



## WHO

**DSPIN, INARF, The Arc of Indiana,  
and SAI members and chapters**

## WHAT

**Host a voter registration event in your  
local community**

## WHEN

**Between September 6-October 11**

## WHERE

**Your Local Chapter or Community**

**WE WILL PROVIDE A CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT AND A WEBINAR  
TO HELP YOU PLAN YOUR EVENT.**

## TOOLKIT INCLUDES

- **PLANNING MATERIALS**
- **PRE & POST-EVENT CHECKLISTS**
- **ACTIVITY IDEAS**
- **WEBINAR**
- **CAMPAIGN EVALUATION**

## COUNT US IN! ACTIVITY IDEAS

**Invite Candidates**

**Hold a Voter  
Registration Drive**

**Hold a Civic  
Engagement Party**

**Hold an Issue Forum**

**Pass Out  
Information on  
Voting Rights**

**For more information:  
Email [acircle@arcind.org](mailto:acircle@arcind.org)  
Or call 317-977-2375**



## Pre-Event Activities

1. **Connect with Partner Organizations.** The Count Us In Voter Registration Campaign is supported by Self-Advocates of Indiana, Direct Support Professionals of Indiana (DSPIN), The Arc of Indiana, and INARF. We encourage you to replicate this partnership in planning your voter registration event. If you are not sure what partners are in your local community, check out the following for more information:

[Self-Advocates of Indiana](#) -- (317) 977-2375

[The Arc of Indiana](#) -- 317-977-2375

[INARF](#) -- 317-634-4957

[DSPIN](#) -- 317-634-4957

2. **Tell Us About It.** Don't forget to tell us about your plans by completing and submitting the [Event Confirmation Form](#).

3. **Educate Yourself.** Make sure you understand the dos and don'ts of voter registration. Learn about [helpful hints](#) for planning a voter registration event, as well as the ins and outs of voter registration and [501\(c\)3 organizations](#). Check out information about [voting in Indiana](#).

4. **Use Your Website.** Encourage participation in your event and voter registration through your website. If your organization has web banners on your web site or purchases/has donated web banners on other sites, consider utilizing this space to announce your event and thank people for their participation.

5. **Use Your Social Network.** If your organization uses Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, use it to raise awareness for your event. Post messages before, during, and after the event to keep people engaged and connected to this important event. Use the event hashtag #CountUsIn.

6. **Alert the Press.** Once the date of your event is confirmed, send a press alert to your media outlets two weeks prior to the event and, again, one week prior to the event. Check with your local publications/stations to determine the best time to send a press alert for the best chance of placement. Consider all media outlets: daily and weekly papers, chamber of commerce newsletters, radio and television stations. Find out who is responsible for assigning or editing stories related to your event (i.e., Human Interest, Local Politics, and Local News). When you send out your press alert, personally address it to that individual. Check the media outlet's web site or ask about the preferred format and method of receiving alerts: e-mail, fax or regular mail. Do not send alerts to general, generic email addresses.

**Basic Format:** (Please note, this format is a very simple guide - deviate as occasion, need or preference dictates.)

Include header

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Your name, title

Your organization

Phone:

Email:

Date and time of event, who will be attending.

Why you are hosting the event. This should be of human interest, not broad and impersonal. It should also reveal something about the importance of people with disabilities being a part of the election/voting process.

Reporters prefer stories with quotes. Include quotes from partner organizations on the importance of the event to their organization, people with disabilities and the state of Indiana.

Short, concise background on partner organizations. Include affiliation with Self-Advocates of Indiana and Direct Support Professionals of Indiana and brief explanation.

*Self-Advocates of Indiana (SAI) is a statewide advocacy organization that empowers people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*

*The Direct Support Professionals of Indiana (DSPIN) is a group of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) from across Indiana who dedicated to building a qualified direct support workforce in our home state.*

Press contact information.

Follow up the alert with phone calls to media to inquire if they will be attending the event. Calls can be the same day as the alert is sent, or the following day to make sure they received the alert. You can also call the day before the event to see if they will be covering the story.

**7. Send an e-Blast.** Let your organization's "friends and families" help get the word out by sending out an e-Blast via e-mail. An e-Blast is a condensed form of your press alert and does not include contact information and has a more informal and personal tone.



## Event Checklist

**Host Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Partner Organizations:**

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**Date of Event:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time of Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Event Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Pre-Event:

- Identify Partner Organizations
- Host an Organizational/Planning Meeting
- Identify Activities to Host during Voter Registration Event
- Contact Your County Clerk's Office to do on-site voter registration and/or voter training
- Order Voting Guide Booklets from [The Governor's Council for People with Disabilities](#)
- Invite Government Officials/Candidates
- Contact [Indiana Disability Rights](#) for resources they have on voter rights
- Recruit and Train Event Volunteers
- Send Press Alert and follow up with Media Contacts
- Send E-blast
- Promote using social media -- use event hashtag #CountUsIn
- Contact Members of the Local Media
- Ask Local Business for In-Kind Contributions

### Day of Event:

- Contact Local Media Regarding Their Participation
- Provide Last Minute Volunteer Training
- Assist County Clerk's Office staff in setting up voter registration and/or voter training
- Welcome and Greet Guests, Community Members, Government Officials/Candidates, Media
- Capture the Number of People in Attendance
- Ask attendees to complete contact cards for more information from The Arc/SAI/DSPIN/INARF
- Promote using social media -- use event hashtag #CountUsIn
- Take photos of event attendees, Government Officials/Candidates, community members

### Post-Event:

- Update Your Communication List Serves and Send a Thank You e-Blast to Attendees
- Send thank you notes to Government Officials/Candidates and Community Members for attending
- Send a Press Release with Your Event's Results and photos
- Complete the Campaign Results and Evaluation Form and return to SAI/INARF



## Event Activity Ideas

1. Arrange for Voter Training. Contact your County Clerk's office to see if they can provide voter training at your event, including presentations about what to expect on Election Day and providing voting machines/sample ballots.
  - Create a slideshow of information or handouts for attendees.
  - Check out the Indiana Secretary of State's Election Division [Information For Voters With Disabilities Brochure](#).
  - Find out what type of voting equipment is used in your county and then play video demonstrations throughout the event.
2. Register attendees to vote. Set up stations with computers where attendees can [register to vote online](#). To register, attendees will need to use an identification card or their Social Security numbers. Representatives from the County Clerk's office can also assist people with registering to vote.
3. Pass out Voting Guide Booklets from the [Governor's Council for People with Disabilities](#), which contain helpful information about elections and voting. You can print a PDF version of the booklet or order them for free ([Voting Guide](#)).
4. Hold a "Civic Engagement Party". Recognize the day as a holiday for democracy and serve refreshments such as a cake decorated like the American flag.
5. Hold your event on or during the week of [National Voter Registration Day](#).
  - Sign-up to host a National Voter Registration Day event on September 27.
  - As a participating organization, you will receive an organizing kit, signs, posters, and other materials specific to the National Voter Registration Day event.
6. Organize an issue forum. Invite government officials, candidates, or community members to serve on a panel and discuss issues important to your organization. See our suggested list of questions to ask your candidates on the [Candidate Questions Page](#) of the toolkit.

Additional information about working with government officials and candidates is available from [Nonprofit VOTE](#).

7. Invite Local Advocacy Groups
  - One goal of this event is to help people connect to resources and support within their local communities.
  - Invite local groups to host an information booth about the types of services, supports, and resources they offer.

8. Have someone speak about Voter Rights or pass out information about what to do if you are denied access to voting or to necessary accommodations on Election Day. Contact Indiana Disability Rights for additional voting resources (317.722.5555 or <http://www.in.gov/idr>).
9. Contact your local library and see if you can set up a voter information station. Pass out information about Voter's Rights and directions on how to register.
10. Create an Event Video.
  - Have a "station" at your event for people to tell why voting is important to them.
  - Compile and copy these statements in a video or video clips that can be shared with local legislators and candidates.
  - Make sure to share these videos on social media using #CountUsIn.
11. Provide An Opportunity to Get Additional Information.
  - Set out a sign-up sheet that includes an option to receive information from your organization(s) and the sponsor organizations about future election news.
  - To preserve individual's privacy in voting, be sure that the sign-up sheet is separate from voter registration areas.
12. If you cannot host an event, participate via social media using the hashtag #CountUsIn.
  - Share weekly information about voter rights and registration.
  - Ask people to share why they vote via video clips or photos.
  - Participate in an organization-wide [Thunderclap](#) campaign on Voter Registration Day (September 27)--Be on the lookout for additional details about this.



## Potential Candidate Questions

*The Arc of Indiana's Governmental Affairs Committee developed the following guiding questions regarding issues that affect individuals with disabilities. These questions could be asked in an Issues Forum or Interview with candidates.*

### General

People with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) want to be active members of the community who are valued and provided opportunities to receive an education, have a job and live a full life. How will you use your office to support and advance issues important to people with I/DD, their families and the Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) who work with them.

### Employment

The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is nearly 80% although many people with disabilities want to work and can work. What will you do to create opportunities for people with disabilities to have access to job training and careers that will increase independence?

### Public Transit

Accessible transportation continues to be a major barrier for people with disabilities to get to work, as well as medical appointments. What would be your plan to address the need for increased mass transit that people with disabilities could utilize?

### Managed Care

There are many conversations taking place regarding managed care for people with disabilities. What would be your priorities and/or goals for a managed care system?

### Medicaid Reimbursement Rates/DSP Crisis

There is currently a shortage of qualified Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) to provide personal, critical care to people with disabilities. Indiana's current Medicaid reimbursement rates for most services provided to people with disabilities were recently restored to the rates of 2010 (they had been cut significantly over the last 10 years). These rates do not allow community providers to hire qualified, dedicated staff. People with disabilities are seeing high

turnover of the people who provide very personal care. What would you do to address the crisis we are facing in the shortage of DSPs across the state?

### **Education**

K-12 education for students receiving special education services is critically important as it paves the way for a future filled with independence. What would your administration do to insure that students receiving special education services have every opportunity to be successful in school with the needed resources that helps them earn a high school diploma, be fairly tested and learn alongside their peers?

### **Guardianship/Supported Decision Making**

Too often parents rush into guardianship although the person with a disability is capable of making many decisions on his or her own. Supported Decision Making is an alternative to guardianship that allows people with disabilities to remain in charge of their own decisions but allows them access to support should they want it. What would you do to make sure that families have alternatives in supporting their children with I/DD to help them maintain independence while getting some support they need in making important decision?

### **Crisis**

Unfortunately the need for crisis intervention exists. Indiana currently does not have a crisis system in place for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities who also have a mental health issue. When people have a crisis situation too often the emergency room or police are the only options. What would your administration do to help provide services for people in crisis situations who have co-existing conditions?



# Event Confirmation

Host Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Partner Organizations (if applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Location:

\_\_\_\_\_

Activities Planned for Your Event: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Target Audience (check all that apply):

Self-Advocates  Direct Support Professionals  Provider Management Staff

Community Members  Government Officials/Candidates  Media

If Government Officials or Candidates were invited, have any confirmed their attendance? If so, please list name and office: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number of attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you need any assistance in contacting additional Partner Organizations? Yes No

Do you need any assistance beyond the Toolkit to plan and host your event? Yes No

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and send this form to Amanda Circle at [acircle@arcind.org](mailto:acircle@arcind.org) or via fax at 317-977-2385 / Sarah Chestnut at [sarah@inarf.org](mailto:sarah@inarf.org) or via fax at 317-634-3221.



## Post-Event Ideas

1. **De-Briefing Session.** Meet with your Partner Organizations to evaluate what went well, opportunities for improvement, and identify any follow-up items. Don't forget to complete and submit the [Campaign Results and Evaluation Form](#).
2. **Make Their Voices Heard.** If need be, submit voter registration forms to the County Clerk's office. **Use Your Website.** Thank attendees and members of the local community for their participation in your event. Remember to share information on voter registration and other useful resources. Also, be sure to post pictures from the event.
3. **Use Your Social Network.** If your organization uses Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, use it as a tool to maintain awareness and to encourage people to get out and vote.
4. **Send an e-Blast.** Add the names and contact information for event attendees to your organization's communication distribution lists. Send out an e-Blast via e-mail to thank people for participating and remind them of important voting related deadlines and activities.
5. **Alert the Press, Part II.** Following your event, send a press release to media outlets. Make sure to include pictures of the visit. You can adapt sections of your press alert to write the press release.

Check with your local publications/stations to determine the best time to send a press release for the best chance of placement. Consider all media outlets: daily and weekly papers, chamber of commerce newsletters, radio, and television stations. Find out who is responsible for assigning or editing stories related to your event (i.e., Human Interest, Local Politics, and Local News). When you send out your press release, personally address it to that individual. Check the media outlet's web site or ask about the preferred format and method of receiving alerts: e-mail, fax or regular mail. Do not send alerts to general, generic email addresses.

**Basic Format:** (Please note, this format is a very simple guide - deviate as occasion, need or preference dictates.)

Include header

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Your name, title

Your organization

Phone:

Email:

Date and time of event, who visited and one item of interest that happened during that event (preferably an item of interest with an accompanying photograph).

Reason for event. This should be of human interest, not broad and impersonal. It should also reveal something about the importance of people with disabilities being a part of the election/voting process.

Reporters prefer stories with quotes. Include quotes from partner organizations on the importance of the event to their organization, people with disabilities and the state of Indiana.

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Press contact information.



# Campaign Results and Evaluation

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Which Partner Organizations did you work with to host your voter registration event?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How many people attended your event? \_\_\_\_\_

Who attended your event? (Check all that apply):

Self-Advocates \_\_\_ Direct Support Professionals \_\_\_ Provider Management Staff \_\_\_

Community Members \_\_\_ Government Officials/Candidates \_\_\_ Media \_\_\_

If any Government Officials/Candidates were in attendance, please list their names and offices:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Was there any media coverage of the event? If so, where was it covered? (Please provide links to any online media coverage)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did you have a sign-up sheet to collect contact information? Yes No

If so, please attach a list of any individuals who expressed an interest in receiving information from Self-Advocates of Indiana, The Arc of Indiana, INARF, and/or DSPIN.

Was the Count Us In! Toolkit helpful in planning this event? Yes No Did Not Use

Do you have any suggestions for improving the Toolkit?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and send this form with any photos or press releases from your event to Amanda Circle at [acircle@arcind.org](mailto:acircle@arcind.org) or via fax at 317-977-2385 / Sarah Chestnut at [sarah@inarf.org](mailto:sarah@inarf.org) or via fax at 317-634-3221.