

AFSCME RETIREES

2026 Election Postcard Toolkit



Dear AFSCME retiree,

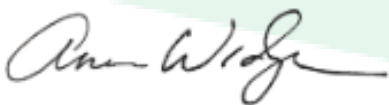
Thank you for stepping up to be part of the AFSCME Retirees 2026 Postcard Program. Your willingness to volunteer your time and lend your voice to this effort means more than you know. Because of retirees like you, we're able to have meaningful conversations with fellow AFSCME members and help strengthen our democracy.

Every postcard you write is a personal reminder that voting matters. By reaching out to working members and retirees, you'll help encourage them to make a plan to vote and elect leaders who will stand with us to protect retirement security, lower everyday costs, and put working families first.

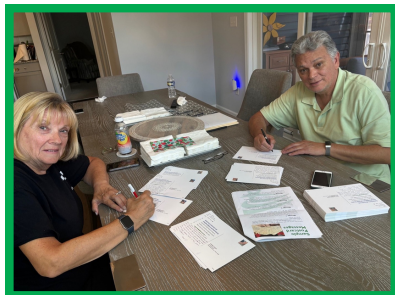
Inside this guide, you'll find everything you need to get started—from how the program works to tips for writing effective postcards and getting them in the mail. Together, we'll make a meaningful impact in communities across the country, one postcard at a time.

Thank you again for volunteering and for continuing to stand up for working families, even in retirement. I'm grateful to have you on our team.

In solidarity,
Ann Widger
Director, AFSCME Retirees

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ann Widger".

Why the Postcard Program is Important



In today's world of crowded inboxes, nonstop texts, and endless social media feeds, a handwritten postcard stands out. It feels personal because it is. Taking a few moments to write a message lets another AFSCME member know that someone cared enough to reach out.

Research consistently shows that handwritten postcards can increase voter participation by reminding people to make a plan to vote and reinforcing the importance of taking part in our democracy. Your message may be the extra encouragement someone needs to head to the polls.

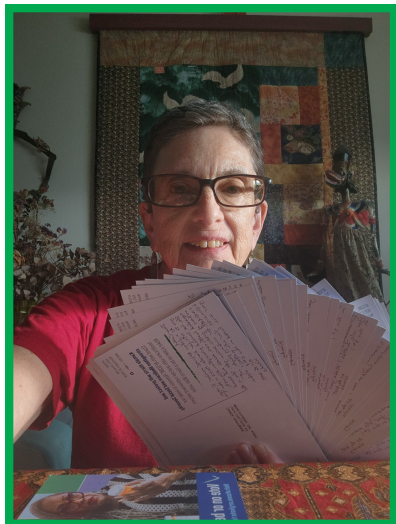
Every postcard you write helps strengthen our collective voice.

Thank you for being part of this effort. One postcard may seem small, but together they can make a real difference.

How does it work?

1. Receive Your Postcard Packet:

After you sign up, you'll receive a packet containing pre-addressed postcards, postage, and everything you need to get started.



2. Write Your Personal Message

Using the guidelines in this toolkit, write a brief, friendly message to the fellow AFSCME member listed on each postcard. Personal, handwritten messages are what make this program so effective.

3. Mail Your Postcards

Once you've completed your postcards, simply drop them in the mail by the program deadline. Mailing them on time helps ensure they reach voters before Election Day, maximizing their impact.

Timeline:

Sign Up



Receive Your Packet



Write Your Postcards



Mail by October 26th



Election Day – November 3

***Postcard packets will be
mailed out starting on
September 14th!***



Postcard Pro-Tip

On the next page are a few examples to help you get started. The best postcards are personal, so feel free to use these as inspiration and put the message into your own words. Share what issues are important to you, why voting is important, and why you're encouraging your fellow AFSCME members to make a plan to vote.



Sample Messages:

Message 1:

Every vote makes a difference. I'm voting to support leaders who will lower everyday costs and help make life more affordable for retirees and working families. I hope you'll join me by voting on or before November 3.

Message 2:

Working people earned their retirement benefits. I'm voting because I want leaders who will protect Social Security, Medicare, and the pensions we've worked so hard for. I hope you'll make your plan to vote, too!

Message 3:

As a fellow AFSCME member, I'm asking you to join me in making a plan to vote on or before November 3. Together, we can help elect leaders who will protect our retirement security and put working families first.

Message 4:

As AFSCME members, we know the power of standing together. That's why I'm encouraging you to make a plan to vote and stand with candidates who stand with us by protecting workers, retirement security, and the freedoms we've fought to earn.

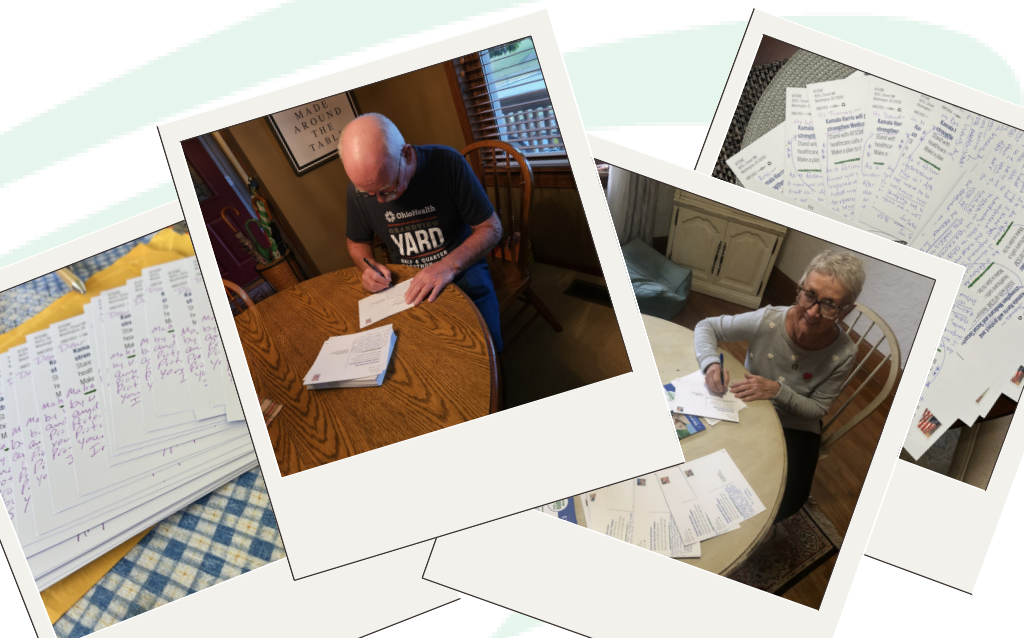
Writing Tips

Do:

- Write neatly and use blue or black ink.
- Keep your message short and personal.
- Encourage the recipient to make a plan to vote.
- Sign your first name only.

Don't:

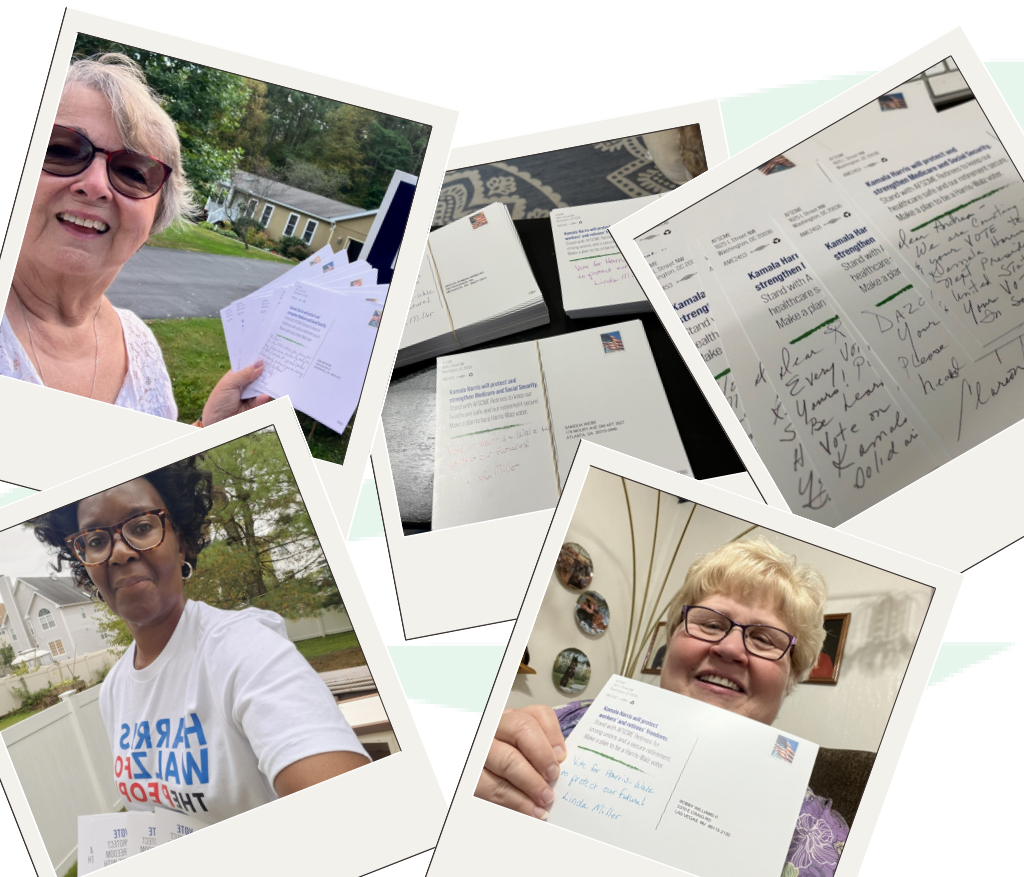
- Use profanity or negative language.
- Add stickers, glitter, or anything that could interfere with mail processing.
- Cover the printed artwork or address.



Before You Mail

Mailing Checklist:

- ❑ Every postcard has a handwritten message.
- ❑ Every postcard is signed with your first name.
- ❑ The postcards are mailed by October 26th.



Share Your Postcard Story

Send Us Your Photos:

We'd love to feature your postcard-writing events! Email your photos to retirees@afscme.org or send them to us directly on Facebook.

Help spread the word about the AFSCME:

Retirees Postcard Program by sharing your participation on social media! Every post helps inspire more retirees and union members to get involved and make a plan to vote.



Facebook:
AFSCMERetirees



Instagram:
AFSCMERetirees

Share Your Participation:

Post photos or videos of yourself writing postcards, hosting a postcard party, or dropping your completed postcards in the mail.

Use Our Hashtag:

Include #AFSCMERetirees in your posts so others can follow the campaign and see retirees taking action.

Hosting Postcard Writing Parties

Writing postcards is even more fun when you do it together! Whether you're an AFSCME retiree chapter or subchapter leader, or simply a member who wants to make a difference, consider hosting a postcard writing party. It's a great way to connect with fellow retirees, build community, and encourage more members to participate in the program.

The following tips will help you plan a successful postcard party. And don't forget...we'd love to see your event! Share photos of your postcard party, your completed postcards (without showing recipients' personal information), or your group in action by emailing them to retirees@afscme.org or tagging @AFSCMERetirees on Facebook.



Planning Your Party

Choose a Date and Time:

- Schedule your event during daylight hours when possible, as many retirees prefer daytime gatherings.
- Consider hosting your postcard party before or after a regular chapter or subchapter meeting to make it easy for members to participate.

Pick a Location:

Choose a location that's comfortable and accessible, such as:

- Your regular chapter or subchapter meeting location
- Your home
- A community center
- A local library
- Another convenient gathering space

Invite Participants:

Spread the word using phone calls, emails, text messages, newsletters, or social media.

- Encourage members to invite a friend or fellow retiree.
- Ask attendees to RSVP so you can plan accordingly.

Planning Your Party

Gather Supplies:

Before your event, make sure you have:

- Postcard packets
- Pens for everyone
- Tables and comfortable seating
- Light refreshments and drinks (optional, but always appreciated!)

Create a Welcoming Atmosphere:

Set up a comfortable writing space where participants can socialize, share ideas, and encourage one another. Having sample messages from this toolkit available can help participants get started and make writing postcards feel easy and enjoyable.

Share the Experience:

Take photos during your event and encourage participants to celebrate their involvement on social media using #AFSCMERetirees. Tag @AFSCMERetirees on Facebook or email your photos to retirees@afscme.org so we can highlight your efforts and inspire others to join the program.

During the Party

Welcome and Kick Things Off:

- Thank everyone for taking the time to participate.
- Share a brief overview of the AFSCME Retirees Postcard Program and explain how handwritten postcards help encourage fellow members to make a plan to vote.
- Take a few minutes to talk about why this effort matters and invite participants to share why they choose to vote.

Start Writing:

- Distribute postcard packets, pens, and this toolkit.
- Review the sample messages and writing tips before everyone begins.
- Encourage participants to write in their own words. Personal, handwritten messages are the most meaningful and effective.



Wrapping Up:

Collect and Mail Postcards:

- Collect completed postcards before everyone leaves.
- Count the completed postcards so you can celebrate your group's impact.
- If it's helpful, offer to mail the postcards on behalf of participants to ensure they're sent by October 26th.
- Encourage members to donate to PEOPLE.

Make It Fun:

Help create an enjoyable, welcoming atmosphere where everyone feels connected and inspired.

- Play background music.
- Provide light refreshments.
- Encourage conversation while people write.
- Hold a raffle or recognize participants for participating.

Share Your Success:

Take photos during your postcard party and encourage participants to share them on social media using #AFSCMERetirees. Tag @AFSCMERetirees on Facebook or email your photos to retirees@afscme.org.

Tips and Ideas:

Choose a Fun Theme:

A simple theme can make your event more inviting. Consider hosting a "Postcards & Coffee" morning or a "Postcards & Potluck", serving light refreshments, or incorporating your chapter's seasonal or monthly meeting theme.

Decorate with AFSCME Retirees signs, banners, or table decorations to create a welcoming space.

Share Why It Matters:

Take a few minutes to explain why the postcard program is important and how handwritten messages encourage fellow AFSCME members to make a plan to vote.

Invite a Guest:

Consider inviting a chapter leader, retiree activist, or community leader to briefly welcome participants or share why they're involved. Keep remarks short so everyone has plenty of time to write postcards.

Keep the Momentum Going

Share Your Story:

Encourage participants to take photos throughout the event and post them using #AFSCMERetirees. Tag @AFSCMERetirees on Facebook, and don't forget to take a group photo before everyone heads home!

Celebrate Your Impact:

- Count the number of postcards your group completed.
- Thank everyone for participating.
- Celebrate the difference your group is making by encouraging fellow AFSCME members to vote.

Stay Connected:

Keep the momentum going after your event by:

- Sharing photos from your postcard party.
- Inviting participants to future AFSCME Retirees events and volunteer opportunities.
- Encouraging members to recruit a friend or host their own postcard-writing party.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What should I write on my postcards?

A: Keep your message short, personal, and positive. Encourage the recipient to make a plan to vote and share why voting is important to you. Feel free to use the sample messages in this toolkit as inspiration, but make the message your own.

Q: When should I mail my postcards?

A: Mail your postcards by October 26th so they arrive before Election Day. Timely delivery helps maximize their impact.

Q: Can I host my own postcard writing party?

A: Absolutely! Whether you're a chapter leader or an individual member, anyone can host a postcard writing party. This toolkit includes tips and ideas to help you plan a successful event.

Q: Who should I contact if I have questions?

A: If you have questions about the AFSCME Retirees Postcard Program, please contact Madalin Sammons at msammons@afscme.org.



**Every postcard starts a conversation.
Every conversation encourages a vote.
Every vote helps shape our future.**

**Thank you for being part of the AFSCME
Retirees 2026 Postcard Program.**

