League of Women Voters of Maine

# ADOPT A

# TOWN

## A VOTE411.ORG PROJECT

*This booklet belongs to:*

**VOTE 411**

# INTRODUCTION:

Thank you for adopting your town — or several Maine towns! By signing up for this project, you agree to help research local data that we can upload to our online database, **www.Vote411.org**. This resource is nonpartisan and allows voters to look up information about their town, state, and federal races during every major election cycle. We try to be as comprehensive as possible, and by volunteering, you're helping us to reach the goal of covering *every* Maine town.

Every election cycle will follow the same type of schedule when it comes to your Vote411 research. Once election and candidate information becomes available, you're free to research the data about your town(s) and submit them.

**WHO TO CONTACT**
Anytime you need assistance, have a question, or want to report your progress, you can contact **Evan Murray**, the Civic Engagement Director for the League:

    PHONE: (207) 370-4576
    EMAIL: evan@lwvme.org

For voter or election related questions, you can also call or text our voter hotline during normal business hours:

    CALL OR TEXT: (207) 558-3333
    EMAIL: vote@lwvme.org

# RESOURCES:

**VOTE411.ORG**
Since you'll be collecting data for Vote411.org, and if this is your first time using the voter database, we encourage you to check out the site, play around with its features, and become familiar with how it works.

Visit the database: www.Vote411.org

**GUIDE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT**
Local governments make many crucial decisions that impact our everyday lives and future wellbeing. The League of Women Voters of Maine has put together a guide to empower everyone to learn more about how local government works. This booklet will refer to the guide throughout, and we encrouage you to bookmark this resource for future use.

Learn more and read the guide at: www.lwvme.org/LocalGov

To go with the guide, we have also created a spreadsheet that compiles municipalities across Maine and their forms of government. Use the spreadsheet for a quick reference.

**HOW TO VOTE IN MAINE**
Refer to the League's guide on voting for information on how to register to vote, find your polling place, request an absentee ballot, learn about your voting rights, and more.

Guide to voting in Maine: www.lwvme.org/VoteInMaine

# BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Let's begin by marking some important dates and gathering information about your town(s). You can find this information on the town's website. Before you start, we also recommend you look up your town/city or plantation in our municipal spreadsheet to learn more about your local government.

**1. YOUR TOWN CLERK**

Town clerks have several duties, including administering elections. You can lookup the following information by visiting your town's website or using the Maine Voter Lookup Service: https://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter_lookup.php. It will be important to know this information in case you need to look up candidates running for local races or have general questions about the election.

*Adopted town #1*

Town: _____

Clerk's name: _____

Clerk's phone number: (_____) - _____ - _____

Clerk's email address: _____

*Adopted town #2*

Town: _____

Clerk's name: _____

Clerk's phone number: (_____) - _____ - _____

Clerk's email address: _____

*Adopted town #3*

Town: _____

Clerk's name: _____

Clerk's phone number: (_____) - _____ - _____

Clerk's email address: _____

## 2. TOWN MEETINGS

Today, many towns mix and match two styles of town meetings when residents can vote on important issues and referendums. Learn more on page 31 of our [Local Government Guide](). Does your town have an annual town meeting or several scheduled town metings? If yes, when do they take place? Write them down below:

_____

_____

_____

## 3. UPCOMING ELECTIONS

What are the upcoming elections for your town(s)? Let's include any municipal, state, and federal elections.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

# CHECKLIST:

Now is the time to start your Vote411 research. Here's a checklist to make sure we stay on track. Check off each item once it has been completed for your town(s). We've provided a research template on pages 7-9, and you can print off as many of these as you need.

*Deadline to submit: ___/____/____

**STEP ONE:** What's on the ballot? We wrote down when elections take place (page 5). Now let's dive into the details.

☐ Visit the town's website and/or contact your town clerk to learn if there are offices up for election or ballot questions.
☐ If there are candidate races, ask your town clerk for a list.
☐ Look for a sample ballot and bookmark it for later.

**STEP TWO:** What are the candidate races? We've contacted our town clerk, now let's get everything sorted.

☐ Make a list of candidate races with the candidate's name and contact information.

**STEP THREE:** What are the ballot questions?

☐ Make a list of questions appearing on the ballot.

**STEP FOUR:** Submit everything to our Vote411 form.

☐ I submitted all the candidate and/or ballot question information using the online form.

# VOTE411 RESEARCH TEMPLATE:

*Use this template when collecting information for each town.*

Municipality/town: _____

**STEP ONE:** What's on the ballot? Check all that apply.

☐ There are candidate races.
☐ There are ballot questions.

**STEP TWO:** What are the candidate races? Collect the following data for each race separately. Once you're ready to submit on our form, we'll have room for up to 8 races.

Name of office race: _____

Which voting system is in use?
☐ Vote for N (one vote per open seat)
☐ Ranked Choice Voting
☐ Other: _____

How many positions are open?
☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ Other: _____

**STEP TWO** *continued:*
List the candidates for this race.


*Candidate #1:* _____

Phone number: (_____) - _____ - _____

Email address: _____


*Candidate #2* _____

Phone number: (_____) - _____ - _____

Email address: _____


*Candidate #3* _____

Phone number: (_____) - _____ - _____

Email address: _____


*Candidate #4* _____

Phone number: (_____) - _____ - _____

Email address: _____


*Candidate #5* _____

Phone number: (_____) - _____ - _____

Email address: _____

**STEP THREE:** What are the ballot questions? Collect the following data for each question separately. Once you're ready to submit on our form, we'll have room for up to 8.

Title of the question: _____

_____

Text of the question: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Other info on the ballot (if the question has an explanation or budget, include it here): _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Is there a link to more information that we can provide?
☐   Yes: _____
☐   No

# BONUS:

Here are even more ways that you can help your town(s) each election cycle.

**VOTE411:** Want to be a super volunteer? Check these off:
☐  Ask your town clerk to help spread the word about Vote411.org.
☐  Contact the candidates personally and ask them to fill out our questionnaire on Vote411.org.
☐  Help promote Vote411.org in your town. We have an entire library of posters and social media graphics free to use and print at home. Want to learn more? Contact Jen Lancaster at jen@lwvme.org.

**ELECTION OBSERVATION**: On election day, we deploy nonpartisan election observation volunteers to polling locations to check on the conditions, help resolve any issues, and talk to poll workers. This is a great way to get invovled in your community and learn more about the electoral process at the local level. Want to learn more? Contact Will Hayward at will@lwvme.org.
☐  I want to be a nonpartisan election observer.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROJECT**: Become the resident expert on the way your town governs and functions. We have a Guide to Local Government that you could help share, a workshop based on it that you could present, and a "Best Practices" checklist. Help us help others learn more about the wonders of local government! Want to learn more? Contact Evan Murray at evan@lwvme.org.
☐  I want to join the local government project.