

American Citizenship

With great rights comes great responsibilities

Key Terms

- Citizenship –The status of a person recognized under the custom or law as being a legal member of a sovereign state.
- Rights – Things that citizens and residents **are** legally able to do
- Responsibilities – Things that **should** be done, or obligations that we fulfill voluntarily
- Duties – Things that are **required** to be done

Civic Rights

- Citizens have the right to vote
- All citizens are offered the protections of the constitution
 - Freedom of Expression
 - Freedom of Religion
 - Right to a fair trial
 - Right to vote in elections
 - Right to apply for federal employment
 - Right to run for public office
 - Freedom of “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”



Politics ought to be the part-time profession of every citizen who would protect the rights and privileges of free people and who would preserve what is good and fruitful in our national heritage.

— Dwight D. Eisenhower —

AZ QUOTES

Responsibilities and Duties

- Obey the Law
- Pay Taxes
- Defend the Nation
- Serve as a Juror
- Attend School
- Be Informed
- Voice opinions
- Respect one another
- Contribute to your community



Responsibility Spotlight – Be Informed

- It is the responsibility of American citizens to be informed of local, state, and national issues so they may make informed decisions on them
 - Vote for representatives who share views
 - States use referendums to directly appeal to the people
 - People who are surprised by governmental actions have not been paying attention



Importance of Voting - Republicanism

- The United States is a Democratically elected constitution-based presidential federal republic
 - American citizens rarely vote directly for legislation, unless there is a referendum where representatives decide it is an issue for the citizens to vote for
 - Representatives are directly responsible to their constituents, and risk being voted out if they go against the wishes of the voting population
 - **Trustees:** Vote on topics based on their opinions on the topic with the idea that their constituents trust them to make the best decision
 - **Delegates:** Vote on topics as if they are there to represent the general will of the people who voted them into office

Benefits and Dangers of Republicanism

- Republic system allows voters to select representatives who will vote on legislation on their behalf
- Allows for local voice in national politics
 - Two Senators from each state
 - 435 Representatives from population based voting districts
- System relies on voters being educated on issues, but has Electoral College as hypothetical stop gate against the “uneducated mob”

