



results

**welcoming &
supporting
new advocates**

Guide for RESULTS Groups

welcome to RESULTS recruitment

Since 1980, RESULTS has mobilized a small, but highly engaged grassroots volunteer network to do deep advocacy and move members of Congress into action on poverty. RESULTS is uniquely positioned to offer people support, training, and resources to influence our government around issues of poverty. Our virtual advocacy opportunities allow people from all backgrounds to get involved. We have a huge opportunity to grow the power of our movement. We are excited to partner with your RESULTS group to grow our network by participating in a RESULTS recruitment campaign. Let's do this!



what can you expect?

RESULTS staff will:

- ✓ Maximize visibility in your community by posting and managing online volunteer ads
- ✓ Recruit, onboard, and provide basic coaching to advocates joining your group
- ✓ Introduce new advocates to your group
- ✓ Check in with new advocates and communicate RESULTS opportunities
- ✓ Offer best practices, coaching, and provide a Group Guide to help you welcome and support new advocates

We ask that RESULTS groups will:

- ✓ Provide a welcoming environment and orient advocates to your local group
- ✓ Meet and communicate as a group regularly
- ✓ Engage in regular actions that new advocates can participate in
- ✓ Actively include new advocates in group plans and actions
- ✓ Provide coaching and support to your new advocates, ideally through a New Advocate Mentor

anti-oppression and recruitment

It is especially important to practice our values when inviting new people into our community. For our movement to grow, **every volunteer needs to be committed** to building an inclusive culture at RESULTS.

- Our movement **attracts different communities with diverse experiences**. We need to provide a welcoming and safe environment for everyone!
- RESULTS work is centered on anti-poverty, which means **we need to invite people with direct lived experiences to have a seat at the table**.
- We need to be **mindful of the ways in which we frame the issues**, to be respectful and avoid “saviorism” language. Read these questions and reflect:
 - *How do I frame the anti-poverty narratives?*
 - *Is my language empowering or oppressive?*
 - *Are we contributing to the myth or are we myth busters?*

Learn more by exploring our [Anti-Oppression resources](#) on the RESULTS website.

what experience does your group provide?

Use these questions to help guide you to cultivate a supportive group environment.

- Do group members **have space to contribute** in unique and meaningful ways?
- Are individual / group **milestones celebrated**?
- Is there space for new people to **take on leadership and meaningful action**?
- Are people **told what to do or asked** how they want to contribute?
- What **support is offered** for new advocates to build confidence?
- What is your **group culture**? Is speaking up encouraged and how often?



new advocate orientation and onboarding

Before a new volunteer is introduced to a local chapter, they are provided **support and training** by RESULTS staff to **prepare them for volunteering** with a RESULTS chapter.

new advocate orientation

All new volunteers attend a one-hour webinar and the following is presented:

- About RESULTS
- Advocacy model
- Anti-Oppression values
- U.S. and global poverty campaigns
- Overview of volunteering

View the orientation slides and learn more by visiting the [Orientation & Training page](#) on our website.

volunteer overview

Here are the basics of what we share about RESULTS volunteering commitments:

- Help make the RESULTS movement a respectful, inclusive place
- Join a local RESULTS group
- Take at least one RESULTS advocacy action every month
- Stay informed by listening to the National Webinar and reading Weekly Updates
- **Spend a time commitment of three to five hours a month**

Inquires online about volunteering



1:1 with RESULTS staff upon request



Added to Weekly Update and Action Alerts



Attends New Advocate Orientation



Introduction to local chapter

role of the new advocate mentor

We encourage groups who are participating in recruitment to identify at least one volunteer to be a “New Advocate Mentor”. This is especially helpful so the responsibility of welcoming new advocates does not fall solely on the Group Leaders!

key responsibilities

- Schedule a one-on-one conversation with all new advocates to get to know them and answer their questions about your local group
- Alert the Group Leader when a new member will be attending their first group meeting
- Assist the Group Leader in creating an agenda that is friendly to new advocates
- Check in with new advocates after their first group meeting to debrief their experience
- Provide informal coaching to new advocates when taking actions

helpful skills

- Communication and social skills – interest in reaching out to new people
- Leadership skills – to motivate the new members
- Inclusivity – this person will talk with people from a variety of backgrounds

supporting volunteers to take action

The most impactful thing you can do as a New Advocate Mentor is empower a new volunteer to get into action! Use this chart to help you **choose an action** for your new volunteer to take.

Beginner Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Call and leave a message for their member of Congress✓ Attend a lobby meeting and have a small speaking role✓ Write and submit a letter to the editor in a local newspaper
Intermediate Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Attend a lobby meeting and deliver part of the agenda✓ Master delivering a RESULTS laser talk or personal story✓ Email a congressional staffer about an issue
Advanced Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Organize or facilitate a meeting with a member of Congress✓ Lead part of a monthly group meeting✓ Grow the RESULTS movement by inviting someone to attend a RESULTS meeting or take a RESULTS action

getting to know your new advocates

The best way to get to know people is through a one-on-one (1:1) conversation!



step-by-step guide to supporting new advocates

immediately upon Introduction

New volunteers will be introduced to chapter leadership via email by RESULTS staff. Please help provide a welcoming and supporting environment by doing the following:

- **New Advocate Mentor** or **Group Leader** responds to the email introduction sent by RESULTS staff **within 72 hours**.
- Share the **date and location** of your next chapter meeting
- Invite them for a **one-on-one introductory meeting or phone call**
- Add new volunteer to **calendar events** and all forms of **group communication** (email listserv, group chats, etc.)

If they do not respond to you within one week, **send a follow-up email or text message**.

after 30 days of volunteering

If your new volunteer has not completed everything after 30 days, no worries! Everyone's timeline will look a little different.

- Attended their **first group meeting**
- Conducted a **one-on-one meeting** with the New Advocate Mentor or Group Leader
- Supported to take a **beginner action**

If you still haven't heard back from your new volunteer, send them **another email and a phone call or text message**.



We recommend **following up monthly** with new volunteers for the first three months after their introduction.

after 90 days of volunteering

We encourage **New Advocate Mentors** to host a check-in after 90 days of volunteering.

- Utilize the **90-Day Check-In Guide** to help you facilitate the meeting
- Invite the new volunteer to fill out an **Individual Planning Form**
- Explore a **volunteer role** within the group using the **RESULTS Volunteer Roles** document

Find all these resources on the [Working with Your Group](#) page, under “Welcome and Support New Advocates”.

If a **new volunteer has not responded to emails, phone calls, or text messages** since their introduction, you should move them to your **Action Network** and follow-up again in three months to check-in on getting involved.

Don't have an Action Network? Reach out to Sarah Leone (sleone@results.org) on the Grassroots Advocacy Team for support on getting started.

tips to keep in mind

- Most new advocates are eager to get started, but **not all will jump in with both feet right away**... They might miss a meeting. They might agree to take action and not follow through. This is OK and everyone engages at their own pace.
- **New advocates are nervous**... Meeting new people, trying new things. They are hyper aware of what they *don't* know. Be **grateful and celebratory** when new advocates contribute. Be **inquisitive and coach** them when they struggle.
- **Recruitment is about planting seeds**. If you provide a quality environment and the right ingredients, great things *can* grow! But not all new connections will stick.
- We do everything we can to capture people's interest but cannot guarantee how advertisements will perform in various communities.
- It is not a **personal failure of you or your group** if a new advocate drops!
- If you can't seem to retain *any* new advocates, please reach out to your Regional Coordinator or Grassroots Staff for coaching and feedback.



Celebration and recognition go a long way! Don't hesitate to celebrate even the smallest of accomplishments with your group. Make sure to give a special shoutout when a volunteer has been in RESULTS for one year!

best practices for welcoming and supporting new volunteers

Welcome them! Thank them for joining RESULTS and for their commitment to help ending poverty.

- ✓ Be aware they themselves may have experienced poverty or are currently experiencing poverty.

Center the human behind the volunteer.

- ✓ No "assignments" but rather "decisions".
- ✓ Help them find their way to do it.
- ✓ Check in often.
- ✓ Recognition goes a long way!

Ask about their experience during the orientation? Do they have any more questions?

- ✓ Check in and see how new volunteers are feeling after their initial New Advocate Orientation. Share with them, or perhaps have one of your current volunteers share with them, what their experience has been like with RESULTS and with your group.

Invite them to take an action with you!

- ✓ If they have time in that moment, visit the [Action Center on the website](#), and invite them to take an action with you.
- ✓ If not, schedule a day and time that would work for them to take action with you.

I sent an email, but I haven't heard back from them yet. What do I do next?

- ✓ If you sent one or two emails and haven't heard back, don't fret! As shared in the guide, most new advocates are eager to get started, **but not all will jump in with both feet right away.** Everyone engages with RESULTS at their own pace and letting them know you are there is enough.
- ✓ You can also try to give your new volunteers a call (or even a quick text) to welcome them personally. Personal connections are important! Check in and see how they are doing, check out the questions from *Getting to Know Your Advocates* to help guide the conversation.

before a new volunteer's first group meeting

- ✓ Send a reminder text the day before the meeting.
- ✓ Keep the new person in mind when creating the agenda.

during a new volunteer's first group meeting

- ✓ **Make time for introductions** at the beginning of the meeting.
- ✓ Have someone provide a **recap of recent actions, accomplishments, and goals** for your RESULTS group.
- ✓ Be intentional about **creating space for new volunteers**. Ask them questions and check in frequently during the meeting.
- ✓ Take an action **TOGETHER** during the meeting.
- ✓ Avoid **acronyms and RESULTS jargon**.
- ✓ Strive to have the new volunteer leave with **one responsibility or action item**.

after a new volunteer's first group meeting

- ✓ **Thank them for joining your meeting** and acknowledge their contributions.
- ✓ **Follow up after the meeting** with an email that includes any website pages and action items. Sometimes things move quickly in a virtual meeting and it's hard to keep up.



“welcoming” activities for group meetings

It is important to **create space for relationship building** in your group meeting, especially since we are conducting our work virtually. Small talk and transition time that normally help volunteers build natural relationships are limited, so as leaders we need to **be intentional with our time together** to help people foster relationships.

When you have a new member join a meeting (or during every meeting!), consider one of the following activities:

Round Robin Introductions	<p>This is an easy way to have everyone introduce themselves. Set a time limit for one to two minutes per person. Provide prompts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How long have you been volunteering with RESULTS?• Why are you working on poverty issues?• What has been your favorite moment in RESULTS?
One-on-one Conversations via Breakout Rooms	<p>Send people into breakout rooms using Zoom for three to five minutes with one other person for a short “get to know you” conversation. This is a great activity for larger RESULTS groups. Provide prompts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where did you grow up and what was it like?• What is something unique about you?• How did you get into RESULTS work and advocacy?
Single Word Rapid Response	<p>This is a fun activity that can be done quickly. The meeting facilitator will provide a prompt, and then each attendee must answer the prompt with one word. You can repeat this a few times in a row if you have time in your meeting. Make sure people also say their name before answering! You can provide prompts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is one word to describe our group culture?• What is one word that describes the feeling you get when taking an advocacy action?• What is one word to describe your experience with RESULTS?

best practices for remote meetings

Remote meetings can make it harder for some people to speak up and fully participate in the meeting. We have identified common challenges that RESULTS groups experience while organizing virtually and provided suggested best practices to ensure everyone feels comfortable, empowered, and heard.

Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be mindful that not every person has access to a strong internet connection. Provide a phone dial-in option for those who might need it.• Note that volunteers might have limitations in setting up a “quiet meeting place”. People might be sharing rooms with family members who might also be working from home or attending virtual classes. Others may be balancing expanded childcare responsibilities.• Frequently pause and leave space in the meeting for those who’ve been quiet to speak up or ask questions.
Interactivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Try out different Zoom features, such as: reactions, polls, and breakout rooms.• Build in specific time in your agenda for relationship building using one of the “Welcoming Activities” (or your own ideas) frequently into your meetings.• Make it fun! Allow time for small talk at the beginning or end of your meeting. Take pictures together, introduce each other to your pets and family members. Think of creative ways to make meeting virtually an enjoyable experience for everyone.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some people formulate and communicate questions better by writing, so encourage the use of the chat feature or consider an accessible, shared channel or document for participants to type their questions.• Make sure you are sharing links to website pages you discuss during your meeting via the chat box.• Provide the option of sharing recordings and notes after the meeting for those who may have trouble tuning in virtually.