

Ban On Book Bans, Teen Voter Registration, More New Laws For Illinois In 2024

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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SPRINGFIELD - Two new laws regarding libraries in Illinois and a third expanding voter registration for teens are just a few of several new laws set to take effect statewide at the start of the new year in 2024.

Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias recently announced these and several other new laws initiated by his office that will take effect at the start of the new year. The initiatives were passed earlier this year by the Illinois General Assembly and signed into law.

A Ban On Book Bans

In 2024, Illinois will become the first state in the nation to place a ban on book bans.

Giannoulias, who also serves as the State Librarian, said this legislation aims “to prevent public and school libraries from banning books, guarding against censorship and protecting librarians.” He added that he introduced it after far-right extremist groups “targeted Illinois libraries, divided communities and harassed librarians.”

“The concept of banning books contradicts the very essence of what our country stands for,” Giannoulias said. “It also defies what education is all about: teaching our children to think for themselves. This landmark law is a triumph for our democracy, a win for First Amendment Rights, and a great victory for future generations.”

Once the law takes effect, state grant funding will only be available to libraries that either adhere to the American Library Association’s (ALA) Library Bill of Rights or issue a statement prohibiting the practice of banning books or resources.

[House Bill 2789](#) was sponsored by state Rep. Anne Stava-Murray (81st District – Downers Grove) and state Sen. Laura Murphy (28th District – Elk Grove Village).

Making E-Books More Accessible

The ban on book bans isn’t the only new Illinois law concerning libraries taking effect in 2024. Another law aims to make digital library materials more accessible by allowing the office of the State Librarian to negotiate with e-book and audiobook publishers to acquire digital rights to these materials at lower prices.

“Libraries are the cornerstones of our communities, but due to technological advancements residents are no longer restricted to just brick and mortar buildings when they want to borrow a book,” Giannoulias said. “That’s why I advocated for the increased acquisition of e-books – so that readers can borrow more digital books from our libraries. Libraries can negotiate better prices from publishers when they work together.”

[Senate Bill 2419](#) was sponsored by state Sen. Laura Murphy (28th District – Elk Grove Village) and state Rep. Nabeela Syed (51st District – Palatine).

Teens Can Pre-Register To Vote

Starting in 2024, when teens go to the DMV to get their driver's license or ID card, they can also pre-register to vote while they're there.

While these future voters won't be able to cast a ballot until they turn 18, pre-registering ensures they'll already be registered by the time they turn 18. Giannoulas' office initiated the measure as part of its effort to expand voter participation across the state.

"Voting is one of our country's most cherished rights," Giannoulas said. "I'm committed to increasing voter participation and voter access. This initiative ensures more young people register to vote and are eligible to vote at age 18."

[Senate Bill 2123](#) was sponsored by state Sen. Julie Morrison (D-29th District) and state Rep. Katie Stuart (D-112th District).