



How to use the templates: Voter Education Toolkit

How to customize and use the templates for social media posts, flyers, postcards, pocket guides, and web content

Introduction

Use this toolkit to create flyers, social media posts, pocket guides, brochures, and booklets to educate observers and the public. Election officials in any size jurisdiction can adapt the templates to fit their voter education needs.

This toolkit covers top-level election processes for voters who are seeing this information for the first time. It has been tested with election officials across the country. Before using any of the materials, you'll need to review them and make sure they match the procedures in your state and jurisdiction.

You can jumpstart your voter education materials using our toolkit templates. Each template includes an estimated amount of time you may need to customize them. The templates are provided in Word, PowerPoint, InDesign and PDF to provide multiple options for editing on most common computer publishing software.

Customizable template kits

Templates are in color and grayscale with sample content for you to use. There are **blank** templates for each format if you want to cover a different topic.

Format	Sample Content	Size	Templates	Time Estimate
Social Media Post (only in color)	Voter registration deadline	Square Ratio	PowerPoint, PNG	15 min
Timeline postcard	Important election dates and voter registration	4 x 6"	PowerPoint, InDesign, PDF	30 min
Flyer	Voter registration and Military & overseas voters	8.5x11"	Word, PowerPoint, InDesign, PDF	1 hour
Half-page booklet	Voting Processes	8.5 x 5.5"	Word, PowerPoint, InDesign, PDF	1+ hours
3-fold brochure	Voting Options	8.5x11"	Word, PowerPoint, InDesign, PDF	2+ hours
Pocket Guide	Voting Options and Processes	8.5x11"	PowerPoint, InDesign, PDF	3+ hours

How to customize and use the templates

- Editing the templates
- Using the Editable Content Document
- Writing using Plain Language
- Translating your materials
- Adding your branding
- Adding or editing QR codes
- Using imagery to support meaning

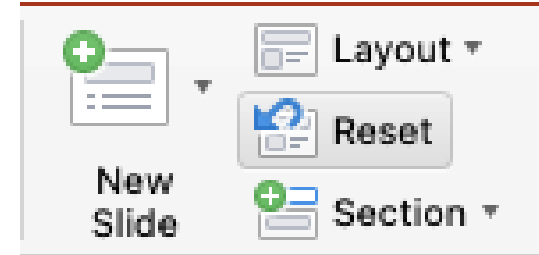
How to customize the designs

Editing the Templates

1. [Review and edit the language to match your jurisdiction.](#)
2. [Add your branding.](#)
3. [Add or edit the QR codes.](#)
4. [Use icons and illustrations to support meaning.](#)

What do I do if elements of the template fall out of place?

Hit Reset in Powerpoint to re-align them.

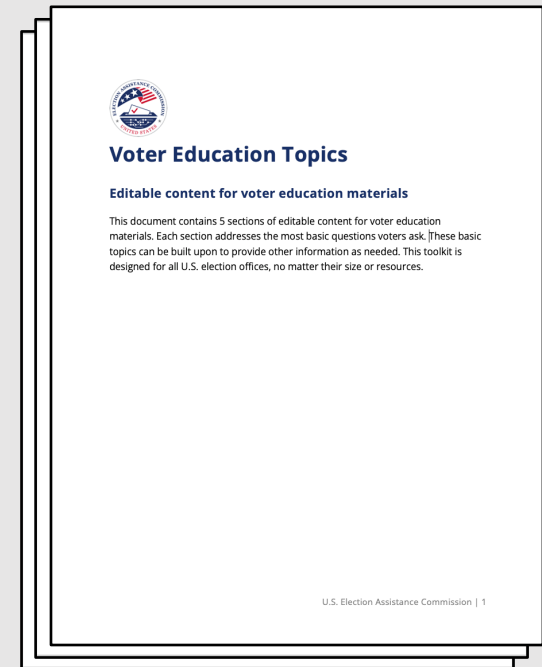


How to customize the writing

Editable Content Document

Use the Editable Content Document when creating materials to educate observers and voters on election processes.

- Review and edit all the [blue] highlights in brackets, which indicate words that may change across states or jurisdictions and depending on your communication strategy or the type of election.
- Delete any sections that don't apply to you.
- If needed, rearrange the order of steps to match your procedures.
- If you want to cite laws for specific policies, add a link not the full text. Citing laws for specific policies directs people who want to learn more to accurate information.
- Think about common questions you get from voters and proactively add in the answers.



Writing using Plain Language

When providing information to voters, it's important to give the correct depth to answer questions without confusing them by adding too much detail.

The toolkit covers basic voter education topics using plain language. It includes space to write citations and link information for voters who want to read more.

Why plain language?

- Plain language makes your writing accessible, understandable, and logical to navigate.
- Research shows that using plain language increases trust.
- Too much information can counterintuitively lead people to understand less.

If you write more in the templates, follow these plain language tips:

- Keep numbers (1, 2, 15, 120, etc) as numbers instead of spelling them out.
- Resist the urge to include everything. Instead, include a QR code or link to send voters to your website for more information.
- Write in active voice most of the time. It's the easiest type of sentence to understand (You must follow these rules). Sometimes this toolkit is written in passive voice to emphasize the object that we are talking about (Valid ballots are prepared).
- Write in sentence case, not ALL CAPS.

Plain Language Resources:

- Field Guide to Ensuring Voter Intent [Vol 1: Writing instructions voters understand](#) (Center for Civic Design)

Translating the writing

This toolkit is written in English, but you may need to translate it to meet language requirements in your district.

- This toolkit is written in plain language to facilitate the translation process. The templates are designed with enough space to accommodate text expansion from translation because some languages are longer than others. [Read this Digital.gov article about the simple ways to prepare English documents for translation into multiple languages.](#)
- Work with a qualified translator in your community. [Read this Digital.gov article about avoiding automated translation.](#)

How to customize the designs

Adding your branding

You can add your county branding to the templates by adding a seal, logo, or typography.

County Seal or Logo

All the templates include a box to put your county's seal or logo. Drag and drop a PNG file of your seal or logo into the labeled box. Use a PNG file so that the area around the seal or logo is transparent.



Typography

The templates are set up using the typeface [Noto Sans](#), which has strong language support. You can download and use it for free from Google Fonts.

You can change the template styles to use a different typeface if you have branding that uses a specific typeface

If you only use Microsoft system fonts, you can use Calibri. We recommend using a sans serif font that includes regular, **bold**, and *italic*.

Adding or editing QR codes

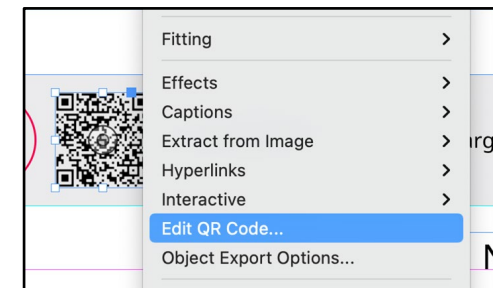
You can use a QR code to guide interested voters to a website for more information, serving the right amount of information gradually. It helps avoid overwhelming voters with too much information at once.

Adding a QR code in Powerpoint

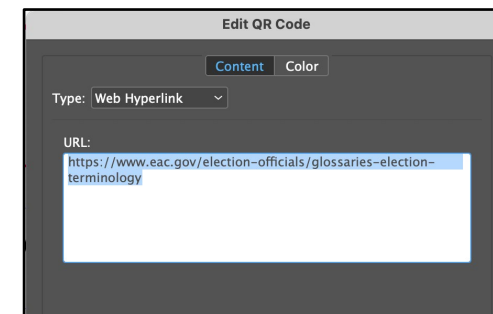
1. Decide which website you want the QR code to link to.
2. Make a QR code. There are many online generators to make QR codes like Bitly and TinyURL. Your IT department might also make one for you.
3. Drag and drop the QR code into the labeled box in the templates.
4. Test it out to make sure it links to the correct location!

Adding a QR code in InDesign

1. Decide which website you want the QR code to link to.
2. Right-click on the existing QR code in the file, and navigate to Edit QR code.
3. Paste your new link and click save. This automatically updates the QR code.
4. Test it out to make sure it links to the correct location!



Make a QR code in InDesign Step 2



Make a QR code in InDesign Step 3

Using imagery to support meaning

The templates uses illustrations and icons to bring draw attention to important information or specific actions to take.

Election illustrations and icon library

This library includes a variety of icons, instructional illustrations and other useful images. They are sized for web, print, posters, plus the Adobe Illustrator source file.

→ [Go to the civic icons and images library](#)

Tips

- Avoid using images as decorative or added “eye candy” just because there happens to be space.
 - Decorative images can be distracting and increase cognitive load. Readers will need to spend more time to understand what information is actually important.
- If you translate the toolkit into other languages, remember to translate the illustration text too.
- If you need to make a significant change to an illustration, you will need Adobe Illustrator software to edit the .ai source files.

