**How to Organize a Phone Bank: The Basics**

Phone banking can be an effective way to encourage people to participate in the 2020 Census. Below are some basic steps for organizing a phone bank.

**Step 1:** Determine why you are organizing the phone bank. In this case, the phone bank will be to encourage people to participate in the 2020 Census.

**Step 2:** Write your phone bank script so you have a uniform and scripted message. For Census phone banking, your can start with this customizable template script:

Hello, my name is [Your Name] and I am a [staff member/volunteer] with [Nonprofit Name]. I’m calling to remind you and your family to participate in the 2020 U.S. Census. Your participation is important for making your voice heard and ensuring that our community receives the funds, services, and representation it deserves. Have you completed the Census form yet?

*If yes:* Great. Thank you for your time [hang up]

*If no:* Okay. Are you planning to complete the Census?

*If yes:* Great. Thank you very much for committing to complete the Census. Have a good night.

*If no:* Oh I see. Do you have particular concerns about participating? Or are their questions I may be able to help you answer?

*If they have questions or concerns, listen to them, and try to answer using materials provided. Otherwise, reply:*

Ok. Thank you for sharing your [questions/concerns]. Please contact the Census bureau at [Number] to be connected with people who can answer your questions.

*If they’re not interested:* Ok. Thank you very much for your time. Have a good night.

*If you get a voicemail, leave a message:*

Hello, my name is [Your Name] and I am a [staff member/volunteer] with [Nonprofit Name]. I’m calling to remind you and your family to participate in the 2020 U.S. Census. Your participation is important for making your voice heard and ensuring that our community receives the funds, services, and representation it deserves. Thank you.

**Step 3:** Assemble your list of people to call. Make sure you follow any data protection policies that apply.

**Step 4:** Find space for phone banking – folks will need to be a few feet apart in order to minimize noise.

**Step 5:** Plan to purchase and activate prepaid cell phones or SIM cards for the volunteers to use. This can help ensure anonymity when calling. However, if your volunteers and clients are a close-knit group, then calling from identifiable numbers can be an advantage. In general, it’s good to give volunteers the option of using their personal phones or prepaid phones. You will likely need to set aside time for buying and activating the phones.

**Step 6:** Determine when you will be phone banking. A good window is typically 5:30-7:30 PM on weeknights. However, depending on who you’re calling, other times may be appropriate.

**Step 7:** Recruit volunteers. Since this will likely take place around dinner time, make sure you have snacks available.

**Step 8:** Train your volunteers. Explain to them why they are phone banking and provide a few minutes for them to practice with the script.

**Step 9:** Make the calls.

**Step 10:** Thank your volunteers.