get out the VOTE

Idea Guide

spark your creativity!

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ILLINOIS

GET OUT THE VOTE!

The most important thing about voting is…well…actually voting. In Illinois, where people can register by themselves online, the importance of our League mission to educate and empower becomes very clear. Educated, informed voters are engaged voters - which means they vote. Our mission is to make sure they know why voting is important, and when and where to engage. Our mission is to activate voices at the ballot box.

This guide is designed to help local Leagues energize and activate voters - use it as a guide to the basics and a jumping off point for your creativity and ideas. This is a place to share ideas with fellow local Leagues - we are our own best resource!

YOUR GOTV GUIDE - What's in here?

This guide is a compilation of GOTV ideas that have been used by many Leagues. Some are new, developed for use during the pandemic - nothing like socially distanced voter engagement! Others are more applicable to "normal" times. One thing is for sure - they all demonstrate the determination, resilience and creativity of Leaguers determined to educate and engage voters!

The GOTV Guide is organized around different voting communities. For each community, you will find ideas for: COLLABORATORS, MATERIALS, EVENTS & ACTIVITIES, and IMPACT MEASUREMENT. At the end of the Guide is a TOOLBOX full of downloadable LWVIL graphics for social media and printable items. By featuring the LWV/LWVIL brand and the Illinois Voter Guide, all of these graphics are designed to position the League as a trusted resource for nonpartisan information.

Start with the Basics - to see what's in store. Then identify a voting community where you would like to target your efforts, and use the lists in this guide to spark your creativity.

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Thank you to LWVNY for sharing their GOTV toolkit, which served as a model for LWVIL's Idea Guide.

GETTING STARTED: THE BASICS

Getting out the vote is an ACTIVE endeavor. Start with a plan.
1. Identify your community - where do you want to turn out voters?
2. Identify the COLLABORATORS in that community - this is especially important if it is a community you don't know or that doesn't know you
3. Involve the collaborators - in order to engage voters, you need to work from within the community, not just layer League on top of it. Ask the influencers what kind of message is most listened to, language, vehicle - paper, social media, personal contact?
4. Develop your message and vehicle - your MATERIALS
5. Execute - hit the streets, hold EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES
6. Measure your IMPACT - Collect data and document your efforts
7. Debrief - what would you advise for next time?

A note about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

The DEI lens should be used for all League activities. One good way to do this is ask a few questions before you get started. Revisit these questions as you move through your League activities.

- Who is involved and how diverse is the group planning and implementing this activity?
- Are key stakeholders meaningfully included?
- Is this work that impacts a group or community? If so, is their voice represented?
- Who will be impacted by this activity?
- Does this help us meet the needs of underserved voters?
- Have we considered various, specific marginalized groups and how they might be impacted?
- How might this be perceived by others?
- Does this align with our vision for an equitable and inclusive organization?
- How is equity addressed?
- What changes could be made to make this more equitable?
- How does this impact the League's culture?

A note about Impact Measurement

Included in this guide is a [Voter Service Metrics Report Form](). This Form will help you to track, compile, and report the results of your efforts. Collecting data to measure and report the impact of your efforts is not only important for your own internal review, documentation, and sharing - it is very useful in securing grants *and* of course, keeping LWVIL informed! Combined, the impact of our 40 Leagues and 3800 members makes LWVIL a powerhouse.

READY...SET...GET STARTED!

REMEMBER - the Illinois Voter Guide combined with your **DEDICATION, ENTHUSIASM, AND ENERGY**, are the best tools you have. Enthusiasm is infectious - use yours to activate voters!

THE GENERAL IDEA: ALL VOTING COMMUNITIES

ALL voting communities need to raise their voter turnout. It all starts, in every community, by spreading the word about why it is important to vote, followed by the when and where to vote. There should always be an emphasis on a commitment to VOTE - registration is simply the first step!

COLLABORATORS

These are the nonpartisan stakeholders in the community - anyone who would have an interest in making sure community members are engaged and voting. When at all possible, contact the collaborators first, especially when you are entering a community that you aren't familiar with. These are the people who know the community - so ask them what will work best in their community. Get their input regarding messaging and the best vehicle for the message. Make sure that you clearly communicate the League's nonpartisan stance - the more activated voters, from any party, the stronger our democracy.

MATERIALS

Anything that you can put your message on is "material." Feature the IVG url and QR code, along with key election information: dates, times, deadlines, polling locations, registration requirements, perhaps a sample ballot and/or list of offices being contested. Remember to use languages other than English when possible and applicable. See the TOOLBOX for downloadable graphics for social media, emails and many printable items.

- Printable, small format:
    - postcards, digital/paper plan-to-vote flyers, doorknob hangers, posters, bookmarks
- Social media
    - Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and TikTok
    - Emails! Reach out to all networks - sharing is a force multiplier
- Signs:
    - Lawn signs
    - Posters for local businesses such as coffee shops, laundromats, & libraries. These should be in a smaller format, so businesses will give you window space for them.
    - Banners
    - Digital signs on city streets/highways and marquees
    - Bus wraps, posters for bus and other transportation stops
    - Billboards
- Collateral items
    - Buttons
    - Masks
- Radio and TV
    - Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
    - Interviews on local stations - talk about the importance of voting

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

These are where and when you put your materials, energy, and relationships to work.

- Set up a Voter Assistance "Hotline" on a dedicated cell phone
- Farmers markets -Voter registration/information table
  - Hands on engagement works! use a spin wheel, cornhole, etc.
  - A big photo frame - I will vote - take pics after registration
- Work the line! Where do people wait in lines? Mask up and GOTV
- Hand out cards in apartment complexes, grocery stores, pharmacies, book stores
- Parade to the Polls
- Partners to the Polls (get people to commit to going to vote together- accountability buddies)
- Ballots & Beverages (same idea - we'll go vote, then out for coffee)
- Ask local businesses to put up posters or a stack of postcards near their register

IMPACT MEASUREMENT

Linked to this guide is a Voter Service Metrics Report Form. Use this form to track, compile, and report the results of your efforts. Collecting data to measure and report the impact of your efforts is not only important for your own internal review, documentation, and sharing - it is very useful in securing grants *and* of course, keeping LWVIL informed! Combined, the impact of our 40 Leagues and 3800 members makes LWVIL a powerhouse.

DISTRICTS WITH LOW VOTER TURNOUT

Work in low voter turnout districts can be especially gratifying - but remember, it is important to involve community members and stakeholders from the very beginning. Remember, people need a reason to vote - find out from collaborators what that reason might be for different stakeholders in their community.

Start by identifying the location of low turnout districts. Get voter turnout data from your local election authority and map out the areas where you will focus your efforts. Then identify community organizations in those areas and reach out to include them in your planning (see DEI page). What approach will work best for their community and how can your League best support their work to turn out voters?

COLLABORATORS

- Community, civic and civil rights organizations, faith communities, libraries, disability organizations, food pantry/distribution/banks, housing shelters/programs/authorities
- Schools, civics teachers: "Be my voice" send information home to caregivers
- Community news: local newspaper, local tv station; community news websites/facebook pages; community podcasters
- Retail stores: Grocery stores, dry cleaners, pharmacies, coffee shops, book stores, etc.
- Chambers of Commerce
- Festival and event organizers of local celebrations (non-alcohol serving events)
- Senior centers, seniors
- Youth interns/volunteers who can create social media announcements and videos for their schools and social groups

MATERIALS

- See TOOLBOX for downloadable graphics
  - Feature QR code and url for IVG!
  - Ask stakeholders about key information and messaging
- Digital and printed postcards, plan-to-vote flyers, doorknob hangers, posters
  - Election dates/times, polling locations, voter registration requirements & deadlines, sample ballot, list of offices being contested.
  - Languages - English, Spanish, any others that are applicable
- Social media announcements and videos about the importance of your vote
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on local radio/tv stations in English and languages relevant to the community. PSAs are short, either 15 or 30 second radio or tv spots.
- Bus wraps, posters for bus and other transportation stops. Contact your local transportation authority for permission and billing information.
- Billboards and digital and fixed marquee signs on temporarily dark movie theaters.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- Local radio/tv station interviews - Contact your local League communications chair for media contact information. Remember the League speaks with one voice and your local League president speaks for your League.
- Provide materials for collaborating community organizations, schools, stores, senior centers - look for opportunities with essential service providers that remain open during the pandemic.
- Create engagement at local gatherings with photo props like an "I will vote" picture frame, a civics spinning wheel, or a demonstration of how to access IVG on your phone
- Postcard and doorknob hanger campaigns
- Distribute voter registration/voting information in schools for students to take home to parents
- Motorcades with car signs; neighborhood parades
- Sidewalk chalk messages about voting
- Equip local/urban transportation companies like Uber and Lyft with handouts/IVG QR code
- Address postcards with local organizations, senior centers, scout troops
- Stroll to the Polls - work with teachers/principals to organize high school students to pass out voter registration and polling place information; if you ask someone to vote, they are more likely to vote.

IMPACT MEASUREMENT

While an increase in voter turnout is the result of many different factors and the efforts of multiple organizations, the Voter Service Metrics Report can help you measure and record the impact of many of your efforts.

- Use the Voter Service Metrics Report Form to track, compile, and report your results
- Contact the election authority for results in your target area after the election is certified.
- Compare results between similar elections (ie: general primary to previous general primary)
- Record the number of postcards, flyers, notes home distributed.
- Record the number of voters registered (if registration events are held)

YOUTH VOTE - HIGH SCHOOL FIRST TIME VOTERS

NOTE: New Illinois Election Law Promotes High School Voter Registration
As of 2022, the law requires that every high school must provide registration information to new voters. SB 825 states: "The State Board of Elections shall prepare a one-page document explaining the process to register to vote to be disseminated to high school age students." This document can be distributed electronically. Additionally, the law states: "No high school may prohibit nonpartisan voter registration activities on its premises. A high school may adopt reasonable regulations restricting nonpartisan voter registration activities."

Local Leagues may wish/need to confirm with area high schools that the new law is being followed. This may include confirming when the required one-page voter registration document will be distributed to students. League voter registration events in a high school should be developed with the cooperation of the principal of the school. Keep in mind that local Leagues may have difficulty accessing high school students in their schools due to COVID-19 restrictions.

COLLABORATORS
- Administration & staff: principals, guidance counselors, civics teachers
- Students: Student council, school clubs, student radio stations and newspapers
- Parents: Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO, PTA), club sponsors
- Businesses: team sponsors, restaurants and shops frequented by teens

MATERIALS
- See TOOLBOX for downloadable graphics
  - Feature QR code and url for IVG!
  - Ask stakeholders about key information and messaging
- Digital and printed postcards, plan-to-vote flyers, doorknob hangers, posters
  - Election dates/times, polling locations, voter registration requirements & deadlines, sample ballot, list of offices being contested.
  - Languages - English, Spanish, any others that are applicable
- Digital graphics always for high schools!
- Social media announcements and videos about the importance of your vote
- Information about how to become a student election day judge
- Scripts for high school daily announcements; LED ticker screens in the hallways
- Basic voter educational materials for students to use to create own messaging
- Zoom presentations for classroom use with virtual on-the-spot Q&A

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES
- Organize paper/digital backpack distribution to high school students
- Provide information so students can create their own messages using daily announcements, LED ticker screens in hallways; instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and TikTok videos of voting Q&A
- Organize intra- and inter- high school GOTV messaging video- Instagram and TikTok contests

- Voter registration at high attendance events such as football games; senior only events; lunch in cafeteria;
- Distribute information about how to become a student election day judge
- Stroll to the Polls - work with teachers/principals to organize high school students to pass out voter registration and polling place information in low turnout neighborhoods under the direction of teachers
- Distribute Birthday packages to senior students with items such as: birthday card from LWV member or community leader, postcard with IVG QR code, how to register, where to find nonpartisan candidate information (IVG, newspapers), and how to register after leaving home.
- Zoom with civics classes, clubs, etc. to discuss importance of voting

IMPACT MEASUREMENT

- Use the Voter Service Metrics Report Form to track, compile, and report your results
- Use Facebook Page Insights, Instagram Apps that track followers, YouTube Analytics for responses; Ask students who post videos/content for data
- Record the number of flyers sent home with students for their parents
- If in-school activities are possible - record the number of students who register online during the school day (may require teacher input)

YOUNG ADULTS - COLLEGE AND TRADE SCHOOLS

Local college campuses and trade schools are a great source of interaction; students are usually eager to engage their peers and grateful for help with basic voter information.

COLLABORATORS
- Students: Student council, on campus advocacy organizations, service and honorary sororities and fraternities, event organizers, campus clubs
- Professors and Administrator: Political Science Departments or Civic Engagement offices
- Media: Campus radio/tv, newspapers, student websites, community news websites

MATERIALS
- See TOOLBOX for downloadable graphics
  - Feature QR code and url for IVG!
  - Ask stakeholders about key information and messaging
- Digital and printed postcards, plan-to-vote flyers, doorknob hangers, posters
  - Election dates/times, polling locations, voter registration requirements & deadlines, sample ballot, list of offices being contested.
  - Languages - English, Spanish, any others that are applicable
  - Digital more than paper, this demographic is environmentally conscious! They are just as likely to take a picture of a handout, not the handout.
- Script/PSA for college radio/tv station; LED ticker screens
- Basic voter education materials for students to create own messaging using Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and TikTok videos

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES
- Offer to mentor campus civics club and provide deputy registrars
- College event collaborations: tying registration and GOTV efforts to a campus-wide activity
- Provide advice for PSA's on registration/election day/Vote-by-Mail using all forms of social media and the college website

IMPACT MEASUREMENT
- Use the Voter Service Metrics Report Form to track, compile, and report your results
- Facebook Page Insights, Instagram Apps that track followers, TikTok and/or YouTube Analytics
- If poll sites are on campus, track the increase in the number of voters from previous elections.

SENIOR CITIZENS

The age group 65 and over votes early and consistently and is not usually a critical target for GOTV campaigns. However, many seniors will benefit from encouragement and help getting to the polls, notably those in assisted living facilities, nursing homes and those with mobility issues. Vote-by-Mail ballots can make a difference in voter participation. Seniors can also be a GOTV resource by writing/addressing postcards, and stuffing and stamping mail pieces.

COLLABORATORS

- Senior centers, faith communities, community service organizations (retired senior and volunteer programs), Meals on Wheels
- assisted living facilities, skilled nursing facilities, veterans homes, adult homes
- Local newspapers, community news websites and Facebook pages
- Uber, Lyft for rides to the polls
- Illinois Office for the Aging in each county

MATERIALS

- See TOOLBOX for downloadable graphics
  - Feature QR code and url for IVG!
  - Ask stakeholders about key information and messaging
- Digital and printed postcards, plan-to-vote flyers, doorknob hangers, posters
  - Election dates/times, polling locations, voter registration requirements & deadlines, sample ballot, list of offices being contested.
  - Languages - English, Spanish, any others that are applicable
- Vote-by-Mail application forms

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- Distribute and post digital/paper flyers on voter information and uber/lyft programs using community organization, senior newsletters and senior facilities.
- Zoom presentation with Q&A on voter registration, voting by mail, voting in person and candidate forums

IMPACT MEASUREMENT

- Use the Voter Service Metrics Report Form to track, compile, and report your results
- Request a count from collaborating organizations of the:
  - number of Vote-by-Mail application forms handed out and completed
  - number arranged to be transported to the polls
  - number of flyers distributed by Meals on Wheels, for example or by other organizations serving seniors.

VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES

Look for opportunities to partner with state affiliates of national organizations that would benefit from the resources that the League can provide, including education about candidates and election choices, providing usable/customized absentee ballots, securing transportation to the polls, and providing training on Ballot Marking Devices.

COLLABORATORS
- Access Living
- Resource Center for Independent Living
- Center for Disability Rights
- Local chapters of The ARC for the intellectually and developmentally disabled
- Center for the Independence of the Disabled; Federal Employment and Guidance Services; Services for the Underserved;
- Election authority

MATERIALS
- See TOOLBOX for downloadable graphics
  - Feature QR code and url for IVG!
  - Ask stakeholders about key information and messaging
- Digital and printed postcards, plan-to-vote flyers, doorknob hangers, posters
  - Election dates/times, polling locations, voter registration requirements & deadlines, sample ballot, list of offices being contested.
  - Languages - English, Spanish, what others are applicable?
  -
- Vote-by-Mail application forms in multiple formats

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES
- Demonstrations of Ballot Marking Devices with local election authority
- Presentations about elections and voting at State conferences and meetings of IL organizations
- Distribute and post digital/paper flyers on voter information and Uber/Lyft programs using community organizations, community newsletter, community centers and living facilities.

IMPACT MEASUREMENT
- Use the Voter Service Metrics Report Form to track, compile, and report your results
- Number of flyers distributed
- Number of Ballot Marking Device demonstration attendees
- Number of Vote-By-Mail applications handed out

NEW CITIZENS

New citizens can register to vote after participating in a Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) ceremony. Voting in elections is a responsibility that comes with U.S. citizenship. A U.S. citizen has the right to vote. You can find additional information about voting in 7 languages in the Voter's Guide to Federal Elections , and should consult with your local and state government about registration and election deadlines. Chicagoelections.gov (7 languages), Cookcountyclerkil.gov, and Elections.IL.gov.

COLLABORATORS
- Illinois Coalition of Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)
- Immigrant aid organizations
- Faith communities
- Cultural organizations

MATERIALS
- See TOOLBOX for downloadable graphics
  - Feature QR code and url for IVG!
  - Ask stakeholders about key information and messaging
- Digital and printed postcards, plan-to-vote flyers, doorknob hangers, posters
  - Election dates/times, polling locations, voter registration requirements & deadlines, sample ballot, list of offices being contested.
  - Languages - English, Spanish, any others that are applicable

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES
- Naturalization Ceremonies
  - Attend training and volunteer at a Federal Building.
  - This program is currently suspended during the pandemic
- Photo ops at cultural events "I can vote now" "new voter" "first time voter" picture frames
- Partners to the polls; encourage voting mentors among collaborating organizations

IMPACT MEASUREMENT
- Use the Voter Service Metrics Report Form to track, compile, and report your results

PRE-TRIAL CITIZENS

In 2019, the Illinois general assembly amended the election code to allow pre-trial citizens who have not been convicted, to have the opportunity to register to vote and apply for a vote by mail ballot. In communities more than 3,000,000 population, there shall be established a polling place in the county jail. In 2021, the election law was amended to allow a polling place in all county jails if the election authority wishes.

- SB2090 pre-trial citizens right to register/votebymail - provides that a pre-trial citizen in jail can register to vote, apply for a vote-by-mail ballot and vote by mail. In a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more, the election authority in the county **shall** establish a temporary branch polling place in the county jail. Upon discharge of a person who is eligible to vote from a county jail, the county jail shall provide the person with a voter registration application.
- SB825 - Voting in Jail - Provides that in a county with a population of less than 3,000,000, the sheriff **may** establish a temporary branch polling place at the county jail. Limits eligibility to a resident of a county who is in custody at the county jail and who has not been convicted of the offense for which the resident is in custody.

LWV of Chicago and Chicago Votes collaborate to provide voter registration and assistance with the election day polling place. To address voting in other Illinois counties, it is important to work with the election authority and the sheriff to develop an effective plan to enable voting rights for pre-trial citizens during an election.

COLLABORATORS
- Sheriff
- Election Authority
- Chicago Votes
- Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights

MATERIALS
- Chicago Votes' *Guide to Voter Registration in Jails*
- Know Your Rights one page document explaining voting rights for pre-trial citizens
- See TOOLBOX for additional downloadable graphics

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES
- Voter registration at the jail
- Polling place at the jail on election day

IMPACT MEASUREMENT
- Use the Voter Service Metrics Report Form to track, compile, and report your results

YOUR LWVIL TOOLBOX

In the LWVIL GOTV Toolbox you will find downloadable materials all in one folder! Check out some of the examples below. *Note: to download a PDF, simply open the document, click on the three dots in the upper right corner of the screen and use the drop down menu. You can print materials directly using the print icon. Do not open the document in GoogleDocs, it will not format correctly.*
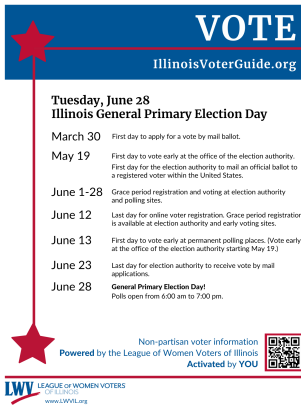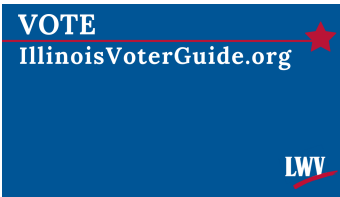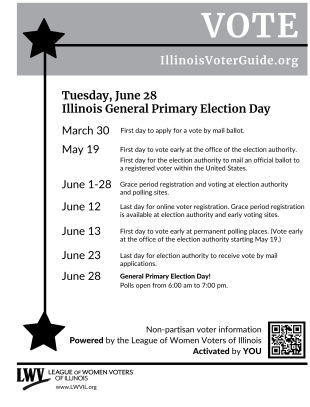
Election Calendar
Graphic format (png) - for social media & emails
Print format (pdf) - color, 8.5 x 11
Print format (pdf) - black & white, 8.5 x 11

Zoom background for meetings and forums

GOTV info card, WITHOUT DATES, English
(print in Spanish on the other side!)
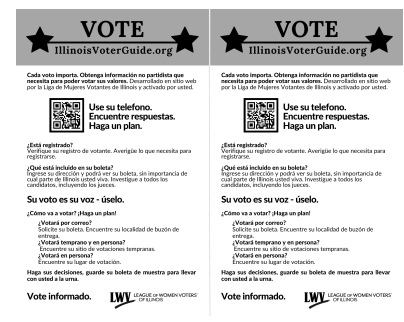Print format (pdf) - color, 8.5x11, two/page
Print format (pdf) - black & white, 8.5x11, two/page

GOTV info card, WITHOUT DATES, Spanish
(print in English on the other side!)
Print format (pdf) - color, 8.5x11, two/page
Print format (pdf) - black & white, 8.5x11, two/page, Spanish

Button design sheet for 2-¼ inch buttons

Yard Signs in English and Spanish

Register to vote.
See your ballot.
Research candidates.

Make a plan. Vote informed.

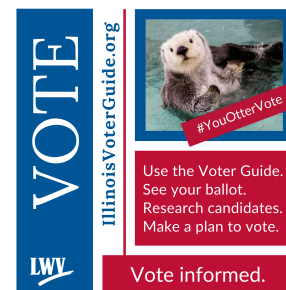Registrese a votar.
Repase su boleta.
Investigue los candidatos.

Haga un plan. Vote informado.

Insta/FB mask

Wear a mask
Vote safely.
Register at the polls.

Help others vote.

IllinoisVoterGuide.org

Every vote counts.

Insta/FB fish

Already voted?
Time to school your friends - help make sure they all vote. Every vote counts!

Vote informed.

Insta/FB otter

Use the Voter Guide.
See your ballot.
Research candidates.
Make a plan to vote.

Vote informed.

Twitter

Already voted?
Time to school your friends - make sure they all vote. Every vote counts!

Vote informed.