

# RESULTS Group Guide: Welcoming New Advocates

**results**



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## Welcome to the RESULTS Fall Recruitment Campaign

For 40 years, RESULTS has mobilized a small, but highly engaged grassroots volunteer network to do deep advocacy and move members of Congress into action on poverty.

We see the window right during and after the 2020 election as the biggest volunteer recruitment opportunity of the foreseeable future, followed immediately by the high-impact advocacy period to set the agenda for the next Congress at the start of 2021.

Your RESULTS group has agreed to seize the moment and play a key role in building the movement and setting the agenda by participating in the RESULTS Fall 2020 recruitment campaign.

Let's do this!



### What can you expect?

- You may receive new volunteers as early as September, but we are anticipating that most connections will happen **October 2020 - January 2021**
- Your group might get 15 new advocates...or you might get 0! We do everything we can to capture people's interest but cannot guarantee how advertisements will perform in various communities
- 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 an action and not follow through. This is OK and everyone engages with RESULTS at their own pace
- **New advocates are nervous...** Meeting new people, trying new things, and they are hyper aware of what they *don't* know. Be **grateful and celebratory** when new advocates contribute. **Be inquisitive and coach** 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 around
- **It is not a personal failure of you or your group if a new advocate drops!**
- **However:** If you can't seem to retain *any* new advocates, please reach out to your Regional Coordinator or Grassroots Staff for coaching and feedback



## What can you expect? (continued)

RESULTS Staff Will	RESULTS Groups Will
Maximize visibility in your community by posting and managing online volunteer ads	Provide a welcoming environment and orient advocates to your local group
Recruit, onboard, and provide basic skills training & coaching to new advocates joining your group	Follow up on new advocate intros within 1 week of staff introduction
Introduce new advocates to your group and ensure you connect with each other	Meet and communicate as a group regularly
Offer ongoing coaching to your group and provide a New Advocates Onboarding Toolkit to help you welcome and support new advocates	Engage in regular actions that new advocates can participate in
	Provide coaching and support to your new advocates, ideally through a New Advocate Mentor

### Important Role: New Advocate Mentor

We strongly encourage groups who are participating in the recruitment campaign to identify at least one volunteer to be a “New Advocate Mentor”. The New Member Mentor welcomes new advocates to your group and supports them through initial action taking. 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 and 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 on action taking

### Requirements:

- 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

# Volunteer Commitments and the RESULTS Experience

It is important for our RESULTS volunteer leaders to understand the commitments we present to new volunteers and assess our local group structure to ensure we are providing a positive experience for all volunteers.

## Volunteer Commitments

During the RESULTS New Advocate Orientation, we ask the new volunteers to uphold the following set of commitments:

- Help make the RESULTS movement a respectful, inclusive place
- Join a local RESULTS group or the Free Agents program
- Choose to focus on domestic or global issues
- Take at least one RESULTS advocacy action every month
- Listen to the monthly National Webinar (live or recorded)
- Read the Weekly Update
- **Spend a time commitment of 3-5 hours a month**

## What “RESULTS Experience” Does Your Group Provide?

Use these questions to help you evaluate what kind of experience you are providing to the members of your group. These questions are a great starting point to help you facilitate a group discussion at your next chapter meeting!



- Does your local RESULTS experience **align with the above commitments**?
- Do group members **have space to contribute** in unique & meaningful ways?
- Are individual / group **milestones celebrated**?
- Is there space for new people to **take on leadership & 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**? *What are your 'standard' ways of doing things? Is it accommodative to new people? Who is in the room? Who is not represented? Who is speaking & how often?*

If you have identified any challenges within your group during this exercise: **Is your team willing to acknowledge and adjust to encourage participation?**

## Anti-Oppression, Inclusivity, and the “RESULTS Experience”

What does anti-oppression have to do with the RESULTS experience? At RESULTS, we recognize that **oppressive cultures undermine progress**. By focusing on anti-oppression and inclusivity, we will **achieve greater success in our collective work towards ending poverty**. For change to happen, **every volunteer needs to be committed** to building an ongoing anti-oppression culture at RESULTS. We do this because:

- 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 on the RESULTS website at: [results.org/our-anti-oppression-values/](https://results.org/our-anti-oppression-values/)

## Anti-Oppression and Inclusivity Best Practices

Anti-oppression and inclusion are ongoing practices, and not a “one time” training. Keep these tips and strategies in mind to help you build inclusivity across your advocacy:

- Focus on helping everyone thrive. It is not a question of “do they fit here” but rather **creating a culture where every individual can contribute** their full potential
- Everyone **deserves to feel a sense of belonging** within RESULTS
- Did you ever experience a time when you were excluded, shamed, interrupted? **Apply those lessons outwardly and practice empathy** for new group members.
- **Ask for permission** to share other’s stories and experiences
- **Check in regularly with your group members** on inclusion practices and progress. Use these questions to help facilitate group discussions:
  - *How is anti-oppression showing up in your group? Who is missing from the group? Why might that be?*
  - *Do you feel comfortable providing feedback to your group members and leadership?*
  - *What have you learned recently relating to anti-oppression and/or inclusion?*

# New Advocate Onboarding Process & Step-By-Step Guide

This section contains an overview of the new advocate onboarding process BEFORE being introduced to a local chapter and guideline for RESULTS volunteers to onboard new people into their local chapters.

## Onboarding Process: BEFORE Introduction to Local Chapter

Before a new volunteer is introduced to a local chapter, they are provided robust **support and training** by RESULTS Expansion Staff to **prepare them for the commitment of volunteering** with a RESULTS chapter. Prior to joining a local chapter, a new volunteer will have **already invested 2-4 hours into RESULTS.**

### NEW ADVOCATE ORIENTATION

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

- RESULTS Advocacy Model
- Overview of Issues
- Legislator Look-up
- EPIC Laser Talks
- Volunteer Commitments
- Weekly Updates & National Webinars

View the orientation slides and learn more by visiting: [results.org/orientation-and-advocacy-training/](https://results.org/orientation-and-advocacy-training/)

### ONE-ON-ONE MEETING WITH RESULTS STAFF

Each new volunteer will participate in a 30-minute one-on-one meeting with RESULTS staff after the orientation and review the following:

- New Advocate Training & website hub
- New Advocate Checklist
- Legislator Look-up
- Weekly Updates & National Webinars
- RESULTS Group Structure & Volunteer Commitments

Be sure to check out the New Advocate Training and other support materials we provide new volunteers at: [results.org/orientation-and-advocacy-training/](https://results.org/orientation-and-advocacy-training/)



## Step-by-Step Guide: Welcoming New Advocates into Groups

This is the exciting part where RESULTS volunteer leaders are introduced to new advocates and take over the onboarding and welcoming of the new volunteer.

### Step 1: Email Introduction

Respond to the email introduction sent by RESULTS staff **within 72 hours**. Set yourself up for success by **writing a template ahead of time** and use our sample email to help craft your message! In your reply, make sure you include things like:

- The **date and location of your next chapter meeting**
- Background on your chapter: how many members, where you live and normally meet, how long your group has been together, etc.
- Invite them for a **short one-on-one meeting**
- If they do not respond within one week of your message, **send a follow-up email**



RESULTS staff will send an email follow-up two weeks after the initial introduction to check-in and see how things are going!

### SAMPLE EMAIL REPLY

*It is great to meet you via email! I am excited to welcome you to the RESULTS Minnesota chapter! Our group meets twice per month and our next meeting is coming up on Tuesday, August 11 at 8:00pm CT via Zoom. It will be a great opportunity to learn more about our group and you'll get to meet some of the members. Does that work for you?*

*We have a group of about 8 people and most of our volunteers live in the Twin Cities area. Our big focus right now is housing, food insecurity at home and abroad, and global health. We last met with 4 congressional offices in June and are planning to meet with Senator Klobuchar's office next month. Hopefully you can join us for that meeting!*

*Have you done advocacy before? I would love to hear more about your interests and learn how you'd like to engage with RESULTS. Do you have time for a short Zoom or phone meeting next week? It would be great to get to know each other and I can tell you a little bit more about our group. Let me know a few days/times in your schedule that might work.*

*Thanks so much and I look forward to meeting you! Welcome again to RESULTS Minnesota!*



## Step 2: New Advocate One-on-One

Meet with the new volunteer individually **within 2 weeks of introduction** to learn more about their interests and goals for volunteering

- Use the RESULTS New Advocate checklist to help you ensure they receive the needed information. Find the checklist online by visiting: [results.org/volunteers/outreach-planning/](https://results.org/volunteers/outreach-planning/) under “I want to welcome new advocates”
- Share and review your RESULTS Chapter profile
- This meeting can happen **before OR AFTER** their first group meeting!

## Step 3: First Chapter Meeting

New Volunteer Attends their first chapter meeting **within one month of introduction**. Send a personal email the day before to confirm they can attend and get them excited!

## Step 4: Follow-Up!

After the new volunteer attends their first chapter meeting, follow-up **within 3 days** to see if they have any questions or feedback and congratulate them if they took an action

## New Advocate Milestones

As RESULTS leaders, we **practice the constant balance** between coaching a new volunteer to take action out of their comfort zone and pushing too hard. Use this chart to help **determine what types of actions** are appropriate to engage your new volunteers.

<b>Beginner Milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the RESULTS Action Center to email their member of Congress</li><li>• Call and leave a message for their member of Congress</li><li>• Attend a lobby meeting and introduce themselves at the beginning</li><li>• Attend their first RESULTS group meeting or RESULTS National Webinar</li></ul>
<b>Intermediate Milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write and submit a letter to the editor in a local newspaper</li><li>• Attend a lobby meeting and deliver part of the agenda</li><li>• Master delivering a RESULTS laser talk or personal story</li></ul>
<b>Advanced Milestones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organize or facilitate a meeting with a member of Congress</li><li>• Lead part of a monthly group meeting</li><li>• Grow the RESULTS movement by inviting a someone to attend a RESULTS meeting or take a RESULTS action</li></ul>

**Note:** This is only a guide and if a new advocate is ready to jump into an intermediate or advanced action, we do not want to stifle them by thinking they are “not ready”. Go ahead, coach them to lead part of that lobby meeting or hook them up with tools for an op-ed!

# Getting to Know Your New Advocates

A vital step to set your new advocate up for success is to get to know them individually. The best tool for really getting to know new advocates is a one-on-one (1:1) conversation which will form a foundation for your relationship.



## Helping Advocates Get to Know Your Group

This section will present tools to help advocates get to know your group, suggest group activities to foster strong relationships, and review best practices when welcoming a new volunteer into their first group meeting

### RESULTS Chapter Profile

There's a lot of information to share with a new person! We've created a **RESULTS Chapter Profile** template for you to fill out and provide new volunteers. Share your group profile with each new person after they are introduced. This preparation work will help make sure nothing is missed when a new person joins your team.



You can find the RESULTS Chapter Profile on the website at: [results.org/volunteers/outreach-planning/](https://results.org/volunteers/outreach-planning/) under "I want to welcome new advocates"

#### The RESULTS Chapter profile includes:

- Group leadership contact information
- Meeting dates and frequency
- Communication methods
- Group norms and expectations

We encourage you to expand upon the profile fields that we have suggested and include other relevant information about your group that you feel a new advocate would benefit knowing!

### Best Practices for a New Volunteer's First Group Meeting

1. Create space in your meeting for **the new volunteer to introduce themselves** to the larger group and share why they joined RESULTS
2. **Pause throughout the meeting** and check-in to see if they have questions
3. Avoid **acronyms and RESULTS jargon** that a new advocate may not be familiar with
4. Be mindful of the **information you are presenting and the pace at which you are conducting the meeting**. Keep the new person in mind when creating the agenda and running the meeting
6. **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
7. Strive to have the new volunteer leave the meeting with **one responsibility or action item** to build accountability within the group

## “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:

<b>Round Robin Introductions</b>	<p>This is an easy way to have everyone introduce themselves. Set a time limit for 1-2 minutes per person. Have people introduce themselves and provide a prompt for them to answer. Provide prompts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How long have you been volunteering with RESULTS?</li><li>• Why are you working on poverty issues?</li><li>• What has been your favorite moment in RESULTS?</li></ul>
<b>One-on-one Conversations via Breakout Rooms</b>	<p>Send people into breakout rooms using Zoom for 3-5 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"><li>• Where did you grow up and what was it like?</li><li>• What is something unique about you?</li><li>• How did you get into RESULTS work and advocacy?</li></ul> <p>If you need help learning how to use the “Breakout Room” feature on Zoom, reach out to a RESULTS staff person</p>
<b>Single Word Rapid Response</b>	<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"><li>• What is one word to describe our group culture?</li><li>• What is one word that describes the feeling you get when taking an advocacy action?</li><li>• What is one word to describe your experience with RESULTS?</li></ul>



## 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 group experience while organizing virtually and provided suggested best practices to ensure everyone feels comfortable, empowered, and heard.

<b>Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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</li><li>• 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.</li><li>• Frequently pause and leave space in the meeting for those who've been quiet to speak up or ask questions</li></ul>
<b>Interactivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Try out different Zoom features, such as: reactions, polls, and breakout rooms</li><li>• Build in specific time in your agenda for relationship building using one of the "Welcoming Activities" (or your own ideas) frequently into your meetings</li><li>• 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.</li></ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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</li><li>• Make sure you are sharing links to website pages you discuss during your meeting via the chat box</li><li>• Provide the option of sharing recordings and notes after the meeting for those who may have trouble tuning in virtually</li></ul>