

# Enfranchising Homeless Clients

**A RESOURCE GUIDE TO**

**VOTER REGISTRATION FOR**

**HEALTH CARE FOR THE**

**HOMELESS PROJECTS**

*Second Edition*

*August, 2008*

NATIONAL  
HEALTH CARE  
*for the*  
HOMELESS  
COUNCIL

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION, AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This second edition of *Enfranchising Homeless Clients*, like the first, relies on the work of many others who share our commitment to human rights, including the civil right to participate in the political process – the right to vote.

This is not the definitive work on the topic, but is intended to arm health care providers and advocates with basic information about what is legal and possible, and to encourage you to help register and mobilize homeless people to vote. For more comprehensive information and guidance, we point to the work of valued colleagues:

- **The National Coalition for the Homeless**, which has conducted its You Don't Need a Home To Vote Campaign for many years now. NCH's 2008 campaign Tool Kit is available at [www.nationalhomeless.org/getinvolved/projects/vote/index.html](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/getinvolved/projects/vote/index.html).
- **The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty's** 2008 report *Voter Registration and Voting: Ensuring the Voting Rights of Homeless Persons* discusses the legalities in depth and is available at [http://www.nlchp.org/view\\_report.cfm?id=268](http://www.nlchp.org/view_report.cfm?id=268). NLCHP's Tulin Odzeger helpfully reviewed the current revision of this manual.
- **The National Low Income Housing Coalition**, whose Voterization project provides clear guidance on what organizations can do to promote voter registration among their people who have traditionally been under represented. See [www.nlihc.org/template/page.cfm?id=156](http://www.nlihc.org/template/page.cfm?id=156).
- **The Sentencing Project**, whose important work for criminal justice reform includes a focus on the unjust disenfranchisement of felons. See [www.sentencingproject.org/IssueAreaHome.aspx?IssueID=4](http://www.sentencingproject.org/IssueAreaHome.aspx?IssueID=4)

The National Consumer Advisory Board (NCAB), comprised of strong people who have endured homelessness, is a component of the National Health Care for the Homeless Council. NCAB's first chairperson, the late Ellen Dailey, inspired and encouraged the development of this manual.

The first edition was prepared in the summer of 2004 by Lynn Martin, a Vanderbilt Medical School student who volunteered with the National HCH Council to help advance single-payer health care reform. She found valuable help from Patricia Post at the National Council, Lauren Siegel at Health Care for the Homeless in Baltimore, and Michael Stoops at the National Coalition for the Homeless. Adrienne Breidenstine, Health Policy Organizer for the National Council, helped to bring this manual up to date in 2008.

We are grateful to all of these fine advocates for human rights, and to all who share in the struggle.

– John N. Lozier  
Executive Director  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council

*For questions and additional assistance, please contact Adrienne Breidenstine, the National Council's Health Policy Organizer, at 443/703-1337 or [abreidenstine@hchmd.org](mailto:abreidenstine@hchmd.org).*

## Homeless People CAN Vote

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This guide is about empowering homeless people by helping them register to vote. In this packet you will find an overview of resources useful for developing a voter registration drive at your Health Care for the Homeless project or at shelters in your community.

No Federal or State law should stand in the way of a person's right to vote – regardless of an individual's housing status. There are, however, a few common misconceptions that often deter homeless people from registering. You should be aware that:

*People do not need to have a traditional and permanent residence in order to register to vote.*

The mere fact that an individual lacks a traditional permanent residence does not prevent him or her from registering to vote. Every State recognizes homeless persons living in shelters or on the streets as eligible voters. While most States have similar laws regarding homeless voter registration, some have differing policies, and you will want to become familiar with those of your State. For information about how to access your States' policies regarding voter registration, please see the "Organizing a Voter Registration Campaign" section of this guide.

*People with criminal records are often eligible to vote.*

Policies regarding the voting rights of ex-felons vary from State to State; however, in most States, if an individual has been pardoned or has served his or her jail sentence/community service requirement/parole time, he or she is eligible to vote.

The District of Columbia and 48 States have laws that restrict the voting rights of convicted felons who are *currently* serving their sentences. In twelve States, even former offenders are disenfranchised. All told, an estimated 5.3 million persons are unable to vote, including 1.4 million (13%) African American men.<sup>1</sup> These laws are unfortunate because they negatively affect the political voice of low-income urban neighborhoods and especially African American communities.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sentencingproject.org/IssueAreaHome.aspx?IssueID=4>, accessed August 22, 2008

## FAQ's from Nonprofit Agencies about Registration Drives

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### *Is my independent HCH program permitted to hold a voter registration drive?*

Yes. All nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations are permitted by law to organize voter registration drives; in fact, the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA or the "Motor-Voter Act") encourages such efforts by nonprofits. However, 501(c)(3) organizations are strictly prohibited from engaging in *partisan* politics. A nonprofit-sponsored voter registration drive must be non-partisan, meaning that it may not endorse the views of a political party or the election of a specific candidate. Bi-partisan activities that support candidates from two different political parties are also prohibited, as these activities are *not* non-partisan. HCH projects also are cautioned against using federal grant money, which is awarded for other purposes, for voter registration activities.

For projects located within agencies not considered independent nonprofits (such as units of local government) please consult with your own internal policies and administration.

For more information about permissible election activities for 501 (c)(3) organizations review an election activities checklist produced by the Alliance for Justice at [www.afj.org/assets/resources/resource1/Electorial-Activities-Checklist.pdf](http://www.afj.org/assets/resources/resource1/Electorial-Activities-Checklist.pdf)

### *Can a nonprofit-sponsored voter registration drive target a population that characteristically is sympathetic to one party's political views and still be considered non-partisan?*

Yes. A voter registration drive directed at poor or minority groups known to be politically disadvantaged is all right even though the results of the efforts ultimately could favor one particular candidate or political party. In this case, the homeless population in your community is your natural constituency. By registering them to vote, you are encouraging them to take advantage of their civil liberties and participate in the political process. Such an act is appropriate for any nonprofit.

For more information about how to make sure your voter registration drive is non-partisan, visit the Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York at [www.npcnny.org/info/adv8.htm](http://www.npcnny.org/info/adv8.htm)

### *Can vehicles owned by nonprofit organizations be used to transport voters to the polls? Can drivers employed by the organization transport voters to the polls?*

Yes. You may want to organize a "Get-Out-the-Vote" Campaign to encourage individuals to act on their registration and actually vote on Election Day. If available, you may use your HCH clinic's vehicles or those owned by volunteer registrants to drive voters to the polls. The vehicles may not have any partisan literature, such as bumper stickers, or other political propaganda attached. For information on organizing a "Get-Out-the-Vote" Campaign, visit <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/getinvolved/projects/vote/gotv.html>

## FAQ's from Individuals about Voter Registration

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As part of your voter registration drive, you may want to make brief “Frequently Asked Questions” sheets available for homeless persons who have questions about registration. Most of the following example questions and answers come from the NCH’s 2008-2009 Voting Rights Manual, online at <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/getinvolved/projects/vote/index.html>

### *Am I eligible to register and to vote?*

Yes, if you are:

- a citizen of the United States
- a legal resident of your State
- at least 18 years old by election day
- [in most States] not in prison, on probation, or on parole
  - policies regarding ex-felons vary from State to State, check with your City/County Elections Office, or see the Sentencing Project’s Fact Sheet at [http://www.sentencingproject.org/Admin%5CDocuments%5Cpublications%5Cfd\\_bs\\_fdlawsinus.pdf](http://www.sentencingproject.org/Admin%5CDocuments%5Cpublications%5Cfd_bs_fdlawsinus.pdf)
- not declared mentally incompetent by a court
  - this policy also varies State to State

### *Must I read or write English in order to register or vote?*

No. You may register and vote even if you cannot read or write. You may take to the voting booth a literate and registered individual who can assist you in the voting process, but they may not actually vote for you.

### *How do I register?*

The NVRA requires states to provide at least three options to facilitate voter registration. The first option, “motor-voter registration,” permits individuals to register to vote when they apply for or renew their driver’s license. The agency-based registration option requires states to offer voter registration services in state or local government office buildings—such as public libraries, public schools, or designated offices that provide public assistance. The third option, mail-in registration, allows individuals to fill out a short voter registration-by-mail form, sign the form, and mail it, or have someone else mail it for you.<sup>2</sup>

### *When can I register?*

You can register anytime, but be sure to do so before your State’s deadline if you want to vote in an upcoming election.

### *Does it cost anything to register?*

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<sup>2</sup> The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. *Voter Registration and Voting: Ensuring the Voting Rights of Homeless Persons*, July 2008. [http://www.nlchp.org/view\\_report.cfm?id=268](http://www.nlchp.org/view_report.cfm?id=268)  
**Enfranchising Homeless Clients:**

No. Registration is free.

***Can I vote by mail?***

Yes. Contact your City/County Elections Office for information on obtaining an absentee ballot and about deadlines.

***Am I registered once I fill out and mail the registration form?***

No. You cannot be sure you are registered until you get a voter notification card from the county. If the notification card does not arrive within three weeks of mailing your registration, call your Registrar of Voters or your City/County Elections Office and ask if you are registered.

***What do I use as my home address and mailing address?***

In order to register to vote you will need to provide your home address; however, you do not need to live in a traditional home or building to be able to provide a valid home address. Your home address can be a geographical description of where you live or spend most of your time, for example a street corner or a park. According to the NVRA, to satisfy home address requirements, a homeless applicant can draw a “locational map” to indicate the specific location in which the individual resides. This description is necessary so that you may be assigned to a precinct, or voting district, as voters may vote only in the precincts in which they reside.

In addition, many states require that voter registrants provide a valid mailing address if they cannot receive mail at their home address. This can be different from your home address, but needs to be a place where you can receive mail. This may be an address of a friend, family member, shelter, or other service provider. If you want to register by mail, you should provide a mailing address at which you may receive mail. Unfortunately, shelters and government offices often do not allow people to utilize these locations to receive mail. The election commission is required to mail registration cards to the mailing address you provide, and if this card is returned as undeliverable, after a few mailing attempts, your registration may become void.

***What is a sample ballot?***

Before each election, in some States, each registered voter receives a packet of information including a Sample Ballot, which is a replica of the ballot the voter will see at the polls. The packet also gives the time and date of the election, the location of your polling place, and an application to vote-by-mail.

***Do I need identification when I go to vote?***

**Enfranchising Homeless Clients:**

This is a confusing issue and, to be safe, you should contact your local Board of Elections for your State's policy. Historically, personal identification requirements have created a barrier for homeless persons in registering to vote. Many state laws make it difficult for homeless persons to obtain identification cards, and the implementation of the REAL ID Act of 2005 has created further difficulties. To avoid needing to show proof of identification at the polling place, federal law requires that first-time voters who register by mail send with their registration form a copy of a current and valid photo identification or a copy of a pay-check stub, bank statement, utility bill, or other government document that shows their name. It may be very difficult for a homeless individual to provide proof of identification; therefore, it is recommended that you pose this circumstance to your local Board of Elections and seek their advice.

To prevent the possibility of being turned away from the polls, voters should plan to bring their voter registration cards to the polling places. A voter registration card indicates that the voter is indeed registered and negates the need for additional identification. In most states, voters will be asked to state their name and address and to sign the roster of voters. According to the NCH, States that require identification risk possible litigation.

***Can someone help me when I go to vote?***

Yes. You may bring a friend, a relative, or anyone else. This person can help you read the ballot or use the voting booth to vote.

***How do I vote?***

States use different voting systems. Many states are beginning to utilize touchstone voting systems. With these systems, a voter touches a screen to make changes, review selections, and cast a ballot. In other states, you will sign your name on a list of all the voters in your area. Then you will be given a ballot, and you will enter a voting booth. Put the ballot in the voting machine and mark your choices. In all states, an election judge must be present and available to explain how to vote on the voting system; however, you must cast your ballot alone unless you are unable to do so because of a disability or inability to read or write on the ballot.

***What will I be voting on?***

We vote on two types of things:

- People – the candidates who are running for public office
- Plans – ballot measures that change local or State laws

You do not have to vote on everything. You may just vote on the matters you care about.

## Organizing a Voter Registration Campaign

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*Know your State's laws and policies regarding voter registration and eligibility to vote.*

- See the 2008 Report of the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty: [http://www.nlchp.org/content/pubs/2008\\_Voting\\_Report\\_final2.pdf](http://www.nlchp.org/content/pubs/2008_Voting_Report_final2.pdf)
- For links to State Boards of Elections websites: <http://www.fec.gov/>

*Obtain materials and resources from your local Elections Office.*

- Your local Elections Office can supply you with mail-in voter registration forms.
- Some offices may limit the number of forms you may take at one time, depending on their supply.

*Determine the location and duration of the registration drive*

For a one-time registration drive:

- Work with clinic staff to find a convenient location in the clinic to register patients as they wait for their appointments.
- Advertise the dates of the drive by posting flyers in the clinic waiting room.
- Plan your drive according to your State's registration deadline and the date of the next election.

For an ongoing registration drive:

- The National Council recommends that social service agencies, including HCH projects and shelters, offer voter registration at an individual's intake interview. If your clinic decides to make voter registration an option at patients' first clinic visits, the staff must be careful to clarify that patients' access to services is not contingent upon their registration or their decision not to register.

*Recruit and train those who will assist with voter registration*

- Use available staff, Consumer Advisory Board members, students.
- Be sure that all volunteers understand State policies regarding voter registration and are able to answer frequently asked questions.
- Have volunteers become familiar with techniques used to convince people about the importance of registering to vote. Information about this can be found at <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/getinvolved/projects/vote/index.html>

*Collect and mail in the registration forms as they are completed, keeping your State's registration deadline in mind.*

## Registering New Homeless Voters

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Homeless individuals may have many questions regarding components of the registration form. Look through the voter registration forms, and anticipate sections that may be confusing. Volunteers should read your State's specific instructions for completing voter registration forms before assisting individuals in the registration process. You can obtain your State's instructions from your local Elections Office or your State's Election Commission website. The Federal Election Commission's National Mail Voter Registration Form also contains each State's specific instructions and policies regarding voter registration. You may download this universal form from <http://www.eac.gov/voter/Register%20to%20Vote>

The following sections are found on the National Mail Voter Registration Form, which, incidentally, is *not* accepted by Wyoming and is only accepted by town and city clerks of New Hampshire as a request for the State's absentee mail-in voter registration form. If you have any questions about how a homeless person should fill out the form, call and ask your local Board of Elections. Think of worst-case scenarios to address with your local Elections Office: individual does not know his/her social security number; individual has no forms of personal identification, etc.

1. **Name** – Print full name, using no nicknames.
2. **Home Address** – States use a residential address to assign voters to their respective voting districts. Either a shelter address or a geographical description of where the person normally returns (i.e. bridge, park bench) is sufficient for a State's registration form.
3. **Mailing Address** – A mailing address may be that of a family member, friend, clinic, or shelter – anywhere a homeless person may receive mail. The individual will be mailed his or her voter registration card, which will indicate the polling location and its hours of operation. In some States, the newly registered voter also will receive a sample ballot, listing the names of candidates up for election.
4. **Date of Birth** – A common mistake is for someone to write the current date instead of his or her birth date. Watch for this.
5. **Telephone Number** – This section does not need to be completed.
6. **ID Number** – Refer to your State's specific instructions.
7. **Choice of Party** – Depending on your State's policy, a voter may need to complete this section in order to participate in a primary election. If an individual does not wish to affiliate with a political party, be sure to have him or her write “no party” or leave this section blank. If the individual writes “independent,” this may be confused as a party affiliation.
8. **Race or Ethnic Group** – This information may or may not be required by your State. Have the individual describe him or herself as one of the following: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black *not* of Hispanic Origin, Hispanic, Multi-Racial, White *not* of Hispanic Origin, or Other.
9. **Signature** – Before signing or making a mark in this section, the individual must make sure that he or she meets all of the State's requirements for voter eligibility and understands everything written in this section of the form. If the applicant is not able to sign the form, the person assisting the applicant needs to write his or her contact information in the space provided.

### Enfranchising Homeless Clients:

*The following compares the voter registration instructions of Tennessee and Oregon. It is important to understand the policies of your State before you begin your registration drive.*

## Tennessee

**Registration Deadline** – 30 days before the election.

6. **ID Number.** Your full social security number, if any, is required for purposes of identification and to avoid duplicate registration (TCA 2.2.116).
7. **Choice of Party.** You do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.
8. **Race or Ethnic Group.** Optional
9. **Signature.** To register in Tennessee you must:
  - Be a citizen of the United States
  - Be a resident of Tennessee
  - Be at least 18 years old on or before the next election
  - Not have been convicted of a felony, or if convicted, have had your full rights of citizenship restored (or have received a pardon)
  - Not be adjudicated incompetent by a court of competent jurisdiction (or have been restored to legal capacity)

### **Attention: Proof of Voter Identification**

*(Pursuant to the Help America Vote Act of 2002)*

If this form is submitted by mail and it is the first time you have registered to vote in your jurisdiction, you **MUST** submit current, valid proof of identification with this application or the first time you vote in a federal election. To send it with this application you should enclose one of the following:

- 1) A **COPY** of a current and valid photo identification **OR**
- 2) A **COPY** of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows your name and address in the jurisdiction.

Submitting your proof of identification now with the application will allow you to avoid this proof at the polling place or, if voting by mail, to avoid sending it with your mail-in-ballot. If you do not provide proof of identification, you may cast a provisional ballot.

## Oregon

**Registration Deadline** – 21 days before the election.

6. **ID Number.** Leave blank. [Federal law will require that you provide a driver's license number to register to vote. If you do not have a driver's license then you will have to provide at least the last four digits of your social security number. If you have neither, you will need to write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will instead be assigned to you by your State.]
7. **Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election.
8. **Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.
9. **Signature.** To register in Oregon you must:
  - Be a citizen of the United States
  - Be a resident of Oregon
  - Be at least 18 years old by election day

### **Attention: Proof of Voter Identification**

*(Pursuant to the Help America Vote Act of 2002)*

Identification is requested only if you are a new registrant in the county and you are mailing the voter registration card via the United States Postal Service (USPS).

Identification is not required for updates within the same county, or for any new registrations delivered in person or by means other than mail via the USPS. Sufficient identification is: a **COPY** of your current, valid photo identification (such as driver's license), or a **COPY** of a pay-check stub, utility bill, bank statement or other government document showing your name and address. The address listed must match the residence or mailing address submitted on this registration application. If you do not provide proof of identification, you may cast a provisional ballot.

## Model Voter Registration Drives

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### *Hope House of Milwaukee, WI: Homeless Shelter model*

- Their City Elections Commission helped them organize an on-site registration drive.
- Shelter staff developed a form that established residency at the shelter for homeless people to use in the registration process. Each form was signed by a staff member and listed the shelter's address and how long an individual had been staying there.
- A representative from the City Elections Commission brought a mock voting booth to the shelter and trained first-time voters on the voting process.
- The shelter distributed flyers containing information on candidates' platforms and maps of the city showing election districts and locations of polling places.
- University students and other volunteers helped with registering homeless people.
- The local transportation union provided rides to the polls on election day.<sup>3</sup>

### *Boston HCH Program: Homeless Health Clinic model*

- For the 2000 Presidential Election, they held a registration drive in their ninety-two-bed respite facility and were able to register forty individuals.
- The City Hall supplied registration forms, and the local Elections Office provided information on the State's voter eligibility requirements.
- Consumer advisory board members volunteered time to register voters.
- Rather than providing materials about candidates' platforms, they informed newly-registered voters about where they could obtain such information.
- Tips:
  - Advertise the registration drive in the clinic several days beforehand.
  - Be patient with the clients; they may have many questions.
  - Be knowledgeable about State policies.
  - Do not pressure patients to register.
  - Get as much volunteer help as possible.
- For the 2004 Presidential Election, the Boston HCH Program held a registration drive for three days in a corner of their hospital clinic.

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<sup>3</sup> 2004 Voting Rights Manual, "Model Wisconsin Program Excels At Voter Registration." 2004: National Coalition for the Homeless. 19 May 2004 < <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/vote2004/wisconsin.html> >

*HCH of Baltimore: Homeless Health Clinic model*

- For the 2003 September Primary Election, they held a registration drive in August in their clinic waiting room.
- They registered voters during specific clinic hours that would interfere the least with patients' appointments and providers' schedules.
- After running the drive for a few days each week for a two or three week period, they were able to register 111 people.
- Consumer Advisory Board members and former consumers volunteered time for the drive. Two volunteers registered voters at a time. Volunteers were ethnically and racially diverse as well as diverse in sexual orientation in order to create a comfortable environment for all clients interested in registering.
- The coordinator of the registration drive received training from The League of Women Voters of Baltimore on how to train volunteers to register new voters.
- Many patients were glad to register, and many were surprised to learn that they were eligible to vote, especially those with criminal records.
- Consumer Advisory Board members have repeated the drive for all subsequent elections.

## Helping Clients Become Informed Voters

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The National Coalition for the Homeless suggests two different ways in which your voter registration drive may educate your clients about candidates' positions on issues of specific interest to them such as income, housing, and health care.

*Ask candidates to complete a questionnaire, and use their responses to compile an information packet for your clients.*

At the end of this packet, you will find a sample cover letter and questionnaire that you may use for this purpose.

If you decide to send questionnaires, be sure to follow up with reminders and second requests to the candidates. You must keep good records of the questionnaires you sent, where you sent them, when you sent them, to whom you sent them, etc. The questionnaire should go to *all* candidates in a particular election, as you must conduct all activities in a non-partisan fashion.

*Sponsor a Community/Candidates Forum on Housing and Homelessness Issues.*

The National Coalition for the Homeless 2008-2009 Voter Registration Manual contains a very complete guide to organizing such a forum.

The guide contains information on:

- How to comply with the law and organize a non-partisan candidates forum
- How to choose which candidates to invite and how to invite them
- What to do if a candidate cancels
- Whom to choose as a moderator
- How to structure the forum
- Ensuring a successful forum
- How to develop a coordinating committee
- The types of subcommittees needed
- How to plan a budget and where money will need to be spent

The guide also provides:

- A sample 7-week timeline for organizing the forum
- A sample phone script and sample letter for inviting candidates
- Tips on how to approach the media
- A sample flyer for advertising the event

## Sample Cover Letter\*

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Date

Name of Candidate

Delivery Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

The [name of your organization] is conducting a non-partisan voter registration drive between [dates of your drive] at [location of your drive]. As part of the drive, we will provide our clients and the media with information about each candidate's position on [ex: health care, low-income housing, and issues of incomes and addictions]. These are subjects of specific concern for the homeless individuals whom we serve.

Please take a few moments to complete the attached questionnaire. Your response is important in helping us increase voters' capacities to make informed voting decisions during this coming election. You may return this questionnaire to:

[Your Address]

We need to receive your response no later than [deadline] so that we may include your statements in the information packet we will compile and distribute. If we do not hear from you by [deadline], we will note in the packet that you did not provide a response to our questionnaire.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name, etc.]

*\* Consider sending this letter in the form of an email with the questionnaire as an attachment. This may boost the number of responses you receive.*

## Sample Questionnaire for Candidates for Federal Office

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### **HEALTH CARE**

1. Do you believe that comprehensive health care should be available to everyone?  
 yes  no
2. Do you support the United States National Health Insurance Act (HR 676), which would provide universal health insurance coverage?  
 yes  no
3. 47 million Americans, including most homeless people, lack health insurance today. If you answered Yes to #1 *and* No to #2, how do you propose to assure that everyone receives the health care they need?

### **HOUSING**

4. Do you believe that housing is necessary for a person to be protected from the elements, and to function normally in our society?  
 yes  no
5. Are you supportive of the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund which would create 1.5 million units of housing over the course of 10 years that is affordable for low-income people?  
 yes  no
6. Do you oppose reductions in funding for subsidized housing?  
 yes  no
7. Because of a dire shortage of low-income housing, an estimated 3.5 million Americans will experience homelessness this year. If you answered Yes to #4 *and* No to either #5 or #6, how do you propose to create the housing resources needed to end homelessness?

### **INCOMES**

8. Do you believe that people who work full-time should be able to afford housing for their families?  
 yes  no
9. Do you support increasing the minimum wage to a level that is adequate for full time workers to pay for housing in the private market in their communities?  
 yes  no

**National Health Care for the Homeless Council**

10. There is no jurisdiction in America where a full-time worker earning the current minimum wage (\$6.55 per hour) can afford a two-bedroom apartment at fair market rent. If you answered Yes to #8 and No to #9, how do you propose to assure that workers can afford to pay for housing?

**DISABILITY**

11. Do you believe that people who are disabled and unable to work should receive incomes adequate for them to obtain housing?  
\_\_ yes \_\_ no

12. Do you support increasing Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) payments to a level that is adequate for disabled persons to pay for housing in the private market in their communities?  
\_\_ yes \_\_ no

13. Currently, SSI payments are only 72% of the (unrealistically low) Federal Poverty Level. Some disabled homeless people receive SSI payments but cannot afford housing; other disabled homeless people are not eligible for the program. If you answered Yes to #11 and No to #12, how do you propose to assure that disabled people are able to afford housing?

**ADDICTION**

14. Do you believe that addiction is a chronic, relapsing medical condition?  
\_\_ yes \_\_ no

15. Do you support restoring Supplemental Security Income benefits that were eliminated in 1996 for persons whose disabilities are related to an addiction?  
\_\_ yes \_\_ no

16. Do you support increasing the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grants and federal funding for substance abuse treatment for homeless people?  
\_\_ yes \_\_ no

17. What do you believe should be the federal role in addressing the addictions-related disabilities of homeless and other Americans?

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate for: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return questionnaire to:

**Enfranchising Homeless Clients:**

**A Resource Guide to Voter Registration for Health Care for the Homeless Projects**