



astho.org/votesafepublichealth

VoteSAFE Public Health is committed to promoting healthy communities and advancing health equity by assuring safe voting and participation in the electoral process is available to everyone.

The COVID-19 pandemic makes voter participation in elections an urgent public health issue for three reasons:

1. Those who are **most impacted** by COVID-19 are also those who experience the most barriers to voter registration and to voting.
2. Civic engagement and **participation in the electoral process through voting** is an action that **impacts health**. A study of 44 countries (including the United States) found that voter participation was associated with better self-reported health, even after controlling for individual and country characteristics.¹ In another study, individuals who did not vote reported poorer health in subsequent years.²
3. **Voting is now a public health issue** as poll sites may be vectors for COVID-19 transmission. Precautions must be implemented to assure that the act of voting itself does not expose people to COVID-19. Moreover, efforts must be made to protect the health of poll workers since those who typically volunteer to staff polling sites may likely be at greater risk for COVID-19 complications and death (e.g., older Americans).

Overall Aims of VoteSAFE Public Health Include:

- Strengthening relationships across organizations and sectors through alignment of efforts to promote safe voting.
- Collectively working to assure safe voting opportunities are available to all and promote the understanding of the relationship of health to civic engagement and social cohesion.
- Assuring systems and resources of support for safe voting are available to everyone.

What is VoteSAFE Public Health?

VoteSAFE Public Health is a coalition of 10 national public health organizations working to assure all Americans have the opportunity to safely vote in the 2020 election and prevent transmission of COVID-19. Specific areas of focus include:

1. Providing guidance and public health technical assistance to election officials in creating and promoting safer polling places on Election Day.
2. Supporting efforts to recruit an expanded workforce of poll workers and assure their safe participation and service.
3. Coordinating and amplifying communications and education efforts with partner agencies and organizations to strengthen public health and safety messages related to the 2020 election.

4. Encouraging voter participation on Election Day through:
 - Providing information and assurances to the public on safe voting opportunities.
 - Promoting an individual and family “Safe Voting Plan.”
 - Sharing information on the relationship between a healthy, engaged electorate and a healthy democracy.
 - Providing get-out-the-vote materials to public health agencies for dissemination in the communities they work with.

VoteSAFE Public Health Coalition Members

- [American College of Preventative Medicine](#) (ACPM)
- [American Public Health Association](#) (APHA)
- [Association of Schools & Programs of Public Health](#) (ASPPH)
- [Association of State and Territorial Health Officials](#) (ASTHO)
- [Big Cities Health Coalition](#) (BCHC)
- [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO)
- [National Network of Public Health Institutes](#) (NNPHI)
- [Network for Public Health Law](#) (NPHL)
- [Public Health Accreditation Board](#) (PHAB)
- [Trust for America's Health](#) (TFAH)

Note: VoteSAFE Public Health Coalition efforts are explicitly nonpartisan as the focus is on sharing guidelines and recommendations on how to safely vote during a public health emergency and encourage voter participation. VoteSAFE Public Health Coalition does not align with any candidate or campaign it is a “non-issue” campaign.

¹ Kim S, Kim CY, You MS. Civic participation and self-rated health: a cross-national multi-level analysis using the world value survey. *J Prev Med Public Health*. 2015;48(1):18–27.

² Arah OA. Effect of voting abstention and life course socioeconomic position on self-reported health. *J Epidemiol Community Health*. 2008;62(8):759–60.