

Michigan PTA Advocacy & Election Guide

2019-2020

“Nothing you do for children is ever
wasted.” Garrison Keiller

Michigan PTA Advocacy MATTERS!

- I. Michigan PTA Advocacy Committee
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Important Dates

Since Proposal 3 passed in 2018, there is no deadline to register to vote in the State of Michigan. Michigan now allows Same Day registration. We always encourage voters to get registered ahead of time.

November 5th, 2019 Elections [List of elections by county](#)

March 10th, 2020 Presidential Primary Election

November 3rd, 2020 General Election

Advocacy Committee Team Members

Marcy Dwyer - VP Children's Advocacy
Barb Anness, Federal Legislative Chair
Kathy Carter, Michigan PTA President
Jennifer Johnson, VP Student Involvement/
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Jennifer Garland, Member
Carin Meyer, Member
Tanya Pitkin, Member
Open Appointment, Special Education
Joyce Krom, Health & Wellness
Open Appointment Legislative Consultant
Open Appointment Legislative Intern
Open Appointment Education Consultant

Michigan PTA Mission Statement To mobilize the forces of school, home, and community in order to ensure a quality education and nurturing environment for every child.

Michigan PTA Advocacy Committee Promotes local, county, state and national efforts to focus on the education and well-being of all children in our state by working with families, educators, school boards, statewide associations and non-profit organizations, business and community leaders, the legislature, the State Board of Education and the Michigan Department of Education to ensure child-related concerns are being met.

Michigan PTA Advocacy Committee Goals To be the voice of parents, teachers and students in advocating for:

- High quality Public Education for all students, regardless of their zip code in Michigan, (adequate and consistent state curriculum standards, teacher certifications, classroom size, arts & music programs, STEAM, early childhood programs, CCRI, Special Education)
- Adequate and Equitably Allocated Funding for Public Education - shifting from an equality model to an equity model where student needs determine funding
- Safety & Security (LGBTQ rights, Gun Free Zones, Student Privacy, Safe Routes to School, Bully Prevention)
- Health & Wellness (Healthy food choices / Free & Reduced Meal Programs, Fitness, Mental Health, Substance Abuse Education, Sex Ed.)
- Family Engagement (advocating for funding of the Family Engagement in Education Act of 2013 (H.R.2662/S.1291))
- Juvenile Justice (reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, elimination of zero tolerance policies disproportionately targeting minorities via the school to prison pipeline. Expulsion guidelines aligned with Federal Gun-Free School Zone Act of 1990).

Legislators Contact Info

U.S. Senators

Gary Peters (D) 724 Hart Senate Office

Building Washington, DC 20510 (202) 224-6221

Debbie Stabenow (D) 731 Hart Senate Office

Building Washington, DC 20510 (202) 224-4822

Michigan Senators

Party	Dist.	Member	Office Phone No.	Office Location
D	5	Alexander, Betty Jean	517-373-0994	4300 Binsfeld Bldg
D	27	Ananich, Jim	517-373-0142	S-105 Capitol Bldg
R	24	Barrett, Tom	517-373-3447	3200 Binsfeld Bldg
D	12	Bayer, Rosemary	517-373-2417	3600 Binsfeld Bldg
R	19	Bizon, John Dr.	517-373-2426	3400 Binsfeld Bldg
D	29	Brinks, Winnie	517-373-1801	6500 Binsfeld Bldg
D	4	Bullock, Marshall	517-373-7918	3500 Binsfeld Bldg
R	34	Bumstead, Jon	517-373-1635	4600 Binsfeld Bldg
D	1	Chang, Stephanie	517-373-7346	S-9 Capitol Bldg
R	31	Daley, Kevin	517-373-1777	5200 Binsfeld Bldg
D	6	Geiss, Erika	517-373-7800	5500 Binsfeld Bldg
D	23	Hertel Jr., Curtis	517-373-1734	7600 Binsfeld Bldg
D	2	Hollier, Adam	517-373-7748	3300 Binsfeld Bldg
R	32	Horn, Ken	517-373-1760	7100 Binsfeld Bldg
D	18	Irwin, Jeff	517-373-2406	5300 Binsfeld Bldg
R	14	Johnson, Ruth	517-373-1636	7300 Binsfeld Bldg

R	21	LaSata, Kim	517-373-6960	S-310 Capitol Bldg
R	25	Lauwers, Dan	517-373-7708	S-2 Capitol Bldg
R	8	Lucido, Pete	517-373-7670	3100 Binsfeld Bldg
R	10	MacDonald, Michael	517-373-7315	4200 Binsfeld Bldg
R	28	MacGregor, Peter	517-373-0797	S-132 Capitol Bldg
R	38	McBroom, Ed	517-373-7840	7200 Binsfeld Bldg
D	20	McCann, Sean	517-373-5100	6600 Binsfeld Bldg
D	13	McMorrow, Mallory	517-373-2523	6200 Binsfeld Bldg
D	11	Moss, Jeremy	517-373-7888	6400 Binsfeld Bldg
R	26	Nesbitt, Aric	517-373-0793	6100 Binsfeld Bldg
R	33	Outman, Rick	517-373-3760	4400 Binsfeld Bldg
D	7	Polehanki, Dayna	517-373-7350	5400 Binsfeld Bldg
R	15	Runestad, Jim	517-373-1758	7500 Binsfeld Bldg
D	3	Santana, Sylvia	517-373-0990	5600 Binsfeld Bldg
R	37	Schmidt, Wayne A	517-373-2413	S-8 Capitol Bldg
R	16	Shirkey, Mike	517-373-5932	S-106 Capitol Bldg
R	36	Stamas, Jim	517-373-7946	S-324 Capitol Bldg
R	22	Theis, Lana	517-373-2420	7400 Binsfeld Bldg
R	35	VanderWall, Curt	517-373-1725	4500 Binsfeld Bldg
R	30	Victory, Roger	517-373-6920	4100 Binsfeld Bldg
D	9	Wojno, Paul	517-373-8360	6300 Binsfeld Bldg
R	17	Zorn, Dale	517-373-3543	5100 Binsfeld Bldg

Secretary of the Senate

Margaret O'Brien	517-373-2400	S-5 Capitol Bldg
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Lieutenant Governor

D Garlin Gilchrist II	517-373-6800	215 Capitol Bldg
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Mail for all Senators can be addressed as follows:

Post Office Box 30036, Lansing, MI 48909-7536

U.S. House Representatives



1st District

Jack Bergman

Republican

Since Jan 3, 2017

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



4th District

John Moolenaar

Republican

Since Jan 6, 2015

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



2nd District

Bill Huizenga

Republican

Since Jan 5, 2011

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



5th District

Daniel Kildee

Democrat

Since Jan 3, 2013

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



3rd District

Justin Amash

Independent

Since Jan 5, 2011

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



6th District

Fred Upton

Republican

Since Jan 5, 1993

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



7th District

Tim Walberg

Republican

Since Jan 5, 2011

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



10th District

Paul Mitchell

Republican

Since Jan 3, 2017

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



8th District

Elissa Slotkin

Democrat

Since Jan 3, 2019

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



11th District

Haley Stevens

Democrat

Since Jan 3, 2019

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



9th District

Andy Levin

Democrat

Since Jan 3, 2019

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



12th District

Debbie Dingell

Democrat

Since Jan 6, 2015

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



13th District

Rashida Tlaib

Democrat

Since Jan 3, 2019

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)



14th District

Brenda Lawrence

Democrat

Since Jan 6, 2015

(Current term ends Jan 3, 2021)

[View District Map](#)

Michigan House of Representatives

District	Name	Party	Location	Phone	Email
001	Tenisha Yancey	D	S0585 HOB	5173730154	TenishaYancey@house.mi.gov
002	Joe Tate	D	S0586 HOB	5173731776	JoeTate@house.mi.gov
003	Wendell Byrd	D	S0587 HOB	5173730144	WendellByrd@house.mi.gov
004	Isaac Robinson	D	S0588 HOB	5173731008	IsaacRobinson@house.mi.gov
005	Cynthia A. Johnson	D	S0589 HOB	5173730844	CynthiaAJohnson@house.mi.gov
006	Tyrone Carter	D	S0685 HOB	5173730823	TyroneCarter@house.mi.gov
007	LaTanya Garrett	D	S0686 HOB	5173732276	LaTanyaGarrett@house.mi.gov
008	Sherry Gay-Dagnogo	D	S0687 HOB	5173733815	SherryGay-Dagnogo@house.mi.gov
009	Karen Whitsett	D	S0688 HOB	5173736990	KarenWhitsett@house.mi.gov
010	Leslie Love	D	S0689 HOB	5173730857	LeslieLove@house.mi.gov
011	Jewell Jones	D	N0690 HOB	5173730849	JewellJones@house.mi.gov
012	Alex Garza	D	N0691 HOB	5173730852	AlexGarza@house.mi.gov
013	Frank Liberati	D	N0692 HOB	5173730845	FrankLiberati@house.mi.gov
014	Cara Clemente	D	N0693 HOB	5173730140	CaraClemente@house.mi.gov
015	Abdullah Hammoud	D	N0694 HOB	5173730847	AbdullahHammoud@house.mi.gov
016	Kevin Coleman	D	N0695 HOB	5173732576	KevinColeman@house.mi.gov
017	Joseph Bellino	R	N0696 HOB	5173731530	JosephBellino@house.mi.gov
018	Kevin Hertel	D	N0697 HOB	5173731180	KevinHertel@house.mi.gov
019	Laurie Pohutsky	D	N0698 HOB	5173733920	LauriePohutsky@house.mi.gov
020	Matt Koleszar	D	N0699 HOB	5173733816	MattKoleszar@house.mi.gov
021	Kristy Pagan	D	S0785 HOB	5173732575	KristyPagan@house.mi.gov
022	John Chirkun	D	S0786 HOB	5173730854	JohnChirkun@house.mi.gov
023	Darrin Camilleri	D	S0787 HOB	5173730855	DarrinCamilleri@house.mi.gov
024	Steve Marino	R	S0788 HOB	5173730113	SteveMarino@house.mi.gov
025	Nate Shannon	D	S0789 HOB	5173732275	NateShannon@house.mi.gov
026	Jim Ellison	D	N0790 HOB	5173733818	JimEllison@house.mi.gov

027	Robert Wittenberg	D	N0791 HOB	5173730478	RobertWittenberg@house.mi.gov
028	Lori Stone	D	N0792 HOB	5173731772	LoriStone@house.mi.gov
029	Brenda Carter	D	N0793 HOB	5173730475	BrendaCarter@house.mi.gov
030	Diana Farrington	R	N0794 HOB	5173737768	DianaFarrington@house.mi.gov
031	William Sowerby	D	N0795 HOB	5173730159	WilliamSowerby@house.mi.gov
032	Pamela Hornberger	R	N0796 HOB	5173738931	PamelaHornberger@house.mi.gov
033	Jeff Yaroch	R	N0797 HOB	5173730820	JeffYaroch@house.mi.gov
034	Sheldon Neeley	D	N0798 HOB	5173738808	SheldonNeeley@house.mi.gov
035	Kyra Bolden	D	N0799 HOB	5173731788	KyraBolden@house.mi.gov
036	Douglas Wozniak	R	S0885 HOB	5173730843	DouglasWozniak@house.mi.gov
037	Christine Greig	D	167 CB	5173731793	ChristineGreig@house.mi.gov
038	Kathy Crawford	R	S0887 HOB	5173730827	KathyCrawford@house.mi.gov
039	Ryan Berman	R	S0888 HOB	5173731799	RyanBerman@house.mi.gov
040	Mari Manoogian	D	S0889 HOB	5173738670	MariManoogian@house.mi.gov
041	Padma Kuppa	D	N0890 HOB	5173731783	PadmaKuppa@house.mi.gov
042	Ann Bollin	R	N0891 HOB	5173731784	AnnBollin@house.mi.gov
043	Andrea Schroeder	R	N0892 HOB	5173730615	AndreaSchroeder@house.mi.gov
044	Matt Maddock	R	N0893 HOB	5173732616	MattMaddock@house.mi.gov
045	Michael Webber	R	N0894 HOB	5173731773	MichaelWebber@house.mi.gov
046	John Reilly	R	N0895 HOB	5173731798	JohnReilly@house.mi.gov
047	Hank Vaupel	R	N0896 HOB	5173738835	HankVaupel@house.mi.gov
048	Sheryl Kennedy	D	N0897 HOB	5173737557	SherylKennedy@house.mi.gov
049	John Cherry	D	N0898 HOB	5173737515	JohnCherry@house.mi.gov
050	Tim Sneller	D	N0899 HOB	5173733906	TimSneller@house.mi.gov
051	Mike Mueller	R	S0985 HOB	5173731780	MikeMueller@house.mi.gov
052	Donna Lasinski	D	S0986 HOB	5173730828	DonnaLasinski@house.mi.gov
053	Yousef Rabhi	D	141 CB	5173732577	YousefRabhi@house.mi.gov
054	Ronnie Peterson	D	S0988 HOB	5173731771	RonniePeterson@house.mi.gov
055	Rebekah Warren	D	S0989 HOB	5173731792	RebekahWarren@house.mi.gov

056	Jason Sheppard	R	372 CB	5173732617	JasonSheppard@house.mi.gov
057	Bronna Kahle	R	N0991 HOB	5173731706	BronnaKahle@house.mi.gov
058	Eric Leutheuser	R	N0992 HOB	5173731794	EricLeutheuser@house.mi.gov
059	Aaron Miller	R	N0993 HOB	5173730832	AaronMiller@house.mi.gov
060	Jon Hoadley	D	N0994 HOB	5173731785	JonHoadley@house.mi.gov
061	Brandt Iden	R	372 CB	5173731774	BrandtIden@house.mi.gov
062	Jim Haadsma	D	N0996 HOB	5173730555	JimHaadsma@house.mi.gov
063	Matt Hall	R	N0997 HOB	5173731787	MattHall@house.mi.gov
064	Julie Alexander	R	N0998 HOB	5173731795	JulieAlexander@house.mi.gov
065	Sarah Lightner	R	N0999 HOB	5173731775	SarahLightner@house.mi.gov
066	Beth Griffin	R	S1085 HOB	5173730839	BethGriffin@house.mi.gov
067	Kara Hope	D	S1086 HOB	5173730587	KaraHope@house.mi.gov
068	Sarah Anthony	D	S1087 HOB	5173730826	SarahAnthony@house.mi.gov
069	Julie Brixie	D	S1088 HOB	5173731786	JulieBrixie@house.mi.gov
070	James Lower	R	S1089 HOB	5173730834	JamesLower@house.mi.gov
071	Angela Witwer	D	N1090 HOB	5173730853	AngelaWitwer@house.mi.gov
072	Steven Johnson	R	N1091 HOB	5173730840	StevenJohnson@house.mi.gov
073	Lynn Afendoulis	R	N1092 HOB	5173730218	LynnAfendoulis@house.mi.gov
074	Mark Huizenga	R	N1093 HOB	5173738900	MarkHuizenga@house.mi.gov
075	David LaGrand	D	N1094 HOB	5173732668	DavidLaGrand@house.mi.gov
076	Rachel Hood	D	N1095 HOB	5173730822	RachelHood@house.mi.gov
077	Tommy Brann	R	N1096 HOB	5173732277	TommyBrann@house.mi.gov
078	Brad Paquette	R	N1097 HOB	5173731796	BradPaquette@house.mi.gov
079	Pauline Wendzel	R	N1098 HOB	5173731403	PaulineWendzel@house.mi.gov
080	Mary Whiteford	R	N1099 HOB	5173730836	MaryWhiteford@house.mi.gov
081	Gary Eisen	R	S1185 HOB	5173731790	GaryEisen@house.mi.gov
082	Gary Howell	R	S1186 HOB	5173731800	GaryHowell@house.mi.gov
083	Shane Hernandez	R	351 CB	5173730835	ShaneHernandez@house.mi.gov
084	Phil Green	R	S1188 HOB	5173730476	RepPhilGreen@house.mi.gov

085	Ben Frederick	R	S1189 HOB	5173730841	BenFrederick@house.mi.gov
086	Thomas Albert	R	N1190 HOB	5173730846	ThomasAlbert@house.mi.gov
087	Julie Calley	R	N1191 HOB	5173730842	JulieCalley@house.mi.gov
088	Luke Meerman	R	N1192 HOB	5173731830	LukeMeerman@house.mi.gov
089	Jim Lilly	R	372 CB	5173730838	JimLilly@house.mi.gov
090	Bradley Slagh	R	N1194 HOB	5173730830	BradleySlagh@house.mi.gov
091	Greg VanWoerkom	R	N1195 HOB	5173733436	GregVanWoerkom@house.mi.gov
092	Terry Sabo	D	N1196 HOB	5173732646	TerrySabo@house.mi.gov
093	Graham Filler	R	N1197 HOB	5173731778	GrahamFiller@house.mi.gov
094	Rodney Wakeman	R	N1198 HOB	5173730837	RodneyWakeman@house.mi.gov
095	Vanessa Guerra	D	N1199 HOB	5173730152	VanessaGuerra@house.mi.gov
096	Brian Elder	D	S1285 HOB	5173730158	BrianElder@house.mi.gov
097	Jason Wentworth	R	S0827 HOB	5173738962	JasonWentworth@house.mi.gov
098	Annette Glenn	R	S1287 HOB	5173731791	AnnetteGlenn@house.mi.gov
099	Roger Hauck	R	S1288 HOB	5173731789	RogerHauck@house.mi.gov
100	Scott VanSingel	R	S1289 HOB	5173737317	ScottVanSingel@house.mi.gov
101	Jack O'Malley	R	S1385 HOB	5173730825	JackOMalley@house.mi.gov
102	Michele Hoitenga	R	S1386 HOB	5173731747	MicheleHoitenga@house.mi.gov
103	Daire Rendon	R	S1387 HOB	5173733817	DaireRendon@house.mi.gov
104	Larry Inman	R	S1388 HOB	5173731766	LarryInman@house.mi.gov
105	Triston Cole	R	153 CB	5173730829	TristonCole@house.mi.gov
106	Sue Allor	R	S1485 HOB	5173730833	SueAllor@house.mi.gov
107	Lee Chatfield	R	164 CB	5173732629	LeeChatfield@house.mi.gov
108	Beau LaFave	R	S1487 HOB	5173730156	BeauLaFave@house.mi.gov
109	Sara Cambensy	D	S1488 HOB	5173730498	SaraCambensy@house.mi.gov
110	Gregory Markkanen	R	S1489 HOB	5173730850	GregMarkkanen@house.mi.gov

Michigan Senate Education and Career Readiness Committee:

Lana Theis (R) Chair, 22nd District
Ken Horn (R) Vice Chair, 32nd District
Jon Bumstead (R), 34th District
Jim Runestad (R), 15th District
Kevin Daley (R), 31st District
Dayna Polehanki (D) Minority Vice Chair, 7th District
Erika Geiss (D), 6th District
Committee Clerk | 517-373-5314

Michigan House Education Committee

Committee Chair: Pamela Hornberger (R) Committee Chair, 32nd District
Brad Paquette (R) Majority Vice-Chair, 78th District
Kathy Crawford (R), 38th District
Hank Vaupel (R), 47th District
John Reilly (R), 46th District
Matt Hall (R), 63rd District
Gregory Markkanen (R), 110 District
Jack O'Malley (R), 101st District
Rodney Wakeman (R), 94th District
Darrin Camilleri (D) Minority Vice-Chair, 23rd District
William Sowerby (D), 31st District
Brenda Carter (D), 29th District
Tyrone Carter (D), 6th District
Matt Koleszar (D), 20 District
Lori Stone (D), 28th District
Taylor Thrush, Committee Clerk 5173737256

Find Legislators below via these websites and hotlinks:

Find your House Representative here: www.house.mi.gov/mhrpublic/
Find your State Senator here: www.senate.michigan.gov/fysbyaddress.html

Representative mailing address:

Senator mailing address: P.O. Box 30014 P.O. Box 3003 Lansing, MI 48909-7514 Lansing, MI
48909-7536

To check the status of a bill: [Michigan Legislature](http://MichiganLegislature)

MI House website: www.house.michigan.gov Twitter: @MIHouseGOP and @MIHouseDems
#MI

Senate website: www.senate.michigan.gov/default.html Twitter: @MISenate and
@MISenDems #MILeg

Voter Registration and Engagement Timeline for Michigan PTA Advocacy 2020 Elections

Fall 2019 (Planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Designate a Voter Engagement Lead (most likely your unit or council's Legislative Representative) If you do not have one, contact Michigan PTA's Advocacy Chair and Federal Legislative Rep to let them know you will require more direct support. (childadvocacyvp@michiganpta.org and fedlegchair@michiganpta.org) ● Review voting rules - specifically new rules regarding voter registration and absentee ballots (here) , deadlines, and polling locations in your district ● Identify potential partners to help provide training or resources (ie: League of Women Voters) ● Gather materials and resources to raise awareness on issues and engage voters on staying informed as well as getting out to vote ● Share information regarding 2020 Census census.gov Census Day April 1, 2020
PTA Welcome Back Events and Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include upcoming Important Dates in PTA Welcome Newsletters and Calendar details ● Provide resources and educational materials on issues related to Public Education, Child Welfare, Health and Wellness, Safety, etc. that your parents, teachers and families will want to be informed about ● Schedule reminders for Voter Registration, and Save the Date for the Presidential Primary and Election day
October / November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to include Legislative and Issue updates in PTA Newsletters and social media outlets. Encourage constructive discussion on the pros and cons of the issues (have an administrator or teacher facilitator assist if necessary to keep the dialogue productive and informative and not confrontational). ● Contact partner organizations (ie: League of Women Voters) to communicate or schedule a Candidate Forum with local candidates.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Send reminders for Save the Date for Presidential Primary, and “How are you getting to the polls” carpools, etc. for voters in your school community
January / February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to include Legislative and Issue updates in PTA Newsletters and social media outlets. ● Include reminders for Save the Date for the Presidential Primary, and “How are you getting to the polls” carpools, etc. for voters in your school community ● Communicate with partner organizations (ie: League of Women Voters) for resources or election supporting materials ● Consider supporting a Student Voter Registration event at your local High School (Contact your VP of Children’s Advocacy or Federal Legislative Representative for resources and or support) ● Communicate and support get-out-the-vote and voter education activities, ● Promote early voting and vote-by-mail / absentee opportunities.
March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Primary Election Day, March 10th ● Utilize e-communications, twitter, facebook, etc. to send reminders about Presidential Primary. ● Resend signups for “How are you getting to the polls” carpools, etc. for voters in your school community+ ● Census 2020 mailings go out
April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● April 1, 2020 - Census Day Census Day is observed nationwide. By this date, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, you should respond for your home in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail. When you respond to the census, you tell the Census Bureau where you live as of April 1, 2020. ● Debrief what worked, what didn’t work with your membership regarding Primary preparation and communication. ● Communicate Election results on a non-partisan basis to your membership - opinions must be limited to the issues only, and not candidates.

May / June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Census Bureau begins visiting homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census to make sure everyone is counted. ● Confirm your Voter Engagement Lead or work with last year's lead to recruit a new lead for the upcoming election season. ● Review voting rules - specifically new rules regarding voter registration and absentee ballots, deadlines, and polling locations in your district ● Identify potential partners to help provide training or resources (ie: League of Women Voters)
Summer 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confirm your Voter Engagement Lead or work with last year's lead to recruit a new lead for the upcoming election season. ● Review voting rules - specifically new rules regarding voter registration and absentee ballots, deadlines, and polling locations in your district ● Identify potential partners to help provide training or resources (ie: League of Women Voters)
September / Welcome Back 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include Important Dates in PTA Welcome Newsletters and Calendar details ● Continue to provide resources and educational materials on issues related to Public Education, Child Welfare, Health and Wellness, Safety, etc. that your parents, teachers and families will want to be informed about ● Schedule reminders for Voter Registration, and Save the Date for Election day ● Create and Distribute signups for "How are you getting to the polls" carpools, etc. for voters in your school community ● Promote the importance of "Get out and Vote"
October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Utilize e-communications, twitter, facebook, etc. to send reminders about Election Day. ● Resend signups for "How are you getting to the polls" carpools, etc. for voters in your school community
November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Debrief what worked, what didn't work with your membership regarding Primary preparation and communication.

December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate Election results on a non-partisan basis to your membership - opinions must be limited to the issues only, and not candidates.
March 31, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Census Bureau delivers apportionment counts to the President and Congress as required by law. • The Census Bureau will send redistricting counts to states. This information is used to redraw legislative districts based on population changes.

STATE CONSTITUTION (EXCERPT) CONSTITUTION OF MICHIGAN OF 1963
ARTICLE II ELECTIONS [link](#)

§ 4 Place and manner of elections.

Sec. 4. (1) Every citizen of the United States who is an elector qualified to vote in Michigan shall have the following rights: (a) **The right, once registered, to vote a secret ballot in all elections.** (b) The right, if serving in the military or living overseas, to have an absent voter ballot sent to them at least forty-five (45) days before an election upon application. (c) The right, once registered, to a "straight party" vote option on partisan general election ballots. In partisan elections, the ballot shall include a position at the top of the ballot by which the voter may, by a single selection, record a straight party ticket vote for all the candidates of one (1) party. The voter may vote a split or mixed ticket. (d) **The right to be automatically registered to vote as a result of conducting business with the secretary of state regarding a driver's license or personal identification card, unless the person declines such registration.** (e) The right to register to vote for an election by mailing a completed voter registration application on or before the fifteenth (15th) day before that election to an election official authorized to receive voter registration applications. (f) **The right to register to vote for an election by** (1) appearing in person and submitting a completed voter registration application on or before the fifteenth (15th) day before that election to an election official authorized to receive voter registration applications, or (2) **beginning on the fourteenth (14th) day before that election and continuing through the day of that election,** appearing in person, submitting a completed voter registration application and providing proof of residency to an election official responsible for maintaining custody of the registration file where the person resides, or their deputies. Persons registered in accordance with subsection (1)(f) **shall be immediately eligible to receive a regular or absent voter ballot.** (g) **The right, once registered, to vote an absent voter ballot without giving a reason,** during the forty (40) days before an election, and the right to choose whether the absent voter ballot is applied for, received and submitted in person or by mail. During that time, election officials authorized to issue absent voter ballots shall be available in at least one (1) location to issue and receive absent voter ballots during the election officials' regularly scheduled business hours and for at least eight (8) hours during the Saturday and/or Sunday immediately prior to the election. Those election officials shall have the authority to make absent voter ballots available for voting in person at additional times and places beyond what is required herein. (h) The right to have the results of statewide elections audited, in such a manner as prescribed by law, to Rendered Thursday, September 19, 2019

History: Const. 1963, Art. II, § 4, Eff. Jan. 1, 1964; Am. Init., **approved Nov. 6, 2018, Eff. Dec. 22, 2018**



NATIONAL PTA®

NONPROFITS, VOTING AND ELECTIONS

A GUIDE FOR 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATIONS ON NONPARTISAN
VOTER PARTICIPATION AND EDUCATION

Published in cooperation with Nonprofit VOTE



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www.nonprofitvote.org

A national nonpartisan program of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits

The Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network (NVEN) is dedicated to expanding the role of America's nonprofits in voting and elections. NVEN works with state nonprofit VOTE initiatives and its national website to provide resources and tools for 501(c)(3) nonprofits to help their communities participate and vote.

Who this guide is for

This guide is primarily for nonprofit organizations organized as 501(c)(3) charities. It is not intended for private foundations or for non-charitable entities. The term “nonprofit” in this guide refers to 501(c)(3) nonprofits. The guide is meant to be used by 501(c)(3)s interested in encouraging voting and voter participation among their staff, board, clients, constituents and communities.

What this guide is not

This guide is not a guide about lobbying. It is about voting and elections. For information about PTA lobbying, visit [PTA.org/Lobbying](https://pta.org/Lobbying). Lobbying rules differ from rules about voting and elections. Nonprofits have limits on how much lobbying they can do. There are no similar limits on voter and election activity. A nonprofit can spend as much as it wants on voter education and encouraging people to vote so long as it remains “nonpartisan” and does not support or oppose a candidate for elective office.

There is one exception — ballot measures. Ballot measures are where elections and lobbying meet. The IRS treats ballot measures as a “lobbying activity,” subject to lobbying rules. A nonprofit may advocate for or against a ballot measure up to its normal lobbying limits. This is discussed in the ballot measure section of the guide.

Acknowledgments

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About the guide’s author

George Pillsbury has worked for 501(c)(3) nonprofits for over 30 years. A founder of the Funding Exchange of New York (1979), he has spent his career with a wide variety of nonprofits — from foundations and grant making institutions to advocacy and voting rights organizations. During this time, he has worked extensively with nonprofits on their involvement with voting and elections. In 1999 he co-founded MassVOTE to work with Massachusetts’ nonprofit community on issues of voter participation and election administration. Today he serves as Policy and Development Director of the national Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network.

INTRODUCTION

Nonprofit Organizations: Leaders in Civic Engagement and Voter Participation

Voting is a foundation and sign of strong communities. Voting correlates with citizenship, education, income and other kinds of civic health. It takes an active and engaged public to ensure broad representation and public officials responsive to community concerns.

Today, our democracy is challenged by gaps in voter participation by age, income and education. Younger, lower-income and less educated voters participate at much lower rates than older, higher income or better educated voters. These gaps lead to other disparities in involvement with government or public policy and other kinds of civic participation.

Many issues affect participation. Sometimes all that is needed is voter education on the process of voting and what is at stake in a particular election. In other cases, it is about voting rights issues or procedural barriers disproportionately impact newer voters and less enfranchised populations.

Nonprofit organizations are uniquely well suited to address issues of voter participation – and help close participation gaps and strengthen democracy:

- Nonprofit organizations are often located in and serve communities impacted most by lower voter participation.
- Nonprofit organizations bring to bear a group of individuals strongly dedicated to changing their communities for the better and with the ability to make positive change.
- Nonprofit organizations, as much as any other type of organization, have the credibility and respect necessary to reach out to discouraged or disengaged voters or people new to voting and politics.
- Many nonprofits wish to incorporate voter participation work into their other activities but have been uncertain about what the law allows them to do. This guide answers questions on what they can do to encourage voter participation through outreach and education to voters in their communities.

GENERAL RULES FOR 501(C)(3) ELECTORAL ACTIVITY

501(c)(3) nonprofits can play an important role in the democratic process. There is one basic rule: 501(c)(3)s may not support or oppose any candidate for public office. This means 501(c)(3)s may not endorse candidates, rate candidates, contribute to candidates, or do anything else that might seem intended to help or hurt a candidate.

Of course, there are many things that a 501(c)(3) can legally do to help their communities participate and vote. 501(c)(3)s may educate voters or candidates on the issues, provide opportunities for voters to hear the candidates' positions, encourage citizens to register to vote, help new voters navigate the voting process and get people to go to the polls on Election Day.

Fortunately, the IRS has provided some useful guidance for nonprofits to help them get involved in voter participation and election-related work. If a question arises the IRS asks you to consider the "facts and circumstances" of the situation. How would it look to an outside observer?

This guide discusses many possible activities and the ways that nonprofits can try to make sure that they remain nonpartisan.

WHAT A 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION CAN DO ON VOTER REGISTRATION, VOTER EDUCATION AND GETTING OUT THE VOTE

501(c)(3) organizations may participate in a wide variety of electoral activities that do not support or oppose a candidate for public office.

The following are ten common activities your nonprofit organization may do to encourage voting in a nonpartisan manner.

1 Voter Registration

Voter registration is a common nonpartisan activity for nonprofits. Voter registration activities for nonprofits often include:

- Registering staff, board and volunteers.
- Registering clients at intake or in the process of the organization's nonprofit activities.
- Having registration forms available at events or meetings.
- Setting up a table at a busy neighborhood location.

Your election officials or a local **nonpartisan** organization can help by providing voter registration forms, training, and information about registration deadlines and other laws governing voter registration in your community.

The registration activities may not be partisan. Nonprofit staff or volunteers may not suggest what candidate to support or party to join or whom to vote for. You may, however, explain to voters the difference between joining a party and registering without party affiliation. Nonprofits may target communities or people that they serve, but nonprofits should not target voter registration efforts in an attempt to support or oppose particular candidates or political parties.

Finally, watch out for limits on the use of certain funds for voter registration such as a grant from a private foundation.

2 Voter Education on the Process of Voting

A helpful role for nonprofits is to help members or clients understand the basics of voting. When is the next election? What's on the ballot? What do you need to know about voting on or before Election Day?

All of these are examples of nonpartisan ways to educate your constituencies and communities:

- Announce dates of elections and registration deadlines.
- Display nonpartisan sample ballots before the election.
- Include lessons about voting in an adult or youth education class.
- Encourage your constituents to volunteer at the polls on Election Day.
- Set up a mock voting machine/ballot in your lobby so people can practice voting.
- Provide your community with nonpartisan information about upcoming elections.

3 Voter Guides on Candidates and Ballot Measures

The IRS has consistently stated that 501(c)(3) nonprofits may carry out voter education on candidates and ballot measures before an election so long as it is nonpartisan. In particular, the IRS cites voter guides and candidate forums as acceptable activities 501(c)(3)s may do on a nonpartisan basis.

This section discusses three commonly used voter guides: –

- One page guide to candidates or ballot measures
- Candidate questionnaire, or
- Sample of the official ballot.

A Voter Guide takes time to prepare and is ordinarily prepared by coalitions or broader, nonpartisan voter engagement entities.

One Page Guide to Candidates or Ballot Measures

Voters appreciate a short nonpartisan guide to the candidates for a specific office or important ballot measures – something that fits on one page. These are easy to distribute and translate into different languages.

A one page guide may include:

Guide to CANDIDATES

(include all running for a particular office)

- Name and photo of candidates
- Current occupation, party affiliation
- List of major endorsements provided by the candidate
- List of major endorsements provided by the candidate
- Campaign contact information

Guide to BALLOT MEASURES

- Title of ballot measure
- Brief summary of what a “yes” or “no” vote means
- List of major endorsements provided by Yes/No ballot measure committees
- A list of top financial contributors to each side

Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate questionnaires serve two purposes. First, they collect information about the candidates for voters. Second, they let candidates know the range of issues of concern to the organization(s) preparing the guide. Questionnaires do take time to prepare and require care to ensure they are nonpartisan.

If you wish to do a candidate questionnaire, consider these key factors that help determine whether or not a voter guide is nonpartisan.

- Do the questions cover a broad range of issues related to the broad interests of the electorate? For example, do the questions address all issues of importance to a specific elected office or reflect a truly broad range of concerns within your issue area? (Note: It may be easier or advisable to create these materials with a group of organizations representing different issue areas.)
- Are the questions or any description of the issues clear and unbiased in both structure and content?
- Are the questions posed to candidates identical to the question as presented in the voter guide?
- Are the candidates given a reasonable amount of time to respond?
- If the questions ask the candidates to respond with “Yes” or “No” or “Undecided,” are candidates given the opportunity to give short one or two sentence explanations to explain their positions in their own words and is that explanation printed in the guide?
- Have all major candidates responded?

Q. What if the candidate does not respond?

A. You may list “Did Not Respond”. When a candidate fails to respond, some 501(c)(3)s choose to provide information about the candidate that is a matter of public record, but the IRS has never approved this approach and thus it comes with some risk. 501(c)(3)s could reduce the risk by sticking to strictly factual information – name, address, etc. – and avoid efforts to summarize the candidate’s positions on issues, which might appear to be slanted to favor or disfavor the candidate.

You should provide candidates a reasonable time period – for example three weeks - to give their responses and information. As the deadline nears, let the candidates know that if they don’t respond, you will print “did not respond”. While not required, it is a good practice to give the candidates the chance to review the final draft of their information and make any last minute corrections.

Sample Ballots

An easy but often effective educational activity is to distribute a sample ballot for your jurisdiction- ideally an official sample ballot prepared by local elections officials.

Sample ballots help voters have a picture ahead of time of what's on the ballot and what the ballot will look like. If you wish you may add short explanations of the office up for election. You may also wish to translate it into languages relevant to your community.

4 Candidate Forums and Candidate Appearances

Candidate forums require a time commitment to recruit the attendance of candidates and your audience. This may be easier in collaboration with other nonprofits in your area. Holding a forum demonstrates to the candidates that your community cares about what the candidates' positions are and the election outcome. It shows that your organization is a leader in local civic affairs.

Among factors that make a candidate forum nonpartisan are –

- All candidates for an office are invited. (Even if all are invited, there is a risk that the event could appear partisan if some candidates refuse to participate. If only one candidate agrees to attend, it is no longer a forum.)
- The rules of the forum don't favor any candidate over another. (Consider using an independent moderator, setting time limits for replies, etc.)
- The questions are fair: They should address a broad range of issues, they should not suggest the response the forum sponsor prefers, and they should not be selected to show particular candidates in a better or worse light. (This doesn't mean they can't be controversial!)

As opposed to a nonpartisan candidate forum, a forum on a ballot measure may be partisan - intended to educate or even persuade your constituents towards a yes or no vote. At your discretion, it can also be nonpartisan . For more, go to "Ballot Measures" pages 11-12.

Q: May a candidate appear at a nonprofit function?

A: The IRS says that candidates may be invited to or attend a nonprofit function on a nonpartisan basis. A candidate may appear:

In their capacity as candidate if the nonprofit:

- Provides an equal opportunity to other candidates for the same office – such as a similar time, venue and presentation format
- Does not indicate support for or opposition to the candidate. State this when the candidate is introduced and in communications about the appearance
- No political fundraising occurs

In their capacity as a public figure such as an elected official or expert in their field if:

- The candidate is chosen to speak solely for reasons other than their candidacy and speaks only in a non-candidate capacity

- There is no mention their candidacy during the presentation and the atmosphere is kept nonpartisan and free of campaign activity

Without invitation on the candidate's own initiative at a public event sponsored by a nonprofit:

- In such a case, it is important to be especially careful that there is no actual or implied endorsement. For example, don't give the candidate a chance to address the gathering.

5 Educating the Candidates

Your 501(c)(3) nonprofit may provide information to educate candidate on your issues so long as you make these resources available to all the candidates in a particular race and all candidates receive the same level of support and information.

- Educate the candidates on your issue.
- Send the candidates a policy paper or research findings. Let them know about your program initiatives. Candidates can benefit from your expertise.

However, your nonprofit may not provide personalized research or similar candidate-specific efforts for particular candidates. For example, don't help a single candidate develop a new policy paper on an issue of importance to your organization: It could appear to be a partisan effort to help that candidate get elected.

6 Encouraging Voting - Getting Out the Vote

Getting out the vote – encouraging and facilitating your communities to vote – is a primary goal of voter participation work. It is nonpartisan as long as you're not telling or suggesting to someone whom to vote for.

501(c)(3)s must leave the partisan work to the parties, candidates, or other more political organizations such as 501(c)(4) advocacy organizations. A 501(c)(3) should generally not work in partnership with these types of organizations unless absolutely certain that the activity will be conducted in a nonpartisan fashion.

Common ways to get out the vote include:

- Remind people to vote with posters in your office, announcements at meetings or events, signs around the neighborhood, etc.
- Educate voters by highlighting reasons to vote as well as information on the voting process.
- Provide an 800 number or other numbers to call for nonpartisan voter information like "Where Do I Vote?" or "When do the polls open or close?"
- Advertise rides to the polls offered by community organizations and agencies
- Mail or hand out postcards with voter information with the date of the election, highlights of what's on the ballot and a number to call for more information.

-
- Use local radio or cable shows, to make public service announcements and the like.
 - Canvass your neighborhood and give out nonpartisan voter information before the election or on Election Day itself.
 - Call clients, constituents and community members on or before Election Day.
 - Provide voting rights information for voters informing them of their rights on Election Day and numbers to call for help.

7 Helping on Election Day

Nonprofits are well-positioned to help on Election Day. The civic mission of nonprofits makes them a good fit not only to encourage their communities to vote, but to provide staff to help at the polls.

Nonprofits may:

- Allow your staff time off to vote
- Allow staff to spend part or all of Election Day doing nonpartisan get out the vote activities
- Encourage your staff and volunteers to sign up as poll workers or translators
- Involve staff members as nonpartisan election observers

8 Voting Rights and Election Reform

Nonprofits may want to help their staff, constituents and community understand their right to vote. Or, nonprofits may also support election reforms that providing better access for voters, more choices on the ballot and a level playing field for elections. These are nonpartisan issues that fit well within what 501(c)(3)s can do in terms of public education or, in some cases, lobbying.

Sample activities could include:

- Distribute information around election time on a voter's rights at the polls
- Contact your local election official to discuss concerns you may have about voting in your community – like the recruitment of poll workers or poll procedures
- Become an advocate for voting rights and election reform. Incorporate these issues into your voter education. Take a stand on a reform initiative – such as Election Day Registration, public funding of campaigns or replacing our now partisan run elections with nonpartisan districting and election administration

9 Issue Advocacy by 501(c)(3)s During an Election

Most nonprofits care deeply about particular issues of public policy – issues such as education, housing, the environment or budget priorities that go to the heart of the nonprofit's mission.

The IRS explicitly states that nonprofits may continue lobbying activities during an election:

“Under federal tax law, section 501(c)(3) organizations may take positions on public policy issues, including issues that divide candidates in an election for public office.”
Internal Revenue Service, Fact Sheet 2006-17, February 2006.

However, it is possible that communications on issues during an election could be considered partisan if they appear to be an effort to support or oppose a candidate. There is a greater risk of appearing partisan when you mention the names of candidates or upcoming elections in a communication. As always in evaluating 501(c)(3) activities, there are no bright lines. It depends on the “facts and circumstances”. Here are some basic guidelines.

General Guidelines for Issue Advocacy Unrelated to an Election

1. You may continue to lobby or engage in other advocacy activities in the months leading up to an election, but be careful before increasing these advocacy activities during the election season. If you step up your advocacy on a particular issue at the same time that this same issue is a key point of disagreement between two or more candidates, it may seem as if you are trying to favor the candidate who most closely shares your organization's views.
2. A history of work on an issue in the past is a key factor the IRS will consider in evaluating whether your current advocacy is an effort to influence the outcome of the upcoming election. Your activity is far more likely to be seen as nonpartisan if you have engaged in the same or similar activities in non-election years.
3. Responding to an external event is often safer. Frequently organizations get involved in an issue in response to external events beyond their control a shelter closing, an imminent vote on a bill in the legislature, etc. This type of external impetus sometimes occurs just before an election. Organizations want to get involved, but may be nervous because the candidates may be talking about the same issue. The external event helps to demonstrate that your organization was not motivated by a desire to influence the election.

10 Ballot Question Education and Advocacy

Many states have ballot questions – initiatives, referenda, or constitutional amendments. How are these different from candidate elections?

In general, there are three things to know about working on ballot measures:

The most important thing a 501(c)(3) nonprofit should know is that the IRS considers activity on ballot measures a lobbying activity – not electioneering. A 501(c)(3) may work for or against ballot questions up to normal lobbying limits. The IRS makes this distinction because advocacy on ballot measures is an attempt to influence a proposed law or a policy – not the election or defeat of a candidate.

501(c)(3)s may also engage in unlimited activities that neither support nor oppose the ballot measure, such as voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote activities.

Your state may have reporting requirements for ballot measure expenditures. Check with your state's campaign finance office or an attorney to see what your state's requirements are if your nonprofit decides to invest resources in advocating a "yes" or "no" vote.

Q: What are the 501(c)(3) lobbying limits in regards to ballot measures?

A: Your lobbying limits depend on which of two alternative tests your nonprofit chooses to measure its lobbying:

- If your nonprofit has chosen to measure its lobbying under the so-called 501(h) expenditure test, it has clearer guidance and can do more lobbying. Under this expenditure test, you can spend a certain percentage of your annual budget (as much as 20% for small organizations, less for larger groups) on efforts by you or your members to directly influence the outcome of a ballot question or legislative vote.
- If your 501(c)(3) has not chosen to use the above expenditure test, it may spend an "insubstantial" amount of money and time on lobbying. This includes any efforts to support or oppose a ballot question and other efforts the organization makes to influence more traditional legislative proposals at the local, state, or federal levels. "Insubstantial" lobby expenditures has been interpreted to mean a relatively small percentage of time and money, for example less than 5%.

Q. How does my nonprofit opt for the 501(h) lobbying expenditure test?

A. File a one-page, one-time form with the IRS - Form 5768. Once submitted and approved your nonprofit has higher and defined lobbying limits. It includes annual reporting of expenditures on your Form 990. For more information and the application form, go to the Alliance for Justice website (www.allianceforjustice.org) and look for their "Worry Free Lobbying for Nonprofits" in their nonprofits and foundation resource section.

Q: How should a 501(c)(3) track its lobbying on ballot questions?

A: Whichever of the two lobbying expenditure tests you use, you will need some type of system to keep track of how much lobbying you do.

- Track the money you spend on direct expenses such as flyers, signs, advertising, and snacks for your volunteers.
- Keep track (via timesheets or some other mechanism) of the time that any paid staff spend supporting your lobbying effort.
- Add some portion of your organization's overhead costs -- rent, utilities, etc. (You could base allocation of overhead costs on the percentage of your overall staff time spent lobbying or use some other reasonable measure.) You'll need to report this lobbying information to the IRS on your organization's annual tax return (your Form 990 for nonprofits).

Also, as mentioned above, any organization spending funds to influence the outcome of a ballot question may have to register and file disclosure reports with a state or local campaign finance office -- who you can find by contacting your Secretary of State's office.

If you need additional information, consult an expert like an experienced nonprofit professional in your area or the publications of the Alliance for Justice (for example: Seize the Initiative at www.allianceforjustice.org).

NONPROFIT STAFF AND ELECTIONS

Being Partisan . . . Staying Nonpartisan

Staff members of 501(c)(3)s are frequently involved in campaigns or asked to support candidates. Since nonprofit staff are involved in community affairs, they may want to support a candidate who has helped their organization or neighborhood.

What you or another staff member does in personal time is a private choice. However, a staff member cannot be seen as representing the organization on a campaign nor may they use organizational resources for a candidate.

Q: When is it personal time?

A: Nonprofit staff can support the candidate of their choice outside of normal work hours. If staff members want to engage in partisan activities during normal work hours, they should take vacation or personal leave.

Q: Can the organization be mentioned?

A: Your organization cannot support a candidate. As a rule, it's safer if the organization's name is not mentioned if a staff member's name appears on candidate literature in the course of that staff member's personal political work. However, it is permissible to list the organization along with the staff member's name if it is clearly stated that the organization name may be listed if noted "for identification purposes only." This can be helpful in clarifying that organizational leaders are involved in their individual, not official roles. Always remember that there may be other reasons you may not want your nonprofit's name associated with a campaign. For example it might be awkward seeking public funds for your organization if a candidate you opposed wins the election!

Overall, as a nonprofit staff member you'll find that there is a great deal you can do for candidates when not representing the organization.

Q: What about board members and volunteers?

A: Board members and volunteers should follow the same rules for staff described above when they are working for your organization. What they do outside of your organization is their choice.

Q: What if a candidate lists my name and organization without my permission?

A: Over-eager candidates may list your nonprofit on a campaign brochure. If they did this without your permission you are not at fault. Just ask them to remove your organization's name from the list. Save a copy of your e-mail or written request to the candidate in your files.

PERMISSIBLE VOTER AND ELECTION ACTIVITIES FOR 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

10 Activities 501(c)(3) Organizations Can Do On a
Nonpartisan Basis

Voter Registration*

Voter Education on the Process of Voting:

Where to vote, information on elections and election process

Voter Guides on Candidates and Ballot Measures

Candidate Forums and Candidate Appearances

Educating the Candidates

Encouraging Voter Participation. Get Out the Vote:

Encourage and help your staff, clients, constituents and other people in your community to get to the polls

Voting Rights and Election Reform

Helping on Election Day:

Volunteer poll workers, election monitors, etc.

Issue Advocacy During an Election

Supporting and Opposing Ballot Questions:

Subject to normal lobbying limits

** Watch out for restrictions from sources other than federal tax law. For example, federal government regulations sometimes prohibit the use of certain federal funds to do voter registration. (For more information on restrictions on use of federal funds, visit the legal resource section of our website.)*

RESOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alliance for Justice

E-mail: advocacy@allianceforjustice.org

Website: www.allianceforjustice.org

For advocacy/voting questions, call the AFJ hotline at 1-866-NPLOBBY (866-675-6229).

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The Public Charity's Guide to the California Imitative Process, Northern California Grantmakers, www.ncg.org

Worry-Free Lobbying for Nonprofits: How to use the 501(h) Election to Maximize Effectiveness, Alliance for Justice, Washington, DC, 1999, www.allianceforjustice.org

Lobbying Guidelines

LOBBYING Charitable and education organizations 501(c)(3)s such as PTAs face some restrictions regarding their lobbying activities. PTAs must refrain from violating PTA policies of nonpartisanship. A 501(c)(3) organization which makes a 501(h) election can expend between 5% and 20% of its total annual program expenditures according to a formula. Restrictions on grassroots lobbying (i.e., efforts to inform the public) are more severe. If a PTA does not file an IRS form to make the Section 501(h) election, it may expend an “insubstantial amount” on lobbying activities, generally understood as no more than 5% of the organization’s total annual program expenditures. The following are some sample PTA activities, which may be used as general guidelines in determining what constitutes lobbying efforts:

Not considered lobbying efforts: 1. Informing members of legislative issues and positions critical to the goals of the association. 2. Researching and conducting nonpartisan analysis on legislation, stating the facts fully, stating your association’s position and allowing people to draw their own conclusion. 3. inviting representatives or staff to visit or learn about your association’s program (not including discussions of specific legislation). 4. Explaining to members how a piece of legislation would affect your concerns. 5. Attending workshops on how to lobby. 6. Responding to official requests by legislative bodies for information or for testimony on the association’s position. 7. Conducting a neutral Candidates’ Night. 8. Endorsing or opposing the school budget.

Considered lobbying efforts, and must be counted for lobbying expenditures. 1. Informing people outside the membership of your position and encouraging them to write supporting your position on legislation or proposed legislation. 2. Telling people, your members included, to write or call supporting your position on legislation or proposed legislation. 3. Testifying about a position before a legislative body when you have not been specifically invited to appear. 4. Writing a “letter to the editor” which seeks to sway the community outside the PTA membership to a position. 5. Making a trip to the state or national capital specifically to change a legislator’s mind about an issue. 6. Advertising in any media in an attempt to sway the general public to action supporting the PTA position on legislation or proposed legislation.

Political Campaigns

POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS 501(c)(3)s, such as PTAs, are absolutely prohibited from participating or intervening in political campaigns on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for political office. Any violation of the political campaign guidelines may result in revocation of tax-exempt status and loss of deductible contributions. Moreover, the IRS will consider complaints from the public that an educational organization is engaged in impermissible political campaign activity. During an election year, questions about IRS political restrictions for not-for- profits tend to increase tremendously. PTA officers, employees and volunteers may choose to participate on their own in the political process. If so, the following rules should be observed:

- An officer, employee or volunteer of the PTA, acting solely in his or her individual capacity, may participate freely in the political process.
- However, in one's official capacity as an officer, employee or volunteer of the PTA, an individual may not:
 1. Make speeches for a political organization of a candidate or publicly endorse a candidate for public office.
 2. Submit funds for or pay an assessment, or make a contribution to a political organization or candidate for public office.

ENDORSEMENTS – PROHIBITED PTAs may not make statements (oral or written) supporting or opposing any candidate for public office. They may not encourage votes for or against any candidate for public office, via a speech, PTA bulletin, editorial position or other media. PTAs should avoid statements that in- directly support or oppose a particular candidate, such as labeling a candidate as pro-education or anti-teacher. PTAs should not host partisan political events.

FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT – PROHIBITED A PTA may not provide financial support to any candidate, political action committee (PAC) or political party. In addition, it may not provide other forms of campaign support, such as free volunteers, facilities or mailing lists to any candidate. It may not use PTA letterhead to solicit contributions.

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES – PROHIBITED A PAC is a political committee whose purpose is to influence the election of any individual to public office. Generally, a 501(c)(3) may not establish or support (financially or otherwise) a PAC.

PENALTIES Because the political campaign activity prohibition is absolute, PTA organizations must take the prohibition on political activity seriously. Any violation of the restriction may result in revo- cation of exempt status and consequent loss of deductible contributions. There are additional financial penalties which may be imposed on both the association and on association managers. The financial penalties on managers can be as high as \$10,000.