

# Battleground state: Virginia may be out of reach for Donald Trump

## Presidential candidate strategy in Virginia



### Virginia from Clinton's perspective

- Virginia is one of Clinton's strongest battleground states, though it was a Republican stronghold until 2008
- In RealClearPolitics' average, Clinton **leads in Virginia by 5 points** and she has suspended advertising there with no plans to buy more advertising in the future
- Clinton seems to be indicating a high level of confidence about her lead in the state
- In 2012, 20% of Virginia voters were black. This demographic has shown itself to be very loyal to Clinton, especially in a matchup against Trump
- Virginia also had the highest percentage of college graduates in its voting population in 2012 among the 11 battleground states, which is a population that tends to favor Clinton over Trump.
- Clinton will likely look to running mate Tim Kaine, Virginia's former governor and senator, to sure up her lead in the state



### Virginia from Trump's perspective

- Trump does not appear to be putting much emphasis on Virginia and Republican operatives in the state suggest that it is leaning so heavily toward Clinton that **it might be unwinnable** for Trump
- Trump has not invested in advertising in the state thus far
- According to a Virginia GOP operative, "the overall vote is going to be determined by Northern Virginia and the Tidewater area" – these are areas where Trump lost in the primary and where demographics include immigrants and college-educated voters
- Trump also has to contend with the advantage Clinton gains from Tim Kaine's wide appeal in the state and her close relationship to the state's current governor, Terry McAuliffe
- Tom Davis, a former VA congressman, says if Trump starts running ads and holding more events in the state, he would have an opportunity to even up the score

Sources: Katie Glueck, Kyle Cheney, "Trump's shrinking swing state map," POLITICO, September 8, 2016; Darren Samuelsohn, Katie Glueck, Kyle Cheney, Daniel Strauss, "25 battleground counties to watch," POLITICO, August 8, 2016; RealClearPolitics Polling Averages, September 9, 2016.

# Battleground state: demographics indicate a Democrat advantage in Virginia’s key counties

## Key battleground counties in Virginia

County	Past elections	Population	Registered voters	Analysis
Henrico County	2016 primary: Clinton, Rubio 2012: Obama 55, Romney 43	325,155	216,082	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This county is a suburb of Richmond and was a GOP stronghold until it flipped for Obama in 2008</li><li>• The county has experienced an influx of Asian and Latino voters, which made it more competitive</li><li>• Democrats will need to hold this county in order to offset Chesterfield County, Richmond’s larger, Republican leaning suburb</li><li>• Tim Kaine’s experience as mayor of Richmond will be an asset here</li></ul>
Loudoun County	2016 primary: Clinton, Rubio 2012: Obama 52, Romney 47	372,629	230,236	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This county also flipped from red to blue for Obama in 2008 and 2012</li><li>• Non-Hispanic white voters now only constitute 62% of the electorate, which aligns with the county’s transition into battleground territory</li><li>• There are many government contractors and defense companies who were impacted by the sequester in the county</li><li>• There is also a blue collar population who may be attracted to Trump because they “feel like they’re being ignored”</li></ul>

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