



# Poll Worker Retention: Off-Cycle Engagement

## Tip Sheet

Poll workers are the front line of every election and, often, the only representatives of the election office that voters will encounter. However, most only serve in this role once or twice a year — or even every few years. In the time between elections, skills can fade, interest may shift, and contact information often changes. Off-cycle engagement helps keep poll workers informed and motivated, improves retention, and ensures a more prepared and connected team.

Below are some practical strategies to maintain poll worker engagement between elections.

### Quarterly Newsletters

Newsletters keep poll workers informed, actively engaged, and show them they are valued by the election office.



- When publishing newsletters, consider the following content:
  - Election updates or changes to procedures.
  - Poll Worker Spotlights (with their permission).
  - Key dates and reminders.
  - Short training refreshers or helpful tips.
  - Fun facts or trivia.
  - Keep it brief, ideally one-to-two pages, and include visuals. Consider offering both print and email versions and posting the newsletter on your public website.
- Use a consistent subject line, such as "Poll Worker Update - Spring Edition".
  - Include a short message from the election official or training team.
- Add a call to action, such as RSVPing for a workshop or updating your contact information.
- Share key insights (e.g., "Voter turnout increased by 12% in the last election.").

### Continuous Communication

Strengthen poll worker readiness through consistent, year-round communication.



- Send brief monthly emails or text messages with reminders or resources, including a "text alert" opt-in for urgent messages.
- Share legal or procedural updates with plain language explanations.
- Notify poll workers early about election dates and training periods.
- Send invitations to community events or voter education sessions.
- Provide a dedicated Poll Worker web page on your election website with FAQs, training links, and job descriptions.
- Use email marketing tools to manage your email lists effectively.
- Launch an "Ambassador Program" pairing experienced poll workers with new hires.

## Workshops and Mini-Trainings

Consider holding workshops or mini-training sessions to help poll workers develop their skills and boost their confidence.



- Event Types:
  - Refresher Labs: hands-on practice with voting equipment and role-playing election operations.
  - Scenario Roundtables: discuss common challenges faced on Election Day.
  - Mini-Certifications: brief sessions on topics such as accessibility, security, or de-escalation techniques.
  - Office Hours: in-person or virtual Q&A sessions with election office staff.
- Record and post videos for those unable to attend live sessions.

## Surveys and Feedback Opportunities

Gather poll worker feedback to guide future improvements in your recruitment, retention, and training program.



- Survey Types:
  - Post-Election Survey: sent within two weeks after each election to gather feedback on training effectiveness, equipment performance, and overall polling place operations.
  - Mid-Year Check-In: a brief survey to gauge interest and availability.
  - Role-Specific Feedback: targeted surveys for supervisors, lead poll workers, or those with specialized skills, like bilingual poll workers.
- Sample Questions:
  - Were you confident using the equipment provided?
  - How could we improve future training or materials?
  - Are you interested in mentoring new poll workers?
- Provide anonymous options to encourage honest feedback.
  - To boost participation, offer incentives such as early access training, small rewards (stickers, buttons, shirts), or recognition in the quarterly newsletter.

## Putting it into Practice

Begin with small steps, refine your approach, and track your progress.



- Choose one or two strategies that best fit your capacity. Even one newsletter or survey can go a long way.
  - Tailor communication to different groups (e.g., new vs. returning poll workers).
  - Track event attendance, the percentage of recipients who open your emails, and survey responses to determine what is working and where adjustments are needed.

## Additional EAC Resources

- [EAC Learning Lab](#) – Free online training for election officials, including poll worker modules
- [Election Worker Recruitment, Training, Retention, and Evaluation Report](#)
- [Sample Poll Worker Training Survey](#)
- [EAC Poll Worker Resources for Election Officials](#)
- [EAC Clearinghouse Awards- Best Practices in Recruiting, Retaining, and Training Poll Workers](#)