

# BEST PRACTICES FOR REGISTERING LOW-INCOME RENTERS |

Many low-income renters have justifiable skepticism towards the political process and may feel hesitant about voter registration. Here are some tips for overcoming common challenges in registration drives.

- **VOTER APATHY** – Messaging matters. There have been numerous studies that indicate low-income people are more likely to register to vote and turn out on Election Day if they are engaged with a positive message. Always rely on an individual's personal experience and connect that to the process for social change in a hopeful way. Do not deliver a message that reminds voters of the ways they have been failed by our institutions, which reinforces feelings of despair. Instead, remind low-income renters that their vote is about a new future for their neighborhood, community, or family. Discuss opportunities for change. Be prepared to share reminders of recent very close elections where a small number of votes determined the difference.
- **TURN FRUSTRATION INTO A PURPOSE** – Use an issue voters are frustrated with as a reason to continue to vote. Pivot to solutions to the problems, and remind the voter that their opponents are standing up and being counted when working in the opposite direction. If they are frustrated that all politicians are the same, that their candidates always lose, etc., you might tell them that you share the same concern and that is why you are registering voters to elect new leaders.
- **REMIND SUBSIDIZED RENTERS THEY HAVE SOMETHING AT STAKE** – If you are organizing in public housing or registering low-income renters in specific properties, you should encourage them to protect their housing program by voting. There can be three important aspects of this message:
  - I. Housing programs are always being threatened with budget cuts, and the voter's affordable home needs to be supported at the ballot.
  - II. Improvements to repair subsidized properties require better budget support, and elected leaders know who votes in high numbers. When residents of subsidized properties turn out to vote, elected officials will pay more attention to their concerns.
  - III. Discuss the number of people in a voter's family or community who aren't fortunate enough to have subsidized housing and experience hardship while on the waiting list. Remind the voter that housing programs need to be protected AND expanded, which requires strong political leaders who represent the interests of low-income renters.

# PARTNERS & RESOURCES FOR VOTER REGISTRATION |

## BOLDER ADVOCACY, AN INITIATIVE OF THE ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE

Bolder Advocacy promotes active engagement in both elections and lobbying by giving nonprofits and foundations the information they need to advocate with confidence. They provide knowledge and tools that demystify advocacy and election engagement for nonprofit organizations. Bolder Advocacy makes it clear that nonprofits should not shy away from electoral activities. They lay out the differences in what organizations can and cannot do under IRS tax rules for nonprofits.

For more information, visit: <https://bolderadvocacy.org>

## NONPROFIT VOTE

Nonprofit VOTE partners with America's nonprofits to help the people they serve participate and vote. They are the largest source of nonpartisan resources to help nonprofits integrate voter engagement into their ongoing activities and services. Their excellent library of online resources includes a Voter Participation Starter Kit and a Voting in Your State Guide, as well as helpful guides on planning a voter engagement program, engaging candidates, and staying nonpartisan in all activities.

For more information, visit: <http://nonprofitvote.org>.

## FAIR ELECTIONS LEGAL NETWORK (FELN)

The Fair Elections Legal Network (FELN) is a national, nonpartisan voting rights, legal support, and election reform organization whose mission is to remove barriers to registration and voting for traditionally underrepresented constituencies. FELN works to improve overall election administration through reforms. They also provide legal and technical assistance to voter mobilization organizations. Their state-specific resources include information on voter registration deadlines, ID requirements for voting, and how to vote early or by mail in any state.

For more information, visit: <http://fairelectionsnetwork.com>.

## BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

The Brennan Center for Justice understands that voting is the foundation of our democracy. It fights to preserve and expand the right to vote for every eligible citizen. Through practical policy proposals, litigation, advocacy, and communications, the Brennan Center works to make sure that voting is free, fair, and accessible for all Americans. It tracks and publishes analyses of voting rights policies in every state legislature across the country.

For more information, visit: <https://brennancenter.org>.

## VOTE411.ORG, A RESOURCE OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

VOTE411.org is an online voter education resource of the League of Women Voters and a "one-stop-shop" for election-related information. The site provides a voter registration tool, a nationwide polling place lookup, and ballot guides for voters in every state. The website will be updated with information on ballot questions and candidates for office. This level of information will be available for every voter in America, down to at least the statewide level, for both primary and general elections.

For more information, visit: <http://vote411.org>.