Voter Registration Event "How-To"

Holding in-person voter registration events is a great way to build support in your community for voting. Nonpartisan organizations like National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) can register voters without jeopardizing their tax-exempt statuses.

If it feels safe to hold an in-person event in your community, this resource contains everything you need to hold a successful voter registration event:

Get to know your state and local election laws.
The most important part of registering people to vote is to familiarize yourself with your state and local voter registration laws. Some states/counties require people registering voters to register with the state in advance, print official paperwork, turn in registration forms within a certain timeframe, etc. Research your local election laws well in advance of the event in case items need to be mailed or approved by a state or county office before you can register others. Ensure you know the proper guidelines for registering voters and filling out paperwork. Registration forms are often thrown out if certain procedures are not followed. If you have questions about the rules where you live, you can contact your local Supervisor of Elections or visit your state's Secretary of State website.

Set a goal.
Set a registration goal for your event and evaluate your event after it's over to identify best practices and where to improve. Do you want to register 50 people? Have each volunteer register 3 people? There are no right answers — think about what makes sense for your community and level of experience.

Plan event logistics.
Consider the following when planning your voting registration event:

- *Accessibility.* Keep in mind practicalities like parking or public transportation. Make sure the location is completely accessible to people with disabilities, be they volunteers or registrants.
- *Location.* Select a space big enough to accommodate volunteers and close to people interested in registering to vote. Think about holding the voter registration event near voters you want to register, like college campuses or a concert venue.
- *Technology.* If your state offers online voter registration, then consider bringing laptops or tablets to your event.
- *Timing.* Think about reserving the space for multiple hours, to give people with different work and childcare schedules a chance to attend. Build set-up and clean-up time into your plans. Consider joining existing community events, like a July 4 parade or fall festival.
- *Volunteers.* Given your goal, how many volunteers do you need to make it happen?

Invite partners.
Asking groups to co-sponsor your voter registration event is a great way to divide tasks and costs, as well as boost turnout. Think both about groups with whom you already have a great working relationship, and about groups with whom you want to get to know. Given the impact of voter suppression tactics on communities of color, consider working with organizations led by people of color.

Get voter registration forms.
If you're registering people by hand, then you will need voter registration forms. Many states allow you to download voter registration forms from the Secretary of State website or local board of elections websites. You can also go in person to your local board of elections to pick up forms and other paperwork. After your event, return the completed voter registration forms as soon as possible to the local board of elections or county registrar, or drop them in the mail. This is where knowing your state's voter registration rules is important! Different states have different rules; if you have questions, call your local Supervisor of Elections.

If registering voters online using an iPad or laptop, use NCJW's unique voter registration tool:

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Collect supplies.

You may need all or some of the following for your event:

- Voter registration forms
- Laptop/tablets
- Clipboards
- Pens
- Box for completed forms
- Table with NCJW signage
- Nonpartisan sign
- Swag
- Music/speakers (just for fun!)
- Water/snacks for volunteers

Invite people to your event.

Get out the word in person and online.

- *Create a Facebook Event*

  To publicize your event and encourage substantial turnout, it is critical you create a Facebook event early on and share it widely. Invite event partners as co-hosts on the page and be sure to share the event link in emails and newsletters.

  To create an event on Facebook:
    - From your News Feed, click Events in the left menu.
    - Click + Create Event on the left side.
    - Fill in the event name, location, date, time, and description.
    - Click Create. You will be taken to your event where you can invite guests, upload photos, add a cover photo or video, share posts, and edit event details.

  Use this sample text*: Is this your first election? Have you moved recently? Not sure you're still registered to vote? If you answered YES to any of these questions, swing by [location] for a National Council of Jewish Women voter registration event on [date] from [time]. Volunteers will be registering people to vote while rocking out to fun music and giving away stickers and candy. Your vote is your voice – make sure*

it's heard in [year]!

Use sample Image below

- *Invite NCJW Members and Advocates*
  Sample email:
  Dear [name],

  Our voice is our vote! On [time and date], National Council of Jewish Women [Section name] is holding a voter registration event to register members of our community members to vote.

  Come by on [date], at [time] at [location] to register to vote or update your voter registration information. Or, volunteer to help register others! RSVP on the Facebook event, *linked here*. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, contact [contact name and info].

[Include location details and anything participants should bring].

Hope to see you at [location] on [date]. With your help, we can make sure our democracy reflects our communities.

Best,
[name]

Train your volunteers.
Make sure your volunteers know what to do at your event. This section borrows from Rock the Vote's voter registration event training.

- *Welcome your volunteers.* Consider a few icebreakers to ease introductions. Share your goals for the event and make sure everyone knows how important their work and time is for its success.
- *Review the form.* Walk through how to fill out the voter registration form. Point out common mistakes that they should keep an eye on: 1) forgetting to sign the form, 2) entering today's date and registrant's birthday in the wrong place, and 3) failing to provide a full driver's license or the last four digits of a Social Security number.
- *Strategies for Engaging Registrants.* Give tips for engaging with potential registrants: 1) Everyone should ask "Are you registered to vote at your current address?" 2) Do not sit or stand behind the table — move around and engage people if possible. 3) Look like you're having fun, or even better, have fun!
- *Divide and conquer.* Determine who will bring what to the event, when to meet, who will clean up, and who is responsible for the completed voter registration forms.
- *Say thanks!* No event can succeed without volunteers.

Hold your event!
Be sure to arrive at least an hour early to set up your area. Communicate any changes or reminders to volunteers. Then get to work and have fun! Take photos of your volunteers, play music, and hold engaging conversations. After the event, say thanks to your volunteers (emailing a thank you after is a great idea too!), and if planning another voter registration event, ask them to help again.

Be sure to turn in your completed voter registration forms to the appropriate local official as soon as possible after your event.

Debrief and report-out.
Hold a debrief session with your volunteers after your event to discuss what went well and what could be improved for future events. Capture your discussion in writing so it can be shared with future volunteer teams. Last, report your success to your Section, board, and NCJW, Inc. via Faith Williams at fwilliams@ncjw.org.