

Why be a member of The Election Center?

The Election Center is the voter registration and elections community's only full-time professionally staffed organization in existence. The Center serves members and nonmembers in inquiries about elections and voter registration laws at national and state levels. Additionally, The Election Center tracks Congressional changes and relays that information immediately to those in elections and voter registration administration. It is a nonprofit, IRS 501 (c) (3) organization dedicated to education and service for the elections and voter registration profession to improve administration of the election process.

The Center keeps track of proposed rules and regulations and how they affect our jobs and our profession. In recent years, The Election Center was responsible for:

- The U S Postal Service creating an "Official Elections Mail" logo to distinguish official voter information from campaign materials;
- Getting the Postal Service to establish a program for better use of rates and services including bulk mail for elections;
- Providing the voice for the elections profession in election reform;
- Alerting us when the U S Congress has held hearings on issues affecting the way we do our jobs, such as the Help America Vote Act, and alternative voting issues, and assisting with legislation related to voters with special needs;
- Keeping us informed on Social Security legislation and which eventually resulted in Congress approving an exemption from Social Security taxes on our part-time elections/registration workers;
- Letting us know through its FaxCast and Email Alert systems of legislation which affects our ability to do our jobs; and to stay on top of the legislation as it proceeds through the system so that we can have our say when it is appropriate;
- The creation of the profession's national Code of Ethics;
- Establishment of the Professional Certification Program to recognize professional development;
- Establishment of the Professional Practices Papers representing the best of the administrative ideas in elections;
- Establishment of the Election Preparation Checklist series;
- Calling positive attention to the dedicated men and women of this profession;
- Creation of the Elections Hall of Fame.

In recent years, our profession has been under attack by partisans and activists who question the professionalism and honesty of those in the elections community. It has been The Election Center providing the voice of reason and providing programs to demonstrate our professional skills and accomplishments.

There are many services offered by The Election Center that have served the elections community well over a number of years. The real reason that you should join, however, is that for an organization like The Election Center to exist it needs members of the profession to support it. The Center is the focal point for voter registration and election administration.

Services, while needed and worthwhile, are secondary to the importance of having a dedicated, full-time staff operation that looks out for our best interests. Due to the concentrated effort of The Center, we now

have a full fledged continuing education program for voter registration and elections officials. The Professional Education Program is affiliated with Auburn University, one of the nation's outstanding academic institutions. Due to staff effort, we know almost immediately whenever there is a bill that will affect our profession or our daily responsibilities. Due to staff effort, attention is called to proposed regulations *before* they become final—giving us the chance to respond, to influence and to modify the process before final regulations.

Thanks to The Election Center staff, we know the correct people to contact or work with in Congress whenever there is an issue that affects us. Thanks to the staff, we know whom to contact in various departments or agencies and how better to achieve a resolution to our problems. Thanks to the staff, we know whom to talk to across the country facing problems similar to ours.

All of these benefits are not possible without a full-time staff operation to serve our needs and that's why we need to support The Election Center. It should be automatic that we send \$350 a year....or more....to The Center, just as a sustaining effort. All of us have been through budget crunches, but this is one area where we *cannot* cut; the value to our profession is too great.

Most officials don't realize how good we've had it. Let us share with you: The Election Center has not raised its membership fees in its existence. Yet the cost of everything has gone up in the last 20 years. Your contribution to The Election Center, at whatever level you are sending, *buys less than half* of what it did more than 20 years ago.

During that time, The Center has offered us the most thorough, complete, and detailed conferences and workshops in existence for elections and voter registration officials. They have kept their promise to us of offering the most substantive programs available anywhere for those in our profession. That's why we owe it to them to be supportive year after year after year. Additionally, we need to tell others about The Center and its value to our profession.

It's also why you ought to join The Election Center this year at whatever level you feel you can. See the enrollment form for the levels of membership and the kinds of services received by each level. Regardless of your choice of membership, you can't go wrong if you support the only nonprofit organization serving our profession. We encourage you to take immediate action to send in your membership now. Please review and sign the enrollment form today and send it along with your check. We each need to ask our neighboring officials to join and help support our organization.

Once you have determined the level of support you can offer, make it automatic that *this one expense stays in your budget no matter what*. You will be glad you did. Our profession will be glad you did. With your support, The Election Center will be around for another 20 years to lead us to the next level of commitment to our communities, to our nation, and to the support of democracy. Can there be any more noble cause?

The members of the Board of Directors encourage you to join The Election Center.

Ernest Hawkins
Sacramento, California

Alice Miller
Washington, DC

Julie Pearson
Rapid City, South Dakota

Dr. Robert Montjoy
New Orleans, Louisiana

Brook Thompson
Nashville, Tennessee

Doug Lewis
Houston, Texas

Join The Center today. Use the enrollment form and help support your profession. Keep your voice heard through your support.