



The Active Voter Guide

Discussion Guide

Let's review

At the start of each discussion, review the conversation ground rules for returning and new members alike to set the stage for active participation by all. You may want to use a timer as you go around the room.

And don't forget to decide who will take notes and post a discussion recap.

- **Be open and curious:** Everyone has a unique perspective, so be prepared to hear a different point of view. Listen first, and focus on the facts.
- **Be respectful and engaged:** Be sure that everyone has a chance to speak before adding a second comment or perspective. Encourage each other's participation.
- **Be focused and concise:** Keep the conversation centered on the issue and the brief.

The "Table-it" Rule: If the group has gone off-topic but the area is of interest, the group can table the conversation and save it for another time to be addressed in a different manner.

Let's begin

- Take five minutes to review the [Executive Summary](#) for this brief. Highlight the main point of each section and key statistics.
- Each member is invited to answer the following questions in a **two-three minute reaction** to the brief:
 - Introduce yourself, and share what "lens of care" did you wear when reviewing this brief (e.g. personal, professional, community, state, nation, global)?
 - What did you find most interesting or surprising from reading the brief? What matters?

Spread the word: facts to share during your discussion

- [The National Voter Registration Act of 1993](#) (also referred to as the Motor Voter Act) "requires states to provide individuals with the opportunity to register to vote at the same time that they apply for a driver's license or seek to renew a driver's license."
- According to the Help America Vote Act, "[all states require identification from first-time voters](#) who register to vote by mail and have not provided verification of their identification at the time of registration."
- [If your state elects judges](#), you may see judicial candidates on your ballot. If [your state has ballot initiative, measure, or referendum processes](#), you may be asked to [vote on such measures](#). Your state may use [ranked choice voting](#).

Let's discuss

Below are questions for the group to consider and discuss, or choose your own.

- **Community:** How have you participated in elections in the past? Have you ever run for office or volunteered on a campaign? What was your experience?
 - What has prevented you from participating in the election process? What would encourage you to do so?
- **Government:** What do you look for in candidates? Do you tend to vote along party lines or by issue?

Let's act

1. **Take it local. Talk to your neighbors** about how elections and voting affects your community. Consider hosting a conversation with local election officials, with individuals who have served as poll watchers, or with young and first-time voters in your community.
2. **Explore the impact of legislation related to elections in your community.** Search for laws in your state regarding [voting requirements](#), and educate yourself on the [candidates and issues that will be on your ballot](#). Investigate what your state's [election security policies](#) are, and steps to become a [poll worker](#) or [poll watcher](#).
3. **Investigate community programs** in your state or municipality. You can contact your [State or Local Election Office](#) and see how your [state and local election officials](#) are chosen.
4. **Research your elected representatives' positions** on elections and voting processes. You can find contact information for federal, state, and local government officials [here](#). Your state or municipality's websites will also have information to contact leaders. Try looking at the drop-down menu for a *Government* tab.
5. **Establish a relationship with your legislators.** It's easy to establish a relationship with your legislators. Start by introducing yourself. You can also learn to write to your representatives or set up a meeting with a legislator on [The Policy Circle website](#).
6. **Consider writing a letter to the editor or an op-ed on your stance on elections and election integrity in your local paper.** Learn how on [The Policy Circle website](#).

Next Steps for Your Circle

- **Post a Recap:** Summarize your discussion to share thoughts with members not present, and share planned actions from group members. Designate who will post a meeting recap on your circle page.
- **Decide your next meeting topic.** Want to discuss a related brief at your next meeting? Suggestions include:
 - [Election Processes & Innovations](#)
 - [Elections: Campaign Finance](#)
 - [Free Speech](#)
- Dive Deeper into this area. If this is an area you would like to pursue further, consider taking possible steps to influence policy. The Policy Circle offers resources for [developing a message about your issue](#) and [organizing a petition](#) to amplify your voice and raise awareness.