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A GUIDE
TO CONDUCTING
A SUCCESSFUL
VOTER
REGISTRATION/
EDUCATION
DRIVE



AN OVERVIEW:

The Secretary of State's voter registration drive is a non-partisan statewide program designed to increase participation in the election process through registering new voters and encouraging voter turnout. The success of this program depends on the assistance from members throughout the community.

This brochure serves to provide guidelines for businesses, associations, schools, and other organizations that wish to plan and implement a voter registration/education drive.

PLANNING THE DRIVE:

Any group planning a voter registration drive should tailor it to their:

- ✦ individual organizational structure;
- ✦ management style, and;
- ✦ physical setting.

Thus, groups are encouraged to adjust the following guidelines to fit their specific situations.

COMMITMENT:

The most important part of the drive is a strong commitment from the organization's leaders. Without this, most drives, whether large or small, may not be as successful as possible. You can show your commitment to this program in many ways. You may want to:

- ✦ Send a memoranda to employees or members;
- ✦ Mention the drive in meetings and gatherings;
- ✦ Distribute voter registration cards and posters throughout your headquarters;
- ✦ Designate a week as "Voter Registration Week" or "Get Out The Vote Week";
- ✦ Sponsor a voter registration "open house" with refreshments during lunch or after work;
- ✦ If you are conducting a drive in the community, set up a booth in a shopping mall, in front of a grocery store, or in front of your building;
- ✦ Have a slogan contest to encourage participation in your drive.

The possibilities are endless, but to get the drive started, we have included a sample memorandum. Remember to adapt the memorandum to your organizational structure and the time frame of the upcoming election (see "important election dates" section in this brochure).

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CHOOSING A COORDINATOR:

Depending on the size of your organization, choosing a coordinator will vary. Generally, public affairs directors, member relations committees or personnel directors are best suited for the job. Whoever you choose, remember that they must have access to all the organization's members and that they must have enough authority to run the drive.

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM

TO: Employees (Members, etc.)
FROM: _____, Chief Executive Officer (President, etc.)
DATE: _____, 1994
RE: Employee (Member, etc.) participation in the November 8th General Election

As you are aware, our corporation (association, etc.) has been extremely involved in a voter registration drive in association with the Texas Secretary of State. Our goal is to maximize employee (member, etc.) participation on election day, Tuesday, November 8, 1994.

I am asking that each of you take the time to vote on Tuesday the 8th. This is a very important election year. Not only will we be electing our Governor, but also you will be electing U.S. Representatives, state-wide officials, and other officials at the county and precinct level. Remember, in order for our voices to be heard in our city, in Austin, and in Washington, it is imperative that each of you cast your ballot.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For your convenience, a listing of polling places is attached. If you need to vote during business hours, I encourage you to arrange with your supervisor a convenient time to cast your ballot.

The right to vote is precious, and I believe that you should take the opportunity to exercise this right. Thank you for your participation.

GOALS:

After the coordinator is selected, the organization's leaders and the coordinator should meet to set and define the goals for the drive. In this meeting, the following tips should be discussed:

- ✦ Who do we want to address? (the members of our organization, the members of their families, the community at large)?
- ✦ What percentage of this group can be registered?
- ✦ What is the time frame of the drive?
- ✦ What resources or promotional materials will we provide?
- ✦ What resources do we need from the Secretary

of State's office?

- ✦ What specific activities should we try?

IMPLEMENTING THE DRIVE:

Now that you have established a commitment to your cause, selected a coordinator and determined your goals, you are ready to begin the drive.

The following is a listing and brief explanation of some widely used voter registration activities. If you want more details about these activities, or if you want assistance implementing a plan that will fit your needs, please contact the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office at 1-800-252-VOTE(8683).

A PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN:

Your involvement in a voter registration/education drive can be a big opportunity for community involvement and exposure. Your efforts will be supported by a strong statewide media campaign which the Secretary of State's Office has put together, so the citizens in your community will have knowledge of the voter registration campaign. Here are some ways that you can participate in this type of campaign:

- ✦ Use your organization's newsletters, a memoranda, or bulletin boards to inform your employees, members, and/or customers of your plan to hold a drive;
- ✦ Write letters to the editor supporting the drive;
- ✦ Hold a press conference to announce the drive;
- ✦ Conduct a joint voter registration drive with another group in your community;
- ✦ Distribute bumper stickers or flyers with your organization's logo and a catchy voter registration slogan.

REGISTRATION ACTIVITIES:

Before starting your voter registration drive, you may wish to have someone in your organization become a volunteer deputy registrar. Anyone can issue voter registration applications, but only the Voter Registrar of your county and volunteer deputy registrars can accept completed applications. The process is easy. Simply contact your local Voter Registrar or the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office for information.

You will need the following forms and supplies for your

drive (most are available from the Secretary of State's Office at no cost):

1. voter registration applications and display boxes;
2. a list of county seats and zip codes (included in this brochure);
3. identifying signs and posters;
4. the telephone number of your local Voter Registrar and surrounding Voter Registrars (also included in this brochure);
5. pens and pencils;
6. name tags for the coordinator and the volunteers.

In addition, the Secretary of State's Office distributes two brochures entitled:

1. "Voter Registration in Texas", and;
2. "The Volunteer Deputy Registrar Guide", which may prove helpful. Please contact our office to order these brochures and supplies.

Once you have the necessary materials, it is time to begin registering new voters. Your approach must respect the individual's right to register or to not register as well as their right to vote or not vote. Use persuasive leadership whenever possible to encourage registration and voter turnout, but never force your opinions on an individual. Also, make sure that your coordinator and volunteers are well supplied with voter registration materials and are able to answer basic questions about the registration process.

"GET-OUT-THE-VOTE" CAMPAIGN:

Registration is only the first step in conducting a successful voter registration drive. The second and most important step is motivating those you have spent time registering to actually "Get Out & Vote". Please consider the following suggestions which will receive a good response and accomplish this goal:

- ✦ **Information:** Make sure that all potential voters know when and where they can vote. You can get a list of polling places from your County Clerk, and this brochure lists the important 1994 election dates.
- ✦ **Education:** The more information that potential voters have, the more likely it is that they will participate in the election process. Have your coordinator put together a listing of nonpartisan organizations in your area who can provide information about the candidates' positions on each issue (such as the League of Women Voters).

✦ **Early Voting:** In Texas, a person is no longer required to have a reason to vote early by personal appearance. Thus, you should encourage early voting by stressing its convenience. You can obtain a list of the dates and times, and polling places for early voting from your local County Clerk.

✦ **Follow Up:** None of the above information is useful unless you can get it to potential voters. Newsletters, memoranda, payroll stuffers, posters, booths, staff meetings and phone calls are just a few of the tools you can use to distribute this information.

VOTER REGISTRATION MATERIALS AVAILABLE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE

VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS: The voter registration application measures 4' x 6' and is postage-paid by the State of Texas.

POSTERS: The posters, which are available in both English and Spanish, display the voter registration logo and list information such as the last day to register to vote and the Secretary of State's toll-free number. Both posters measure 11' x 17'. We recommend that you place them in a busy area, such as a store-front window or reception area.

DISPLAY BOX: The display box allows you to display up to 400 voter registration applications in a professional manner. Assembled, each box measures 4.5' x 8.5'. The box is mailed to you flat with assembly instructions.

VOTER REGISTRATION IN TEXAS BROCHURE: This brochure is very useful to your voter registration coordinator. The brochure outlines the qualifications for voting, who is entitled to vote, how to register to vote, and the process by which a voter's application is processed once it is received by the local Voter Registrar.

VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR GUIDE: This brochure explains how a member of your organization can become a volunteer deputy registrar.

GET-OUT-THE-VOTE MATERIALS: Our office has prepared posters, in both English and Spanish, and bill stuffers for your "Get-Out-The-Vote" campaign.

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Fax (512) 475-2811



Printed on recycled paper

VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION (SOLICITUD PARA REGISTRO DE VOTANTES)				
PLEASE COMPLETE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION. PRINT OR TYPE IN ALL INFORMATION.				
Last Name (Apellido)		First Name (NOMBRE PRIMARIO)	Middle Name (NOMBRE MEDIO)	Initials (Iniciales)
Sex (Sexo)	Date of Birth (Fecha de Nacimiento)	Place of Birth (Lugar de Nacimiento)	County and Address of Former Residence (Condado y Direccion de Anterior Domicilio)	
Home Address (Direccion de Casa) and Apartment Number, City, State, and ZIP. If none, describe location of residence, ID# and include P.O. Box or Rural Box. (Direccion de Residencia, Numero de Apartamento, Ciudad, Estado, y Codigo Postal, o si no tiene direccion de residencia, ID# y Estado, y incluir un numero de caja postal o una caja rural.)				
Mailing Address (Direccion de Correo) and ZIP. If mail cannot be delivered to your residence address, alternate Postal Union Station or Army Post Office or comparable mail forwarding address. (Direccion de Correo y Codigo Postal, o si no puede ser entregado a su domicilio, una estacion de correo alternativa.)				
Applicant is a United States citizen and a resident of the county and has not been finally convicted of a felony or if a felon eligible for registration under section 1.0005, Election Code, I understand that giving false information to procure a voter registration is a misdemeanor. (El solicitante es un ciudadano de los Estados Unidos y es residente del condado y no ha sido finalmente declarado culpable de un delito grave, o si es un delincuente, entiendo que proporcionar informacion falsa para obtener un registro de votante es un delito menor.)				
I, Secretary of State, do hereby certify that the applicant is a qualified voter of this county and has not been finally convicted of a felony or if a felon eligible for registration under section 1.0005, Election Code, I understand that giving false information to procure a voter registration is a misdemeanor. (Yo, Secretario de Estado, certifico que el solicitante es un votante calificado de este condado y no ha sido finalmente declarado culpable de un delito grave, o si es un delincuente, entiendo que proporcionar informacion falsa para obtener un registro de votante es un delito menor.)				
Signature of Applicant or Agent or Printed Name of Applicant if Signed by Witness (Firma del Solicitante o Agente o Nombre Impreso del Solicitante si Firmado por un Testigo)				
Signature of Agent or Printed Name of Applicant if Signed by Witness (Firma del Agente o Nombre Impreso del Solicitante si Firmado por un Testigo)				
Date of Signature (Fecha de Firma)				
Signature of Registrar (Firma del Registrador)				

VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION

- Name:** Applicants must give their full legal name--no initials please. A married woman may not use her husband's first name in place of her own.
- Sex:** The sex should be indicated because many times it is hard to tell whether the applicant is male or female by his or her given name.
- Date of Birth:** The date of birth blanks must be properly filled in with the applicant's month, day, and year of birth. Simply showing that they are over 18 will not be acceptable.
- Place of Birth:** Section 13.002(c) of the Texas Election Code requires a place of birth on the application.
- 4a. Please explain to the applicant that, if they were born in a foreign country, not born to American parents, or were otherwise not entitled to U.S. citizenship at birth, they must also provide their court of naturalization.**
- County and Address of Former Residence:** Applicants must indicate if they were formally registered in another Texas county so that their previous registration will be cancelled.
- Residence Address (or Description of or Physical Location If no Street Address):** The applicant's county street address must be provided in this space. Lack of zip code does not invalidate the application.
- 6a. If the applicant cannot receive mail at the above address, then a description of the physical location of the residence is required, e.g., two miles west of Dripping Springs on Hwy. 290.**
- 7, 8, and 9. Social Security Number, Telephone Number, and Texas Driver's License or Personal I.D. Number:** Although this information is optional, it is important because it is used to accurately maintain the voter registration records.
- Signature:** A signature is required on all applications to make them valid. A husband, wife, mother, father, son, or daughter may act as an agent to register one another if the person acting as an agent is a registered voter of the county or has submitted an application. If someone is unable to sign the application, you may have them mark the application, and their mark must be witnessed.

Remember, your coordinator and volunteers should not indicate in any way how an individual should vote. Moreover, it is important that your organization not conduct the drive in a manner that favors a particular candidate or political party. Every effort should be made to ensure that the voter/education drive and "Get-Out-The-Vote" campaign remain completely nonpartisan.

CONDUCTING A NONPARTISAN DRIVE:

Federal law allows a corporation to jointly sponsor a nonpartisan voter registration or "Get-Out-The-Vote" drive with a nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization or with the state or local agency responsible for administering elections, such as the Secretary of State's Office.

A corporation may distribute to the general public registration and voter information prepared by the election officials. The corporation may set up a table, rack, or booth on its own premises for distributing official voter information and employees may help distribute these materials. Of course, the distribution must be carried out in a nonpartisan manner: the corporation may not endorse or support a candidate or party in connection with the distribution.

Federal law also allows a corporation to purchase nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote ads directed to the general public. This message should be limited to promoting such acts as voting and registration (e.g., "please register and vote") and to describing the time and place for registration or for voting. The message may be delivered through posters, billboards, broadcast media, newspapers, newsletters, brochures, or similar communications.

Other activities of a jointly-sponsored, nonpartisan registration drive must be conducted either by a person authorized by the governmental agency or by the nonpartisan organization itself. In other words, the co-sponsor, such as the Secretary of State's Office, or the tax-exempt organization must participate in administering any other activities of the drive, although the corporation may make its office building and employees available for such activities.

MEASURING RESULTS HOW WELL DID WE DO?

As in other efforts by an organization, it is important to measure what has been accomplished. Measuring the results should be done in a manner that enables your leaders to know that you conducted a successful drive, that a high percentage of your organization is registered to vote, and that they actually did vote in the last election. One way to measure the results of the drive is through the use of surveys. By surveying your organization at the beginning of the drive, and after an election, you can determine how many

people you registered, and how many people actually voted. Another way is to check with your volunteer deputy registrar. They will have records of how many completed applications they received and delivered to the Voter Registrar.

IMPORTANT ADDRESSES

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TEXAS LIBERTARIAN PARTY

Joe Barnett, Chair
733 Edgestone Place, #236
Arlington, Texas 76006
(817)469-9171

IMPORTANT 1994 ELECTION DATES

- January 15, 1994:** Local government uniform election date.
- February 6, 1994:** Last day citizens may register to vote for the March 8, 1994, primary elections.
- February 7, 1994:** An application by mail to register to vote in the primary election is acceptable if postmarked by this date.
- February 16, 1994 to March 4, 1994:** Period for early voting by personal appearance for the March 8, 1994, primary elections.
- March 8, 1994:** Primary election day.
- April 12, 1994:** Primary runoff election day.
- April 18, 1994 to May 3, 1994:** Period for early voting by personal appearance for the May 7, 1994, local elections.
- May 7, 1994:** Local government uniform election date.
- July 25, 1994 to August 9, 1994:** Period for early voting by personal appearance for the August 13, 1994, local elections.
- August 13, 1994:** Local government uniform election date.
- October 9, 1994:** Last day citizens may register to vote for the November 8, 1994, general election.
- October 11, 1994:** An application by mail to register to vote in the general election is acceptable if postmarked by this date.
- October 19, 1994 to November 4, 1994:** Period for early voting by personal appearance for the November 8, 1994 general election.
- November 8, 1994:** General election day.

