



THEIR **VOTE** MATTERS

**HOW YOU CAN HELP SENIORS
EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT TO VOTE**

CENTER FOR VULNERABLE VOTERS

Residential Facility and
Skilled Nursing Home
Staff Training Guide



Voting is a fundamental right for American citizens. Unfortunately, not all Americans are able to participate equally in the voting process. Many citizens find the voting process confusing or find that their votes are at risk of not being counted or, in the worst case, subject to fraud.

The Center focuses on:

- Enabling vulnerable voting constituencies to protect their vote and exercise their civic right to participate in America's election process.
- Educating citizens to actively participate in protecting both the voter and their vote.
- Ensuring election officials, poll watchers and poll workers understand how to protect the integrity of all votes.
- Training and educating residential facility and skilled nursing staff in how to protect the voting rights of their most vulnerable residents.
- Educating the general public on the legal ramifications of vote fraud against vulnerable voters.

Staff has a key role to play in protecting Vulnerable Voters

The Center for Vulnerable Voters, is the only center of its kind, providing information and training focused on protecting the votes of the most vulnerable voters in our nation.

The Center's nationwide vote fraud hotline has received hundreds of vote fraud calls. Many of these calls come from staff members at residential facilities, rehabilitation centers and nursing homes. They call to report vote theft and abuse against residents in their facilities, as well as attempts from outside groups to convince staff members to coerce residents to vote a particular way. In all cases, that is illegal.

At the same time, staff members, like you, ask to have better training so they can fulfill their obligation to protect the votes of the residents and patients in their care. We know the majority of healthcare workers care.

My team is grateful for the genuine concern and desire we have seen come from facility directors, physical and occupational therapists, nurses, orderlies and administrative staff to protect vulnerable populations. Together we can make a difference.



Lori Roman
President and CEO

Residential Constituencies



The Center for Vulnerable Voters (CVV) helps the millions of eligible voters who live in centralized housing environments and are ripe for vote suppression and/ or ballot harvesting. CVV identifies vulnerable voting constituencies and fights those who seek to suppress or steal their votes. CVV focuses on the rights of special needs, homeless and physically disabled Americans living in group homes, and elderly voters in both continuing care retirement communities and skilled nursing home facilities.

The Problem



Those receiving services in skilled nursing facilities and residents of long term care facilities could be susceptible to having their ballots tampered with and/or their voting preference suppressed.

It is important to protect the voting rights of those in skilled nursing facilities, convalescent homes, and group homes -- protecting them against vote suppression and vote fraud.

Four Key Terms

Vote Suppression



A strategy used to influence the outcome of an election by discouraging and/or preventing specific groups of people from voting.

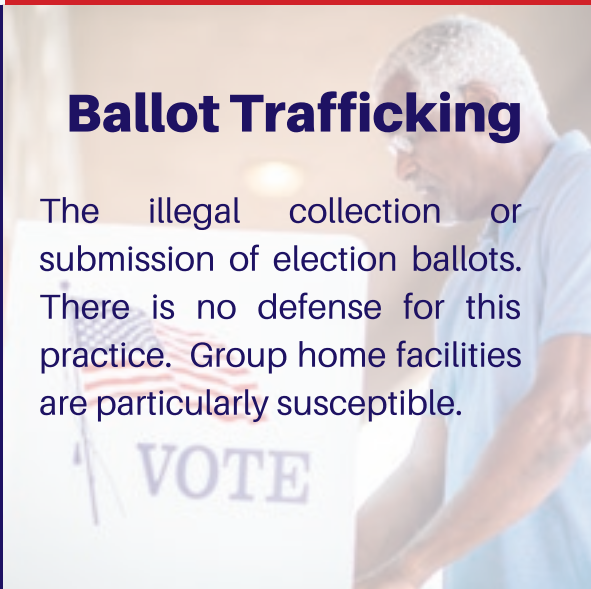
Vote Coercion /Theft

The use of intimidation or fear of reprisal to secure a vote for a specific candidate. In some cases the perpetrator simply completes the ballot without authorization.

Ballot Harvesting

A non secure method of collecting absentee voters' ballots during elections with the stated intent of dropping them off to election offices or polling places. Illegal in some states.

Ballot Trafficking



The illegal collection or submission of election ballots. There is no defense for this practice. Group home facilities are particularly susceptible.

PROTECTING OUR SENIORS DURING ELECTIONS

Some of those in your care may be considered "non compos mentis" -- a term that means they may not know everything that is going on around them -- including which candidates are running in an election and sometimes even their name.

Seniors who can not respond to their name should not be given a ballot.

Residents who can not EITHER express that they wish to vote in the election, OR cannot indicate their preferred choice on the ballot should not have a ballot marked for them.





There have been instances of facility staff being convicted and jailed for forging signatures on absentee ballot request forms and filling out ballots for patients with dementia.

It's important you follow federal and state voting laws. Answering the questions below can help you learn how well you know the voting laws in your area:

- Can I get in trouble for assisting a resident completing a ballot?
- Has someone asked me to suggest a candidate to my residents? Because that's not ok.
- Does the law allow me to collect or submit ballots for multiple people?
- What do I do if asked to assist with a ballot for someone who doesn't know their name or the names of the candidates running?
- Am I making sure ballots are stored securely?
- Am I being careful not to tell residents which candidates to vote for?

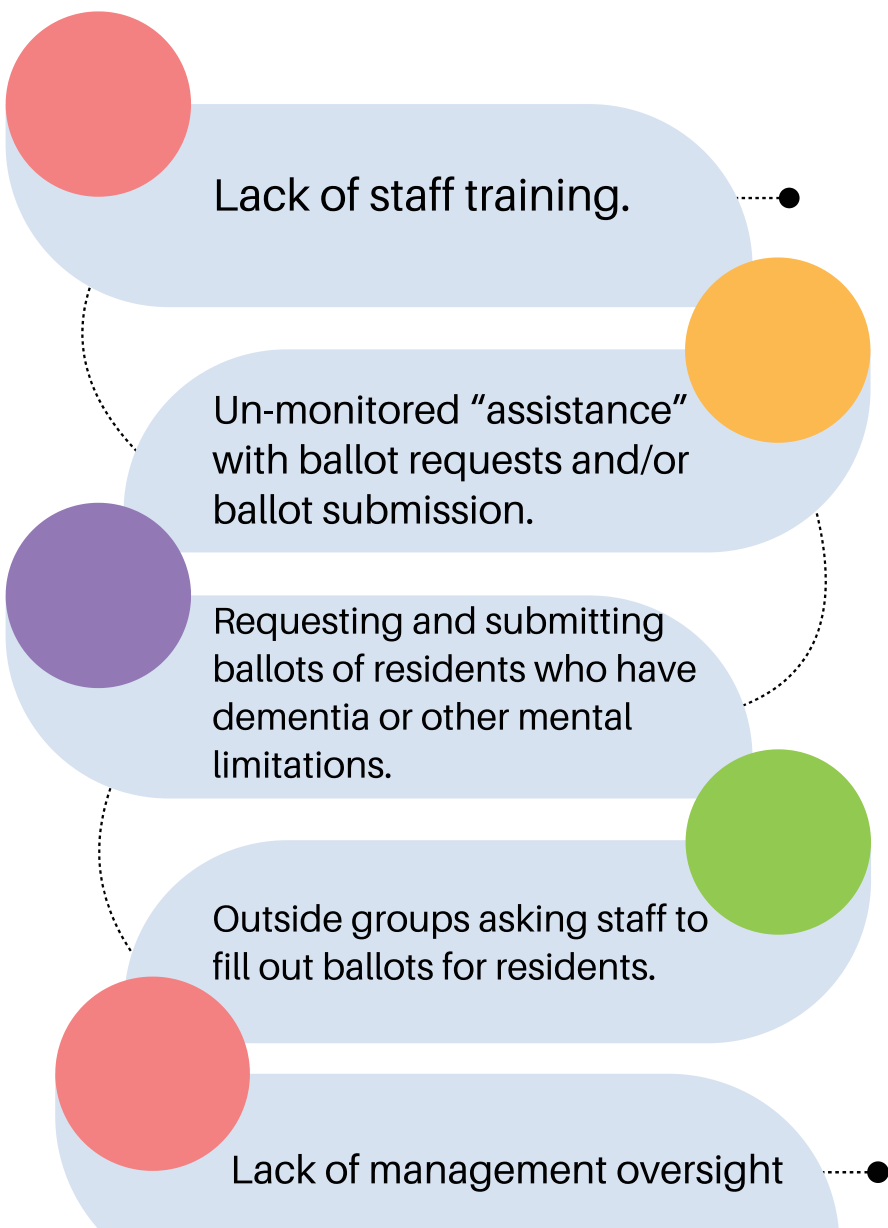
FOLLOWING VOTING LAWS PROTECTS YOU AND YOUR PATIENTS



SCAN ME

DOWNLOAD YOUR STATE LAWS HERE

Facility vulnerabilities



Lack of staff training. ●

Un-monitored “assistance” with ballot requests and/or ballot submission. ●

Requesting and submitting ballots of residents who have dementia or other mental limitations. ●

Outside groups asking staff to fill out ballots for residents. ●

Lack of management oversight ●



PROTECTING OUR FACILITY DURING ELECTIONS

UN-MONITORED VOTING ACTIVITIES CAN LEAD TO FRAUD

Weigh your role carefully. Conduct a self-assessment to ensure you are providing impartial and unbiased assistance if you are asked to help with ballot requests or ballot submissions. **Ensure your state laws allow you to offer assistance.**

It's always better to use the "buddy system." If you're allowed to help residents, try to have another staff person involved along with you. Encourage others to do the same!



Facility directors:

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

-  Vote fraud is a crime, often punishable by steep fines and jail time. You are responsible for educating staff on the voting laws in your state as well as the criminal penalties for vote fraud. You can be held responsible for their failure to comply with laws.
-  Be aware of, and enforce, ballot assistance laws.
-  Know which residents are designated "non compos mentis" in your facility and ensure you know state and federal voting policies for those individuals. Staff should not request or mark ballots for residents who cannot express that they wish to vote in the election, or cannot express their preferred candidate.
-  Enact protocols at your facility to protect the residents from possible vote suppression and fraud.
-  Teach staff that it's never "ok" to tell a resident who to vote for. It's illegal.



DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)

-  **Protect your staff members from outside groups that offer financial compensation for ballot trafficking.**
-  **Create systems - which you monitor - to protect the chain of custody of absentee ballots.**
-  **Discuss with your staff how to protect absentee ballots from ballot harvesters / traffickers and create systems to protect your residents' ballots.**
-  **Create a training program to teach staff what constitutes vote suppression and fraud and create policies to prevent these crimes at your facility.**
-  **Reward staff members who exemplify best practices in patient care and who protect their patient's voting choice. These staff members are champions for America's Constitution.**



Residents have a right to privacy when voting

Residents with cognitive deficits should **not** request ballots

It's never "ok" to tell a resident who to vote for. It's illegal.

It's never "OK" to cast a resident's ballot

WHAT I MUST KNOW TO PROTECT MYSELF & MY RESIDENTS

You must know your state laws

Residents have a right to not vote

Residents may have a right to request family assistance with voting

GUIDE FOR FACILITY STAFF MEMBERS



DOWNLOAD YOUR STATE LAW HERE

Each state has laws that govern election rules for residents of nursing homes, group homes, and residential and skilled nursing facilities. Staff members at these facilities must know these laws and ensure they follow these voting rules and regulations.



Senior Citizen Bill of Rights Pocket Guide

- 1- The right to vote -- or not vote.
The choice is yours, and yours alone.
- 2- The right to refuse assistance from
unknown persons and persons you don't
want help from.
- 3- The right to privacy. No one has the right
to ask you about your personal and private
voting preferences or make a voting
suggestion. Voting is confidential!
- 4- The right to redress. If you believe your
rights have been violated, you can report
this to your local election official.
- 5- The right to request candidate visits at
your residence. Ask your resident
manager to invite candidates of all parties
to visit your residence, hear your concerns,
and explain their policy positions.

**You have the right to participate as
little, or as much, as you want.**



Vote Fraud Hotline

888-820-VOTE

CenterForVulnerableVoters.org

VOTING BILL OF RIGHTS

★★★ CARE FACILITY RESIDENTS ★★★

We must do everything in our power to make sure the votes of our vulnerable citizens are protected and counted fairly. This Bill of Rights outlines what vulnerable voters can and should expect from our election systems — an environment that makes it easy to vote and hard to cheat.

I. THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The federal Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act of 1984 (VAEHA) is designed to assure the fundamental right to vote by directing polling locations to provide access for elderly and handicapped voters.

II. THE RIGHT TO REGISTER TO VOTE

You also have the right to register to vote if you have changed your place of residence. Registration requirements vary by state and are found by calling your state, county or city election office. You may find your state's requirements or directly register to vote at <https://www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state>. To avoid fraudulent system abuse, we recommend contacting your previous voting jurisdiction to ensure you are removed from their voter rolls.

III. THE RIGHT TO CHALLENGE VOTE FRAUD

After every recent election, there have been reports of people taking advantage of seniors to commit vote fraud by changing votes, inputting false choices and other crimes. Vote fraud is often committed face-to-face by people who approach you to “assist” with filling out your ballot or “delivering” your ballot to a polling location. You should only rely on trusted and known individuals to assist you with voting, and you have the right to refuse assistance from anyone you do not know or trust.

VOTING BILL OF RIGHTS

★★★ CARE FACILITY RESIDENTS ★★★

IV. THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ASSISTANCE FROM UNKNOWN PERSONS

Many political operatives are active in neighborhoods or facilities with a large senior population and have been known to manipulate or change votes. Suppose a stranger approaches you with offers of voting assistance. In that case, you have a right to refuse such help and request that the operative or unknown person leave your property or residential unit.

V. THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY

If any person is legally assisting you at your private home or residential facility with filling in your mail-in, absentee or in-person ballot, your choice is yours alone. It should not reflect the political preferences of the person assisting. Any person assisting you with transportation or accommodation at your home, residential facility or polling station has no right to ask you about your personal and private voting preferences or make a voting suggestion. Voting is confidential!

VI. THE RIGHT TO AN ABSENTEE OR MAIL BALLOT

Although procedures for voting by mail or absentee ballots vary by state, every state must provide senior citizens with an absentee or mail-in ballot when requested. You can find this information by calling your state or local election office or online at <https://www.usa.gov/election-office>.

VOTING BILL OF RIGHTS

★★★ CARE FACILITY RESIDENTS ★★★

VII. THE RIGHT TO CONFIRMATION OF YOUR VOTE CHOICE

If you live in a senior residence, the option of staff or volunteers assisting you with filling out your absentee or mail-in ballot is determined by the laws in your state. If your state allows such help, you have the right to ensure that your ballot is handled confidentially, securely, and accurately--reflecting your vote choice.

VIII. THE RIGHT TO DEMAND THAT FACILITY STAFF ADHERE TO STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS

If you live in a group home you have a right to request that your facility provide staff training on adherence to state and federal election laws. In some states, facility staff and volunteers are not allowed to assist with filling out ballots. Staff cannot influence or comment on your choices, and they must maintain the confidentiality of your vote. If you suspect laws are being broken, you have the right to report the facility to local election officials and the Secretary of State or Attorney General offices in your state. You may call the Center for Vulnerable Voter **at 888-820-VOTE.**

IX. THE RIGHT TO VOTING INFORMATION

The federal website [USA.gov](https://www.usa.gov) provides complete information about your polling station and requirements in its "Find My State or Local Election Office" tab. This information can be accessed directly here: <https://www.usa.gov/election-office>. The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center can provide information and resources to you by calling 202.332.2275 or online at <https://ltcombudsman.org/issues/voting>.

VOTING BILL OF RIGHTS

★★★ CARE FACILITY RESIDENTS ★★★

X. THE RIGHT TO APPLY FOR STATE PHOTO ID

Seniors who have given up a driving license have a right to receive a photo ID from their state. Presenting ID at polling stations helps to ensure no vote fraud will be committed in your name and affirms your right to vote in states requiring ID. Most states provide free photo ID to seniors. You or a trusted friend or relative can check with your state's motor vehicle department to determine procedures, required documentation and fees.

XI. THE RIGHT TO REQUEST ACCOMMODATION AT POLLING STATIONS

Federal law provides you with the right to ask your polling location for accommodation and alternate means of voting on election day if you have sensory or mobility issues. These accommodations include visual aids, telecommunication devices for the hearing impaired or wheelchair ramps, without a medical certificate being required.

XII. THE RIGHT TO MOVE TO HEAD OF THE LINE

If you are over 70 years old or physically disabled, federal law gives you the right to move to the front of the line at your polling location by making a request at check-in.

XIII. THE RIGHT TO VOTE EVEN IF YOUR POLLING LOCATION IS NOT ACCESSIBLE

Suppose your home polling location cannot provide adequate accommodation for your physical disability. In that case, that location must direct you to the nearest polling station that can accommodate your sensory or mobility restrictions or provide another means of voting for you on Election Day.

VOTING BILL OF RIGHTS

★★★ CARE FACILITY RESIDENTS ★★★

XIV. THE RIGHT TO CURBSIDE VOTING

Many states and local election locations provide drive-up voting to accommodate people who wish to vote in person but have mobility challenges. In this case, a designated curbside official will show you their credential then provide you with a paper or electronic ballot. Please call ahead or check the website of your state or local election officials to find out if this service is available to you.

XV. THE RIGHT TO EARLY VOTING

With shorter lines and fewer crowds, early voting is often a good option for seniors. A majority of states and the District of Columbia permit early voting. Check with your state or local election office to see if your voting jurisdiction allows early voting.

XVI. THE RIGHT TO REDRESS IF NOT ACCOMMODATED ON ELECTION DAY

If you believe your rights to the accommodation have been violated, you can report this to your local election official. Be sure to notify your election official with specific detail, including time and place, within 45 days of the election violation.

XVII. THE RIGHT TO REQUEST CANDIDATE VISITS AT YOUR SENIOR RESIDENCE

Many candidates visit senior residences before elections. You have the right to request your residence manager invite candidates of all parties to visit your residence, hear your concerns, and explain their policy positions.

VOTING BILL OF RIGHTS

★★★ CARE FACILITY RESIDENTS ★★★

XVIII. THE RIGHT TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE

Many procedures and requirements for absentee or mail ballots and in-person voting accommodations can be found online on state and local voting information websites, as well as local political party pages.

XIX. THE RIGHT TO DEMAND YOUR VOTING RIGHTS

You've earned it! If you feel your rights are being violated on election day, speak up for those rights or ask for assistance from a relative or trusted friend to ensure you can trust the integrity of your voting choice and be provided full federally-protected sensory or physical accommodation.

XX. THE RIGHT TO MARK ELECTION DAY ON YOUR CALENDAR

If you prefer to vote absentee, we recommend requesting your ballot no later than two months before election day. Don't miss your chance to have your voice heard in the political process.

XXI. THE RIGHT TO TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR VOTE

America celebrates and treasures its senior voters who have left an indelible mark on our strength and patriotic culture. We thank you for your leadership and life-long demonstration of exemplary citizenship.

CENTER FOR VULNERABLE VOTERS

305 5th Avenue South
Suite 204-G
Naples, FL 34102

888-820-VOTE

CenterForVulnerableVoters.org