



VOTER EDUCATION TOOLKIT: HOW TO LEAD A SHORT GROUP DISCUSSION ABOUT VOTING RIGHTS

There will be many opportunities to educate voters in a nonpartisan way this election year. Below is a suggested outline to help spark discussion. If two people are able to lead the education session, one person can facilitate and the other can write responses on a flipchart or blackboard, if available. You can switch roles halfway through the session to give everyone a chance to facilitate.

Please use your creativity to add on to this outline and let us know what works! You can contact the *Vote For Homes Coalition* office at 215-232-7272, x3042.

1 - INTRODUCTION:

Introduce yourself and tell the group why you are here. You can use this opportunity to tell a little bit about your story or why you are involved in the coalition.

Hello. My name is _____ and I'm with the *Vote For Homes Coalition*. How many of you or someone you know has had problems finding affordable housing? Give them an opportunity to raise their hands.

That's why we are raising the issues of affordable housing, jobs, and human services this election. Does anyone know what offices are being voted on this year? In 2018, we will be voting for US Representatives, one US Senator, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Pennsylvania State Senators (even districts), and Pennsylvania State Representatives.

Other possible questions:

- I want to get an idea of what people think about when they hear the word “voting”. For example, when I hear the word “voting” I think of _____. Shout out some words you think about when you hear the word “voting”.
- We are concerned about housing, jobs, and services this election. How many people have heard the candidates talking about these issues?
- How do YOU think voting can change the state of housing, jobs and human services?
- What do YOU think candidates should make a priority?

2 - LEARN ABOUT YOUR VOTING RIGHTS:

For more information, contact the *Vote For Homes Coalition* at 215-232-7272.

www.voteforhomes.org

Updated on 3/13/18

So, what are your rights as a voter? I’m going to give you a pop quiz on what your rights are when you go to the polls. I’ll make a statement about your voting rights, and I want you to tell me if that statement is true or false. Is that clear? *Let people call out answers. After you explain the correct answer, you might want to make sure that what you said is clear. You could ask, “Do you have any questions?”*

Use attached voting rights quiz called “Know Your Voting Rights in Philadelphia: A User-Friendly Voter Rights Quiz.” Now is also a good time to pass out the Voter Rights Fact Sheet (available at www.voteforhomes.org).

LIST OF OFFICES UP FOR ELECTION 2018-2019

	2018	2019	2020
National	All U.S Representatives One U.S. Senator	None	President All U.S. Representatives
State	Governor Lieutenant Governor State Senators (even districts) All State Representatives	Justice of the Supreme Court Judge of the Superior Court Judge of the Commonwealth Court	All State Representatives Attorney General Auditor General Treasurer
Local	None	Mayor City Council City Commissioners	None
Trial Judges	None	Judge of Court of Common Pleas Judge of Municipal Court	None
Party	Democratic State and City Committee People Republican State and City Committee People	None	Democratic State and City Committee People Republican State and City Committee People



VOTE FOR HOMES

c/o Project HOME 1515 Fairmount Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19130
Ph: 215-232-7272 Fax: 215-232-7277 www.voteforhomes.org



KNOW YOUR VOTING RIGHTS IN PHILADELPHIA: A USER-FRIENDLY VOTER RIGHTS QUIZ

True or False: You can be prevented from voting if you are homeless.

FALSE: You cannot be prevented from voting if you are homeless. Just register to vote with the address of a shelter or program that will let you receive mail.

True or False: Your vote can be challenged based on your temporary mailing address if you are homeless.

FALSE: You are allowed to register to vote and cast a ballot using a temporary mailing address if you are homeless. Your vote cannot be successfully challenged for this reason alone.

True or False: You can only register to vote if you are 18.

FALSE: You can register to vote before your 18th birthday as long as you turn 18 on or before the very next election.

True or False: You can vote while you are in prison if you are serving time for a misdemeanor only.

TRUE: You can vote from a penal institution by absentee ballot if you are convicted of a misdemeanor. To get an absentee ballot, you must fill out an absentee ballot request form/application and return it by the appropriate deadline.

True or False: You cannot vote if you have a prior felony conviction.

FALSE: In Pennsylvania, people with felony convictions on their record can vote once they are released from jail or prison. The law requiring people with felony convictions to wait five years after release before voting was eliminated in 2000. Now, all people convicted of felonies can register as soon as they are released.

True or False: You cannot vote if you're on probation, parole, or house arrest.

FALSE: People who are on probation, parole, or house arrest can vote. Also, people who are awaiting trial can vote, even if in jail. People on parole or probation and living in a halfway house or community corrections center cannot use the address of the halfway house as their registration address. They must use a previous or future address. They can vote with an absentee ballot or at the home district in person.

True or False: Registering to vote signs you up for jury duty.

Not Necessarily. When you register to vote, you are put on the list of people who may be asked to serve jury duty. However, you are also put on the list when you apply for a driver's license.

True or False: People are not allowed to have help inside the voting booth.

FALSE: If you are unable to read the information on the machine or the ballot for any reason, or if you cannot operate the machine without help, you are entitled to assistance. Just fill out the *Declaration of Assistance* form available at your polling place on Election Day, then choose someone to help you.

True or False: Anyone you want can assist you inside the voting booth.

FALSE: While you have the right to choose the person who will help you, your employer, an agent of your employer, your union leader, an agent of your union or the Judge of Elections **CANNOT** be your assistance provider.

True or False: In Pennsylvania, you can only vote in English.

FALSE: The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Federal law) requires Philadelphia County, the city of Reading in Berks County and some wards and divisions in Allentown, to provide ballots, poll workers, information, and other resources in Spanish and English.

True or False: You can bring your children into the polls with you.

TRUE: Bringing your kids with you on Election Day helps teach the next generation that voting is important; and while you can enter the polling place with more than one child/minor(s), only one of them can go into the voting booth with you.

True or False: You must have ID to vote.

FALSE: In January 2014, the Commonwealth Court held that Pennsylvania's strict photo ID law was unconstitutional. The Commonwealth is not appealing the decision. As a result, voters do not need **photo** ID to vote and poll workers should not ask every voter for ID. Only first time voters or voters voting for the first time at a polling site, must show ID.

First time voters can show photo or non-photo ID. See below for forms of acceptable ID.

If you forget your ID or if you don't have ID, you can vote by a paper ballot called a provisional ballot. Your provisional ballot will be counted if it is filled out properly and election officials can match the signature on your voter registration to the signature you add to the outside of the envelope in which you will place your provisional ballot.

True or False: Your voter ID card can be used as ID when you vote.

TRUE: You *can* use your voter ID card as ID when you vote. If you don't receive your voter card 14 days after you registered, or if you've lost your voter ID card, call your local voter registration office to ask for a new card. Some other acceptable forms of ID include: PA driver's license, any ID issued by PENNDOT, a passport, Armed forces ID, an Employee ID, a utility bill, a bank statement, or a paycheck – if these last three show your current address. Just remember, if you don't have ID, you are still allowed to vote by provisional ballot!

True or False: You cannot vote in the General Election if you did not select a political party on your voter registration application.

FALSE: You do not have to pick a political party in order to vote in a General Election. You only have to pick a political party ahead of time if you want to vote in a PRIMARY election. If you did not select a party when you registered, you can amend your voter registration information to add one.