HOW TO PLAN
A VOTER
REGISTRATION DRIVE

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NEW JERSEY EDUCATION FUND
1. Plan the Drive

**Who:** Define your target population/demographic. Are there specific neighborhoods or segments of the population (younger voters, minorities, and other underrepresented groups) that you want to focus on?

**Where:** Set up in public locations where people congregate. Examples of successful locations include shopping centers and supermarkets, houses of worship, office buildings, hospitals, post offices, markets, college campuses, etc. It can also be effective to table around popular events, such as PTA or city council meetings, as well as concerts and sporting events.

Before setting up within a site, it is always best to call the facility ahead for permission. There is rarely a fee associated with tabling, but it’s always best to play it safe.

**When:** Depending on your location, research in advance when you are going to be able to reach the most people. For example, if you are targeting an office building, catch people at lunch time rather than when they are rushing to get home for the day. Post offices and supermarkets are often busiest Saturday mornings. For college campuses, set up your drive when classes are in session to reach the most students or coincide your drive with other programs such as freshman orientation or homecoming weekend.

It is also important to keep election dates in mind. Know the voter registration for the next election to take advantage of peak citizen interest and plan your drive to coincide.

2. Coordinate your volunteers

Train your volunteers. Review their responsibilities, as well as all of the voter forms and “Frequently Asked Questions” with volunteers before the drive.

Make the most of your volunteers’ talents. Some people will be better suited for certain tasks depending on their knowledge and experience. For example, if one volunteer is shy, but a powerful writer, they might be more comfortable creating publicity, rather than speaking publicly. Know your volunteers strengths and plan accordingly.

Make sure you have enough volunteers. Ensure that there are enough volunteers to spread the work evenly.

Most importantly—Thank your volunteers for their hard work and time!
3. Publicize your drive

Put up posters to give people advance notice that a voter registration drive is coming. Messages on these posters should be clear, direct, and attention-grabbing. If your drive or organization has a logo or title, it should be used on all advertisements.

Submit community bulletins and press releases to local papers, write letters to the editor. Make sure to include who, what, when, where, and why in all of your media releases. Invite the papers, radio stations, and local television stations to attend your drive. Make your arrangements early enough so that there will be plenty of time to get the word out.

4. Gather the materials you will need

Call your County Commissioner ahead of time to obtain voter registration forms, Vote by Mail applications, and party affiliation declaration forms. These forms can also be photocopied. If you are registering people from multiple counties, use statewide forms available through the Division of Elections. All of these forms can be found on the League of Women Voters of New Jersey web site, www.lwvnj.org, and may be printed and photocopied.

Provide the phone number for the Division of Elections and for your local County Commissioner of Registration, as well as election dates and deadlines. Bring nonpartisan educational materials provided by the League of Women Voters such as Voters’ Bill of Rights cards and answers to frequently asked questions.

Bring plenty of pens and clipboards, and table and chairs if these are not provided by the facility. Dress up your table with a poster, balloons, and streamers to draw visitors in!

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Checklist for Voter Registration Drives

- Tables, Chairs, Streamers, Balloons, Tablecloth
- Flyer Announcing Drive and Organization
- Forms (county and state voter registration forms, Vote by Mail applications, party affiliation declaration forms)
- Timeline – Election Dates and deadlines for filing the above forms
- Pens and Clipboards
- Phone numbers for county election officials and the League of Women Voters of New Jersey, 1-800-792-VOTE(8683)
5. During the drive

When registering voters you should encourage as many people as possible to fill out the forms while they are at the table. This way, you can review the forms for accuracy and ensure that the forms get submitted to the elections office. Be efficient in helping voters register, but make sure to review all forms before allowing the registrant to walk away! Ultimately it is your aim to demonstrate that registration is quick, easy, and something to be proud of. Thank each registrant for his or her time and welcome them as new voters.

Keep an eye out for those voters who must be re-registered. Example of people that may need to re-register are people with address changes, name changes, or those that have been served a felony sentence and have finished their probation or parole. It may be useful to post a sign with this information.

Don’t forget that you should also provide voters the opportunity to fill out Vote by Mail applications and party affiliation declaration forms.

6. After the drive

The most important thing after your drive is to make sure the forms get to the elections office promptly for processing. Failure to do so will disenfranchise citizens who believe that they are registered to vote, thus defeating the purpose of the drive and hurting your group’s credibility.

You should also evaluate the successes and failures of your drive. Was your site effective? Did your table attract a lot of attention? Did you publicize enough? Did you have enough volunteers? Did you target the right population in your community? Did you register many new voters? Ask yourself these questions to prepare for your next voter registration drive.