

## Post Election Action: Ten Ways to Take Action

1. Join or maintain your membership in NASW. While this sounds a little self serving, social workers need an ever stronger presence in Washington DC and in state capitols. Imagine how we can fight regressive proposals and the abridgement of civil rights if we could double our lobbying efforts! We know from organizing principles that there is strength in numbers and it's ever so true now. When a social worker says "I wish I knew what I could do now," let them know that you're a member of NASW and that's something you're doing to take action.
2. Keep pushing voter registration and political action. Join with other advocacy groups at the local level to register voters and participate in local politics. We social workers know how to help people overcome fear and intimidation as well as gain confidence through empowerment.
3. When your representative, no matter what party, has a community forum, event or activity, attend and voice your opinion about social work (human) values, ethics, and the need for inclusive programs to serve the most needy and vulnerable. Use your knowledge to point where the gaps are and identify evidence-based effective programs.
4. Get educated and stay on top of the latest policies in your area of practice. It's predicted that the new Administration will attack health care, social insurance, education and anti-poverty programs. Know the details, research, and be ready to talk to anyone: media, other policy makers, the community, etc., about proposals that might work and which ones we already know will not.
5. Connect with schools of social work for the latest research, ideas and experience. Schools are also a tremendous source of student energy and volunteerism. Find out how to inspire and collaborate with them.
6. Organize or connect to local community organization efforts. Many local community based organizations will be the target of cutbacks and defunding. Social workers can be a policy and advocacy resource. Encourage collaboration, including connecting to NASW chapters and the National office to coordinate with wider lobbying efforts.
7. Develop media connections and strategies. Don't wait the for media to contact you or NASW, reach out to them. If you see a human services or human interest story, take note of the reporter and contact to them. You may get the brush off, but keep trying. Write letters to the editor -- they expand the knowledge of their readers. Use social media if that's where your connections are strong. Social workers know what it takes to form relationships. Take a lesson from this past election on what the media is interested in and attracted to. If they bite, they can be an ally.
8. Clients and targeted local populations will need your support, encouragement and ally-ship. There may a tendency for some to hide or keep a low profile. Let them know there are many who support them and will fight regressive policies. Find out who their local contacts are (religious and secular human rights leaders & organizations, social service agencies, ethnic clubs, etc.); reach out and offer to collaborate with them on strategies and tactics.
9. Get ready for the next election (we have them every two years and sometimes every year. Identify candidates you support and work with them to get elected. Run for office and ask NASW's PACE and CalPACE programs to support you with endorsements, funding, and/or campaign strategies.
10. Read NASW's columns on Post Election Stress and Never Giving Up.