

Getting Started with Canvassing



An Introduction to Advocating for
Instant Runoff Voting
at the Polls

Why we canvass...

We need people, money, and endorsements to succeed. If you want to see things change, *you need to get involved*. We can't do it alone – we need to make it as easy as possible, for as many people as possible, to also get involved.

1. **Canvassing works. Finding people who care is essential to reach our objective.** Talking to and canvassing folks in Maine led to a huge number of people joining together to pass RCV despite some very difficult political challenges. The first thing we must do is find people who understand the problem.
2. Canvassing is a way to **ensure that we have a diverse group of supporters especially geographically**. People lead busy lives. Going outside of our comfort zone allows us to interact and activate those who might not feel they have enough time, money, or political influence to change the world themselves. As a canvasser, you can empower them to join the larger community of people who care about democracy.
3. **Person to person contact is the single most effective way to communicate and advocate.** People are inundated with information on their phones, TVs, and computers. We take the time to communicate our message in person which highlights its importance, allows supporters to ask questions, and persuade them to join our efforts.
4. **Canvassing at the polls** is the best way to ask voters to persuade their elected officials to support RCV. Politicians care about their constituents. If we can demonstrate support for RCV, we will be able to persuade others.
5. Canvassing allows us **to energize our supporters by mobilizing them to convince others**. Most people don't actively seek out what's wrong with their elections. We bring them this knowledge and give them the tools to get involved and do something about it.
6. **Canvassing is FUN!** Not many people get to take the time to talk to thousands of strangers about things that are important to them. Canvassing is a great way to find out more about yourself and make connections with people you normally would not interact with. There are so many reasons why we canvass.

Take a moment to think about what motivates you; what would you add to this list?

How to canvass...

1. Be **CONFIDENT**. Be intentional in your *body language*. Make *eye contact* early and often. Use language actively to express your enthusiasm for RCV. Understand that your *tone* of voice impacts the conversations you have daily.
2. Be **CONVERSATIONAL**. Establish good *rapport* through *active listening*. Be *polite*. Find basic *issue agreement* and build upon that. This might require *checking in* with the person to see if they *understand* what you are saying before advancing the conversation.
3. **Tell your story**. Why do you support ranked choice voting? [*I don't like to be forced to vote for only ONE candidate for an office like I do now, especially when I like several candidates almost equally well and would be pleased if any of them were elected.*]
4. Be **CONCISE**. Say only what you need to say. Keep your message as short and as simple as you can. People who don't understand will *frequently ask questions* or give *common objections*. That is when you impress them by succinctly answering their question or *overcoming the objection*. The ideas we communicate are much easier to understand when we know exactly what we plan to say. *Practice* how you will approach people.
5. Be **CLOSING**. Prepare a specific and simple ASK. Will you join our effort to bring RCV to Texas? Respond to action alerts, take part in a project, or volunteer your time, etc. Make sure you know exactly what you are asking for and why-because some people request that you close at any point quickly during your conversation.
6. Be **CREATIVE**. Flexibility is very important. Be *adaptive* and *solutions-oriented* in your outreach. If something is not working for you, try a new approach. Being open to different possibilities will improve your outreach exponentially.

What skill do you need to focus on?

RANK YOUR SKILLS!

CONFIDENT

CONVERSATIONAL

CONCISE

CLOSING

CREATIVE

WRITE-IN

1ST CHOICE

2ND CHOICE

3RD CHOICE

4TH CHOICE

5TH CHOICE

6TH CHOICE

1

2

3

4

5

6

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2

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6

RANK EACH CANDIDATE IN ORDER OF CHOICE

Color in the 1 next to your 1st choice, the 2 next to your 2nd choice, and so on.

Fill one bubble per row, one bubble per column.

Don't rank a single candidate more than once.

Note: Ranking 2nd, 3rd, and Nth choices will not hurt your 1st choice.

VOTER CHOICE
MASSACHUSETTS
VOTERCHOICEMA.ORG

Have fun.

Be genuine.

Be helpful.

Be relaxed.

Smile.

Here's a step-by-step process for canvassing for a cause at the polls:

1. Research and Preparation: Before heading to the polls, read through RCV information on our [webpage](#) . Make sure you understand the local laws and regulations regarding canvassing at polling places. *Stand outside the 100-foot distance markers at the polling places.*
2. Identify Polling Locations: Determine the polling locations where you want to canvas. You can choose to stay at one polling place or visit a few locations.
3. Organize Your Team: If you're working with a team or organization, coordinate with them to ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities. Assign specific tasks such as distributing flyers, engaging with voters, or collecting signatures.
4. Gather Materials: check out our canvassing [toolkit](#). Gather all necessary materials for canvassing, such as flyers, brochures, clipboards, pens, and any other promotional items or informational materials related to RCV. If you're using a tablet, make sure it is charged and review our [Tablet Sign Up Guide](#).
5. Arrive Early: Arrive at the polling location early to set up and familiarize yourself with the layout. Respect any designated areas for campaigners and follow any instructions provided by poll workers or officials. Introduce yourself to the election judge, and respectfully follow any directions they give you.
6. Engage with Voters: Approach voters respectfully and engage them in conversation about RCV. Be friendly, enthusiastic, and informative, but avoid being pushy or aggressive. Respect voters' privacy and personal space.
7. Distribute Materials: Offer flyers to interested voters. Clearly explain RCV and its importance and be prepared to answer any questions.
8. Collect Signatures: Have a designated area for this purpose. Clearly explain that you are soliciting support for RCV and encourage voters to join our effort.
9. Provide Information: Be prepared to provide additional information or resources to voters who express interest in learning more about RCV. Direct them to the IRV for Texas website or social media for further information.
10. Respect Polling Regulations: Follow all rules and regulations set forth by the polling location and election officials. Avoid obstructing or interfering with the voting process. *Stand outside the 100-foot distance markers at the polling places.*
11. Document and Evaluate: Keep track of your interactions and any feedback received from voters. After the canvassing session, take time to evaluate the effectiveness of your efforts and identify any areas for improvement. Send us your feedback of lessons learned to

12. Follow Up: If you use a tablet to sign up voters, we will take it from here to reconnect with them and engage them. If you used a sign-up sheet, be sure to get with our canvassing coordinator to find out where to send them.

If you have any questions, please let us know.
Contact ???