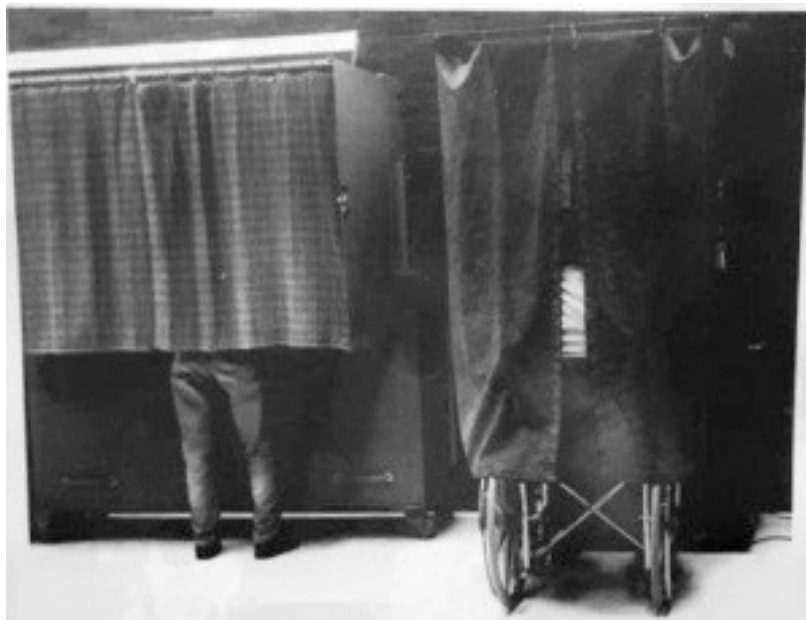




## **Get Out The Vote (GOTV) 2016 Phone Banking Guide**

Prepared by the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL)

October 2016



**"With Rights come Responsibilities!"**

Throughout 2016, we have seen policy issues important to the disability community start to receive significant attention from politicians seeking election. From presidential candidates all the way down to local officials, it is important to make sure that candidates know that people with disabilities not only vote, but that we are passionate about seeing policies and legislation created around issues that are important to us. It has been projected that one in six eligible voters during this election will have a disability, and more than 25 percent of the eligible electorate will either have a disability or have a family member with a disability.<sup>1</sup> It is essential that we mobilize this significant voting force to head to the polls on November 8. The Missouri Disability Vote Project claims that phone banking is "the single most effective tactic" in encouraging voters with disabilities to turn up at the polls on Election Day. You can participate in this important voting tactic by making a list of your own contacts and making GOTV phone calls of your own!

## **GOTV Phone Calls**

With the election close at hand, it is necessary not only to inform our family, friends, and acquaintances about the importance of this election and the issues that matter to Americans with disabilities, but to encourage these contacts to show up at the polls on Election Day. One of the most effective ways to do this is to make GOTV phone calls. Making these calls can be broken down into four simple steps.

1. **Make a list of your personal contacts.** This can include family, friends, coworkers, church members, class members, recreational club members, or any other acquaintance whose phone number you have. Get creative and brainstorm a list of everybody you can contact about getting out the vote in and for the disability community.
2. **Pick up the phone and give them a call!**
3. **Ask them if they plan on voting** in the upcoming election.
4. **Inform them about the disability policy issues** that are important to you and your community in this upcoming election.

With the election so close at hand, when is the right time to make these calls? According to the Missouri Disability Vote Project, GOTV phone calls should start no sooner than three weeks before the election, and they should continue up to and through Election Day. These rounds of calling, or "sweeps," should happen a few times so that you can make calls to all registered voters and try to reach as many people as possible, as you will not reach everybody on the first call. Here is a handy schedule to help you plan your GOTV phone calls:

### **3 weeks before Election Day (Oct 18)**

- **Round 1: GOTV Phone Calls:** first contact to all list members

### **2 weeks before Election Day (Oct 25)**

- **Round 2: GOTV Phone Calls:** second round of calls to people not reached during first round

### **Weekend before Election Day (Nov 5)**

- **Round 3: GOTV Phone Calls:** reminder call to all individuals who indicated that they are planning to vote



## Phone Banking Best Practices

- According to the Missouri Disability Vote Project, the best times of day to make your GOTV phone calls are in the early- to mid-evening, or on weekend afternoons, as this is when people are most likely to be at home and answering phone calls.
- Here are some tips and best practices from Carol Westlake, Executive Director of the Tennessee Disability Coalition, which has been leading an active and successful GOTV disability campaign since 2002.<sup>ii</sup>
  - **Make GOTV personal.** Contact people with whom you have a familiar relationship, as you are more likely to be able to convince them to vote than you would a stranger.
  - **Make it easy.** Make sure that you are knowledgeable about voting processes and information in your state, as you may need to provide this information to your callers so that they, in turn, can go out and vote. Here is some information you should find out prior to making your calls.
    - Does your state have voter ID laws that require certain types of identification at the polls? [Find out your state's requirements.](#)
    - Does your state allow early voting, and where and when does it start? Contact your Board of Elections, or refer to this [calendar.](#)
    - Does your state allow absentee ballot voting for disabled voters, and how can these voters obtain an absentee ballot? The National Conference of State Legislatures has more information about [absentee and early voting.](#)
    - How can a voter find the location and hours of their polling place? Visit or direct individuals to your state Board of Election's website to find out about local polling locations and hours, or visit [Rock the Vote](#) to find election information in your state.
  - **Time your calls correctly.** Follow the GOTV schedule provided above to make sure that your calls are at a time when people are both available and thinking about the election.
  - **Help them figure out a plan.** If you can, help them figure out what information they need to take to the polls (such as voter identification) and brainstorm with logistics, if possible.
    - Does your area have accessible transportation options on voting day? If so, pass this information on to voters who may need it.
    - Once early voting has begun: when someone says that they will vote, ask them when they are planning on going to the polls. Helping the person pin down a time increases the likelihood that they will vote.

- Tips for Effective Messaging and Calling: while it is exciting to engage with somebody who "gets it," it is important to make sure that you are focused on making as many calls as possible. Because of this, it is best to try to keep the call brief.
  - The best messaging will be brief and to the point, as you want to capture the individual's attention and link voting to the disability issues that matter to you.
    - An example message provided by the Missouri Disability Vote Project is "If you care about protecting your rights under the ADA, vote on November 8."
  - Try to set a goal for the amount of calls that you make per hour. A good starting target is **six calls per hour.**

**GOTV CALL LOG**

Date	Name	Phone #	Voting Y/N

---

<sup>i</sup>Source: [Disability, Voter Turnout, and Voting Difficulties in the 2012 Elections](#) (PDF)  
<sup>ii</sup> Tips provided by Carol Westlake during October 4, 2016 Rev Up National Organizing Call.