



# Voter Registration Drive: A How-To Guide

Election Day is quickly approaching, and we're excited that you've decided to get involved and host a registration event! In this toolkit, you'll find important information about hosting an event in your community with CAI's online voter registration tool, so that people can register themselves to vote. Here's an overview of our step-by-step guide:

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## BEFORE YOUR EVENT

### 1. Lock in Your Logistics

**Will you have Wi-Fi?** CAI's online voter registration tool requires an internet connection. It's mobile-friendly, so you can use cellphones, but having a few devices—ideally, tablets—connected to the Internet with CAI's tool bookmarked ([www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration](http://www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration)) is ideal. Alternatively, you can print off copies of your state's voter registration form and offer to mail them on the participant's behalf.

**Where and when will you host your event?** Areas with high foot traffic are ideal. Here are some suggestions:

- People are most likely to register when they're killing time as they wait in line!
- Set up a table in a high-traffic area: common areas, pools, golf courses, and other areas where residents visit often!

### 2. Set Goals

You should have the following goals in mind:

- Providing CAI's online registration tool ([www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration](http://www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration)) to people so they can register themselves to vote or update their registration status.
- Having conversations with people about the issues you/they care about, as a way to continue building relationships in your community (check out [www.caionline.org/AdvocacyPriorities](http://www.caionline.org/AdvocacyPriorities) for ideas!)

Based on your community and your voter registration event, you can brainstorm and set additional goals in advance!

### 3. Build Your Team

Organizers work best in teams, so think about people who can help you with your voter registration event and how many people you'll need. If you'll be in the same location for a few hours, you can schedule a few shifts and follow up with your fellow



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volunteers. Make sure that you have enough people to work at your table, reach out to the passerby, canvass a line, bring snacks/tables/chairs, and more.

- **Ask your neighbors or board to help you out.** Tell them what you're doing and explain

why it's important to the community!

- **Reach out to local organizations.** Civic and volunteer organizations in your community can put you in touch with people looking to register voters.

- **Get online.** Be sure to post about your event on social media! By engaging with people and offering volunteer opportunities online, you can expand your reach and connect with new people who want to help with your event.

### 4. Set Up Your Supplies

Try to get your supplies together in advance in order to have a streamlined and fun registration drive. Here's what you'll need:

**Online Registration Tool:** Make sure all phones, tablets, and computers are charged and ready to go, and bookmark [www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration](http://www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration) for quick access on all your devices.

**Setting Up Your Spot:** Depending on your event, here are some additional supplies you may want to gather.

- A table and chairs
- Sign-in sheets and pens for folks who would like to get involved and volunteer at future events
- Posters, banners, and signs that say "Register to Vote Here"
- Bring your gear! Consider asking everyone on your team to wear the same color shirt, so that you can easily keep track of one another.
- Snacks for your group! It's always great to have water bottles and some granola bars on hand to keep volunteers in high spirits.
- If you have permission from your association board, be sure to bring it with you in case you need it.

### 5. Publicize Your Event

The tools and networks you utilize every day are the best places to start. Social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, will help you spread the word. Publicizing your



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event will help recruit volunteers and let potential voters know where they can go to register. If the registration drive is at a school, tell the campus newspaper and radio station what you are up to. Get a local radio station to come broadcast from your registration event. Other local media outlets may be interested, too. They just need to know your event is happening!

### 6. Train Your Volunteers

Whether it's at a designated team meeting or 30 minutes before the event, you'll need to train your volunteers to run through CAI's online voter registration tool and best practices with your volunteers! Make sure your volunteers feel valued and create an environment where you're able to motivate each other.

Here are a few things you can do to get the ball rolling:

- **Introductions:** Icebreakers are a good opportunity for everyone to get to know each other and laugh together. Ask about each person's reason for participating in the registration drive! You can motivate each other and potential registrants by telling them your reason and asking for theirs.

- **Hand out materials:** Give everyone their tablets, mobile devices, or computers with CAI's registration tool bookmarked:

[www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration](http://www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration).

- **Explain how to register voters.**

- o Everyone should ask: "Are you registered to vote at your current address?" If the person walking by says yes, ask them if they are sure that they have registered since the last time they moved.

- o Explain how to wrap up a person's registration process: "Thanks for registering to vote! If you have any further questions, you can call your Secretary of State!"

- **Do a demo.** Have your volunteers roleplay by registering each other to vote, and go through some of the FAQs that are at the end of this guide.

- **Set a goal for each person and the group.** Remember to make them realistic. If volunteers are fanning out into different areas, make sure everyone comes back to a central meeting place at the same time.

### 7. Confirm Your Logistics

The day before your event, make sure to confirm the logistics with your venue or host



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organization! Additionally, call your volunteers to confirm their attendance and doublecheck that you have all the supplies you'll need. Take one more look at the Sample Script and Answers to FAQs found at the end of this guide, and make sure that you're ready for the big event! **You've got this.**

## DURING YOUR EVENT

### 1. Set Up Your Spot

Game on. You've locked down the when and where. You've posted the event on Facebook. You've recruited the volunteers you need. The voter registration forms and supplies are stacked neatly in your home, office, or car trunk. Today is the big event. What now?

- Arrive an hour – yes, one hour! – before your event starts.
- Lay out your supplies and make your spot look sweet! Set up your signs, lay out your buttons, and rock your t-shirts.
- Have volunteers arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of the event.

### 2. Use Social Media

Take lots of photos and videos during your event to post on social media! As the event starts, post about it on your social media accounts. Remember to follow the guidelines from our **Social Media Guide** and have fun.

### 3. Be Proactive and Engage with People

Make sure that you have all hands are on deck – stand up and engage with people, don't just sit behind your table. Circulate through the area you're set up in and make it easy for passerby to engage with you.

*Tip: When you start talking to someone, hand them a tablet/device right away. Many people will instinctively begin to fill it out the form!*

### 4. Stay Nonpartisan

Remember that CAI is a nonpartisan organization. This means that neither you nor your volunteers can endorse or denounce a candidate or party. You must register anyone who wants to vote, regardless of their political preference.

### 5. Ask People to Get Involved

CAI is dedicated to fulfilling a key promise of our democracy: ensuring that every eligible American is not only empowered to vote—but feels the importance of doing so. If the



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people you meet share your passion for this project, ask them to join you in volunteering. Take their information down and follow up!

### **AFTER YOUR EVENT**

#### **1. Thank Your Volunteers**

Make sure to thank your volunteers, debrief and celebrate their work, and make plans for the next event. Be excited and end on a high note!

The key to getting volunteers to keep coming back is to make them realize that they had an impact. The key to making them feel like they had an impact is to set realistic expectations. Generally, an average volunteer registers 3-5 voters an hour at a heavily trafficked place. Sometimes less. *Not only is that perfectly okay, but it is also a huge deal!* Let

your volunteers know this, especially if they feel like they “*only* got four people to register.” Because of their hard work, four new people can vote. That is huge. People fight wars and die for that right, and you just gave it to someone.

#### **2. Follow Up with CAI**

If you haven't figured it out, voter registration is a pretty big deal. We want to highlight your work and use it to inspire other people from around the country to register voters FOR their community. Make sure to upload photos/videos from your event and tag us!

#### **3. Plan Your Next Event!**

Start getting ready for your next voter registration drive! Announce the next event and sign people up for it. Ask your volunteers from this event to join you again – even if they can't commit, always leave them with a next “touch point” in which you will reach out to them again.



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## VOTER REGISTRATION SCRIPT

**Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm with (Community Name) and an advocate with CAI. Are you currently registered to vote?**

**IF YES** – That's great! Have you moved or changed your name since the last time you voted?

**IF YES, I'VE MOVED/CHANGED NAME** – I can help you update your voter registration

right now! It will only take a minute, and it will ensure that you're able to vote on Election Day. Let's get started at [www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration](http://www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration). You can use my phone/tablet/computer to fill out the form, or if you have your own, you can register on your own device.

**IF NO** – Thanks! Can I answer any questions about the upcoming election? Don't forget to vote in the midterm election on November 8<sup>th</sup>!

**IF NO** – Let's get you registered! It's quick and easy. Can I help sign you up now and make sure your voice is heard this election?

**IF YES** – Great! Let's get started at [www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration](http://www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration). You can use my phone/tablet/computer to fill out the form, or if you have your own, you can register on your own device.

**IF NO** – Okay! If you change your mind, you can always register or check out resources at [www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration](http://www.votervoice.net/CAI/voterregistration). Have a great day.

**IF THEY HAVE A QUESTION** – See the answers to frequently asked voting questions on the next page.

**CLOSING** – Thanks for registering to vote! Remember to verify your voter registration status within the next few weeks to make sure that you're on the voter rolls.



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## ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Why should I register?**

You can't vote if you don't register, and most states have voter registration deadlines that occur long before Election Day. So even if you haven't decided whom you're voting for or even *if* you're voting, you should register now so you will be able to vote on Election Day.

### **Why should I vote?**

Great question! There are many reasons why a person votes and yours may be different from anyone else's, but voting is an essential part of our democracy. We elect representatives to enact laws on our behalf and the only way to voice who represents you is to cast a ballot. Also, many issues come up on the ballot that you are allowed to directly vote on like the freedom to marry, how much you pay in taxes, where they put a landfill/build a stadium, and much more.

### **I don't like either candidate, so I'm not going to vote.**

You should still vote! There are other important local, state and federal elections to vote for. You don't need to choose a presidential candidate to vote in other key races.

### **When do I vote?**

The General Election is November 8<sup>th</sup>. But, elections happen all the time. You know the big one: the presidential election every four years and even more happening at the state, county and city level. (Think Governor, Sherriff, or Mayor) Check out [www.votervoice.net/CAI/candidates](http://www.votervoice.net/CAI/candidates) to find out what's happening in your area.

### **I don't believe in voting.**

Everyone's entitled to their opinions and beliefs. I'd encourage you to vote based on the issues you care about and think about how casting a ballot might change that.

### **Which address do I use?**

Use the address where you reside and intend to vote.





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## **Who's on the ballot?**

Ballots vary by location. I can show you the upcoming elections now at [www.votervoice.net/CAI/Candidates](http://www.votervoice.net/CAI/Candidates) or contact your local officials for more information.

## **Does my vote even count?**

Yes! It may sound cliché but every vote matters. Think of it this way: the only vote that doesn't matter is the one that was never cast. Make your voice heard – don't let other voters decide the election results for you!

**How can I check my voter registration status?** Contact your county elections office or your state election official. They can confirm if you are registered, and at which address.

**Can I register to vote at my college or university address?** Yes. Even if you are already registered at home, we encourage you to register at school. You are much more likely to vote.

**Can I register to vote using a P.O. Box as my address?** No, you must provide a valid place of residence as your address on your voter registration application.

**My address has changed. Do I need to re-register?** Yes. Each part of the state has its own unique candidates and measures on the ballot. Simply fill out a new application form, and re-register at your new address.

**I want to vote, but I will not be in my home precinct on Election Day. Can I still vote?**

Absolutely. Go to the state website for details on getting an absentee ballot from your state.

**If I register to vote, am I going to be called for jury duty?** Juror lists are created from a variety of state databases, including lists of taxpayers and drivers – so if you have a driver's license or pay taxes, you are still on the state's list of eligible jurors. Don't give up your right to vote to avoid jury duty!



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**I do not have a permanent residence because I am homeless. Can I still register and vote?** Yes, you are still eligible to register and vote. You may use the address of where you sleep as the place of residence on your voter registration application.

**Where do I vote?** Where you vote depends on where you live. Your state elections office should have precinct locations posted online in advance of Election Day.