

How to:

Conduct a voter registration drive

1 Ask

Get permission from church leadership so you're under biblical authority. Emphasize the purpose is to register voters, not to promote a political view point.

This is legal. The IRS says church voter registration drives are legal, and even encouraged, as long as they're nonpartisan and don't endorse or oppose candidates (See legal tips below.)

2 Prepare

- **Schedule** registration drives at least three consecutive Sundays leading up to the month before the election. Be sure to allow enough time to meet Nebraska voter registration deadlines.

- **Advertise** Try to advertise your voter drive in bulletins, newsletters and posters during the week(s) prior and during the drive. Remember, mail-in voter registrations must be mailed and postmarked on or before the third Friday preceding an election.

- **Get registration forms** on line at www.sos.ne.gov/elec/pdf/vr.pdf or contact your county election office. Be sure to have plenty of black pens.

- **Know NE voting requirements**

In order for a person to vote in Nebraska they must be 18 years of age or older on General Election Day (first Tuesday, after first Monday in November).

A person must also be a citizen of the United States, a resident of Nebraska and not convicted of a felony, or if convicted, it has been at least two years since the completion of the sentence for the felony including any parole term or must not have been found mentally incompetent. For more information be sure to visit:

<http://www.familyfirstne.org/Nebraska+Voter+Information+Center>

- **Recruit volunteers** to work the voter registration table. Family First recommends 3 volunteers for a 500-member church.

- **Set Up Tables** Clearly mark your table with signs saying "Register to Vote Here!!"

Other optional materials include talking points on policy issues to get people excited about voting, a bowl of candy, or patriotic décor. You may also consider having signup sheets for people who want to be more involved. This is a great starting point for forming a civic awareness group.

3 Register

- **Take the Initiative** Stand up, don't sit, and don't just let people walk by.

Make eye contact, smile and ask them, "Are you registered to vote at your current address?" or, "Are you going to be 18 on or before election day?" Don't put them on the defensive by saying, "You're not registered?"

- **Provide Assistance** Lead people step-by-step through the process so they don't feel like any question is stupid.

- **Personal Contacts** Telephone or visit parishioners who aren't registered—you can obtain that information by comparing church-mailing lists with voter registration records, which are public information. Keep records so you follow up with them later.

4 Follow Up

Contact those on your sign-up list a few days before the election and remind them to vote.

Send Thank you notes to church leaders and volunteers.

For more information or resources please contact Family First 610 J Street, Ste. 10, Lincoln, NE 68508 or call toll free 1-877-435-3210 or visit www.familyfirst.org

Legal Tips from Family First

- Emphasize registration, not politics
- Allow people from every political party to register
- Don't tell people who you are voting for during registration
- Don't make issue statements like, "Do your part for pro-life candidates" that can be construed as endorsements