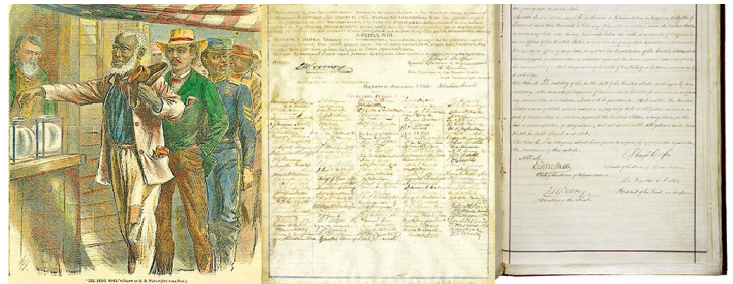

Free Citizens Vote

Article I, Section 3 of the Constitution of the United States stated Representation would be “determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons.”

“All other persons” referred to all the enslaved people owned by free persons. In the law, “all other persons” were considered three-fifths a person and two-fifths property. The label of “property” had to be eliminated.



The Emancipation Proclamation was a document used in the Civil War. This document proclaimed that enslaved people in the rebellious states were free. Once the states were no longer in rebellion, there had to be permanent emancipation. In the law, there is an order to the process of making changes. This order was critical in making slavery illegal and creating equality for emancipated individuals. This amendment legally abolished all slavery and conditions of slavery in the United States.

13th Amendment: Free

The 13th Amendment changed a portion of Article IV, Section 2. “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.” **Passed by Congress Jan. 31, 1865. Ratified Dec. 6, 1865.**

Newly emancipated people had to be recognized in the law as citizens of the United States. Citizenship indicates the individual has civil rights and protections of the government. Every person has natural rights. Those rights are inalienable. Civil rights are rights expressed in the Constitution of the government. The United States Constitution provides protection from the government infringing on inalienable rights. The Constitution further defines the civil rights of citizens in the Bill of Rights. Until the 14th Amendment, all non-European people were prohibited from being citizens.

14th Amendment: Citizens

Section 1: “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” **Passed by Congress June 13, 1866. Ratified July 9, 1868.**

The emancipated African Americans were no longer considered property. They were citizens of the United States. The last necessary piece of the legal documents was the 15th Amendment. This would amend Article I, Section 4 of the Constitution: “The times, places and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each state by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations.”

The 15th Amendment altered such regulations. The ratification of the 15th Amendment gave the newly emancipated citizens the right to vote.

15th Amendment: Vote

Section 1: “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

Section 2: “The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.” **Passed by Congress Feb. 26, 1869. Ratified Feb. 3, 1870.**