

# Get Ready to Vote!

**Nancy Ward, SABE Voter Project  
Michelle Bishop, NDRN**

**April 2016**



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# Today's Presenters

## **Nancy Ward**

Co-Director, Voter Project

Self Advocates Becoming Empowered

## **Michelle Bishop**

Voting Rights Specialist

National Disability Rights Network



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# Why is Voting So Important?

- Voting is how you make sure your voice is being heard.
- The people we do (or don't) vote for get to decide important things in all of our lives.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access



# Why is Voting So Important?

- The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) says that everyone has the right to vote...
- Privately: no one has to know who you are voting for or why.
- Independently: you should be able to go through the whole voting process by yourself.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# Get Registered to Vote

- Before you can vote, you have to register.
- This way, your name will be on the list when you go to vote.
- To register to vote you must:
  - Be a citizen of the United States
  - Live in the state where you want to register
  - Be at least 18 years old on election day



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# Get Registered to Vote

- You need to fill out a new voter registration form if you
  - Have never registered before
  - Have a new address, even if it is in the same city
  - Changed your name
- You can find out how to register to vote in your state at [http://www.eac.gov/voter\\_resources/contact\\_your\\_state.aspx](http://www.eac.gov/voter_resources/contact_your_state.aspx)
- If you think you are registered, you can check using [www.CanIVote.org](http://www.CanIVote.org)



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access



# Get Registered to Vote

- In some states, you cannot register to vote if you have a guardian.
- You can find out if that is true in your state by going to <http://www.bazelon.org/Where-We-Stand/Self-Determination/Voting.aspx>



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# Get Registered to Vote

- If you have a guardian and are worried that you cannot register to vote in your state:
  - Make sure by looking at the guardianship papers.
  - You can have a judge change your guardianship papers to say that you can register to vote. Your guardian should help you get this changed.
  - You can also find the Protection & Advocacy (P&A) office in your state, and they will help you with this. You can find your P&A by going to <http://www.ndrn.org/en/ndrn-member-agencies.html>.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access



# Get Registered to Vote

- You might need to sign a voter registration form.
- If you can't sign your name, you can make a mark or ask someone to help you sign.
- Remember: you can register to vote even if you cannot read or write.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access



# Learn About the Ballot

- After you register to vote, you should learn what you will be voting on so you will be ready to make a decision.
- Where you can find out what will be on your ballot at [www.vote411.org/ballot](http://www.vote411.org/ballot)
- Make time to learn about the people and issues that will be on your ballot before election day.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# Make a Plan to Vote

- Before election day, make sure you know:
  - Where is my polling place?
  - How will I get there and back?
  - Do I know who I want to vote for?
  - Do I have the right kind of ID?
  - How can I celebrate after I vote?
- You can even:
  - Fill out a copy of the ballot and bring it with you.
  - Plan to go vote with friends and celebrate together.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# Questions?



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

NATIONAL  
**DISABILITY RIGHTS**  
NETWORK

Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities



# When You Go to Vote

- Polling places are required by law to be accessible.
  - Just like other public places (schools, stores, restaurants, movie theaters...)
- Sadly, some polling place still aren't accessible.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# When You Go to Vote

- At your polling place:
  - Make sure you know what you need to get around (like a ramp, elevator, or wide enough doors), and make sure your polling place has it.
  - If there are power cords, they should be taped down so no one trips on them.
  - No one should be able to see who you are voting for.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# When You Go to Vote

- There should be a way for you to vote independently, even if you can't fill out a paper form.
- Poll workers should know how make a voting machine accessible for you, and don't be afraid to ask for it.
- If you need help voting, you can bring whoever you want to help you.
- You can also ask the poll workers, and they will have one Democrat and one Republican help you.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# If You Have Trouble Voting

- Talk to the poll workers:
  - First, try asking for the help you need.
  - If poll workers won't help you or let you vote, ask for the supervisor. They are there to help you.
  - If you are nervous, you can bring a paper with you about your rights and show it to the poll workers if they will not let you vote.
- Remember: If you are registered and your correct name and address are in the check-in book - poll workers can't tell you that you can't vote.



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access



# If You Have Trouble Voting

- You can also bring a paper with people you can contact to help you. That could be:
  - A disability group that you are a member of, like a SABA or People First chapter
  - The Protection & Advocacy agency in your state
  - The Election Protection hotline (866-OUR-VOTE)
- DON'T give up, and DON'T lose your right to vote!



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

# After You Vote

- Tell people that you voted!
- Tell other people that they should vote to!
- CELEBRATE!
- Share your voting story:
  - Tell your family and friends
  - Tell your self advocacy group
  - Tell your Protection & Advocacy agency
  - Email your story to [listen@eac.gov](mailto:listen@eac.gov)



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access



# Questions?



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access

NATIONAL  
**DISABILITY RIGHTS**  
NETWORK

Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities



# Thank you!



**GoVoter.org**

National Technical Assistance Center for  
Voting and Cognitive Access