

EDSD Nonpartisan Voter Participation Initiative (NVPI)
Terms of Reference for Congregational Voter Advocate

Objective: As witness to being Jesus people, build a positive EDSD voter participation initiative in 2024 through a coalition of local congregations, community partners and the Diocesan Service and Advocacy groups.

Terms of Reference:

1. Each local church interested in engaging in this positive initiative to implement nonpartisan activities in support of voter participation for the 2024 Elections will identify a Congregational Voter Advocate to coordinate its efforts. Each Congregational Voter Advocate must be nominated/referred by the head of the congregation.
2. The Congregational Voter Advocate will be the local NVPI team leader composed of the members of the congregation and partners engaging in the activities to promote voter participation. Each local NVPI team will identify a plan of action with activities appropriate to its parish and team members, such as voter registration, engaging with young voters, candidate forums, information forums on state propositions or local measures, rides to polls, .
3. The Congregational Voter Advocate will promote collaborations within the parish, e.g. with local nonprofits, schools, colleges and other faith-based groups.
4. With church leaders, the Congregational Voter Advocate will facilitate discussions focused on the scriptural basis of issues relevant to the elections. A choice of Bishop Office approved materials will be available.
5. The Congregational Voter Advocate must ensure all activities are conducted in a nonpartisan manner¹
6. All local NVPI participants will receive relevant trainings about:
 - a. What is and is not nonpartisan activities (required)
 - b. How to identify misinformation
 - c. Conducting civil conversations
 - d. Conducting activities as identified in the local plan of action such as
 - i. How to conduct voter registration
 - ii. How to complete mail ballots properly
7. Congregational Voter Advocates are expected to represent their church at a monthly zoom NVPI meeting for networking and support. During the monthly meeting, relevant trainings will be conducted and Congregational Voter Advocates will be provided with the resources to train their local NVPI team. The Diocesan NVPI leaders group and Diocesan staff will be available during the zoom and in-between to provide ongoing advice and support.

¹ The Internal Revenue Code provides that, by definition, 501(c)(3) organizations do not “participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.” In other words, taking an active role in a political campaign can negate a church’s tax-exempt status. Church Law Center, Oct 2, 2020 <https://www.churchlawcenter.com/church-law/political-activities-by-churches-whats-permitted-and-whats-prohibited/>

8. The Congregational Voter Advocate will ensure activity reports/communications including photos/videos are drafted and shared with the parish and Diocese.
9. After the election, the Congregational Voter Advocate will participate in a Diocesan debriefing to document successes, lessons learned and recommendations for future initiatives.