Project VOTE – Online Voter Education Tool Kit
Workbook

This Workbook is to be used with the Project VOTE Online Voter Education Tool Kit found at http://www.olrs.ohio.gov/tutorials/vote. The Online Tool Kit is an online training for people with disabilities about voting.

As you work through each part of the Online Tool Kit, you will find “Workbook” exercises. You will use this Workbook to take notes and answer questions.

Using the Workbook is helpful because once you are done with the training, you can look at your Workbook to remind you of the things you learned.

For more information about voting:

Ohio Legal Rights Service
http://www.olrs.ohio.gov/topic-voting

Ohio Secretary of State
http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections.aspx
Workbook Exercise 1

Use the space below to write questions you have about voting. At the end of the training, you will review your list to see if your questions have been answered.
Workbook Exercise 2

How does voting fit into your life? People vote for different things every day. For example, people can vote for their favorite contestant on a TV show, like American Idol. Or a group of people ordering a pizza might choose to vote on which toppings they want. No matter what you are voting for, you are making a decision and voting for what you want. It’s your choice!

Answer the following questions to see how voting fits into your life.

What are examples of things you can vote on?

What are some of the things you voted on in the past?

How did it make you feel when you voted?
Workbook Exercise 3

There are different people and issues you might vote on during an election. Have you voted for any of these people or issues? Make a checkmark in the box next to each person or issue you have voted for.

_____ president
_____ senator
_____ representative
_____ governor
_____ mayor
_____ county commissioner
_____ city council members
_____ measures, propositions
_____ taxes, bonds
_____ school board members

Answer the following questions:

Have you voted for something that made a difference in the lives of people with disabilities?

Do you think it is your responsibility as a citizen to vote?
Workbook Exercise 4

On the next two pages is a Voter Registration Form. Use a blue or black ink pen to complete the form. The Online Tool Kit will provide step-by-step instructions on how to complete the form. This form can also be downloaded and printed from the Ohio Secretary of State's website at  
http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/publications.aspx#vrf.
Eligibility
You are qualified to register to vote in Ohio if you meet all the following requirements:
1. You are a citizen of the United States.
2. You will be at least 18 years old on or before the day of the general election.
3. You will be a resident of Ohio for at least 30 days immediately before the election in which you want to vote.
4. You are not incarcerated (in jail or in prison) for a felony conviction.
5. You have not been declared incompetent for voting purposes by a probate court.
6. You have not been permanently disenfranchised for violations of the election laws.

Use this form to register to vote or to update your current Ohio registration if you have changed your address or name.

NOTICE: This form must be received or postmarked by the 30th day before an election at which you intend to vote. You will be notified by your county board of elections of the location where you vote. If you do not receive a notice prior to Election Day, please contact your county board of elections.

Lines 1 and 2 below are required by law. You must answer both of the questions for your registration to be processed.

Registering in Person
If you have a current valid Ohio driver’s license, you must provide that number on line 10. If you do not have an Ohio driver’s license, you must provide the last four digits of your Social Security number on line 10. If you have neither, please write "None."

Registering by Mail
If you register by mail and do not provide either a current Ohio driver’s license number or the last four digits of your Social Security number, please enclose with your application a copy of one of the following forms of identification that shows your name and current address:
- Current valid photo identification card, military identification, or current (within one year) utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check or government document (except board of elections notifications) showing your name and current address.

Your Signature
Your signature is required for your registration to be processed. In the box next to the arrow by line 14, please affix your signature or mark, taking care that it does not touch surrounding lines or type so it can be effectively used to identify you. If your signature is a mark, include the name and address of the person who witnessed the mark beneath the signature line. If by reason of disability you are unable to physically sign, you may follow specific procedures found in Ohio law (R.C. 3501.382) to appoint an attorney-in-fact who may sign this form on your behalf at your direction and in your presence.

Please see information on back of this form to learn how to obtain an absentee ballot.
HOW TO OBTAIN AN OHIO ABSENTEE BALLOT
You are entitled to vote by absentee ballot in Ohio without providing a reason. Absentee ballot applications may be obtained from your county board of elections or from the Secretary of State at: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov or by calling 1-877-767-6446.

OHIO VOTER IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
R.C. 3503.19
Voters must bring identification to the polls in order to verify identity. Identification may include a current and valid photo identification, a military identification, or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document, other than a notice of an election or a voter registration notification sent by a board of elections, that shows the voter’s name and current address. Voters who do not provide one of these documents will still be able to vote by providing the last four digits of the voter’s Social Security number and by casting a provisional ballot. Voters who do not have any of the above forms of identification, including a Social Security number, will still be able to vote by signing an affirmation swearing to the voter’s identity under penalty of election falsification and by casting a provisional ballot. For more information on voter identification requirements, please consult the Secretary of State’s website at: www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov or call 1-877-767-6446.

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Workbook Exercise 5

Who would you vote for? Now that you have met the candidates, answer the following questions.

Who would you vote for and why?

Why wouldn’t you vote for the others?

Would it change your mind if you found out that Sally the Socialite Candidate supported community employment opportunities and had voted to close sheltered workshops so that everybody could get a job that pays well?

Would it change your mind if you found out that Carl the Community Candidate owed a lot of people money?

Would it change your mind if Leo the Legislator Candidate receives campaign contributions from insurance companies and votes to cut Medicaid?
Workbook Exercise 6

Here are some ideas for ways to learn about candidates and issues.

- Review the “What’s on the ballot” section of the Secretary of State’s website http://www.sos.state.oh.us/sos/elections/Voters/whatsontheballot/whatsOnBallot.aspx.
- Attend or host a Legislative Day.
- Call for an appointment with a legislator.
- Invite a League of Woman Voters representative or an elected official to come speak with your advocacy group.
- Look up a candidate’s voting record.
- Read your local newspaper.
- Talk with family and friends.
- Listen to the radio and television talk shows.
- Make a checklist of what is important to you and check whether the candidates share your ideas.

Are there other ways you can learn about candidates and issues?

What ways work best for you?
Workbook Exercise 7

There are many different ways to cast your vote. Have you voted in any of these ways? Make a checkmark next the ways you have voted.

I have voted:

_____ By mailed in my ballot
_____ With a touch-screen voting machine at a polling place
_____ With a mechanical-lever voting machine at a polling place
_____ With a punch card at a polling place
_____ With a paper ballot at a polling place
_____ By using an absentee ballot

Are there other ways you have voted?

Did you run into any problems?

Which way is the best way for you to vote?
Workbook Exercise 8

Example 1
You have a hard time remembering what to do when you are in the voting booth and would like someone to help you. What can you do?

Solutions and more information:
- Take a sample ballot into the voting booth with you.
- You can bring a person of your choice into the voting booth to help you. However, that person may not be a candidate on the ballot, and may not be an agent of your employer or your labor union. (An "agent" is a person who is told by your employer to do something for them.)
- You can ask a poll worker to help you. Two poll workers will provide assistance to you in marking your ballot.
- Ask a poll worker for an audio or video tape tutorial.

Example 2
You use a wheelchair but the walkway to from the parking lot to the voting place is not accessible and the doorway to the voting place is not wide enough. What can you do?

Solutions and more information:
All polling places must be physically accessible to persons with disabilities unless an exemption has been granted by the Secretary of State for "good cause."

- Before election day, you can contact the county board of elections to make sure your voting place is accessible. If it is not accessible, you can require the board of elections to reassign you to an accessible voting place.
- You can also ask the board of elections to provide you another way (called an "accommodation") of casting your ballot on election day. An example of an accommodation is for the voting place to offer "curbside voting" where a poll worker will come out to your car to bring you a ballot to cast.
- If your voting place is not accessible and no one is helping you, contact LRS.
Example 3
One of the poll workers tells you that you are not allowed to vote because you are developmentally disabled. What can you do?

Solutions and more information:
- You cannot be told you cannot vote based only on your mental ability. You can be challenged only on qualifications such as age, residency and citizenship.
- If the poll worker still will not let you vote, you can ask for a provisional ballot. This is a temporary ballot you can use.

Example 4
Your guardian says you are not allowed to vote. What can you do?

Solutions and more information:
- Explain to your guardian why voting is important and that you want to vote.
- A general finding of incompetency and guardianship does not take away the right to vote. If the order does not specify that you are incompetent to vote, then you may register and vote.
Workbook Exercise 9

There are many ways to become involved in the voting process besides registering to vote and casting your vote. Here are several other ways to become involved. Mark a check next to the ways you would like to get involved in the voting process.

_____ Be a poll worker. Attend training on becoming a poll worker.
_____ Practice new voting machines when your local election board is thinking about buying a new accessible voting machine.
_____ Educate others about voting, including family members, social service agencies, community advocacy groups and your friends and peers.
_____ Work with the candidates on their campaigns and political platforms.
_____ Pass out petitions or registration cards.
_____ Be an advocate for yourself and others about voting rights, issues and ways to get out and vote.
_____ Educate the people about the issues that are important to you.
_____ Attend the primary caucus meeting and get important issues on the party platform.
_____ Encourage full inclusion for all people in the registration and voting process.

Can you think of other ways to become involved?
Workbook Exercise 10

One way to become involved in the voting process is to become involved with your community. Building relationships with other community members will raise their awareness of the issues that concern you and will help inspire people to get out and vote.

- Ask voting representatives to do a part of the training.
- Hold trainings at the elections office.
- Invite legislators to do parts of the training.
- Get involved in a task force on voting.
- Go to community meetings about voting.
- Send email and paper mail information.
- Work on proposals to increase accessibility.

Who are some of your current community partners you work with?

What are some ways you can build connections with other agencies, organizations and people in your community?
Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions

How do I use a voting machine?

Ohio uses two types of voting machines. These machines are the Direct Recording Electronic machine and the Optical Scan machine. Each county is required to have at least one machine per polling place that is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for voters with disabilities.

To find out which machines are used at your polling place, go to the Ohio Secretary of State's website at http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/Upload/elections/votingsystems.aspx?page=361 where you will find a map that shows the machines used in each county. When you use the map, you can click on a link to a video that shows how to use the different machines. A link to a written description on how to use each machine is also provided.

Contact your local county board of elections if you have questions or need more instructions. To find your local county board of elections, go to http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections/electionsofficials/boeDirectory.aspx.

What if I need help getting to my voting location?

There are several ways to ask for assistance if you don't have a way to get to your voting location.

- Call your local or county campaign headquarters of either political party or the office of a local candidate. They will usually arrange for a volunteer to take you to your voting place.
- Ask your case manager or social worker if they can assist you or if they know someone else who can.
- Contact your local paratransit service and arrange transportation in advance.

Can I vote early?

Yes, you can vote early. You can vote early by using an absentee ballot.

To get an absentee ballot, you must send a written application to your county board of elections (http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections/electionsofficials/boeDirectory.aspx) no later than noon on the third day before Election Day. You cannot apply for an absentee ballot more than ninety days before an election.
Application forms for absentee ballots are available from the board of elections and from other government agencies. After the board of elections receives your application for an absentee ballot, it will either mail the ballot to you or deliver it to you.

If you living in a public or private institution within the county and cannot leave or are unable to mail in an absentee ballot, the board of elections is required to send two employees to you to deliver your ballot and to return it to the board. If you need assistance in marking your ballot because of your disability, tell the two employees and they will assist you.

What if I’m in a hospital or nursing home?

The answer depends on your situation.

- If you are able to leave the hospital, you can go to the voting place yourself.
- If you need assistance with transportation to the voting place, ask the social worker or client rights advocate to arrange transportation. If possible, you should request transportation assistance before election day.
- If you cannot leave the hospital, the social worker or client rights advocate should assist you in contacting the county board of elections or you can contact the board of elections.
- If your residence is in a different county from the hospital, different arrangements will need to be made. Talk with the social worker or client rights advocate to make arrangements in advance.

Do I have to provide identification?

When you come to the polling place to vote, you must identify yourself and provide proof of your identity.

Proof of identity may be in the form of:
- driver's license;
- state identification card;
- other valid photo identification;
- military identification;
- copy of a current utility bill;
- bank statement;
- government check;
- paycheck; or
- another government document (but you cannot use a notice of election mailed by the board of elections, or a notice of voter registration mailed by the board of elections).
The document you use should show your current address. If a driver's license or state identification card does not show your current address, it is still valid. The precinct election official will make a notation that the address is not current.

**What if I don’t have identification with me?**

If you don't have identification with you, you can still vote by casting a provisional ballot. A provisional ballot is used to record a vote if a voter's eligibility is in question and the voter would otherwise not be permitted to vote at his or her polling place. If you have a Social Security number and can provide the last four digits of that number, you can cast a provisional ballot without further proof or contact with the board of elections.

If you don't have identification with you and have no Social Security number, you can still vote by provisional ballot by signing an affirmation form provided by the election precinct officials. You are not required to have any further contact with the board of elections.

If you have an accepted form of identification but you don't have it with you, and if you have a Social Security number but cannot state the last four digits of that number, you can vote by provisional ballot. Then you must go to the board of elections office within ten days and give them an accepted form of identification or provide the last four digits of your Social Security number. If you don't go, your vote will not be counted.
Appendix B: What do I do if I think my right to vote is being violated?

If you believe your right to vote is being violated, there are several places that can help you.

**Ohio Legal Rights Service (LRS)** is an independent state agency and the federally and state designated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system and Client Assistance Program for people with disabilities in the State of Ohio. LRS was created to protect the rights of Ohioans with disabilities, and that includes protecting the fundamental right to vote. If you experience problems when you register to vote or exercise your right to vote, please contact LRS. You can call LRS' Intake toll free telephone line or write to LRS Intake.

Ohio Legal Rights Service  
50 West Broad Street, Suite 1400  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-5923  
Telephone: 800-282-9181 (statewide toll free) or 614-466-7264 (toll call)  
TTY: 800-858-3542 (statewide toll free) or 614-728-2553 (toll call)  
FAX: 614-644-1888  
Web site: www.olrs.ohio.gov

The **Ohio Secretary of State** receives and reviews complaints of voting rights violations. If you believe that your rights to accessible voting places and equipment have been violated, you have the right to file a complaint with the Secretary of State. Complaints made by U.S. mail should be sent to:

Ohio Secretary of State  
Attn: Director of Elections  
P.O. Box 2828  
Columbus, Ohio 43216

Complaints made in person, by phone, fax or email should be made to:

Ohio Secretary of State  
Attn: Director of Elections  
180 East Broad Street, 15th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
Telephone: 877-767-6446 or 614-466-2585 (ask for "Elections Division")  
TTY: 614-466-0562  
Fax: 614-752-4360

You can also contact your County Boards of Elections ([http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections/electionsofficials/boeDirectory.aspx](http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections/electionsofficials/boeDirectory.aspx)) which are responsible for voter registration and administering polling places in
Ohio. Contact your local Board of Elections if you have a problem with finding your voting location, accessing the location or ballot, registering to vote, or applying for an absentee ballot.

The **United States Department of Justice (DOJ)** enforces ADA Title II and investigates complaints of ADA Title II violations. If you believe that your rights to accessible voting places and equipment have been violated, you have the right to file a complaint with the DOJ.

United States Department of Justice  
Telephone: 800-514-0301 (toll free)  
TTY: 800-514-0383  
On the Web: [http://www.ada.gov/enforce.htm#anchor218282](http://www.ada.gov/enforce.htm#anchor218282)