

5 COOL WAYS TO EDUCATE & ADVOCATE DURING ELECTION SEASON

Election season is the perfect time to help your community stay informed and engaged, all while keeping your nonprofit squarely in the nonpartisan lane. Here are five cool ways 501(c)(3) public charities can engage in nonpartisan advocacy during election season.

1 LATTES & LISTENING SESSIONS

Grab a lavender latte, gather the community, and host a meet-and-greet where candidates can hear directly from constituents about how policy decisions impact their daily lives. Invite all viable candidates, provide everyone an equal opportunity to participate, and maintain a neutral environment.

2 CAFECITO & CONVERSATIONS

Get the conversation brewing by sharing the organization’s expertise, educating candidates about your community’s needs, and raising awareness about important issues. **Just remember:** everyone gets the same information, the same access to resources, and the same nonpartisan treatment.

3 MOCHAS & MICS

A candidate says something wild. A (c)(3)’s first instinct: “We need to respond, immediately.” Before you hit send, take a sip of your Mexican mocha and prepare your message. Focus on the issue, not the candidate; assign a spokesperson ready to respond to difficult questions; and prepare your talking points before speaking publicly.

4 ICED COFFEE & INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

Grab your iced coffee and your favorite campaign button — but leave your 501(c)(3) out of it! As an individual, you’re free to endorse candidates, attend partisan rallies, and get involved in campaigns. Just do it on your own time and with your own resources. No borrowing the organization’s name, email list, staff time, or equipment.

5 BREWS & BALLOTS

Candidates may bring campaign chaos, but nonprofits can bring the cold brew and civic engagement. 501(c)(3)s can engage in nonpartisan voter education and assistance by helping voters find reliable information, access resources, and participate in elections. Ensure the organization’s efforts are focused on empowering participation, not influencing candidate elections, and that nothing of value is given in exchange for voting or registering to vote.

