



The “Eligible Eight” Best Practice Responses

There are eight common scenarios you will encounter when working with voters. In order to help eligible voters participate, we must be effective in our communications with them. You Can Vote’s **tested responses and approaches** can help you bring voters into the process respectfully and without judgment. This handout is a guide for volunteers to meet voters where they are and educate them using our proven best practice approaches.

1: “I can’t vote.” Simply ask “Can you tell me why?” (*listen*). Another option is to say “The only requirements to vote in NC is to be a citizen who is over 18, and not currently be on probation or parole for a felony conviction” (*listen*) If they say “I have a felony on my record.” ask “Are you finished with your parole and probation?” (*listen*).

[IF FINISHED SERVING] “Oh that’s great! In North Carolina your rights are immediately restored when you are done serving your sentence. I can help you register to vote right now!” (*you can point to bottom of registration form showing the rule*).

[IF STILL SERVING]: “As soon as you finish your parole your rights will be reinstated and you can then register to vote. Would you like a form to complete when the time comes?”

2: “I don’t vote. It doesn’t matter.” (*Respect this statement and listen!*) “I’m sorry to hear that. This year there are a lot of local races on the ballot (*point to orange card*) including sheriff and district attorney. These offices can make a big impact on the daily life of our local community members. I know it can feel like national politics is impossible to change, but locally one vote really can and does make the difference - it did in Virginia in 2017!” (*listen*)

AND: “If I register you to vote today, you will be able to vote if you change your mind. It doesn’t mean you have to vote- you’ll just have the option to do so.” (*pause, lift up clipboard*)

3: “My ID doesn’t have my address on it - I just moved so I can’t vote yet.” “Do you live in North Carolina? As long as you are here for 30 days prior to November 6th, you can register and vote. There is no photo ID requirement when you vote, and I don’t need one to help you fill out the registration form.”

4: “I registered online.” “Oh that’s great! Did you print out the form to then sign and mail it to the Board of Elections? I want to make sure because we talk to so many people who didn’t realize they needed to take that final step to become registered in NC.” (*listen, offer to do voter lookup*)

5: “I already voted.” “Great - thanks for being a voter! Can you tell me when you voted? There is another election coming up in November and the Primary was in May.” (*show election dates on orange card*)

6: “I think I registered when I got my ID.” “That’s great, we are finding a lot of voters who did this but have not received the card with their polling location from the Board of Elections. Did you receive the card in the mail? (*listen*) OR: “I can look you up online to make sure you are registered- we are finding the DMV is not always processing the applications. I know you want to be registered when you show up to vote!

7: “I’m a student so I don’t live here.” “We’re glad to have you in North Carolina for now! As long as you are here, you can choose to register and vote here. *I can help you do that.* If you want to vote in your home-state *you will have to* request an absentee ballot from your state board of elections.” (*listen*) *Another approach:* “There’s a lot on the NC ballot this year, and decisions by these lawmakers can impact your tuition and school policy. If you want a choice on those matters, you can register and vote here during your school tenure. When you move, you can re-register”

8: Might not speak English. Ask in English “Do you need information to vote?” If there seems to be a language barrier, hand them a card in Spanish and point to the “who can register.” Please *do not hesitate* to approach someone who looks like they might not speak English. If you do speak some Spanish, approach as you would any other voter. Changes in your dialogue in a Latinx area could be “Do you have questions about registering?” or “Have you voted before?” “Do you need information about voting?” “Sr/sra, tiene preguntas sobre la proxima eleccion?” “Ha registrado(a) para votar?” “Necesita informacion sobre como puede registrarse?” *Keep it simple.* Most non-English speakers have someone with them to help translate.