



ELECTION WELLNESS TOOLKIT

Presented By



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Mobilize Recovery brings together a diverse cross-sector cohort of advocates, allies, and stakeholders to drive measurable, sustainable, and action-oriented solutions that create resilient communities of recovery. We are dedicated to raising up the voices of people whose lives are affected by addiction. From direct outreach to civic & community engagement, we empower advocates to take direct action by providing digital tools, advocacy training, and education. Learn more at www.mobilizerecovery.org



The Recovery Advocacy Project (RAP) is a network of people across the country advocating for addiction recovery policies. RAP is committed to giving people in recovery from all pathways, family members, and supporters of recovery the grassroots organizing tools to think and act locally. RAP is working to build a visible and effective constituency in demand of community and public policy based solutions in response to America's long standing addiction crisis. Visit recoveryvoices.com for resources, advocacy guidebooks, and grassroots organizing support from a Recovery Organizing Coach. Visit the RAP website at www.recoveryvoices.com

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Inseparable is a leading national mental health advocacy organization that helps policymakers advance significant change at the state and federal levels which specifically focus on increasing access to mental health care, improving crisis response, expanding youth mental health services, and growing the behavioral health workforce. Together with lawmakers, Inseparable is securing major federal and state reforms that will save lives and improve care for millions of Americans. We fight for a future where mental health policy, no longer an afterthought, helps our country thrive. Visit the Inseparable website at inseparable.us

The Election Wellness Toolkit is designed for anyone who is trying to protect their mental health this election season.

Every election cycle, it can feel like we're collectively stuck in a Catch-22. We want social change, we need better policy, and we know those things require electing better policymakers. To elect policy champions, we engage in politics – showing up at events, making phone calls, knocking doors, and so on. It's important, empowering work but engaging in politics can be stressful.

The Election Wellness Toolkit is designed to help those in recovery or with a mental health diagnosis, but it's also applicable to friends, family, colleagues, and advocates. These tips are intended to help everyone protect their mental health while working to elect the leaders they deserve.

Managing stress is an essential part of maintaining our mental health – often this gets harder during election years. From political rhetoric to 24-hour news cycles, doom scrolling to disinformation, and fears about outcomes, elections are ongoing, added stressors.

In this climate, disengaging from the political process can be a rational, self-protective response, but winning better policy requires advocacy and votes.

That's why we prepared this guide to equip you with tools to stay healthy and civically engaged.

Election Season Mental Health

Taking Action Helps

Research shows that activism is a tool for improving your mental health. According to the JED Foundation, activism can improve connection, foster community, reduce loneliness, lessen depression, lower stress hormones, and provide an outlet for frustration. ¹

Here are some practices that may come in handy.



Prioritize wellness time for yourself



Break up screentime with movement



Get outside

morning sun and fresh air can set the mood for the day



Substitute rejuvenating activities

like walking, writing, music, for screens



Take a break

from screens & social media



Limit consumption of the news



Develop a self-care ritual

like meditation, stretching or a bath



Say "No"

to things if you feel your plate is full



**When you are feeling overwhelmed,
take a step away from politics and do something you love**



The work we do as advocates can be emotional. It is important to keep an eye on our energy levels throughout the year.

Participate but avoid fatigue during busy months like National Recovery Month (September), and plan with care around emotional days for our community like Overdose Awareness Day and Black Balloon Day.

¹ <https://jedfoundation.org/resource/how-to-use-activism-as-self-care/#:~:text=By%20talking%20about%E2%80%9494and%20taking,connection%20and%20sense%20of%20purpose>

Build Your Recovery Capital

Connecting With Your Recovery & Wellness Community

During times of stress or overstimulation, surround yourself with support - A strong support network can offer alternative coping mechanisms such as mindfulness techniques, exercise routines, or creative outlets, empowering individuals to manage stress effectively without relying on substances. For those of us in recovery, it is important to assess our connection to our support networks. When election season gets overwhelming or emotionally draining, it is important to surround ourselves with those that are encouraging and understanding of our healing process.

Invest in building your Recovery Capital

In order to foster resilience and enhance long-term recovery outcomes, we can build **Recovery Capital** by connecting with our recovery community.



Here are a few ways to connect to recovery and wellness communities:

Attend a local (or online) mutual aid support group.

You can find a list of different Recovery Groups from Faces & Voices of Recovery [here](#).

Family members can find support through Family Coaching at Drugfree.org or through grief groups at Griefshare.org.

Join the Phoenix [Mobile App](#)

Offers features to enhance the recovery journey for individuals to include mediation and exercise workshops, and a Mobilize Recovery Partner page to link with our advocacy community.

Learn about and connect with recovery peer support.

You can research if there is a local Recovery Community Organization at peerrecoverynow.org or research Peer Recovery Support at SAMSHA.gov.

Vote

Know Your Rights as a Voter.

Voting Made Simple

From your local school board to the Senate, it's important to vote in every election. Registering to vote (ages 18+) typically takes less than 2 minutes.

1. Register to Vote

Most states offer online registration. View a list of states offering [online voter registration](#).

If your state does not offer online registration, be sure to visit a local DMV, Post Office, Library or other community center to register in person.

Convicted of a felony? Most states restore your right to vote. Use this [online tool](#).

2. Check Your Registration

If you are unsure of your registration status, [use this tool](#) through RAP to find out!

3. Find Your Polling Place

Locate your polling place using [this tool](#) or checking with your local library or government office.

Every state has absentee voting available, but the degree in circumstances in which a state may allow you to vote absentee differs from state to state. The Recovery Voter Hub provides additional information on these [varied regulations](#).

4. Request an Absentee Ballot

Every state has **absentee voting available**, but the degree in circumstances in which a state may allow you to vote absentee differs from state to state.

The Recovery Voter Hub provides additional information on these varied regulations.

5. Vote!

Mark time on your calendar to meet any election day deadlines for mail-in, absentee, or in-person voting. **Rock the Vote** even provides personal election reminders.

While Presidential Election years are important, **local and municipal elections take place every year**. Continue to stay engaged to make your voice heard.

Recovery Voter Hub

The Recovery Advocacy Project

The Recovery Advocacy Project has created an extremely helpful [Voter Information Hub](#).

Engagement Tools

At the **Recovery Voter Hub**, you can learn about voting, your rights, and the issues that recovery voters like yourself or your loved ones are passionate about. This is also a space to explore tools for engagement to get others involved.

Can I vote if I have a conviction on my record?

Felony disenfranchisement laws have suppressed the right to vote for many vulnerable communities including many in the recovery community. However, a large number of states have begun the work of Voter Restoration granting voting rights to formerly incarcerated or convicted individuals.

If you have been convicted of a felony, find helpful tools at the [Recovery Voter Hub](#).

Here you can search by state and conviction to determine if your

Voting information and support

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We can either imagine a world in which our elected officials court and value the votes, suggestions, and voices of us in the recovery and mental health community, **OR** we can make it a reality.

