

EMPLOYEE ON-SITE VOTER REGISTRATION TOOLKIT

In 2000, less than 60% of America's eligible voters actually voted. More than 75 million people eligible to vote stayed home during an election decided by 537 votes.

Organizing a voter registration for your employees is a great opportunity to express your commitment to your community and to revitalizing our democracy.

This toolkit is designed to help your business organize a successful on-site employee voter registration drive. Voter registration drives are easy to organize and are very effective in making ensure that your employees are registered to vote. Remember, you can also set up an online voter registration website by request from Voteworks.org



STEPS FOR SETTING UP AN ON-SITE EMPLOYEE VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE:

The most effective employee voter registration drives are when a business can build visibility around the registration drive, and actively make it easy for all of their employees to register to vote.

1. Figure out the how, when and where to host your voter registration drives.

Each voter registration drive for a location should be organized to maximize your potential of reaching all of your employees in one location and having the employees take a couple of minutes to register to vote on the spot. The easier you make registration for people the more people will register to vote. Remember, deadlines are fast approaching, and vary by state!

a. How: The most effective drives are where a business is actively asking their employees to register to vote and ask everyone to take a minute to fill out the form now.

Ideas: Have the staff directors ask all of their staff to register to vote; have fellow employees ask their peers to register to vote. Set up a voter registration table with forms and a drop box (see Tips on Setting up a Voter Registration Table)

b. When: The best time to hold the registration drive is when all the employees are in the same place. Ideas: Office wide meetings or company events; staff meetings or lunch breaks.

c. Where: Set up a voter registration table in the heaviest traffic areas (i.e. break rooms, lunch areas, or the main entrance to your building).

d. Time: Determine how long you want the registration drive to last (1 day, 1 week, etc). Besides meetings and events, the best time to have the table set up would be during the beginning / end of the work day, lunch breaks or during shift changes.

e. Deadlines: The list of voter registration deadlines by state is available at www.voteworks.org Remember to plan your voter registration drives early enough to meet the deadlines!



STEPS FOR SETTING UP AN ON-SITE EMPLOYEE VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE:

2. Create momentum around the Voter Registration Drive

a. Before the Voter Registration Drive: To make your voter registration drive as successful as possible build momentum before the event. Make sure everyone in your company knows why you think it is important to register to vote and that you are organizing a voter registration drive. Here are just a few ideas of how to create momentum for the registration drive:

b. Send an email or note to all your employees about the importance of registering to vote and why their vote matters;

c. Include a short description in your company newsletter;

d. Put a flyer in all employee paychecks letting them know about the registration drive.

e. Remember that all of this must be non-partisan!

Examples of all of those elements are available at www.voteworks.org

f.

During the Voter Registration Drive: Make the voter registration drive as visible as possible.

g. Send a second email reminding people to register to vote;

h. Put posters up through out the office about where people can register to vote;

i. Have staff managers remind people to register to vote during meetings, etc.

3. Recruit volunteers:

a. The most effective voter registration drives have volunteers who are prepped to ask people to register to vote in an active, outgoing way. Whether it is during a meeting, event or at a table have volunteers actively ask people to register to vote and to help answer any questions about the registration forms or the regulations. Its very important that they know that this must be non-partisan, and that they can't incent or coerce someone to register to vote.



TIPS ON SETTING UP VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE TABLES:

1. Materials you will need:
 - a. Posters or flyers
 - b. Voter Registration Forms - State –Specific
 - c. Pens
 - d. Clipboards
 - e. Envelopes, for those that take the form with them
2. Registration forms: Understand the form and be able to explain the process to your peers. A guide to the form in your state is provided with this toolkit and the state-specific forms are available to download from the voteworks.org website. Make sure that the form is complete before people walk away! There are Spanish and English forms available from some states.
3. Be an active tabler! Don't just sit there - engage people by standing in front of the table and asking people to register as they walk by.
4. Sample tabling talking points:
 - a. Hi, have you registered to vote yet?
 - b. No? Great, I can register you right now.
 - c. Here's how you fill out the form...
 - d. Would you like to volunteer to help more of your co-workers get registered?
5. Your staff tabling the event should also be prepared to answer frequently asked questions. This might include:
 - a. When is election day?
 - b. How do I find out where my polling place is?
 - c. Do we have time off to vote on election day?
 - d. Do you know our company's policy if I wanted to work the polls?
 - e. I might be traveling that day. How do I request an absentee ballot?
 - f. What ID do I need to bring to the polls when I go to vote?
 - g. I cant remember if I'm registered – how would I know?
 - h. I moved recently – do I need to re-register?

Remember it is absolutely essential that no one is soliciting for a candidate or a party during your voter registration drive.



HOW TO TURN IN VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS

What do you do with the voter registration forms?

1. Decide or find out if your company is collecting the forms to send in all together. If they are, you can just collect all the forms and tell the employee that their form will be mailed in for them. Your company will need to sort the forms by county, and call the Secretary of State's office to find out where each county batch needs to be sent. Make sure you get them in before the deadline!
2. If you are not collecting forms to send in, you should tell each employee that they need to send their form to their county clerk's office. The county clerk for each county in your state is listed on the back of the registration form. If you have any questions, you can check your state registrar online.



WHY IS ONE VOTE SO IMPORTANT?

Here are some elections won or lost by a handful of votes. Every vote counts!

1. In 1986, the City Council race in Williamsburg, Virginia between Former Mayor Robert Walker and Mary Lee Darling ended in a tie vote. Mary Lee Darling was declared the winner after a drawing from a hat according to Virginia State Board of Elections Code.
2. In 1997, the 86th House of Delegates race between Donald Williams and Beverly Graber in Norfolk, Virginia was one of the closest in the Commonwealth of Virginia in recent years. After a recount, there was an 11 vote difference making Donald Williams the winner.
3. John Kennedy was elected President in 1960 by carrying one state by less than one vote per precinct.
4. Marcus Monton was elected Governor of Massachusetts in 1839 by one vote out of 102,066 cast.
5. In 1962, the Governor's race in Minnesota was so close it took four months to find out who won. The State Canvassing Board gave Anderson 619,722 votes and Rolvaag 619,842 votes. After a District Court recount, Anderson had 619,751 votes and Rolvaag had 619,842. The Margin of Victory was 91 votes.
6. In 1845, one vote made Texas part of the United States.
7. One vote saved President Andrew Jackson from impeachment conviction in 1868.
8. One vote elected Rutherford B. Hayes to the Presidency and the man in the Electoral College who cast the vote was an Indiana Congressman elected by one vote.
9. In 1950, a state senator from Garrett County, Maryland was elected by one vote. The winner had 3,080 votes; the loser, 3,079.
10. One vote kept Aaron Burr from becoming President. That one vote elected Thomas Jefferson, the President in 1800.

All facts from the Voter Education Handbook for Virginia

