

FIELD ORGANIZER TOOLKIT



September 19, 2023



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ABOUT

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY



Welcome to the National Voter Registration Day team! On September 19, 2023, we'll start our second decade of celebrating democracy through providing a single day of action designed to ensure all eligible voters are registered and #VoteReady. We're proud to count you among this year's coalition of partners.

Celebrating National Voter Registration Day has been partner-driven from the very beginning. In a nationwide collaborative effort, partners of all sizes and sectors from local food pantries to Fortune 500 companies stage a 24-hour democracy blitz aimed at getting every eligible American #VoteReady for their next trip to the polls. Over this civic holiday's first decade, the resourcefulness and commitment of partners like you who make this day possible has resulted in more than 5 MILLION Americans being registered to vote.

This year will be defined by both a tidal wave of state and local elections AND be the last mass registration effort before the 2024 presidential primaries. With the help of coalition partners like you across the nation, we plan to get more than 250,000 Americans #VoteReady.

This Field Toolkit is here to help you get started. We also encourage you to check out additional resources on the National Voter Registration Day website, such as our Communications Strategy Guide, our library of *sample social media content*, or our *#VoteReady resources* from our friends in the voter engagement space.

Background

National Voter Registration Day is celebrated every year on the third Tuesday in September. First organized in 2012, it is the nation's largest nonpartisan civic holiday dedicated to celebrating our democracy by registering as many eligible Americans to vote as possible through the collective efforts of thousands of volunteers, nonprofit organizations, businesses, schools, libraries, election officials, and individuals from across the country.

National Voter Registration Day is endorsed by the National Association of Secretaries of State, National Association of State Election Directors, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, and the National Association of Election Officials. The holiday is governed by a Steering Committee composed of a diverse, nonpartisan group of civic and business leaders, including election officials from both sides of the aisle.



5 TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

- 1 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 so you can spend more time promoting your event as the date nears
- 2 Check out the many available resources.** You're already reading this, so good work! Find registration resources or learn more about voter registration in your state at NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org/toolkit-for-organizations.
- 3 Get connected.** Get acquainted with NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org and be sure to follow us @NatlVoterRegDay on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and/or [Instagram](#). Make sure to use the hashtags #NationalVoterRegistrationDay and #VoteReady to join in the conversation and help us trend once again on the civic holiday.
- 4 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 for given audiences or local contexts? Look for announcements of our webinar training. Find information for your local election board at nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state.
- 5 Ask for help.** Need something you don't see in our training and resources? Contact us at info@nationalvoterregistrationday.org and we'll do our best to make your event organizing life easier. That's what we're here for!

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. Your state's guide to voter registration drives should be your first stop!

KEEPING NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY ABOUT DEMOCRACY



National Voter Registration Day is about democracy. It's about doing something, big or small, to help your community participate in the electoral process. We're helping people use their voice—not telling them what to say.

Following are three major ways we keep National Voter Registration Day about democracy and not partisanship:

1.

No Electioneering

National Voter Registration Day events cannot be used to advocate on behalf of a particular candidate or ballot measure. By keeping National Voter Registration Day strictly about registering people to vote, we keep it a feel-good democracy event that everyone wants to participate in.

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*

2.

Nonpartisan Positive 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 and check out our [communications tools](#).

3.

Inclusive Outreach

When interacting with potential voters, no targeting may be done on the basis of party. By all means, gear your outreach to your local community, communities you or your organization serve, areas with historically low turnout or populations, and/or those who are new to voting, such as young voters or new citizens.

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY CHECKLIST



Use this checklist to make sure you and your team are prepared for September 19, 2023.

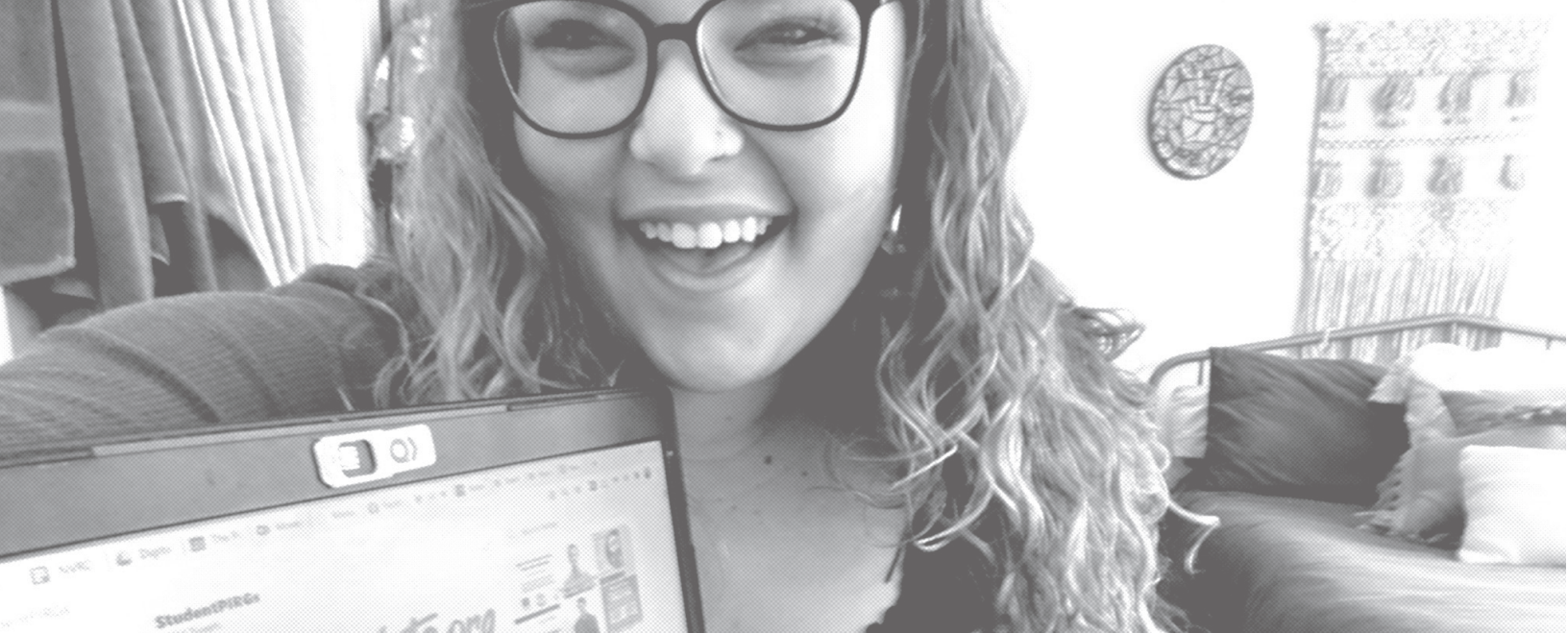
Planning

- Build Your Team:** Bring in people and partners who are passionate about voting, are good at organizing and tracking details, and/or are charismatic and enjoy talking with strangers. Make sure you have someone on the team who can grant or get approval for the timing and location of the event.
- Timing & Location:** Select a high-traffic area where people will be stopping or passing through and time your event to coincide with the location's busiest hours. Avoid tourist attractions or events attended by folks from out-of-state.
- Promotion:** Get the word out by posting flyers around the location 2-4 weeks in advance and/or spreading awareness through social and traditional media. See the Communications Strategy Guide for sample social media posts, press releases, and additional assets.
- Paper or Digital Voter Registration:** Decide which options for registering will be available at your event. If your location lacks WiFi, consider a paper-based event. If you will not deliver completed paper forms on behalf of voters, consider supplying stamps, envelopes, and directions to the nearest mailbox for voters to mail their forms.

Materials

- Voter registration applications (and stamps and envelopes if needed)
- Pens and clipboards for writing on
- QR-coded flyers or posters with registration link
- Stickers and other fun giveaways*
- Swag from the [National Voter Registration Day store](#) to draw people's attention
- A lock-box or large manila envelopes for completed registration forms
- Masks, sanitizer, or any other personal protective equipment

* In compliance with state and federal law, any giveaway items at your event must be made available to anyone regardless of whether or not they register to vote.



Volunteers, Training, and the Day of Your Event

- Recruitment:** Most events will not need more than 2-3 volunteers helping with registration at a time. Keep shifts shorter than 4 hours, but make sure you have any set-up or break-down time covered.
- Training:** Anyone assisting voters should review the Voter Registration 101 sheet, the Staying Nonpartisan Fact Sheet, and do a role-play with another volunteer to practice engaging with voters. Provide volunteers with the tally sheet and give them instructions on what to do with completed forms.
- Take Pictures:** We'd love to see your event in action! Encourage volunteers to take pictures of each other assisting voters (ask before snapping a photo!). If you use social media, be sure to share it with the hashtags #NationalVoterRegistrationDay and #VoteReady
- Report Back:** Share the tally sheet totals, event pictures, and feedback on our materials and support so we can make next year even better!

Volunteers and staff should consider wearing stickers or pins that note that they are a part of an organization not an elections office. They can say "I'm a volunteer with: [name of your organization]"

VOTER REGISTRATION 101



With the exception of North Dakota, states require a person to be registered in order to cast a vote in elections. **When you help people register, you make democracy work!**

This is a general guide for conducting voter registration drives on National Voter Registration Day. Find state-specific information and additional resources on our [website](#). All National Voter Registration Day partners commit to remaining nonpartisan and abiding by state and local laws while registering voters.

Voting eligibility: Everyone who registers to vote must attest (be able to prove) that they are:

- ★ A citizen of the United States (for federal elections and most state and local elections)
- ★ At least 18 years of age by Election Day (unless the state offers pre-registration); and
- ★ A legal resident of the state they register in (students may register in their school OR home state, but may only register and vote in one).

There are two options for registering to vote:

Using Paper Registration Forms

- ★ No WiFi or device necessary
- ★ Accepted in every state*
- ★ No state ID# needed to complete

Assisting voters: Make sure a voter has filled out all required fields

- ★ Checkbox: 18 or older
- ★ Checkbox: US Citizen
- ★ Date of birth (make sure they didn't put today's date here)
- ★ Residential address (can't be a P.O. Box)
- ★ State ID # or last 4 digits of SSN (social security number)
- ★ Signature

Accessing paper forms: Call your state or local election office to request forms, or print your own where allowed. The federal form may also be used.

Registering Online

- ★ No paperwork to handle
- ★ Available in 40 states & DC
- ★ Automatic voting reminders

Using the NVRD portal: Our registration page is powered by tools that connect to state voter registration portals to complete registrations. Use this QR code to connect to the portal.



Use your state portal: Connect voters directly to your state's website for registering. Voters who use the state website may not be enrolled in automatic voting reminders.

Assisting voters: In most states, voters will need to have a state-issued ID # in order to register. Voters without the necessary ID can register on paper.

*Review state laws prior to offering voter registration. Do not offer to retain and submit paper voter registration forms in Florida, New Hampshire, or Texas without proper authorization.

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY EVENT TALLY SHEET



Name: _____

Before talking to voters, make sure you're smiling, looking upbeat, and comfortable with the questions in the grid below. Feel confident when you walk up to people—you're making democracy work! You can adapt this script for yourself, but we think this is a great way to open conversations:

"Hi, I'm [name]! Did you know today is National Voter Registration Day?"

Once people engage, ask the following questions. In the first column, make a tally for every person you ask. In the second column, mark whenever someone registers via paper form or online. In the third column, make a tally for every person who commits to text three others to register.

"Can we make sure your voter registration is active and up to date?"	[If yes, offer paper form or QR code to register] "Awesome, can you fill this out? It will only take a minute."		[After registering or if up to date] "Great job! Will you text three friends to remind them to update their registration today?"
Asks:	Paper:	Online:	Text-3-friends:
Total:	Total:	Total:	Total:

Don't forget! Turn in this tally sheet and all paper voter registration forms you collect to the person running the event. They need to share these numbers with National Voter Registration Day and send the forms to the elections office.

Got pics? Share pictures from your National Voter Registration Day event by tagging us at @natlvoterregday on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram along with the hashtags #NationalVoterRegistrationDay and #VoteReady.



TIPS FOR TALKING TO VOTERS

Have fun!

- ★ Get out from behind that table and invite people to talk to you.
- ★ Give a shout-out every time somebody registers to vote and compliment the heck out of them. If you make somebody feel special for participating, you can bet they'll want to keep doing it and invite others.
- ★ 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 approachable. Standing or walking in pairs is encouraged, but not at the expense of talking to voters instead.

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

- ★ Talk 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 with an organization immediately when you start talking to people.
- ★ Don't get discouraged or take things personally. If somebody is rude, shake it off and move on.

Have a conversation—talk with people, not at people

- ★ Ask questions and listen to the answer. Tailor your message to what the individual says.
- ★ Find your own pitch. Experiment and figure out what works best for you.
- ★ Talk to everyone you see. The next person could be amazing!
- ★ While being careful to remain nonpartisan, connect voting to people's lives and issues they care about. (Don't assume and don't ask intrusive questions, but if someone lets you know about issues that are important to them, connect the dots (see "tailor your message to what the individual says" above).

Stay on message

- ★ You're not telling people who or what to vote for, just helping them register!
- ★ National Voter Registration Day is a positive way to celebrate democracy—that takes all of us!

Close the deal

- ★ Always make the ask. If you can, put the clipboard and pen in a person's hand while you're talking with them.
- ★ Don't backtrack. Once you ask, wait for the person's response.
- ★ If you have handouts, give them to the person at the end of your conversation to prevent distraction.

CONCLUSION



With your help on September 19, hundreds of thousands of Americans will take the first step to being #VoteReady by acting on their eligibility and registering to vote in upcoming elections. Whether you help three or 300 hundred voters on this year's holiday, you are making a difference.

We can't do this without you, and your events are what make National Voter Registration Day great! Here are some final reminders as you begin the planning process:

- 1 National Voter Registration Day is about democracy,** not political parties, candidates, or particular issues. Use this as an opportunity to come together, celebrate our shared values, and bridge differences in your community.
- 2 It's better with friends.** Join forces with other groups in your area to build local relationships and maximize the number of voters you will reach. Maybe you can start a tradition and team up every year!
- 3 Have fun, but take it seriously.** Make sure you're following state rules around voter registration, that voters are filling out the form legibly, and that all forms make it back to the proper elections office within the allotted time frame. Missing any of these steps could mean that a voter that registered with you won't be on the rolls when they go to vote. This is why training is so important.
- 4 Don't reinvent the wheel.** We want to make this easy for you, so be sure to read the emails from the National Voter Registration Day team and check out the National Voter Registration Day website and social media channels so you don't miss anything. We've got trainings, tools, and tips to make the day as easy as possible for you and help your event run smoothly.

First things first—are YOU #VoteReady?

Make sure to practice what you preach and ensure YOUR registration and the registrations of those helping with your event are up to date!

We just have one more question:

*Are you ready to help people register and vote?
Let's go get America #VoteReady together.*



SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

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