

STAYING COMPLIANT: LEGAL RISK ESSENTIALS

Guidelines for Successful Nonprofit Engagement



NONPARTISAN CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY FOR 501(c)(3)s

vote.
ONLINE

- **501(c)(3) organizations are prohibited by law from:**
 - Endorsing or opposing candidates for public office
 - Making or facilitating political contributions
 - Using organizational resources to support or oppose candidates
- **This includes:**
 - Staff time
 - Communications
 - Events
 - Organizational assets



NONPARTISAN VOTER EDUCATION & **vote.** REGISTRATION IS PERMITTED **ONLINE**

- **Nonprofits may participate in election-related activities if:**

- Activities are conducted fairly
- Activities are conducted without bias
- All candidates must have equal opportunity for inclusion



MAINTAIN TRANSPARENCY & NEUTRALITY



- **Use language and practices that clearly show:**
 - No endorsement of any candidate
- **Best practices include:**
 - Inviting all candidates
 - Covering all relevant perspectives
 - Avoiding use of nonprofit communications or donor lists to favor one side



CHECK STATE AND LOCAL LAWS



Regulations vary by state and locality

- **Some jurisdictions have stricter rules related to:**
 - Ballot measures
 - Lobbying
 - Advocacy

Seek legal guidance before extensive election-related or policy work

AVOID COERCION OR UNDUE INFLUENCE



- **Ensure staff and volunteers:**
 - Do not pressure individuals to register to vote
 - Do not pressure individuals to vote in any particular way

Participation must always be voluntary

KEEP ACCURATE RECORDS & DOCUMENTATION



- **Maintain clear records of:**

- Voter registration activities
- Materials distributed
- Training provided

- **Documentation supports:**

- Legal compliance
- Accountability
- Audit or inquiry readiness





THANK YOU!
