

Operation Citizen

Citizenship Kit

A first act. A clear record. A next step.



You do not have to master the whole system before you can use one part of it. Begin with one public decision that affects your life. Find the record. Name the office that can act. Ask for a specific change. Keep what comes back.

This kit helps you do that work. You can use it alone, with a book club, or through a civic group that already meets. You do not need to join an organization or agree with every Operation Citizen finding to inspect the evidence.

The Quiet Collapse provides the diagnosis. The Operation Citizen chapbook develops the fuller response. This Citizenship Kit gives you a first action and a way to follow it through.

Start with page 5 if you already have an issue. Use page 6 if you have thirty minutes and want a guided start. Pages 3–4 help you choose a channel. Page 7 is your working record.

What is in the package



- This twelve-page booklet: orientation, seven levers, a first action, and group practice.
- The Field Guide: complete instructions for all seven levers, A5/R8, tool use, and two annotated comment examples.
- The Worksheets: reusable evidence, request, commitment, comment-period, finding, and outcome records.
- Sources and References: official routes, source notes, and the limits of each example.

Edition 1.0 • September 5, 2026

Welcome you have a place in this work

The citizen pays for public institutions, lives with their decisions, and helps choose the people who run them. Operation Citizen begins with that relationship. Public power should be open to inspection. People affected by a decision should be able to find who made it, what rule allowed it, and how to challenge or improve it.

That is our civic standard. It is not a claim that every citizen can bring every dispute to court. Legal standing has separate requirements. The Constitution's Preamble states public purposes; it does not create every power or remedy a citizen might need. [S01]

From diagnosis to response

The book asks what happened to the promise made to citizens. This kit asks what you can do with a finding. The work begins when a broad concern becomes a question that a responsible office can answer.

"Services are getting worse" is a concern. "What records show how this office decided to reduce its public hours?" is a records question. "Will you publish a plan to restore access, with dates and a way to measure delay?" is an action request.

How Operation Citizen works

The chapbook explains the case. The Digital Companion explains mechanisms through interaction. Citizen levers provide lawful routes to act. Authority research identifies what each public actor can do. CL tools help inspect evidence. The Rulemaking Observatory tracks opportunities to comment. An outcome record shows what followed.

These parts work together. You can enter through any one of them. You may need records before a complaint, or a public comment before a rule closes. You may return to research after an office explains a limit you had missed.

Keep the standard simple: one issue, one responsible actor, one clear request, and a record another person can check.

Seven civic levers find the right door

A lever is a lawful route for bringing evidence to someone who can use it. Choose by the decision you want to affect. A large packet sent to the wrong office is still at the wrong office.

1 Public Comment Mechanism

Use it: An agency is asking for input on a rule, form, or policy.

Find the official notice and open comment window. Identify the proposed change, explain its effect, support your point, and ask for a specific revision. Save the submitted text and receipt. A comment is input to a decision; it is not a vote or a guarantee of an individual reply. [S02]

First action: Write the docket number, deadline, and one sentence naming the change you seek.

2 State Attorney General Referral

Use it: A business practice or other harm may fall within your state attorney general's responsibilities.

Begin at your state's official complaint page. Describe the affected people, places, dates, and entities. Explain the state connection. Ask for review or referral. The office decides what it can investigate; it does not become your private lawyer merely because you file. [S03]

First action: Find the correct state route and gather one record that shows the harm.

3 Inspector General / Oversight Hotline

Use it: You have specific information about waste, abuse, misconduct, or a failure in an agency's operations.

Find the inspector general whose agency or program is involved. Give facts, dates, and sources. Explain what failed. Use the receiving office's instructions for sensitive information. An ordinary appeal of a benefit decision may need a different route. [S04]

First action: Name the agency, program, and event you can document.

Need the full steps? Open the same numbered brief in the Field Guide.

Seven civic levers continue the work

4 Public Records Request

Use it: A missing government record prevents you from checking a decision.

Look for published records first. For federal executive agencies, use the Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA. Ask for existing records with a subject, date range, and likely office. State and local records follow their own laws. A FOIA request does not require an agency to create a new analysis. [S05]

First action: List the specific records that would answer your question.

5 Congressional Oversight Packet

Use it: A federal program or repeated agency failure needs scrutiny from Congress.

Send a short request to your representative or senator, or the relevant committee. State the finding, give the strongest supporting records, and ask for a defined oversight step. An individual member can request information or seek a hearing; that member cannot promise a committee or chamber will act. [S06]

First action: Write one question you want the office to put to the agency.

6 Campaign Finance / FEC Pattern

Use it: You want to examine political money or document a possible federal campaign-finance violation.

Start with the Federal Election Commission's public records. Keep lawful funding relationships separate from evidence of a violation. A formal complaint has sworn and notarized filing requirements. The FEC's current lack of a quorum limits enforcement action; check its status before choosing this route. [S07]

First action: Save the actual filing and record the reporting period.

7 Election Timing / Challenger Accountability

Use it: You want candidates to answer a public question before voters decide.

Find the official election calendar. Ask candidates the same office-specific question. Preserve their exact answers and check later conduct. Voting, primary participation, and candidate comparison are part of continuing citizenship. Eligibility and deadlines vary by state. [S08]

First action: Record the election date and one commitment you want every candidate to address.

Choose your entry point

Begin with the problem you can describe clearly. You can contact an elected office, attend a public meeting, or work with a civic group without forcing every act into a numbered lever.

A service or benefit failed

Find the agency's service or appeal route first. Keep any appeal deadline. If the record shows a wider failure, consider Lever 3 or Lever 5. A complaint to an oversight office does not replace an appeal or preserve its deadline.

A rule may change

Use Lever 1 while the official window is open. If it has closed, check the final action and later notices. Do not send a new comment to an old window and assume it counts.

You cannot see how a decision was made

Use Lever 4. Ask for the record that would answer the question. When it arrives, choose the next action from what it actually shows.

You are concerned about a company's conduct

Find the agency or state office responsible for that practice. Lever 2 may fit. Record an ownership link only when a filing supports it. Shared names, a donation, or a sequence of events does not establish unlawful coordination.

A bill or candidate matters to you

Read the bill's latest text and actions, or the candidate's exact statement. Use Lever 5 for scrutiny of federal operations and Lever 7 for a public commitment. A co-sponsorship, committee vote, floor vote, and enacted law are different events.

You want company in the work

Use a book club, library group, neighborhood circle, or existing civic organization. Bring one question and one source. Ask the group to help check the record and choose a next step. Page 8 gives you a meeting format.

Your choice is a starting point. Change it when better evidence points elsewhere.

Your first thirty-minute civic check

This is a focused evidence exercise. It does not certify an institution or prove a broad claim. At the end, you should have one supported question and a route to act.

Minutes 0–5 Choose one decision

Use an issue you already care about: a bill, agency notice, service change, or public promise. Make it small enough to describe in two sentences. If you do not have an issue, use the BLM worked example in the Field Guide to practice without submitting anything.

Minutes 5–12 Open the primary record

For a bill, use Congress.gov. For a proposed federal change, use the agency notice and its official docket. For a local decision, use the public body's agenda, minutes, or published notice. Save the title, link, date, and exact passage. A news report can lead you to the record; it does not replace it.

Minutes 12–18 Name the actor and the limit

Who can make the decision? What action is within that office's power? Is there a deadline? If you cannot answer, write down what you need to learn. An honest gap is a useful result.

Minutes 18–25 Write a bounded request

Use this form: "The record shows _____. This affects _____ because _____. I ask your office to _____ by _____. Please identify any limit on your authority and the office that controls the next step."

Choose a reasonable response date. Your requested date does not create a legal deadline.

Minutes 25–30 Check and save

Separate fact from your interpretation. Remove personal details that do not belong in a public record. Check the receiving office's instructions. Send only when the request fits the route. Otherwise, save a draft and name the missing fact.

Done for today: one evidence record, one request or draft, and one follow-up date.

One issue, one action



Write here, or use Worksheet 1 in the separate Worksheets file.

My question:

The decision or event, with date:

What I know from a record:

Source title, page or section, link, and date checked:

What I think it means — and what I have not established:

Who can act, and what I will ask that office to do:

My route and its official deadline, if any:

Sent on / saved as draft / receipt number:

I will check again on: _____

What would count as a result:

Do not put another person's private medical, financial, or identity details on a shared worksheet. Keep a public summary separate from confidential supporting records.

From book club to citizen circle

A citizen circle is a group that does one piece of civic work together. It can meet inside an existing club. It does not need officers, a mailing list, or a new organization to begin.

A forty-five-minute meeting

First ten minutes: Each person names a passage or concern. Choose one question the group can examine. Do not spend the whole meeting trying to settle national politics.

Next ten minutes: Read one primary source together. Ask what it establishes and what it leaves open. Let someone make the strongest fair case against the group's first reading.

Next fifteen minutes: Choose a lever and name the responsible public actor. Agree on one work product: a question, comment, records request, or evidence packet. Keep the request within the actor's authority.

Final ten minutes: Name a volunteer, a second reader, and a date. Decide what may be shared publicly. Schedule a short review of the response.

Three working roles

The **source reader** checks the record. The **request writer** prepares the action. The **record keeper** saves the source, final text, receipt, and response. People can share or rotate roles. No one has to disclose private experiences to participate.

A useful group agreement

We will apply the same standard across parties. We will preserve disagreement. We will correct errors where we published them. We will speak for the group only with its agreement. We will not treat silence as consent.

Before the next meeting

Ask whether an existing organization already has the expertise or channel the issue needs. Offer a concise, sourced question that it can use. Do not claim partnership or endorsement without an agreement.

Measure the work: a checked record, a completed request, a reply, a corrected claim, or a documented next step. Attendance alone is not the result.

A5 and R8 the terms and the destination

A5 means Accountability Five. It names five reforms in how public power is used. **R8 means Rights Eight.** It names eight economic-security goals, drawing on Franklin Roosevelt's 1944 call for a Second Bill of Rights. These are Operation Citizen's program terms. They are not a statement that every goal is already an enforceable federal right. [S09]

The five accountability reforms

A5-1: Congressional conflicts, trading, and pay-to-play. Separate public duty from private financial interest.

A5-2: Term limits and anti-entrenchment. Address the rules and incentives that keep power fixed in place.

A5-3: Single-purpose and germaneness. Make a bill's purpose visible; "germaneness" means that an amendment relates to the subject under debate.

A5-4: Constituent-Capital Parity. Give citizens a fair, visible place in decisions alongside organized money.

A5-5: Forced consideration and blocker accountability. Show who can bring a proposal to a decision and where it stops. Healthcare floor access is a key use of this demand.

The eight goals

Family-supporting work; income security; viable farms and producers; freedom from unfair competition and monopoly; a decent home; adequate health care; protection against economic insecurity in old age, sickness, disability, accident, or unemployment; and a good education.

Turn a goal into an assignment

Ask: **Which office? Which lawful act? Which deadline? What public proof?** Separate what an actor can do now from what needs funding, a new statute, state action, or a constitutional amendment.

For example, constitutional limits on congressional tenure are different from limits on holding a committee chair. The legal route matters. See the Field Guide's A5/R8 section and the authority package before making a promise about results.

Tools help you check a claim

CL identifiers are stable labels for the Citizens' League tools. The tools help you find evidence and frame questions. A score is a result under a stated method, not a court finding or proof of motive.

CL-001 • Congressional Scorecard: Inspect a member's conduct and the records behind it. The live tool also offers an R8 voting lens. Keep the score, measure, period, and source together.

CL-002 and CL-005 • Federal and state records: Explore federal withdrawal and state responses. Check whether two numbers use the same date, population, and definition before comparing them.

CL-003 • Capture Index: Inspect committee funding, procedure, and related evidence. Its published scores do not yet incorporate all newly added revolving-door evidence. Do not use the ranking as a complete or final finding.

CL-006 • Replacement Event Index: Examine the institutional effects of departures from Congress. Coverage is partial. An unscored person is not a low-risk person.

CL-007 and CL-009 • Bills and procedure: Trace a bill and understand the steps before a vote. The recorded CL-007 link failed the September 5 check. Use Congress.gov for the current bill record. Older tool totals are dated samples, not today's full Congress.

CL-004 supports taxonomy maintenance. **CL-008** remains in development. Neither is needed for your first citizen action.

Where to begin

Open quietcollapse.net/citizen-tools, or use the official routes on page 12. The Field Guide gives a tool-by-tool route, source date, and use limit. If a tool fails, continue with the official record.

Do not copy a score into a complaint without checking what it measures. Preserve the source record that supports your actual request. The citizen should be able to explain the question without asking the recipient to trust a color or grade.

Keep the record honest

Say what kind of statement you are making

A **fact** is supported by a record. An **inference** is what you draw from facts. A **judgment** applies a standard. A **proposal** says what should change. Label them when confusion is possible.

An agency receipt proves receipt. It does not prove agreement. A referral is not an investigation. An investigation is not a finding of misconduct. A vote is not the same as a law. Record the stage that actually occurred.

Give an opposing reader a fair chance

Include the strongest relevant contrary evidence. If the office says it lacks power, ask which law limits it and who can act instead. If the evidence changes your conclusion, change the conclusion.

Keep sensitive records in the right place

Public comments and some complaint records may become public. Read the receiving office's privacy notice. Share only what the action requires. Do not promise anonymity or protection that the channel does not promise.

Follow through without inventing success

Keep the final request, date, recipient, receipt, reply, and follow-up. Use these stages: **draft; submitted; acknowledged; referred; substantive response; final action; closed without the requested change**. Not every matter reaches every stage.

When nothing happens, record "no response received as of [date]." Do not turn silence into proof of bad intent. Check delivery, follow up once with the record number, and consider a better-fitting channel.

Ask whether a repair can last

Was the result a promise, a new practice, a rule, a budget decision, or a law? Who can reverse it? What public record would show reversal? A useful result includes the means to check whether it holds.

Success begins with a truthful record. Public consequence takes continued work.

Stay involved and find the record

For Operation Citizen materials, start at quietcollapse.net. For tools, use [Citizen Tools](#). For corrections or inquiries, use [Contact](#). Send the title, version, exact passage, supporting record, and proposed correction. The contact page was reachable on September 5, 2026.

Official starting points

- **Public comments:** [Regulations.gov](#) and the agency's notice. [S02]
- **State complaints:** [State attorneys general](#). [S03]
- **Agency oversight:** [Oversight.gov hotline finder](#). [S04]
- **Federal records:** [FOIA.gov](#). [S05]
- **Congress:** [Find your representative](#), [Senators](#), and [Congress.gov](#). [S06]
- **Federal political money:** [FEC data](#) and [complaint instructions](#). [S07]
- **Election rules and dates:** [Vote.gov](#) routes you to your state. [S08]

The separate **Sources and References** file identifies S01–S09, the source manuscripts, the historical comments, and what was checked for this edition. The Field Guide explains the legal and practical limits in more detail. Neither historical comment is an instruction to file into a closed proceeding.

Your next act

Choose one issue. Put the source beside the claim. Ask the office that can act for one concrete step. Keep the answer. Bring it back to someone who will check it with you.

Publication record

Directed by Thom Barrett. Prepared from Operation Citizen source materials with research, drafting, and editorial assistance from OpenAI Codex. New kit text has not yet received Thom Barrett's final author review. Existing source documents retain their own authorship and status.

Edition 1.0 · September 5, 2026. Dates, office procedures, and tool records can change. Check the official route when you act.

