INTRODUCTION

In today's economy, communities compete with one another to attract new talent and investment. They compete with their schools, workforce, and infrastructure. They also compete with the strength of their community. For years, business leaders in Ohio have shared a simple, powerful point with their employees, suppliers, customers, and neighbors: We cannot compete if we cannot get along. We need to work together, respect one another, protect one another, and bring out the best in one another.

The 2020 election will be among the most contentious in recent history. It’s okay for citizens of good faith to disagree strongly, but we must reject those trying to divide us -- and we must commit ourselves to helping the most vulnerable among us exercise their right to vote.

This Resource Guide features recommendations, best practices, and resources for business owners interested in helping their employees and/or customers vote. We also provide links to dozens of organizations, coalitions, and apps that can help.

If you need additional support -- or would like to help Business Forward recruit other businesses, please contact us at info@businessfwd.org.
FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO

1. HELP YOUR EMPLOYEES REGISTER AND PREPARE TO VOTE.

2. GIVE THEM TIME TO VOTE ON ELECTION DAY.

3. SPEAK OUT ABOUT POLICIES THAT ENCOURAGE VOTING AND MAKE IT EASIER.

4. STAND UP FOR VOTERS MOST LIKELY TO BE SILENCED OR SUPPRESSED.

5. PREPARE YOUR EMPLOYEES FOR EXTENDED BALLOT-COUNTING AND A DELAYED DECISION.
WHY YOUR EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS NEED HELP

1. REGISTRATION IS NOT AUTOMATIC.
   Voters must register before the election in most states (31 out of 50).¹

2. VOTING RULES ARE COMPLICATED.
   ID requirements, registration deadlines, and early voting and absentee voting rules vary by state.

3. VOTING TAKES TIME.
   One in three non-voters say scheduling conflicts with work or school kept them from voting.²

4. VOTING REQUIRES INFORMATION.
   Among young voters in particular, would-be voters are unfamiliar with campaign issues and do not appreciate why their vote matters.

5. VOTING DURING A PANDEMIC CAN BE CONFUSING AND FRIGHTENING.
   Vote-by-mail and early voting will matter more this election.

DID YOU KNOW?

Less than half of eligible voters vote in midterms.³

The U.S. ranks 26th out of 32 developed democracies in voter participation.⁴
FOUR LESSONS FROM FORTUNE 500 CEOS

Hundreds of America’s largest companies encourage and help their employees vote, and many of them are also helping their customers. Here’s what they’ve learned:

1. **HELPING EMPLOYEES VOTE ISN’T “POLITICAL”**
   - 500+ companies support ElectionDay.org

2. **YOU DON’T NEED TO SPEND A LOT OF TIME OR MONEY TO SUCCEED**
   - Awareness is the critical barrier:
     - short emails,
     - quick reminders,
     & social media work.

3. **CEO ENGAGEMENT IS KEY**
   - Your support creates a culture of voting.

4. **IT’S GOOD FOR TEAM CULTURE**
   - 600+ companies support MakeTimeToVote.org
   - 76% of employees say that CEOs should take the lead on change rather than waiting for government to impose it (up 11 points from 2019).

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*CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY: THE POWER OF COMPANIES TO INCREASE VOTER TURNOUT. HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL, ASH CENTER FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND INNOVATION*
GETTING STARTED

1. HELP YOUR TEAM FIND THE BASICS ON REGISTRATION, EDUCATION, AND WHEN/WHERE/HOW TO VOTE.

VOTE.ORG

OHIO VOTER INFORMATION

2. FIND A PARTNER THAT FITS YOUR COMPANY’S CULTURE AND YOUR EMPLOYEES’ POINT OF VIEW.

#GOVOTE

Artists coming together to make art that encourages people to #GoVote.

VOTOLATINO*

Encouraging young Hispanic and Latinx voters to register to vote and become more politically involved.

REJECT MY VOTE

Linking culture and policy to create a voter mobilization campaign that’s bigger, more diverse, and more powerful.

HeadCount.org

Works with musicians, labels, and concert promoters.

iGNITE

Led by and for Gen Z women.

3. REMEMBER “DOS” AND “DON’TS.”

DO

ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEES TO VOTE

DON’T

ENCOURAGE THEM TO VOTE FOR A PARTICULAR CANDIDATE.
FOCUS ON EARLY VOTING

Lines are shorter during early voting than on election day. It’s also easier for workers with young children, a second job, or earning a degree. But, chances are, your employees do not know when early voting starts.

KEY DATES IN OHIO

5 OCTOBER
REGISTRATION DEADLINE
REGISTER ONLINE
CHECK YOUR STATUS

31 OCTOBER
ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST DEADLINE
REQUEST HERE

6 OCTOBER
VOTING BEGINS FOR IN-PERSON ABSENTEE VOTERS

3 NOVEMBER
ELECTION DAY: POLLS ARE OPEN 6:30AM - 7:30PM E.T.
FIND YOUR POLLING PLACE

ACT NOW

OHIO VOTER INFORMATION CENTER

CLICK HERE TO:
- REGISTER
- CHECK REGISTRATION STATUS
- FIND POLLING LOCATION AND HOURS
- FIND VOTER ID INFO
- REQUEST ABSENTEE BALLOT
- FIND INFO ON ABSENTEE BALLOTS

CLICK HERE FOR A SAMPLE EMAIL TO YOUR EMPLOYEES
HELP THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST

Even in normal times, some voters need more help than others. During a pandemic, looking out for younger voters and vulnerable communities is critical.

YOUNG PEOPLE VOTE 20% LESS THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

MINORITIES ARE MORE LIKELY TO FACE OBSTACLES TO VOTING

VOTING RATES BY RACE
(AVERAGE TURNOUT AS % OF TOTAL VOTING AGE POPULATION: 2000-2018)

- WHITE 51.7%
- BLACK 49.3%
- ASIAN 26.3%
- HISPANIC 25.7%

“As American business leaders, we stand together to protect the physical safety of our employees and communities while also protecting their right to be heard on Election Day. Public health is essential but so is civic health. If we take action now, we do not have to sacrifice one to achieve the other.”

ACT NOW
CLICK THE LOGOS BELOW TO HELP NOW

VOTOLATINO
ROCK THE VOTE
THE NATIONAL COALITION ON BLACK CIVIC PARTICIPATION
NEXTGEN AMERICA

BUSINESS FOR AMERICA

8
We unequivocally denounce racism, intolerance, bias, violence and injustice here and elsewhere...racist rhetoric and xenophobia throughout this crisis have created an even greater divide in our country.

- MARK AND RICHARD SMUCKER
CEO AND CHAIRMAN, SMUCKER’S
ORRVILLE, OH

Our commitment to help and support now is critical, as so many of our associates, families, friends, customers and communities are hurting, frustrated and angry... We must use our voice to express that we are against racism and injustice against the black community. We can and we must do better as a company and community to become a greater part of the solution.

- RODNEY MCMULLEN
CHAIRMAN AND CEO, KROGER
CINCINNATI, OH

Far too often, the burden of seeking equality rests on the shoulders of those most marginalized. This simply won’t work. The change we need is broad and deep and requires us all to be active.

- DAVID TAYLOR
CEO, P&G
CINCINNATI, OH

As a team, we’re committed to informing and educating ourselves so we can continue to be part of this conversation. We encourage our partners and readers of all ages to join us.

- OVERDRIVE
CLEVELAND, OH

One of our core values at Big Lots is that we treat all like friends, and we bring an attitude of respect and honesty to every interaction. Together, we all stand against the racism and discrimination that so disproportionately impacts the black community.

- BIG LOTS
COLUMBUS, OH
CONSUMERS WANT THEIR BRANDS TO ENGAGE

79% OF CONSUMERS BELIEVE COMPANIES SHOULD TAKE ACTION\(^\text{17}\)

81% WOULD PREFER TO BUY FROM COMPANIES THAT SUPPORT DEMOCRACY\(^\text{18}\)

87% BELIEVE COMPANIES THAT DO TAKE ACTION HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE\(^\text{19}\)

AS MORE CEOS SPEAK OUT, BRAND RISK FALLS — AND THE RISK OF DOING NOTHING RISES

Advice from Gap, Inc.:

“"Our employees were already looking to us to speak up and it felt like a miss not to.... The employees come to expect a certain outreach. There was more risk in doing nothing and not having any communication about this election. We had an imperative to do something."\(^\text{20}\)"
BECOME A POLL WORKER OR POLL WATCHER

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A POLL WORKER VS. POLL WATCHER?

POLL WORKERS are trained by local election boards to identify problems and serve at polling places on Election Day. It’s a nonpartisan role that simply works to ensure a successful election process.

POLL WATCHERS are recruited by political parties to protect people casting their vote. They monitor incidents of voter intimidation and work with voters and election officials to address problems at the polls.

BECOME A POLL WORKER

POWER THE POLLS
We are proud to partner with this new initiative from WorkElections, teaming up with businesses and coalitions to promote civic engagement and poll worker recruitment.

CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP

OHIO NEEDS POLL WORKERS

SIGN UP TO BE AN ELECTION WORKER THROUGH THE OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE FRANK LAROSE:

HELP AMERICA VOTE
September 1st is National Poll Worker Recruitment day. Click here to learn more about working at your local polling place.

HELP YOUR PARTY AT THE POLLS

CLICK HERE FOR MORE ON POLL WATCHERS
Check with party leadership in your county for the opportunity to become a poll watcher.

NCSL POLL WATCHER QUALIFICATIONS IN OHIO:
“Must be a registered voter in the precinct; can’t be a candidate; can be appointed by a political party or a group of five or more candidates; one person per precinct; can’t be a uniformed peace officer, state patrolman, member of an organized militia or any other person in uniform; can’t be carrying a firearm or deadly weapon.”

NATIONAL

POWER THE POLLS

NATIONAL OHIO NEEDS POLL WORKERS

HELP AMERICA VOTE

CHECK WITH PARTY LEADERSHIP IN YOUR COUNTY FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME A POLL WATCHER.

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Their experience demonstrates there’s higher risk of error or fraud from in-person voting than mail-in voting. That’s because voters often show up at the wrong polling location, whereas mailed ballots go to only those who can use them.

1 IN 4 Americans vote by mail.

28 STATES already encourage vote-by-mail (without asking for a reason).

In 2016, these five states reported 112 cases of potential fraud - out of 11 million ballots.

.001% POTENTIAL VOTING FRAUD

Covid-19 makes crowded polling places dangerous for seniors and those with underlying conditions. Meanwhile, states rely heavily on seniors to serve as poll workers. With seniors staying away, state polling places will be shorthanded.

It’s enjoyed bipartisan support for years.

KEY FACTS ON MAIL-IN VOTING

In 2016, these five states reported 112 cases of potential fraud - out of 11 million ballots.
PREPARE YOUR EMPLOYEES FOR “ELECTION WEEK”

A CONCLUSIVE OUTCOME ON ELECTION NIGHT IS UNLIKELY

1. Some states will accept ballots postmarked on election day, which means vote totals for some states could take more than a week.

2. On election night, some states count mail-in ballots first; some last. This could affect early vote totals -- but not the final result.

3. Setting expectations early will encourage patience and help your employees manage anxiety.

A WINNER ON ELECTION DAY IN NOVEMBER? DON’T COUNT ON IT

The New York Times

JUNE 24, 2020
SHANE GOLDMACHER

THIS NOVEMBER, ELECTION NIGHT COULD STRETCH INTO ELECTION WEEK OR MONTH

npr

JUNE 13, 2020
MILES PARKS

DECLARING 2020’S WINNER COULD WELL HINGE ON HOW QUICKLY STATES COUNT MAIL BALLOTS

The Wall Street Journal

SEPTEMBER 19, 2020
ALEXA CORSE
2020 ELECTION DAY

NOVEMBER 3RD IS ELECTION DAY IN THE U.S. All employees are allowed three hours paid time off to vote, and managers must accommodate. If you are delayed at the polls by long lines, please notify your manager -- and stay in line.

CLICK HERE TO FIND YOUR POLLING LOCATION IN OHIO.

To learn more about the upcoming election in Ohio, check out the non-partisan voter guide at ballotpedia.org/Ohio.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT VOTING THIS FALL? FIND MORE INFO HERE.

We know change can't be made without participation, so we encourage you to vote and make your voice heard.