

VOTER GUIDE RECOMMENDATION CHECKLIST



Use this checklist of our recommendations when creating or reviewing a voter guide.

Include the right information at the appropriate level of detail

- Is the information organized by activity or task?
 - Does the cover page include the following information?
 - County name and seal (or other official insignia)
 - Name or type of election
 - Date of election day and times the polls are open
 - Polling place information
 - How to contact the election office
 - Languages offered
 - Is it clear how the county and state guides are different and connected?
 - Are the headings written as questions or active instructions?
 - Are the plain language principles incorporated? This includes
 - Writing short sentences
 - Using short, simple, everyday words
 - Writing in active voice and writing in the positive
 - Keeping paragraphs short
 - Separating paragraphs by a space, so that each one stands out on the page
 - Are there definitions and descriptions for election terms and processes?
-

Organize information in an easy-to-follow path

- Is there a table of contents?
 - Are there questions, quasi-questions, or instructions as headings?
 - Does each page have a clear topic?
 - Are there visual elements to make each section easy to see?
 - Is the voter information organized to include both an overview and details?
-

VOTER GUIDE RECOMMENDATION CHECKLIST

Present information so it is easy to read and understand

- Is the text big enough (at least 12 points)?
 - Is the information visual?
 - Is there consistency in presentation and writing?
 - Is the sample ballot presented in a way that voters easily understand what it is and how to use it?
-

Personalize information for the voter

- Is the availability of languages visible in all versions of the guide?
 - Is the polling place clearly visible? Is it on the front cover?
 - Is it clear when the sample ballot is an exact sample and when it's just similar?
 - Do the update and registration forms look official?
-

Use structure and content to close civic literacy gaps

- Is there a signature so voters know the source of the guide?
- Are voters told their rights (i.e., voter bill of rights)?
- Is it easy to learn about and compare the candidates?
- Do voters know how the ballot measures will affect them?
- Is there an explanation of the type of election?
- Has the voter information been tested with low-literacy and low-English-proficiency voters?