

Researching candidates on your ballot:

Tips and resources guide on candidates, their records and platforms

How to contact campaigns and what to expect?

- In-person is always best. This includes attending town halls, forums and debates. Virtual events can be helpful, too.
- Sending an email or calling is also an option. You should expect a response. Don't be frustrated if you are sent to a staffer, as staffers have a lot of sway. They are often advising the candidates on the issues.
- Asking questions via social media is not always effective, since campaign staffers can't always tell if users are constituents or not.

What websites and resources are useful when researching candidates?

- Always check your local newspaper(s) and public media stations. They often have interviews, information and profiles regarding local candidates.
- Social media pages of candidates can also be helpful. But don't rely on social media for all your news!
- If a top-priority voting issue for you has an organization that advocates or follows that topic, check their website to see if they have a candidate scorecard or analysis. Note: Individual organizations are inherently advocates for their issues, and those scorecards may be skewed.
- Sign up for campaign emails to find what candidates are saying.
- Talk to people and ask them how certain policies play out in their lives and community.
- Don't rely on the same source for all your information. Seek out information from many sides for a more informed decision.

How can I find voting records for incumbents?

Congress

1. Go to [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov)
2. Pick your senator or representative.
3. Choose filters on the left-hand menu

You can even see how many of each kind of bill they've been involved in without having to click any more. (Example: U.S. Sen. Todd Young has sponsored/co-sponsored 242 health bills in his time in office, which is his highest number of bills in one subject, though not many of them made it to law)

State

1. Go to iga.in.gov.
2. Click on legislation.
3. Click by legislator.
4. Find your legislator to view their record.

County, city and town

Check their websites for meeting dates and minutes

If the candidate is not an incumbent, their website should list what they have done in their community.

Recommended websites:

Vote411

vote411.org

Ballotpedia

ballotpedia.org

Open States

openstates.org

Indiana Voter Portal

indianavoters.in.gov

Indiana Election Division

in.gov/sos/elections

On The Issues

ontheissues.org

Resources:

Detroit Documenters Candidate Scorecard

bit.ly/DocumentersCandidate-Scorecard

This spreadsheet can help keep track of what you want in a candidate and who best matches your priorities.

2021 Indiana Civic Health Index

bit.ly/CivicHealthIndex



SIDE EFFECTS
FROM WFYI PUBLIC MEDIA 

Voter guides, issue-based voters

If you are focused on a specific topic, check out groups that advocate on that topic. They may have their own voter guide. Here are a few examples for 2022:

Women

Women4Change

women4changeindiana.org/vote

Guns

Moms Demand Action

gunsensevoter.org/candidates/

National Rifle Association

nrapvf.org/grades/indiana/

Colleges and universities also may have specific resources for students:

engage.iupui.edu/service-opportunities/voting-guide.html

Our statewide news team has also built a digital guide for voters – both first-time voters and the experienced.

Find it at ipbs.org/projects/voting-guide/

Don't get discouraged

For some races, it's really, really hard to find information. Judges are pretty difficult to research – which is why many states have eliminated elected judicial positions. Some candidates don't campaign, respond to media requests, and attend forums or debates. It's harder to find information about them outside of their voting records if they're incumbents.

And as journalism faces ever increasing cuts, it's pretty hard to find information about local races.

Now what?

- Indiana's next legislative session starts January 2023. It will be a long, budget-writing session. You can track what is happening at iga.in.gov. There are also many Indiana Statehouse reporters that will be working on keeping you informed daily. Follow your local Indiana Public Broadcasting station for reporting from our statewide team during the legislative session. And you can join the Indiana Two-Way for weekly text messages and news updates throughout the session, by texting "Indiana" to 73224.
- Sign up for updates from the offices of your representatives
- Communicate with your representatives (phone calls and in-person meetings are most effective to share how policy is impacting you)
- File a public record request. Here is how to do that: sickpodcast.org/season-2-episode-2
- Organization Day is Nov. 22
- The upcoming legislative session is a long session, where lawmakers will set the state's two-year budget.

Here are some explainers that may help you:

How does the legislative session work?

ipbs.org/projects/session-explainer/

Learn about roles and responsibilities of government officials

Indiana executive government

ipbs.org/projects/executive-government/

Indiana county government

ipbs.org/projects/county-government/