

Alaska Get Out the Vote Coalition



Mission:

To empower Alaskans with disabilities and other Alaska Mental Health Trust beneficiaries to become active voters and part of the political process by eliminating voting barriers, promoting awareness of the voting process and helping people access their right to vote.

Who are we?

The Coalition members include:

- UAA Center for Human Development- Partners in Policymaking
- Disability Law Center for Alaska
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Alaska Mental Health Board
- The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education
- Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Alaskan Commission on Aging
- Access Alaska

Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities
AARP
Alaska Behavioral Health Association
AgeNet
Key Coalition
NAMI
The Consortium
The Statewide Independent Living Council
Disabled American Veterans
Nine Star
Up with Down Group
Stone Soup Group
Beans Cafe

Activities of GOTV:

1. Internal organization- Core Planning Group
 - a. Contact list above and enroll
 - b. Hub community activities- PiP interns organizing locally-
Fairbanks, Anchorage, Cordova
 - c. Record keeping- database to keep track of individuals
registered

2. Outreach activities-
 - a. Media campaign- to general public and beneficiaries

- b. Voter Registrar Training
 - c. Beneficiary voter information training
 - d. Registration drives- Have booths at community activities and nonprofits set up at least once per week.
 - e. Educational outreach- via paycheck envelopes- posters- competition for # of voters registered, etc.
3. Getting beneficiaries to vote in the Primary election
- a. Transportation arranged for those who need rides
 - b. Having Div. of Elections send people into group residences- community centers
4. Getting beneficiaries to vote in the General election
- a. Registered- Assist with registration
 - b. Transportation- List of people who will provide rides
 - c. Absentee- education campaign
 - d. Special Assistance?
 - e. Coordinated site from Div. of Elections

Sample of GOTV activities:

- ✓ Record Keeping and Managing information- Voter Identification and List Development are crucial activities for the GOTV Campaign. A comprehensive list in each area should be compiled, consisting of trust beneficiaries, their family

members, persons who are interested in beneficiary issues, service providers and members of participating organizations.

- ✓ Voter Registration- Voter registration should be the primary focus of each local GOTV hub. This activity includes educating the community about individual rights related to persons with disabilities and the need for compliance with the Motor Voter Act. The committee is also responsible for voter registration in person and by absentee ballot.

- ✓ Voter Education- Members of each local committee should work with their local election commissions to procure voting machines or paper ballots so that individuals with disabilities can get pre-election experience. Practice-voting sessions should be scheduled in places where beneficiaries are already gathered, such as service agencies and group homes. These practice sessions will help to dispel people's fears about voting. You may also want to hold non-partisan candidate and issue forums. If you hold a candidate forum, you should invite candidates from all the major political parties.

- ✓ Public Awareness and General Publicity- Publicity should be aimed at the community at large, as well as the beneficiary community. Extensive use of local media is recommended. This includes editorials, articles, talk shows, local public service announcements, and the Internet.

- ✓ Get out the Vote Mailer- The purpose of this activity is the creation and distribution of a get out the vote mailer. This mailer should go out to all individuals on the comprehensive list shortly before the election. The mailer should explain in clear, simple language the importance of the beneficiary community's participation in the voting process.

- ✓ Creation of Phone Bank List- develop a comprehensive phone list; assembled from the mailing lists of participating organizations, the procurement of sufficient donated phone lines, and the recruitment and training of volunteer callers. Results should be recorded for every person on the list.

- ✓ Locating Transportation- Transportation problems keep many individuals with disabilities from voting. GOTV group should work with local transportation officials, local officers of political parties, local service providers, and volunteers to ensure that everyone who wants to vote can get to the polls. In addition, make sure that public transportation is in compliance with the ADA.

- ✓ GOTV can provide training on how to interact courteously with voters who have disabilities. All voters deserve respectful

treatment, but voters with disabilities have particular barriers to overcome in order to freely exercise their right to vote. The informed, sympathetic election official can be tremendously helpful in this process.

- ✓ Access - Work with local election commissions to make sure all polling places are accessible.

- ✓ Staff Awareness- Talk to the people at work about the importance of voting to your organization and the community you serve.
 - Put a newsletter article on your web site, in any agency newsletter or e-news that goes out close to Election Day, encourage everyone to vote
 - Send e-mails to staff, beneficiaries, board and volunteers encouraging them to vote
 - Make a VOTE TODAY sign and place it in your main lobby and other common areas on Election Day with information about polling places.
 - Include a Nov. 4th Vote reminder in the payroll envelopes
 - Do an “office Knock” on the day before Elections Day to remind people to VOTE.
 - Make a Nov. 4 VOTE message on you outdoor marquis or agency window so that passersby are reminded to vote

- Put a GOTV message in your e-mail signature so that every email you send reminds people to vote.
- Challenge staff from different departments to see how many voters they are able to turn out.

Remind nonprofits that they can legally participate in the Get out the Vote efforts and have a unique role to play in getting people to vote because of the relationships they have with the very people who tend not to vote. We know that direct contact with people is the single most effective way to increase voter participation.

