

Instructions for Letter Writers

All letters will be targeted to these 12 “Super-States” which are the most critical battlegrounds for the Presidential election and either a flip-able US Senate seat or state legislative seats needed to end the most egregious gerrymandering.



Writing Letters to Voters through VOTE FORWARD.ORG.

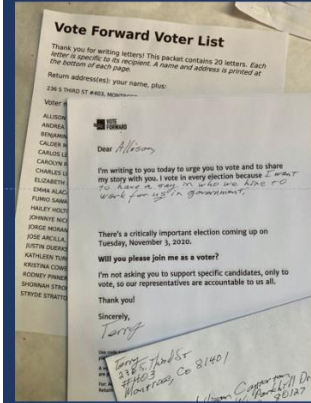
In the 2020 election, 10 million letters will be targeted to Democrats who are less likely to vote, under-represented voters likely to vote Democratic and older voters inexperienced with absentee voting who live in one of the 12 super battleground states. We will be joining multiple organizations and grassroots groups from all over the country to have all of these letters prepared and ready to mail when we receive the call to mail them sometime in mid-October.

Multiple randomized experiments have shown that Vote Forward’s hybrid handwritten/typed letter templates are effective at increasing voter turnout. The templates have also been carefully reviewed for legal and compliance issues, and include key information that must be present, legible, and correct. For these reasons, all volunteers adopting voters from Vote Forward’s system should not make modifications such as adding to or changing the typed text, re-typing the letters, handwriting letters on personal stationery, or formatting the letter content for a different medium such as a postcard. These kinds of changes risk mis-informing voters and/or decreasing the effectiveness of all of our efforts in an election year when voter turnout is critical.

Getting started:

1. Sign up for a VOTE FORWARD.org account at <https://votefwd.org>
2. Read Vote Forward's simple explanation of the letter writing campaign
3. You’ll be asked a few basic questions to make sure you’re a human being with good intentions. That starts the Vote Forward vetting process and in 24-48 hours you’ll hear from them that you’re approved

- After approval you can click a button on their website to “adopt” some voters. You will be able to download a PDF with a list of the addresses and the letters to be personalized.



VOTE FORWARD LETTERS

Vote Forward provides a voter list with names & addresses

Writers download and print letter from their web site and provide the envelope

Write the salutation and complete the sentence about why you vote. In this example: “I want to have a say in who we hire to work for us in government”.

Sign the letter with your first name only and address the envelope.

The return address is a local VOTE FORWARD PO Box in the voter’s state.

Supplies:

- “Peel and seal” letter sized envelopes. One can usually prepare ~20 letters and envelopes per hour. With ~13 weeks remaining, and 1-2 hours of writing per week, you will need between 260-520 envelopes
- Forever stamps from your local Post Office or online with [USPS.com](https://www.usps.com)
- Blue pens, either ballpoint, felt tip, or classic fountain, so that your letters don’t look xeroxed
- Hi-liters, white-out (Tombow Original Correction Tape highly recommended), stickers or other decorative items are optional

Writing:

Fill in first name of the voter after “Dear” and then write 1-3 sentences to explain why you believe it is important to vote in every election. This is the most important, fun and personal part of the letter. It’s the motivational hook. The key is to make it authentic: if it motivates you, chances are it will motivate the recipient to read your letter and follow your request.

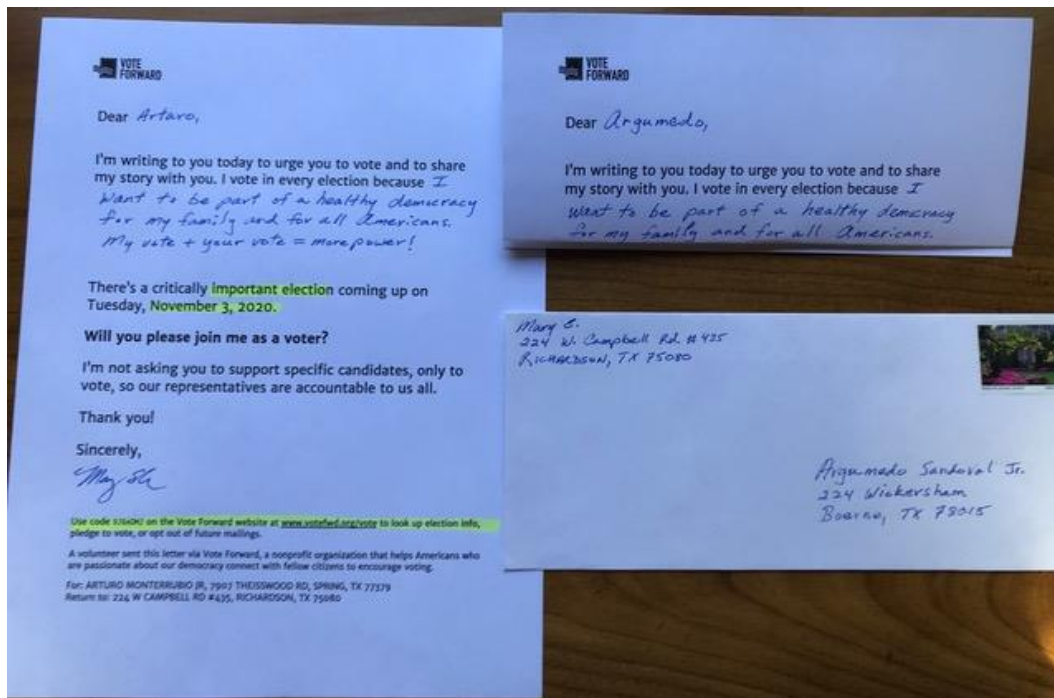
- **Write in English only in large, clear, easy to read print.** Avoid cursive because it is hard for many people today to read.
- **Keep it positive** (*I want a clean, green planet. Not: I’m worried about climate change.*)
- **Emphasize the collective voice (my vote + your vote = more power) and use inclusive language (“we” and “our”)** (*When we all vote, we can have the government/policy/country we want.*) Use “If we both”, “I believe” or “I wish” rather than “I want”)
- **Make it personal** (*I’m a retired teacher and I believe our kids should have a great education.*)
- **Avoid clichés** (*Sometimes issues I care about have been decided by a handful of votes. Not: Every vote counts!*)
- **Don’t guilt-trip or preach** (*It’s great to be an active part of our democracy! Not: Voting is your responsibility!*)
- **Keep it pithy:** Short messages are more effective, plus you’re going to be writing them dozens or hundreds of times!
- Issues are okay to mention, but avoid those that may be controversial as the voter may not share your perspective
- **Do not mention candidates by name.**

Write the envelopes:

- Fill out the person's full name and address.
- Avoid using honorifics because it is not always possible to tell whether the person is Mr. or Ms.
- Return address: In the top left corner, use your first name & last initial or you may also use your middle name and/or a pen name as a last name if you prefer. ; **Write in the return address which you will find on the downloaded list from Vote Forward.** It is an in-state PO Box owned by Vote Forward. Do not omit it; it is an important verifier.

Finish:

- Fold and place the letter in the envelope so their hand-written name is the first thing they see when they open it. (see below)
- **MAKE SURE TO PUT THE RIGHT LETTER IN THE RIGHT ENVELOPE!** Do this immediately after addressing the envelope to avoid getting them mixed up and double check that the name and address printed at the bottom of each letter matches the name and address on the envelope.
- Seal and put on a stamp
- Store your finished letters in a safe clean place until notified by us to mail.
- Return to VOTE FORWARD.ORG, mark the previously downloaded letters as complete before downloading more.
- Please save the list of names that comes with each packet of letters from Vote Forward as we'll need your totals to keep track of our overall progress.



For a virtual letter **Writing Party** you'll need 10-20 letter sized envelopes, a packet of 10-20 letters downloaded and printed from the Vote Forward Website and a blue pen. If you do not get your Vote Forward account approval in time to download your letters before the day of the Writing Party/Workshop event, email luckbend@gmail.com and we can email letters that you can print at home.