



Get Out the Vote Phone & Text Banking

Why host a phone or text bank to reach voters?

Phone or text banking involves individual outreach to voters through phone calls or text messages. Contact from a trusted organization can help prepare and motivate people to vote and is more effective than emails or postcards. Include phone or text banking as part of your Get Out the Vote strategy in the weeks leading up to the election. Benefits include:

- Flexibility to organize in-person, at a distance, all at once, or over many shifts
- Enjoyable for your staff and volunteers
- GOTV messages can be paired with wellness checks, invitations to events/services, or other messages you want to get out to your community

Instructions for organizers:

Before starting, please read over this packet in its entirety. If you have questions, you can reach out to info@nonprofitvote.org. Keep in mind that it may take 3-4 days for a response.

Every good phone or text bank has four key ingredients:

1. A list of clients/voters to contact
2. Staff or volunteers (bankers) to make the calls/texts to voters
3. A script to guide their interactions
4. A tracker to record voters' answers and important notes: [Download our template.](#)

What if I don't have a list of clients or community members that includes their name and phone number? We recommend targeting a small geographic area (such as a City Council ward) using the [data firm L2](#). You can get a few hundred names and numbers for around \$50 dollars.

Who should I ask to phone/text bank? How many people should I ask? For every 100 phone numbers, recruit two people to phone/text bank for two hours (you could also recruit four people for a Power Hour!) Consider asking staff to participate, as well as committed volunteers, members of your board, or even program participants. Members of a local youth leadership program make great bankers. Recruit bilingual speakers if many people in your community speak languages other than English at home.

How do I use the scripts? How do I train my bankers? Download the phone banking script as a Word doc [here](#) and download the texting script as a Word doc [here](#). Text that appears in curly brackets and highlighted should be filled with your organizational or state information. Head to [Voting In Your State](#) for links to your state's website. If text appears in double angle brackets, it indicates that your bankers will use the dropdown menus in the tracker to select the voter's answer (ex: <<RECORD whether they're voting early, by mail, etc>>). Start banking sessions with a quick training: ask bankers to read through the script and then have them open the tracker and review the options in each column's dropdown menu. Make sure there is a staff member or lead volunteer that bankers can contact if there are questions or issues.



Phone Banking Orientation

Thank you for phone-banking with [{organization}](#)! This is a great service to voters in our community and will help make sure their voices are heard at the polls.

What every phone banker should know

If this is your first time phone-banking, welcome! This is generally a very positive experience for both the caller and the voter being called. Keep in mind the following:

- It will feel awkward at first and that's okay! You'll start feeling more comfortable after the third or fourth conversation.
- Most people won't pick up and you may only have a handful of conversations with voters. This is okay too! Every call makes a difference.
- You never have to stay on the phone with someone rude or aggressive. If you feel uncomfortable, disconnect the call and make a note in the tracker.

On the next page there is a script to guide you through conversations with voters. You may reword the script to make it sound more like yourself or if you find that people are confused by a question. If voters go off-script, use the table on the 2nd page for help.

General conversation outline:

Intro – Who you are and whether you've reached the intended voter

Q1 – Checking if they have voted

Q2 – Asking how they will cast their ballot (early, in person, by mail)

Q3 – Prompting them to ask a friend or family member for help

Tracking

Use this [{tracking sheet link}](#) to see your list of voters/phone numbers and to keep track of your conversations. Use the drop down menus (click on or hover over the cell to see the options) to record whether the voter answered the phone and what their responses were to your questions. Use column H to record any additional notes that are important.

If you run into any issues, your contact for the phone bank is [{Name}](#) at [{phone number}](#). They are on call to assist you.

Thanks in advance for helping our community out! Happy calling.



Phone Banking Script

***START CALL*:** Hi, I'm [Your Name] calling on behalf of {Organization}. Am I speaking with [Name of Voter]? <<Record response in column C>>

If **YES:** Good. **Continue to Q1 – Check if they've voted**

If **NO:** Sorry about that! We'd still encourage you to vote because everyone should be heard in this election. ***END CALL***

Q1 – Check if they've voted: We want our community to participate in the upcoming elections on {election date}, especially in {state or city}. We do not represent any political party or candidate. First, have you already voted in this election? <<Record answer in column D>>

If **YES:** Great, thanks for being a voter. If you haven't already, ask a friend or family member to vote too. Have a great day and thanks for talking! ***END CALL***

If **NO:** No problem **Continue to Q2**

Q2 – What's their vote method?: Which method do you think you will use to vote in this election: voting early, voting by mail, or voting in person on election day?

If **YES/METHOD:** Great! <<Record vote method in column E>> **Continue to Q3**

If **NO/DON'T KNOW:** The election is coming up soon! We recommend voting in person early or on election day if you haven't already requested your ballot by mail. You can avoid lines and vote on your own schedule. {Insert state specific voting early information} **Continue to Q3 **

Q3 – Ask a friend for help: Do you have a friend or family member who can help you think through how you will cast your ballot? <<Record in column G>>

If **Q3 YES:** That's great. We hope you can help represent our community this year and thanks for being a voter! ***END CALL***

If **Q3 NO/DON'T KNOW:** That's okay – you can go to canivote.org, that's CAN, I, VOTE, DOT, ORG to learn more about the election. Can I make a note for someone from {organization name} to follow up with you? Thanks for talking today and for being a voter! ***END CALL***

*****Use sample responses on the next page if the voter goes off script*****

Sample responses

They don't know there's an election	This year there are elections that impact our community. We want everyone to be represented, so visit {LINK} to learn more about what is on the ballot. Thanks and have a good day! *END CALL*
They don't live in state	Sorry about that! We'd still encourage you to vote to make everyone is heard in this election. *END CALL*
They don't speak English	Do you have someone who speaks English nearby? I can talk to a family member or a friend. *Wait* If not, no problem. Thank you for your time! *END CALL*
Don't call me/Angry	We will make a note not to call you again. Sorry to bother and have a nice day! *END CALL*
How did you get this #	{Describe how you got their number (client list, list pulled from eligible voters, etc)}
Other voting problem (mail ballot lost, problem with registration, etc)	Unfortunately, this isn't an issue I can help you with, but you can go to {LINK} to look up the local elections office. They will be able to answer your questions and give you next steps. Thank you! *END CALL*

[{OPTIONAL – Decide if you want phone bankers to leave a voice message for voters who do not pick up. Remove this section if you do not want them to leave a voicemail}](#):

Voicemail: Hi, this message is for [Name of Voter]. I'm [Your First Name] calling on behalf of [{Organization}](#). We want to make sure our community is represented in the upcoming elections on [{election date}](#), especially in [{state or city}](#). We do not represent any political party or candidate. I'm sorry I missed you. Please go to [{LINK}](#) to learn more about the upcoming election. Thanks, and happy voting!



Sample Texts for Text Banking

Setting Up a Text Bank

The sample texts below can be used with text bankers recruited by your organization or through a vendor such as [ThruText](#) or [CallHub](#). If you are using your own text bankers, complete these steps to get outreach started:

1. Select a text message from the list below and fill in highlighted information, or create your own text message.
2. Using the sheet labeled “Text Banking” in the [template tracker](#), add your text message to cell B4 for quick reference. Make a copy of the sheet for each text banker and then add your list of names and phone numbers for text outreach.
3. Walk text bankers through the tracker. Make sure each text banker has a unique list of names and numbers. Discuss with your text bankers whether they should continue texting with voters who respond that they need help/have a question or if bankers should simply record responses in the tracker for someone else to provide follow up.

Sample Text Messages

Hi voter! This is [NAME] on behalf of {Organization name}. We want our community to show up this election and have your vote influence decisions about education, housing, transportation, and criminal justice. Have a question? Just reply or send STOP to opt-out.

Hi! This is [NAME] from {Organization name}! Do you know who you're voting for yet? Check out your city's voter guide and your voting options at {state, city, or county website}. Send STOP to opt-out or just reply for help.

Hi! Thanks for getting #VoteReady with {Organization name}. Our local elections are coming up soon! Have you chosen how you're voting yet? Let us know or get help by replying! Send STOP to opt-out.

Hello! This is {Organization name} with a reminder to vote in Tuesday, November 2nd's election! Check out your ballot ahead of time at {state, city, or county website}. Any questions? Just reply for help or send STOP to opt-out.