

THE NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK VOTER MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGN AND FIELD EDUCATION

Dear Field Instructor:

[Name of School/Program] is proud to participate in the National Social Work Voter Mobilization Campaign. Given the importance of civic engagement to social work practice and impact, we encourage your consideration of the addition of an assignment on nonpartisan voter engagement in student field placements.

We have attached a flyer describing the goals of the **National Social Work Voter Mobilization Campaign*** (*endorsed by the Council on Social Work Education [CSWE], the North American Network of Field Educators and Directors [NANFED], and the National Association of Dean and Directors [NADD]). The flyer includes examples of field assignments such as encouraging student discussion of the relevance of voter mobilization to their social work practice and how it might apply to your organization, how they might integrate nonpartisan voter registration, education, and outreach into the organization's work. Additional resources for field assignments can also be found on our website: <https://votingissocialwork.org/>

Our hope is that agencies will consider integrating nonpartisan voter engagement activities to their service delivery and culture and embrace such activities as part of their professional responsibilities, regardless of practice setting/method. Additionally, it is hoped that such activity will ultimately increase voter turnout and civic engagement in communities. We also hope to generate conversations within the profession about social workers' responsibility to incorporate voter engagement into their practice.

Background: Voting Is Social Work

When people vote, there are benefits to themselves—improved health, social connections, mental health and overall well-being—as well as their communities. Voting is an important indicator of community health and essential in any broader efforts to address inequality and the social determinants of health. The groups most underrepresented among voters are populations that social workers often work with directly.

Goal:

Incorporating assignments in nonpartisan voter engagement into required field education in schools of social work can introduce the student to:

- The benefits of voting and the connection to empowerment, as emphasized in the Code of Ethics;
- The relevance of voting to social work, including voting as a human right and the profession's history in voter engagement;
- The meaning of nonpartisan voter engagement and difference from partisan political activity; and
- Methods of incorporating nonpartisan voter registration, education and outreach in field settings, including the rules that apply to nonprofits and public organizations.

We welcome your feedback and your questions.

Sincerely,

(Signature of Field Education Director)

(Contact information, Field Director)





A NON-PARTISAN

CALL TO ACTION Turn Out The Vote

NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK VOTER MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGN

VOTING = A HUMAN RIGHT

Voting Supports the Political Power of Clients and Communities

Voting Powers the Fight for Racial, Social and Economic Justice

VOTING IS SOCIAL WORK

Why Vote?

Took years for Congress to pass the 1965 Voting Rights Act (VRA).

Many people fought for and died to win this basic right.

Non-partisan voter registration, education and outreach are legal, ethical and professional.

A healthy democracy depends on an accessible and inclusive electoral process.

Your Vote is Your Voice!

The Benefits of Voting

Individuals who vote report higher levels of health and mental health, stronger social connections, better employment outcomes, and a greater sense of individual efficacy.

Communities that vote in high numbers receive more attention, responses and resources from legislators and develop stronger community connections.

Professions that Get-Out-The-Vote elevate their visibility, voice, and political influence.

Barriers to be Overcome

Limited Access: Long lines, lack of transportation, lack of information on candidates and where to vote keeps people away from the polls.

Voter Suppression: Voter ID laws, gerrymandering, purged voter rolls, disenfranchised felons, myths of voter fraud, and closed polling places target the poor, women, persons of color and youth, & uphold white supremacy.

Structural Racism: Chips away our right to vote, challenges free and fair elections and the democratic ideal of equality for all.

Distrust of Government: Feelings that “my vote does not matter”, “the system is rigged”, “candidates don’t understand my situation”, and that “politics is not for me” discourage voting.

Misbeliefs: People wrongly believe that homeless persons, domestic violence victims, disabled people and convicted felons do not have the right to vote.

Make a Difference

Obtain and utilize the VotER Tool Kit online and in person.

Raise awareness of the importance of voting to social work practice and social policy.

Link voting rights to social work issues.

Organize voter registration drives at your school, agency or field placement.

Invite candidates to speak to your community about important issues.

Inform everyone about candidates, election dates, voting site locations and mail-in possibilities in your state. (turbovote.org)

Help register constituents, remind them to vote, and help get out the vote.

Become a poll worker on election day.

Make voting rights and voter mobilization skills part of your classroom and field assignments.

NASW & Council on Social Work Education support social action.

Powerful interests suppress the vote of the people.

For more information go to votingissocialwork.org



NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK VOTER MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGN: VOTING IS SOCIAL WORK

The Non-Partisan Campaign Seeks to

- Raise awareness of the importance of voting to social work practice and social policy.
- Integrate voter engagement activities into classroom and field education.
- Train faculty, field instructors and students to mobilize the vote.
- Activate both micro and macro students.
- Ensure that all the people we serve have access to the vote.
- Protect our democratic rights and institutions.

Organizational Endorsements

- Association for Community Organization and Social Action (ACOSA)**
- Clinical Social Work Association (CSWA)**
- Congressional Institute for Social Work and Policy (CRISP)**
- Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)**
- Influencing Social Policy (ISP)**
- Latino Social Workers Organization**
- Nancy A Humphreys Institute for Political Social Work**
- National Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Directors (BPD)**
- National Association of Deans and Directors (NADD)**
- National Association of Perinatal Social Workers**
- National Rural Social Work Caucus**
- Network for Social Work Management (NSWM)**
- New Social Worker**
- North American Network of Field Educators and Directors (NANFED)**
- Society of Social Work Leadership in Health Care**
- Special Commission to Advance Macro Practice in Social Work**
- #MacroSW Twitter Chat Collaborative**
- VotER: Building a Health Democracy**

Your Vote Is More Important Than Ever Before
Be Part of History!
Join the National Social Work Voter Mobilization Campaign

Learn more at: [Voting is Social Work](#)

The National Social Work Voter Mobilization Team

- Mimi Abramovitz, Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College, CUNY*
- Beth Lewis, Graduate School of Social Work, Bryn Mawr University*
- Gena McClendon, Voter Access & Engagement Initiative, Brown School, Washington University*
- Terry Mizrahi, Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College, CUNY (Emeritus)*
- Becki Sander Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College, CUNY*
- Tanya Rhodes Smith, Humphreys Institute for Political Social Work, University of Connecticut*