



# VOTE411 Voter Guide: Admin Training Guide

Last updated: 8/19/2025

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Welcome!

## How To Use This Guide

[Full Training Video](#) (Link)

This training guide is designed to explain each function of the VOTE411 Voter Guide Admin application. It is organized by the navigation of the application to help you find what you need. It is not intended to be followed as a strict order of operations. The Guide Admin was created so your League can create your guide in the order that works best for you, your members, and elections. If you are looking for help with getting started on creating your guide, there is a sample order of operations at the end of this document.

## Getting Started

Before you can start creating your voters' guide on VOTE411, you must first fill out a [VOTE411 information request](#) form so LWVUS can walk you through the signup process. They will go over the cost-sharing structure, provide helpful tips and answer any questions you might have about the program. Once LWVUS answers all your questions and gets what they need, they will send you the login information so you can get started. If you have any trouble logging in, please reach out to [VOTE411Help@lww.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lww.org).

## Before You Receive Login Information

While you are waiting for the login information from LWVUS you can begin researching the races and candidates you'll be covering for the upcoming elections. You'll want to have the following information before you begin to create your guide:

1. A list of the races you will cover (ex: all races in the entire state, down through State House, local races only, etc.). You need this information before contacting LWVUS because the cost-share pricing depends on the type of races you'll be covering. Also, be sure to coordinate with other Leagues in your area to make sure more than one League does not reach out to the same candidates. For example, more than one League regularly falls within a specific congressional and state senate district.
2. Candidate contact information. You'll need an email or mailing address for all the candidates you will be contacting through VOTE411. Email addresses are easiest to use in the system and should be a priority in your data collection. However, if you're unable to find an email address you will be able to mail letters of invitation to the candidates so if you cannot find an email address for a candidate be sure to find their physical mailing address. If you have emails for the candidates you do not need to also find physical mailing addresses, you only need the mailing address for candidates without emails. If you can, use the spreadsheet template that LWVUS provides to input all this information as that makes it easier to create multiple races at the same time.

3. Determine what biographical questions you'll be asking of the candidates. Examples of biographical questions are listed below, but you can collect any information you think the voters would like to know.
  - a. Campaign address (standard in guide)
  - b. Campaign phone (standard in guide)
  - c. Campaign website (standard in guide)
  - d. Campaign email (an email address the campaign wants the public to see) (standard in guide)
  - e. Campaign X/Twitter handle (standard in guide)
  - f. Campaign Facebook page (standard in guide)
  - g. Campaign Instagram page (standard in guide)
4. Determine what questions you'll be asking the candidates. You can ask the same questions of each race or create different questions depending on the race; it's up to you. What do you think the voters need to know about the candidates before they go to the polls? You'll need to come up with the questions and a character limit (not word limit - counts every letter, space and punctuation) for each response.
5. If you are asking the candidates questions in a language other than English, you'll also want to translate your questions to that language before you begin. It is recommended you do not use an online program (like Google Translate) to translate your questions as they are not always the most accurate, so either use a native speaker or get a reputable translator to translate the questions. The candidates will have the opportunity to respond to the questions in English and the other language.
6. Find any Geographic Information System (GIS) data you will need to district your races. See below for more information about GIS.
7. It is recommended that you use Google Chrome or Firefox as your primary browser when working with VOTE411. If you don't already have Google Chrome or Firefox on your computer, you can download them both for free.
  - h. Chrome download: <https://www.google.com/chrome/>
  - i. Firefox download: <http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/>

## Glossary

### Iconography of the Guide

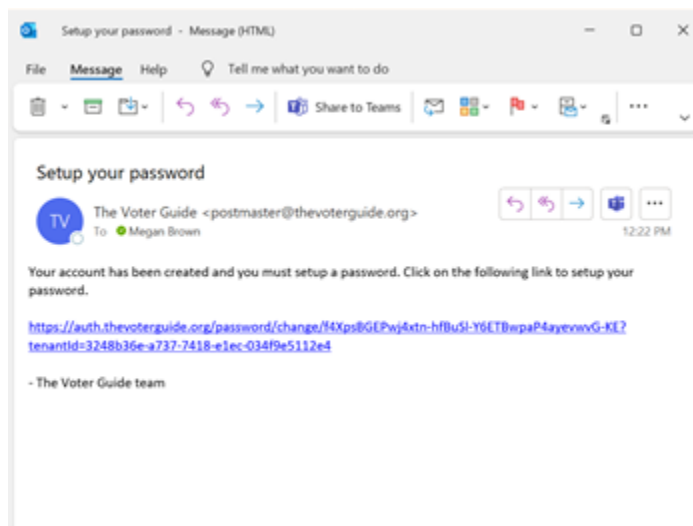
| Icon                                                                                | Term                    | Description                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Drag and Drop           | Denotes the ability to drag and drop an item to reorder it     |
|  | Vertical Three Dot Menu | Used to open menu with additional options                      |
|  | Checkbox                | Check the box to the left of the items in your guide. When you |

|  |  |                                                   |
|--|--|---------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | click the box, the bulk actions menu will appear. |
|--|--|---------------------------------------------------|

## Logging In

### [Logging In Training Video](#) (Link)

Before you can log in, LWVUS will need to manually add you to the passwordless login system. To request access to a guide, please email [VOTE411Help@lwv.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lwv.org) and someone from our team will get back to you with login instructions as well as a [login video tutorial](#). You will know you have been added to the system when you get an email from the Voter Guide with a link to set up your account.

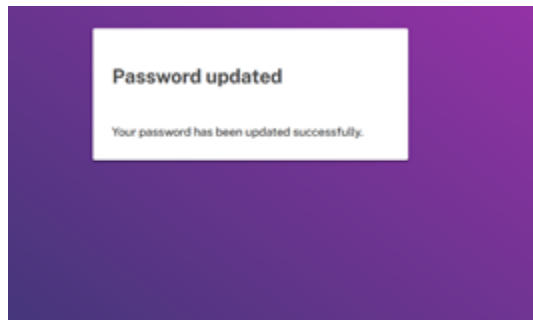


Before you can log in you will need to click on this link and create a password for the system AND set up two factor authentication. To complete those steps, first, click on the link, which will bring you to this page:

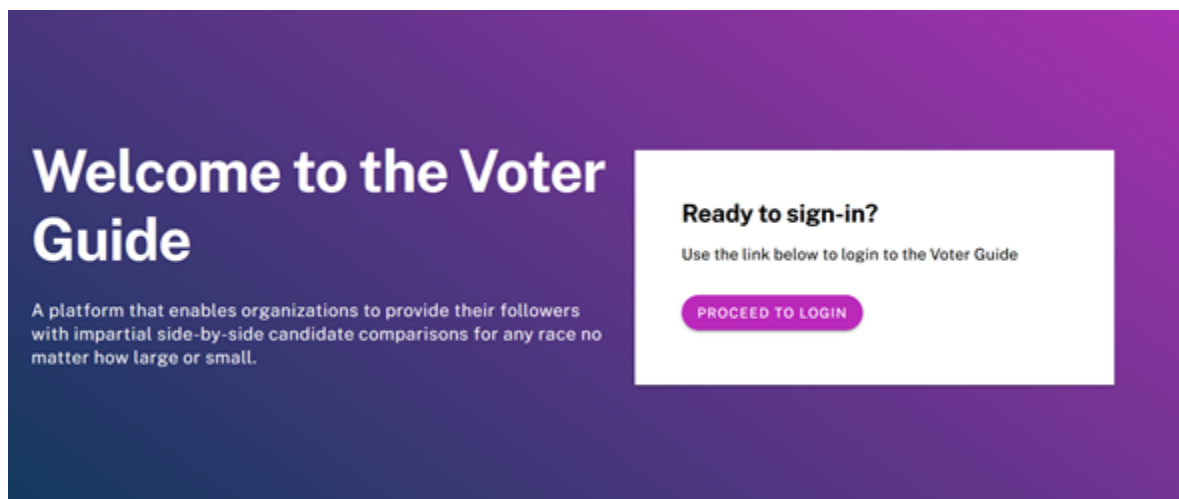
 A screenshot of a web form titled "Update your password". The form has a purple background. It contains two input fields: "Password \*" and "Confirm password \*". Below these fields is a purple button labeled "SUBMIT".

Please choose a strong password of at least 12 characters. You can use a random password generator (like this: <https://passwordsgenerator.net/>) to create the password. You do NOT need to remember this

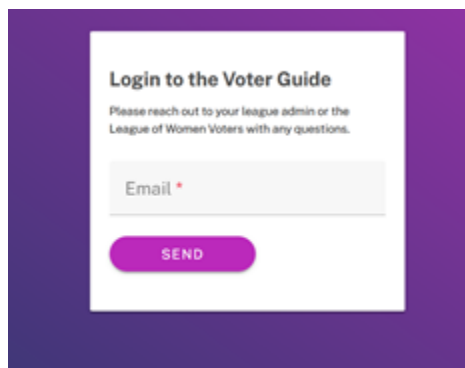
password as you will NOT be using it to log into the system. If both passwords match and you click “submit” you’ll see this page:



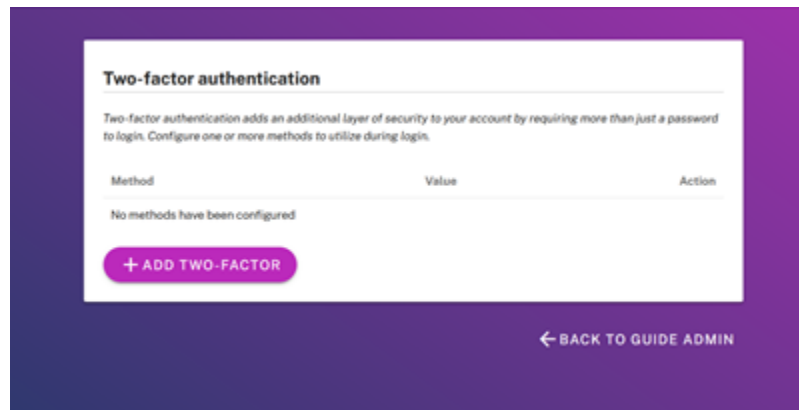
That means you’ve created the password in the system! You then need to go to the guide log in page <http://admin.thevoterguide.org/login> and enter your email address. **NOTE: this needs to be the email address assigned to your guide, typically the email address you use to communicate with LWVUS.** If you have any questions about which email address is assigned to your guide, please contact LWVUS at [VOTE411Help@lww.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lww.org).



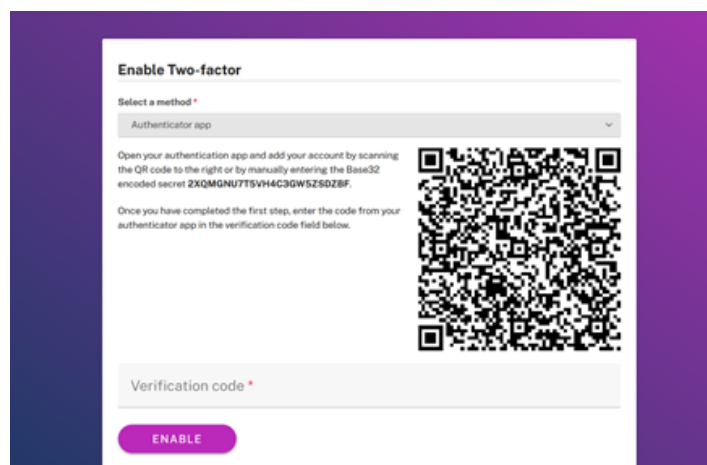
Click the “proceed to login” button and enter your email address on the next screen.



You will get another email with a link. Click that link and you will be prompted to set up two factor authentication. **This is a required step and must be completed to access your guide.** Follow the prompts to set this up through the system and a phone application (like Google Authenticator). The Google Authenticator App is available and free to download on both the iOS App Store as well as the Google Play store.

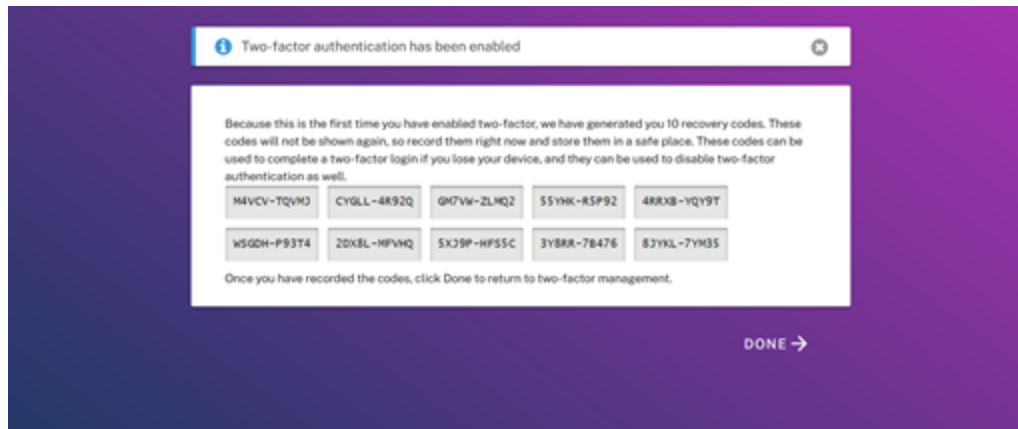


Click on Add Two-Factor. Click the “+” button on the bottom right corner of the Google Authenticator app and choose “Scan barcode”.

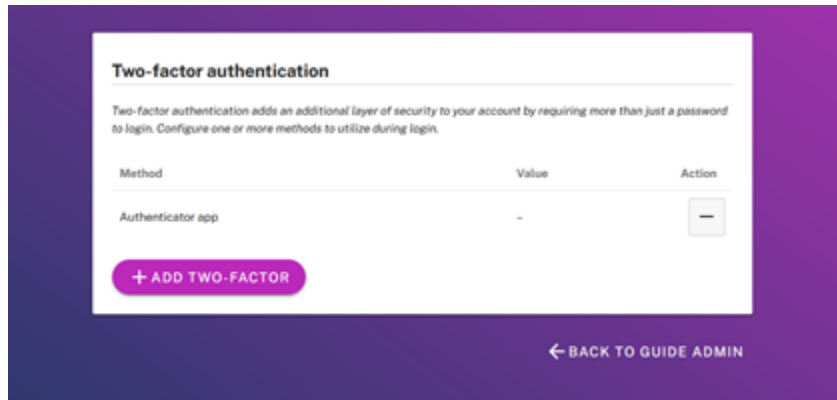


Scan your unique QR code using the authentication app that you downloaded on your phone. After the QR code has been scanned, you'll see the new account show up on the home screen of the Google Authenticator app. Enter the six-digit code in the Verification Code Line on this page below the QR code to confirm that the code has been set up correctly and then click 'enable.'

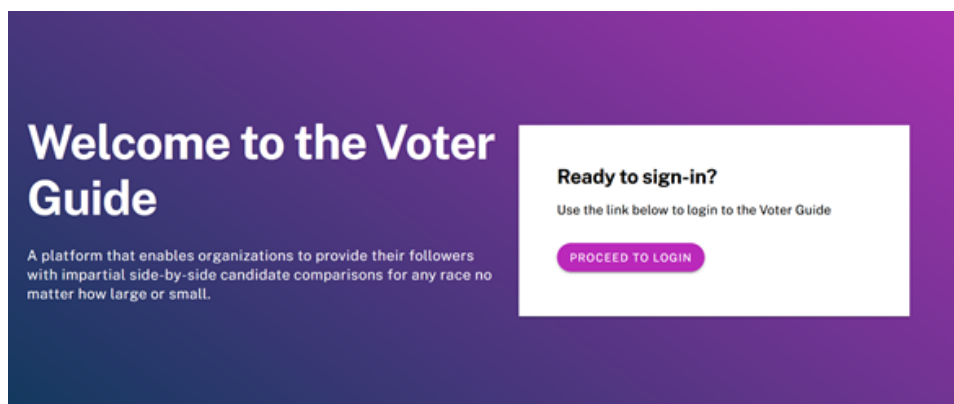




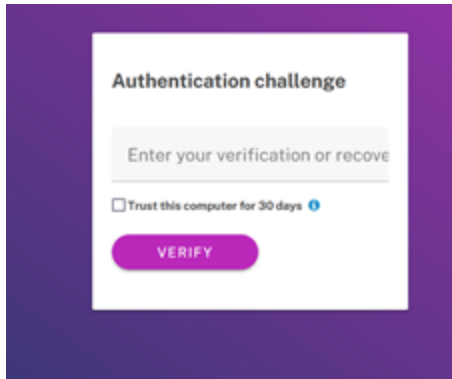
After you have set everything up correctly you will be taken to a screen with recovery codes to use in case you don't have your phone handy one day when trying to log in. **These should not be used in place of the codes given in your Authentication App.** Click the "done" button and your set up is complete!



Click "back to guide admin." This will bring you back to the initial log in page where you can enter your email address:



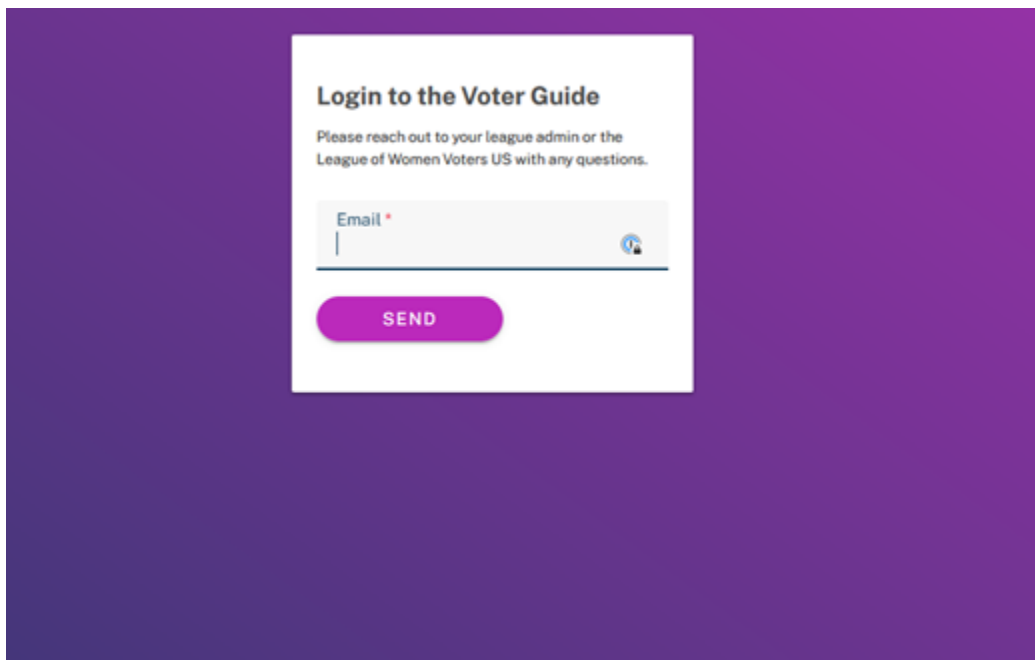
Click "proceed to login," enter your email address and click the link in the new email. You'll then see where you enter the code for two factor authentication:



Enter the code that is on your phone, not the recovery codes, (the code changes frequently) and you're in!

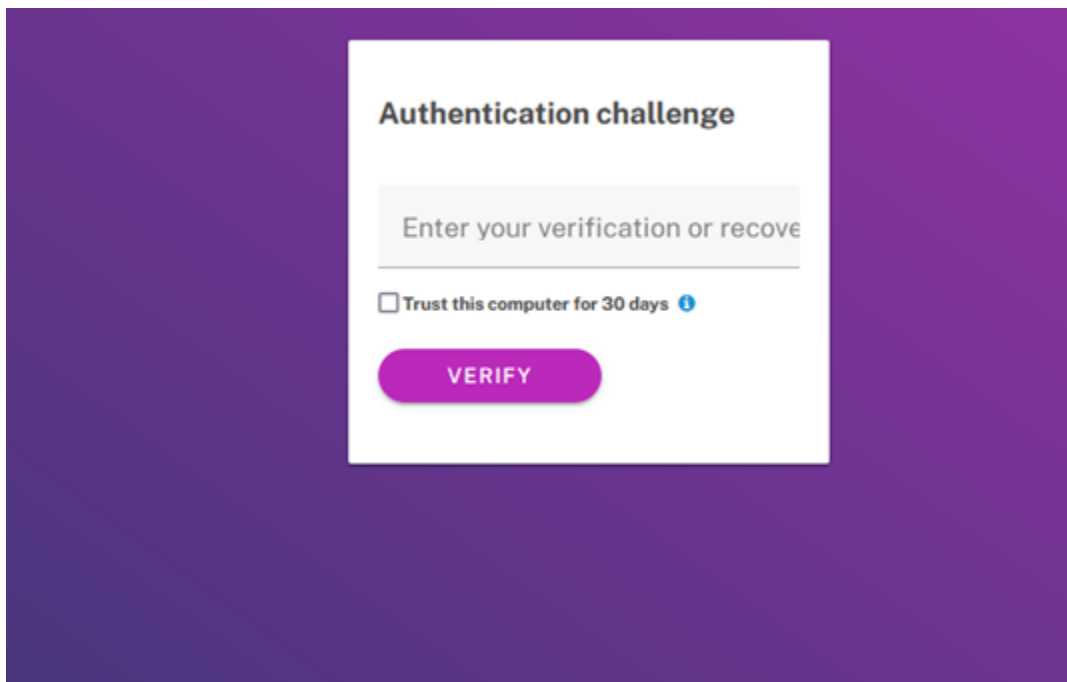
This may seem like several steps to access your guide, however, **after this first time setting up your profile you will only have to email yourself the link and enter the two-factor authentication and that's it!** This is a much more secure way to log into your guide and allows for multiple users to access the system and be logged as to the last time those users logged into the guide. If you have any questions about how to access your guide, please contact LWVUS at [VOTE411Help@lww.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lww.org).

- Password less login
  - Each admin will have their own email associated with the guide. Once you have registered for the system you will not need a password to access the guide. Instead, click on the log in link and enter the email associated with your account. The system will email you a link through which you can access the system.



- Two-factor (multi-factor) authentication

- To make sure your guide is secure we have implemented two-factor authentication. Each time you log into the system you will be required to enter a code from a second source (ex: Google Authenticator). Each time you log in the code will change and you will be required to enter the new code.



If you have any issues signing in, please contact LWVUS at [VOTE411Help@lww.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lww.org) and a team member will help guide you through the process.

### **Guide Overview Dashboard**

[Dashboard Training Video \(Link\)](#) -

After you log in you will land on the Guide Overview Dashboard page. Here you will find basic information about your guide, as well as links to the different sections of your guide. You will also have the ability to preview (check addresses) your guide and submit your guide for publication. This is a homepage of sorts and is a great place to get an overview of where your guide stands and what other steps you might need to complete. You can always return to this page by clicking on Guide Overview in the top navigation.

**VOTE 411 Voter Guide**

SWITCH GUIDE REPORT A BUG HELP SETTINGS

Guide Overview Races & Measures Candidates Districts Campaign Finance Mail Center Import

WELCOME BACK, **training22**

You are viewing your League's current guide.

Ready to go live? Click "Submit Guide" below to notify LWVEF staff that your guide is ready to be merged with the master guide.

Preview Guide Submit Guide

**Races and Measures**  
Guide Quick View

New Race New Measure

**Languages**  
Create your voter guide in multiple languages! Set the languages you want, then use "Race Questions" to create the questions in all languages.

Add More Languages

**Helpful Resources**  
VOTE411 Admin Listserv  
Request to subscribe:  
[VOTE411+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:VOTE411+subscribe@groups.io)

[League Management Site](#)  
Find videos and other resources to help

**Candidates**  
View and manage all candidates in your guide. View All

**Mail Center**  
Contact candidates. Email invitations and reminders or export letters for snail mail. View All

**Districts**  
See all district information in your guide and add new data if needed. View All

**Biographical Information**  
View and create biographical questions to assign to races. View All

**Race Questions**  
Add or edit questions to ask candidates. View All

**Parties**  
Manage parties in your guide. Add, edit, merge, delete. View All

**Categories**  
Add or edit race categories in your guide. View All

## Guide Settings

In the upper, right-hand corner of your guide, you'll see menu options. From this section, you can switch guides (if available), report a bug, contact the VOTE411 help desk, access settings to view the recycling bin for deleted or archived information, add additional languages to your guide, and log out.

## Users & Roles

Admins can access all aspects of the guide and complete all steps. Contributors cannot delete, archive or bulk edit content. If you're unsure of what user role you have been assigned, please email LWVUS at [VOTE411Help@lww.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lww.org) and someone from the team will let you know. To add new Admins or Contributors to your guide, please email us the names and email addresses of those who need access.

## Languages

### [Languages Video Training \(Link\)](#)

To set additional languages (other than the default English), click on Settings; Guide Settings; Languages. You'll then see a list of available languages (in alphabetical order). Check the box to the left of the language(s) you'd like to add to your guide, then click the right pointing arrow icon in the middle of the screen. You'll see your language selection(s) move into the "Languages in your guide" box on the right. Click "save" and you've just added other languages to your guide!

**Note: The system does not translate any content for you, you will need to provide the translated content into the guide.** Do not use any online translation services (i.e. Google Translate) as they are not high-quality translations. Be sure to use a native speaker or professional translator to translate your content.

Languages

Languages

Allows users to add and respond to questions in another language in the voter guide, candidate form, and voter ballot. By default, every guide will contain English.

☐ Ganda

☐ Georgian

☒ Greek

☐ Guarani

☐ Gujarati

☐ Haitian Creole

☐ Hausa

1 Languages Selected

>

<

Languages in your guide

☐ German

☐ Spanish

0 Languages Selected

Save

## Recycling Bin

If an admin deletes a race , the content will live in the Recycling Bin. You will be able to see the information that was deleted and the date it was deleted. Admins can restore the content or permanently delete it by using the Actions icon on the right hand side of the table. Candidates who are not currently running can be archived to keep their information saved in the system for future use (see below). NOTE: The system will not allow you to create a new race with the same name if it still exists in the recycling bin. To proceed, you must either restore it, permanently delete it, or slightly modify the race title (e.g., add an extra character) so the system recognizes it as a new race..

VOTE 411 Voter Guide

SWITCH GUIDE

REPORT A BUG

HELP

SETTINGS

Guide Overview

Races & Measures

Candidates

Districts

Campaign Finance

Mail Center

Import

Recycling Bin

View and restore any races, candidates, biographical information, question sets, and questions

Deleted Items

BULK ACTIONS: Permanently Delete | Restore

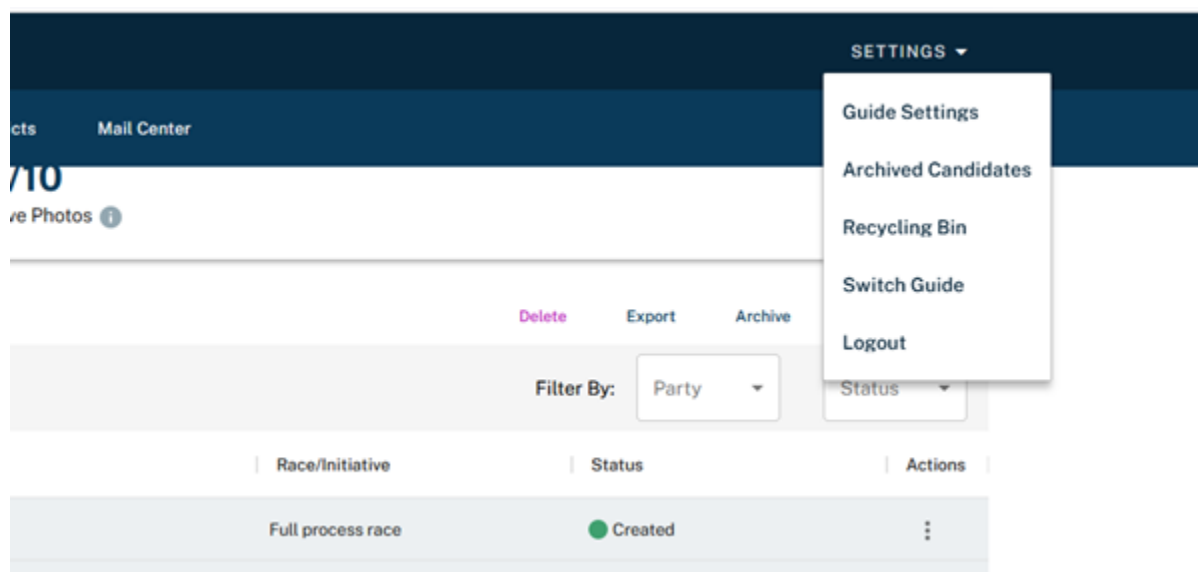
|                                     | Name                        | Type         | Actions     |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Aaron Tobin                 | Candidate    | <div></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Aaron Tobin                 | Candidate    | <div></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Addison Township Clerk      | Race/Measure | <div></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Addison Township Supervisor | Race/Measure | <div></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Addison Township Treasurer  | Race/Measure | <div></div> |

## Archived Candidates

### [Archiving Candidates Video Training \(Link\)](#)

After an election, if you are no longer working with specific candidates and do not want them to appear in the Mail Center, you can archive them by clicking on the three dots underneath the action column, or by checking the box to the left of the candidate on the Candidate table and clicking the “archive” link that appears at the top of the table. This keeps them in the system but ensures that these candidates will not be emailed in the future, nor will they appear on the published guide if you re-publish their race. This also allows us to save candidates year after year, so you never have to add the same candidates over again for the next election.

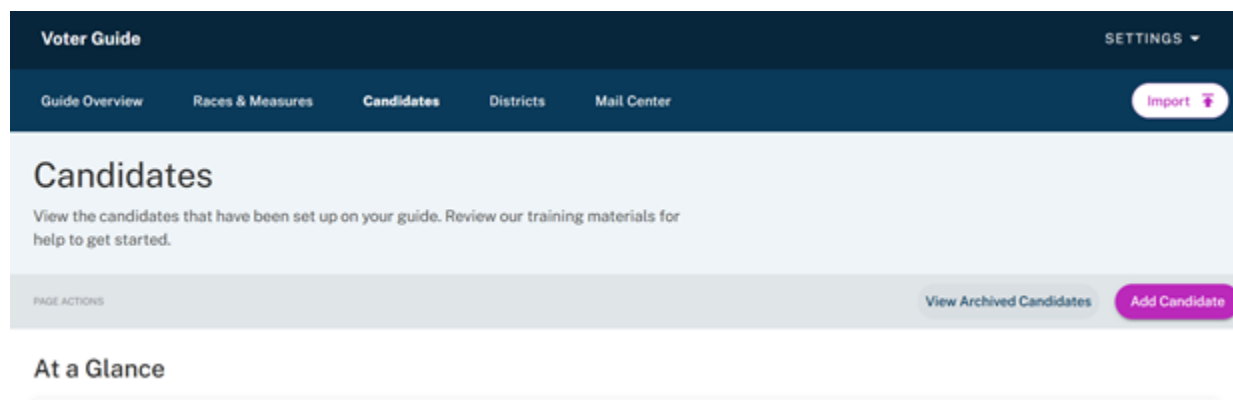
Once archived, all candidates will appear in the Archived Candidates section found in “Settings.”



Here you can view all the candidates currently set to “archived,” as well as complete actions, such as:

- Restore candidate - “Unarchive”

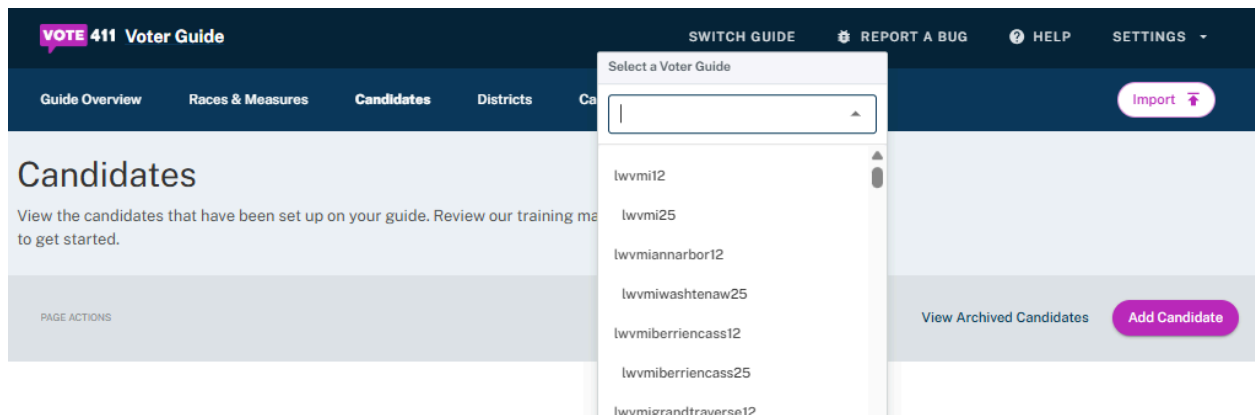
You can also access the View Archived Candidates section by clicking on the button on the Candidates Page.



## Switching Guides

[Switching Guides Video Training \(Link\)](#)

If you have access to more than one guide, you can switch guides using the “Switch Guide” button in the settings banner of your guide admin. In the Switch Guides section, start typing or select the guide name from the drop-down menu. Make sure any new content is added to the current year’s guide, as only that information will appear on the VOTE411 website when published.



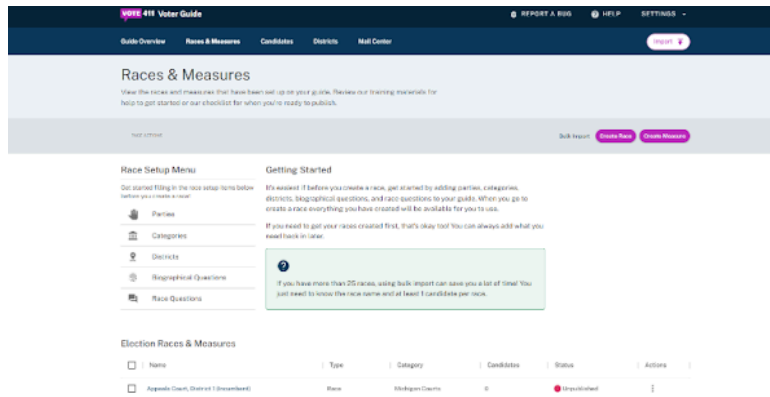
### Races and Measures

Once guide setup has been completed, you’re ready to start creating your voter guide! The system is separated into three main sections: Races & Measures, Candidates, and Districts. You will need to complete each section before you publish your guide; however, the order you complete the sections doesn’t matter - just do it in the order that makes sense for you.

Races and Measures is where you will create your races/ballot measures. It allows you to assign specific information to the races (categories, districts, biographical questions, etc.) one by one, or you can bulk import information into the guide using spreadsheet templates.

## Dashboard

The Races and Measures Dashboard is a great place to keep track of, and manage, the races in your current guide.



On this page you'll find a dashboard that will list the races you currently have in your guide. You'll be able to see the race name, election type, category, number of candidates, and publication status, all in one location! You'll also be able to edit or delete races by clicking on the "action" icon next to the race.

You can create races piece by piece using the "Race Setup Menu" toward the top, left of this page, or you can bulk import races using the spreadsheet upload. No matter which way you create the race, the system will help walk you through the process!

## Parties

The Parties section is where you can add any political parties that you'll need for your guide. The following parties come standard with your guide, and you cannot update these parties or their abbreviations.

- Dem - Democratic
- Rep - Republican
- Ind - Independent
- Grn - Green
- Lib - Libertarian
- Oth - Other

If you have other parties in your area, you can add them on this page. You'll need to add an abbreviation and the full party name and then click the "add party" button. This will add the new party to your guide and save the party to the system. You can add as many parties as you need to your guide, however, if you add parties that are not currently in the guide you'll need to let LWVUS know (email [VOTE411Help@lwv.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lwv.org)) as they'll need to add the parties to the master VOTE411 guide before publication.

If you need to edit or delete any parties in the system you can on this page as well. Note, only admins can delete the parties; contributors will not see that option in their guide.



The screenshot shows the 'Parties' management page. At the top is a dark blue header with 'Voter Guide' on the left and 'SETTINGS' on the right. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: 'Guide Overview', 'Races & Measures', 'Candidates', 'Districts', and 'Mail Center'. The main content area has a title 'Parties' and a subtitle: 'We've got you started with a few standard parties, but you can add as many additional parties as you'd like. Questions? Check out our help guide.' Below this is a section titled 'Add additional parties' containing a form with two input fields: 'Party Abbreviation \*' and 'Party Name \*'. A note below the fields states '\*Required fields needed to add a new party'. To the right of the fields is a purple button labeled 'ADD PARTY'. Below the form is a section titled 'Existing parties' which lists three parties: 'Dem' (Democratic), 'Rep' (Republican), and 'Ind' (Independent). Each party entry has a 'DELETE' link and a purple 'UPDATE PARTY' button.

## Categories

Categories are the internal organizational tool we use to manage the races in our guides. These allow us to group our races into categories and help set the ballot order that voters will see on their guide. These categories are for internal use only and will not be seen by voters on VOTE411.

The system comes with standard categories for you to use. If you need additional categories, you can add them at the top of the page. Put the Category Title and description (description is optional but will help you determine which races to assign to this category) and click “add.” This will add the new category below.

The existing categories are:

- Statewide - Ex. US Senate, Governor, Secretary of State
- US House - Ex. US House Districts
- State Upper House - Ex. State Senate
- State Lower House - Ex. State House
- County-Wide Offices - Ex. County Commissioner, etc.
- Municipal-Wide Offices - Ex. Mayor, Village/Township races, etc.
- School Board - Ex. School-related elections
- Measures - Ex. Ballot measures, amendment, questions, etc.

Once your categories are created you assign races to the specific categories. The categories are meant to be overarching topics, not specific races. For example, you'll assign all State Senate races to the State Upper House category. You can change the order of the categories by using the drag-and-drop (=) icon, and you can reorder the races within the category by using the same icon (=) next to the race name.

**Note: The order of categories and races within the category sets the ballot order for the voters.**

### Add additional categories

\*Required fields needed to add a new race category

Cancel **ADD**

---

### Existing categories

|                   |                                                      |   |   |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| Statewide         | Ex. US Senate, Governor, Secretary of State          | ▼ | ≡ |
| US House          | Ex. description of what type of races these would be | ▼ | ≡ |
| State Upper House | Ex. description of what type of races these would be | ^ | ≡ |

2 races categorized

|                   |   |   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Maryland 1 Senate | ⋮ | ≡ |
| Maryland 2 Senate | ⋮ | ≡ |

## Districts

We will go into more details on districts below but wanted to note here that Districts are listed in the Race Setup Menu. However, districts can be the very last thing you do, so if you do not have that information ready you can complete setting up your guide and contacting candidates.

## Biographical Questions

Biographical questions are the biographical information for the candidate and their campaign. Additional information on where the voter can find additional information about the candidate besides the questions/answers we're providing in their guide. Your guide comes with the following biographical questions already set up:

- Campaign Website
- Campaign Email
- Campaign X/Twitter Handle
- Campaign Instagram URL
- Campaign Facebook URL
- Campaign YouTube URL
- Campaign Mailing address

These biographical questions will be asked of all candidates in all guides. If you have additional biographical questions, you can add them at the top of the Biographical Questions page by adding the question type (email, url, text, mailing address, etc.), title (education, occupation, etc.) and a character limit (if needed). You can also set if the candidate can edit the field or if it's a private field that will live in our system but NOT appear on the published site. Examples of private fields would be a campaign staffer's contact information for that campaign or the candidates personal mailing address. Once you've

set the new biographical question click the “save” button and that will add the new question to the list below.

## Biographical Questions

| Name                          | Type            | Char Limit | Candidate Editable <sup>i</sup> | Publicly Visible <sup>i</sup> | Localized <sup>i</sup> | Actions |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| Website                       | URL             | 200        |                                 |                               |                        |         |
| Campaign Email                | Email           |            |                                 |                               |                        |         |
| Facebook                      | URL             | 200        |                                 |                               |                        |         |
| Campaign X (formerly Twitter) | Twitter         | 200        |                                 |                               |                        |         |
| Instagram                     | URL             | 200        |                                 |                               |                        |         |
| Campaign YouTube              | URL             | 200        |                                 |                               |                        |         |
| Campaign Phone Number         | US Phone Number | 14         |                                 |                               |                        |         |
| Campaign Mailing Address      | Mailing Address | 1000       |                                 |                               |                        |         |

<https://admin.thauntomail.com/dashboard/>

If you are asking candidates different biographical questions you can create a Biographical Set to mix and match the biographical questions to customize which questions you ask by race. This is not required as you can ask all candidates to answer the same biographical questions, but if you have any race that has a specific requirement (such as age) and you’d like to ask only candidates in that race for their birthdate,

you can create a biographical set and assign that set to the race. Biographical Sets are found at the bottom of the Biographical Questions page.

Click the “create set” button, add a set name (tip: the set name should match the race type you want to assign the set, such as City Council) and then check the box to the left of the bio questions you’d like to assign and then click “add set.” That’s it - the new set will appear at the bottom of the Biographical Question page where you can add or delete questions from the set, or reorder the list of questions, if needed.

The screenshot shows a modal titled "Create Biographical Set" with a close button (X) in the top right. Below the title is a note: "By default some biographical questions are always included in every set. Use the table below to add more." There is a text input field for "Bio Question Set Name \*". Below this is a section titled "Default biographical questions" which contains a table of available questions. The table has two columns: "Name" and "Type". The questions listed are: "text" (TEXT), "Email address" (EMAIL), "Favorite text" (TEXT), "Web page" (URL), "New SET" (TEXT), "Mailing Address" (ADDRESS\_MULTI), and "Campaign Phone" (PHONE). Each row has a checkbox in the "Name" column. The checkboxes for "Email address", "Web page", and "Mailing Address" are checked. At the bottom of the modal, there is a note: "\*Required fields needed to create a new question set", a "CANCEL" button, and an "ADD SET" button.

| Name                                                | Type          |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> text                       | TEXT          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email address   | EMAIL         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Favorite text              | TEXT          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Web page        | URL           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New SET                    | TEXT          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mailing Address | ADDRESS_MULTI |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campaign Phone             | PHONE         |

## Race Questions

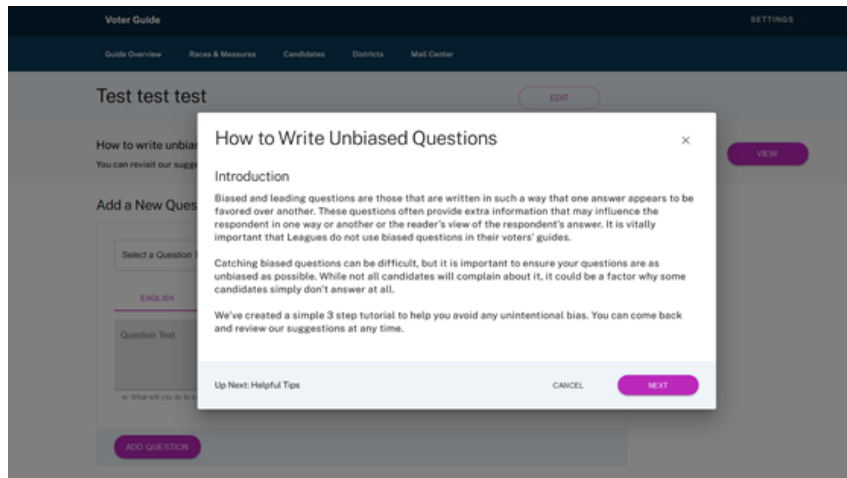
This is where you will create the questions you are asking the candidates. Most likely, each race will have their own, unique questions, however, you are able to create one set of questions to ask all candidates, regardless of the race. (LWVUS recommends you ask each race a different set of questions because each office has different duties).

To create a question set, put the race question name in the box at the top of the page, and click “add question set.” You should name the set something that relates to the race(s) that you’re assigning those questions (ex: City Council, School Board, State Legislature, Mayor, etc.). A question set name can be no longer than 60 characters.

The screenshot shows a form titled "Add additional race question sets" within the "Voter Guide" application. The form has a navigation bar at the top with links: "Guide Overview", "Races & Measures", "Candidates", "Districts", and "Mail Center". The main form area has a text input field for "Race Question Set Name \*". To the right of this field is a section titled "Languages currently applied to the guide" which lists "English (default), Abkhazian, Afar, Aragonese". Below this list is a lightbulb icon and a note: "To learn more about additional languages or to add more options, please adjust your [guide settings](#)." At the bottom of the form, there is a note: "\*Required fields needed to add a new question set" and an "ADD QUESTION SET" button.

Here, you will also see the list of languages you currently have turned on in your guide, as well as a link to where you can add additional languages if you would like.

The first time you add question sets in your guide, a pop up will appear with helpful tips on how to write unbiased questions. Please take the time to read through that information. The pop up will only appear automatically the first time you add questions to your guide, however, you are always able to access the information through a link at the top of the question set page.



After the unbiased question pop up, or after you click the “add question set button” you will land on a page where you can add the questions for this specific set. You will first need to choose the type of question from the drop down menu. Your options include:

- Text - candidate types in a response to the question. This is the most common format
- Agree/Disagree - candidate has the ability to click agree or disagree to a statement. They are not able to provide additional information unless you ask a follow up text question
- YouTube - this allows the candidate to respond to the question through a YouTube video link
- Scale: Agreement - this allows the candidate to respond to a statement by clicking on a scale that ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree
- Scale: Quality - this allows the candidate to respond to a statement by clicking on a scale that ranges from poor to excellent
- Scale: Relative Quantity - this allows the candidate to respond to a statement by clicking on a scale that ranges from much less to much more
- Scale: Importance - this allows the candidate to respond to a statement by clicking on a scale that ranges from very unimportant to very important
- Scale: Support - this allows the candidate to respond to a statement by clicking on a scale that ranges from strongly oppose to strongly support

**Voter Guide**

Guide Overview Races & Measures Candidates Districts Mail Center

### Add a New Question

Select a Question Type

- Text
- Agree/Disagree
- YouTube
- Scale: Agreement
- Scale: Quality
- Scale: Relative Quantity
- Scale: Importance
- Scale: Support

CHURCH SLAVIC CORSICAN GREE >

JS?

Once you choose the question type, you can set the character limit. **This is not a word limit, it counts all letters, spaces and punctuation.** LWVUS recommends you set a limit between 500-1000 characters. Anything less than 500 is not long enough to respond and anything more and voters will not read the candidates responses. For reference, LWVUS asked the Presidential candidates to respond in 750 characters for the 2020 and 2024 Presidential elections.

After choosing the question type and setting the character limit, you're ready to type in your question! Type the question into the Question Text box and click "add question" and your question will appear in the question list at the bottom of the page.

If you have additional languages in your guide, you can type the questions in the appropriate language here as well. You do not need to save before moving between languages, you can create all languages at the same time before clicking "add question."

When you're all done with the list of questions for that race, you can move back to the Races & Measures section to create a new question set.

## Creating a Race

[Creating Races Training Video \(Link\)](#)

Once you have finished the Race Setup steps, you're ready to create your races! You have a couple of options to create the races, Bulk Import and Step by Step Race Creation.

### Bulk Import

[Bulk Import Training Video \(Link\)](#)

If you have more than 5-10 races to add, we highly recommend using the bulk import process to add races. Visit the bulk import section of the training guide to learn how.

### Step by Step Race Creation

If you have fewer than 5-10 races to add to the system, you might feel more comfortable using the step-by-step race creation feature. This will walk you through all the steps needed to create your race, though it does require you to add each race one by one. It is highly recommended that you have completed all the race setup steps (parties, categories, bio questions, race questions, etc.) before starting the step-by-step race creation process. While you can create things as you go, you will save lots of time if you're all set before getting started.

To start creating a race, go to the Races & Measures page and click the "Create Race" button toward the top of the page.

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Campaign Finance

Mail Center

Import

## Races & Measures

View the races and measures that have been set up on your guide. Review our training materials for help to get started or our checklist for when you're ready to publish.

PAGE ACTIONS

Bulk Import

Create Race

Create Measure

Race Setup Menu

Getting Started

Once in the set-up system, we will guide you through the steps needed to create the race. You will have 8 pages of steps to complete - while that sounds like a lot, most of the information is already in your guide if you have completed the race set up as recommended above.

Page one includes:

- Type of race - General Election, Closed Primary, Open Primary
- Voting options - Single vote, Multiple selection, Ranked Choice
- Race name - Please be sure to read the linked race naming guidelines in the platform to ensure your race name is correct. We need the location, so “Mayor” doesn’t work, while “Denver Mayor” does.

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### Type of race

General Election

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet consectur.

Open Primary Election

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet consectur.

Closed Primary Election

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet consectur.

### Voting options

By default, your race will be set to plurality, or winner-takes-all, voting. However, some elections use ranked choice voting, which you can indicate here. Don't know what this is? [Learn more](#)

Single Vote

Most races will fall under this type of race, where voters will be selecting one candidate to win.

Multiple Selection Vote

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet consectur.

Ranked Choice

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet consectur.

### Race Name

Fill out all the required information above first to generate a suggested race name. Or, you can fill in your own race name at any time.

Race Name \*

in Virginia House District 7

?

If you are creating your own race name, make sure you're using the official race name. Use our [how to name your race guide](#) to understand best practices.

Once you’ve added this information, hit the “Save & Continue” button to move to the next step. **If you hit the “Save & Continue” button your race will be created, the content you enter on page one will be saved. As you move through the step by step process any other information you add will only be saved on the final page.**



Step 2 of the process is assigning the Race Category. Any category that you have already created will appear on this page, including the standard categories. If you need to create a new category, you can also do so on this page. Click the “continue” button to move to step 3.

The screenshot shows the 'Voter Guide' interface at 'STEP 2 OF 8'. The top navigation bar includes 'Voter Guide', 'SETTINGS', and a list of tabs: 'Guide Overview', 'Races & Measures', 'Candidates', 'Districts', and 'Mail Center'. An 'Import' button is in the top right. On the left, a sidebar lists steps: 'Race Overview' (checked), 'Category' (active), 'Description', 'Candidates', 'Biographical Questions', 'Race Questions', 'Review', and 'Submit'. The main area is titled 'Choose your category' and contains the instruction: 'Selecting a category for your race will help keep your League organized and drag to change the order of the ballot.' Below this are six category cards, each with a radio button: 'Statewide' (Ex. US Senate, Governor, Secretary of State, etc.), 'US House' (Ex. US House Districts (district 1, 2, 3, etc.)), 'State Upper House' (Ex. State Senate Districts (district 1, 2, 3, etc.)), 'State Lower House' (Ex. State House Districts (district 1, 2, 3, etc.)), 'County-Wide Offices', and 'Municipal-Wide Offices'.

Step 3 is adding the Race Description. This is anything the voter needs to know about a specific office to help them determine who is the best candidate for the job. Things like office duties, any requirements for the office, salary, etc. Click “continue” to move to the next step.

The screenshot shows the 'Voter Guide' interface at 'STEP 3 OF 8'. The top navigation bar is identical to the previous step. The sidebar on the left shows 'Description' as the active step. The main area is titled 'Enter a race description' with the instruction: 'How would you describe this race? Use this description as a way to help voters understand more about the race, position, and office.' Below the instruction is a rich text editor with a toolbar containing icons for bold, italic, underline, link, unlink, bulleted list, numbered list, quote, and undo. The text area contains the placeholder 'Enter description text'. At the bottom, there are three buttons: 'BACK', 'CANCEL', and 'CONTINUE'. The footer includes the LWV logo, a link to the FAQ, contact information for the Voter Guide Helpdesk (help@lwv.org), and a copyright notice for the League of Women Voters Education Fund.

Next step is where you’ll add the candidates for this race. You can enter the candidate information and assign their party here. If you have more than one candidate to add to the race, click the “add another

candidate” plus sign icon to add more candidates. When you’re done, click “continue” to move to the next step.

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Add candidates to this race

You can always come back and add more to your race later!

STEP 4 OF 8

Candidate 1

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Contact's Name

Contact's Email

Candidate Party

☐ Democratic

☐ Republican

☐ Independent

0 Parties Selected

REMOVE

+

Add another candidate

BACK

CANCEL

SKIP

CONTINUE

Step 5 is where you’ll assign the biographical questions. You can either assign existing sets, create a new set, or just use all biographical questions you have in your guide. Once you’ve assigned the set, click continue to move to the next step.

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Left sidebar

Assign or add new biographical questions

Biographical questions are the information candidates provide that allow voters to find additional information about their campaigns. Examples include social media sites, and contact information.

STEP 5 OF 8

Use an existing biographical set

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet conesctur.

Create a new biographical set

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet conesctur.

Use all biographical questions

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet conesctur.

Choose an existing set of biographical questions

Biographical Set Title \*

BACK

CANCEL

CONTINUE

Step 6 is where you'll assign the race questions to the race. Any existing question sets you have will appear in the drop-down menu if you choose "use existing race questions." Or you can create new questions for this race right in this process. Once the questions are assigned, click "continue" to move to the next step.

**Voter Guide** SETTINGS

[Guide Overview](#) [Races & Measures](#) [Candidates](#) [Districts](#) [Mail Center](#)

Left sidebar

## Add your race questions

**STEP 6 OF 8**

Race questions are the questions your league decides what to ask candidates/initiatives for a race. Voters will be able to view these questions and compare against candidates.

### Use an existing race question set

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet consectur.

### Create a new race question set

Description about the type of race goes here lorem ipsum dolor set amet consectur.

### Choose an existing race question set

Select a Race Question Set \*  
Senate race question set

[ENGLISH](#) [ABKHAZIAN](#) [AFAR](#) [ARAGONESE](#)

Do you agree?

Test

The 7th step is where you'll review all the information you just added to the system. If everything looks good, scroll to the bottom and click "save race." If you see something that needs changing, just click the "edit" button that appears in the specific box and make the changes as needed.

Step 8 is the completion page! You'll see that you've successfully created your race. You can use the buttons at the bottom to either view the race or go back to the beginning of the process and create a new race.

**Voter Guide** SETTINGS

[Guide Overview](#) [Races & Measures](#) [Candidates](#) [Districts](#) [Mail Center](#)

Left sidebar

## Complete

**STEP 8 OF 8**

You've successfully completed your guide! If you ever need to edit your race you still can by visiting the race's detail page.

[VIEW/EDIT RACE](#) [CREATE NEW](#)

That's it!

## Creating a Measure

### [Creating Measures Training Video \(Link\)](#)

If you are creating a ballot measure/constitutional amendment, you'll want to create it using the "Create Measure" button found on the "Races & Measures" page. This will set your measure up correctly to include the "yes-for the measure" and "no-against the measure" candidates automatically.

Creating a measure is similar to the step-by-step race creation described above. You'll click the button and follow the prompts to create your measure:

The screenshot shows the 'Getting your measure set up' screen, which is the first step of a two-step process. The page has a dark blue header with the 'VOTE 411 Voter Guide' logo and navigation links for 'REPORT A BUG' and 'SETTINGS'. Below the header is a dark blue navigation bar with links for 'Guide Overview', 'Races & Measures', 'Candidates', 'Districts', and 'Mail Center'. A 'Search' button is also present. The main content area is divided into a left sidebar and a main panel. The sidebar contains a 'Race Overview' section with links for 'Category', 'Description', 'Candidates', 'Biographical Questions', 'Race Questions', 'Review', and 'Submit'. The main panel is titled 'Getting your measure set up' and 'STEP 1 OF 2'. It includes a sub-header 'Getting started by filling out the required information first.' and a 'Districting' section with a description and a 'Choose a state\*' dropdown menu. A help box next to the dropdown asks if the user doesn't see the district they need and offers to 'Create a new district now'. Below the dropdown is a 'Measure Name' section with a description and a 'Measure Name\*' text input field. A help box next to the input field advises users to use official measure names. At the bottom of the page are 'Cancel', 'Save & Exit', and 'Save & Continue' buttons.

On the first screen you'll set up the districts and the measure name and click "save and continue." This button will save the measure in the system so if you must leave the process at any time after this you won't lose everything. Anything past this page will not save until the final submit page.

Next page has you set your category;

The screenshot shows the 'Create a measure' interface at Step 2 of 8, titled 'Choose your category'. The left sidebar lists the steps: Race Overview, Category (current), Description, Candidates, Biographical Questions, Race Questions, Review, and Submit. The main content area instructs the user to 'Selecting a category for your measure will help keep your League organized and drag to change the order of the ballot.' It features a box for 'Uncategorized' with a note 'This race/measure is not in a category'. Below this, there is a section 'Or, create a new category' with input fields for 'Category Name \*' and 'Category Description \*', followed by an 'Add' button. At the bottom, there are 'Back', 'Cancel', and 'Continue' buttons.

After clicking “continue” you’ll be prompted to enter a description. Here is where you’ll want to put the ballot measure text as the voters will see it on their ballot.

The screenshot shows the 'Create a measure' interface at Step 3 of 8, titled 'Enter a race description'. The left sidebar now highlights 'Description' as the current step. The main content area asks 'How would you describe this measure? Use this description as a way to help voters understand more about the ballot measure.' It features a rich text editor with various formatting tools (bold, italic, underline, link, unlink, bulleted list, numbered list, indent, outdent, undo, redo) and a large text area labeled 'Enter description text'. At the bottom, there are 'Back', 'Cancel', and 'Continue' buttons.

Next page you’ll see the “candidates.” These are pre-populated and are listed as both yes and no. **You do not need to add a party to these candidates** just click “continue to move to the next page.

**VOTE 411 Voter Guide** REPORT A BUG SETTINGS

Guide Overview **Races & Measures** Candidates Districts Mail Center Import

☒ Race Overview  
☒ Category  
☒ Description  
☒ **Candidates**  
 Biographical Questions  
 Race Questions  
 Review  
 Submit

## Add candidates to this race

STEP 4 OF 8

You can always come back and edit the details later!

**Candidate 1**

Full Name \*  
Yes -For the Measure

Last Name \*  
A-First

This field is used to alphabetize and won't be shown on the guide.

Candidate Party\*

☐ Democratic  
☐ Republican  
☐ Independent

0 Parties Selected

Contact's Name

Contact's Email

**Candidate 2**

Full Name \*  
No -Against the Measure

Last Name \*  
B-Second

This field is used to alphabetize and won't be shown on the guide.

Candidate Party\*

☐ Democratic  
☐ Republican  
☐ Independent

Contact's Name

Contact's Email

Remove

Import

If you would like to add biographical questions to the measure you can do so on the next page:

**VOTE 411 Voter Guide** REPORT A BUG SETTINGS

Guide Overview **Races & Measures** Candidates Districts Mail Center Import

Follow the step by step guide to create a measure.

☒ Race Overview  
☒ Category  
☒ Description  
☒ Candidates  
☒ **Biographical Questions**  
 Race Questions  
 Review  
 Submit

## Assign or add new biographical questions

STEP 5 OF 8

Biographical questions are the information candidates provide that allow voters to find additional information about their campaigns. Examples include social media sites, contact information and other information for voters to find out more about the candidates.

Use an existing biographical set ☒ Create a new biographical set ☐ Use all biographical questions ☐

Choose an existing set of biographical questions

Biographical Set Title \*

Back Cancel Continue

It may be helpful to have a “a yes vote means” and “a no vote means” question here to explain to voters what their yes/no votes mean. If you provide any information on what a yes/no vote means you **MUST** provide information on the opposing vote.

VOTE 411 Voter Guide

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Import

Follow this step by step guide to create a measure.

✓ Race Overview

✓ Category

✓ Description

✓ Candidates

✓ Biographical Questions

✓ Race Questions

Review

Submit

Add your race questions

STEP 6 OF 8

If you are requesting your editors or any advocacy groups present arguments for or against this initiative, you can create question fields for them to do so. When phrasing questions, keep in mind that both sides will be asked the same question.

Use an existing race question set

If you have already created question sets you can choose from the existing list.

Create a new race question set

If you need to create a new question set for this race.

Choose an existing race question set

Select a Race Question Set \*

Back

Cancel

Continue

Finally, you'll review the information, click "save measure" button and you're all set!

VOTE 411 Voter Guide

REPORT A BUG

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Import

Create a measure

Follow the step by step guide to create a measure.

✓ Race Overview

✓ Category

✓ Description

✓ Candidates

✓ Biographical Questions

✓ Race Questions

✓ Review

Submit

Review

STEP 7 OF 8

Take a look at all the measure details you've entered below. If you see any mistakes select the edit option. When everything looks good proceed to submit!

Measure Overview

Edit

Measure Title

District

Measure ID

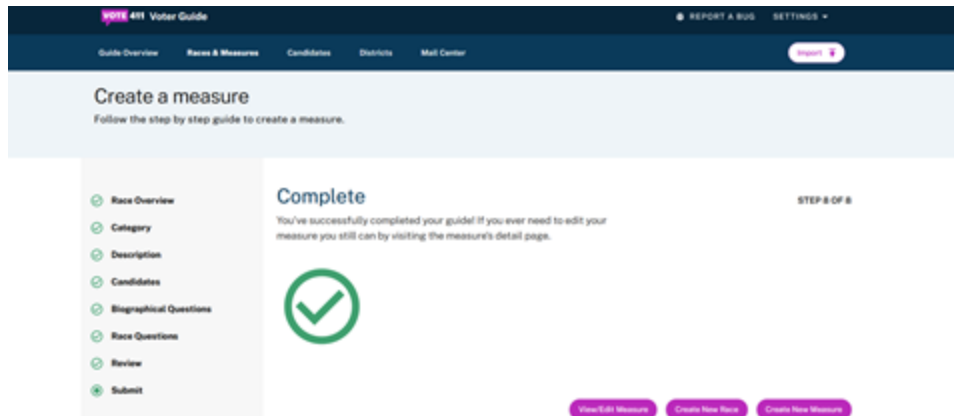
Iowa - State Upper House District - Senate District 39

Measure Category

Edit

Category

Uncategorized



## Viewing and Managing Races

Once you’ve created your races you can view and edit at any time, as needed. Click on the Races & Measures link at the top of the page and scroll down to view the list of races. If you need to edit any content in these races, you can do so from the Race Detail Page. To view, click the “action” icon next to the race and click “edit,” or click on the race name, to view the race.

| Election Races & Measures                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                      |         |                  |             |                                                |         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------|------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------|---------|
| BULK ACTIONS: <a href="#">Delete</a>   <a href="#">Export</a>   <a href="#">Publish</a>   <a href="#">Unpublish</a>   <a href="#">Update District with Race Name</a>   <a href="#">Bulk Edit</a> |                                                      |         |                  |             |                                                |         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                         | Name                                                 | Type    | Category         | District    | Status                                         | Actions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                              | English Race Name                                    | Race    | County           | Will        | <span style="color: red;">●</span> Unpublished | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                         | Crystal City School District 4-Day Week Provision    | Measure | Jefferson County | District 21 | <span style="color: red;">●</span> Unpublished | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                         | Sunrise School District Proposition Kids             | Measure | Jefferson County | District 1  | <span style="color: red;">●</span> Unpublished | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                         | Cedar Hill Fire Protection District Proposition Fire | Measure | Jefferson County |             | <span style="color: red;">●</span> Unpublished | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                         | Dunklin Fire Protection District Proposition S       | Measure | Jefferson County |             | <span style="color: red;">●</span> Unpublished | ⋮       |

### Race Detail Page

On the Race Detail page, you’ll see all the information you added to the race, including the name, the race type, voting options, number of candidates, description, category, etc. If you need to change any of the information for the race you can make the changes directly on the page. **If you make any changes to this page, be sure to click “save” to make sure your changes are saved to the system.**



< Races & Measures

Test Race

You are viewing an existing race. You can make changes directly on this page. Make sure to save your changes when you are done.

PAGE ACTIONS

Cancel

Delete

Preview Race

Publish Race

Save

ENGLISH

SPANISH

Race Overview

Race Title (English) \*

Test Race

9/200

Race type

Open/General Election

Voting Options

Single Vote

Number of Candidates

1

Race Category

Statewide

Manage categories for this guide

B

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☰

☷

”

✂

←

☰

☷

☰

Description

Cancel

Delete

Preview Race

Publish Race

Save

If you scroll down on this page, you will be able to assign the district for this race. You'll use the drop down menus to choose the state, the data set and then the specific district for this race. This is key in ensuring voters only see the information on their specific ballot and races will not be published without district information assigned.

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District

Choose a state\*

Illinois

Select a district type\*

County

Select a County\*

Will

## Bulk Actions (Important Actions)

[Bulk Edit Training Video \(Link\)](#)

You can bulk edit races back on the Races & Measures race table. Click “races & measures” at the top of the page and scroll down to the table. Check the box to the left of the races you want to edit, and you’ll see a list of actions appearing at the top of the table:

| Election Races & Measures           |                                      |        |           |          |                          |         | BULK ACTIONS: <a href="#">Delete</a>   <a href="#">Export</a>   <a href="#">Publish</a>   <a href="#">Unpublish</a>   <a href="#">Update District with Race Name</a>   <a href="#">Bulk Edit</a> |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------|-----------|----------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Name                                 | Type ↓ | Category  | District | Status                   | Actions |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | English Race Name                    | Race   | County    | Will     | <span>Unpublished</span> | ⋮       |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Test Race                            | Race   | Statewide | Colorado | <span>Unpublished</span> | ⋮       |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Union County School Board District 7 | Race   |           |          | <span>Unpublished</span> | ⋮       |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Union County Council District 2      | Race   |           |          | <span>Unpublished</span> | ⋮       |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Union County Council District 6      | Race   |           |          | <span>Unpublished</span> | ⋮       |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Megans Race                          | Race   |           |          | <span>Unpublished</span> | ⋮       |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |

Any of these actions will be assigned to the races you have selected. They include:

- Delete
- Export
- Publish
- Unpublish
- Update Race with District Name
- Bulk Edit

Bulk editing is key if you import your races and candidates through the spreadsheet as it allows you to assign bio/race questions, districts, etc. to multiple races at the same time. These races must all have the same bio/race questions, districts, etc. in order to use the bulk edit feature, meaning that all the races you want to edit must be using the same bio question set (for example). You cannot use bulk edit to assign different sets or different districts to different races.

## Previewing a Race

If you would like to preview your races before publishing on the live side, you can do so by clicking on the Preview Guide button on the Guide overview page. Keep in mind that your preview will show unpublished races and unapproved candidate answers. This mode also shows the most up-to-date version of your guide.

The screenshot shows the 'NewBallotTraining' dashboard. At the top is a dark blue navigation bar with links: 'Guide Overview', 'Races & Measures', 'Candidates', 'Districts', and 'Mail Center'. On the far right of this bar is an 'Import' button with a plus icon. Below the navigation bar, a light blue banner contains the text 'WELCOME BACK, NewBallotTraining' and 'You are viewing your League's current guide.' To the right of this text is a message: 'Ready to go live? Click "Submit Guide" below to notify LWVEF staff that your guide is ready to be merged with the master guide.' Below this message are two buttons: 'Preview Guide' and 'Submit Guide'. The 'Preview Guide' button is circled in blue. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column has three sections: 'Races and Measures' (with 'View All' and 'Create New' buttons), 'Languages' (with an 'Add More Languages' button), and 'Helpful Resources' (with links to 'VOTE411 Admin Listserv' and 'League Management Site'). The right column has six sections, each with a 'View All' button: 'Candidates', 'Mail Center', 'Districts', 'Biographical Information', 'Race Questions', 'Parties', and 'Categories'.

Guide Overview Races & Measures Candidates Districts Mail Center Import

WELCOME BACK, **NewBallotTraining**  
You are viewing your League's current guide.

Ready to go live? Click "Submit Guide" below to notify LWVEF staff that your guide is ready to be merged with the master guide.

Preview Guide Submit Guide

**Races and Measures**  
Guide Quick View  
View All Create New

**Languages**  
Create your voter guide in multiple languages! Set the languages you want, then use "Race Questions" to create the questions in all languages.  
Add More Languages

**Helpful Resources**  
VOTE411 Admin Listserv  
Request to subscribe:  
[VOTE411+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:VOTE411+subscribe@groups.io)  
  
[League Management Site](#)  
Find videos and other resources to help you build your guide.

**Candidates**  
View and manage all candidates in your guide. View All

**Mail Center**  
Contact candidates. Email invitations and reminders or export letters for snail mail. View All

**Districts**  
See all district information in your guide and add new data if needed. View All

**Biographical Information**  
View and create biographical questions to assign to races. View All

**Race Questions**  
Add or edit questions to ask candidates. View All

**Parties**  
Manage parties in your guide. Add, edit, merge, delete. View All

**Categories**  
Add or edit race categories in your guide. View All

## Candidates

At the top navigation you'll find the "Candidates" section right to the right of the Races & Measures. Here is where you'll manage the candidates that you have assigned to your races.

## Dashboard

On this page you will also see a list of candidates, including their status (created/invited/responded). You can search the candidate list, sort the list, and complete either bulk or individual actions for these candidates.

## Candidates

View the candidates that have been set up on your guide. Review our training materials for help to get started.

PAGE ACTIONS

[View Archived Candidates](#)
[Add Candidate](#)

Candidates

BULK ACTIONS: [Archive](#)

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Name            | Party | Race/Initiative                                  | Category      | Campaign Fina...              | Sta...                                   | Actions            |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Robert Anderson | NP    | Becton Regional Board of Education: Carlstadt... | Uncategorized | <input type="radio"/> No Data | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Invited | <div>⋮</div>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Alicia Armental | NP    | River Dell Regional Board of Education: River... | Uncategorized | <input type="radio"/> No Data | <input type="radio"/> Created            | <div>Edit</div>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Thomas Bogdansk | NP    | Ramapo Indian Hills Regional Board of            | Uncategorized | <input type="radio"/> No Data | <input type="radio"/> Created            | <div>Archive</div> |

## Creating a Candidate

### [Creating Candidates Training Video](#)

You have several ways to add candidates to your guide. **NOTE: candidates cannot live in the system without being assigned to a race, so you need to either add candidates at the same time you add races, or have your races set up before you can start adding candidates.**

### Bulk Import

You can import all your races and candidates at the same time. See the “Bulk Importing” information below to learn how.

### Creating a Single Candidate

At the top of the Candidates landing page, you’ll see an “Add candidate” button toward the top, right-hand corner of the page. If you click that you’ll see a modal pop up where you can manually add the candidate and assign them to their race. **NOTE: the race needs to be in the guide before you can add candidates as candidates cannot live in the system without a race.**

The screenshot shows a web application interface with a dark blue header containing navigation links: Guide Overview, Races & Measures, Candidates, Districts, Campaign Finance, and Mail Center. An 'Import' button with a download icon is on the right. The main content area is titled 'Candidates' with a sub-header: 'View the candidates that have been set up on your guide. Review our training materials for help to get started.' Below this is a 'PAGE ACTIONS' section. A modal window titled 'Create a new candidate' is open, featuring a close button (X) in the top right. The modal contains the following fields and elements:

- A dropdown menu labeled 'Add Candidate race \*' with 'English Race Name' selected.
- Two text input fields: 'Full Name \*' and 'Last Name \*'.
- Two text input fields: 'Contact's Name' and 'Contact's Email'.
- A 'Candidate Party\*' section with three radio button options: 'Megan', 'Unaffiliated', and 'Cst'. Below these is a label '0 Parties Selected'.
- A footer bar with the text '\* Required fields needed to create a new candidate', a 'Cancel' button, and a purple 'SAVE' button.

In the background, a table of candidates is visible, including Robert Anderson, Alicia Arment, Thomas Bogdan, Megan Zrown, Megan Brown, and Elizabeth A. G. The table has columns for Name and Actions.

### Creating Candidates During Step by Step

See “Step by Step Race Creation” to learn about adding candidates when adding races.

## Viewing and Managing Candidates

As mentioned above, the Candidates landing page has a list of candidates toward the bottom of the page. You’ll be able to view all your candidates, search for a specific candidate, sort candidates by name, party, etc. and see the candidates current status. You can make changes to specific candidates (edit, archive) or do bulk actions to several candidates at once (edit/archive).

View the candidates that have been set up on your guide. Review our training materials for help to get started.

PAGE ACTIONS

[View Archived Candidates](#)

Add Candidate

BULK ACTIONS: [Archive](#)

|  | Name             | Party | Race/Initiative                                  | Category      | Campaign Fina...                                                                          | Sta...                                                                                      | Actions                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                                               | Robert Anderson  | NP    | Becton Regional Board of Education: Carlstadt... | Uncategorized |  No Data |  Invited |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                          | Alicia Armental  | NP    | River Dell Regional Board of Education: River... | Uncategorized |  No Data |  Created | <div><div>Edit</div><div>Archive</div></div>                                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                          | Thomas Bogdansky | NP    | Ramapo Indian Hills Regional Board of Educati... | Uncategorized |  No Data |  Created |                                                                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                          | Megan Zrown      | jfh   | English Race Name                                | County        |  No Data |  Created |  |

From the candidate landing page you can click on a candidate's name or click the "edit" link from the action icon to go to the candidate detail page. On this page you'll see all the candidate information you added when you created the candidate, and any answers the candidate has submitted for the guide, in all the languages that the candidate submitted replies.

[← Candidate Dashboard](#)



Candidate Race Profile

## Bananas the Monkey

Race: [Click here for an example race](#)

Party

### Non-Partisan

Contact's Name

Contact's Email

Status

● Responded

Security Code

DY6SM8VF

PAGE ACTIONS

ENGLISH

### Biographical Information

This information is editable by the candidate. Depending on the privacy setting some fields will not be viewable on the ballot.

Website  
[www.VOTE411.org](http://www.VOTE411.org)

Do not include http/https

Campaign Email

Facebook  
www.facebook.com/VOTE411

Do not include http/https

Campaign X (formerly Twitter)  
 <https://twitter.com/>

Instagram

### Campaign Finance

No campaign finance data exists for this candidate.

Find Match

## Race Questions & Responses

The race responses are editable by the candidate.

### Using Question Set

### Example Questions for Pretend Race

**Why are you the best candidate for the position?**

Enter response  
I'm a good climber.

19/500

What are your top three priorities?

Enter response

Socializing, climbing, and eating

There are some actions you can do on this page that will directly affect the candidate. These include:

- Archive
- View Activity Log
- Send an email
- Edit candidate information
- Save any changes

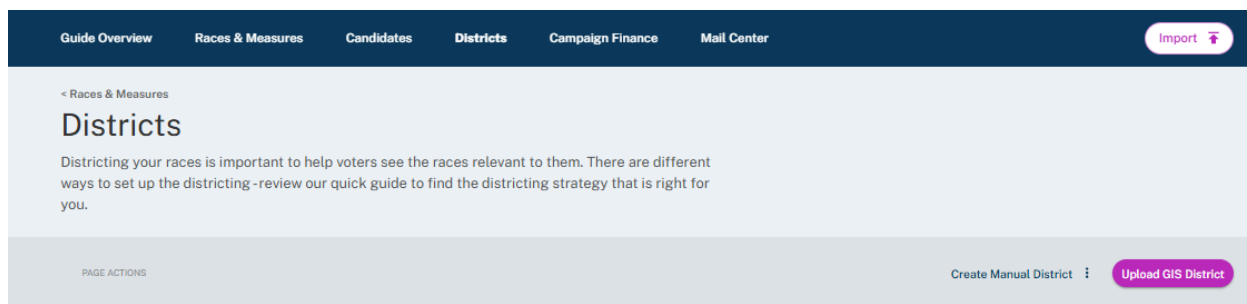
## Districts

The candidate and ballot information we provide on VOTE411 is tailored to each voters' specific ballot - we only show voters the races and candidates they'll see on their ballot. To do this, we use what are called GIS Shapefiles, which allows the voter to enter their address on the site and then the technology only displays the correct races for that specific address.

Districting can be the most confusing part of the entire process since most people have never used, let alone heard of, GIS Shapefiles. **But don't worry!** LWVUS is here to help - if the information below does not help, please reach out to LWVUS ([VOTE411Help@lww.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lww.org)) and we can help you find the content you need!

## District Dashboard

You can find everything related to districts by clicking on the "Districts" link at the top of the page. On the landing page you'll find a list of all the districts that are currently in your guide, as well as what type of district (more on types below). You can search the races, sort the races by name or type, or do specific actions on each district (edit).



### Created Districts

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Name                                | Type             | Actions |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|---------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Grand Forks City Council Wards 2022 | GIS District Set | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | ND Ambulance Districts 2024         | GIS District Set | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | ND State Dist Court 2021            | GIS District Set | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | North Dakota Cities 2024            | GIS District Set | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | North Dakota House 2024             | GIS District Set | ⋮       |

## GIS Districts

[GIS Training Video \(Link\)](#)

As mentioned above, GIS Shapefiles are the best way to ensure voters only see the candidate and ballot information on their specific ballot. GIS (Geographic Information System) is a system that gathers, manages and analyzes data related to locations. **You do not need to know anything else about GIS other than how to find the files you need and how to load them into the system.** Once you find the files you will NOT be able to open the files on your computer (you need specific software to open the files). All you need to do is save and load into the system and that's it!

### Finding GIS Shapefiles

Every city/state/county/etc. handles GIS data differently. Some have GIS departments that have the data easy to find and download online. Others have the data, but you must request the files directly. Other areas do not have the data in the format we need. It really all depends on how your area manages GIS and what districts you need for your guide.

If you're looking for **City** and **School** GIS data, the US Census has what you need in their TIGERline Shapefiles system (<https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/geo/shapefiles/index.php>). The "Type Layer" for cities is called "Places" and for schools is "School Districts." For cities all you need to do is choose your state and download the files. For schools, most likely you want to choose the "Unified School District" set to download the school districts in your state.

The screenshot shows the US Census Bureau's website for downloading 2021 TIGER/Line® Shapefiles for School Districts. The page has a dark blue header with the US Census Bureau logo and the title "2021 TIGER/Line® Shapefiles: School Districts". Below the header, there are three sections for selecting a state and downloading the files:

- Elementary School District (current)**: Select a State:  Download
- Secondary School District (current)**: Select a State:  Download
- Unified School District (current)**: Select a State:  Download

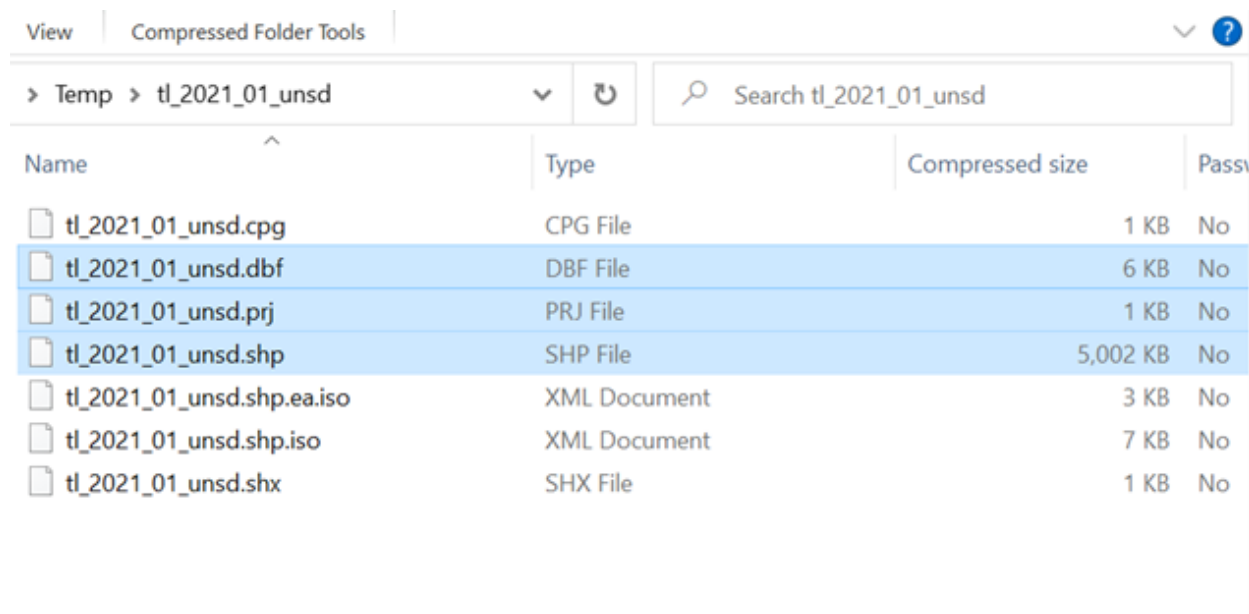
Below these sections, it says "Source: US Census Bureau, Geography Division". At the bottom, there is a dark blue footer with the text "CONNECT WITH US" followed by social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, and RSS. Below the icons, it says "Accessibility | Information Quality | FOIA | Data Protection and Privacy Policy | U.S. Department of Commerce".

Once you download the data, several files will appear on your computer. **Remember, you are not able to open these files unless you have specific GIS software installed on your computer.** You only need three of these files to load the data into your guide:

- DBF File (.dbf)
- PRJ File (.prj)
- SHP File (.shp)

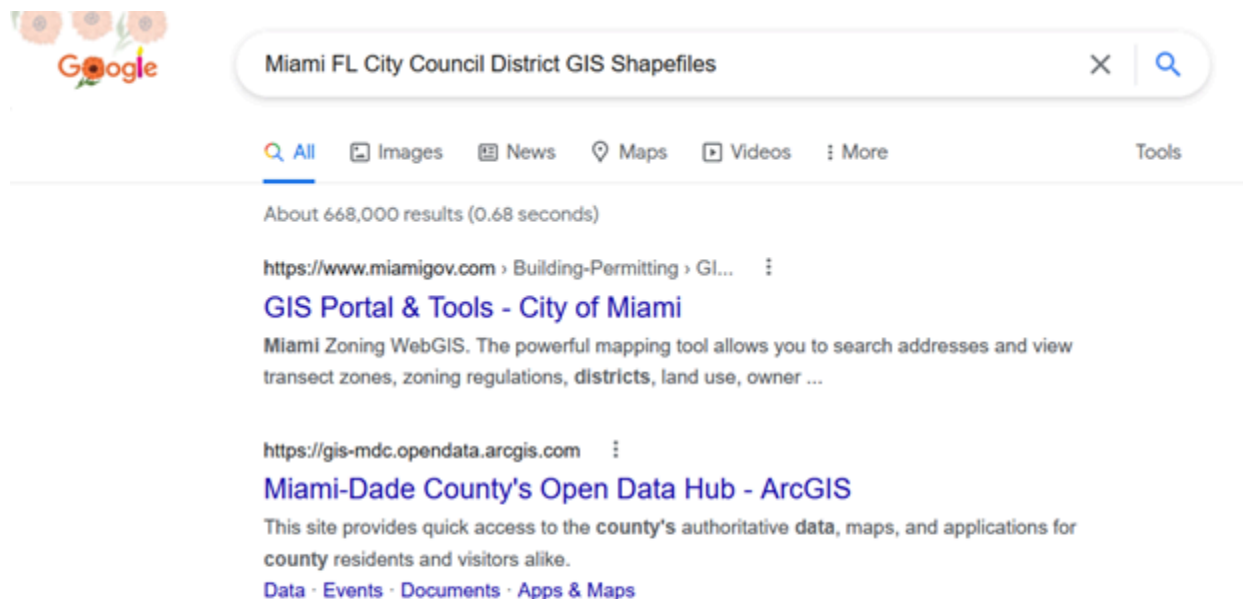


Save these files to your computer so you can load them to the system (details below on how to load into the system).



| Name                       | Type         | Compressed size | Passw |
|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------|
| tl_2021_01_unsd.cpg        | CPG File     | 1 KB            | No    |
| tl_2021_01_unsd.dbf        | DBF File     | 6 KB            | No    |
| tl_2021_01_unsd.prj        | PRJ File     | 1 KB            | No    |
| tl_2021_01_unsd.shp        | SHP File     | 5,002 KB        | No    |
| tl_2021_01_unsd.shp.ea.iso | XML Document | 3 KB            | No    |
| tl_2021_01_unsd.shp.iso    | XML Document | 7 KB            | No    |
| tl_2021_01_unsd.shx        | SHX File     | 1 KB            | No    |

For other districts (city council, county council, judicial, etc.) you'll need to search and see what's available in your area. Google is your best option. We recommend you search for the districts you need by typing the race name and the words "GIS Shapefiles," like this: *Miami FL City Council Districts GIS Shapefiles* and see what comes up. As mentioned above, every area does it differently but many areas now have GIS departments with Open Data websites where you can find and download the information you need. In the above Miami example, Google returns this:



In this situation, it appears that Miami has an Open Data link (the second option here). That's the first place you should look as "Open Data" means you can download the data. If you don't see "Open Data"

listed, clicking on GIS department information is the next best thing. If all you can find is the GIS Department for your area, you'll have contact information for the GIS Coordinators who may be able to provide the data for you upon request.

If, after searching, you still cannot find the files you need, reach out to LWVUS and they can take a look and see what they can find for you. If they cannot find the districts you need, that most likely means they do not exist in the GIS format we need. But don't worry! Even without GIS we can ensure voters only see the races on their specific ballot through Manual Districting.

## Adding a GIS District

After you have found and downloaded the GIS shapefiles you need, it's time to add them to your guide. You have a couple of options for adding GIS to your guide.

### Adding a Single GIS District

To load GIS into your guide, click on the "Upload GIS District" button on the Districts homepage:

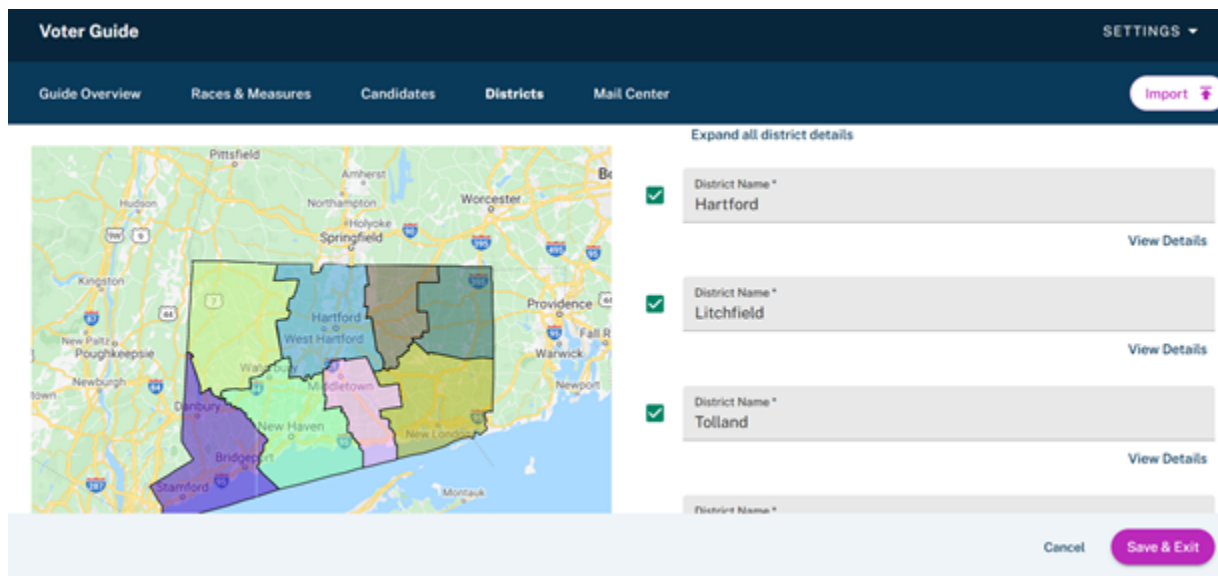


On the next page you'll be able to name the district (TIP: Name the district something that makes sense, like Miami City Council Districts and not just City Council), set the state (required) and load the three files you've already saved to your computer (.shp, .dbf, .prj).

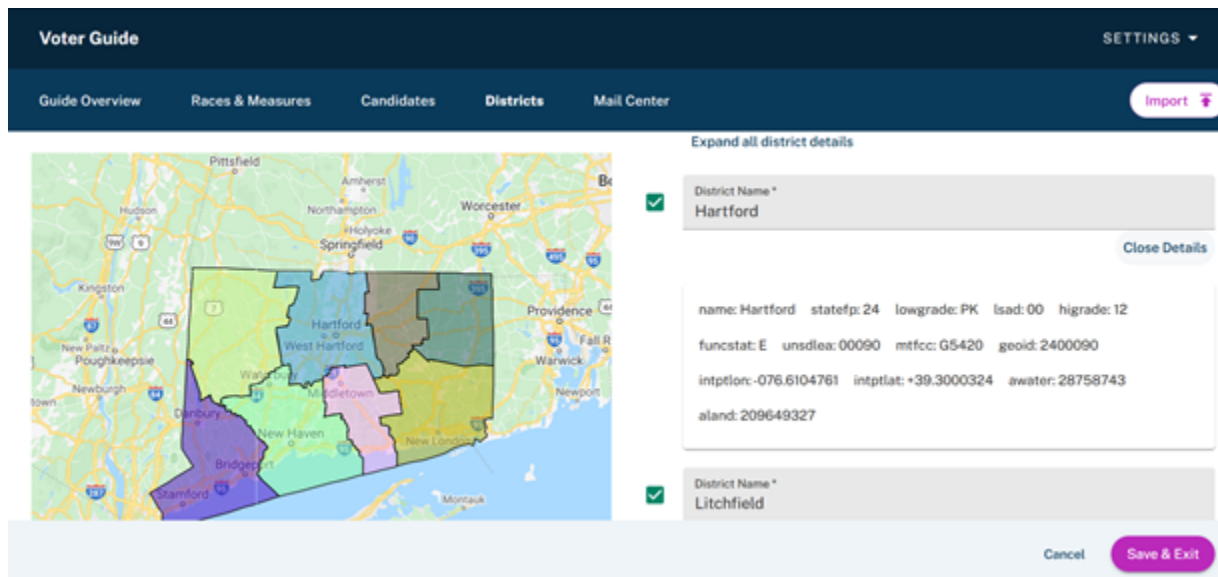
A screenshot of the 'Set Information' and 'Find your GIS Data' steps in the Voter Guide application. The page has a dark blue header with navigation links: 'Guide Overview', 'Races & Measures', 'Candidates', 'Districts', and 'Mail Center'. An 'Import' button with a download icon is in the top right. The main content area is divided into three sections. The first section, '1 Set Information', has a form with 'GIS District Set Name \*' (with a hint 'ie: New Jersey school districts') and 'State \*' (a dropdown menu). The second section, '2 Find your GIS Data', has a paragraph explaining that each state, county, city, town, etc. has a different way of distributing this data, and sometimes this data doesn't exist, and then you will need to create your district using one of our manual options. There are a few places where you can find GIS Data: US Census Bureau, Google, Secretary of States and Board of Elections, and Universities and Colleges. A link 'Learn more about how to find your GIS Data' is provided. The third section, '3 Upload GIS Data', has a paragraph explaining that GIS Data is already in your account for all the races down through the State House, so you'll only need to create GIS Districts for any local races you are covering. Below this, there are three upload boxes: 'Geography File -.shp', 'Attribute File -.dbf', and 'Projection File -.prj'. Each box has a cloud icon with an upward arrow, the text 'Upload your [file type] file here (.shp)', and an 'Upload' button.

Once added to the page, click “import and continue” to view the districts.

On the next screen you’ll see the data that was inside the GIS shapefiles you just loaded. You’ll see a map of the districts and then a list of the district names on the right-hand side of the screen.



If you need additional information about the district names, click “view details” to see the additional data for that district. Sometimes the district names aren’t as “clean” as the above screenshot and you need to use the additional details to help rename the district.



If you need to edit any names of the districts you can type directly in the “District Name” box, or use the new bulk edit feature found at the top of the page.

Here you can replace the District Name with any information in the “view details” section mentioned above, add a prefix to the district name or add a suffix to the district name. Any edits you make in this section will be applied to all district names that are checked, so make sure you only have check marks next to the districts you want to update.

Once you’ve checked your district map and names you’re ready to “save and exit” to load the GIS data into the guide! Only district names that have a check mark will be imported into the guide so make sure all the districts are checked that you need (the system defaults to checking all districts). Once imported you’re ready to assign the districts to the races as described above.

### Managing GIS Districts

Once you have loaded your GIS into the system you’ll see the list of districts in the Districts table:

**VOTE 411 Voter Guide** REPORT A BUG SETTINGS

[Guide Overview](#) [Races & Measures](#) [Candidates](#) [Districts](#) [Mail Center](#) Import

**Districts**

Districting your races is important to help voters see the races relevant to them. There are different ways to set up the districting- review our quick guide to find the districting strategy that is right for you.

[Create Manual District](#) Upload GIS District

**Created Districts**

| <input type="checkbox"/> Name     | Type               | Actions        |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Text     | ZIP Code District  | <span>⋮</span> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Text     | Composite District | <span>⋮</span> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senate   | District Set       | <span>⋮</span> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> III      | District Set       | <span>⋮</span> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FWCCDist | GIS District Set   | <span>⋮</span> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Text     | District Set       | <span>⋮</span> |

Rows per page: 50 1-6 of 6

If you need to make any edits to the name or state assigned to the district you can do so by clicking on the district name or using the action feature to edit.

**VOTE 411 Voter Guide** REPORT A BUG SETTINGS

[Guide Overview](#) [Races & Measures](#) [Candidates](#) [Districts](#) [Mail Center](#) Import

**Districts**

Districting your races is important to help voters see the races relevant to them. There are different ways to set up the districting- review our quick guide to find the districting strategy that is right for you.

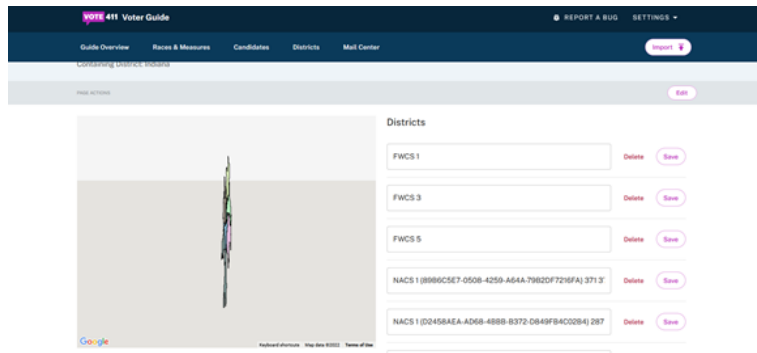
[Create Manual District](#) Upload GIS District

**Created Districts**

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name | Type               | Actions           |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text | ZIP Code District  | <span>⋮</span>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Text            | Composite District | <span>Edit</span> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senate          | District Set       | <span>⋮</span>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> III             | District Set       | <span>⋮</span>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FWCCDist        | GIS District Set   | <span>⋮</span>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Text            | District Set       | <span>⋮</span>    |

1 row selected Rows per page: 50 1-6 of 6

You cannot add new districts to existing GIS sets, if you need to add new districts you will need to load the files again and grab the districts you need. You can delete districts (if you are a guide admin) or change the name of the set or districts.

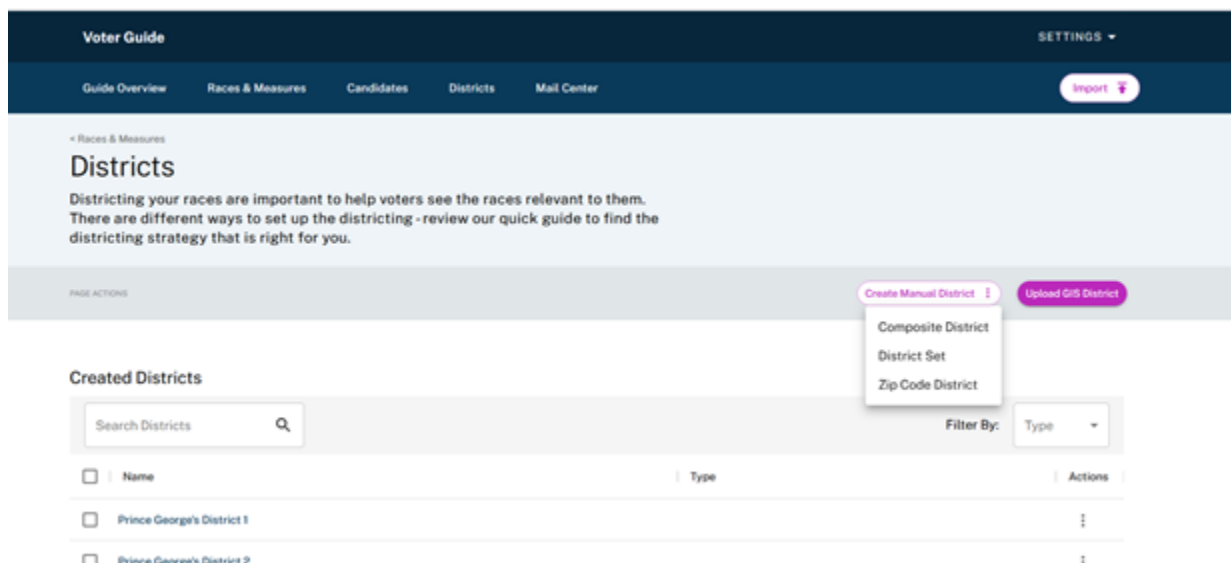


## Manual Districting

### [Manual Districts Training Video \(Link\)](#)

As mentioned above, it is possible that the GIS data you need for your race does not exist. We have several other ways that enable us to show voters only the races and candidates on their ballot. Each option has their own pros and cons so be sure that you're choosing the right "plan B" for districting your race. If you have any questions about which option to use please contact LWVUS and they'll help guide you.

To find the manual districts, click on the Create Manual District button on the Districts homepage and choose the type that best fits your needs:



### Composite Districts

Composite districts are used if we have the GIS data we need to create a larger district. For example, these districts are often used for judicial races where the district is 2+ cities/counties/towns/etc. Basically, anytime you have the smaller components for the district already, you can use Composite Districts to create the larger district. **This only works if the district is made up of complete cities/towns/counties, and not half of city A and all of city B.**

**1. Set Information**

Composite District Name\*  
Test 1  
e.g. New Jersey school districts

---

**2. Add your districts**

Choose a state\*  
Georgia

Select a district type\*  
State Upper House District

Select a district\*  
Senate District 29

**Add district**

**Selected districts**

- Remove** Georgia = State Upper House District = Senate District 28
- Remove** Georgia = State Upper House District = Senate District 34
- Remove** Georgia = State Upper House District = Senate District 29

## ZIP Code Districts

Zip Code Districts are used if you know which zip code(s) make up a specific district. Just like with Composite Districts, **the district needs to be made up of complete zip codes, not portions of zip codes.**

**Creating a ZIP Code District**  
Create a district out of area ZIP codes

**1. Enter District Name**

Zip Code District Name\*  
Test Zip Code  
e.g. New Jersey school districts

---

**2. Enter your ZIP Codes**  
Add one ZIP Code at a time to create your district

ZIP Code  **Add**

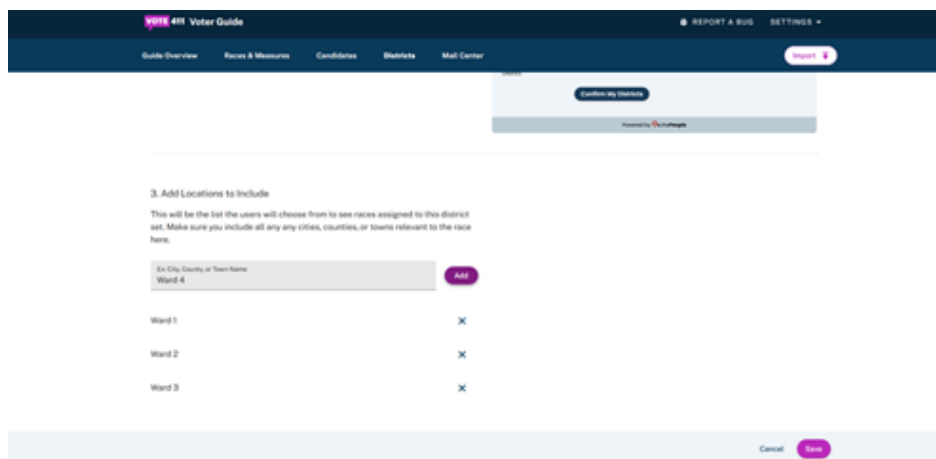
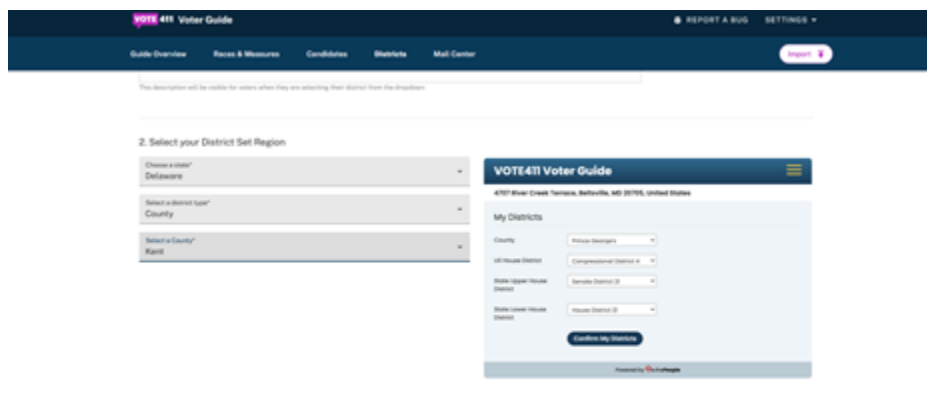
**Added ZIP Code regions**

|       |          |
|-------|----------|
| 20036 | <b>X</b> |
| 20012 | <b>X</b> |
| 20006 | <b>X</b> |

**Cancel Save**

## District Sets

District sets should be your last option as this does require voters to choose their district before viewing their races (and not all voters know their district). However, this does ensure that voters only see the races on their ballot. District Sets work by manually creating the districts and then assigning a larger area those districts and allowing voters to choose. For example, let's say you were unable to find the GIS data for your city council races and you're not able to use Composite Districts or Zip Code Districts to assign the district to the races. You can create a District Set, assign it to the entire city and then have voters choose District 1, District 2, etc. before viewing their guide



## Mail Center

The way we contact candidates to get them to answer our questions is through email (or snail mail if the candidate does not have an email address). The Mail Center is where you'll contact the candidates, generate the emails (that you've already created!) and/or export a snail mail letter.



# Mail Dashboard

## [Mail Center Training Video \(Link\)](#)

After clicking on the Mail Center link, you'll land on the mail dashboard. The dashboard is broken into three sections:

- Not invited yet
- Invited
- Responded

You will be able to easily see where the candidates are in the process as well as complete actions, including bulk actions, for the candidates in the same status.

The screenshot shows the Mail Center dashboard. At the top is a navigation bar with links: Guide Overview, Races & Measures, Candidates, Districts, Campaign Finance, and Mail Center. An 'Import' button is on the right. Below the navigation bar is a header section for 'Mail Center' with the subtitle 'Communicate with candidates through email or snail mail.' and buttons for 'Edit templates' and 'Create a template'.

Below the header are three tabs: 'NOT INVITED YET' (selected), 'INVITED', and 'RESPONDED'. Under the 'NOT INVITED YET' tab, there is a table of candidates. Above the table are bulk actions: 'Send an email', 'Send a letter', 'Move to invited', and 'Move to responded'. The table has columns: Name, Race/Measure, Category, Has Email, Mailing Ad..., and Actions. A dropdown menu is open for the first candidate, showing options: 'Edit candidate', 'Send an email', 'Send a letter', 'Move to invited', and 'Move to responded'.

|                                     | Name                   | Race/Measure                                          | Category      | Has Email | Mailing Ad... | Actions |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|---------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Alicia Armental        | River Dell Regional Board of Education: River Edge... | Uncategorized | Yes       | No            | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Thomas Bogdansky       | Ramapo Indian Hills Regional Board of Education: W... | Uncategorized | Yes       | No            | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Megan Zrown            | English Race Name                                     | County        | No        | No            | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Elizabeth A. Calderone | Pascack Valley Regional Board of Education: Woodcl... | Uncategorized | Yes       | No            | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Brady Davis            | State House District 16                               | Uncategorized | No        | No            | ⋮       |

## Not Invited

All candidates that appear in the Not Invited Yet section have not yet received a communication to participate in the voter guide. They have been created, they exist in the system, but they have not yet received an invitation to participate. All candidates will start in this section once you create the candidate. Candidates that appear in this section can have several actions taken to interact with them. Those actions are:

- Send email - invite the candidates to participate through email
- Send a letter - if the candidate does not have an email address you can generate a snail mail letter to send
- Move to Invited - change the status to invited without sending email/letter
- Move to responded - change the status to responded without sending email/letter
- Archive Candidate - move candidate to Archived section of guide

## Mail Center

Communicate with candidates through email or snail mail.

PAGE ACTIONS

Edit templates
Create a template

NOT INVITED YET

INVITED

RESPONDED

BULK ACTIONS:

Send an email
Send a letter
Move to invited
Move to responded

|                                     | Name                   | Race/Measure                                          | Category      | Has Email | Mailing Ad... | Actions |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|---------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Alicia Armental        | River Dell Regional Board of Education: River Edge... | Uncategorized | Yes       | No            | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Thomas Bogdanský       | Ramapo Indian Hills Regional Board of Education: W... | Uncategorized | Yes       | No            | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Megan Zrown            | English Race Name                                     | County        | No        | No            | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Elizabeth A. Calderone | Pascack Valley Regional Board of Education: WoodCL... | Uncategorized | Yes       | No            | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Brady Davis            | State House District 16                               | Uncategorized | No        | No            | ⋮       |

Edit candidate
Send an email
Send a letter
Move to invited
Move to responded

## Invited

Candidates that appear in the “Invited” section have received at least one communication to participate in the guide but have not yet responded to the questions. There are several actions you can take with candidates in this section, such as:

- Send an email - send the invitation OR reminder email to candidates
- Send a letter - if they do not have an email address you can generate a snail mail letter
- Move to responded - change their status without the candidate submitting responses
- Archive candidate - move to the archive section of the guide

Guide Overview
Races & Measures
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Districts
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Mail Center

Import

## Mail Center

Communicate with candidates through email or snail mail.

PAGE ACTIONS

Edit templates
Create a template

NOT INVITED YET

INVITED

RESPONDED

BULK ACTIONS:

Send an email
Send a letter
Move to uninvited
Move to responded

|                                     | Name                   | Race/Measure                                          | Category      | Has Email | Mailing Ad... | Actions |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|---------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Robert Anderson        | Becton Regional Board of Education: Carlstadt FULL... | Uncategorized | No        | Yes           | ⋮       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Megan Brown (Write-In) | Test Race                                             | Statewide     | Yes       | Yes           | ⋮       |

Edit candidate
Send an email
Send a letter
Move to uninvited
Move to responded

1 row selected

Rows per page: 50

## Responded

Candidates that appear in this section have either submitted their answers to the questions or have been manually moved by a guide admin. You can do several actions with candidates in this section, including:

- Send an email - if you need to communicate with the candidates you can do so there. NOTE: the system will automatically send an email to candidates when they submit responses, so you do not need to do so manually.
- Send a letter - if you don't have the email address, you can generate a snail mail letter
- Archive candidate - send the candidates to the Archive section of the guide
- Move to uninvited - this moves that candidate back to the Not Invited Yet section. This is used most often after a primary and before a General so you can re-email the candidates their invitation.

[Guide Overview](#)
[Races & Measures](#)
[Candidates](#)
[Districts](#)
[Campaign Finance](#)
[Mail Center](#)

Import

## Mail Center

Communicate with candidates through email or snail mail.

PAGE ACTIONS

Edit templates Create a template

NOT INVITED YET INVITED RESPONDED

BULK ACTIONS:

Move back to uninvited Send an email Send a letter

| <input type="checkbox"/> | Name                                                                                                 | Race/Measure                   | Category  | Has Email | Mailing Ad... | Actions     |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  Bananas the Monkey | Click here for an example race | Statewide | No        | No            | <div></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  Patches the Dog   | Click here for an example race | Statewide | No        | No            | <div></div> |

Rows per page: 50

1-2 of 2

< >

## Moving Candidates

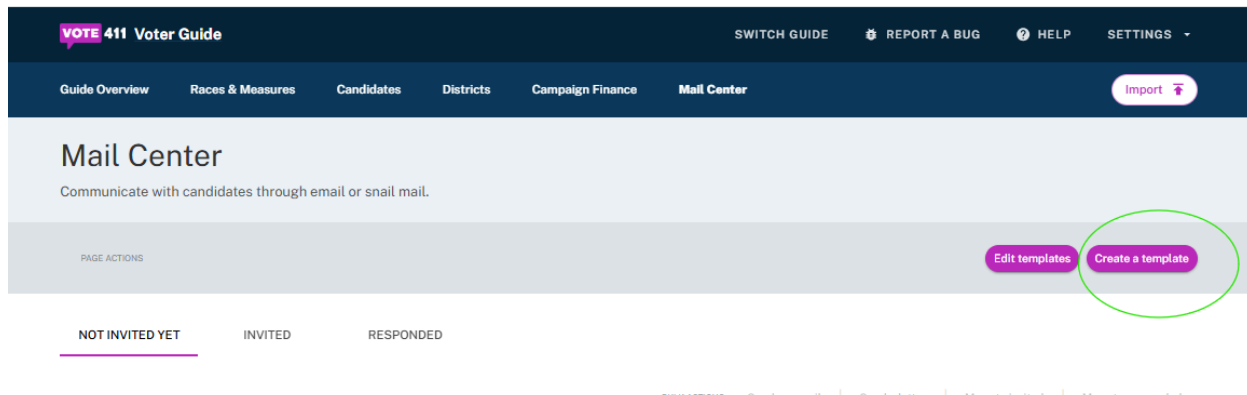
As mentioned above, admins can move candidates to different statuses depending on your needs. The system will move candidates automatically when:

- You send an invitation email/letter to a candidate for the first time. The candidate will move from “Not Invited Yet” to “Invited” automatically
- When a candidate submits answers to our questions, they will automatically move from whichever status they were in, to the “Responded” section
- To manually move a candidate, go to their profile page, click Edit Candidate, and update their status in the pop-up window

## Email Templates

[Email Templates Training Video \(Link\)](#)

To make it easier to email candidates, email templates are created in advance and then used through the Mail Center. You can create or edit email templates in the Mail Center.



## Creating New Email Templates

If you don't have any existing templates and you'd like to create a new one, you can click the "create a template" button at the top of the Mail Center landing page. You will then go to the "Create a new email template" page.

Choose your template type from the drop-down menu, and name the template (ex: Primary 2025, General 2025, etc.). You'll also need to add the sender name, a responder email and a subject line. We strongly encourage you to add "League of Women Voters" somewhere in the subject line to ensure candidates know to open the email. You also can BCC yourself on the email so you receive the same email the candidates receive. This is not required but strongly encouraged, especially on the "receipt" email that is automatically sent when the candidate submits their responses. **Only one email address can be entered as a BCC.**

## Using Macros

The system will email candidates in bulk, but you still want to make the emails candidate-specific and personable. Macros enable us to personalize the emails while being able to send all emails at the same time.

Just to the right of the template text box, you'll see a green box full of macros (anything that starts with a “#” is a macro). You can enter these into your template and the system will input the correct information directly in the email when you send it. For example, you can start your email with “Dear #candidate\_name()” and when you send the email the system will replace the macro with the candidates name.

Macros are a huge time saver and enable us to email hundreds of candidates at the same time but still look like we emailed them individually.



You can use the following macros in the body of an email:

**#question\_list()**  
Displays the questions for the candidates's race.

**#mailing\_address()**  
Displays the candidate's mailing address.

**#today()**  
Displays today's date.

**#candidate\_name()**  
Displays the candidate's full name.

**#contact\_name()**  
Displays the contact name for the candidates's race.

**#race\_name()**  
Displays the name of the race.

**#race\_url()**  
Displays the URL to the candidate's race page.

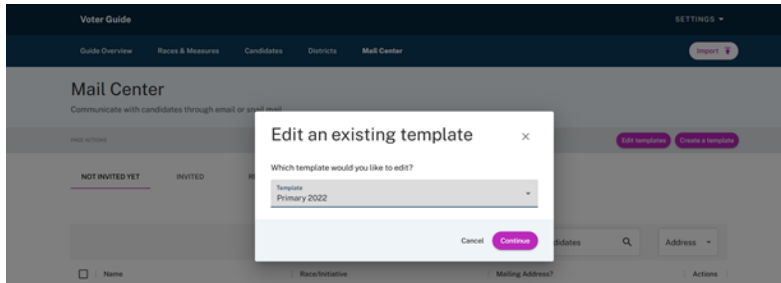
**#candidate\_url()**  
Displays the URL to the candidate's detail page.

**#response\_url()**  
Displays the URL where the candidate can input his/her response.

**#response\_url\_short()**

## Editing Email Templates

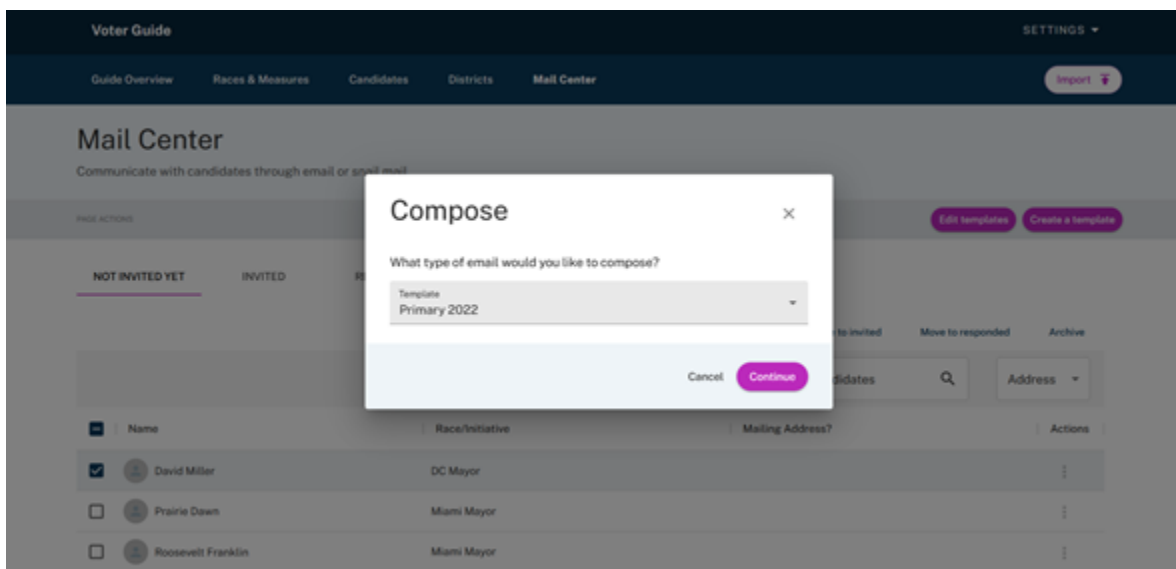
To edit existing templates click on the “edit template” button at the top of the mail center landing page. A pop up will appear asking you which template you would like to edit (Invitation, Reminder, Receipt, etc.). After you choose your template type, you'll go to the Email Template page where you can edit the template. Just be sure to click “Save Template” before leaving the page to ensure any changes you made are not lost.



## Sending an Email

Once all your candidates are in the system, and your email templates are created, you're ready to send the emails to the candidates.

Use the table to filter for all candidates that have an email address (the system will not allow you to send emails if you have selected a candidate that does not have an email address in their profile). Check the box to the left of the candidates that you want to email (you can select all) and then click "send an email." A pop up will appear, allowing you to choose your email template.



On the next screen the template you selected will appear. You can look at the text, make any edits or determine it's good to be sent.

The screenshot shows the 'Send an email' page in the Voter Guide system. The top navigation bar includes 'Voter Guide' and 'SETTINGS'. Below it, a secondary navigation bar has links for 'Guide Overview', 'Races & Measures', 'Candidates', 'Districts', and 'Mail Center', along with an 'Import' button. The main heading is 'Send an email' with the subtext 'Invite or remind your candidates to answer our questions.' Below this is a 'PAGE ACTIONS' bar with 'Cancel', 'Skip Email', 'Preview', and 'Send Email' buttons. The form fields include: 'Template Type' (Bulk Email), 'Send to' (David Miller), 'League/Sender Name' (League of Women Voters Prince George's County MD), 'Responder Email' (sample@sample.com), 'BCC', and 'Subject of email'. A second 'PAGE ACTIONS' bar is at the bottom of the form.

### Preview the email

Once you’ve looked over the template you can either skip sending the email, preview the email or send the email. By clicking preview, the system will automatically send you an email to the address you’re logged in with. This is helpful in making sure you have all the correct macros, the formatting looks good and allows you to see what the candidates will see if they need help. You only really need to preview the email the very first time you send to candidates since once you’ve determined the email is good, you’re good to go. If you preview the email, just be sure you only select one candidate and not all as the preview will send you the emails for all the candidates you’ve selected.

Sending the email will send the email to the candidates so be sure to only click that button when you’re ready to go!

## Sending a Letter

If your candidate does not have an email address, we can generate and send snail mail letters so we can invite these candidates to answer our questions. The snail mail letter templates work the same as email templates (including macros!).

### Editing the Letter

When you’re ready to send the letter, use the table to filter for any candidates that have mailing addresses, check the box to the left of the candidates that need the snail mail letters. **Note: the system will only allow you to send letters to candidates that have mailing addresses in their bio question.** After you have checked the box next to the candidates, click on the “send letter” link and you will land on the “Send a Letter” page.

< Mail Center

## Send a Letter

If your candidates do not have email addresses you can snail mail their letters of invitation so they can still participate in your voter guide.

PAGE ACTIONS

Cancel Download labels Download letter(s)

Template type  
**invitation**

Send to  
**Megan Brown (Write-In)**

**Letter**

You can make any edits to the text on that page, including adding any macros you need (as listed on the right side of the page).

Voter Guide SETTINGS

Guide Overview Races & Measures Candidates Districts Mail Center Import

## Send a Letter

If your candidates do not have email addresses you can snail mail their letters of invitation so they can still participate in your voter guide.

PAGE ACTIONS

Cancel Download labels Download letter(s)

Template type  
**invitation**

Send to  
**David Miller**

**Letter**

**[YOUR NAME]**  
**[YOUR ADDRESS]**  
**[YOUR PHONE NUMBERS]**

**#question\_list0**  
Displays the questions for

When your letter is ready, click “Download Letters” to download your letters to a PDF. The system will generate letters for all candidates you selected into one PDF document.

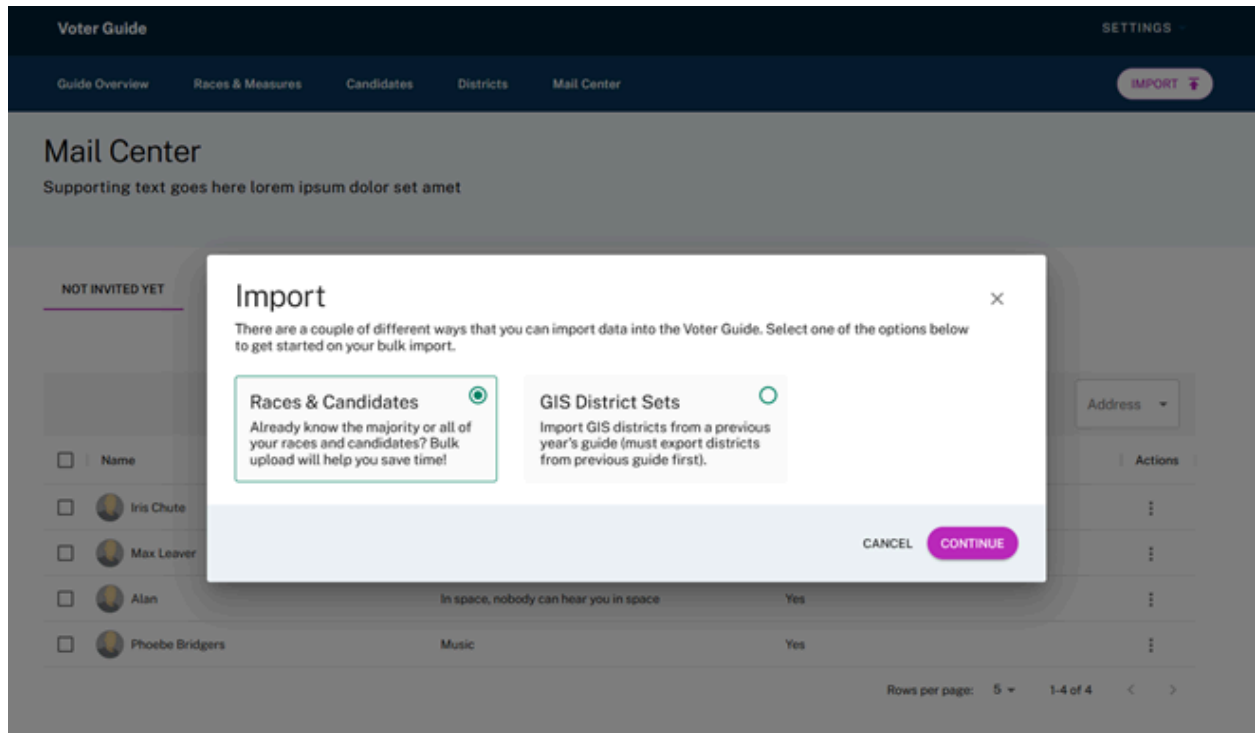
### Mailing Labels

You can also download mailing labels filled out with the candidates name and mailing address. You can print these labels on sticky labels to make it easier to address the snail mail letters.

### Bulk Importing

Bulk importing will save you time when creating your guide. To start a bulk import, click the “Import” button in the top, right-hand corner of your guide.





## Races and Candidates

The bulk import you'll use most often is the Race and Candidates. This is a huge time saver when creating your guide, especially if you have more than 5-10 races to create. It allows you to load ALL candidates and races AND biographical questions at the same time!

To bulk import, click on the "Races and Candidates" tab and then click Continue. You'll land on the bulk import page with ALL the information you'll need to complete this process. You'll be able to download the template where you can start adding the races/candidates/biographical questions you have (TIP: Do this step first so that you can start adding candidates as soon as your filing information is available).

Voter Guide

SETTINGS

Guide OverviewRaces & MeasuresCandidatesDistrictsMail Center

Import

### Getting started with a bulk upload

Bulk upload can help save you a lot of time if you know what races you'll be covering ahead of time. You do have to know at least one candidate per race in order to upload a new race correctly.

- Download our template**

Our template contains the correct column names needed to properly upload your candidates and their races. While you could use your own spreadsheet to keep track of this information, we find that is easiest if you start by downloading our template.

Download Template
- Start creating or updating your races & candidates**

You can use the bulk import to create new candidates and races, or you could use it to update existing ones.

To create new data, the required columns are `fullname`, `lastname`, and `race`. Don't worry if you don't know the rest of the column's information yet, as you can always come back and update it. However, the more information you have, the better!

To update your races, just make the race updates you want are within the spreadsheet. When it is time to upload your file, there is an option called "Update existing races." By default, this is always turned on! If you made changes that you aren't ready to have in the system, just make sure to uncheck that option.
- You're almost done, but don't forget to check your work**

Pretty easy, right? Before you go ahead and upload your file, please double check your work! Look to make sure your file is formatted correctly and the data you've added is accurate. It's very important that:

  - the first row of your spreadsheet contains the correct column names: `fullname,lastname,race,userdata,party,occupation,imageurl,contactname,contactemail`,
  - the `fullname`, `lastname`, and `race` column is filled out for each row (so that a candidate and its race can be added to the system)

Remember, you can upload and update your races as many times as you'd like. If you are waiting for more race data, you can upload what you have now, or you could wait until you have all the information later.

Once the template is ready to go, load it into the "upload my races" section of the page and click "save."

Import my races

Add your spreadsheet by clicking the "Attach" button to choose your file. Once it has been attached, click the "Save" button to add your races to your guide.

Attach your race file here (.csv)

Attach

Cancel

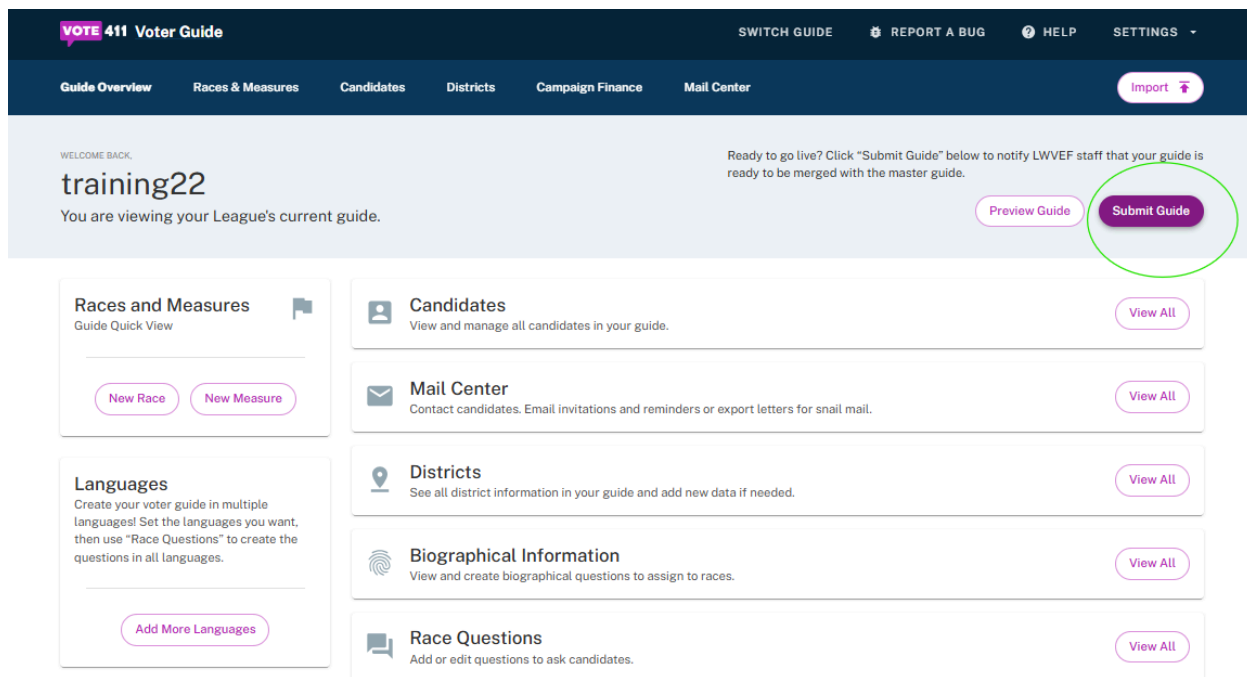
Start Import

After uploading your .csv file and clicking 'start import,' the system will automatically send you an email with the status of your upload. If it was successful, your imported races should now appear in your guide. If there are any issues with the upload, you will also receive an email letting you know what errors you need to fix before attempting to import your spreadsheet again. If you continue to have issues, please email [VOTE411Help@lww.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lww.org).

## Submitting Your Guide

When you're nearly ready to publish your guide, you need to submit the guide to LWVUS so they can import it into the master VOTE411 guide. **This step is required and failure to complete the step will delay your guide's publication.** Only guides that are imported into the master VOTE411 will appear when published. It's easy to submit your guide!

On the "Guide Overview" landing page, you'll see a "Submit Guide" button toward the top of the page:



At least one business day before you plan to publish your races, click that button and LWVUS staff will receive an email letting them know you're ready to publish your guide. Someone from the VOTE411 team will then import your guide into the master VOTE411 guide. The LWVUS team will not send you an email when your guide is imported. After you click the "submit guide" button please just wait the at least one business day and then publish your races as planned.

## Publishing Races

### [Publishing Training Video \(Link\)](#)

After submitting your guide, you're ready to publish your races. You can publish races one at a time, or bulk publish several races at once, it just depends on what you need to publish and your publication timeline.

To publish the races, go to Races & Measures and scroll down to the dashboard. Check the box to the left of the races you want to publish (or click the box at the very top to select them all) and then click the "publish" link that appears above the dashboard.

[Guide Overview](#)
[Races & Measures](#)
[Candidates](#)
[Districts](#)
[Campaign Finance](#)
[Mail Center](#)

[Import](#)

## Races & Measures

View the races and measures that have been set up on your guide. Review our training materials for help to get started or our checklist for when you're ready to publish.

PAGE ACTIONS

[Bulk Import](#)
[Create Race](#)
[Create Measure](#)

Race Setup Menu

Get started filling in the race setup items below before you create a race!

- Parties
- Categories
- Districts
- Biographical Questions
- Race Questions

Getting Started

It's easiest if before you create a race, get started by adding parties, categories, districts, biographical questions, and race questions to your guide. When you go to create a race everything you have created will be available for you to use.

If you need to get your races created first, that's okay too! You can always add what you need back in later.

If you have more than 25 races, using bulk import can save you a lot of time! You just need to know the race name and at least 1 candidate per race.

Election Races & Measures

BULK ACTIONS: [Delete](#) | [Export](#) | [Publish](#) | [Unpublish](#) | [Update District with Race Name](#) | [Bulk Edit](#)

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Name                                                                                       | Type | Category  | District ↓   | Status                 | Actions           |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-----------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The North Dakota Voter Guide will be published again in May 2026. Click here for more info | Race | Statewide | North Dakota | <span>Published</span> | <a href="#">⋮</a> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Click here for an example race                                                             | Race | Statewide | North Dakota | <span>Published</span> | <a href="#">⋮</a> |

2 rows selected

Rows per page: 50 | 1-2 of 2 | < | >

If you’re publishing for the first time, at the very bottom of the Races & Measures page you’ll find some helpful tools to help you make sure you’ve done all the steps needed before you publish, including a helpful checklist to make sure you’re ready to go!

|                                     |          |                          |                   |
|-------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | lalalala | <span>Unpublished</span> | <a href="#">⋮</a> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Test     | <span>Unpublished</span> | <a href="#">⋮</a> |

4 rows selected

Rows per page: 5 | 1-5 of 61 | < | >

Are you ready to publish a race?

Review our race checklist to make sure your race is truly ready to go!

[VIEW CHECKLIST](#)[HOW TO PUBLISH](#)

After you have published your races, please give the system a little while to update before checking if the races are on the VOTE411.org website. There is a delay, and the delay is longer the closer we get to the General Election. If your races are not on the site after a long time, please reach out to LWVUS ([VOTE411Help@lww.org](mailto:VOTE411Help@lww.org)) and they’ll help troubleshoot for you.

Suggested Order of Operations

Don’t know where to start? We know there’s a lot to do so we’ve created a sample order of operations for you. **NOTE: there is no “right” way to complete your guide. If you complete all the steps, it does not**

**matter the order you complete them in.** We recommend you get access to your guide early so you can play around and test out what works best for you and your League.

8. Determine the races you will be covering for the election. Also determine the filing deadline so you know when to start pulling the candidate information.
9. Download bulk import spreadsheet (if using).
10. Determine guide timeline. What date are you going to first contact candidates? When will you remind the candidates? What is your publication date? Etc.
11. Start looking for GIS shapefiles for the districts you're covering (if needed). Load any files you have into your guide.
12. Determine biographical questions and race questions you'll be asking candidates.
13. Finalize email templates. Look at the defaults and add changes or create your own. You will need an invitation template, reminder template and receipt template. When finalized, add to the system.
14. Add "race setup" pieces to guide so you're ready to go when you get your candidate information
15. When the filing deadline passes, begin adding candidate and race information into your spreadsheet, or use the step-by-step race creation to create your races. If your state does not release email addresses for the candidates, be sure to research emails so you can easily contact candidates (candidate websites and Facebook pages often have emails listed).
16. Make sure all races have bio questions and race questions assigned before contacting candidates.
17. Once all races and candidates are in the system, you're ready to email the candidates.
18. Remind candidates who haven't responded after a certain amount of time.
19. At least one business day before your publication date, click the "submit guide" button to tell LWVUS you're getting ready to publish.
20. Publish your guide on your determined publication date (note, we recommend you publish on weekdays so LWVUS staff is in the office to help troubleshoot if needed)
21. Keep contacting candidates after you publish to get as many candidates to respond by Election Day as possible. Use our [candidate pressure campaign toolkit](#) to put the pressure on the candidates so they finally respond.

### **Additional VOTE411 Resources**

- Online Voter Guide Trainings and Resources
  - o Training Videos
  - o Sample Candidate Questions
- VOTE411 Promotion
  - o VOTE411 Promotional Videos
  - o VOTE411 Brand Standards
  - o Social Media & Press
  - o VOTE411 Promotional Materials
  - o Candidate Pressure Campaign
  - o QR Code and Widget
  - o VOTE411 Social Media

