



Housing is Built with Ballots: Planning Your Nonpartisan Voter Engagement Campaign

1

Wednesday, May 8th, 2024

Advocacy

**Youth
Housing
Initiative**

**Race
Equity**



OHIO
Balance of State
Continuum of Care



COHHIO
Training and
Technical Assistance



COHHIO
Coalition on Homelessness
and Housing in Ohio

Housing Ohio
conference



COHHIO
Homeless Management
Information System

**SOAR
Ohio**

**Fair Housing
& Tenant
Information**



Healthy Beginnings
At Home

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



**Housing is Built with Ballots:
Planning Your Nonpartisan Voter
Engagement Campaign**

Agenda

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- Why Nonpartisan Voter Engagement Matters
- Building Blocks of a Successful Campaign
- Rules of the Road
- *Our Homes, Our Votes* Opportunities and Resources
- Creating Your Workplan
- Reflection/Conclusion

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Why Nonpartisan Voter Engagement Matters

About the National Low Income Housing Coalition

OUR HOMES

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NLIHC is dedicated to achieving racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice.



About *Our Homes, Our Votes*

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- NLIHC's nonpartisan campaign to boost voter turnout among low-income renters and people experiencing homelessness, and to elevate housing as an election issue
- Empowers housing providers, advocates, tenant leaders, and direct services organizations to register, educate, and mobilize voters



Voting as a Social Determinant of Health

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[Explore topics](#)

Public Health

Support for Safe and Equitable Access to Voting H-440.805

Topic: Public Health

Meeting Type: Annual

Action: Appended

Council & Committees: NA

Policy Subtopic: NA

Year Last Modified: 2022

Type: Health Policies



1. Our AMA supports measures to facilitate safe and equitable access to **voting** as a harm-reduction strategy to safeguard public health and mitigate unnecessary risk of infectious disease transmission by measures including but not limited to: (a) extending polling hours; (b) increasing the number of polling locations; (c) extending early **voting** periods; (d) mail-in ballot postage that is free or prepaid by the government; (e) adequate resourcing of the United States Postal Service and election operational procedures; (f) improved access to drop off locations for mail-in or early ballots; and (g) use of a P.O. box for voter registration.
2. Our AMA opposes requirements for voters to stipulate a reason in order to receive a ballot by mail and other constraints for eligible voters to vote-by-mail.
3. Our AMA: (a) acknowledges **voting** is a social determinant of health and significantly contributes to the analyses of other social determinants of health as a key metric; (b) recognizes that gerrymandering which disenfranchises individuals/communities limits access to health care, including but not limited to the expansion of comprehensive medical insurance coverage, and negatively impacts health outcomes; and (c) will collaborate with appropriate stakeholders and provide resources to firmly establish a relationship between voter participation and health outcomes.

Eviction and Disenfranchisement

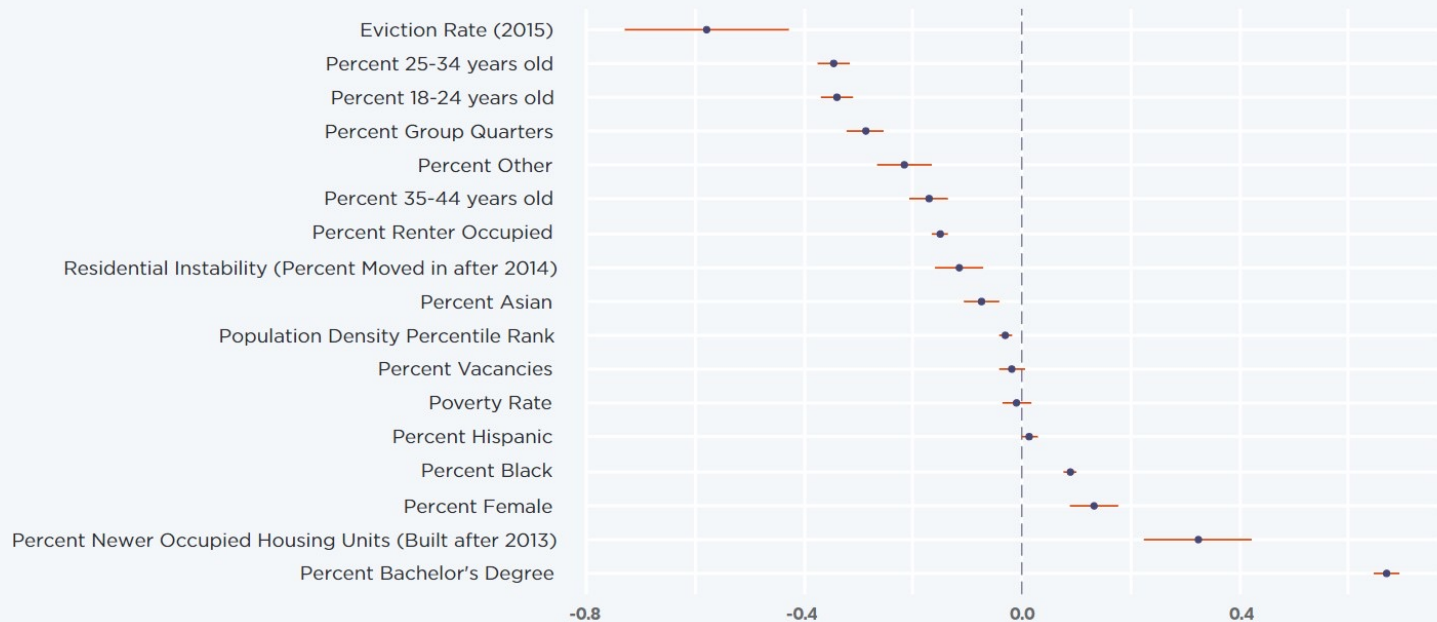
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One-Year Eviction Model Coefficient Plot



Source: <https://evictionlab.org/eviction-voter-turnout/>

Voter Turnout Disparities

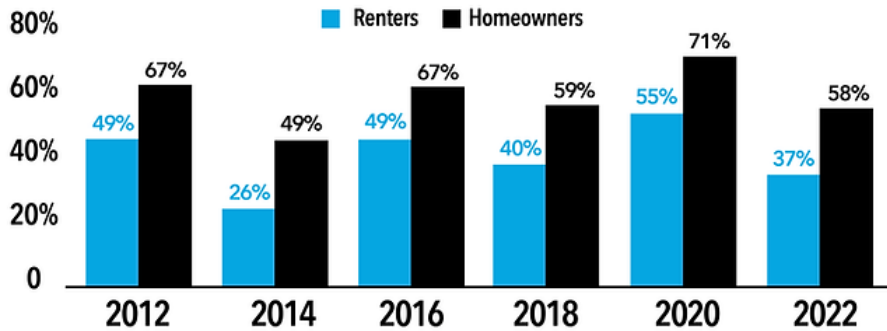
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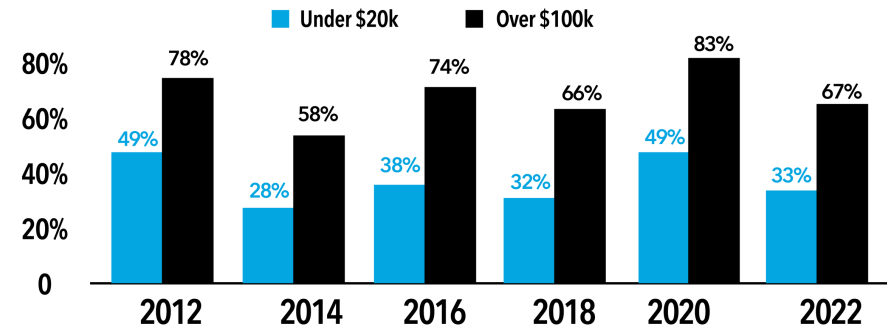
U.S. Citizens Who Reported Voting in National Elections by Housing Tenure (2012-2022)



Source: November 2012-2022 Current Population Survey data.



U.S. Citizens Who Reported Voting in National Elections by Family Income (2012-2022)



Source: November 2012-2022 Current Population Survey data.



Nonprofit Voter Engagement Can Make the Difference!

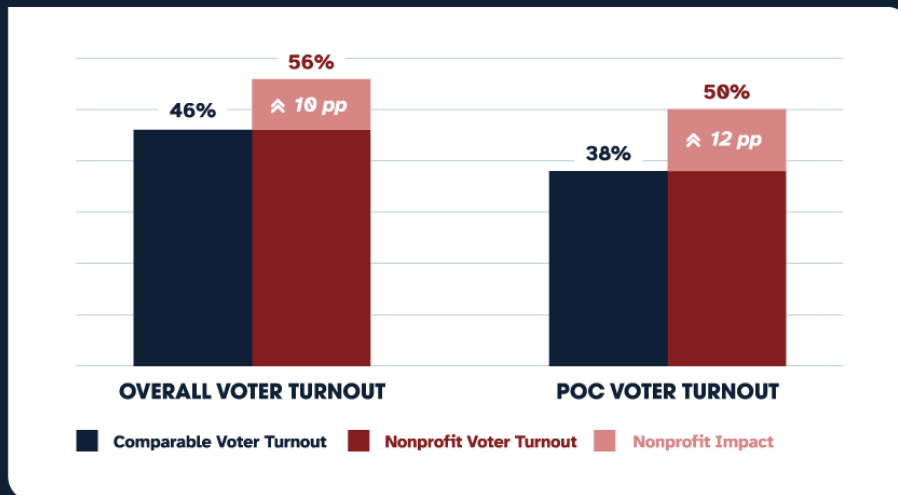
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NONPROFIT POWER



 Nonprofit VOTE

ACROSS THE BOARD —
ALL VOTERS ENGAGED BY NONPROFITS SAW A

**10 PERCENTAGE
POINT BOOST**

FOR VOTERS OF COLOR SPECIFICALLY —
IT WAS A

**12 PERCENTAGE
POINT BOOST**

READ THE FULL NONPROFIT POWER REPORT:

nonprofitvote.org/nonprofit-power-report

Nonprofit Voter Engagement Can Make the Difference!

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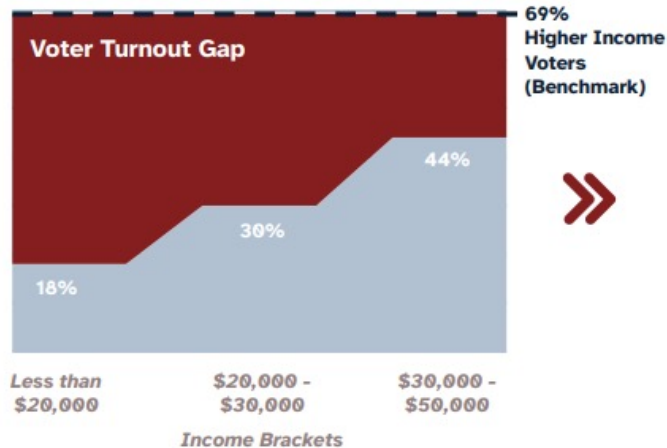


THE VOTER TURNOUT GAP WAS **NARROWED BY AROUND A THIRD** BETWEEN LOWER AND HIGHER INCOME POPULATIONS

COMPARABLE VOTERS

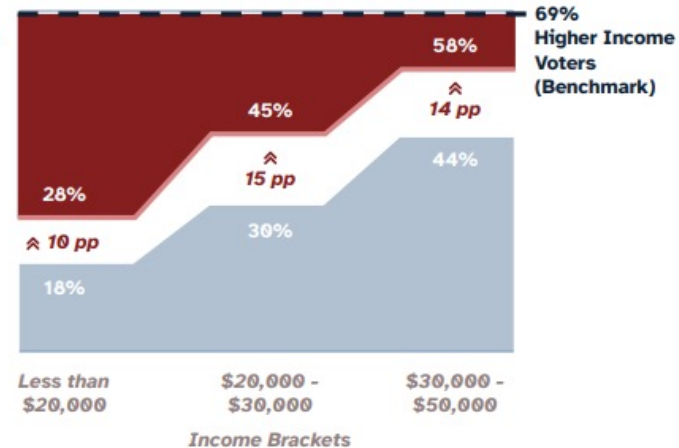
in the same states counties and with the same demographics as our nonprofit voters

**see methodology for full definition*



WITH NONPROFIT ENGAGEMENT

Narrower Gap is Better



Comparable Voter Turnout
 Voter Turnout Gap
 With Nonprofit Engagement Turnout

- - - Comparable Voter Turnout for Higher Income Population \$75,000 - \$100,000 (Benchmark)

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Building Blocks of a Successful Campaign

Building Blocks of a Nonpartisan Voter Engagement Campaign

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Voter Registration



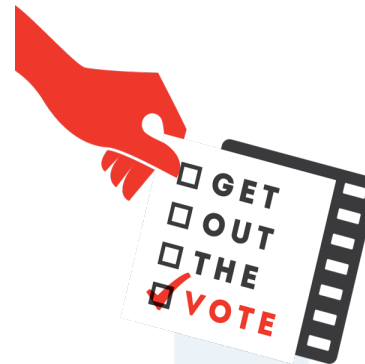
- Make forms available
 - Tabling
- Canvassing
 - Voter registration events

Voter Education



- Voter ID clinics
- Candidate forums
- Nonpartisan voter guides
- Signs & messages about dates, deadlines, polling places

Voter Mobilization



- Reminder phonebanking or textbanking
- Canvassing
- Transportation
- Post-Election celebration

Voter Protection



- Distribute info about Election Protection Hotline
- Inform voters about provisional ballots

Voter Registration

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- Familiarize yourself with voter registration rules
- Offer registration trainings
- Obtain materials you need
 - Paper forms (in multiple languages) and/or technology for online registration
 - Use: www.ourhomes.turbovote.org
- Integrate voter registration into existing operations
 - Ex: registering voters at lease-up or intake
- Door-to-door canvassing, textbanking, or phonebanking
- Host designated voter registration events (ex: National Voter Registration Day)



Voter Registration: Key Considerations

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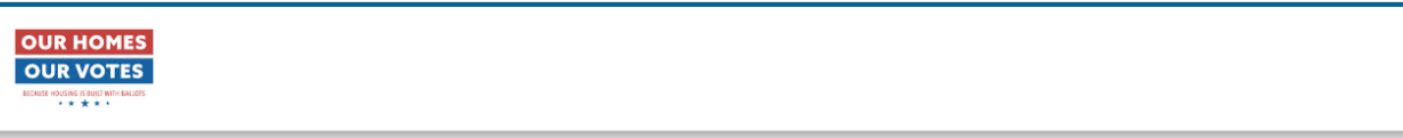


- Keep records of newly registered voters so you can reach out in GOTV efforts
- ~~Are you registered to vote?~~ → Do you need to update your voter registration?
- Confirm voters' registration status at their current address

OurHomes.TurboVote.org




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Make Your Voice Heard!

Your vote is your voice. Use this tool to register to vote, check your registration status, update your registration, and sign up for reminders about elections in your community.

Never miss an election!
Enter your address or [Select your state](#)

 **Register To Vote**
with help from TurboVote

Check Your Registration

Preregister To Vote
Under 18? Register as soon as you can!

[Vote Early >](#)

[Vote by Mail >](#)

Voter Education

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- Who?
 - Candidates
- What?
 - Ballot questions
- Where?
 - Polling place and/or ballot dropbox
- When?
 - Early voting period, mail-in deadline, polling place hours
- How?
 - In-person or by mail, voter ID requirements
- Why?

Positive Messaging Matters!

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- Frustration → the importance of voting to achieve solutions
- Bring up examples of close elections where a small number of votes made the difference
- Remind residents of subsidized housing that it's important to protect and expand funding for housing programs
- Always be optimistic!

Voter Mobilization/Get Out the Vote

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- ~~Election Day~~ → Election Season
 - Early voting
 - Vote-by-mail
- Follow up with voters to make sure they have a plan
- Make voting more accessible
 - Transportation resources, ex: Rideshare2Vote Aware
 - Provide childcare
 - Rides or group walks to the polls
- Consider becoming a polling place
- Follow up again on Election Day
- Celebrate civic engagement!

Voters Experiencing Homelessness

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- Voters CAN register and vote without a permanent residential address!
- *Pitts v. Black* (1984): court case affirming that citizens without residential addresses have the right to vote



National Voter Registration Form

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Please fill out the sections below if they apply to you.

If this application is for a **change of name**, what was your name before you changed it?

A	<input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Miss	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jr	<input type="checkbox"/> II
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms.				<input type="checkbox"/> Sr	<input type="checkbox"/> IV

If you were **registered before** but this is the first time you are registering from the address in **Box 2**, what was your address where you were registered before?

B	Street (or route and box number)	Apt. or Lot #	City/Town/County	State	Zip Code

If you live in a rural area but do not have a street number, or if you have no address, please show on the map where you live.

C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write in the names of the crossroads (or streets) nearest to where you live. Draw an X to show where you live. Use a dot to show any schools, churches, stores, or other landmarks near where you live, and write the name of the landmark. 							
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Example</td> <td rowspan="2">Route #2</td> <td>● Grocery Store</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Woodchuck Road</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public School ●</td> <td></td> <td>X</td> </tr> </table>		Example	Route #2	● Grocery Store		Woodchuck Road	Public School ●
Example	Route #2	● Grocery Store						
		Woodchuck Road						
Public School ●		X						

If the applicant is unable to sign, who helped the applicant fill out this application? Give name, address and phone number (phone number optional).

D	
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Mail this application to the address provided for your State.

Every One Votes (National Alliance to End Homelessness): Pro Tips

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- ❑ Discuss with your local election office the possibility of using your organization as a polling site.
- ❑ Satisfy address requirements by having your organization agree to collect mail on behalf of individual clients. Establish a policy on how to get mail to clients that have moved to another facility or provider.
- ❑ Contact your local election office to determine whether you can collect registration forms and submit them on behalf of your clients. You may assist clients with completing the paper form or registering online. Remember you may not influence your client's political preference or party registration.
- ❑ Waive any curfew or waiting in line practices on Election Day and replace with tickets or shelter reservations to eliminate stress and disincentives to vote.



Candidate Engagement

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- Get candidates thinking about housing issues and elevate housing in election coverage
- Educate community about the stakes of election for housing
- Activities include: candidate forums, town halls, surveys, factsheets, site visits
- Keep everything nonpartisan!

OUR HOMES, OUR VOTES

2020

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October 9, 2019

To CNN, The New York Times, and moderators of the next presidential candidate debate:

The undersigned 852 organizations urge you to ask each presidential candidate how they would address the nation's housing and homelessness crisis.

Our country is in the grips of a severe and pervasive housing affordability crisis. Nationally, there is a shortage of 7 million homes affordable and available to the lowest-income renters. Rents have risen faster than renters' incomes over the last two decades, and while more people are renting than ever before, the supply of housing has lagged. Fewer than 4 affordable and available rental homes exist for every 10 of the lowest-income renter households nationwide. As a result, record-breaking numbers of people cannot afford decent homes. Every state and community – urban, rural, and suburban – is impacted.

So far, 11 presidential candidates have released major housing plans or other housing proposals to address the housing crisis. They are talking about these plans on the campaign trail – in town halls, forums, and meetings in New Hampshire, Iowa, and beyond. But during the first two rounds of presidential debates, debate moderators have neglected to directly ask candidates how they would address our nation's housing affordability crisis. People in America need to hear all presidential candidates share what they will do to make homes affordable to the tens of millions who are struggling to keep roofs over their heads or who have no homes at all.

This is an issue of paramount importance to voters. According to a recent national public opinion [poll](#), 60% of people say housing affordability is a serious problem where they live, up 21 points from 2016. Over 61% of people report having to make at least one sacrifice in the past three years because they were struggling with housing costs, such as cutting back on learning activities for their child, nutritious food, or healthcare.

Strong majorities of the public expect solutions – 83% say elected officials are not paying enough attention to the cost of housing and the need for more affordable housing. Nearly 8 in 10 people in America say the president should "take major action" to make housing more affordable for low-income families. And 91% of Democratic voters say they are more likely to vote for candidates who have detailed plans for making housing more affordable.

Ballot Measure Advocacy

- 501c3 nonprofits can endorse ballot measures!
- Highlight ballot measures in your voter education to show voters they can have a direct impact on policy

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HOUSING ON THE BALLOT

How to Organize a Successful Ballot
Measure Campaign for Affordable
Homes

2022

Authors:

Courtney Cooperman
Housing Advocacy Organizer

Lena O'Rourke
Consultant to NLIHC

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Rules of the Road

Staying Nonpartisan for 501c3 Nonprofits

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501c3 nonprofits CAN...

- Register voters
- Educate voters
- Engage candidates on issues
- Host election-related public events
- Get voters to the polls
- Endorse ballot measures that align with their mission

***Exceptions: Legal Services Corporation, Americorps VISTAs, CSBG and Head Start funds (but can use other dollars)*

501c3 nonprofits CANNOT...

- Endorse political candidates
- Donate money, resources, or time to a particular candidate
- Use staff time, resources, or representation of the organization for partisan political activities
- Conduct registration, education, and mobilization activities in any way that seeks to benefit a particular candidate or party

PHAs and HUD-Funded Agencies

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- President Biden's EO on Promoting Access to Voting directs federal agencies to facilitate voter registration & encourage voting
- HUD circulated announcements in February 2022 to PHA, multifamily, SNAPS, and HOPWA distribution lists
- Announcements clarify that HUD grantees are permitted—and actively encouraged!—to organize nonpartisan voter engagement activities

What is Allowed?

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Share nonpartisan voter and election resources with residents



Permit use of community space to hold meetings, candidate forums, and voter registration



Collaborate with local election administrators to use space for voter drop boxes and voting sites



PHAs: documentation of residence; apply to operate as voter registration agency; make forms available, accept and transmit completed forms, run PHA-initiated voter registration drives (where permitted by state law)

What is Prohibited?

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Partisanship!!!

- Favoring one candidate over another. This includes inviting one candidate to a forum without providing the equal opportunity for others to attend
- Tying voter registration to the electoral prospects of any party/candidate
- Use of facilities for partisan activities (ex: phonebank for a candidate, rather than nonpartisan get-out-the-vote)

Giving the impression that benefits are tied to a resident's voting activity, or that registration and voting are not voluntary

- Ex: hosting an Election Night party and only inviting or offering rewards to those who voted



What Funding is Available?

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- Section 8 administrative fees and public housing operating subsidies may be used to fund permissible nonpartisan voter engagement activities
- Where PHAs fund Resident Councils, they may use funds to provide transportation to the polls as a resident service
- Resident Councils should consult with PHAs to determine whether funds can be used for additional voter engagement activities



More Information

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[Bolder Advocacy campaign:](https://afj.org/bolder-advocacy/)
<https://afj.org/bolder-advocacy/>



THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF VOTER ENGAGEMENT IN HUD-ASSISTED PROPERTIES

Housing providers can create a culture of civic engagement and provide important opportunities for residents to update their voter registrations, learn about elections, and cast their ballots. Some owners of HUD-assisted properties, however, worry that federal funding prohibits them from doing voter engagement work. Fortunately, this is not the case!

This resource provides guidance for public housing agency (PHA) directors, owners and operators of federally assisted housing, service coordinators, tenant leaders, and other advocates who are seeking to encourage voter participation and strengthen civic engagement in their communities.

Background

President Biden's [Executive Order on Promoting Access to Voting](#) (March 2021) affirms that the right to vote is fundamental to American democracy and that it is the obligation of the federal government to ensure that American citizens can exercise that right. The executive order directs federal agencies to evaluate ways to expand voter registration opportunities, provide information about voting, and facilitate participation in the electoral process.

In response to the executive order, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) [circulated announcements](#) to its email lists on February 9, 2022, clarifying that PHAs and recipients of HUD funding are permitted - and actively encouraged! - to facilitate nonpartisan voter engagement activities. This resource summarizes key takeaways from HUD's announcements.

Our Homes, Our Votes
compilation and summary of
announcements:

<https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/hud-usich-info>

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NLIHC Resources and Opportunities

Our Homes, Our Votes Educational Resources

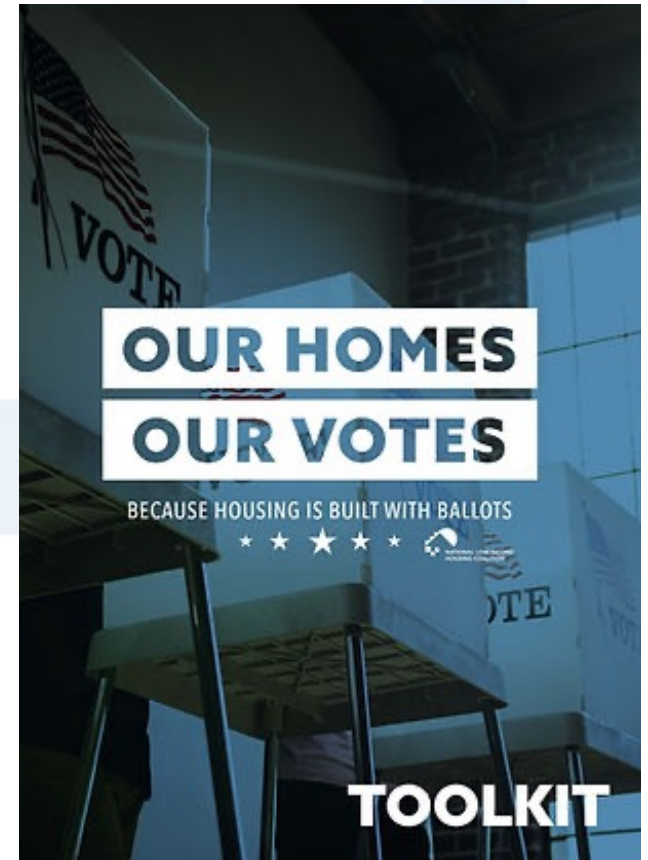
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- Comprehensive online resource library
 - Visit: <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/resources>
- Biweekly webinar series
 - Register: www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/webinars-2024
 - Next webinar: **Monday, May 20: Voter Registration 101**



Affiliates Network

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- Open to all nonpartisan organizations that share campaign's goals
- Regular office hours, email listserv, and post-election virtual gathering
 - First office hours are this Friday, May 10, from 1-3pm
- TurboVote referral codes
- Sign up: www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/affiliates

Housing Providers Council

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- Nonpartisan group of housing developers, property managers, and resident services staff committed to boosting voter turnout among their residents
- Regular virtual meetings (bimonthly in 2024) to exchange ideas and receive trainings on best practices in nonpartisan voter engagement
- Topics have included: complying with NVRA, transportation to the polls, language access, connecting residents with voter ID
- More info and application link:
<https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/housing-providers-council>



Welcome to Vote Pledge

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Who: initial signers include 22 organizations that collectively own or manage more than 257,000 units across 41 states, DC and the US Virgin Islands

What: nonpartisan declaration of commitment to integrate voter registration into lease-up and income recertification, and to pursue other nonpartisan voter education and mobilization activities

When: launched on tenth annual National Voter Registration Day in 2022 (but it's never too late to join!)

Why: it should be just as easy to register to vote when you sign your lease as it is when you apply for a driver's license!! Residents must update their voter registration when they move into a new address. Modeled after National Voter Registration Act, which integrates voter registration at motor vehicle authorities and requires other public benefits agencies (but not subsidized housing) to offer registration

WELCOME TO VOTE PLEDGE

The right to vote guarantees every citizen a voice in our democracy. Voter registration is the first step to exercising that fundamental right. Too often, however, citizens face obstacles that prevent them from registering to vote or updating their registrations. These barriers do not affect all voters equally.

Because voters must re-register each time they change their residential address, and renters move more frequently than homeowners, renters often must go to additional lengths to keep their registrations current. This burden contributes to the stark voter turnout gap between renters and homeowners – and even greater disparities between low-income and high-income individuals.¹

We, the undersigned 22 providers of affordable housing, are committed to closing this gap. As owners and operators of affordable housing, we are in a unique position to facilitate voter registration for our community members and help them overcome barriers to participation. When we welcome new residents into our properties, we must take the opportunity to welcome them as voters, too.

We therefore pledge to:

- Integrate nonpartisan voter registration into the lease-up and income recertification processes in our properties. As residents fill out paperwork and prepare to move into their homes, we will ensure that they are ready to vote at their new addresses. Where permissible by state law, we will offer voter registration forms to new residents, provide assistance, collect completed registrations, and transmit them to local election officials.
- Encourage nonpartisan voter education and mobilization in the 2022 election cycle through activities, such as: publicly posting flyers and sending reminders about voter registration and voting options; hosting community events where voter registration is available; applying to become voter registration agencies and/or polling places; providing accessible, nonpartisan voter education materials; and/or coordinating transportation to the polls.
- Undertake voter registration and engagement activities in a fully nonpartisan manner and in compliance with all relevant state election laws.

As affordable housing providers, we are committed to creating strong communities where our residents thrive. Promoting our residents' access to the fundamental right to vote is essential to fulfill this purpose.

OurHomes.TurboVote. Org

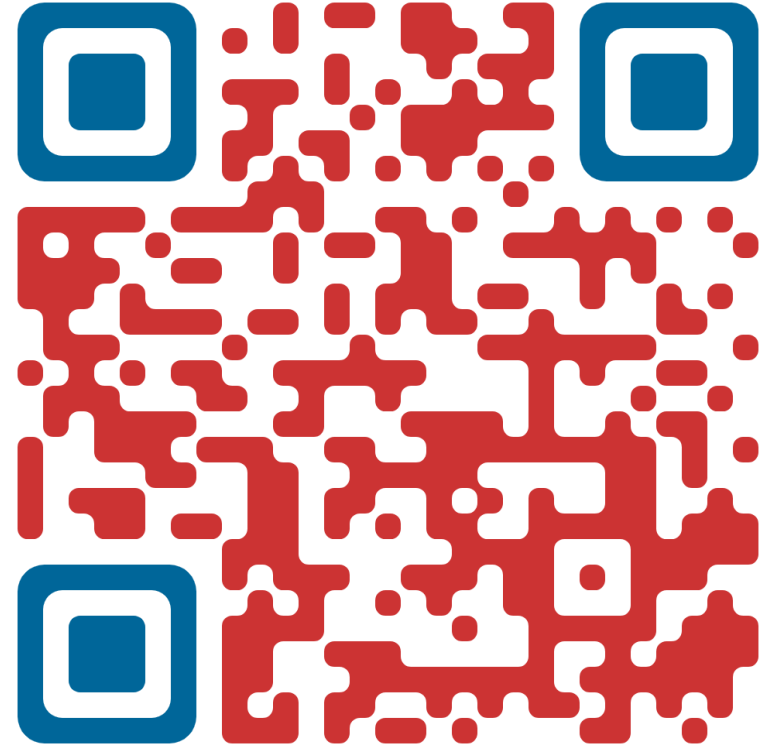
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Register to vote and update your voter registration, check your voter registration status, find election information for your community, and sign up for election reminders!



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Workshop: Brainstorming Your 2024 Nonpartisan Election Plans

Breakouts Agenda

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- Two options
 - “Getting started:” embarking on nonpartisan voter engagement activities for the first time in 2024, or just starting to brainstorm scope of work this year
 - “Workplanning tool:” have a general idea of priorities for the year and want to start hammering out logistics
- ~25 mins: independent/small group time for brainstorming
- ~15 mins: report back

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Questions?



Email: ccooperman@nlihc.org