U.S. Representatives Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisholm of New York and Patsy Mink of Hawaii. Throughout history, it had also been celebrated as Suffrage Day, Woman Suffrage Ratification Day, Women's Emancipation Day and more. (Source: [Library of Congress](#))
2. On August 26, 1920, the 19th Amendment was certified by the U.S. Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby, giving women the right to vote. (Source: [Library of Congress](#))
3. Many white suffragists actively fought against Black Americans' right to vote. Poet, author, lecturer and the first African American woman to publish a short story Frances Ellen Watkins Harper was among suffragists and abolitionists fighting for women's and African Americans' suffrage. In a famous 1866 speech in New York, "We Are All Bound Up Together," she described the burden of racism and sexism Black women face. (Source: [NPR](#) and [National Women's History Museum](#))
4. In 1912, Chinese American economist and women's rights activist Mabel Ping-Hua Lee led a suffrage parade in New York City at only 16 years old. Despite her activism, Lee was excluded because of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act that prevented Chinese immigrants from attaining citizenship. Though that act was repealed in 1943, it is unknown if Lee—who was the first Chinese woman to earn a PhD in economics—attained citizenship and voted. (Source: [NPR](#) and [National Women's History Museum](#))
5. After the 19th Amendment was ratified, Black women—and Black men—faced voter suppression tactics that disenfranchised Black Americans. Further, Native Americans were not yet considered U.S. citizens, and Asian and Latinx immigrants were often barred from attaining citizenship. The ratification of the 19th Amendment only continued the universal suffrage movement for women of color. (Source: [Atlanta History Center](#))
6. Decades later, in 1965, the Voting Rights Act was signed into law, outlawing discriminatory voting tactics. But voting suppression laws, such as photo ID requirements, restrictions on mail-in ballots and cuts to early voting, continue to restrict many Americans—particularly BIPOC individuals—from casting ballots in elections, and activists and advocates continue to fight for universal suffrage. (Source: [National Archives](#) and [ACLU](#))