

Voter Education Topics

Editable content for voter education materials

This document contains 5 sections of editable content for voter education materials. Each section addresses the most basic questions voters ask. These basic topics can be built upon to provide other information as needed. This toolkit is designed for all U.S. election offices, no matter their size or resources.

Getting started with bite-snack-meal content

Bite-snack-meal is a content framework used to organize and present information. At its core, bite-snack-meal divides information into short, medium, and long versions, ensuring that key information is always prioritized.

The information in this document is intended to be used and adapted across different types of content. It is written to be used in both digital and print mediums. It can also be adapted to share information verbally, including use in scripts for voter helplines. We hope engaging with this document can spark creative ideas about how to share information with voters.

Each topic section has a **key information checklist** and **sample content**. The key information checklist provides suggested topics to help answer voters' most common questions. The sample content offers templates for jurisdictions to adapt for their own needs, written in plain language and organized into bite, snack, and meal components.

Best Practices for Designing Effective Voter Education Materials



Read more about plain language and the bite-snack-meal framework in the best practices guide in the toolkit.

Design templates

This toolkit contains blank and sample design templates to use when developing materials. There are different options to choose from depending on how much time you have. The templates are available in Word, PowerPoint, and InDesign.



How to use the voter education content

Review and edit content suggested in this document and in the templates to match your jurisdiction's election procedures. To get started, follow the instructions below:

- **Review and edit** all the [blue] highlights in brackets, which indicate words that may change across states or jurisdictions and depending on your communication strategy or the type of election.
- **Delete** any sections that don't apply to you.
- **Rearrange** the order of steps to match your jurisdiction's procedures.
- Add citations linking to your election laws, as needed.

If you write more information, remember to do the following:

- Keep numbers (1, 2, 15, 120, etc.) as numbers instead of spelling them out.
- Write in an active voice most of the time. It's the easiest type of sentence to understand.

Explore Voter Education Topics

Click on the titles below to jump to the sections.

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Voter Registration: How to register to vote

Key information checklist

In this section

- What type of election is being held?
- What are the options for registering to vote?
 - Online [URL website link]
 - By mail
 - In-person (election office, DMV, etc.)
 - Same day registration, if available
- What is the contact information for the election office (phone, TTY)?
- What relevant dates (month, day, year) do voters need to know?
 - Election day
 - Voter Registration deadlines for online, by mail, or in person
- What is the voter registration process?
 - Eligibility requirements
 - What voters need to register
 - Options for registering
 - Online, by mail, in-person registration
- How do voters check their voter registration status?
- How and when should voters update their voter registration (name change, move, change political affiliation)?

Voter's question: How do I register to vote?

Size of info	Sample content
Bite	Register to vote [online, by mail, in-person] for the [General] election by [Month day, year]
	Register to vote online at [state registration website]
Bite	Register to vote, or update your address by [Registration deadline - Month day, year] If you move, your voting location may change. Be sure to update your voter registration address every time you move.
Snack	 Are you eligible to vote? You must be a citizen of the United States. You must live in [State]. You must be at least [18 years of age on or before election day]. You must not be barred from voting because of a disqualifying felony conviction. You must not have been judged "mentally incompetent" in a court of law. What do you need to register? Valid State ID or Driver's License number The last four digits of your Social Security number
Meal	Register to vote [online, by mail, in-person] for the [General] election by [Registration deadline - Month day, year] Options for registering Online [local/state registration website]

Size of info	Sample content
Possible formats: website or voter guide	 In person at [your local election office, registrar, or clerk] [Website link to a list of election office addresses] By mail [Options to register and vote on the same day] Do you want to check your voter registration status? Visit [URL to state or local] website to check your voter registration status. Do you need to update your voter registration? If you changed your name, moved within the state, or want to change your political affiliation, update your registration at [URL to state website for updating voter registration]

Voting Options: How to choose when and where to vote

Included in this section:

- o <u>Voting in person</u>
- o Voting by mail/absentee

Key information checklist

Subtopic: Voting in person

- What are the in-person voting options?
 - Voting Early
 - Voting on Election Day
- When is early voting open/available (start and end dates)?
- What is the process for same day registration, if available?

- What do voters need to have?
 - Valid state ID
 - The last four digits of their Social Security number
- Where are the voting locations/where is the voter's assigned voting location?
 - List of voting locations
 - Early
 - Assigned location
 - Non-assigned
 - Election Day
 - Assigned location
 - Non-assigned
 - o URL link to website or resource
 - How the voter can find their assigned location
 - How to find nearby locations
- What do voters need to vote in person?
 - o Valid state or photo ID
 - Link to list of acceptable IDs
- What is the URL of the state or local website for more information?

Voter question: How do I vote in person?

Type of info	Sample content
Bite	Early voting is available [September 21 – November 3]. More information about early voting can be found:
	Online at [Jurisdiction Website]
	By calling the election office at [Jurisdiction Phone Number]
Bite	Election day is [Election Day Date].
	Find your voting location at [URL to voting location list/lookup].
Snack	2 Ways to Vote
	At the polls on Election Day
	Polls are open on Election Day, [Election Day Date], [Election Day Hours]
	Find your [assigned voting location/nearest voting location/available voting locations]:
	Online at [URL to voting location list/lookup]
	By calling the election office at [Jurisdiction Phone Number]
	In person before Election Day
	You can vote early during the early voting period, from [September 21 – November 3]. Learn more at [Jurisdiction Website].
	Find early voting locations at [URL to vote location lookup]
	Voter ID requirements
	[State] requires you to bring one of the following forms of ID with you to vote:

Type of info	Sample content
	 [List valid forms of ID, whether the ID needs to be current, and other documentation or information required of voters to vote]
	For more information on voter ID requirements visit [URL to view voter ID requirements]
Meal	Where can I vote in-person?
	At the polls on Election Day
	Polls are open on Election Day, [Election Day Date], [Election Day Hours]
	Find your [assigned voting location/nearest voting location/available voting locations]:
	 Online at [URL to voting location list/lookup]
	By calling the election office at [Jurisdiction Phone Number]
	In person before Election Day
	You can vote early during the early voting period, from [September 21 – November 3]. Learn more at [Jurisdiction Website].
	Find early voting locations at [URL to early voting location list/lookup]
	Can I register to vote on election day?
	[State] [does/does not] offer same-day registration.
	What do I need to bring with me to vote in person?
	[State] requires all voters to provide:
	 [List valid forms of ID, including whether they need to be current/active, and other documentation or information required of voters to vote]

Type of info	Sample content
	First time voter? Special rules may apply.
	If you are voting for the first time, you may be required to show additional identification. The accepted forms of ID are:
	 [List valid forms of ID accepted, and other documentation or
	information required for a first time voter to vote.]

Key information checklist

Subtopic: Voting by mail/absentee

- What relevant dates (show month, day, year) are important to voters?
 - Absentee/mail ballot request deadlines
 - Absentee/mail ballot return deadlines
- How do voters request a mail ballot?
 - Online
 - o By mail
 - At the local election office
- What are the eligibility requirements to receive a mail ballot?
 - Requirements (changes state to state)
- How do voters return a mail ballot?
 - o By mail
 - Ballot drop off location (if applicable)
- How to pack your ballot and seal envelopes properly
 - o Where do voters sign their return envelope?
 - If applicable, witness and/or assistant signatures
 - Postage (if needed)
- What is the URL link to state or local website for by mail/absentee ballot information?

Voter question: How do I vote by mail/absentee?

Included in this section:

- o Sample content for states where voters request a mail ballot
- o Sample content for states where all voters get a mail ballot

Type of info	Sample content for states where voters request a mail ballot
Bite	How do I vote [by mail/absentee]?
	Request an [absentee/mail] ballot by [Request deadline: month, day, year and time] using the [form/voter portal] at [Jurisdiction Website].
	Return it by [Return deadline date and time] by mail, [to a drop box, to the election office, or bring it to your voting location] on [Election date and deadline time]. [You can find a list of drop box locations at [Jurisdiction website]].
Snack	Unable to get to the polls on Election Day? You can vote by mail!
	To vote by mail, you must request a ballot. Then you can mark the ballot and mail it back or drop it off.
	How do I get a [mail-in/absentee] ballot?
	Request a ballot by [Request Deadline: month, day, year] at [URL to the state website for absentee/vote by mail voting].
	After you apply to vote by mail, you will receive your ballot within [time frame].
	How do I mark my [mail-in/absentee] ballot?
	Follow the instructions on the top of your ballot to mark it correctly. Ballots must be marked using [a blue or black pen].
	How to return your [vote by mail/absentee] ballot

Type of info	Sample content for states where voters request a mail ballot
	Follow the instructions on the ballot packet to sign and seal your return envelope.
	To return your ballot, you can:
	 Mail your ballot, so that it is [postmarked/delivered] by Election Day, [Date: month, day, year]
	 Deliver your ballot to the [Elections Office name] [or any of the drop box locations listed at [Jurisdiction website]]
	 Drop off your ballot on Election Day at [any/your] voting location before [deadline time]
	All ballots must be [postmarked/delivered] by [time] Election Day, [Month day, 20XX].
Meal	Everything you need to know about [vote by mail/absentee voting]
	[Vote by mail/absentee voting] allows voters a convenient, accessible way to vote without needing to visit a voting location.
	How does [vote by mail/absentee voting] work?
	Once you request a ballot and your eligibility is confirmed, a ballot and return envelope will be mailed to you.
	Follow the instructions in the ballot packet and complete all required sections.
	Use the return envelope provided to return your ballot, using one of three methods:
	 Mailing your ballot. Ballots must be [postmarked by/received by [deadline]]
	 Delivering your ballot to the [Elections Office name] [or any of the drop box locations listed at [Jurisdiction website]]
	 Dropping off your ballot on Election Day at [any/your] voting location in [Jurisdiction name]

Type of info	Sample content for states where voters request a mail ballot
	Important deadlines
	[Include table or list of important [vote-by-mail/absentee deadlines]]
	Who is eligible to [vote by mail/vote absentee]?
	In [State] you must meet the following eligibility requirements to [vote by mail/vote absentee]:
	[List eligibility requirements in detail, including link to legal code]
	How do I request an [vote by mail/absentee] ballot?
	Request a ballot by [Request Deadline: month, day, year] at [URL to the
	state website for absentee/vote by mail voting].
	After you apply to [vote by mail/vote absentee], you should receive your ballot within [time frame].
	How can I check the status of my ballot?
	To track your ballot:
	 [Include options for voters to track their ballot, including a URL for voter ballot tracking, a phone number for ballot tracking, or other services provided by your election office.]
	How are [vote by mail/absentee] ballots verified?
	[Provide information on how your state approaches ballot verification.]
	How will I know if there is a problem with my ballot?
	[Provide information on how your election office handles ballot curing. If applicable, include next steps voters need to take.]

Type of info	Sample content for states where all voters get a mail ballot
Bite	Absentee/vote by mail
	All active registered voters will receive vote by mail ballots by [time/date].
	For information on how to complete and return your [absentee/vote by mail] mail ballots visit [Jurisdiction Website]
Snack	How to vote by mail
	When will I get my mail ballot?
	All active registered voters will receive vote-by-mail ballots by [time/date].
	You can mark the ballot and mail it back or drop it off in-person.
	How do I return my [mail-in/absentee] ballot?
	Mark your ballot. Then follow the instructions on the return envelope to sign and seal your ballot.
	There are three ways to return your [mail-in/absentee] ballot. You can:
	 Mail your ballot, so that it is [postmarked/delivered] by [time] on Election Day, [November 8, 2024].
	 Deliver your ballot to the [Elections Office name] [or any of the drop box locations listed at [Jurisdiction website]]
	 Drop off your ballot on Election Day at [any/your] voting location in [Jurisdiction name]
Meal	Everything you need to know about [vote-by-mail/absentee] voting

[Vote-by-mail/absentee voting] allows voters a convenient, accessible way to vote without needing to visit a polling location.

How does [vote-by-mail/absentee voting] work?

All active registered voters will receive vote-by-mail ballots by [time/date].

You can then follow the instructions on the ballot to complete all required sections.

Use the envelope provided to return your ballot using one of three methods:

- Mailing your ballot, so that it is [received/postmarked] by Election Day, [November 8, 2024]
- Delivering your ballot to the [Elections Office name] [or any of the drop box locations listed at [Jurisdiction website]]
- Dropping off your ballot on Election Day at [any/your] voting location in [Jurisdiction name]

Important deadlines

[Include table or list of important [vote-by-mail/absentee deadlines]

How do I request a [mail/absentee ballot]?

All active registered voters will receive vote-by-mail ballots by [time/date].

How can I check the status of my ballot?

To track your ballot:

 [Include options for a voter to track their ballot, which may include tracking available via a voter portal, ballot tracking application, or website, or a phone number to call your office.]

How are [vote-by-mail/absentee] ballots verified?

[Provide information on how your state approaches ballot verification.]

How will I know if there is a problem with my ballot?

[Provide information on how your election office handles ballot curing. If applicable, include next steps voters need to take.]

Voting Process: How to make sure your vote counts

Key information checklist

- How do voters fill out a paper ballot correctly?
 - How to mark the ballots correctly (filling in ovals, marking, write-ins)
 - What pen to use
 - o What voters can do if they make a mistake
 - What not to do
- In-person voting:
 - o What do voters do if they make a mistake on their in-person ballot?
 - o What do voters need to know about provisional voting?
- Vote by mail:
 - o What do voters do if they make a mistake on their mail/absentee ballot?
 - What are the mail/absentee ballot return deadlines?
 - o How can voters track their mail ballot to make sure it's been counted?

Voter question: How do I make sure my vote counts?

Sample content
Check your ballot carefully
[Use only a blue or black pen. Do not use red ink pens, markers, or other types of pens.]
If you make a mistake, ask a poll worker for a new ballot or follow the instructions in your [mail/absentee] ballot packet.
Do not sign your name, write your initials, or write any other words or marks on your voted ballot.
To vote for a [qualified] write-in candidate, write their name on the blank line at the end of the list of candidates and fill in the oval next to that name.
[A list of qualified write-in candidates is available at the voting location on Election Day. The list is posted on our website at [URL for qualified write-ins] [13 days] before the election.]
How do I fill out a paper ballot?
 [Provide instructions on how to mark the ballots correctly (filling in ovals, marking, write-ins). If possible, use illustrations here to help voters visualize the process.]
Ballots must be completed in [describe what pen/ink to use]
In person voting:
What if I make a mistake on my ballot?
If you make a mistake while completing your ballot, [provide instructions to the voter on who to speak to at the polling location to get a new ballot and discard of the spoiled ballot].

Type of info	Sample content
	What if I'm told I need to vote provisionally?
	Provisional voting is a process used when there is a question about a voter's eligibility. Provisional ballots are required when:
	• [List reasons a voter may need to vote provisionally in your state]
	To vote provisionally, you must complete and submit:
	 [List all forms/documents required by your state for provisional voting]
	Once your eligibility to vote has been confirmed, your vote will be counted. To check the status of your provisional ballot you can:
	 [List options for voters to track the status of their provisional ballot.]
	Vote by mail:
	How do I complete a [mail/absentee] ballot?
	Follow the instructions on the top of your ballot to complete and submit your ballot correctly. You can also visit [URL to instructions on completing a mail-in ballot] for more information.
	What is the deadline to submit my [mail/absentee] ballot?
	The deadline to submit your mail-in ballot is [deadline].
	How can I track the status of my [mail/absentee] ballot?
	You can track the status of your ballot [provide options for voters to track the status of their ballot.]

Type of info	Sample content
	What can I do if there is an issue with my [mail/absentee] ballot?
	If you find that there is an issue with your ballot, you can [provide
	instructions to voter on how to cure their ballots].

Voters with specific circumstances

Included in this section:

- o <u>Military & overseas voters</u>
- Voters with disabilities
- o Voters who need language assistance

Key information checklist

Subtopic: Military & overseas voters (UOCAVA)

- Who is eligible?
 - U.S. citizen living outside the U.S.
 - Military or service member
 - Spouse or eligible family member of a service member
- How do voters request a mail/absentee ballot?
 - Submit a request through the state or local election office
 - Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)
- How do voters return their mail/absentee ballot?
 - Return options
 - Mail
 - Where to sign on the return envelope
 - Who else needs to sign (witness, assistant, etc.)
 - How to pack the ballot and seal return envelopes properly
 - Ballot return deadlines for absentee/vote by mail (include) postmark deadline if applicable)
 - Electronic ballot return
 - Fax, Email, Portal

Voter question: How do I vote if I live overseas or if I'm in the military?

Type of info	Sample content
Bite	Overseas or military voters can register and request a ballot at [URL to state website for overseas/military voting]. You can choose whether to receive your ballot by mail or electronically [by email/fax/portal.]]
	You can also use the Federal Post Card Application found at fvap.gov.
Snack	Who is eligible to vote when living overseas?
	All U.S. citizens living overseas have the right to vote in federal elections, including those who have moved temporarily (e.g. for school or military service) and those who have moved indefinitely.
	Can I register to vote or update my registration overseas?
	Yes, all U.S. citizens can register to vote from overseas. To register to vote or update your registration, visit [URL to update registration/register to vote for military and overseas voters].
	How do I request a ballot?
	Overseas or military voters can register and request a ballot at [URL to state website for overseas/military voting]. You can choose whether to receive your ballot by mail or electronically [by email/fax/portal.]] You can also use the Federal Post Card Application found at fvap.gov.
Meal	Who is eligible to vote when living overseas? All U.S. citizens living overseas have the right to vote in federal elections, including those who have moved temporarily (e.g. for school or military service) and those who have moved indefinitely.
	Do I need a U.S mailing address to vote if I live overseas?
	You do not need a U.S. mailing address to vote abroad.

Type of info	Sample content
	Does it matter how long I've been out of the U.S.?
	Time is not a factor in your ability to vote in the U.S. If you hold U.S. citizenship, you have the right to vote.
	Can I register to vote or update my registration overseas?
	Yes, all U.S. citizens can register to vote from overseas. For information on registering to vote or updating your voter registration, visit [website to update registration/register to vote].
	How do I request an overseas ballot?
	Submit a completed Federal Post Card Application to your local election official to confirm your eligibility and be put on the absentee voter list for the upcoming elections of this calendar year. Apply for overseas voting at [website to request overseas voting application].
	How do I submit a ballot while overseas?
	Follow the instructions on the return envelope to sign and seal your ballot. Postmarked [Date: month, day, year]. All ballots must be received by [date]. Alternatively, you may return your ballot by [email/fax/portal, include specifics.] If you do not receive your ballot, you can use the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) found at FVAP.gov.
	How can I track my ballot once I submit it?
	Once submitted, you can keep track of your ballot by visiting [URL to track ballots] or calling or emailing your election office at [election office phone number or email address].

Key information checklist

Subtopic: Voters with disabilities

- What rights do voters with disabilities have?
- What information is available about accessibility?
 - Voting location accessibility
 - Election and voting information in large print, audio, or Braille versions
- What assistance is available for in-person accessible voting?
 - Voting options
 - Paper
 - Touchscreen ballot marking device
 - Curbside or drive-up voting
 - How to get assistance in marking and casting a ballot
 - o Who can help you
- What are other ways voters with disabilities can request a ballot and cast their vote?
 - Vote by mail/absentee
 - Electronic ballot delivery (also called Accessible vote by mail)
 - Electronic ballot return
- What is the contact information regarding accessibility accommodation?
 - URL to state or local website
 - Call [phone number]
 - Relay service [#]

Voter question: As a voter with a disability, what are my voting options?

Type of info	Sample content
Bite	Voting rights for voters with disabilities
	As a voter with a disability, you have a right to vote:
	Privately and independently
	At an accessible voting location
	Using an accessible voting system
	If you need assistance, you can:
	Ask an election worker, or
	Bring someone to help you

Type of info	Sample content
Snack	Accessible voting options are available
	As a voter with a disability, you have a right to vote:
	Privately and independently
	At an accessible voting location
	Using an accessible voting system
	If you need assistance, you can:
	Ask an election worker, or
	Bring someone to help you
	Additionally, you may:
	Seek assistance from workers at your voting location
	Bring someone of your choice to help you cast a ballot (except for your employer or an agent of your union)
	Ask your local election officials about accessible equipment, aids, or procedures that are available to help you vote
	[Include information about curbside voting, if available]
	For more information see our website [URL to information on services
	provided for voters with disabilities in your jurisdiction]
Meal	[Jurisdiction] supports voters with disabilities
	[Jurisdiction] provides the following services to voters with disabilities:
	[List assistance provided by your jurisdiction to voters with
	disabilities. Include relevant contact information such as, phone
	numbers, email addresses, forms, and physical addresses here.]

Voter Education Topics: Editable Content Document

Key information checklist

Voters who need language assistance

- What languages/translations are available in our jurisdiction?
- Which materials are translated?
- Where can voters request translated materials?
 - o Phone lines for different languages
 - o State or local website URL to find translated materials online or request printed materials to be mailed
- Where can I find out more?
 - o Jurisdiction website URL for more information

Sample Topic

Voter question: How can I get voting materials in my preferred language?

Type of info	Sample language
Bite	 [Jurisdiction] offers voting materials in the following languages: [List languages provided by your jurisdiction] Find out how you can get election information in your preferred language by visiting [URL for your jurisdiction's language access services].
Snack	 [Jurisdiction] offers voting materials in the following languages: [List languages provided by your jurisdiction] [Jurisdiction] provides the following language access services [languages offered]: [List jurisdiction's language access services] Learn more about how you can get election information in your preferred language by visiting [URL for your jurisdiction's language access services].
Meal	 [Jurisdiction] provides the following language access services for [languages offered]: [List jurisdiction's language access services with details. Include when services are available, how to access them, & relevant contact information such as phone numbers, email addresses, forms, and physical addresses here.]