

LONG TERM CARE COMMUNITY COALITION

Advancing Quality, Dignity & Justice

PROTECT RESIDENTS' VOTING RIGHTS

September 15, 2020 – Voting rights are a fundamental right for residents in long-term care. [According to federal rules for nursing homes](#), facilities must protect residents' rights as U.S. citizens and must support residents in the exercise of their rights.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic is heightening barriers that have long interfered with residents' voting rights. Already cut off from their loved ones, residents are now being deprived of critical electoral services — including in-person voting assistance — because of pandemic-related restrictions. Ultimately, [hundreds of thousands of nursing home residents may be unable to vote](#) in the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

The [Long Term Care Community Coalition \(LTCCC\)](#) is deeply troubled by reports about the disenfranchisement of long-term care residents. Since March, residents have been suffering in silence. This November, their voices deserve to be heard.

Below are links to fact sheets and resources providing information that can help preserve residents' essential rights to voting in this upcoming election. These resources can also be found on LTCCC's website at nursinghome411.org/voting.

**Note: Election rules and deadlines vary across states.*

Voting resources:

- [How to vote in your state \(The Washington Post\)](#). Deadlines for registration, ballot requests, and voting for every state.
- [Vote.org/COVID-19](#): State-by-state COVID-19 election guidance and resources.
- [Cognitive Impairment & Voting \(National Consumer Voice\)](#). Information on legal protections and restrictions as well as practical barriers for voting for cognitively impaired individuals.
- [Nursing Home 411 Podcast](#): Elder law expert Nina Kohn discusses the voting barriers in long-term care settings and offers tips for families, ombudsmen, and advocates to help residents vote.
- [How to Cast a Vote \(National Consumer Voice\)](#). Fact sheet on how to vote (absentee, early, at facility, curbside) and how to seek assistance voting.
- [Mail ballot deadlines \(New York Times\)](#): Breakdown of how much time people have to vote by mail in each state.
- [LTCCC webinar on residents' rights to voting](#), self-determination, and quality care.

Residents have the right to be free of **interference, coercion, discrimination, and reprisal** from the facility in exercising their rights.

- U.S. Regulations (**§483.10**)