



NEW CITIZENS KEY TALKING POINTS & TIPS

National Voter Registration Day & Welcoming America



On National Voter Registration Day, you'll talk to a lot of people, from potential voters to members of the press. In those situations, it can help to have some crisp and concise messaging points that lay out the central themes of National Voter Registration Day and the importance of helping people, including newly naturalized citizens, register to vote.

FRAMING 2026 AS AN ELECTION YEAR

- ◆ 2026 is not just an election year—it's an **elections** year! Voters nationwide will head to the polls to weigh in on so many races this midterm—including every U.S. House seat, a third of U.S. Senate seats, 36 governorships, and over 6,000 state legislative seats, not to mention thousands more races for local offices. In other words? Potential voters should know it's all on the table this November.
- ◆ The daily tumult of national politics in Washington can feel far off and beyond our control. It can also feel like the only arena worth paying attention to. But remember that getting your community registered to vote for upcoming elections is a chance to take control and exert agency over the political process at all levels: federal, state, and local.
- ◆ For many newly naturalized citizens, this will be the first time they have a say in the elections that shape their daily lives.
- ◆ With races for offices from your U.S. Senators and Representatives down to your town council and local comptroller, the way your community welcomes newly naturalized citizens and supports them in their journey as new American citizens is something your vote gives you a voice in shaping.



TALKING TO NEW CITIZENS ABOUT REGISTERING

Many eligible voters and first-time voters are confused, feel discouraged, or are unaware they need to take action to register or update their information. That's understandable. Voter registration and updating their status are part of everyday civic life. Even small address changes, name changes, or long periods of not voting may require updating your registration.

In a lot of ways, beginning the conversation about voter registration with newly naturalized citizens is no different than with any other potential voter. There's no way to tell if someone is eligible just by looking at them, so there's no need for assumptions: Open with "Hi there, are you a U.S. citizen? If so, we can help you register to vote today," no follow up questions required. If the person you're speaking with says no or hesitates, move on to offering other information or translated materials they can share with their friends and family about the registration process—there are many ways to get civically involved!

Lead with empathy, kindness, and a helpful attitude when there may be confusion, and be sure to direct people to clear, unbiased, accurate information from official election sources.

Remember: no matter what, ensuring that your community is #VoteReady to hit the polls **begins with registering to vote OR updating your voter registration with any new information.**



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HAVE A CONVERSATION

TALK *WITH* PEOPLE, NOT *AT* PEOPLE

ASK QUESTIONS AND LISTEN TO THE ANSWER

Tailor your message to what the individual says. Conversations are more effective when they don't sound overly scripted.

FIND YOUR OWN PITCH

Experiment and figure out what works best for you. Add a personal note, how registering to vote helped you shape your community, or something that feels comfortable.

DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT IMMIGRATION STATUS

Talk to everyone you see. It is impossible to tell if an adult is eligible to vote just by looking at them, so don't hesitate to offer voter registration and education opportunities to everyone who walks through your doors. Even if individuals cannot vote themselves, they can still be involved in the civic process by supporting and encouraging others to vote.

NOTE THE MILESTONE

Where appropriate, highlight that voting is a way to participate fully in your community, especially for people who may be engaging in the process for the first time because they just became a new citizen.

CONNECT THE DOTS

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, connecting the dots helps make the case for voting.

TIP: LEAVE IT TO THE (LEGAL) PROFESSIONALS!



It's always important to provide accurate information, and sometimes that means connecting people with legal experts.

In the course of your conversations, you may hear particular questions or concerns best handled by legal aid organizations. For example, you may if you're asked whether past legal issues or time abroad affect their right to vote, or whether registering to vote could affect their or their family's immigration status. Groups like the Election Protection Hotline are best equipped to provide accurate, clear legal guidance for questions about voting eligibility and status; we recommend you direct people with specific questions to 866-OUR-VOTE or 866ourvote.org.



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CONVERSATION SCRIPTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

These are great sample statements to reference when conducting a conversation with a potential voter. Take some time before your event to practice. The more natural the conversation, the more comfortable everyone will be discussing voter registration!

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

- ◆ “Hi, we’re sharing information about how to register to vote. Would you like to learn more?”
- ◆ “We’re helping people check or update their voter registration today. Is that something you’d be interested in?”
- ◆ “Have you had a chance to check your voter registration recently?”
- ◆ “We’re offering quick, nonpartisan help to make sure your registration is up to date.”
- ◆ “If you have a minute, I can show you how to register or verify your information.”

EXPLAINING THE PURPOSE

- ◆ “This is a nonpartisan effort. We’re not supporting any candidates or parties.”
- ◆ “Our goal is simply to make sure everyone has access to voter registration information.”
- ◆ “We work with community organizations and election officials to provide accurate resources.”
- ◆ “This is about helping people participate if they choose to.”
- ◆ “We’re here to make the process clear, simple, and accessible.”

IF SOMEONE IS UNSURE

- ◆ “That’s completely okay. You can take your time and decide what feels right.”
- ◆ “I can walk you through it now, or you can look at this information later.”
- ◆ “Even just checking your status can be a helpful first step.”
- ◆ “There’s no pressure. We’re here as a resource whenever you need it.”
- ◆ “Would it help if I showed you where to find official information?”

IF SOMEONE RAISES CONCERNS ABOUT SAFETY OR PRIVACY

- ◆ “That’s a really valid question, and you’re not alone in asking it.”
- ◆ “Your registration information is used only to confirm your eligibility and assign your polling place.”
- ◆ “We can connect you directly to trusted, government-run websites.”
- ◆ “You only provide the information required by your state to register.”
- ◆ “You can always review the process first before deciding to move forward.”

IF SOMEONE EXPRESSES FEAR OR DISTRUST

- ◆ “I hear you, and it’s completely understandable to feel that way.”
- ◆ “Our role is just to provide information so you can make your own decision.”
- ◆ “You don’t have to decide today. You can take your time.”
- ◆ “If it’s helpful, I can share resources you can review privately.”
- ◆ “We’re here to support, not to pressure.”

IF SOMEONE DECLINES

- ◆ “No problem at all. Thanks for taking a moment to chat.”
- ◆ “If you change your mind, we’re always here as a resource.”
- ◆ “Feel free to take this information with you.”
- ◆ “Have a great day, and thanks again for your time.”
- ◆ “We appreciate you stopping by.”



KEY TIPS FOR REGISTRATION CONVERSATIONS

STAYING NONPARTISAN

To celebrate National Voter Registration Day, your organization must remain nonpartisan, so be sure in your conversations to avoid promoting or opposing any candidates or parties. It's also important to keep materials, messaging, and events neutral. Remind voters that you are there to help everyone, including first-time voters and newly naturalized citizens—regardless of background, beliefs, or party—to register to vote.

HANDLING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Difficult and partisan turns in the conversation are inevitable; the best way to navigate them is to be confident, honest, and to redirect respectfully. Affirm voter sentiments and questions by listening instead of engaging in debate or pointed questioning. Some voters, especially those registering for the first time, may raise questions they have about how the process works, so offer reassurance and clear next steps. For questions around specific state elections, refer to official sources: vote.gov, nass.org/Can-I-Vote, or local election offices. And be sure to avoid giving any legal advice by sending voters to these resources for more information.



FURTHER RESOURCES FOR TALKING TO POTENTIAL VOTERS

[Nonprofit VOTE Webinar: How to Talk About the Value of Voting - Connecting to Everyday Life](#)

[The Right Question Institute's "Why Vote?" Tool](#)

[Join the Welcoming Network](#)