



# Engaging Reform Jewish Voters

The Reform Movement's  
2020 Internal Voter  
Engagement Toolkit

Cover photos courtesy of Chris Rylee (top and bottom), and Ralph Alvsang (middle).

# Introduction to Voter Engagement, Voter Registration, and Voter Turnout Within Our Jewish Community

**As Reform Jews, we believe democracy is strongest when everyone participates—and it suffers when citizens are shut out from the democratic process or choose not to engage.**

Nonpartisan civic engagement work is one way that we fulfill the sacred mandate of *tikkun olam*, world repair, and ensure that our enduring values are represented in the public square.

To realize our goal of building a more just and compassionate world, Every Voice, Every Vote: The Reform Movement's 2020 Civic Engagement Campaign will encourage all U.S. citizens to exercise their right to vote, and work to break down obstacles that shut some out of the voting booth.

This campaign seeks to mobilize the entire Reform Jewish community—be it through a congregation, a NFTY region, sisterhood, a camp community, or campus activism. We know our Movement is strongest when we act together.

If you believe that civic engagement is important for the Jewish community, we want you with us.

**Use this voter engagement toolkit to help your community plan its strategy for meaningful, Jewish, nonpartisan civic engagement in 2020.**

## A Note about COVID-19 and Its Impact on Civic Engagement Work:

Every Voice, Every Vote: The Reform Movement's 2020 Civic Engagement Campaign has been planned for two years. But over the past few weeks, we've witnessed North America and the world change in ways we never could have expected. COVID-19 has spread through cities and towns, sown uncertainty and fear within our communities, and forced widespread social distancing. Our current circumstances highlight the critical role that elected officials play at every level of government. Their leadership matters more than ever during challenging times such as this one. Elections are the opportunity to select the people who not only determine the policies that we care about, but also serve as the civic leaders we turn to in moments of crisis. In light of this, our civic engagement work is more urgent than ever.

This toolkit was built to provide a range of tools for Reform Jewish communities to facilitate civic engagement and bolster voter turnout in all communities. Some of the recommendations in this resource require or suggest in-person communication and contact. **While we hope that this becomes possible between now and November, you should always follow the guidance of public health officials and abide by any "shelter in place" or social distancing guidance.** Many parts of civic engagement work can easily be done from home, including phone and text banking, and relational organizing using the Empower app. The RAC already provides much of its civic engagement training and resources virtually, through webinars and content on our website. We have also made our pledge cards digital this year.

As we move into an unknown future together, we encourage you and members of your community to utilize this resource to the best of your ability, be creative and constructive, adapt its concepts and core goals, and look forward to a world in which the opportunities in this toolkit reflect the reality we're in—one where we can be together in person to support and encourage one another and where exercising the right to vote is an exciting demonstration of agency to secure a better, more just world for everyone. We're here to help.

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction to Voter Engagement</b>	<b>6</b>
Why does voter engagement work matter?	6
What is Jewish about voter engagement?	6
How can Reform Jewish communities carry out voter engagement work?	6
Engaging young and first-time voters	7
Voter engagement work across lines of difference	7
Let the RAC know about your voter engagement efforts	7
Staying nonpartisan	7
<b>Voter Registration</b>	<b>8</b>
Introduction to voter registration	8
Who can do voter registration?	9
Organizing voter registration events	9
Preparing for your voter registration event	9
At your voter registration event	11
Following your voter registration event	12
Tabling in your broader community	13
<b>Voter Turnout</b>	<b>14</b>
Introduction to voter turnout	14
Principles to guide voter turnout efforts	14
Using the Empower app	18
Organizing a phone bank	18
Preparing for your phone bank	18
During your phone bank	19
Following your phone bank	20
Organizing a text message bank	21
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>22</b>
Appendix A: Voting laws in your state	22
Appendix B: Sample voter registration script	23
Appendix C: Voter registration frequently asked questions	25
Appendix D: Sample phone bank script	27
Appendix E: What voters want to know	29
Appendix F: Sample voter contact spreadsheet	31

# Introduction to Voter Engagement

## ■ Why does voter engagement work matter?

Each person is an agent of change. By driving civic participation through nonpartisan voter engagement, we are acting on our belief that our democracy is strongest when everyone can and does participate, regardless of party or politics. The goal of nonpartisan voter engagement is *not* to elect particular candidates or parties, but rather to encourage every eligible citizen to vote and ensure that they are able to do so.

Elected officials also pay attention to voter turnout. Mobilizing our communities to vote will help gain better access to elected officials and increased clout, putting us in a stronger position to advocate for the issues we care about. Voters are also more likely to stay civically engaged. As community members are mobilized to vote, leaders often emerge and strengthen our ability to work on important issues in the future.<sup>1</sup> Finally, when we act together as a movement, our strength increases exponentially.

The Reform Movement has long been committed to protecting and elevating the right to vote as the cornerstone of our democracy. By engaging voters in our broader communities and working across lines of difference, we can help ensure that all people have access to the ballot box—and the knowledge and tools necessary to vote. For more information on voter engagement in the broader community and combatting voter suppression, [please use the Combating Voter Suppression toolkit](#).

## ■ What is Jewish about voter engagement?

As the Reform Movement works to fulfill the sacred mandate of *tikkun olam*, world repair, voter engagement is essential. As Jews and Americans, we have an obligation to participate in elections to ensure that policies at the local, state and national levels bring us closer to achieving our vision of a world where all people experience wholeness, justice, and compassion. Rabbi Yitzhak taught, “A ruler is not to be appointed unless the community is first consulted” (Talmud, Brakhot 55a). To ensure that our voices and commitment to social justice are heard in the public sphere, we must educate ourselves on the voting process, register, and show up at the polls. We also have a responsibility to engage across lines of difference and ensure that access to voting is a reality for all.

## ■ How can Reform Jewish communities carry out voter engagement work?

As part of the Reform Movement’s 2020 Civic Engagement Campaign, we are encouraging and supporting Reform Jews to lead nonpartisan voter education, registration, and turnout initiatives, including committing to becoming 100 percent voting communities. Resources including suggested activities, program tips, and sample materials to engage in this work and move toward achieving the goal of 100 percent voting are outlined in this toolkit, and include:

- Promoting and conducting voter registration (helping people register for the first time or update their registration)

---

<sup>1</sup> “Seven Reasons to do Voter Registration,” Nonprofit VOTE

- Educating community members on the importance of voting and the voting process
- Employing strategies to encourage and increase voter turnout
- [Using the Empower app](#) to track and organize your voter engagement efforts
- Engaging young and first-time voters, on which more information can be found in [the Reform Movement’s Student Voters Addendum](#)
- A Reform Jewish community may also consider partnering with organizations to register and turnout voters in the broader community, including working across lines of difference. Resources to assist your community in doing this work can be found in [the Reform Movement’s Combating Voter Suppression toolkit](#).

## ■ Engaging young and first-time voters

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, people ages 18-24-years-old consistently vote at lower rates than all other age groups.<sup>2</sup> In the 2014 and 2016 elections respectively, only 19.9 percent and 50 percent of *registered* young voters voted. For more information about engaging young and first-time voters, use [the Reform Movement’s Student Voters Addendum](#).

## ■ Voter engagement work across lines of difference

We know that the electorate—the part of the population that votes—is not representative of our country: It is older and whiter than the general population. But politicians in both parties are most responsive to the concerns of those who vote, meaning that the needs of young people and people of color do not carry as much weight. For more information about engaging voters in the broader community, [use the Reform Movement’s Combating Voter Suppression toolkit](#).

## ■ Let the RAC know about your voter engagement efforts

We are most powerful when we work together, and with the full force of the Reform Movement behind this Civic Engagement Campaign, our impact grows exponentially. We want to celebrate your community’s work and make sure it is counted as part of our Movement’s overall efforts. Let us know about your voter engagement efforts by [submitting this short form](#).

## ■ Staying nonpartisan

As a 501(c)(3) organization, the Religious Action Center’s civic engagement work is nonpartisan, and it is important that your Reform Jewish community also remains nonpartisan while doing voter registration and engagement work, regardless of its status. For more information and general guidelines, refer to the Reform Movement’s [“The Do’s and Don’ts of Civic Engagement Work: Rules for Non-Profits”](#) resource.

---

<sup>2</sup> “Young-Adult Voting: An Analysis of Presidential Elections, 1964–2012,” U.S. Census Bureau

# Voter Registration

## ■ Introduction to voter registration

Before people can cast their votes in an election, nearly every state in the nation requires them to register. Every election, citizens are barred from voting because they miss the registration deadline or neglect to re-register upon moving. According to the Census Bureau, more than 20 percent of eligible voters were not registered to vote in 2014.<sup>3</sup> Studies have shown that simply registering individuals to vote and providing them with relevant resources increases actual turnout.<sup>4</sup> Because voting is habit-forming, helping people register and reminding them to vote in one election dramatically increases the likelihood that they'll vote in future elections.<sup>5</sup>

Reform Jews can help ensure the voices and values of people in their community are heard through voter registration efforts. Below are some suggestions for ways to do this in your Reform Jewish community:

- Run a voter registration drive or [event](#)
- Celebrate [National Voter Registration Day](#) on September 22, 2020
- Celebrate Sukkot by hosting a registration drive or voter pledge party in your sukkah. Use the Reform Movement's [Festival of \(Voting\) Booths resource](#).
- Send voter registration materials to members of your congregation by email or in the mail. You may choose to specifically target young members and new members. (They may not be registered if they recently moved to your town.)
- Put up flyers about registration or advertise in your newsletter or on [social media](#).
- Set up a space in your congregation's lobby or community's common space with voter registration materials, instructions, and a box for completed forms. Be sure your instructions include a sample registration form with required fields highlighted.
- Talk about registering to vote at a staff, board, or other meeting in your Jewish community.
- Run an educational program on the importance of civic engagement and its connection to Judaism including information on voter registration. A sample voter engagement program for youth programs can be found on [the Reform Movement's Student Voters page](#).
- If your community runs a regular Torah or text study group, devote one session to the importance of civic engagement and its connection to Judaism. [Find resources to help](#).
- If your community sends birthday cards to its members, include voter registration materials for people turning ages from 18 to 25.

---

<sup>3</sup> "Why Are Millions of Citizens Not Registered to Vote?" Pew Charitable Trusts

<sup>4</sup> Gerber, Alan S and Green, Donald P. Get Out The Vote. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2015. (139)

<sup>5</sup> "Seven Reasons to do Voter Registration," Nonprofit VOTE

- If your community sends care packages to college students, include vote-by-mail materials.
- Put up a bulletin board in your congregation that people can sign once they've registered to vote. This helps create positive social pressure and promotes registration to others.

Registering new voters is an important first step to voting but on its own is not enough to ensure people vote. Voter registration efforts should be followed by voter turnout strategies, including repeated contact with people before the election. [Read the Voter Turnout section](#) of this toolkit for more information on how to effectively follow up on your registration efforts.

However your community conducts its voter registration work, you will need to access voter registration forms for your state. These can be obtained at your local election office or state election website. [Learn how to access yours.](#)

As a matter of both principle and nonprofit tax law if you are a 501(c)(3) organization, your Reform Jewish community must remain nonpartisan while doing voter registration work. This means that your congregation or community cannot promote or oppose specific parties or candidates. For more information and general guidelines, refer to the Reform Movement's ["The Do's and Don'ts of Civic Engagement Work: Rules for Non-Profits"](#) resource.

## ■ Who can do voter registration?

In most states, you do not have to be 18 to help register others to vote. Because research shows that the messenger is more important than the message itself when convincing people to vote, young people can be the most effective messengers in reaching out to their peers to encourage and help them register to vote.<sup>6</sup>

## ■ Organizing voter registration events

One way to register voters is to host voter registration events to demystify the registration process, focus communal energy on the privilege and responsibility of voting, and provide information about voting in advance of Election Day. This section of the toolkit includes some ideas and things to keep in mind when planning a voter registration event. Some of these suggestions are specific to registering voters in your Reform Jewish community, but many can be applied to any voter registration effort. For more information about registering voters in the broader community, [use the Reform Movement's Combating Voter Suppression toolkit.](#)

## ■ Preparing for your voter registration event:

- **Where and when to register voters:** Conduct voter registration in a highly trafficked area at a popular time, such as during religious school drop-off or at a youth event. Studies have found that voters who register closer to the election are more likely to vote.<sup>7</sup> While registration promotion and drives can take place at any time of year, consider holding your biggest registration event in the weeks leading up to your state's deadline. If you can, offer

---

<sup>6</sup> Gerber, Alan S and Green, Donald P. *Get Out The Vote*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2015. (99)

<sup>7</sup> "A Voter Participation Starter Kit," Nonprofit VOTE

voter registration a few times; you may choose to host one larger kickoff program or event and then hold smaller scale registration tables over the course of a month. Closer to the election follow up with people you registered earlier in the year. For more information on organizing voter turnout efforts, read the [turnout section of this toolkit](#).

- **Gather and train volunteers:** In addition to the leader/small group of leaders organizing your voter registration efforts, you will want help from additional volunteers. This not only helps get the work done but helps engage and mobilize people within your community around civic engagement work and the more people you have, the more voters you can register! Recruit a diverse group of volunteers with a variety of skill sets. If you are working in your congregation, try to have volunteers from every corner of your congregation including the social action/justice team, youth group, sisterhood or brotherhood, board, and religious school. Provide training to your volunteers prior to your registration events, especially in states where this is a requirement. A sample training agenda may include: [rooting voter engagement in Jewish values through a text study](#), [why voting/registering to vote is important](#), [staying nonpartisan](#) and [knowing state laws](#), how to fill out a registration form, [doing a role play using a script](#), [knowing how to answer common questions](#), and getting motivated.<sup>8</sup>
- **Gather supplies:** Make sure you have everything you need for your voter registration drive. This may include: voter registration forms, [sample scripts](#) and handouts with [answers to frequently asked questions](#), clipboards, pens, a box for completed forms and other fun giveaways, such as stickers or pens.
- **Promote your event:** Create a flyer that can be sent via email, posted on bulletin boards at your congregation or campus, and distributed more widely, in coffee shops and public meeting spaces in your community. Use our [social media tips](#), [graphics](#), and [#ReformJewsVote](#) to post about the event and ask your partners and people in your community to share the posts with their networks as well. Encourage people to be ambassadors for your event by asking them to invite their personal networks, either through email, phone calls, social media posts, or in-person meetings. Consider contacting your local paper or radio station and letting them know about the event, too.
- **Know your state's voter registration laws:** Each state has different laws regarding voting, especially around holding voter registration drives. Learn more about the [specific laws in your state](#).

---

<sup>8</sup> "United Way Voter Engagement Toolkit," United Way Worldwide

## ■ At your voter registration event:

- **Set up your table:** In addition to your table, chairs, and voter registration materials, make your space welcoming by decorating with posters and red, white, and blue balloons, and/or streamers and by playing music. You may also want to bring a camera and have other activities available, such as a voting-themed photobooth ([have people hold this sign when taking pictures](#)), or a bulletin board or poster people can sign once they register to vote. Display the poster somewhere prominent like the synagogue lobby, and share it on social media.
- **Make the event Jewish:** Civic participation is a Jewish value, and voter mobilization research shows that people are more likely to participate when they are contacted by someone they know. People are especially responsive to appeals from a friend, neighbor, or community organization they know and trust.<sup>9</sup> Connect your event and the importance of registering to our enduring Jewish values by using [this resource created by Reform rabbis](#).
- **Register people to vote:** Encourage voters to register in person at your table so you can check the form to make sure it is filled out correctly, and so you can be sure the form gets submitted. Some states allow people to register online, so having a tablet or laptop at the table will make this easier. Check in advance if your state allows [online registration](#); sometimes registration can be done entirely [online](#), while other states allow the form to be filled out online and then be printed out and mailed. If your state requires the form to be printed, be sure to have a printer ready at your registration station. You should also have paper voter registration forms available; find them through [your local election office or state election website](#). Paper forms also ensure you receive the registrants' names, addresses, and phone numbers so you can stay in contact close to the election. (Refer to [this guide on filling out and returning voter registration forms from Nonprofit Vote](#) to learn how to properly complete registration forms.) Keep all completed forms together so that you can submit the forms after the event.
- **Have a script:** Use [this sample script](#) to help guide your conversation about voter registration. When finalizing your own script, always tailor your message to your target audience.
- **Know the answers to commonly asked questions:** People are more likely to register at your table if you can answer their questions. In the [Voter Registration Frequently Asked Questions section](#) of this toolkit, you will find answers to some of the most common questions people receive while registering voters.
- **Verify existing voter registration:** People may not know if they are registered to vote, or may need to update their registration if they've recently moved. Have a computer available for people to check their status using [this tool from the National Association of Secretaries of State](#). Also remind people they need to re-register to vote at their new address if they have moved.

---

<sup>9</sup> "A Voter Participation Starter Kit," Nonprofit VOTE

- **Engage with people who have already registered:** Many people you will talk to will already be registered to vote. Make sure you have an additional way for them to engage, such as voter pledge cards, or be ready to hand them information about the upcoming election or other civic engagement events your community is hosting. Encourage people to [fill out the Reform Movement's virtual pledge card](#) or [order physical pledge cards](#) to have filled out by hand.
- **Stay nonpartisan:** As a matter of principle and of the law for 501(c)(3) non-profits, while registering voters Reform Jewish congregations and communities may not suggest a candidate to support, which party to join, or how to vote. Volunteers and staff may not wear a candidate's button or apparel; they may however, explain the difference between joining a party and registering without party affiliation.<sup>10</sup> For more information, read the Reform Movement's ["Do's and Don'ts of Civic Engagement Work: Rules for Non-Profits"](#) resource.
- **Keep track of who shows up:** Keep track of everyone with whom you engage, even if they didn't need to register, and collect their contact information to be used later in your voter turnout efforts. Ideas on how to do this can be found in our ["Planning your Community's Civic Engagement Work"](#) resource.
- **Promote voter turnout:** Take advantage of speaking with people in person and remind them to vote. The more personal an interaction, the more it raises a person's chances of voting.<sup>11</sup> Have information available at your table to educate potential voters on the voting process, including when, where, and how to vote, or have them [fill out the Reform Movement's virtual pledge card](#) or [sign physical voter pledge cards](#). This may also be a good time to recruit more volunteers for your community's voter turnout activities over the coming weeks. Learn more about how to promote and conduct voter turnout by reading the [Voter Turnout](#) section of this toolkit.

## ■ Following your voter registration event:

- **Thank your volunteers:** Take time to appreciate the people who took time out of their day to help with your voter registration event and let them know what an impact they've made.
- **Turn in registration forms:** Make sure you turn in completed registration forms to the registrant's local election office promptly. It is best to return the forms in person rather than by mail. Make sure to [check your state's turn-in policies](#) following voter registration, drives as many have required deadlines from when the form is signed and dated.
- **Let the the Reform Movement know how your event went:** We are more powerful when we work together, and with the full force of the Reform Movement behind our civic engagement campaign, our impact grows exponentially. Let the RAC know how your voter registration event went by [submitting this short form](#).

---

<sup>10</sup> "United Way Voter Engagement Toolkit," United Way Worldwide

<sup>11</sup> Gerber, Alan S and Green, Donald P. Get Out The Vote. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2015. (9)

- **Plan voter education and turnout efforts:** Voter registration is an important first step to voting and should be followed by encouraging those you registered to actually vote. Make sure to follow up your registration event(s) with voter education and turnout efforts, which you can learn more about in the [Voter Turnout section](#) of this toolkit.

## ■ **Tabling in the broader community**

Your community may also want to consider registering people who are not part of a Reform Jewish community. While the information in the above section still applies, more information about registering voters in the broader community can be found in [the Reform Movement's Combatting Voter Suppression toolkit](#).

# Voter Turnout

## ■ Introduction to voter turnout within our communities

As important as registering to vote is, a registered voter is not a guaranteed voter. In the 2016 election, nearly 40 percent of the 231 million eligible voters in the U.S. did not cast ballots.<sup>12</sup> Many registered voters still lack the confidence, knowledge, and habit of voting to take the time to participate in a given election. With some support, education, and encouragement, people are more likely to vote. When you encourage one person to vote, you increase the likelihood that others in their family or friend group will vote. Studies have also shown that voting is habit forming: casting a ballot for the first or second time can instill a lifelong voting habit.<sup>13</sup>

Reform Jewish communities can help ensure the voices and values of their community members are heard at the polls by leading turnout efforts, including educating voters on the voting process, encouraging them to vote, and ensuring they have a voting plan.

## ■ Principles to guide voter turnout efforts

**The more personal, the better:** The messenger matters. Voter mobilization research shows that people are more likely to participate when contacted personally, including by people associated with groups they trust—like your Reform Jewish community!<sup>14</sup> This is why the most effective get out the vote tactics are those that maximize human interaction and foster a sense of community and personal connection, whether this is face-to-face or over the phone.<sup>15</sup> This is also why once you reach one voter, your message is likely to spread and influence at least one additional person in their family or friend group.

**Repeated contact makes the difference:** Personal contact with a voter should occur multiple times. Studies show that phone calls from people who contact the same potential voters twice are especially effective at creating committed voters.<sup>16</sup> Keep in mind that attempting to contact a voter is different from actually doing so, meaning calling and getting a voicemail message does not count as a contact. Your voter turnout efforts should involve a plan to reach voters multiple times. For example: your first contact could be meeting someone at a voter registration table and having them [sign a physical voter pledge card](#) or [fill out the virtual pledge card](#) on a computer or phone, your second contact could involve speaking to them during a phone bank, your third contact could be mailing them back their pledge card to remind them of their commitment to vote and your fourth and final contact could be texting them right before Election Day reminding them to vote.

---

<sup>12</sup> "American Goes to the Polls 2016," Nonprofit VOTE

<sup>13</sup> "Outreach to 'Unlikely' Voters Creates Voters," Nonprofit VOTE

<sup>14</sup> "Seven Tips on Getting Out the Vote," Nonprofit VOTE

<sup>15</sup> "2014 GOTV Recommendations," Nalyst Institute LLC.

<sup>16</sup> "How to mobilize reluctant voters," Washington Post

**Keep track of who you contact:** It is important that from the start of your civic engagement work you keep track of every person you contact, the method by which you contact them, and the result. This is to enable you to reach people who haven't yet been contacted and follow up with people you already contacted so that you have sustained communication with them. One way to do this is with the [Empower app](#), a platform designed to engaged voters. You could also use a shareable spreadsheet or database (using software such as Microsoft Excel or Google Drive) from your community's membership list so that you can easily enter information about each contact. Use this [sample voter contact spreadsheet](#) to help you create your own!

**Make sure voters know when and where to vote:** Many first-time voters are excited to participate but aren't confident about where, when, and how to vote, including what will be on the ballot. By educating voters, Reform Jewish communities can demystify the voting process, remove participation barriers, and instill confidence in voters—all of which helps increase voter turnout. Read the "[What Voters Want to Know](#)" section of this toolkit to learn more about what information voters are seeking in advance of an election.

**Timing is important:** Voter turnout efforts have the greatest impact in the final weeks and days leading up to an election, when there is peak citizen interest, especially by voters who are less likely to turn out.<sup>17</sup> During the two to three weeks before an election, your community's strong encouragement of voting will help make people more likely to vote.<sup>18</sup> You can contact voters before this period to prime the pump, but the early contact will only be effective if there is follow-up during the final days and weeks before the election. States that allow early voting options require earlier voter outreach—you don't want to confine your voter outreach to the week before an election if a significant number of voters will have already voted through early voting options or vote by mail ballot.

**Use messages that work:** Though research shows that it is often the messenger rather than the message that drives people to the polls, you should still use messages that have been proven to be effective. It is hard to hold the attention of potential voters for more than a few moments, so it is best to stick to a single message that is brief, accessible, and memorable, rather than trying to incorporate too many messages into a single phone call or email.<sup>19</sup>

- **Social pressure and accountability:** Experiments have shown that the decision to vote is strongly shaped by someone's social environment and that social pressure is one of the most reliable messages for voter turnout. People want to be praised for doing the "correct" thing, in this case voting, and to avoid being "punished" for failing to do so.<sup>20</sup> Social pressure makes voters feel that they will be held accountable for their actions. One example of a gentle social pressure tactic is to show people that others like themselves have committed to vote.<sup>21</sup> In addition to saying this over the phone, show a list of committed voters in your community on a bulletin board or in your service booklet at Shabbat. You can also have people sign a banner in the lobby to show that they have pledged to vote.

---

<sup>17</sup> "Seven Tips on Getting Out the Vote," Nonprofit VOTE

<sup>18</sup> "A Voter Participation Starter Kit," Nonprofit VOTE

<sup>19</sup> Gerber, Alan S and Green, Donald P. Get Out The Vote. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2015. (34, 154).

<sup>20</sup> Gerber, Alan S and Green, Donald P. Get Out The Vote. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2015. (145-157)

<sup>21</sup> "2014 GOTV Recommendations," Nalyst Institute LLC.

- **Making a commitment:** Making a commitment is the first step to keeping a commitment. One way to help increase the accountability of voters to themselves, friends, family and your Reform Jewish community is by asking people to fill out a voter pledge card.<sup>22</sup> The RAC has created a voting pledge for Reform Jewish communities, which [you can access and learn more](#) about!
- **Creating a voting plan:** People are more likely to vote if they visualize their plan to do so and share that plan with another person.<sup>23</sup> Close to the election, ask people to talk through the logistics of when, where and how they will vote. Ask questions such as “Will you be voting by mail, early or on Election Day?” “Where will you be coming from?” “How will you get there?” and “What time do you plan to vote?”<sup>24</sup> This is an easy conversation to have and will help ensure that the voter is confident about the process.
- **Reasons for voting:** New voters are often looking for reasons why they should vote, and it can also be helpful when mobilizing voters to have them explain their reasons for voting.<sup>25</sup> When working with your Reform Jewish community, cite reasons that connect voting to Jewish text and tradition, and to your community’s efforts, which can be found in [this resource created by Reform Movement rabbis](#). You can also find reasons for voting in the [sample call script for phone banks](#).
- **Positivity:** Negative messaging such as, “If you don’t vote, you can’t complain,” can be counter-productive.<sup>26</sup> Use positive messages that encourage and motivate people to vote, which can include connecting the election back to its importance to your Reform Jewish community or community at large.

Keeping the principles above in mind, including the need for multiple contacts rooted in real interaction, below are some suggestions for ways your Reform Jewish community can increase voter turnout:

- Organize a [voter phone bank](#).
- Organize a voter text messaging bank to voters with whom you have already engaged.
- Have voters sign voter pledge cards, call the signers and then mail the cards to them right before the election. The RAC has made [physical pledge cards](#) and [a virtual pledge card](#) with instructions for your community to use.
- Talk to people in your community about voting where they already are, for example before or after services, at sisterhood events or during religious school pick up and drop off.
- Though email is the least effective voter outreach method when used alone, it can be useful as a supplement to other more interactive voter engagement methods. Send reminders about the upcoming election, information about the voting process and sample ballots to your congregation by email or in the mail. You can find more information about what to include in the [“What voters want to know”](#) section of this toolkit.

---

<sup>22</sup> “The Value of Pledge Cards: A Brief Overview,” Change Media Group

<sup>23</sup> “Seven Tips on Getting Out the Vote,” Nonprofit VOTE

<sup>24</sup> “2014 GOTV Recommendations,” Nalyst Institute LLC.

<sup>25</sup> “A Voter Participation Starter Kit,” Nonprofit VOTE

<sup>26</sup> “Seven Tips on Getting Out the Vote,” Nonprofit VOTE

- Run an educational program on the importance of civic engagement and its connection to Judaism, and have people create voting plans and sign voter pledge cards. A sample program for youth can be found in [the Reform Movement’s Student Voters Addendum](#).
- If your community runs a regular Torah or text study group, consider devoting one session to the importance of civic engagement and its connection to Judaism. Use [this resource created by Reform Movement rabbis](#) to help.
- Talk about pledging to vote and create and share individual voting plans at staff, board or other meetings in your Reform Jewish community.
- In addition to contacting voters, create a webpage on your congregation or community’s website with information that voters are seeking prior to the election. You can find this information in the [“What Voters Want to Know”](#) section of this toolkit.
- Put up flyers or advertise in your newsletter or on social media information about the election and voting to enhance your more personal voter engagement efforts. The RAC has put together [social media recommendations](#) for civic engagement work to help.
- Organize a group of volunteers to help drive people to their polling places on Election Day.
- Create a “voter honor roll” for your community for people to sign after they vote. Display it proudly.
- On Election Day, have people take pictures with this printable [“I am a Reform Jew and I vote because”](#) signs and post them on social media using #ReformJewsVote, and use these [shareable graphics](#). These resources and additional sample [social media posts and tips](#) can be found here.
- On Election Day, [hold a party or festival](#).
- The Shabbat before the election invite new voters up to the *bima* for a special blessing. There can also be other blessings or readings for all voters.

Your Reform Jewish community’s voter engagement plan should include more than one of these tactics. Make sure the main emphasis of your work is to have conversations in person or by phone with the people you want to turn out to vote. Less interactive voter engagement methods should be supplemental, rather than the primary way you do outreach. The main conversations should take place in the weeks before the election, and you should have a separate plan to remind everyone with whom you engaged, and those you haven’t been able to reach, about voting during the few days before the election. The plan for the few days leading up to Election Day is called Get Out the Vote (GOTV).

It is important that whether or not your Reform Jewish community is a 501(c)(3) organization, you remain nonpartisan while doing voter engagement work. For more information and general guidelines, refer to the Reform Movement’s [“The Do’s and Don’ts of Civic Engagement Work: Rules for Non-Profits”](#) resource.

## ■ Using the Empower app

The Empower app is a tool that helps leaders like you leverage their personal relationships to build power and turn out the vote. By using relational organizing, the Jewish community has huge potential to support members of our communities in getting to the polls. In addition to contact with a voter being personal, it also should be done multiple times. Studies show that phone banks from which callers contact the same potential voters multiple times are especially effective in creating committed voters.<sup>27</sup> This tool helps volunteers prioritize who they're contacting about voting, organizes information about each contact, and provides prompts for conversations to have with these contacts to ensure they are contacted multiple times about voting. [Sign-up today by clicking here!](#)

## ■ Organizing a phone bank

One way to contact voters and increase turnout on Election Day is through a phone bank. Phone banks provide a way to engage a group of volunteers of any size, have personal conversations about voting with people you previously registered, or who signed voter pledge cards, explain to them the voting process, and help them design a voting plan without having to hold an event or go door-to-door. This section of the toolkit includes ideas to keep in mind when planning a voter turnout phone bank. Some of these suggestions are specific to turning out voters in your Reform Jewish community, but many can be applied to phone banks for your broader community. More specific information about combatting voter suppression can be found in [the Reform Movement's combatting voter suppression toolkit](#) and [ballot initiative toolkit](#).

## ■ Preparing for your phone bank:

- **When and where to have your phone bank:** You should talk to voters at a time that makes sense for them to be thinking about voting. For most people, this is in the weeks and days leading up to Election Day. If you plan to talk about voting by mail or early voting, adjust your timeline accordingly.<sup>28</sup> Although phone banks can take place at any location, it is best for volunteers to be together in one central site such as your congregation or someone's home. While callers may prefer to make the calls from their own homes, experience has shown that the calls are much more likely to get made if people come together to make them. You will want to schedule a phone bank over several nights and weeks to reach the most people, and if you're calling within your community, consider the time of day you're making calls to connect with the most people.
- **Recruit volunteers:** In addition to the leader(s) organizing your voter engagement efforts, you will want help from additional volunteers. This not only helps your phone bank to reach more voters but also helps engage and mobilize people within your community around civic engagement work. Recruit a diverse group of volunteers, as the more personal the call, the better. For example, many young people who are not yet eligible to vote are still looking for

---

<sup>27</sup> "How to mobilize reluctant voters," Washington Post

<sup>28</sup> "2014 GOTV Recommendations," Nalyst Institute LLC.

ways to get involved. Provide them an outlet by recruiting teens in your youth group to staff the phone bank and call their peers who are of voting age. Make sure to over-recruit volunteers so that enough people show up, and make reminder calls the night before. In states with many groups reaching out to voters, people may be less likely to respond to calls the closer you get to Election Day. In this case, it will take more volunteers to reach the same number of voters.<sup>29</sup> For more information about working with teens in this work, use [the Reform Movement's Student Voters Addendum](#).

- **Gather and prepare lists of who to call:** Before your phone bank, set a goal of how many people you want to call. For example, your goal may be to help 250 people make a voting plan. Keeping accurate lists of voter contacts is essential. You can start your call list with the voters you registered, people you interacted with at registration or other civic engagement events your community has held, and people who filled out [a voter pledge card online](#) or [a physical version in person](#). If this information isn't available or does not constitute enough people, you can also use your community's member list. If you have the ages of voters available, make sure to separate out young voters (18-24) so that they are sure to be called by a peer.
- **Gather and prepare supplies:** Make sure you have everything you need for a successful phone bank. This may include: printed contact lists to divide up among volunteers, a way to track and record data from phone calls, and printed call scripts and information sheets about the voting process in your state or county. Ask volunteers to bring their cellphones and chargers with them. Providing food, drinks, and sweets sets a festive and fun tone for the phone bank.

## ■ During your phone bank:

- **Train volunteers:** At the start of each phone bank, provide training to volunteers. A sample training agenda may include: rooting voter engagement in Jewish values through a [text study](#), why [voting/conducting voter turnout efforts is important](#), your nightly call goal, [staying nonpartisan](#), doing a role play using your [call script](#), knowing the [answers to questions voters may ask](#), how to [keep track of who you call](#), and getting the group motivated. The most important part of the training is to have people pair up and role play the calls. This gives people a chance to work out their jitters and uncertainties, and it gives you a chance to see which members of the phone bank team will need more support.
- **Use a script:** Provide a script that volunteers can use to guide their phone conversations. Remind volunteers to stay positive and keep their conversations on message and nonpartisan. Scripts should be brief and direct as possible. Use [this sample script](#) as a template, and remember to tailor your talking points to your target audience. Callers do not need to stick to the script word-for-word—it is better if they add personal touches—but they should use the general framework.

---

<sup>29</sup> [Ibid.](#)

- **Know what information voters will be looking for:** Make sure that you and your volunteers know the answers to information that voters often seek prior to Election Day, which you can find in the [“What Voters Want to Know”](#) section of this toolkit. Your callers should know when and where to vote, but they don’t need to be experts on every candidate and issue. It is best to stay away from conversations about candidates in order to stay nonpartisan.
- **Stay nonpartisan:** As 501(c)(3) non-profits, Reform Jewish congregations and their volunteers may not suggest a candidate or party to support, or how to vote. Though some communities may not have 501(c)(3), our civic engagement work is nonpartisan and all who participate must abide by that principle. For more information and guidance on how to keep your voter engagement work nonpartisan, read the Reform Movement’s [“Do’s and Don’ts of Civic Engagement: Rules for Non-Profits”](#) resource.
- **Be available to answer questions:** Volunteers will often have questions once they begin to make calls. Make sure that at least one person leading your phone bank is not making their own calls but is rather monitoring the calls and answering volunteers’ questions throughout the night.
- **Keep track of who you call:** Make sure that each of your callers is keeping track of who they call and the outcome. Remember that attempting to contact a caller is not the same as actually speaking. If someone is not home, that should be recorded and after your volunteers have called everyone on the entire list, you can re-try calling the people you weren’t able to reach during the first round. We recommend a coding system everyone can use. Some examples are: AV-already voted, Y=yes will vote, U-undecided (about whether to vote), N-not voting, R-refused, LM-Left Message, NH-not home, and WN-wrong number or moved.

## ■ Following your phone bank:

- **Thank your volunteers:** Take time to appreciate the people who took time out of their day to help with your phone bank, and let them know how much of an impact they’ve made by adding up the number of people they called collectively. Give volunteers the opportunity to make calls another night and encourage them to invite their friends.
- **Organize your data:** Collect volunteers’ coded call sheets and transfer the information to wherever you are keeping track of everyone you engage during your community’s civic engagement work. Keeping your list of voter contacts current is essential for successful voter engagement efforts.
- **Let the RAC know how your event went:** We are more powerful when we work together, and with the full force of the Reform Movement behind this Civic Engagement Campaign, our impact grows exponentially. Let us know how your phone bank went by [submitting this short form](#).

## ■ Organizing a text message bank:

In addition to organizing a phone call bank, your community may choose to incorporate a text message bank into its voter turnout efforts. The Empower app provides a platform to help you with your text conversation. Text messages are not as personal or interactive as phone calls, and thus not as effective on their own. But text messages can be an effective contact for voters with whom you have already had conversations, reminding them to vote the day before Election Day.<sup>30</sup> Text messages should briefly introduce the sender and their organization (your Reform Jewish community), remind the person about the election, a request to please vote, and if possible, it should provide their polling place and its hours. For example: Hi [Name], my name is [Name] with [Community Name] helping people vote. There is an important election on [“tomorrow,” or list the date or day of the week if it’s within a few days]. [Insert polling place and hours if possible]. I hope to be able to thank you for voting. Please vote!<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> “2014 GOTV Recommendations,” Nalyst Institute LLC.

<sup>31</sup> “Results from 2017 Virginia Text Message Experiment,” NextGen America

# Appendices

## ■ Appendix A: Voting laws in your state

Each state has different laws regarding voting, especially around voter registration and voter registration drives. Below is a list of resources to access specific information about the state where you plan to do voter engagement work:

- **National Voter Registration Day's Rules for Voter Registration Drives in your State:** Each state resource includes links to obtain state-specific voter registration forms, regulations for handling registration forms and other pertinent state laws for conducting voter registration drives
- **Fair Elections Center's State Specific Guides:** Each state guide summarizes important registration and voting information for each state including deadlines, voter ID requirements, polling place locators, options to cast a ballot and student specific voting information
- **Nonprofit Vote's Voting in your State: A 50 State Guide:** Access current state-specific voting information including eligibility, how to register and check your registration status, upcoming deadlines and more
- **Dates and Deadlines:** Find registration deadlines and election dates on your state's election website
- **Pre-registration:** Some states allow pre-registration for youth ages 16 and 17 who won't be 18 by the next election
- **Voting by Mail:** Learn your state's laws around registering and voting by mail, which is especially relevant when working with college students, by scrolling down to the "jump directly to your state" section of the website.
- **Nonprofit Vote's Voting in your State Resource Library:** This resource library includes information regarding state-specific laws around voting with a disability, voting and homelessness, voting privacy and domestic violence and voting with a past felony conviction.

## ■ Appendix B: Sample voter registration script

Below is a sample script to help guide conversations during a voter registration event and for training volunteers. When writing your own script, always tailor your message to your targeted audience. For example, we have included talking points about Judaism's teachings on civic engagement, but you should remove this piece if you are registering voters outside your Reform Jewish community.

### **Intro:**

Hi! How are you? My name is (name). (Congregation/Community name) has a goal this year to be an 100% voting congregation/community. We believe that our democracy is strongest when everyone participates, and it is important to make sure that Jewish voices are present in the public square, regardless of political party. That is why we are helping people register or update their voter registration. May I help you today?

### **If Yes:**

- That is great! Here is a voter registration form, please let me know if you have any questions. (Hand them a registration form, collect and check completed form, and move to closing.)

### **If already registered:**

- That is great! Have you moved recently?
  - If yes: I can help you update your registration so that you are all set for the upcoming election. This will only take a minute! (Hand them registration form, collect and check completed form and move to closing.)
  - If no: Great, you are all set for the upcoming election! (Engage them in secondary activity and move to closing.)

### **If no:**

- I don't have time: I understand you are very busy. Filling out this form will take less than five minutes, and I will make sure it gets turned in for you. You can save yourself time by registering with me today. (Share a reason to register to vote from below.) Just to let you know, I will be here on (insert dates you are tabling) if you change your mind about registering to vote. Thanks so much for stopping by!
- I don't vote/I am not interested: I understand. (Share reason to register to vote from below.) Just to let you know, I will be here on (insert dates you are tabling) if you change your mind about registering to vote. Thanks so much for stopping by!

### **Reasons to register to vote:**

- We are trying to get our congregation/community to 100% voting, and we cannot do this without your registration!
- Civic engagement is important to Jewish tradition. The Talmud states that "A ruler is not to be appointed unless the community is first consulted" (*Talmud, Brakhot 55a*). By registering to vote, you are ensuring that you can be consulted.
- There is power in numbers. When we vote and get those close to us to vote, we can impact outcomes and change the debate on issues important to us.

- We want to register everyone in our community so our voices are heard.
- If our congregation/community votes in large numbers, it helps us and the entire Reform Movement advocate for issues we care about. We will have better access to elected officials and increased clout.
- When communities register and vote, they are more likely to elect representatives that reflect the diversity and interests of their community.

Look at the [Voter Registration Frequently Asked Questions](#) section of this toolkit to see how to answer questions that are commonly asked during voter registration drives.

### **Secondary Ask/Activity:**

Make sure you have a secondary way to engage with your registration drive for people who are already registered to vote such as asking people to pledge to vote on election day. [Use the Reform Movement's virtual pledge cards](#) or [physical pledge cards](#) to help facilitate this. If you are registering people to vote outside your Reform Jewish community, consider making a similar pledge to vote card to have on hand.

### **Closing**

Thank you for (registering to vote/updating your registration/pledging to vote/being an engaged citizen). You have brought our congregation/community one step closer to achieving our goal of 100% voting!

- If applicable: We will submit your registration form right away to our local election office and then you should be all set for the upcoming election on November 3rd. Once your registration has been processed, you will receive an acknowledgement card in the mail.
- Hand out any voter reminder cards, information about the election, or let them know about upcoming civic engagement related events in your community.

Have a great day!

Before the voter leaves, be sure to look over the form and check that all required fields are completed and are legible. If the voter does not provide a phone number on the registration form, make sure to ask for it. Similarly, even if someone didn't need to register, make sure you collect a name and contact information. This will help you with future turnout efforts.

You may also direct people to other ways to engage with your voter registration event such as social media ([use these tips](#) and the hashtag #ReformJewsVote), a photo booth ([use these signs](#)), or a poster to sign that will be hung in a prominent space in your community.

*This script was developed with the help of resources from [Nonprofit Vote](#) and [National Voter Registration Day](#)*

## ■ Appendix C: Voter registration frequently asked questions

Someone is more likely to register to vote at your event if you can answer their questions. Below are answers to questions that are commonly asked at voter registration drives:

- **How can I check if I am registered to vote?** You can check to see if you are registered to vote through [this tool from the National Association of Secretaries of State](#). Depending on your state, you may need to enter your date of birth, county, and other identifying information. You can also check your registration by calling your local election office.
- **I just moved, do I need to re-register?** If you have changed your address, name, or want to change your political party, you must re-register to vote. When you send in a new voter registration form, there is a place to indicate that you are changing your address. You do not need to “un-register” your previous registration. If you’ve moved recently, there’s a chance that you’d been removed from the voter rolls. To be safe, it’s always good practice to check to see if you are registered to vote through [this tool from the National Association of Secretaries of State](#).
- **If I didn’t vote in the last election, do I need to register again?** No, even if you did not vote in the last election, you are still registered and do not need to register again. If you voted in the last election and have since moved, see the question above.
- **Can I register to vote using my school’s address? Can I use a PO Box address or a school mailbox address as my permanent address?** Even if you were previously registered at your home address, you can register using your school address, including if you are living in a dorm room. However, you cannot use a PO Box as your permanent address. You should instead list the street address of your dorm and specify the floor or apartment you occupy. For more resources for college students, use [the Reform Movement’s Student Voters Addendum](#).
- **Do I need to list my phone number?** Listing your phone number is not a required field, but it is very helpful in case the local board of elections has a problem with your registration and needs to contact you.
- **Does voter registration cost anything?** No, voter registration is free.
- **How can I find out if my registration was processed and accepted?** Once your voter registration is processed, you will receive a registration acknowledgement card in the mail from your local election officials. In most states, you can also check your registration status online through your state’s online voter registration portal. You can also check by calling your local elections office.
- **What kind of identification do I need to vote?** About 30 states have voter ID laws, and half of these require a photo ID. The majority of photo ID states allow voters without the correct ID to vote a provisional ballot or sign an affidavit and vote a regular ballot. Some states also ask for some form of ID from first time voters who vote in person. You can find your state’s voter ID laws by using resources from the [Voting in Your State section](#) of this toolkit.

- **How do I find out where to vote?** To find your polling place, you can contact your local elections office. In most states, you can also research this information online. Tools can be found in the [Voting in Your State section](#) of this toolkit.
- **How can I vote by mail?** Generally, as long as a vote by mail ballot is postmarked by Election Day, it will be counted. However, in some states, the deadline for applying for a vote by mail ballot is a few weeks prior to Election Day. You can find information about voting by mail by using [this resource from Vote.org](#) or the government’s [Voting Assistance Guide](#). For more information about young voters, use [the Reform Movement’s Student Voters Addendum](#).
- **Can I register and vote with a past felony conviction?** Each state is different: Maine and Vermont have no restrictions, 14 states restore your right to vote immediately upon release from jail or prison and many others only restore the right after a “full sentence” including probation and parole has been served. More information about laws in your state can be found on [Nonprofit Vote’s website](#).
- **How can I register to vote if I’m experiencing homelessness?** If you’re experiencing homelessness, use the address of a shelter or other nonprofit. In most states, you can also mark a cross street on the form to indicate the place where you usually sleep. More information can be found on [Nonprofit Vote’s website](#).
- **Can I keep my current address private if I’m a survivor of domestic violence?** In most states, yes. Address Confidentiality Programs and Confidential Voter Listings are programs administered by states that enable survivors of domestic violence to register while maintaining the confidentiality of their address.
- **If I register to vote, am I going to be called for jury duty?** No, it is against the law to use the voter rolls for jury duty.

This list of frequently asked questions was compiled with the help of the following resources:

<https://www.nonprofitvote.org/documents/2015/07/faq-voter-registration-state.pdf/>

<https://www.rockthevote.org/voting-information/voting-faqs/>

<https://www.rockthevote.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/field/voter-registration-how-to.pdf>

[http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/eadvocacy/ACS\\_Voter\\_Registration\\_Guide3.pdf](http://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/themes/acs/docs/resources/eadvocacy/ACS_Voter_Registration_Guide3.pdf)

## ■ Appendix D: Sample phone bank script

Below is a sample script to help guide conversations during a phone bank to increase turnout in advance of Election Day and for training volunteers. When writing your own script, always tailor your message to your targeted audience. For example, we have included talking points about a Reform Jewish community's goal of achieving 100% voting, but you should remove this piece if you are calling voters outside your Reform Jewish community. You may also want to adapt your script for calling young voters or college students.

Remember that scripts should be used as a guide rather than recited word-for-word.

### Intro:

Hi! My name is (name) and I am a volunteer with (congregation/community name). May I please speak with (insert name)?

Earlier this fall you (registered to vote/signed a voter pledge card). Our congregation/community has a goal of achieving 100% voting in the upcoming election, so we are calling to urge you to vote on (insert election date). We believe our democracy is strongest when everyone participates, and it is important to make sure that Jewish voices, regardless of their political party-affiliation, are present in the public square. Can we count on you to vote in this election?

- **If yes and there is an early voting opportunity:** Great! We also want to let you know that (insert state/county) offers convenient opportunities for early voting. May I tell you a little more about early voting? (Insert details about early voting.) What is your plan to cast your vote? [Get them to state the time and place of voting.] Thank you for your commitment to vote in this election, have a great night!
- **If yes and there is no early voting opportunity:** Great, thank you for making sure your voice is heard and bringing our congregation/community closer to our goal of 100% voting. Do you know when you vote? Do you have a plan for getting there? [Get them to state the time and place of voting. Share information about the location of their polling place if they need it.] Thank you for your commitment to vote in this election, have a great night!
- **If undecided:** I hope you will decide to vote. (Share reason to vote from below.) Is there any information I can provide to make it easier for you to vote? (Provide information if needed.) Thank you for your time. If you change your mind or would like more information about the voting process, please contact (Local Board of Elections or someone leading your voter engagement efforts). Have a good night!
- **If no:** I'm sorry to hear that. (Share reason to vote from below.) Thank you for your time. If you change your mind or would like more information about the voting process, please contact (Local Board of Elections or someone leading your voter engagement efforts). Have a good night!

- **Reasons to vote:**

- We are trying to get our congregation/community to 100% voting, and we cannot do this without your participation!
- Civic engagement is important to Jewish tradition. The Talmud states “A ruler is not to be appointed unless the community is first consulted” (Talmud, Brakhot 55a). By voting, you are fulfilling your responsibility of being consulted.
- There is power in numbers. When we vote and get those close to us to vote, we can impact outcomes and change the debate on issues important to us.
- We want everyone in our community to vote so our voices are heard.
- If our congregation/community votes in large numbers, it helps us and the entire Reform Movement advocate for issues we care about. We will have better access to elected officials and increased clout.
- When communities vote, they are more likely to elect representatives that reflect the diversity and interests of their community.

This script was put together with the help of resources from [The Praxis Project](#) and [Advocacy and Communication Solutions](#)

## ■ Appendix E: What voters want to know

An educated voter is a more likely voter! Make sure that wherever you provide voters with information, you address the following:

### The voting process—when, where and how to vote:

- **Election dates and deadlines:** Voters want to know the date of elections and deadlines for registration, vote by mail requests as well as the deadline to vote by mail. You can find this information on your [state's election website](#).
- **Polling places and hours:** Voters will be looking for information about polling places and hours. You can find this information by using [Nonprofit Vote's 50 State Guide](#) or the [Fair Elections Center State Specific Guides](#), or by going to your state and local elections websites.
- **Early voting and voting by mail:** Early voting is growing rapidly, both in person and by mail. It allows voters to avoid lines and provides additional flexibility. Prepare to answer questions if these options are available in your state and how to take advantage of them by using [Nonprofit Vote's 50 State Guide](#) or the [Fair Elections Center State Specific Guides](#).
- **College Students:** Especially when working with college students, voters will want to know how to request a ballot and vote by mail. You can find this information by scrolling down to the "jump directly to your state" section on [vote.org](#).
- **Identification needed:** First-time voters and in states with stricter laws, voters need to know what type of identification they should bring with them to vote. You can find information about voter identification by using [Nonprofit Vote's 50 State Guide](#) or the [Fair Elections Center State Specific Guides](#).

### Getting help on Election Day

- **Election Day hotlines:** Provide voters with your local Board of Elections phone number in addition to the following national hotlines in case they experience problems on Election Day:
  - 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683) (English)
  - 888-VE-Y-VOTA (1-888-839-8682) (Spanish)
  - 888-API-VOTE (1-888-274-8683) (Asian multilingual assistance)
  - 844-YALLA-US (1-844-925-5287) (Arabic)
  - 301-818-VOTE (301-818-8683) (American Sign Language—Video)
- **Rides to the polls:** If your community, or another organization with whom you partner, is working to provide voters with rides to their polling place, make sure that information on how to take advantage of this service is available!

**Sample Ballots:** Seeing a sample ballot helps voters familiarize themselves and gain confidence prior to casting their own ballot on Election Day. You can access sample ballots to make available by going to your state and local elections websites, which you can find by using [Nonprofit Vote's 50 State Guide](#).

If you are working with your broader community or across lines of difference to turn out voters, consider having translated information and materials on hand. For more information about working with communities across lines of difference, please see [the Reform Movement's Combatting Voter Suppression toolkit](#).

*This resource was put together with help from the following resources from Nonprofit Vote: [Nonprofit Vote's Voter Participation Starter Kit](#), [10 Things to Do from Now until Election Day](#)*

## ■ Appendix F: Sample voter contact spreadsheet

Use this sample voter contact spreadsheet to help you track voter engagement efforts in your own community. One place to start is to add names from your congregation's/group's membership list so that you can easily enter information about each contact, in addition to adding other people with whom you interact. You can also [view this spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel](#).

First	Last	Phone	Email	Filled Out Pledge card	1st Contact	2nd Contact	3rd Contact	Additional Contact	Additional Contact	Notes
Nathan	Zuckerman	111-111-1111	<a href="mailto:GhostWriter@gmail.com">GhostWriter@gmail.com</a>	7/10/2018	Conversation after services	Phone call 9/15	Send back pledge card 10/27	Text 11/4		
Alexander	Portnoy	222-222-2222	<a href="mailto:Pcomplaint@gmail.com">Pcomplaint@gmail.com</a>	9/6/2018	Phone call 10/15	Send back pledge	Text 11/4			
Neil	Klugman	333-333-3333	<a href="mailto:GbyeColumbus@gmail.com">GbyeColumbus@gmail.com</a>		registered to vote	Phone call 10/15	Conversation after	Text 11/4		
Mickey	Sabbath	444-444-4444	<a href="mailto:MyTheater@gmail.com">MyTheater@gmail.com</a>	10/1/2018	Phone call 10/2	Send back pledge	Text 11/4			





Union for Reform Judaism | 633 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017 | 212-650-4000  
Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism | 2027 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington D.C. (RAC): 202-387-2800  
Knowledge Network: URJ1800@URJ.org | URJ.org | RAC.org