



## 2023 Minnesota Legislative Accomplishments

Under DFL leadership, the 2023 Minnesota Legislature passed historic laws and funding to improve the lives of average Minnesotans. See [MinnPost guide to the Minnesota Legislature's 2023 'done' and 'undone' lists](#). This document prepared by DFL Senate District 61 highlights many of the key policies passed in 2023.

### Voter Registration

**You can register to vote even if you have a felony conviction.**

- **You can register right now!** Even if you have a felony conviction, are on probation or parole, as long as you are not incarcerated on the day you vote.
- **To vote you must register.** Find out how to [register](#), [where to vote](#) and to get answers to your questions about your eligibility to vote if you have a criminal conviction, CALL 1-877-600-VOTE, the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, or go to [mnvotes.gov](#)
- [Register now](#) to vote on November 7!

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### Driver's Licenses for All

**Beginning October 1, all Minnesotans can obtain a driver's license or identification card regardless of immigration status.**

- To get a driver's license, an applicant who is 21 or older must prove their identity, pass the vision test and the written and driving tests. Requirements for applicants between 16 and 21 are different.
- After October 1, any person of any age may apply for a Minnesota Identification card regardless of immigration status. The applicant must apply for the card, pay the required fee and present proof of identity (same types of identity documents as allowed for a driver's license).
- Both the driver's license and the identification card will have **no markings** indicating citizenship or immigration status.
- See [MN Driver and Vehicle Services](#) for information on driver's licenses.
- Great resource: [Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota Frequently Asked Questions.](#)

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### Clean Energy & Transportation

**Minnesota is taking action to tackle climate change. Laws and investments passed in 2023 include:**

- **100% carbon-free electricity by 2040.** Establishes a standard for utilities to supply Minnesota customers with electricity generated or procured from renewable sources. It will help create good-paying jobs, especially in areas of the state where coal and gas plants have been retired. [See Governor Walz's press release.](#)
- **Consumer rebates for electric vehicles and residential heat pumps.** [Qualifying new EVs will be eligible for a \\$2,500 state rebate.](#) The [MN Department of Commerce](#) will be launching this program and the [heat pump rebate program](#) in the near future.
- **Funding for home weatherization and pre-weatherization.** See the MN Department of Commerce's [Weatherization Assistance Program](#) for information and eligibility.
- **Electric school bus grant program.** \$13 million was allocated for grants to school districts to purchase electric school buses to reduce children's exposure to diesel fumes.
- **Funding for solar on schools and public buildings,** including \$29.3 million for solar on schools and \$5 million for solar on public buildings. [See article in Solar Power World.](#)

- **A dedicated metro sales tax to raise \$1.74 billion for public transit.**
- **State funding to secure \$68 million in federal dollars for a [MN EV fast charger network](#).**
- **[MN Climate Innovation Finance Authority](#)** was established to fund small renewable energy projects in historically underserved communities.

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## Benefits for Families and Children

**Laws passed in 2023 support healthier families and communities, including:**

- **Universal school meals.** Covers all school lunches and breakfasts, even if families don't meet current federal USDA household income guidelines. Students will receive school meals at no charge starting at the beginning of the next academic year (September for most schools).
- **Tuition-free college for low-income families.** There is no specific application for this program. The Minnesota Office of Higher Education says that students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Minnesota Dream Act Application — both of which are currently used to apply for aid — will be considered for the program.
- **Removing lead pipes.** Provides \$240 million to the Public Facilities Authority to establish a grant program for replacing water service lines containing lead. The following groups will be eligible to receive the grants: community public water suppliers of a community water system, municipalities, suppliers of other residential drinking water systems; and anyone eligible for grants or loans under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act.
- **Tenant protections,** including pre-eviction protections, expungement reform, transparency in the cost of housing, stronger privacy rules, emergency repairs, and more. Details available at [Home Line](#).
- **Gun safety reforms,** including universal background checks and a red flag law that allows law enforcement to intervene when someone is at high risk of injuring themselves or others with a firearm, limits no knock warrants, invests \$113.3 million to fight violent crime statewide. [Governor Walz Signs Historic Gun Safety Measures Into Law](#).
- **Ban on PFAS chemicals in consumer products.** This law prohibits the sale or distribution of some products with intentionally added PFAS within Minnesota effective January 1, 2025. Products covered by the new law include: carpets, cleaning products, cookware, cosmetics, dental floss, fabric treatments, children's products, menstruation products, textile furnishings, ski wax, and upholstered furniture. See [MN Pollution Control Agency](#) for more information.
- **Historic funding for public schools.** Allocates \$5.5 billion on E-12 education over the next four years, including a 4% and 2% increase in the per-pupil formula in the next two years, funding for special education services now covered by the general funds of districts and automatic funding increases tied to inflation (with a 3% cap). See [Minnesota Reformer article](#).
- **Additional policies passed:** abortion access protection; ban on LGBTQ conversion therapy; access to gender-affirming care protection; paid family and medical leave; prescription drug affordability; MinnesotaCare public option.

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## Environmental Justice

**Minnesota will better protect communities from toxic pollutants.**

- Some Minnesota communities that have a higher proportion of low-income, people of color and people with limited English language proficiency, are disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution, are identified as “environmental justice” (EJ) communities.
- The new [Cumulative Impacts law](#) requires that the MN Pollution Control Agency consider the cumulative impacts of new pollution sources in an EJ community before approving new air permits that would increase pollution burden.
- The Hennepin Energy Recovery Center or HERC Incinerator, which creates a small amount of energy by burning trash, is no longer considered to be a source of renewable energy.
- The [Minnesota Environmental Justice Table](#) is advocating for shutting down the HERC incinerator to protect the health of EJ communities and build a zero-waste future.