



# GET OUT THE VOTE

## CONVERSATION GUIDE

The 2020 election will be a critical one for ensuring that voters stay safe while exercising their right to vote, and it's a year that demands that everyone do their part to ensure that their network takes the time to cast their ballot. Here are some tips for how to reach out to people in your extended networks. [For more tips and resources like this, join Hand in Hand's mailing list!](#)

### Be Ready

- ❑ What's your personal voting plan? Have a clear plan and narrative about how you'll execute your plan.
  - ❑ My plan:
- ❑ Who do you want to talk to about voting?
  - ❑ It's great to talk to the people you expect will vote. But what about the people you're not sure about? Their vote might be a crucial missing piece of the electoral puzzle. Write a list of the people in your network that you want to talk with about voting this year. Consider people you are connected to through: working in your home; working at or belonging to schools, daycares, places of worship; others you regularly encounter at businesses you patronize; neighbors; friends.
    - ❑ People I plan to talk to:
  - ❑ Do some research: find out if your contacts vote by using the [Vote With Me](#) app. You don't have to tell anyone you used it, but it might help you be clear on who you want to talk with and what you want to say. But remember: shame is not an effective persuasion tool!

- ❑ Plan your conversation: schedule a time to talk with these folks, tell them what you want to talk with them about, and put it in your calendar. You might be talking to them in person, by phone, or video-conference.
  - ❑ Plan ahead: think about what you want to say, where you'll need to be delicate, and how you'll approach conversations with different people
  - ❑ You don't have to be an expert!
- ❑ Know the Facts! [[source](#)]
  - ❑ In a typical presidential election year, about 50% of the voting age population actually casts a ballot. In the last 20 years, we haven't seen greater than 58%
  - ❑ Statistically, white and Black voters have highest turnout; older voters are more likely to make it to the polls than younger voters.
    - ❑ Name privilege here! Citizenship, class, language and other types of privilege makes it much easier to understand how voting works in the US.
- ❑ Be prepared to help!
  - ❑ You're offering support to people by asking them about their voting plan. If they have questions, even if you don't know the exact answer, it's vital that you are able to point them in the right direction. We love [Vote Save America](#) and <https://wecanvote.us> which are both one-stop-shops for voters new and old.

## CONVERSATION GUIDE

Having conversations about voting can be a struggle, especially if you're not sure about whether someone is able to vote, or if you know they have a spotty voting record. Here are some guiding questions for your conversations.

- Conversations about voting are *not* about candidates, so don't focus on the candidate or issue—focus on voting. If you're not sure whether the person you're contacting supports the same candidate or issue that you do, a different kind of conversation is necessary. That conversation is about \*persuasion\* and not voting. [[source](#)]
- Research shows that a small amount of social pressure, paired with helping voters make a plan and providing detailed information on how to vote actually improves turnout. [[source](#)]
- Know your goals—they are all about voting, but they might vary in detail from person to person. You may have to have more than one conversation with people to achieve all of these goals and that's okay! (Hint: that's why it's important to start early!) Here are some potential goals for your conversation:
  - Determining if your contact plans to vote
  - Helping someone get registered to vote or request a ballot by mail
  - Supplying information and/or support in order to vote
  - Talking through a voting plan with details about each part of that plan

- Including polling location, transportation, early voting, mailboxes and stamps, ballot drop boxes, dates and deadlines, and more

## FOLLOW YOUR CONVERSATION GOALS

Here are some questions that can help achieve your goals.

- “Are you planning to vote this year?”
- “I’m planning to vote by mail this year. Have you already registered to receive your ballot by mail?”
- “Do you usually vote in-person or by mail?”
- “I voted by mail for the first time recently, and it was easy! Can I help you sign up to get your ballot by mail?”
- “I know we haven’t talked very much about voting, but it’s very important to me, and I wanted to check in with you about your plan to vote.”
- “A lot of polling locations have closed due to COVID-19, so I’m making sure to vote by mail this election. Have you requested your ballot yet?”

Follow-up questions:

- “Do you know your polling location?”
- “Do you usually walk, drive, or take public transit to vote? I’d be glad to drive you!”
- “Do you get/need time off to vote?”

If you’re not sure about citizenship status:

- “I don’t want to make you uncomfortable, but if you’re able to vote and need support, I’d love to make sure that your ballot counts this election.”
- “I’d like to give you election day off in order to vote if that’s accessible to you.”
- “If it’s okay with you, I’d love to talk with your [children, partner, siblings, etc] about the importance of voting this November and if there’s anything I can do to make voting more accessible for them.”

If you don’t know the person you’re talking to well:

- “I know this might be kind of awkward, but I’m really concerned about our democracy, so I’m talking with lots of people about voting this year. Do you have a few minutes to talk about your voting plan?”
- “I know we haven’t talked about voting before, but this year I’m committed to making sure that people I know have a voting plan, and I’d love to talk with you about yours.”

If the person might be formerly incarcerated or otherwise not able to vote:

- “I know we haven’t talked about voting before, but I’m concerned about the upcoming election and I was wondering if you’d be willing to talk with me about that.”

- “I think casting my ballot this year might be among the most important things that I do, but it’s also really important to me that people I care about are voting too. Do you already have a plan to vote?”