Get Out the Vote 2018: Educating & Registering Voters at Your Organization

August 15, 2018
2:30 – 3:30 PM EDT
Webinar Logistics

We recommend calling in on your telephone

Phone: 1-914-614-3221
Access Pin: 355-701-699

For audio support:
877-582-7011

To ask a question, please use the questions dialogue box in your control panel.
Today’s Presenters

Michael Petruzzelli, MPA
Manager, Policy and Advocacy
National Council for Behavioral Health

Robert Davison, MA, LPC
Chief Executive Officer
Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc.
Why GOTV?

• Behavioral health organizations have proven their political effectiveness.

• Registering voters is the first step in shaping local, state, & national policy.

• Your clients & their families deserve to have their voices heard.
Politics & Nonprofits

**Note:** This presentation is **NOT** a substitute for legal advice. Always seek experienced legal counsel to address risks based on your organization’s own unique circumstances.

**DO**
- Register clients and families to vote
- Help clients understand elections and voting processes
- Sponsor/participate in *nonpartisan* candidate forums or questionnaires
- Take positions on public policy issues

**DON’T**
- Endorse or rate candidates for office
- Contribute money to candidates or parties
- Exclude candidates from forums or questionnaires

= “Non-partisan”
Politics & Nonprofits
Resources

Fair Elections Legal Network: Voter Registration Drive Guides

Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network: Nonprofits, Voting, and Elections
Voter Registration in 4 Steps

1. Learn your state’s election rules and deadlines
   • Deadline to register to vote? Can clients register online or must it be in-person?
   • Do you need special clearance prior to becoming a voting registrar?
   • Learn more about your state’s specific rules here: Fair Elections Legal Network

2. Designate a Voter Engagement Coordinator
   • The go-to person for all things Voter Registration and GOTV
   • Coordinate outreach strategy, train colleagues on voter registration and education
   • Ensure forms are available and properly completed
   • Submit completed forms to election officials
Voter Registration in 4 Steps

3. Train staff on Voter Registration procedures
   • Train staff on registration forms and how to contact the Voter Engagement Coordinator
   • All staff should be comfortable helping clients register

4. Post signs at your center
   • “This clinic registers voters – register today!”
   • “May we register you to vote today?”
Key Dates

**Election Day 2018**
Tuesday, November 6, 2018

Voter Registration deadlines are usually 15-30 days before Election Day.

Find your state’s deadlines here.
Case Study

Robert Davison, MA, LPC
Chief Executive Officer
Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc.
Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc.

- **200 staff** serving **8,000 individuals** a year across **four counties** in Northern New Jersey

- 2017 merger between Mental Health Association of Essex County (est. 1950) and the former Mental Health Association of Morris County (est. 1953)

- Offers a full spectrum of services to individuals and families in our community whose lives are affected by mental illness.
Case Study: GOTV in Practice

Civic engagement = wellness & recovery

Voter registration at MHA Essex and Morris

- Part of an overall commitment to advocacy
- Outreach programs
- Registration in out-patient programs
- Registration in supportive housing
**Tips and Tricks to GOTV**

**DO**
- Identify an organizational leader
- Identify consumer leadership
- Institute redundancy and checks
- Set reasonable expectations

**DON’T**
- Worry about being perfect – just get started!
- Assume one contact is enough – consistent follow-up is necessary.
- Delay - the time is NOW!
What’s Next?
Building off of Voter Registration

- Host events with candidates/elected officials
  - Legislative breakfasts, townhalls, candidate Q&A
- Provide Election Day transportation to the polls
- Promote consumer advocacy
- Promote board advocacy
- Voter Registration is only one part of an ongoing advocacy campaign
  - Candidate questionnaires
  - Federal and state-level Hill Days
The National Council is happy to provide our members with the below resources. Need other materials or further assistance? Let us know!

National Council’s Voter Registration Toolkit

State-by-State Registration Deadlines

Fair Elections Legal Network: Voter Registration Drive Guides

Nonprofits, Voting, and Elections

Promotional Voter Registration Flyers
Questions?

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