

Unite & Rise for Voting Rights

Menu of Activations

On August 8, 2026, Leagues across the country will execute a local Day of Action in honor of the anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This is not a symbolic event. Every activation must reach real people in the community and generate trackable engagement data that contributes to the Unite and Rise 8.5 campaign goal of engaging 8.5 million people before November.

The Day of Action is not a standalone event. It is the summer's most visible expression of the work Leagues are already doing. Whether your League is focused on Electoral/Voter Protection or Movement Building, August 8 is where that work becomes collective, visible, and connected to a nationwide effort.

Leagues are strongly encouraged to execute their activation in partnership with at least one community organization. Partnerships expand your reach, strengthen your credibility, and deepen the impact of your action.

This document contains everything a League needs to select and plan their activation: a guiding framework for choosing the right action, the full menu of 10 activations organized by lift level, universal data tracking requirements, and a target population guide.

Before You Select Your Activation

Every League should answer these three questions before selecting an activation. Your answers should drive your choice, not habit or convenience.

1. Who is your target community?

We strongly encourage Leagues to focus their activation on a specific population from the Target Population Guide at the end of this document. **Leagues in communities where a population focus makes sense will have greater impact and stronger reach.** That said, rural, smaller, or newer Leagues may find it more appropriate to reach their general public and that is a valid choice depending on your community context. Whether you select a specific population or reach broadly, your audience should shape your partner choice, your location, your messaging, and your materials.

2. What is your capacity?

Be honest about your volunteer depth and your planning bandwidth. A well-executed medium lift activation beats a poorly executed high lift activation every time. Use the timelines below to assess whether you have enough runway to plan your chosen action before August 8.

3. What kind of partner will this require? We strongly encourage Leagues to partner with at least one community organization. You do not need to have a partner confirmed before selecting your activation, but you should have a clear sense of what kind of partner your chosen activation requires and a plan for securing one. A strong partner brings existing community relationships, expands your audience, and makes your activation more credible and effective.

The League of Women Voters is proud to work alongside our Unite and Rise Power Partners: YWCA, the American Association of University Women (AAUW), and the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW). If your League has an existing relationship with a local chapter of any of these organizations, that may be a natural starting point. **But we encourage you to think beyond familiar names and ask yourself:**

- Who are you trying to reach, and does this partner already have their trust?
- Does this partner have real access to your target community, or just a recognizable name?
- Does this partnership match your activation type and your league's capacity and community context?
- How will you sustain this partnership beyond August 8, and what is your plan to make that happen?

The planning toolkit provides a partner outreach template to support this process. Even a modest partnership reflects the League's commitment to building civic power with communities, not just on their behalf.

Activation Menu

There are 10 activations organized across three lift levels. Select at least one activation. **All activations are designed to take place in or for the community — not inside the League universe.** Partnership with a community organization is strongly encouraged and will significantly expand your reach and impact. We recognize that rural, smaller, or newer Leagues may not always have access to a community partner and Leagues in that situation can still participate and should reach out for support through the toolkit.

Leagues selecting medium or high lift activations will have access to activation-specific training sessions in June. Each training is organized by activation type and includes dedicated time for questions. Leagues planning a medium or high lift

activation are strongly encouraged to attend the session that corresponds to their chosen action.

HIGH LIFT — 10 to 12 week runway — Begin planning by late May

High lift activations require strong partner relationships, significant volunteer depth, and complex logistics. They have the highest potential reach and impact.

1. Deep Canvassing

Volunteers have extended, relational one-on-one conversations with low-propensity (aka high-opportunity) voters at their doors. The goal is genuine persuasion and relationship building, NOT information distribution. Requires partner list access, trained volunteers, and mapped routes.

Example: A League trains 15 volunteers in deep canvassing technique and partners with a community organization to access a voter list in a low-propensity (high-opportunity) precinct — volunteers spend August 8 knocking doors and having 15-minute relational conversations, collecting 40 vote pledges by end of day.

Suggested for: Electoral/Voter Protection states

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Partner confirmed	Confirm a partner with access to low-propensity (high-opportunity) voter lists in your target area	Weeks 1–2
Volunteer recruitment	Recruit canvassers — deep canvassing requires more training so recruit early	Weeks 3–4
List and routes	Obtain voter list, map routes, assign turf to volunteers	Weeks 5–6
Training	Train all volunteers on deep canvassing technique — not optional	Weeks 7–8
Confirmation	Confirm volunteers, finalize routes, prepare all materials	Weeks 9–10
August 8	Execute	Week 11–12

2. People’s Hearing / Community Testimony Event

A community-led public hearing where residents share personal testimony about voting barriers and civil rights. Must include a conversion moment at the close, i.e. pledge cards, voter registration, or contact collection.

Example: A League co-hosts a public hearing with a local civil rights organization where 10 community members share personal testimony about voting barriers. The event closes with a registration table and pledge cards, collecting 35 contacts before anyone leaves the room.

Suggested for: Electoral/Voter Protection states

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Partner confirmed	Confirm co-hosting partner and identify community speakers	Weeks 1–2
Venue and logistics	Secure venue, permits, and any media or stakeholder invitations	Weeks 3–4
Speaker preparation	Prepare speakers, develop agenda and program	Weeks 5–6
Volunteer recruitment	Recruit and assign volunteers for setup, facilitation, and registration table	Weeks 7–8
Confirmation	Confirm all speakers, volunteers, and logistics	Weeks 9–10
August 8	Execute — close with a clear call to action and collect contacts	Week 11–12

3. Cross-Movement Advocacy Day

A joint public event co-hosted with civil rights, civic, or philanthropic organizations that serve communities the League does not typically reach. Each partner must bring their own audience and is a genuinely shared event where multiple organizations contribute people, planning, and purpose. Leagues should prioritize partners they have not worked with before or organizations embedded in low-turnout communities. Requires a coordinated agenda, shared goals, and a clear call to action built into the program.

Example: A League co-hosts an August 8 event with a local workers' rights group and a housing justice organization. Each partner promotes the event to their own members, bringing together three different communities for a shared conversation about voting rights, civil rights, and civic power.

Suggested for: Movement Building states

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Partners confirmed	Identify and confirm at least two partner organizations	Weeks 1–2
Joint planning	Develop shared agenda, talking points, and materials with partners	Weeks 3–5
Venue and logistics	Secure venue, assign volunteer roles for registration and facilitation	Weeks 5–6
Promotion	Partners promote to their own networks — coordinate messaging	Weeks 7–8
Confirmation	Confirm all logistics, speakers, and volunteer assignments	Weeks 9–10
August 8	Execute — ensure each partner has a designated contact collection moment	Week 11–12

4. Skeptic’s Picnic

Small informal gatherings specifically designed for people who are not regular voters, hosted with a local community partner in neighborhoods or settings with documented low civic participation. Leagues must work with their partner to identify locations where non-voters actually are, NOT locations that are simply convenient for League volunteers. High relationship value, low formality. The goal is listening and trust-building with people outside the League's typical orbit.

Example: A League partners with a neighborhood association in a rural low-participation community to host three informal backyard gatherings — a partner resident opens their home for each one, volunteers spend the evening listening to why neighbors don't vote and sharing simple information about how to get started, and every attendee is invited to share their contact information before leaving.

Suggested for: Movement Building states

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Partner confirmed	Identify partner with access to non-voter community members	Weeks 1–2
Locations identified	Select 3–5 informal gathering locations across neighborhoods	Weeks 3–4

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Materials prepared	Develop culturally competent, in-language materials and light refreshments	Weeks 5–6
Volunteer training	Train volunteers on listening approach — not persuasion	Weeks 7–8
Promotion	Partner promotes to their community — keep it informal and low-pressure	Weeks 9–10
August 8	Execute — collect contacts from all willing participants	Week 11–12

MEDIUM LIFT — 8 to 10 week runway — Begin planning by early to mid June

Medium lift activations require at least one confirmed community partner, some logistics coordination, and dedicated volunteer recruitment. They are the recommended tier for most Leagues.

5. Voter Registration Drive in Low-Turn Out Neighborhoods

Coordinated voter registration activity in communities with documented registration or turnout gaps. Location must be selected based on where unregistered or underrepresented residents actually are, not where foot traffic is highest. Volunteers must actively engage people in conversation — not wait to be approached. Partner must be an organization already embedded in that specific community who can identify the right location and help the League show up with credibility.

Example: A League partners with a community organization in an under-registered neighborhood to set up a registration table at a local laundromat or corner store — volunteers actively approach customers, registering 100 new voters over the course of the day.

Suggested for: Electoral/Voter Protection states

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Partner confirmed	Confirm partner with access to high-traffic community location	Weeks 1–2

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Location secured	Reserve location and confirm any required permissions	Weeks 3–4
Materials prepared	Prepare registration forms, clipboards, talking points, and handouts	Weeks 5–6
Volunteer recruitment	Recruit and assign volunteer shifts	Weeks 7–8
Confirmation	Confirm all volunteers and logistics	Week 9
August 8	Execute — volunteers engage, not just sit. Collect all contacts.	Week 10

6. Faith & Community Coalition Roundtable

A discussion on voting access, civil rights, and community equity co-hosted with a faith or community organization that serves an underserved or underrepresented community the League does not typically reach. The partner must bring their congregation or membership as the primary audience — not the League's existing network. Should end with a clear call to action such as a voter registration table, a pledge card, a vote plan, or an invitation to stay engaged on civil rights issues in the community. Leagues should not default to congregations or organizations they already have relationships with unless those communities are genuinely underserved or underrepresented.

Example: A League partners with a community center in an underserved neighborhood to host a roundtable on civil rights and civic power — the community center promotes to their regular participants, bringing 40 residents who are rarely reached by traditional civic engagement efforts, and the conversation connects VRA history to issues the community is already facing today.

Suggested for: Movement Building states

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Partner confirmed	Identify and confirm faith or community co-host	Weeks 1–2
Agenda developed	Prepare discussion questions, agenda, and resource materials	Weeks 3–4
Venue arranged	Confirm venue or virtual platform with partner	Weeks 5–6

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Volunteer recruitment	Recruit volunteers for registration, facilitation, and note-taking	Weeks 7–8
Confirmation	Confirm all attendees, logistics, and closing call to action	Week 9
August 8	Execute — close with a voting action moment for every attendee	Week 10

7. Community Town Hall / Voter Education Forum

An open public forum on voting rights, civil rights, or VRA history held in and promoted to an underserved or underrepresented community. Must be co-hosted with a partner already embedded in that community who brings their own audience — not just the League's existing network. The venue should be located in or immediately accessible to the target community. Ends with a clear call to action and contact collection.

Example: A League co-hosts a town hall at a community center with a local tenant association — the association promotes to their residents, filling the room with people the League has never met, and the conversation connects VRA history to housing, economic, and civic justice issues the community faces today, closing with a contact collection table.

Suggested for: Electoral/Voter Protection states

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Partner confirmed	Confirm co-hosting partner who will promote to their audience	1–2
Venue and format	Secure venue, develop agenda and speaker lineup	Weeks 3–4
Promotion	Partner and league promote beyond existing membership	Weeks 5–7
Volunteer recruitment	Recruit and assign volunteers for setup and registration table	Weeks 7–8
Confirmation	Confirm all logistics and speakers	Week 9
August 8	Execute — end with a registration or pledge table open to all attendees	Week 10

8. Phonebank — Underrepresented Voter Outreach

Volunteers make outbound calls to people on a partner or public list who are not yet civically engaged — including low-propensity voters (high-opportunity), newly registered voters, or community members from underrepresented populations. The people being called are community members not yet engaged — not internal members. Requires a script, a calling platform, and partner list access.

Example: A League of 8 volunteers spends August 8 making outbound calls to low-propensity (high-opportunity) voters on a partner organization's list — by end of day they have completed 200 contacts and confirmed 45 vote plans.

Suggested for: Electoral/Voter Protection states

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Partner and list confirmed	Confirm partner with access to low-propensity (high-opportunity) voter contact list	Weeks 1–2
Platform and script	Set up calling platform and develop voter outreach script	Weeks 3–5
Volunteer recruitment	Recruit and train volunteers on script and platform	Weeks 6–7
Test run	Run a test phonebank session to identify issues	Week 8
Confirmation	Confirm all volunteers and finalize contact list	Week 9
August 8	Execute — track all completed contacts and responses	Week 10

LOW LIFT — 6 to 8 week runway — Begin planning by mid to late June

Low lift activations have minimal logistics and shorter planning runways. They still require real community reach. A low lift activation is not low-impact.

9. Postcard/Letter Writing to Underrepresented Voters

Volunteers gather at one location on August 8 to write personalized postcards/letters together to newly registered voters, young first-time voters, low-propensity voters, or new Americans — connecting VRA history to the importance of their participation. The list of recipients could come through a partner organization or state League. Low tech, tangible, and personal. Reach is measured by postcards written and sent.

Example: A League gathers 15 volunteers at a community center on August 8 to spend the day writing personalized postcards to 200 newly registered voters on a list that may be available from your state League. Each postcard connects the VRA anniversary to the importance of the recipient's vote in November.

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Partner and list confirmed	Confirm who will provide the recipient list; agree on list criteria and format	Weeks 1–2
List + venue secured	Obtain recipient list of newly registered, young, or low-propensity (high-opportunity) voters and book venue space	Weeks 3–4
Materials prepared	Draft postcard/letter template, key messages, and VRA talking points	Weeks 5
Volunteer recruitment	Recruit volunteers; communicate location, time, and materials preview; confirm RSVPs	Week 5–6
August 8	Volunteers gather, write, and address all postcards together. Tally and report total postcards sent.	Week 6

10. Relational Organizing Conversations

Each volunteer commits to having 5–10 structured one-on-one conversations on August 8 with people in their personal network who are not yet civically engaged such as low-propensity (high-opportunity) voters, young people who have never voted, newly registered voters, or new Americans. Volunteers should not count conversations with people who are already reliable voters. Reach is real because it is personal, but the impact depends entirely on targeting the right people. Structured around a simple script.

Example: A League with 12 volunteers each identifies 8 people in their personal network who rarely or never vote — on August 8, every volunteer has those conversations using a simple script, collectively reaching 96 people with a direct personal ask.

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Script developed	Develop a simple conversation guide for volunteers	Weeks 1–2

Milestone	What needs to happen	Deadline
Volunteer recruitment	Recruit volunteers and assign conversation targets	Weeks 3–4
Training	Brief all volunteers on script and how to log their conversations	Weeks 5–6
Confirmation	Confirm all volunteers are ready and know how to report	Week 7
August 8	Execute — every volunteer reports number of conversations and contacts collected	Week 8

Universal Data Tracking

Every League that participates in the Day of Action is asked to report the following five metrics after August 8, regardless of which activation they executed. These are the universal metrics that will be aggregated into the nationwide impact report and contribute to the Unite and Rise 8.5 campaign goal of engaging 8.5 million people.

Tracking your results is not administrative busy work. It is how we demonstrate the collective scale of what Leagues all across the country accomplished together, make the case for continued investment in local organizing, and understand what worked so we can do it better next time. We ask all Leagues to complete their report by **August 22**.

Metric	Definition	Why it matters
People engaged	Number of community members who had a direct interaction with your activation — in person or by phone. Must be a real human interaction. Walk-bys do not count.	Primary metric that feeds the 8.5M Unite and Rise goal
Contacts collected	Number of community members who provided their name and contact information during or after your activation.	Builds the pipeline for November GOTV follow-up
Conversion actions taken	Number of people who took a specific action i.e., registered to vote, signed a pledge, or confirmed a vote plan.	Quality metric that shows depth of engagement beyond attendance
Partner organizations involved	Number of community partner organizations that co-hosted or actively supported your activation.	Tracks coalition growth and community embeddedness
Volunteers deployed	Number of league volunteers who participated in executing the activation on August 8.	Tracks organizational capacity growth over time

Target Population Guide

Focusing your activation on a specific population will increase your impact and make it easier to find the right partner, location, and messaging. We strongly encourage Leagues to consider one of the four populations below, though Leagues may choose to reach the general public if that better fits their community context. **Every activation on this menu can be tailored to any of these populations.**

Target population	What to consider when planning for this population
Low-propensity voters	People who are registered but rarely vote. Requires access to voter file data through a partner. Focus on low-turnout precincts. Persuasion and relationship-building are more important than information distribution.
Young people (18–29)	Partner with student organizations, youth civic groups, HBCUs, community colleges, or youth-serving nonprofits. Peer-to-peer contact works better than traditional canvassing. Messaging should connect VRA history to present-day stakes.
Newly registered voters	People who recently registered but have never voted. Partner with organizations that supported recent registration drives. Focus on vote planning, polling location information, and what to expect on election day.
New Americans / immigrant communities	Partner with immigrant-serving organizations. Provide in-language materials and culturally competent outreach. Focus on eligibility, rights, and the connection between civic participation and community power.

This is a living document. Last updated April 23, 2026.