How Can Social Workers Get Involved

1. Contribute to CalPACE
CalPACE endorses and makes campaign contributions to social workers and like-minded candidates running for state and local elected offices.

2. Volunteer in political campaigns
Campaigns are always in need of volunteers to place phone calls encouraging others to vote, distribute literature, host fundraising parties, or put up lawn signs. Volunteer with a friend or partner to make it more fun!

3. Run for elected office
Contact CalPACE and your local political party as the first steps toward applying your knowledge and skills in the political arena.

4. Vote
This is the bare minimum that each social worker should be doing to satisfy our Code of Ethics requirements. Vote for CalPACE endorsed candidates who will champion policies that empower individuals and communities.

But Why Should We Elect Social Workers to Public Office?
Federal, state, and local policies and laws affect our social work profession and practice, and therefore, it is essential that elected representatives share NASW’s policy positions as stated in Social Work Speaks, which is the NASW’s publication of NASW policy statements.

Scan QR code below to make a donation to CalPACE.
What is the CalPACE Political Action Committee?

The California Political Action for Candidate Election (CalPACE) is NASW California’s political action arm. As a political action committee, CalPACE endorses and financially contributes to state and local level candidates who are social workers or who support social work values and NASW’s policy agenda irrespective of party affiliation. The endorsement decisions are made by the CalPACE Committee which are appointed by the Chapter President biennially. CalPACE contributions come directly from NASW member donations to the CalPACE committee. Exercise your commitment to social justice and political action by donating to CalPACE!

How Does CalPACE and NASW Help

**Elections**

Besides candidate elections, the NASW-CA Legislative Committee analyzes statewide propositions and makes recommendations on measures that affect the social work profession or those social workers serve.

**Legislative Advocacy Days**

Every spring, NASW-CA holds an event at the California State Capitol in Sacramento. Nearly 1,400 social workers gather to learn about priority social work related policy. Event participants gain hands-on experience by meeting with legislators and their staff by applying the knowledge they learned the previous day.

NASW-CA Involvement in Policy

While CalPACE is the political action committee for the organization, NASW-CA funds a full-time Director of Government Relations and Political Affairs (Lobbyist) who represents NASW members in meetings with legislators and committee hearings about proposed legislation that has been vetted by the Chapter’s Legislative Committee. The Director also attends Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) meetings to advocate for the profession.

Why Should Social Workers Get Involved?

“It is easier to spend a few months and some money electing the right people than to spend years and a lot of money trying to get the wrong people to do the right thing.”

– Senator Debbie Stabenow, MSW

According to Social Work Speaks, social workers possess a wealth and breadth of knowledge about human needs and behavior, service delivery, systems theory, and the effects of public policy. Therefore, we are in a unique position to participate in politics and elections as well as advocate for public policy and legislation that upholds social work values.

Many social workers are hesitant to be involved due to concerns over party politics or partisanship. Unfortunately, the U.S. political systems are largely about choosing among candidates and not issues. If an individual or group wants to be able to influence electoral or legislative outcomes, they have to make partisan choices. Social workers must be involved in the election of candidates and in the legislative process, as dictated by our ethics, by being agents of social change and serving our clients both in and out of the office.

All of these social workers have been elected to public office through the help and donations from our CalPACE committee, and they are not the only ones. There are many social workers throughout California who have been elected to public office.