

## Illinois Suffrage Timeline

1812 -

- May 20 - Illinois becomes a territory, with suffrage for all white males over 21 who pay taxes and have lived in the territory for over a year.

1818 -

- Illinois enters the Union. Its constitution gives the vote to “white male inhabitants above the age of twenty-one years.”

1848 -

- Illinois’ second constitution is approved, still excluding women from voting.

1855 -

- The first speech in Illinois in support of suffrage is given by Mr. A.J. Grover, editor of the *Earlville Transcript*.
- Susan Hoxie Richardson, cousin of Susan B. Anthony, organizes the first suffrage organization in Illinois at her home in Earlville.

1869 -

- February 11-12 - First Midwest Suffrage meeting is held in Library Hall in Chicago.
- Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton are present and speak.
- The Illinois Woman’s Suffrage Association (IWSA) is organized and Mary Livermore is elected president and Myra Bradwell is Corresponding Secretary.
- The national movement is divided into two competing organizations, the National Woman’s Suffrage Association (led by Anthony and Stanton) and the American Woman’s Suffrage Association (led by Lucy Stone).
- The IWSA is affiliated with the AWSA.

1870 -

- The IWSA holds its first annual convention in the state capitol of Springfield to coincide with the Illinois state constitutional convention.
- The IWSA campaigns for inclusion of women’s suffrage in the new state constitution.
- May - A third Illinois constitution is drafted, expanding the vote to African American males but not to women.

1873 -

- A state statute is passed that recognizes that women are eligible to serve in school offices.

1874 -

- Ten women are elected as County Superintendent of Schools.

1876 -

- Elizabeth Boynton Harbert is elected IWSA president and serves until 1884.
- The IWSA is now affiliated with the NWSA.

1879

- Frances Willard presents a petition with 180,000 signatures to the Illinois legislature supporting partial suffrage for women. Willard and her supporters define a limited set of issues for which women would be eligible to vote on a “Home Protection” ballot.

1887 -

- Mary Holmes is elected IWSA president and serves through 1897.

1888 -

- Suffrage conventions are held in northern Illinois.

1890 -

- Catharine Waugh McCulloch is elected IWSA Superintendent of Legislative Work and drafts legislation that will give Illinois women the right to vote. She presents the legislation in Springfield every year for 20 years.
- February - The NWSA and IWSA merge to form the National American Woman's Suffrage Association.
- The IWSA changes its name to the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association (IESA).

1891 -

- Suffrage conventions are held in southern Illinois.
- June - Illinois women are granted the right to vote in school board elections.

1893 -

- Catharine Waugh McCulloch is elected President of the IESA.

1894 -

- May - The Chicago Political Equality League (CPEL) is formed by the Chicago Woman's Club.
- Lucy Flower is elected University of Illinois trustee, becoming the first woman in Illinois to hold a statewide office.

1897 -

- Illinois Association Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage to Women is formed by Caroline Corbin.

1906 -

- Ella Stewart is elected IESA President.

1909 -

- Municipal suffrage bill is presented to the Chicago City Council. It does not pass.

1910 -

- Grace Wilbur Trout is elected President of the CPEL.

1911 -

- CPEL moves its headquarters from the Chicago Woman's Club to the Fine Arts Building.

1912 -

- Grace Wilbur Trout is elected President of the IESA.
- Dec 12 - Suffrage mass meeting is held in conjunction with NAWSA meeting in Chicago.

1913 -

- January - Ida B. Wells and Belle Squire form the Alpha Suffrage Club.
- March - A suffrage parade is held in Washington D.C. in conjunction with the presidential inauguration. An Illinois contingent marches, led by Grace Wilbur Trout. Ida B. Wells and other black suffragists are asked to march at the end of the parade. Wells refuses and joins her fellow Illinois suffragists in the parade.

- May 7 - The Illinois Presidential and Municipal Suffrage Bill passes State Senate.
- June 11 - The Illinois Presidential and Municipal Suffrage Bill passes State House granting Illinois women a partial vote.
- June 13 - A Victory Banquet is held at the Leland Hotel in Springfield.

1914 -

- May 2 - A suffrage parade is held in Chicago with 15,000 supporters marching on Michigan Avenue.

1916 -

- June - The Republican National Convention is held in Chicago and 5000 women march in the rain demanding a suffrage plank be added to the party platform.

1919 -

- June 4 - The 19th Amendment is passed by the U.S. Congress and sent to the states for ratification.
- June 10 - Illinois is the first state to ratify the 19th Amendment.
- 1920
- January - The Illinois Constitutional Convention considers adding women's suffrage to the constitution, just in case the 19th Amendment is not ratified.
- February - NAWSA holds its Convention in Chicago. The League of Women Voters is founded in the Gold Room at the Congress Hotel.
- August 26 - The 19th Amendment is ratified.

**Sources:**

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