



Building 100 percent Voting Congregations using Data

This Memorandum of Understanding sets out guidelines for congregations providing congregational membership information to Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy and its national partner, Faith in Action, for the purposes of building 100 percent voting congregations. This document also provides some information about the process of creating a “congregational list match” in order to register and mobilize voters.

Building 100 percent Voting Congregations

100 percent Voting Congregations have completed or are committed to, among other things, ensuring all members are registered to vote. 100 percent Voting Congregations can utilize sophisticated database tools, such as the Voter Activation Network (VAN), via Virginia Interfaith Center’s partnership with Faith in Action. The VAN organizes the public record information of registered voters and makes it easily available to GOTV-minded organizations and congregations. The VAN can help congregations identify who in their congregations may need to update voter registration information or, because of a less consistent voting record, would benefit from personalized outreach/engagement.

Your congregation can become 100 percent voting without comparing its membership records with the VAN, but you will have less accurate information about who is an irregular voter or access to the other benefits from the VAN.

Additional VAN Benefits

There are additional benefits for congregations that match their member lists to the VAN. A list match can help congregations:

- Update and clean their lists for broader organizational purposes,
- Keep in touch with members who may have moved,
- Centralize lists into one, easy-to-use format that can be used in Excel and other Windows/Mac programs, such as mail merge, or email listserv programs,
- Gather additional information such as people’s birthdays, and
- Provide information to members about what legislative districts they are in (this information is particularly important in 2023 given the redistricting confusion).

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Congregational List Match

Neither Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (VICPP) nor Faith in Action (FIA) will share congregational membership information with any additional parties. Once the list is matched with the voter files and returned to the congregation, the list will be maintained on a secure server until after the election. After the list has been run subsequent to the November election (to follow up on how many members registered/ voted) the list will be destroyed. VICPP nor FIA will sell or retain congregational membership information, and no information will be used for commercial purposes. Congregational membership information will be used solely by the congregation for its purpose of identifying, contacting, and registering/mobilizing potential faith voters through a congregational list match in the VAN. Because the congregation retains membership list ownership, this agreement can be severed at any time upon written request. VICPP will share any improvements to the congregational membership list (for example, updated addresses), as well as the congregational list match that includes voting information. VICPP will share voting information about congregational membership with the congregation for as long as it retains access to the VAN.

All access to this data follows the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding with State Voices signed by the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy and Faith in Action.

Congregations wishing to use voter data to strengthen their voter registration and outreach must sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

Memorandum of Understanding Building 100 Percent Voting Congregations

Our congregation, _____, would like Virginia Interfaith Center's partner, Faith in Action, to match its congregation's membership list to the voter files. The congregation will provide as much information as possible using the recommended excel format.

It is agreed that after the congregation's list is matched against the voter file and the voting and additional information is returned to the congregation, all digital and physical copies of the list shall be destroyed.

Agreed to this _____ day of _____, [Enter Year]

Name and Title of Congregation Representative

Signature of Congregation Representative

Name of FAITH IN ACTION Representative

Signature of FAITH IN ACTION Representative

Name of Virginia Interfaith Center Representative

Signature of Virginia Interfaith Center Representative

Congregational List Match FAQ

What is a congregational list match?

A list match is a great way to identify unregistered voters in your congregation so you can reach out specifically to individuals who need to be registered to vote. You can also see information like voting history, demographics, and political and geographic districts.

How do we do a congregational list match?

The process is simple. You provide VICPP an excel list of your congregational list or directory. We match that list with the Voter Activation Network (VAN), which is a database of the registered voters in the state. This will allow us to create a list of your congregation members' registration and voting statuses. The excel spreadsheet should contain as much of the following information that you have: First Name, Last Name, Street Address, City, State, Zip Code, birthdate.

What is the VAN?

The Voter Activation Network, or VAN for short, is an online database of all registered voters. This database is nationwide. It is a powerful tool that Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy can use to help congregations register and organize thousands of voters before the November election. Information in the VAN is only information from publicly available records. The VAN makes those records easier to access and easier to use.

Who will have access to the congregational list?

No one. The list with additional information provided by the VAN will be returned to you and then the list will be destroyed.

Will the congregational list be used for any other purpose?

No, it will just be used to create a voter list of your congregation to identify who needs to be registered to vote and to help turn your congregation out to vote in November.

Who will have access to the voter list once it is created?

Only you and the people you choose to give it to. The list could be used by volunteers from your congregation who may want to help register voters or help with a Get Out the Vote effort.

We already do our own voter registration drive, do we really need to do this?

You do not need to use a list to register voters, but using the list match can make your registration drive much more successful. Without using your congregational list in the VAN, you will likely miss many of your congregants who don't even realize they have been dropped from the voting rolls. The list can also confirm that your congregation is a 100 percent voting congregation!

Will the data match be perfect?

Probably not. If one of your members' legal name is Kimberley Smyth and your congregational records show the person as Kimberly Smith, you might not get a match. Nonetheless, you are likely to get a lot of information for most of your members. And all the nonmatches can allow you to check spellings and addresses.

What if we don't have all the address information?

Provide as much information as you have. The better information you provide, the more likely you will be to get matching information. Please put the data in the attached email excel format.

Who can we talk with?

For questions or more information or to start the process, contact VICPP Civic Engagement Coordinator, Robert Lester (Robert@virginiainterfaithcenter.org).