What Can You Do?
Stand Up and Fight Back!

- Make Issues of Homelessness Part of the Debate
- Educate Yourself and Your Clients on Voting
- You Don’t Need a Home to Vote. Help Your Clients Register!

Health Care & Housing Are Human Rights
Assist Clients in Registering to Vote
First of all…

**IT IS LEGAL**

- The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 encourages nonprofits to register historically underrepresented groups
- Outstationed eligibility workers are required to do voter registration
- Court cases have repeatedly ruled that you do not need a traditional dwelling to vote

Health Care & Housing Are Human Rights
Assist Clients in Registering to Vote Second…

**IT IS OUR MISSION**

- All people have the right to participate in the decisions affecting their lives
- Public policy decisions impact our clients and services
- Integrate service and advocacy
- Empower clients

[Health Care & Housing Are Human Rights]
Participation Rates

Source: US Census Bureau.

Health Care & Housing Are Human Rights
Word of Caution: Remain Nonpartisan
(Discuss Issues – Not People)

- Do not explicitly support a candidate or party
- Do not implicitly support a candidate or party
- Offer same support and materials at all sites
- Choose partners carefully
Word of Caution: Source of Funding and State Law

- Federal funds (like Health Center grants) cannot be used
- Private dollars may also have restrictions
- Account for staff time and expenses using other funds
- Check with your State/County Elections Office for other restrictions

Health Care & Housing Are Human Rights
Options for Integrating Voter Registration

- Provide registration materials in lobby
- Register during intake
- Include in case management/clinical work
- Voter registration drives
- Consumer Advisory Board sponsorship
Register at Intake

- Appoint a coordinator for training intake staff, collecting forms, and communicating with Elections Office

- Publicize effort in lobby – include voter education posters

- Include on intake forms (if you are not registered, would you like to register today?)

- Intake staff should assist with forms, ensure complete information, and facilitate f/u for any additional documentation (IDs, etc.)
Voter Registration Drive

- Establish a coordinator on committee
- Set date, time and location – possibly around a special event
- Advertise effort in lobby and elsewhere
- Engage your Consumer Advisory Board, recruit volunteers
- Have all needed materials on hand
- Assist in completing forms, answer questions, offer to mail forms
# Voter Registration
## Do’s and Don’t’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DO</strong></th>
<th><strong>DON’T</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assist with forms</td>
<td>Refuse anyone the opportunity to register</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educate about voting process</td>
<td>Attach information to the registration forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offer the HCH project as a mailing address</td>
<td>Discuss the candidates’ positions on issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss importance of policy</td>
<td>Have any materials endorsing candidates or parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer to mail in forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Check state/county law</td>
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Health Care & Housing Are Human Rights
Overcome Common Barriers

- I do not have time
- My vote does not matter
- I am homeless
- I do not have an ID
- I have a criminal record
- I am already registered
You Do Not Need a Home to Vote! (But You Might Need an ID)

- Check your local laws for registration and election day requirements:
  - Mailing Address
  - Photo Identification
  - Citizenship
  - Registration Deadlines
  - Criminal Background

Help Overcome these Barriers!

Health Care & Housing Are Human Rights
Get Out the Vote
Leading Up to Election Day

- Early voting opportunities
- Absentee ballots
- Polling places
- Sample ballots, voting machines
- Nonpartisan issue education
- Publicize information widely
- Consider becoming a polling place or an election volunteer
Get Out the Vote

Election Day

- Have volunteers provide transportation (no partisan bumper stickers)
- Can use company vehicles for transportation
- Ask for in-kind donation of a bus or taxis for the day
- Walk to polling station in a group
- Have a get out the vote rally
- Have volunteers at the polling places
Other Election Year Activities

- Host a candidate forum
- Attend town hall meetings
- Invite candidates to tour or volunteer at your project
- Write letters to the editors and/or op-eds
Candidate Forums

- Make sure all candidates are invited
- Avoid even the appearance of partisanship
- Plan well in advance
- Invite the media
Many Resources Available Online
(Special thanks to the National Coalition for the Homeless)

- Community Health Vote (NACHC): http://www.nachc.com/Community%20Health%20Vote.cfm
- League of Women Voters: http://www.lwv.org/
- Nonprofit Vote: www.nonprofitvote.org

USE THESE SITES FOR POSTERS, FORMS, BALLOTS, EDUCATION MATERIALS, WIDGETS AND STATE INFO!
More Information on the Council

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council is a membership organization for those who work to improve the health of homeless people and who seek housing, health care, and adequate incomes for everyone.

- Our site: www.nhchc.org
- NHCHC offers free individual memberships at: http://www.nhchc.org/council.html#membership