

Organizing a Canvass

Before your Canvass

1. Set goals

Set clear, achievable goals for yourself and your canvassers:

Are you canvassing for Voter ID? Or to discuss campaigns and issues?

Decide how many people you want to contact, how many volunteers you will need, and how long your canvassing will take.

1. Recruit volunteers.

Start close to home:

- Family, friends and neighbors.
- Progressive activists: members of your DFA group
- Websites: Facebook, Twitter etc will help get out the message
- “Bring a friend:” Encourage your volunteers to bring people they know

Be sure to create an event for your DFA group at www.democracyforamerica.com, and write an email blast for your National Field Organizer to send out.

As your event approaches, you need to follow up with everyone who has committed to volunteering to ensure that they turn out. Make sure everyone has the date, time, and meeting place.

1. Gather your materials:

Make sure you have everything you need:

- Clipboards
- Maps
- Pens/Pencils
- Response sheets for the canvass
- Script for the canvass
- Your contact information for the canvassers
- Cell phone

Remind your volunteers to bring:

- Umbrellas
- Walking Shoes
- Cell phones
- Spare pens/pencils

At the Canvass

1. Greet your canvassers

Make sure your canvassers feel valued, and get their contact information for next time. Give latecomers a few minutes, but try and keep things on time.

2) Canvass!

Have fun engaging with your local community about important progressive issues, but remember these tips:

- Safety first. Watch out for dogs, and never go inside a person's house.
- Don't get into arguments. Agree to disagree, and move on.
- Be polite - your canvassers are ambassadors of the progressive movement, no matter how reactionary the canvasee might be!

After the canvass

1) Thank your volunteers.

Meet up with your volunteers at the starting point to collect their data and recap the event. Congratulate everyone, and thank them again.

If people are interested, it is often a nice touch to have a social event after the canvass. Why not go for drinks at a local bar?

2) Send your petition info/sign in sheet to your National Field Organizer. Their contact details are on your DFA profile page.