

Tips For Voter Registration Volunteers

Conduct during events:

Please remember that the League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization and we happily register everyone, regardless of the party they choose. Our Non-Partisan and Diversity Policies in the About Us section of our website should be read prior to volunteering. During registration events, avoid saying something in support of or in opposition to, a political party, candidate or office holder. Likewise, do not wear clothing that appears to promote a candidate or political party.

They've given you a table, but please don't just sit. There should be two volunteers at an event, so take turns walking up to people: wear your League t-shirt or button and, approaching with your clipboard in hand, start by introducing yourself, telling them you're from the League, and asking if they are registered or if their registration is up to date

Questions that may come up:

Who can register and vote?

If they are a US citizen and at least 18 years old on or before Election Day. In addition, as of January 1, 2020, 16 and 17-year-olds may now pre-register to vote. Pre-register in section 2 on the NYS voter registration form and you will automatically be eligible to vote when you turn 18 years old. You must be 18 years old to vote on or before the date of the general, primary or other election in which you want to vote. Citizens of Puerto Rico may also vote.

If they have been incarcerated for a felony conviction, and have been released on parole or supervised release or have served your sentence, voting rights are restored. If they have been incarcerated for a misdemeanor conviction, they are eligible to vote. Offer them the brochure about Voting Rights for Former Felons.

If they are homeless there are two considerations when completing the registration form: (1) **mailing address** is required. This can be anyplace willing to accept mail on behalf of the individual, such as, a family member or a shelter. The Board of Elections must be able to send mail to the individual. (2) **address where you live** – address where you sleep; this could be a shelter or a street corner or street area. This address will be used to determine your election districts.

When registering college students, suggest they fill out a form instead of relying on their phone for registering. According to the Board of Elections, problems have arisen with the phone method. They have two options: (1) register using their college location in order to vote locally

or (2) register using their home address which may require them to request an absentee ballot if they are not able to get to their polling place.

Once they've filled out the form, check it over carefully. Questions 5,6 and 7 are optional but make sure all others are completely filled out, signed, and legible. Suggest that registrants take a photo of their completed form as a reminder of how they signed since they will need to sign the same way for mail-in ballots.

Do I need to choose a party?

Choosing a party is optional, but people must be registered with a political party if they want to vote in a party's primary. The primary is where they can vote for the candidates that will represent the party in the general election. Usually only the Democratic and Republican parties hold primaries. Offer to show them the copy of party descriptions from LWVNYS guide. **If they do not want to register with a party, they should choose the last option, "No Party".**

I'm not sure if I am registered / I need to make changes to my registration

If people don't know if they are registered, they can check their registration in Monroe County with the Monroe County Board of Elections at monroecounty.gov/etc/voter.

If they are registered, but need to update their name, address or party, they will need to fill out a new registration form.

How does early voting / absentee voting work?

Remind everyone that early voting in NYS should make voting easier. Early Voting has been adopted in NY and they can vote in any of the early voting sites over a period of ten days preceeding election day. In Monroe County, they can find the early voting locations announced closer to elections at www.monroecounty.gov.

NY has made absentee voting a little easier too, but it's still more complicated than going to the polls. To vote without going to their polling place, they will need to apply for an absentee ballot. Once the application is received, the Board of Elections will send an absentee ballot through the mail. Go to Monroe County Board of Elections to complete the process, but start early. When they choose this option, absentee ballots will be sent to them for all future elections. If they want to change this option, they will need to fill out a new registration form. **A new rule as of June 2022 means that individuals who have requested an absentee ballot can't vote in person at a polling location, using the voting machines.** The individual can vote using an affidavit ballot at the polling location.

What do we do at the close of an event?

Tabling materials should be packed back into the suitcase. If larger items are used (e.g., Frederick Douglass cut out) they should have been carried to the event in a large tote bag. **Completed Registration forms** should be placed in the large marked envelope included and returned with the tabling materials, given to the materials manager or dropped off at the Board of Elections (BOE) during the next available office hours (M-F: 9:00 -5:00). **The Voter Registration Feedback form** should be completed and returned with the tabling materials. This form will allow us to determine our literature needs and gauge the effectiveness of events.

For additional information, see the Toolkit for Voter Registration Drives on the LWV-NYS website: <https://lwvny.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Toolkit-for-Voter-Registration-Drives-9-22-Clean.pdf>