



**AMPLIFY  
YOUR VOICE!**

## **Grassroots 101: Voter Registration**



### **Overview:**

Voter registration is the primary step to the one of the most basic, and important, tenets of democracy—voting! While many Americans are likely already registered to vote, some people such as people who have recently turned 18 may not register immediately. Also, many people may be unaware that they have to update their voter registration information when they move to a new address. With our current opt-in voting system, it is essential to make sure others are registered and informed of their voting rights!

### **Goal:**

The goal here is to reach out to potential voters, educate the public on one of our most important civil rights and duties, and make sure that every person possible has their voice heard in our political system!

### **Time Required:**

3 minutes up to several hours. Registering a friend or family member to vote takes a matter of minutes or you could spend hours registering new voters if you set up a table at an event or public location.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Voter registration forms
- A table and/or clipboards
- Pens (bring plenty!)
- Voter guide/informational brochures
- Chair and/or comfortable shoes
- A safe place (box, envelope, folder, etc.) to protect filled forms from being lost or damaged.
- A welcoming presence (try to smile, greet people, ask about their day, etc.)
- Snacks/candy/swag to entice potential voters; just remember to share with anyone who asks, whether or not they intend to register!

### **Steps:**

1. **Make sure the area where you intend to register voters allows for solicitation of voter registration.** If you are just registering your friends and family to vote, no need to worry about this, but if you want to set up a table at an event or location to register new voters, make sure you check first!
2. **Have your materials ready.** Make sure you have registration forms, information, and extra pens.
3. **Check registration status.** If someone is unsure of their WA state voter registration status, you can have them check at the online portal, [MyVote](#).
4. **Know what it takes to be an eligible voter in WA State.** To be registered to vote in Washington state, a person must:
  - a) **Be a U.S. Citizen.**
  - b) **Be a legal resident of Washington.** One must establish a residential address at least 30 days prior to Election Day.
  - c) **Be at least 18 years of age by Election Day.**

- d) **Not be disqualified from voting due to a court order.** Only a Superior Court Judge can declare a person unable to vote due to mental incompetency. Do not assume that someone under guardianship due to mental incapacity is ineligible to vote.
  - e) **Not under the Department of Corrections supervision for a Washington felony conviction.** A felon's right to vote is restored as long as they are no longer in prison or under community custody such as supervision or parole.
5. **Store completed forms somewhere where they will remain safe and will not be lost or damaged.** When collecting sensitive information, it's always a good idea to have somewhere safe to keep these forms after they are collected, even if you are just registering a friend or family member!
  6. **Return the completed registration forms.** Forms must be returned no later than 5 days after you receive them, or at least 29 days before Election Day, whichever comes first. Any new registrations or changes submitted after the deadline will take effect for the next election and keep voters from being eligible for the current election season. If you have forms from more than one county, it is best to send them to the Washington Secretary of State Elections Division. They will forward them to the relevant counties.
  7. **If you wish to track the number of registrations and updates** you have submitted through MyVote, the State Elections Division can provide you a [unique URL](#).

#### **Additional tips and tricks to successfully register a new voter:**

- Use non-confrontational, friendly language. Voters shouldn't feel bad or guilty for not being registered to vote yet, they should feel excited to register and exercise their right to vote!
- Remember, anyone can register new voters, even if you are not a registered voter!
- Make it personal and fun. Talk about why you're passionate about voter registration and the importance of being engaged.

#### **Additional resources/external links**

[WA MyVote](#)

[WA Voter Registration Form](#)

[WA State Guide to Registering Voters](#)

[Hosting a Voter Registration Drive Rules and Tools](#)

[ACLU-Voting Rights Restoration in Washington State](#)

#### **Questions?**

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