



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

September 19, 2023

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Warren:

Thank you for your letter regarding President Biden's Executive Order 14019 on "*Promoting Access to Voting*." The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has been working diligently across agencies to support a variety of efforts to improve awareness and ease of access to voter resources for citizens when engaging with HHS.

For example, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) created a webpage to serve as a resource hub<sup>1</sup> to make it easier for disabled people and older adults to find the voting resources they need and to support them in exercising their fundamental right to vote. The resource hub also includes details about ACL programs and resources, including information and education, supportive services and legal assistance to improve access to and inclusion in the voting process. For example, ACL funds formula grants to support the Protection and Advocacy (P&A) programs in each state and territory to protect individuals with disabilities by empowering them and advocating on their behalf. Consistent with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), P&A programs ensure full participation of people with disabilities in the electoral process, including exercising their rights to register to vote, cast a vote, and access polling places. P&A programs work with states and communities to improve information on the location of accessible polling places and to encourage adoption of voting procedures that enable individuals with disabilities to vote privately and independently, as well as educate election officials, poll workers, and election volunteers on the rights of voters with disabilities.

Separately, ACL's State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program grantees in every state and territory could help if a person who lives in long-term care facility, such as nursing homes and assisted living facilities, is having difficulty exercising their right to vote.<sup>2</sup> Ombudsman programs support all residents' right to vote and advocate on behalf of residents to ensure that they have the opportunity to participate in the election process.<sup>3</sup>

The Indian Health Service (IHS) has committed to promoting access to voting in Indian Country by offering voter registration services in five areas by the end of 2023. The IHS is working with tribal, federal, and urban Indian programs, and state agencies to designate several facilities as voter registration agencies under the National Voter Registration Act.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://acl.gov/news-and-events/announcements/voting-resources-older-americans-and-people-disabilities>

<sup>2</sup> [Voting Resources for Older Adults and People with Disabilities | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)

<sup>3</sup> National Long-Term Ombudsman Resource Center at [National Consumer Voice \(ltcombudsman.org\)](#) and [National Consumer Voice \(ltcombudsman.org\)](#).

Following President Biden’s EO, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) updated its Health Center Program FAQs guidance in March 2022 for nearly 1,400 federally-funded community health centers. The FAQs describe ways in which health centers are permitted to support voter registration efforts.<sup>4</sup>

In Healthy People 2030, the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP), located within HHS’s Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), incorporated voter participation as a Social Determinant of Health and reclassified it from a research objective to a “core objective” in 2022, establishing the measure among the Nation’s public health priorities.<sup>5</sup>

Since the launch of the Marketplaces in 2013, HealthCare.gov continues to connect consumers with official and trusted voter registration resources. After consumers apply for coverage on HealthCare.gov, the Marketplace website includes a callout about registering to vote and connects consumers to official resources from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission,<sup>6</sup> where consumers can find state-specific information about how to register to vote, important dates and deadlines, absentee/mail/early voting, registration lookup, ballot tracking, polling place lookup and other helpful voter resources.

As a part of annual efforts to get ready for the upcoming Open Enrollment Period, and in support of the Executive Order, CMS is working to ensure that access to Vote.gov voter registration resources are more accessible for consumers who may be looking for voter registration information outside their enrollment journey on HealthCare.gov. CMS has expanded locations on HealthCare.gov that connect consumers to Vote.gov information without needing to create or sign into their account so they can access the resources at any point in time while browsing HealthCare.gov, making it easier for consumers to connect with official Vote.gov resources. CMS added a link in the HealthCare.gov footer to register to vote, which goes to Vote.gov so consumers can easily find this resource and get information and links for their state’s voter registration processes.<sup>7</sup> CMS has also added highlights for registering to vote on several key helpful resource articles for consumers in case they may be looking for information while learning about the Marketplace and their health insurance coverage options.<sup>8</sup> CMS will continue to consider what additional updates the agency may make in support of the Executive Order.

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<sup>4</sup> [Voter Registration and Health Centers | Bureau of Primary Health Care \(hrsa.gov\)](https://www.hrsa.gov/primary-care/health-centers/)

<sup>5</sup> <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/social-and-community-context/increase-proportion-voting-age-citizens-who-vote-sdoh-07>

<sup>6</sup> See, Healthcare.gov “Application for Health Coverage & Help Paying Costs” (OMB No. 0938-1191 Expires: 10/31/2025), in which the section instructing applicants to mail the completed form states: “If you want to register to vote, you can complete a voter registration form at eac.gov.” [Application for Health Coverage & Help Paying Costs Short Form \(cms.gov\)](https://www.cms.gov/medicare/health-care-costs-short-form/).

<sup>7</sup> See, “Register to Vote” under Resources at the bottom of this healthcare.gov webpage: [Get 2023 health coverage. Health Insurance Marketplace® | HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov/2023/01/get-2023-health-coverage/) Clicking on “Register to Vote” takes the consumer to this webpage: [Check Voter Registration Deadlines and Laws in Your State | Vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov/).

<sup>8</sup> A “Register to vote” highlight is included on these educational pages: Quick guide: Tips about the Health Insurance Marketplace® at <https://www.healthcare.gov/quick-guide/one-page-guide-to-the-marketplace/>; Medicaid: & CHIP: Medicaid expansion and what it means to you at <https://www.healthcare.gov/medicaid-chip/medicaid-expansion-and-you/>; and More savings landing page: New, lower costs on Marketplace coverage at <https://www.healthcare.gov/more-savings/>

Thank you for your ongoing interest and support on this important issue. Should you have further questions, please have your staff contact the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Legislation at (202) 690-7627.

Sincerely,

Xavier Becerra

Cc:

Hon. Ben Ray Lujan

Hon. Richard Blumenthal

Hon. Mazie Hirono

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Hon. Sheldon Whitehouse

Hon. Raphael Warnock