



Civic Engagement 101

The committed, active participation on issues concerning rights, duties, and quality of life within your community.

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News & Information Literacy

KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW

- Get the facts right to make good decisions.
- You don't need to be an expert; just know some basic information.
- Learn to evaluate the information and identify if the information is biased or incorrect.
- Newspapers, libraries, and nonpartisan organizations that study policy, like universities and some think tanks, can be great resources of information.

News Literacy (Part 2)

DON'T GET FAKED OUT

- [Ten Questions for Fake News Detection](#)
- [How to Spot Fake News](#)
- [10 Best Fact Checking Sites](#)
- [TED Talks Playlist: How to Navigate Questionable Information](#)
- [Combating Fake News: 4 Strategies to Separate Fact from Fiction](#)
- [How Does “Fake” News Become News?](#)

News Literacy (Part 3)

GET MULTIPLE SOURCES

The most important aspect of news literacy is ensuring that you get your news from multiple sources. Try your best to get your news and information from at least three sources.

At least two of those sources of news should be bona fide journalism, not commentary or talk shows. Examples of commentary: op-eds; Fox & Friends; columnists; The Rachel Maddow Show.

At least two of those sources should be written format.

At least one should be a local source.

Registering to Vote & Voting

THE MOST POWERFUL WAY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Who can vote? You must:

- Be a United States citizen
- Be at least 18 years old on Election Day
- Be a resident of Minnesota for 20 days
- Be finished with all parts of any sentence of a felony conviction
- Not be ruled legally incompetent by a court
- Not had your right to vote specifically revoked by a court

You can:

- [Check Your Registration Online](http://www.mnvotes.org) (www.mnvotes.org)
- [Register Online Before Election Day](http://www.mnvotes.org) (www.mnvotes.org)
- [Register on Paper Before Election Day](#)
- [Register on Paper on Election Day](#)

Why Should I Vote?

A REPUBLIC, IF YOU CAN KEEP IT

- Local offices like county commissioners, mayor, and city council have the most direct **impact** on your daily life: school quality, public transportation, policing and accountability, enforcement of **anti-discrimination** laws, housing costs, etc.
- Many elections have been decided by just a few votes; **you can make a difference!**
- Even if your preferred candidate doesn't win, you still let the winning candidate know you didn't choose them
- Elected officials are most responsive to people who vote, not necessarily all constituents

Don't Take Your Strongest Power for Granted

Voting is a right that many generations of Americans struggled to win – and many people in other countries still fight for! Even Americans continue to struggle against voter suppression today.



Political Parties & Candidate Campaigns

ONE WAY TO ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE OF SIMILAR BELIEFS

MAJOR PARTIES

- Democratic-Farmer-Labor
- Republican

<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/how-elections-work/political-parties/>

MINOR PARTIES

- Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis
- Green
- Independence
- Legal Marijuana Now
- Libertarian

Elected Officials You Can Contact

NEVER RUN OUT OF PEOPLE TO TALK TO!

- President and Vice President
- U.S. Senators
- U.S. Representative
- Statewide Constitutional Officers
 - Governor and Lt. Governor
 - State Auditor
 - Attorney General
 - Secretary of State
- State Senator
- State Representative
- County Commissioners
- County Officers
 - Sheriff
 - Attorney
 - Recorder
 - Auditor/Treasurer
- Mayor
- City Council Member
- School Board Member
- District Councils (technically not a public official, but still responsive to constituents)

How to Call Elected Officials

EVEN IF YOU HAVE SOCIAL ANXIETY

“Hi, my name is **Name**, a constituent from **Place**.

I’m calling to ask **Elected Official** to **support/oppose bill name or number**.

They should do this because **reason**.

*My zip code is **ZIP**.

*I **would (not)** like a response.

Thank you.

**Optional/if requested*

Hi, my name is Jade, and I live in Lowertown in Ward 2.

I’m calling to ask Councilmember Smith to support the development of affordable housing.

They should do this because housing in the Twin Cities is the most expensive in the country.

I would appreciate if they would follow up with me at 651-555-1234.

Thank you.

Letters to the Editor

A letter to the editor gets you published in a newspaper and brings the public's attention to your issue.

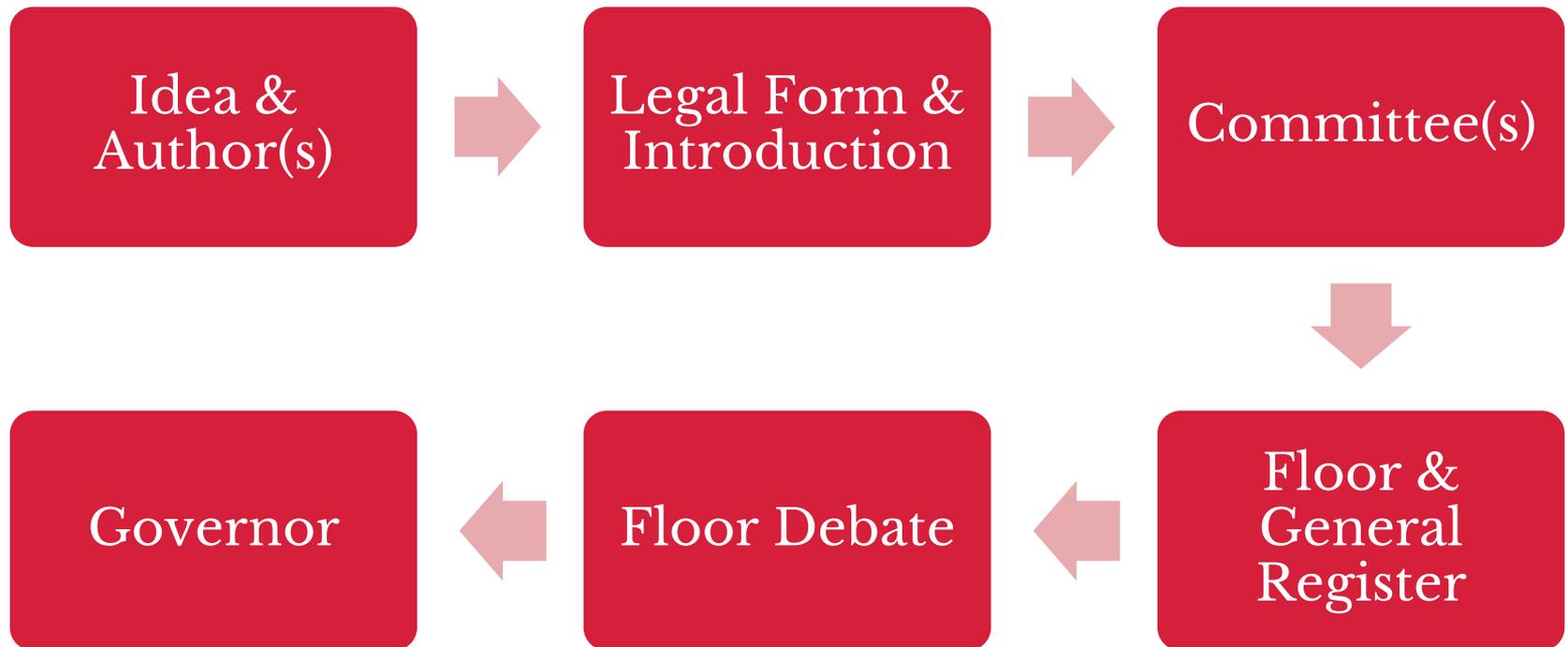
Each newspaper has certain requirements, such as word limits. Contact the papers you want to submit your work to before submitting your letter.

[Tips on authoring and submitting a letter to the editor.](#)



The Legislative Process

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW



Commissions & Boards

GET APPOINTED TO POWER

- State Boards & Commissions

<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/boards-commissions/>

- Ramsey County Advisory Boards

<https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/volunteer/advisory-boards-committees>

- St. Paul Boards

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/mayors-office/committees-boards-and-commissions>

- St. Paul District Councils

<https://www.stpaul.gov/residents/live-saint-paul/neighborhoods/district-councils>

Volunteering

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR GOVERNMENT

- <http://www.minnesotanonprofits.org/>
- <https://www.justserve.org/>
- <https://www.volunteermatch.org/>
- <http://www.handsontwincities.org/>
- <https://www.idealists.org/>
- <https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/volunteer>
- <https://archive.spps.org/GetInvolved.html>

*You don't make
progress by
standing on the
sidelines,
whimpering and
complaining.*

Shirley Chisholm

Catalyst for change.

First black woman elected to
Congress.

First woman to seek a major
political party's presidential
nomination.

