



# Non Profits & Voting Debunking the Myths and Misconceptions

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# Agenda

- **Welcome and who I am**
- **Top misconceptions and answers for non profits/501c3**
- **Election checklist for 501c3s to remain nonpartisan (can and cannots)**
- **Pause for questions**
- **Reminders about habits and motivating humans**
- **Great examples of civic engagement by nonprofits in Wisconsin**
- **More questions and brainstorm time**

Some Common  
Questions and  
Misconceptions

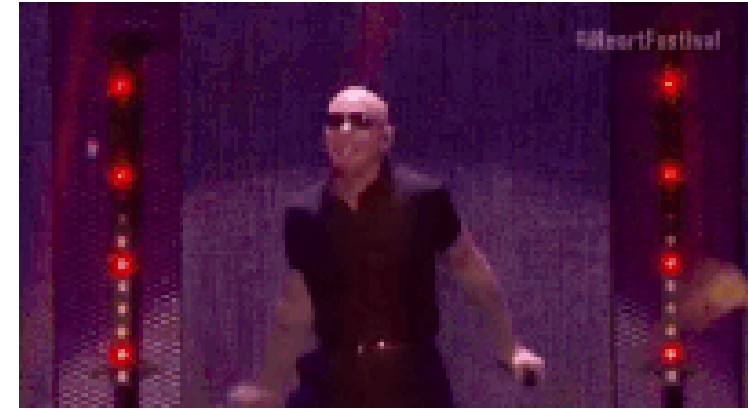


‘We are a non profit, we can’t do anything voting related.’

- Might have never thought of it, not in any plans or proposals, or may really think you can’t.
- Federal tax law explicitly prohibits 501c3s from supporting or opposing candidates, but recognizes the importance of their participation in democracy process.
- Our role – educate and encourage participation.



‘We are not sure how the stakeholders (board and funders) would think. They might feel some sort of way.’



### **What's important**

- You know voter education is legal
- Engaging the community or your clients enhances your mission
- You have a plan to operationalize in a meaningful way (more on this!)

‘My one vote is not going to do anything – My vote doesn’t matter.’

- This is real!
- Wisconsin Voices has different lit and messaging to inspire folks who don’t feel heard.
- Bottomline –listen and respond with authenticity don’t be discouraged from continuing to have the conversation if you can’t convince everyone.



I VOTE  
BECAUSE...

...I WANT TO  
MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE.”

- NEILISHA



**# IVOTEBECAUSE**  
FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO [VOTE411.ORG](http://VOTE411.ORG)



I VOTE  
BECAUSE...

...I DESERVE  
AN  
OPINION  
ABOUT  
MY  
FUTURE.”

- ANTHONY



**# IVOTEBECAUSE**  
FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO [VOTE411.ORG](http://VOTE411.ORG)



# Non Profit Cans and CANNOTS -a checklist on election activity

Reference: *Bolder Advocacy* (PDF linked)



So many things  
we (501c3s) CAN  
DO

- Conduct voter registration drives
- Nonpartisan get out the vote education (phone calls, door knocking, digital media, newsletters etc)
- Conduct nonpartisan public education or training on participation in the political process
- Educate candidates on public interest issue within the purview of the org
- Canvass the public on issues and voting info

\*there are different rules for voter registration and get out the vote for **private foundations**

## More CAN dos

- Publish legislative scorecards
- Prepare candidate questionnaires and voter guides
  - Example:
- Sponsor candidate debates
- Engage in limited lobbying – including work on ballot initiatives

# What 501c3s CANNOT do



- Endorse candidates
- Make campaign contributions
- Publishing anything that explicitly or implicitly favors or opposes
- Ask candidates to sign a pledge on a dividing issue

## Quick tips on humans

- Don't assume – you don't know if someone is a regular voter or not at all. (And they might not have the right to vote.) So ask!
- People need to make a specific Plan to Vote – you don't just magically show up at the gym to work out.
- To people you know and they trust you- make it personal, “I hear you might feel some type of way, but voting this election is really important to my kid's education/my family's healthcare.”

The background features several concentric circles in a light red color, with a dashed red line winding through them. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

Making it happen!  
Examples of other non  
▼ profits are doing civic  
engagement

**You can do it too!**

**YWCA of Milwaukee  
offering voter  
registration twice a  
week**

**UNCOM Community  
centers sending out  
templates to the  
neighborhood centers to  
promote voting**

**Churches working to  
coordinate 'souls to the  
polls' canvass and group  
trip to early vote**

**Commit digital person,  
those who do social  
media – to promote  
helpful, informative  
encouraging (be funny  
too) message**

**FCI giving the day off to  
not just vote but help  
others go and vote (door  
knocking)**

# Shareables!

Follow WIVoices on Facebook  
@wisvoices on Twitter and share the content



Arrrgh ya  
registered  
to vote?

Find out at:  
[myvote.wi.gov](https://myvote.wi.gov)

#talklikeapirateday

LIVE IN WISCONSIN?  
HAVE A FELONY?  
OFF PAPERS?  
YOU CAN VOTE.

REGISTER TO VOTE AT [MYVOTE.WI.GOV](https://myvote.wi.gov)

In Wisconsin, you have the right to  
**LEAVE WORK TO VOTE**

- ★ you must tell your employer at least a day in advance
- ★ you can take up to three hours of unpaid time
- ★ your employer can set the time for you to leave work

**IT'S THE LAW.**  
*Wisconsin State Statute 6.76*

For more important updates and information on voting, upcoming elections, and your rights in Wisconsin, text VOTE to 864-237.

Mobile alerts from Wisconsin Voices. Message & data rates may apply.

A red speech bubble graphic with a white outline, pointing downwards. The background features faint, concentric circles and dashed lines.

Sign up for quick election  
reminders to use and share!

**Text VOTE to 864-237**



# FCI's Voter Resource Page and Next week's webinar

Check it out



Questions?  
And ideas you're thinking about.

Thank you!

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