



# Voter Registration Training

## How to Conduct a Voter Registration Drive in San Francisco

**November 2016**





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San Franciscans must register to vote by

**October 24, 2016**

in order to vote in the General Election on

**November 8, 2016**



# **Training Your Team Before You Begin**

**It is critical that everyone working or volunteering for you understands the procedures and laws relating to voter registration. Before sending out people from your organization to register people to vote, be certain that each person knows the registration eligibility requirements and the importance of registrants correctly completing the voter registration card.**



# Setting Up a Registration Drive

- Acquire Voter Registration Cards (VRC)
- Train circulators for accurate, swift, friendly service
- Receive permission to set up in high-traffic areas or on private property
- Set up a table or area with:
  - Clipboards
  - Pens
  - Signs – banners – decorations
- Designate a secure place to keep completed cards



**People who register voters are called “circulators”**



# Acquiring Voter Registration Cards

Any person, group, or organization may visit the San Francisco Department of Elections, City Hall, Room 48

- Fill out, sign, and submit:  
**Statement of Distribution**  
to take custody of Voter Registration Cards (VRC)
- Receive numbered  
**California Voter Registration Cards**  
(good anywhere in the state), which are available  
in many languages
- Ask for a free **REGISTER HERE** display box,  
while supplies last



# Training Your Team Before You Begin

Train your “circulators” in:

1. Basic Registration Rules
2. Frequently Asked Questions
3. Completing and Reviewing a Voter Registration Card
4. Keeping information on the VRC safe
5. What to do with completed cards



**TIP:**  
Read the  
VRC  
before  
asking  
others to  
fill it out!



# Understanding the Basic Rules

1. Register anyone who wants to register to vote
2. Let people who wish to register in private take the card with them
3. Do **not** offer an incentive to register, although you **may** offer a treat to everyone passing by
4. Do **not** charge anyone a fee to register to vote
5. Do **not** pre-print any statement or information on cards
6. Do **not** alter information on cards
7. Do **not** copy, collect, or share information on cards
8. Fill out both sections of the “Did someone help you...” box if you helped fill out or will deliver the form
9. Be sure to remove the receipt and give it to the voter
10. Submit cards within 3 business days of completion (or registration deadline, whichever comes **first**)



# Frequently Asked Question #1

## 1. Do I need to be a registered voter to register others?

- No. You do not need to be a registered voter, be a particular age or even be a resident of the area in order to register voters. However, if you help someone fill out their voter registration card, you do have to fill in and sign the affidavit in the spaces provided for that purpose
- All circulators are responsible for following the law, so training is highly recommended



# Frequently Asked Question #2

## 2. Can I refuse to register someone?

- No. You must accept ALL eligible registrations, regardless of political party preference, county of registration, etc



# Frequently Asked Question #3

## 3. Who can register to vote in California?

- United States citizen
- Resident of California
- At least 18 years old on Election Day  
(it is OK register a person who is 17 years old as long as they will be 18 before or on Election Day. The voter registration will be activated when they are old enough to vote)
- Not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction or on parole for a felony conviction



# Frequently Asked Question #4

## 4. Who is a “resident” of San Francisco?

- People who live in San Francisco
- People who move to another state or country but intend to return, may still claim residency in California. However, they cannot register in another state and continue to vote in California
- People in the service of the United States or the State of California stationed elsewhere may retain residency in California for voting purposes
- Students may register at either their “hometown” address **OR** their “school” address



# Frequently Asked Question #5

## 5. Can someone who is homeless register and vote?

- Yes. People who are homeless may register to vote
- If someone does not have a “home” address:
  - **Line 5:** leave blank
  - **Line 7:** write in the cross streets where they most often stay (to establish voting precinct)
  - **Line 8:** if possible, write in a “mailing” address so the voter can receive elections materials

Note: A home address CANNOT be a P.O. Box, however, a mailing address CAN be a P.O. Box or “Post Office General Delivery” with zip code (for the voter to pickup)



# Frequently Asked Question #6

## 6. Who cannot register to vote?

- A citizen of another country  
(even if a permanent U.S. resident)
- Anyone a court has specifically found to be “mentally incompetent to register and vote”
- Anyone who is currently in prison or jail for a felony conviction or on parole for a felony conviction

*Having a misdemeanor conviction  
does not affect the right to vote!*



# Frequently Asked Question #7

## 7. When do voters need to update their voter registration?

- Every time they move
- When they change their legal name
- When they want to change their political party preference



**TIP:**

People may  
take cards  
for friends  
and family!



# Frequently Asked Question #8

## 8. Where does someone show they want to vote by mail?

- Voters choose to permanently vote by mail by initialing **Line 16** on the VRC.
- Voters can change their minds at any time by contacting the Department of Elections.



# Frequently Asked Question #9

## 9. What if someone does not live in San Francisco?

- A California Voter Registration Card (VRC) distributed by the San Francisco Department of Elections can be used for any California county



# Frequently Asked Question #10

## 10. Are there other ways to register to vote?

- Yes. People can also go online to register to vote:
  - **[Registertovote.ca.gov](http://Registertovote.ca.gov)**
  - To easily register online, voters must have California Drivers' License  
**or**  
California identification number from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)\*
  - Must consent to the DMV sending the California Secretary of State an electronic copy of the signature from driver license or identification card

\* People without DMV records will have to print out, sign, and mail their form– so it may be easier for them to use a VRC!



# Completing a Registration Card

All information is important! These are common mistakes:

- Use blue or black ink
- **Line 1:** If you have registered voters in the past, this is a new location on the VRC for citizenship and age
- **Line 2:** The form begins with the voter's FIRST NAME
- **Line 13:** Email and **Line 14:** Phone are OPTIONAL – the voter can leave them blank
- **Line 16:** “To receive...” means the voter chooses to be a permanent vote-by-mail voter
- **Optional box # C:** Encourage voters to indicate their language preference
- **Line 18:** Be sure voters read and sign inside the red box



# Reviewing a Registration Card

- Go over the card with the voter to be sure that all sections are completed
- Be sure to see that **Line 1** boxes are checked, and **THE CARD IS SIGNED** inside the red box
- Cross out simple mistakes—ask the voter to make the correction and initial the change
- For big mistakes or ineligible voters, mark **VOID** in big letters across the VRC
- Remove the receipt portion and give it to the voter
- The voter will receive a “proof of registration” card from their county elections office in about 2 weeks



# Returning Registration Cards

- Keep completed VRCs in a secure place
- Do not copy a VRC or any information from a VRC
- The registration deadline for the November 8, 2016, election is **October 24** (15 days prior).  
If someone *takes* a VRC from you, tell them they must submit the VRC by this date. **Free postage!**
- Return all the VRCs you *collect* to the Department **within 3 business days** or by October 24, whichever is *first*
- Return any void cards with your completed VRCs



# Finding More Information

- **sfelections.org**
- **registertovote.ca.gov**
- **sfoutreach@sfgov.org** – we can provide training
- **(415) 554-4375**
- **Department of Elections  
City Hall, Room 48**

Registering voters is an  
important community  
service!

*Thank you!*



**TIP:**  
SF voters  
can check  
their  
voter  
registration  
at  
**sfelections.org**

