

VOTER REGISTRATION AND ENGAGEMENT FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

July 18th, 2018
2:00pm EST- 3:00pm EST

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NATIONAL
HEALTH CARE
for the
HOMELESS
COUNCIL



OBJECTIVES

1. Know ways that individuals and organizations can participate in voter registration.
2. Understand legal and logistical limitations of voter registration activities
3. Locate resources that will help plan and implement voter registration activities.

A QUICK HISTORY

1776- DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

1788- THE CONSTITUTION

- 15th Amendment (1870)- African-Americans
- 19th Amendment (1920)- Women
- 24th Amendment (1964)- Poll Taxes
- 26th Amendment (1971)- Voting Age 18

1965- VOTING RIGHTS ACT

2013- SHELBY V. HOLDER



*“This is Selma, Alabama. There are more negroes in jail with me than there are on the voting rolls”
- Martin Luther King Jr. (1965)*

TODAY...

- Banning of people convicted of a felony
- Requiring photo ID
- Requiring proof of citizenship
- Reducing early and absentee days
- Misinformation campaigns
- US Territories



VOTING IS IMPORTANT

- It is our mission.
- It is empowering.
- We are all impacted by the decisions of who we vote (or don't vote) for.
- People experiencing homelessness are underrepresented.

And yes... it is legal!



About Nonprofit VOTE

Founded in 2005, Nonprofit VOTE partners with America's nonprofits to help the people they serve participate and vote.

We are a leading source of nonpartisan training, materials and other resources for nonprofits doing voter engagement work.

For more information, visit us online at
www.nonprofitvote.org



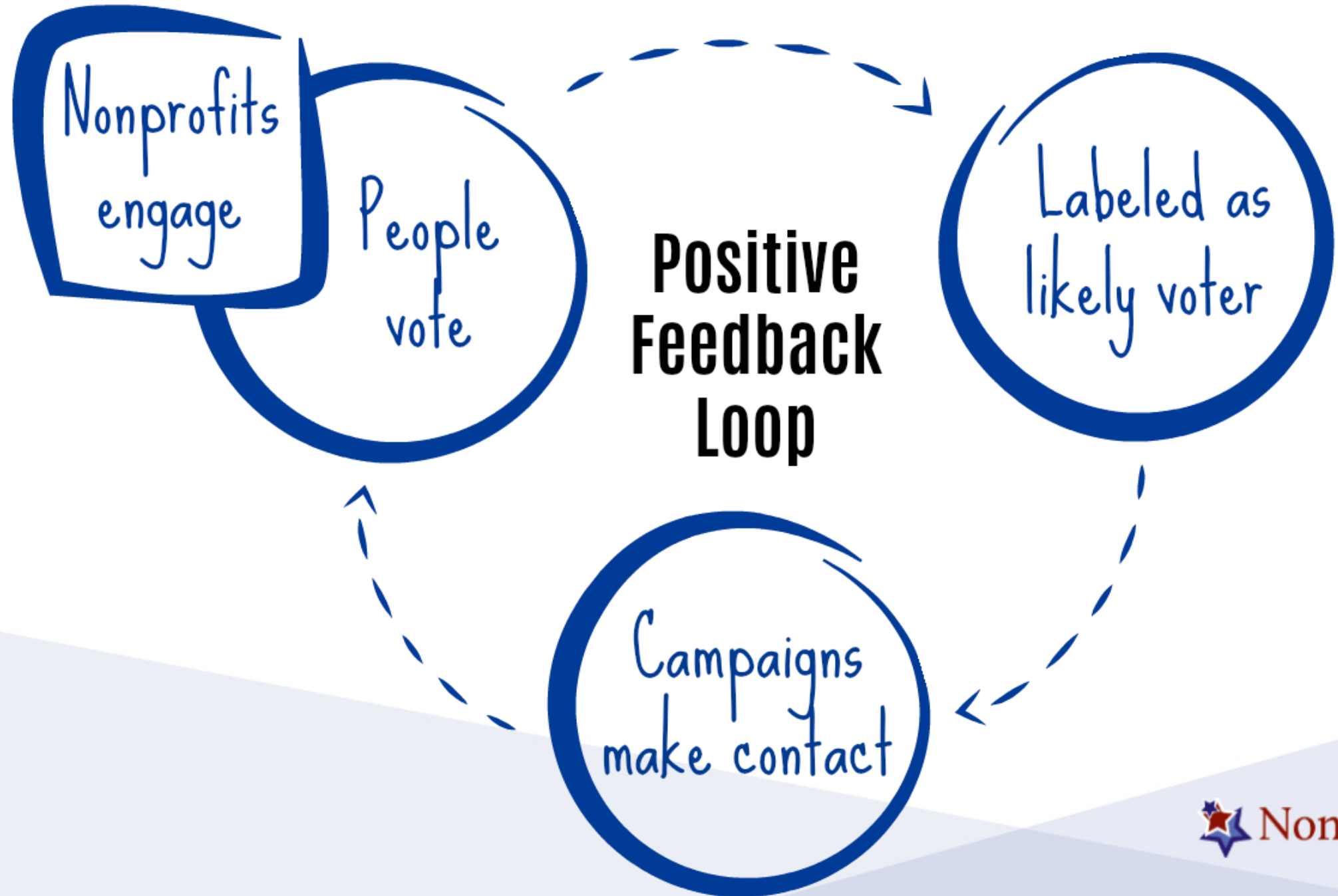


Why voter registration?



Nonprofits make the difference

- Reach – engage communities overlooked by others and help them vote at higher rates.
- Unique assets – high levels of trust, cultural competency, and ongoing interaction
- Affirmed by the IRS – nonprofits are encouraged to do nonpartisan voter education under IRS guidelines





From theory to action



Know your stuff

- Laws vary from state to state, so visit nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/
- Ensure all staff participating in registration efforts understand rules regarding remaining nonpartisan and eligibility requirements
- Learn your deadlines, early voting periods, and how to secure absentee/mail in ballots



Best practices for success

- Get buy in from staff and leadership
- Assign a point person to coordinate efforts and ensure registration forms are turned in on time
- Integrate voter registration into existing activities (at intake, during classes or meetings, during planned events)
- Paper vs online: You can register more people at once using paper, but online has a better completion/error-free rate. Think about what works best for you and plan around it.



Beyond registration



Voter education and GOTV

- Educate voters on what it will be like to vote
 - Ask local election officials if you can train people on how to vote on voting machines
- Educate voters on what is on the ballot
 - Don't tell people *who* to vote for, but make sure they understand the races in the election
 - Supply a sample ballot (try your local League of Women Voters)
- Get out the Vote
 - Provide rides to the polls
 - Ensure people have the ID they need to vote

OPTIONS FOR INTEGRATING VOTER REGISTRATION

- Materials in lobby
- Registering during intake
- Include in case management
- Voter registration drives
- CAB sponsorship
- Find community partners



PLAN FOR COMMON BARRIERS

- No Time
- No ID
- No Home
- Criminal Record



CHECK LOCAL LAWS FOR REQUIREMENTS

- Mailing Address
- Photo Identification
- Citizenship
- Criminal Background



REGISTRATION DOS AND DON'TS

DO

- Assist with forms
- Educate about voting process
- Offer the HCH project as a mailing address
- Discuss importance of policy
- Offer to mail in forms
- Check state/county law

DON'T

- Refuse anyone the opportunity to register
- Attach information to the registration forms
- Discuss the candidates' positions on issues
- Have any materials endorsing candidates or parties

OTHER ELECTION ACTIVITIES

Leading up to the election

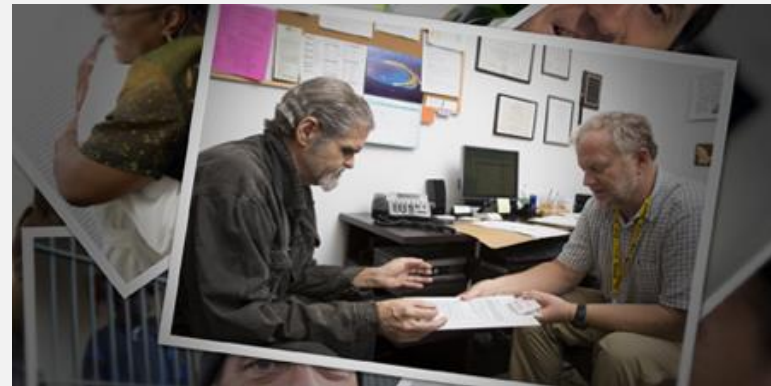
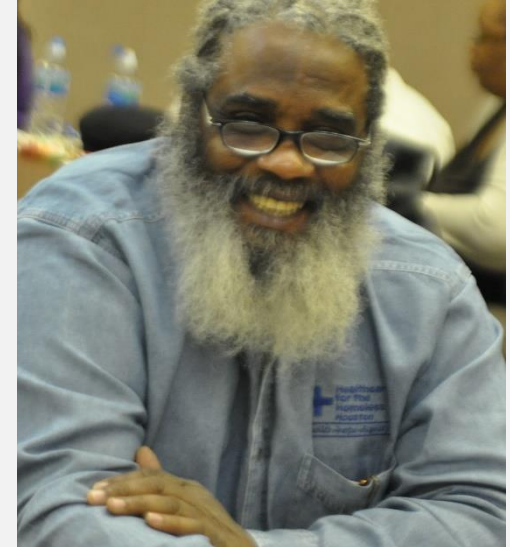
- ✓ Early voting
- ✓ Absentee ballots
- ✓ Locating polling places
- ✓ Sample ballots, voting machines
- ✓ Non-partisan issue education

On election day

- ✓ Transportation to the polls
- ✓ Go the polls together
- ✓ Get out the vote rally
- ✓ Volunteers at polling places

VOTER REGISTRATION AT HOUSTON HCH

- Consumer Driven
- Every Monday year-round
- Extensive work with local election board
- Get out the vote campaign



RESOURCES

- Registration deadlines → <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/voter-registration-deadlines/>
- Election dates → <https://www.usvotefoundation.org/vote/state-elections/state-election-dates-deadlines.htm>
- 2018 Planning Timeline → <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/documents/2018/03/2018-voter-engagement-timeline-nonprofits.pdf/>
- Voter ID laws → <http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id.aspx>
- Felon Voting rights → <http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/felon-voting-rights.aspx>
- Nonprofit guide to nonpartisan activities → <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/nonprofits-voting-elections-online/voter-registration/>
- General info on registration and voting process → <https://www.usa.gov/register-to-vote>
- Comprehensive voter registration guides → <http://www.projectvote.org/issues/civic-engagement/state-vr-guides/>
- National Coalition for the Homeless' Toolkit & Other Resources → <http://nationalhomeless.org/campaigns/voting/>
- League of women voters → <https://www.lwv.org>
- National Voter Registration Day sign up: → <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/partner-sign-up/>

QUESTIONS?

*The vote is the most powerful
nonviolent tool we have.*

-John Lewis

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