

## How To Engage With Communities Disproportionately Affected by COVID-19

1. **Explore What is Seemingly Invisible.** Consider who is not present. Who is not emailing or calling you. Pay attention to what is not on the surface or obvious. That is where your attention also needs to be.
2. **Seek out Friends or Ambassadors in the Community.** It is inauthentic to go into a community that you do not belong to, in order to get information. In that situation, reach out to friends, colleagues or ambassadors in the community who can educate you, or introduce you around and help steer you in the right direction.
3. **Be Sensitive.** Acknowledge the harm that is occurring in communities of color and indigenous communities as a result of COVID-19. Educate yourself so you know as much as you can about what is happening in the community.
4. **Pay Attention to Tone.** Empathy is okay. Uplifting is okay. Playful is okay. Opportunistic is NOT okay. “Pollyanna” is NOT okay. “I will save you” is NOT okay.
5. **Keep Connecting With Voters.** Even though communities of color and indigenous communities are being disproportionately harmed, this is exactly the time they need to be touched, to be heard, and to be helped. Awkwardness or discomfort can not be an excuse for inaction.
6. **Explore Different Tactics.** Consider other tactics such as virtual phones, texting, and even reverse robocalls. Explore having large community meetings via Zoom, or block parties via Google Duo. Livestream chats on Instagram. Host a Q&A session on Facebook Live, YouTube Live, or Twitter. Set up telephone town halls/ dial-in calls with a service like [TTHM](#). Use a voicemail service to send recordings straight to voters’ inboxes. Be creative.
7. **Update Your Pitch and Loop Back.** Nowadays, consider 1) introducing yourself and the position you are running for; 2) asking the voter how they are doing; 3) acknowledge COVID-19 and these unprecedented times; 4) offer a resource, an update, or something you are doing to help; 5) ask for their vote; 6) then follow up with an email, text, or phone call from another person on the campaign to confirm the vote. Number 6 is what is called a loop-back. Persuading voters is hard and takes time, but you should expect each of these direct voter contacts will take a lot more time than usual.

### 8. **Then: Turnout was focused on likely voters.**

**Now: Push for equity. Focus your efforts on the voters who will be most disadvantaged by these changes.**

If your state has reduced the number of polling places, some voters may now live prohibitively far from the nearest polling site. People who live alone may have difficulty finding a witness to verify their ballot. Others may have health or mobility issues that make it hard to participate in any election, let alone this one. Some people may not be able to afford the postage required to request an absentee ballot, while others may not have a permanent address from which to request that ballot in the first place. Your campaign should tailor each of your GOTV plans to make sure that *everyone* in your community is able to vote (and to have their vote counted) in this democratic process.