

**NATIONAL VOTER  
REGISTRATION DAY**

**2020**

**Field Organizer Toolkit for  
In-Person and Online Events**





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# NAVIGATING THE NEW NORMAL

We know that the world has been turned upside down since last year's National Voter Registration Day. And the COVID-19 pandemic has caused voter registration levels across the country to plummet as millions of voters per month are not updating their registration automatically at DMVs and are not being contacted by in-person events on campuses, at concerts, and more.

There is even MORE of a need to organize the biggest ever National Voter Registration Day this year. And while events may look different, we are here to help you navigate this new normal and organize a safe and effective voter registration event on September 22 that makes sense for you and your community.

This guide is intended to help you evaluate the different strategies and tools at your fingertips and to plan for an event that will be a success, no matter what it looks like. And beyond this guide, we've developed a few supplemental resources to assist:

- ★ Partners that do in-person events this year should consult our "COVID-Proofing Your In-Person Voter Registration Event" guide to make sure that their event complies with public health recommendations and safety guidance. <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/documents/2020/07/covid-proofing-your-in-person-voter-registration-events.pdf/>
- ★ For virtual events, we have prepared a cheat sheet of the different online tools that can be used to register voters and get them #VoteReady ahead of November. <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/documents/2020/08/2020-guide-for-online-voter-registration-tools.pdf/>

Our webinar training series will be adapted to reflect the varied ways by which our partners are getting voters registered on this year's holiday. We'll also have special training sessions led by our digital platform partners on how to use social media to build, promote, and drive voter registration at your event. <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/2020-webinar-schedule/>

All this to say: don't despair. We've got your back no matter how you choose to organize this year, and we're just as determined as you are to make this year's holiday a raving success despite all of the obstacles being thrown our way.

Let's go get America #VoteReady!







## NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

# 10 STEPS TO GETTING STARTED

- 1 Read through all the resources. You're already reading this, so good work! Check out training and registration resources or learn more about voter registration in your state here: [nationalvoterregistrationday.org/toolkit-for-organizations/](https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/toolkit-for-organizations/). Take extra care to read the state-specific guidelines for organizing a voter registration drive in your state.
- 2 Get connected. Get acquainted with [NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org](https://NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org). Make sure to like National Voter Registration Day on Facebook. Follow the event on Twitter using the handle @NatVoterRegDay. Use the hashtags #NationalVoterRegistrationDay and #VoteReady.
- 3 Start early. It's never too soon to start planning. Figure out the stuff you can knock off your list early and get it out of the way. Make sure to factor in turnaround times for things like getting certified by your state election office to do third-party voter registration if necessary in your state.
- 4 Convene your planning crew. Meet somewhere fun (or, in a Zoom room. That's fun in COVID times, right?). Go over the basic plan for the event, answer people's questions, and get your team excited and motivated by talking about what's at stake this Election Day.
- 5 Set your goals. Check out our goals and objectives on the following page, and then think about your own goals. How many volunteers do you want to recruit? How many voters do you want to register? Can you go bigger than ever and ask each volunteer to bring at least one friend along?
- 6 Write and follow your field plan, or determine your strategy and tools needed for a virtual event. Figure out what it's going to take to recruit enough volunteers for your event and to register voters on the big day, and then follow the plan to a "T."
- 7 Set your schedule. Timelines help you get stuff done. Start with National Voter Registration Day (Tuesday, September 22) and then plan backwards. Schedule deadlines for things like venue confirmation or finalization of digital outreach plans, media contact, volunteer recruitment, and team training.
- 8 Ask for help. Contact us if you need something and we'll do our best to make your organizing life easier. That's what we're here for! You can contact us at [info@nationalvoterregistrationday.org](mailto:info@nationalvoterregistrationday.org).
- 9 Participate in any trainings you need. Do you have limited experience with promoting and running a voter registration drive, or is this your group's first time doing a virtual event? Even if you're experienced, are you looking for tips on how to adapt your work to these uncertain times? Look for announcements of our webinar trainings. Use our training resources. Contact a local partner or your local election board here: [www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state](https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state).
- 10 Get to work. This is where it gets fun! Things might get crazy as September 22 approaches. Trust in the work you've done.



## NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

# MAKING A PLAN

### Building your team

Your National Voter Registration Day event has lots of potential. This is a great opportunity to bring new people into your network and empower citizens to be more engaged in their communities. To make your event as successful as possible, you're going to need help. The first thing you'll need is a dedicated crew to help you plan your event, whether it's in-person or online. When recruiting your team, here are a few qualities to look for:

- ★ **Diligent and Committed:** Look for people you can count on. Be clear and upfront with your volunteers about your expectations and needs before, during, and after the event.
- ★ **Fun and Creative:** Look for people who will contribute creative energy.
- ★ **Connected and Networked:** The person you work with who has 1,000 Facebook friends? Sounds like an asset. The one you see at every event? Definitely good to have on board.
- ★ **Informed and Passionate:** People who are knowledgeable and passionate about voting and civic engagement are always good to have around. They will be particularly effective in talking to potential voters at your event and helping other volunteers to do the same.
- ★ **Tech Savvy:** Especially if your event is going to be fully virtual—but even if it's not—make sure that you have at least one person on your core team who is comfortable with the tech tools you choose to build into your plan.

### Goal setting

#### Here are our goals for National Voter Registration Day 2020:

- ★ Setting a new record for new or updated voter registrations in a single day, besting 2018's record of 865,000.
- ★ 5,000 organizations signed on as partners across the US!
- ★ Wide support from election officials, community groups, businesses, schools, libraries, online partners and civic groups.

#### What are yours?

For example:

- ★ # of Volunteers 10
- ★ # of Registrations 40
- ★ Partners A local business
- ★ # of Social Media Likes, Shares, Etc. 50

#### How can I estimate how many registrations my event will collect?

Between 20% and 30% of eligible voters are not registered nationwide<sup>1</sup>. Unless you will be in an area with a population that has a higher likelihood of people not being registered (such as a freshman college dorm or a naturalization ceremony) you can use this figure to roughly predict the number of registrations you will collect. For instance, if you expect that 100 people will walk by your table and everyone will be asked to register, set a goal of 20 registrations. If you're organizing an online event, think a little more about your audience and if they're more or less likely to be registered to vote than the average. Not everyone will say yes to your ask to get registered, and that's okay!



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2017/06/why-are-millions-of-citizens-not-registered-to-vote>





# VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

## Figuring out how many volunteers you need

It takes lots of time to find volunteers. Not everybody who says they are going to volunteer will actually show up, especially now that COVID-19 may lead to last-minute cancellations by volunteers. The reliability of your volunteers depends on how loyal your potential volunteers are, how close they are to you, and how often you've asked them to volunteer. And of course, this year, there are factors related to public health that may impact volunteer participation.

Every organization is different, but you normally want to start volunteer outreach at least two weeks to a month before an event. That way you have plenty of time to make initial outreach calls, and then make follow-up reminder calls to each person who said they'd attend.

Our experience gives us the following assumptions:

- ★ For most organizations, about half of the volunteers who say they will show up actually do. It's a good idea to recruit twice as many volunteers as your goal. It will never hurt to have extra volunteers on the day of your event!
- ★ Mix online outreach with calls and texts. A typical caller can make around 25 calls per hour.
- ★ Most organizations we've worked with talk to about four people and get one or two people to sign up as volunteers per hour.
- ★ Most volunteers can do two hours of recruitment calls and not much more.

Based on these assumptions, here is an example of how much time and how many people you'll need to reach your volunteer goals:

Volunteer Objective	How many volunteers do you need to say yes?	How many two-hour calling shifts should you plan for calling potential volunteers?
10	20	10
50	100	50

## Using partnerships for more volunteers

Are there other organizations in your community that could have a volunteer base your organization might tap into? Maybe a local nonprofit, school group, or business? Talk to them and coordinate! If you're in a larger city, there might even be other groups also planning an event on National Voter Registration Day.

### How does your organization utilize partnerships?

"In NYC, we have taken the approach of working with partners and volunteers to host a broad scale of events designed to bring awareness of NVRD as a day of pride. We have accomplished this by co-hosting large and small opportunities for voter registration and engagement. The events have ranged from celebrity-hosted student rallies to workplace and subway drives to new-citizen swearing-in ceremonies."

– Onida Coward Mayers, NYC Votes





# TRAINING VOLUNTEERS

## Training your volunteers

For your National Voter Registration Day event to be a success, you first need to train your volunteers and prepare them to confidently and capably register voters, whether that's in person or online. Make sure volunteers have all the materials they need before training starts.

If you're doing an in-person event, we encourage you to consult our guide on how to "COVID-Proof" your event, available here: <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/documents/2020/07/covid-proofing-your-in-person-voter-registration-events.pdf/> and on the partner organization toolkit page on our website. Ahead of your training, have all the clipboards assembled in advance with the script, who within your organization can answer questions, blank voter-registration cards or forms, pens, and a "Register to Vote" sign taped on the back of the clipboard. If your state allows online voter registration and you plan to collect some/all of your registrations online, provide volunteers with the necessary equipment (laptop, chargers, etc.) and make sure that internet access is available at your training and the site of the event.

Good trainings are fun, informative, quick, and engaging. Keep things short, and leave time for questions and answers. Most important, give volunteers a chance to partner up and practice. Role-play helps. Before you deploy volunteers to sites, announce what time they should return, make sure they know to turn their materials in when they get back, and have contact info from each of your volunteers. Try and hold your training immediately before the event, or no more than one week prior to the event so that information is fresh for your volunteers and no one forgets anything important between the training and your event.

If you're doing an online event this September 22, we recommend having a volunteer training one week or more before the big day in order to make sure that all volunteers understand their roles, and have the necessary equipment and tech savvy to get the job done.

### Training should include the following:

- ★ Who can register to vote in your state? This includes knowing:
  - that any U.S. citizen who turns 18 by Election Day (November 3, 2020) can register and vote; and
  - your state-specific rule – if any – for allowing ex-offenders to vote. Find out here: [nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/special-circumstances/voting-as-an-ex-offender/](https://nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/special-circumstances/voting-as-an-ex-offender/).
- ★ How to fill out a registration form (paper and/or online) and which fields are required.
- ★ Where to look for common mistakes, such as forgetting to sign the form.
- ★ Staying nonpartisan. We're not here to tell you who to vote for, just to help you register.
- ★ Myth-busting: Discuss common misconceptions, such as jury duty being decided by voter registration forms. Getting called for jury duty most often comes from getting a driver's license or being on other lists.
- ★ Who to call if a volunteer has questions when registering someone.
- ★ Where to turn in all completed registration forms and other materials.
- ★ Quick script training and role play.
- ★ Time for Q & A.







# LOGISTICS

## Before an in-person event

### Pick a location and get approval from the venue, if need be:

- ★ Per our “COVID-Proofing Your In-Person Voter Registration Event” guide, pick a location that can provide the safest conditions possible for your volunteers and participants, with priority for outdoor venues or indoor ones with sufficient ventilation.
- ★ Prioritize places with steady foot traffic on a Tuesday if you’re planning an in-person event.
- ★ We’ve seen the most success at campuses, transit areas, food stores, at your own agency or business or at local events in your neighborhood. This year, think about how that may differ and plan accordingly, perhaps by stationing your event near an essential business such as a grocery store or pharmacy.
- ★ Avoid tourist places with people from out of state or out of country. Festivals and sporting events can have a lot of out-of-state people.

### Think about what you may need:

- ★ Personal protective equipment (PPE) such as facemasks, and cleaning supplies such as disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer
- ★ Plenty of blank registration forms and/or a tablet for registering voters online (if applicable)
- ★ A clipboard and multiple pens for every volunteer
- ★ A volunteer sign-in sheet and name tags for volunteers

- ★ National Voter Registration Day posters\* and additional posters or swag from your organization. If you need more National Voter Registration Day posters and/or stickers, you can download the files and print more on our website, or order them from our online store
- ★ National Voter Registration Day stickers to identify volunteers and to give away\*
- ★ A volunteer signup sheet\*
- ★ A training script for all of your trainers, and sample scripts for volunteers asking individuals to register to vote
- ★ Envelopes or boxes for completed registration forms
- ★ A table and chairs
- ★ A source of shade (umbrella or tent)
- ★ A way to play music
- ★ Handmade posters and banners with your organization’s name
- ★ A camera or a volunteer willing to take photos or video using his/her smartphone (even better if this person can post updates on social media throughout the day!)
- ★ Water and snacks for volunteers
- ★ Other supplies (balloons, signs, individually wrapped snacks, etc.) to draw attention to your event, make it feel inviting, and encourage passers-by to stop and check it out

\* All partners who sign up on our website are sent free posters and stickers.





## Event components

### Volunteer arrival

- ★ Have volunteers show up well before you actually plan on having the event take place so that they can be trained. Factor in time in case volunteers show up late.
- ★ Have volunteers sign in through a sign-in sheet (if in-person) or, if your event is virtual, devise another way to keep track of who participated. This will help you keep track of who volunteered and make it easier to re-engage (and thank!) them later.

### Pre-event training

One person can train approximately 5 – 10 others. Make sure you have enough trainers for all of your volunteers! Each trainer should be familiar with voter registration rules in your state (see here: <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/toolkit-for-individuals/rules-for-voter-registration-drives/>), as well as tips for talking to prospective voters.

### Greeting your volunteers

- ★ Make sure you have lots of greeters (like at the end of a marathon) for when people come back from volunteering. If you're staying in one spot, just keep your energy high and give your volunteers lots of positive feedback.
- ★ Have snacks and goodies for volunteers.
- ★ Collect each volunteer's clipboard, and any completed voter registration forms.

### Registering voters

- ★ Smooth deployment from training to actually registering is critical. Make sure you have transportation figured out beforehand if you'll be driving somewhere.
- ★ Make your event fun. Announcements, cheering, and music will attract a lot more positive attention than people just sitting at a table.

## Finishing up

- ★ Allow your volunteers to chat about how registering went. Always finish the event by asking volunteers about their favorite registration or memory from the day.
- ★ Remind all of your volunteers how big of an impact they've made.
- ★ Have someone count all of the registrations to show how each individual added together made a big impact.

## Running the event

One of the secrets to running a great event is to have a run sheet: a chart or timeline that breaks down what needs to happen minute by minute and identifies who's in charge. See sample below.

Make one person the stage manager for the event. This person is in charge of following the run sheet word by word, making sure that everything that needs to happen happens. Of course, it's impossible to predict everything that will happen, so be ready to improvise.



### Sample day of timeline

Time	Event	Location	Who leads	Details
10:15AM	Leave office to get to venue	Head quarters		Make sure to bring all materials needed.
10:30AM	Set up, prepare tables, snacks, check-in, music	At Site		Music player, snacks, tables, check-in materials.
10:45AM	Check-in arriving volunteers	At Site		Welcome! Explain day's process and hand out clipboards/materials.
11:00AM	Icebreaker for volunteer	At Site		Favorite childhood book/first memory of civic participation/etc.
11:20AM	Group voter registration training	At Site		Answer any questions. Do a demonstration. Go through materials that everybody should have. Have them split into pairs and practice.
11:40AM	Team Cheer	At Site		"Yeah, democracy!"
11:40AM	Spread everybody out through square.	At Site		Check in with each departing volunteer to make sure they have everything they need.
12:15PM	Set up lunch for volunteers	At Site		Have them take 15 minute, incremental breaks so there are still volunteers registering at all times.
1:00PM	Check in with each volunteer team	At Site		Ask them if they have any questions, and collect any filled out registration forms.
2:00PM	Check in with each volunteer team	At Site		Ask them if they have any questions, and collect any filled out registration forms.
3:00PM	Regroup team	At Site		Collect all materials and count completed forms. Encourage volunteers to take water and snacks.
3:15PM	Check-outs, Celebration	At Site	All staff	Announce how many registrations we accomplished, Check-in with volunteers to get feedback on event.
4:00PM	Break down ables, clean up, go to office	At Site		Make sure not to forget anything. Keep registration forms within reach.
5:00PM	Debrief, Did Good / Do Betters	Head quarters	Everyone	Add up numbers of voters registered and volunteers engaged. Report results to NVRD via online survey.





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## Before a virtual event

### Build your lists for greater virtual "foot traffic"

- ★ Whereas an in-person event venue should be planned around foot traffic in a given area, a virtual event should be planned around as big of a list as possible in order to position your event to register as many voters as possible.
- ★ Assess the size of your organization's contact database (email distribution list and phone numbers if you're planning on using texting or phone banking as part of your event) and social media following. Try and grow your contact lists continuously ahead of National Voter Registration Day through asking individuals on it to encourage their friends, families, and communities to subscribe or follow your social media accounts.
- ★ Register your event—even if a virtual one—on our Events Tool on our website.
- ★ Consult our Communications Toolkit and resources page on our website for ways to publicize and promote your event.

### Select your tools

- ★ Check out our digital tools guide on the partner resources page on our website. Find an online resource such as Vote.Gov, or a third-party tool that works well for your organization and will help you achieve your goals.
- ★ Evaluate other tools to facilitate communication that is not face-to-face, such as email newsletter tools and texting programs, and decide if these would be useful to your group in the leadup to and during your event.

### Equip your staff and volunteers

- ★ Make one of your volunteers or staff members a go-to for technical support and troubleshooting.
- ★ Make sure your staff and volunteers have what they need to succeed in your virtual event. This could include computers, tablets, cell phones with sufficient credit, chargers, high-speed internet, applications such as Zoom, and more.

- ★ Encourage staff and volunteers to download any necessary applications ahead of time and test out their ability to navigate them well in advance of the day.
- ★ If your virtual event involves something such as a Zoom call to demonstrate how to fill out your state's voter registration form, consider a practice call the day before to avoid any last-minute challenges on the big day.

### Develop your content

- ★ Draft emails to send out ahead of and on the day of your virtual registration drive. Ask a few individuals to review and give feedback on any parts of it that may be particularly effective and compelling, or anything that could be confusing.
- ★ Prepare social media content, including language and images, so that it's ready to go. Decide what hashtags you will encourage your community to use (don't forget #NationalVoterRegistrationDay and #VoteReady, for example!). Consult our Communications Toolkit and our website for lots of ready-made social media content and graphics.

### Make a day-of schedule

- ★ Just because your event isn't in person this year doesn't mean that you don't need a schedule! Develop a timeline of when you will send out communication and to whom, when you'll post on social media, and when you'll ask your volunteers and community to amplify your calls to action.
- ★ Consider a check-in call or videoconference during your event for volunteers to chat about how things are going, discuss what's working well, and to celebrate their efforts and success.



## BEST PRACTICES FOR PHONE OR TEXT BANKING

### Overall:

- ★ Confirm that your volunteers have their own cell phones, laptops, and internet connection if needed. Headphones can also be useful.
- ★ Always know what you want to ask – have specific times, dates, and places; or specific websites to register to vote.
- ★ If possible, have a caller who knows the prospective volunteer or voter call or text them.
- ★ If you're recruiting volunteers, call through your active ones first.
- ★ Make sure people who are calling are having fun, and are enthusiastic about what they're asking people to do. If texting, make sure texts are concise and upbeat.
- ★ Try to avoid distractions of all types and keep callers/texters on task.
- ★ Think about different roles for different volunteers, especially if some volunteers are not able or comfortable with an in-person event. Can they support you virtually?
- ★ This year, for events that are not in-person, we recommend having volunteers make calls from their own homes. If you are having volunteers gather together to make phone calls or send text, ensure that they're doing so in a socially distant way.
- ★ Have a way of rewarding volunteers who finish their list or get positive results – even just a shout-out. Many organizations find it helpful to have a way to celebrate each new volunteer commitment or every new voter that your volunteers register.
- ★ When you find someone who is excited about the cause, try to get them to do more! Depending on the purpose of your calls or text, this could be bringing friends along to volunteer at an event, or getting additional friends to register to vote on the holiday.

### When to call:

- ★ Best time to call is 5:30pm – 9:00pm on a weekday in more normal times. These days, with more people working from home and staying home in general, you may have better luck during "off" hours.
- ★ Always schedule time for training before calls or texting efforts actually start.

### How to call or text:

- ★ Give your callers or texters a suggested script. Ask them to practice it and make it their own.
- ★ Consider having volunteers do a few pretend "practice calls" to other volunteers or do some role-play exercises beforehand to work out the kinks in their ask.
- ★ Have a stated expectation for the number of calls or texts made per person. Give folks a list
- ★ with a specific number of calls or texts, and encourage them to finish the list.
- ★ Have volunteers record the responses somewhere so you can call or text back through unanswered numbers; you can save time by not calling people who have already been talked to.
- ★ Make it fun! If you're having a virtual volunteer phonebanking or texting session, get creative around how to make people feel like part of a bigger effort. Consider playing music, having breaks for volunteers to chat, or sending food or goodies to volunteers to keep them going.

### When someone says "no:"

- ★ If you're calling volunteers: If they're interested but unavailable for your event, try to get them to volunteer for a different event with your organization. Don't waste the phone call!
- ★ If you're calling to get people to register, if someone doesn't want to, in most cases it's best to thank them and move on. But depending on the tone of their voice, you may want to remind them that it typically takes two minutes or less to check your voter registration status online. And whether or not they think they want to vote, getting registered is the only way to make sure they have that option.







## KEEPING NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

# ALL ABOUT DEMOCRACY

National Voter Registration Day is about democracy. It's about doing something, big or small, to help more people in your community participate and vote. We're helping people find their voice—not telling them what to say. While political parties, campaigns, and political action committees (PACs) are free to celebrate National Voter Registration Day, only nonpartisan organizations that commit to refraining from political messages are eligible to sign up as official holiday partners, receive free stickers and posters, and be listed on our website.

We have three major ways we keep National Voter Registration Day about democracy and not about partisanship:

### No “electioneering”: Candidates and ballot measures

We ask that no National Voter Registration Day event be used to advocate on behalf of a particular candidate, party, or ballot measure. You can provide nonpartisan voter education on where and how to register as well as vote. You can also provide information about something else your group is doing. By keeping National Voter Registration Day strictly about registering people to vote, we keep it a feel-good and positive pro-democracy event that everyone wants to participate in, regardless of where they stand politically. You can provide nonpartisan voter education on where and how to register as well as vote – including options for voting by mail or voting early in person.

#### Avoid:

- ★ Asking people who they plan to vote for or who they voted for in the past
- ★ Wearing shirts, buttons, or stickers that support a candidate or convey a political message
- ★ Getting pulled into political debates with people you are registering or bystanders

### Messaging

In addition to not advocating for partisan issues, there's a lot you can do to help National Voter Registration Day stay all about democracy and the importance of turning out the vote in your community. Keep it positive. Encourage a celebratory and unifying atmosphere at your in-person or online event. For more on this, including sample messaging and some special messaging related to voter registration and the COVID-19 pandemic, consult our Communications Toolkit here: <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/documents/2020/07/communications-toolkit-for-partners.pdf/>.

### Targeting people, not parties

No targeting may be done on the basis of party. You are free to target your friends, people you serve, your local community, and areas with historically low turnout or new to voting, such as young voters or new citizens. Do not only ask people to register to vote that you think will vote a certain way, and do not encourage people to register with a particular political party.





## HOW TO ASK SOMEONE TO REGISTER IN PERSON OR ONLINE

Even though asking someone “Are you registered to vote?” or “Can I help you register to vote?” seems straightforward, we’ve learned that those questions aren’t the best ones. Try these alternatives instead as part of your in-person event or as part of your virtual calls to action:

**“Are you registered to vote at your current address? Let’s take two minutes to check your registration to make sure it’s up to date.”**

- ★ Why it works: Some people may think their registration is current because they got a driver’s license in their new state or only moved across town. Even if you move down the street, you have to update your voter registration or you might be turned away at the polls.
- ★ Use the Voting In Your State guide to find the right link for people to check their registration: <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/>. You can have a laptop set up for people to check (bookmark the appropriate page), or encourage them to visit that link on their smartphone.

**“Our community needs more voters. Can you help out by updating your registration today?”**

- ★ Why it works: Some people aren’t motivated by politics but care deeply about their community. You can explain that elected officials who represent them are more responsive to communities with higher numbers of registered voters.
- ★ Remember to use the word “update” since many people don’t realize they need to update their registration when they move, change their name, or if they haven’t voted in several years.

**“The deadline for voter registration is approaching. Do you have 2 minutes to make sure you’re registered?”**

- ★ Why it works: Use that sense of urgency (the looming deadline) and highlight the ease of

registering to get people to do it on the spot rather than waiting for another day or time.

- ★ Get even more specific by inserting your state’s registration deadline in your ask. You can find your state’s deadline by checking your Secretary of State’s website or visiting the Voting In Your State guide here: <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/>.

**“Want to flatten the voting curve? The more of us that register and vote ahead of Election Day, the smaller the crowds at the polls and the safer we’ll all be.”**

- ★ We’re likely to see high voter turnout this year, which is great. But with high turnout and a shortage of poll workers due to COVID-19, we may also see long lines at the polls. Crowds at polling stations are a public health risk and can also deter potential voters from casting a ballot.
- ★ Every voter that registers and votes ahead of November 3 will be one fewer person in line on Election Day, meaning smaller crowds and a safer environment for poll workers, voters, and our communities.
- ★ Even in the states that have same-day registration, getting registered EARLY is extra-important this year for public health reasons. Why wait??!

**“Did you know that in order to be able to vote by mail, you need to register well in advance of Election Day?”**

- ★ Voters shouldn’t have to choose between their safety and their voice in our democracy. Due to the pandemic, states are rolling out changes this year that will enable more voters than ever before to vote by mail or vote in-person early ahead of Election Day. In order to take advantage of these options, voters need to be registered at their current addresses with enough lead time.







# MORE TIPS FOR TALKING TO VOTERS IN PERSON AND ONLINE

## Always look like you're having fun, including with virtual events.

- ★ Get out from behind that table and invite people to talk to you (while maintaining social distance, of course!).
- ★ Celebrate every newly-registered voter! Ring a cowbell, have them add their name or message to a "wall of fame," give them a shout-out on social media, or find other ways to make it fun. If you make somebody feel special for participating, you can bet they'll want to keep doing it!
- ★ Act up a little. Move or say something while you're standing around, and have a good time. This can help make the whole process much less intimidating for new voters.
- ★ Make sure you're an approachable group. Standing or walking in pairs is encouraged, but not at the expense of talking to voters instead.
- ★ No need to make your online communications such as emails and Tweets overly serious! Use graphics and language that get people engaged and smiling. We have lots of sample graphics on our website for you to freely download and share. <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/national-voter-registration-day-2020-sample-social-media/>

## Be the kind of person you'd want to talk to.

- ★ Be friendly if you're running an in-person event.
- ★ If your event is virtual, make sample text messages, email language, and social media calls to action positive in tone and ones that invite engagement by your target community.
- ★ Talk (or type) like a regular person. Don't be a robot and read directly off the script.
- ★ Be up front about what you're doing in a positive way. Identify yourself as a volunteer immediately when you start talking to them.
- ★ Take nothing personally and don't get discouraged. If somebody is rude to you, shake it off and move on.

## Have a conversation, rather than talking at people.

- ★ Ask questions and listen to the answer. Tailor your message to the individual.
- ★ Find your own pitch. Experiment and figure out what works best for you.
- ★ Talk to everyone you see. The next person could be amazing!
- ★ For both in-person and online events, try to connect voting to people's daily lives and the issues they care about.
- ★ For online content, rather than simply sharing information, try and start a conversation and engage potential voters. Ask questions, take a poll, and ask people to share their thoughts—and then share your call to action to register to vote!





### Stay on message and remind them of the big picture.

- ★ You're not telling them who to vote for, just helping them register!
- ★ No matter who someone plans to vote for or how they plan to vote—or even if they're not sure they want to vote at all—getting registered is the first step.
- ★ National Voter Registration Day is a national holiday and a positive way to celebrate democracy. At the same exact time, thousands of volunteers across the country and online are reaching out to their friends, families, and community members to encourage them to register to vote.

### Close the deal.

- ★ Always make the ask. If you can, put the clipboard and pen in their hand while you're talking to them. You'll be amazed at how many people start filling it out.
- ★ Don't backtrack. Once you ask, wait for their response.
- ★ If you have handouts, give them out at the end of your conversation. They can be distracting if you hand them to voters right away.
- ★ For online events, don't bury the lead: make sure the call to register to vote is clear and up front in all emails, tweets, posts, and more.







# AFTER YOUR EVENT

## Turn in your completed voter registration forms.

- ★ We'll also ask you for your feedback on how we were able to support your event and how we can improve our support for partners like you in future years.
- ★ All states have rules on when completed forms need to be turned in. It's always best to turn in forms as soon as possible to avoid any issues.
- ★ If you don't know when or where to turn them in, ask a partner or local election office. Visit <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/partner-tools/rules-for-voter-registration-drives/> to download your state's registration drive rules and make sure you comply.

## Report your numbers and tell us how it went.

- ★ We'll send you a couple emails right after National Voter Registration Day with a link to report the number of volunteers you engaged and the number of voters you registered. These numbers are important for us to be able to know how big our impact is nationally, as they're some of the only numbers we are able to track year to year. We'll also ask you for your feedback on how we were able to support your event and how we can improve our support for partners like you in future years.

## Thank your volunteers.

- ★ This is a big one. People love to be appreciated. If you want to email them, that's great. But make sure that it's personal to them, and try to follow it up with a phone call. Actively appreciating the people who help you accomplish your goals is the easiest way to make sure they keep helping you.

## Follow up with the voters you registered and help them get #VoteReady.

- ★ If your event was in-person and you used paper forms, If it's okay in your state, make a copy of each of the completed voter registration forms for your own records. Some states like Texas and New Mexico don't allow copying so check on our website or with your local election office to verify state-specific rules. Redacting personal information (date of birth, signature, SSN, or driver's license number) is always a good idea.
- ★ You can use the copies you made to follow up with folks to make sure they have all the information they need to actually vote.
- ★ Check out the resources on our website to help voters get #VoteReady, and share them widely with your volunteers, new voters you registered, and more. If your event was virtual, use the same online or text/phone methods you used to engage voters to share these complementary resources.
- ★ Every time you contact a voter, you increase their likelihood of voting. Follow up with them right after the event to thank them for registering and answer any questions they might have, then again during your get-out-the-vote process!

