



League Links

April 2026

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Co-Presidents' Message

To all our dedicated volunteers—thank you. Your time, energy, and commitment make our work possible and our impact stronger across Michigan. We are grateful for everything you do to support civic engagement and strengthen our democracy.

Well done, all!

In League,
Lynne Kochmanski and Denise Hartsough
Co-Presidents
League of Women Voters of Michigan

Local League Members

Local Leagues in Michigan

Our League Members

Our local League members are the heartbeat of League work in Michigan. As a grassroots organization, local Leagues are where important League work gets done, including VOTE411, tabling, candidate forums, local advocacy, and more...

FAVORITE THING ABOUT THE LEAGUE

"I can't think of more important work to be engaged in, empowering voters and defending democracy is fundamental."



Voter Service Updates

Deadline Approaching: Youth Engagement Grant Program

Don't forget to submit your grant proposals!

LWVMI is offering local Leagues an opportunity to promote youth engagement in voter service activities during the 2026 election year. Grant funding is available to provide honoraria for youth ages 16–25 who are interested in supporting civic engagement and democracy efforts alongside local Leagues.

Details about the grant—including examples of eligible youth engagement activities and application criteria—are available at this [link](#).

Local Leagues are encouraged to submit a proposal outlining their plans to engage youth. Grants of up to \$1,500 are available. Proposals should include a description of planned activities, anticipated costs, and a timeline covering May through November 2026.

Please submit proposals to:

Judy Florian at voterservice@lwvmi.org

or

Lynne Kochmanski at copresidentkochmanski@lwvmi.org

Deadline: April 30, 2026

Get Out the Vote (GOTV) Postcard Campaign

LWVMI is pleased to offer local Leagues the opportunity to participate in the Get Out the Vote (GOTV) postcard campaign for the August 4 and/or November 3 elections. This is an excellent volunteer opportunity for League members.

A postcard template will be provided, with the option to customize it by adding the local League's name and logo. The postcard size is 4 x 6 inches, and the current postage rate is \$0.61.

To participate, each local League must complete the **2026 GOTV Postcard Campaign Application**, available at this [link](#). **The target group for this campaign is newly registered, first-time voters (age 18-29)**. However, local Leagues can identify a different target population. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Voters who have not participated in an election during the past four years
- Women voters age 40 and over who didn't vote in 2022
- Voters in a specific jurisdiction, precinct, or ZIP code (demographics decided by the local League)

Our Voter Access Network (VAN) Data Team will extract voter information from the database, which connects directly to the Michigan Department of State's Qualified Voter File (QVF). The data team includes Cathy Marshall of Washtenaw County and Susan Hannah of Northern Lower Michigan. Once an application is received, the request will be forwarded to the data team for processing.

LWVMI will reimburse local Leagues for printing and postage expenses up to a maximum of \$1,000. Local Leagues may exceed the \$1,000 limit but will be responsible for any costs above that amount. Expenses must be paid upfront by the local League, with receipts submitted for reimbursement.

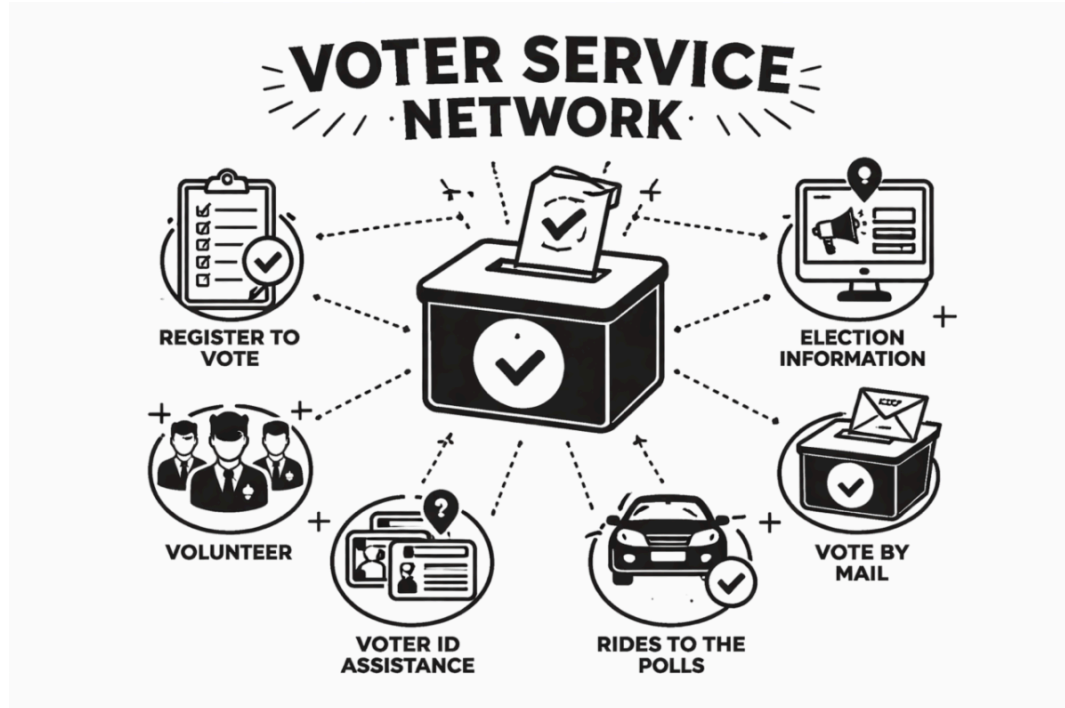
To receive reimbursement, local Leagues must submit receipts along with the GOTV Expense Reimbursement Request, available on the LWVMI.org website. **The deadline to submit the reimbursement form and receipts is Friday, November 13, 2026.**

Questions can be directed to Judy Florian at voterservice@lwvmi.org.



Voter Service Network Meeting

Mark your calendars! Our next Voter Service Network meeting will be held on Thursday, April 23, at 7:00 p.m. You can register for the meeting at this [link](#). Only those actively involved in Voter Service work in their local League can attend. An agenda will be sent out the week of April 23.

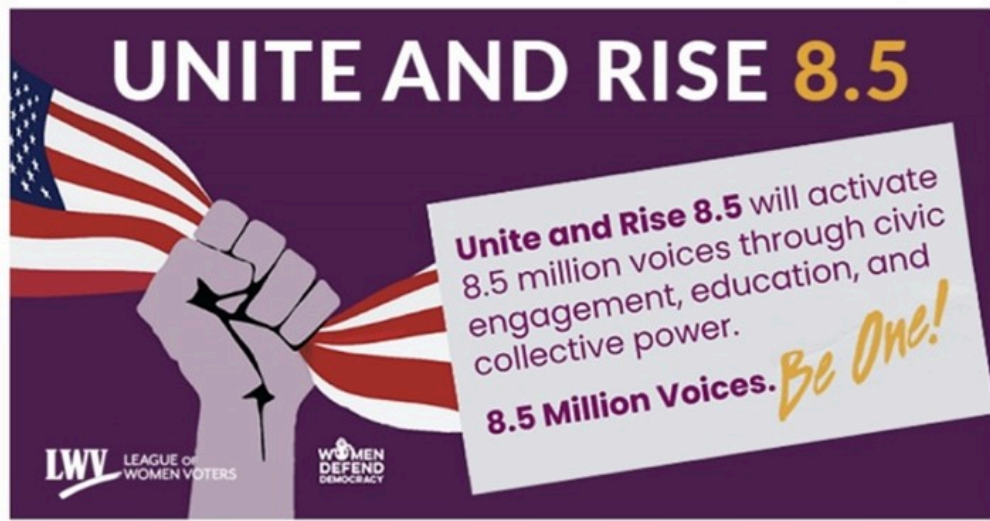


Judy Florian
VP for Voter Service
voterservice@lwwmi.org
313-402-6786

Unite and Rise 8.5

The *Unite & Rise 8.5 Playbook 5: People Power Summer* for May through July will be released on April 24.

- Playbook 5 Community Call, May 4, 5pm on Zoom. Registration: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1rxn7WqoRGO_Y5K97N6F-A#/registration
- Unite & Rise 8.5 LWVMI Network Playbook 5 meeting, May 6, 7pm Zoom. Registration: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/OSaF26r7TxKps31W1CpL0A>
- Save the date for National Voting Rights Activation Day on August 8.



LWVMI Litigation Update

League of Women Voters of Michigan filed an amicus brief to stop the Justice Department from obtaining private voter data. The brief argues that the Justice Department's appeal to Sixth Circuit should be denied for the sake of election integrity, voters' privacy, and the Constitution. You can read the press release [here](#).



LWVMI Advocacy Committee Report

The Advocacy Committee has been busy again in April. Here are some highlights:

APRIL 11, 2026 - SUPPORT FOR PLUG-IN SOLAR

The League voted to support HB 5764 which would allow customers to access solar energy with less up-front cost. The systems simply plug into a home's existing electric circuits.

APRIL 11, 2026 - ENABLE "VIRTUAL" POWER PLANTS

LWVMI supports SB 731-732, known as the Distributed Energy Generation Resources (DER) Bill. DERs are small, localized power generation and storage technologies dispersed throughout the electric grid. The bills would create aggregation programs for DERs called virtual power plants (VPPs). Enabling VPPs would allow more affordable and reliable use of energy and reduce energy waste.

APRIL 11, 2026 - ESTABLISH FIREARM INDUSTRY RESPONSIBILITY ACT

The LWVMI Board voted to support SB 841-843 and SB 848-854. The bills would create a firearm industry responsibility act, abolish firearm industry immunity, provide a waiting period for firearm purchases, expand gun free/weapon free zones to include all buildings owned or leased by the state, prohibit sale, production and possession of high-capacity magazines, allow local governments to

impose certain restrictions on firearms such as prohibiting open carry of firearms in local government buildings, provide license to sell firearms at retail and provide for secure storage of firearms by retail sellers.

APRIL 11, 2026 - OPPOSE REPEAL OF CONCEALED WEAPONS LIMITS

The League of Women Voters of Michigan voted to oppose HB 5653-5657 which would repeal many provisions limiting carry of concealed weapons including allowing in bars, churches, hospitals, sports arenas and large entertainment venues. The bills would make Michigan a “Constitutional Carry” state.

MARCH 27, 2026 - NO PUBLIC DOLLARS TO PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

As a member of the Council of Organizations and Others for Education about Parochial (CAP), the League signed on to a letter to Governor Whitmer urging her to decline to opt Michigan into the Education Freedom Tax Credit program. This program proposes national vouchers that would redirect an indeterminate amount of funds from public to private schools. This proposal financially irresponsible, lacks transparency, and will create major winners and losers in education systems across our state. Read the letter [here](#).

MARCH 14, 2026 - OPPOSE REPEAL OF MICHIGAN'S CLEAN ENERGY ACT

The LWVMI Board of Directors voted to oppose HB 5710 and 5711 which would repeal Michigan's 2023 Clean and Renewable Energy Law. We let the House Energy Committee know of our opposition on March 16. The House Energy Committee met again on April 14, and again we sent written notice (a “card” that’s read into the public record) of our opposition to repealing this Act.

Sandra Sorini Elser
LWVMI VP for Advocacy
advocacy@lwvmi.org

Ballot Proposals and Petitions

When Leagues began presenting Know What You Sign, we informed voters on eight potential ballot proposals. Where do those now stand?

- **State Constitutional Convention (Con Con)** - Will be on the ballot as Proposal 1. Mandated by the Michigan Constitution to be on the ballot every 16 years.
- **Americans for Citizen Voting** - Submitted petitions with over 750,000 signatures to the Board of State Canvassers in March, hoping that the Bureau of Elections will find that at least the required 446,198 are valid. Results of the signature review are expected in late May or early June.
- **Protect Voters' Rights** - The petition did not circulate widely and the group is not expected to submit signatures.
- **Michiganders for Money Out of Politics** - Petitions are still circulating with a reported 250,000 of the needed 356,958 signatures collected. Organizers ask those who signed in the fall to sign again, as they have shifted forward the 6-month window for collecting signatures.
- **AxMITax** - Petitions are still circulating. The number of signatures collected so far has not been announced.
- **Rank MI Vote** - Campaign suspended.
- **Invest in MI Kids** - Campaign suspended.
- **Voters to Stop Pay Cuts** - Campaign suspended.

LWVUS National Convention 2026

Registration for [Convention 2026: Women Unite & Rise](#) is open until May 22nd. Visit the event website to register, book your hotel accommodations, access pre-Convention webinar recordings, and more! Early bird registration ended on March 31st.

Registration of in-person delegates is \$600.

Registration of virtual delegates is \$150, which includes only plenary sessions.

Please check with your local League leadership if you are interested in attending as a voting delegate. Each local League has a designated number of delegate spots allotted to them based on membership size. Every attempt will be made to accommodate those who wish to attend, though assistance with cost is limited, and at the discretion of local Leagues.

Once local Leagues have decided on who will be attending, please send your lists to communications@lwwmi.org, and cc copresidentkochmanski@lwwmi.org and copresidenthartsough@lwwmi.org.



LWVMI Spring Appeal Letter - Coming Soon

We all know there are three levels of the League of Women Voters: national (LWVUS), state (LWVMI), and local Leagues. While we each have our own areas to focus on, we often collaborate across these levels. Our efforts and activities are like a beautiful tapestry, making us all stronger together.



One thing I often hear from members is concern about the number of donation requests they receive from the League. I was at a fundraising seminar at the last national convention in D.C., and heard that complaint quite plainly. To be clear, LWVMI only sends out two donation appeals each year; one in the spring, and one at the end of the year. These two donation appeals are sent by mail, not email.

Soon, if you haven't already, you'll receive our spring appeal letter. Please answer the call to help keep our state League strong. A strong state League makes our local Leagues even more powerful. Consider making a donation to help continue

the important work of empowering voters and defending democracy. Thank you for all you do for all the levels of the League of Women Voters.

Carrie Moon-Dupree
LWVMI Development Director

Membership Network Notes

Congratulations to Macomb County League!

Macomb County is becoming an Independent League. They've worked hard as a State Unit producing short informational videos on mis & disinformation, holding candidate forums, working on improving voter turnout, and participating in Board of Canvassers observation and Observer Corps. They've met all the requirements and on April 11 the LWVMI State Board approved their application to become a full-fledged Independent League. Their application has been forwarded to LWVUS, and we hope it will be considered and approved at their June board meeting. Please join us in acknowledging their accomplishment. We look forward to an official announcement once LWVUS has approved their application.

April Meeting:

Ann Constance of Marquette League joined us to discuss their new satellite chapter at Northern Michigan University (NMU). She provided background on how the Marquette League became involved with student leader interns from NMU and the development of the satellite chapter and then answered several questions from the audience. Highlights include:

- Marquette first researched existing and former student/satellite chapters finding that there haven't been many. The major challenge is that the student members are transient and even though a university strongly supports the program, it requires student involvement to keep it going.
- Marquette worked with an existing student intern program at NMU.
- Marquette's first student intern now serves on the Marquette board and heads communications for the Marquette League.
- They have both a staff advisor and a student mentor for the student interns. The staff advisor was found through a League contact at NMU. The student intern mentor is a League member. It's important the students get mentoring and have an amazing experience with the League.

Another student involvement program in Grand Traverse Area (GTA) League informally partners with the local community college student government on events like voter registration drives. They work with both a faculty advisor and the president of the student organization.

Local League Highlights from around the State:

- Grosse Pointe participated in the No Kings events among other activities.
- North Central Michigan has just become a new state unit! They attended a Roscommon County Commissioners meeting advocating for a resolution to not support Documentary Proof of Citizenship (DPOC) measures and have also worked on high school voter registration.
- Leelanau held a program on early childhood issues and related funding and grants with much of the focus on nutrition and parent-child communication. The program was attended by two supportive legislators: a Republican and a Democrat.
- Flint Area continues work on their Observer Corps and is offering training for new observers. In addition, they are involved in high school voter registration

- and are holding a half-hour new member orientation for the 15 members who have joined since October.
- Kalamazoo is starting up regular membership meetings. They recently held one to make signs for No Kings.
 - Jackson Area is involved in My Democracy My Vote and tabling at a youth council function.
 - Dearborn-Dearborn Heights (DDH) attended the Wayne County Commissioners meeting. The Commissioners adopted a League-supported resolution to not support DPOC. DDH is also working on youth voter registration.
 - Detroit is participating in No Kings and is having a friend-raising event at Suffis at the Fisher Theater.
 - Berrien & Cass Counties League is training other organizations on how to conduct voter registration.
 - Lansing Area League is hosting Dr. Kimberly St. Martin at their April luncheon to speak on Michigan's Multi-tiered System of Supports Technical Assistance Center, a part of the Michigan Department of Education.

Finishing Up:

The May 13, 7:00 pm Membership Leaders Network meeting will be a great panel discussion on Shared Leadership in Action with leaders from 3 of our Leagues talking about their unique versions of Shared Leadership. All League members are welcome so please join us on Zoom using this [link](#).

Also don't miss the program on voting site accessibility on April 30 at 7:00 pm (See related article below).

Carla Barrows-Wiggins
VP for Membership
Membership@lwvmi.org

Take Action on ICE!

LWVUS: Tell Congress No More ICE and CBP Funding

Congress is considering a fast-track legislative process to allocate billions of additional dollars to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the very agencies that are terrorizing our communities. All the while, millions of Americans are struggling to meet their basic needs.

[Speak up now!](#)

LWVMI: Support ICE Restraints in Michigan

Urge your State Senator and State Representative to pass Senate Bill 508 and Senate Bill 510. SB 508 would prohibit a federal immigration officer from conducting an immigration enforcement action in a sensitive location. SB 510 would prohibit a federal immigration officer from wearing a mask or personal disguise and require the use of activated body-worn cameras.

[Take action!](#)



Local Resolutions for Voting Rights - Join In!

Local units of government are adopting resolutions opposing documentary proof of citizenship (DPOC) requirements for voting. The most prominent of those DPOC measures is from Americans for Citizen Voting (ACV), which has submitted its petition signatures to the Board of State Canvassers. ACV wants us to add a DPOC requirement for voting to our Michigan Constitution.

DPOC is proposed as a solution to a non-existent problem and would prevent many eligible voters from accessing the ballot. When Kansas tried DPOC, that requirement blocked 30,000 citizens from voting. Not everyone has easy access to a passport or birth certificate.

So far, seven communities have stated their opposition to the needless red tape of DPOC: County Commissions for Washtenaw, Wayne and Kalamazoo Counties; City Councils in Ypsilanti, Detroit and Pontiac; and the Meridian Township Board.

If your local unit of government is interested in considering a resolution, please notify Denise Hartsough, copresidenthartsough@lwvmi.org.

LWVMI Environmental Network April 2026 Report

The LWVMI Environmental Network met on April 16, 2026.

Michelle Armstrong, a backyard beekeeper and Secretary of the [Michigan Bee Keepers Association](#) gave an interesting presentation on why pollinators and bees are so important for our environment.

Then our group members discussed the work we are all doing in our local Leagues to help protect our environment.

Sandy reported that LWVMI will once again be a sponsor of the [MICAN Michigan Climate Summit](#). The summit will be in East Lansing on June 12 at the Kellogg Center. All League members and members of the general public are invited to

attend. This year the Summit will focus on “Collective Courage.” A call to stand together to use our voices to work for the change our communities need.

All League members are welcome to join the Environmental Network. Please contact Sandy at advocacy@LWVMI.org for more information.

Get Involved for DEI and Voter Service!

Voter Service and Membership DEI are jointly sponsoring an effort to help evaluate more statewide voting sites for accessibility. Volunteers visit voting sites and assess the site based on a straightforward set of criteria. Training will be provided.

To participate, join us on April 30 at 7:00 pm for an introductory Zoom with Eric Welsby of Detroit Disability Power. The time commitment is low and the impact is high! [Here](#) is the Zoom link for the meeting.

All LWV Members Welcome!

For more information, please contact Membership@LWVMI.org.

A Night at the Theatre- Grosse Pointe League Enjoys Suffs The Musical

Several members of the League of Women Voters of Grosse Pointe attended Suff's: The Musical at the Fisher Theatre on April 18. Suff's tells the story of the American women's suffrage movement, focusing on the activists who fought for voting rights in the years leading up to the 19th Amendment. The production explores the movement's internal conflicts, friendships, and differing strategies, while highlighting tensions across generations and racial lines.

If you didn't make it to see Suff's at the Fisher Theatre, you can watch it on PBS on May 8 at 9:00 pm. More information can be found [here](#).



Pictured, Front Row, L to R: Liz Martin, Sue Acton, Judy Masserang, Marge Freundl,
Judy Florian, Wilhelmina Giblin.
Back Row, L to R: Ruth Hoover, Loren Mannino, Melissa Levasseur, Mickie Verdebar and
Laura Larson.

Local League Advocacy Network April 28, 2026, at 3:00 pm via Zoom

The next LWVMI Local League Advocacy Network meeting will be on April 28, 2026, at 3:00 pm via Zoom.

All League members are welcome. You can access the meeting link [here](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email.

The meeting agenda will be:

- [DPOC Laws Tool Kit](#)
- [News Release on a panel opposing the Save America Act](#)
- [News Release on US House passage of the Save America Act](#)
- [Take Action item on the SAVE Act suite of bills](#)
- Round Robin-Local Leagues share their advocacy activities.
- Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 3:00 pm

For questions, please contact Christina at bcschlitt@gmail.com.

Hope you will join us.

Sandra Sorini Elser, LWVMI VP of Advocacy
Christina Schlitt, LWV North Central Michigan

LWV Member Portal Trainings

LWVUS is offering a three-part training series on May 28, June 4, and June 11 at 4–5 pm ET for new League leaders on how to navigate the LWV Member Portal and its important features. This series will be a refreshed version of the trainings on the LWV Member Portal that were presented last year in the summer. Member registration is required!

- The Membership Chair/Roster Manager training will cover joining and renewing, as well as navigating the LWV portal and updating the roster. This webinar is helpful for roster managers, membership chairs, and any leader who wants more guidance on using the portal. Click [here](#) to register.
- The Treasurer training will cover Stripe, offline payments, League-paid dues, the finances screen, the process of making Leagues whole, and the remainder of the PMP cycle. This training is open to any League leader, particularly those who deal with finances. Click [here](#) to register.
- The Optional Portal Tools training will focus on using the email tool and the website editor within the portal. This tutorial is for Leagues that are using or considering using the portal emailer or website editor. Click [here](#) to register.

Local Leagues

Berrien/Cass Counties
Copper Country (with Gogebic County Geographic Unit)
Dearborn/Dearborn Heights
Delta County
Detroit
Eastern UP MAL State Unit
Flint Area
Grand Haven Area
Greater Grand Rapids Area
Grand Traverse Area
Grosse Pointe
Holland Area
Jackson Area
Kalamazoo Area (with Calhoun County Geographic Unit)
Lansing Area
Leelanau County
Lenawee County
Livingston County
Macomb County MAL State Unit
Manistee County
Marquette County
Midland Area
Mt. Pleasant
North Central Michigan State Unit
Northeast Michigan (formerly Alpena County)
Northern Lower Michigan
Northwest Wayne County
Oakland Area
Saginaw County
Troy
Washtenaw County

For more information go to www.lwvmi.org
or check out Facebook pages for state and local Leagues

LWVMI Leadership 2025-2027

Co-President: [Denise Hartsough](#) (Kalamazoo Area)
Co-President: [Lynne Kochmanski](#) (Washtenaw County)
VP Voter Service: [Judy Florian](#) (Grosse Pointe)
VP Advocacy: [Sandra Sorini Elser](#) (Washtenaw County)
VP Program: [Ellen Lafferty](#) (Livingston County)
VP Membership: [Carla Barrows-Wiggins](#) (Oakland Area)
Secretary: [Maria McCarville](#) (Saginaw County)
Treasurer: [Tom Wells](#) (Grosse Pointe)

Directors

VOTE411: [Anne Jackson](#) (Washtenaw County)
Advocacy: [Connie Mitchell](#) (Dearborn/Dearborn Heights)
Observer Corps: [Tina Pawlak](#) (Holland Area)
League Links: [Courtney Winell](#) (Greater Grand Rapids Area)

DEI Team: [Sheryl Theriot](#) (Detroit)

Development: [Carrie Moon-Dupree](#) (Northwest Wayne County)

Director at Large: [Charles Thomas Jr.](#) (Detroit)

Calendar



April 2026

Arab American Heritage Month

National Volunteer Month

April 19-25: National Volunteer Week

April 22: Earth Day

April 23: [Voter Service Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm

April 25: [Parliamentary Procedure Workshop](#) | 1:00 pm

April 28: [Local League Advocacy Network Meeting](#) | 3:00 pm

April 29: [Communications Network](#) | 2:30 pm

April 30: [Voting Site Accessibility](#) | 7:00 pm

April 30: Youth Engagement Grant Proposals Due

May 2026

Asian American Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month

Jewish American Heritage Month

Mental Health Awareness Month

May 5: Advocacy Committee Meeting | 2:00 pm

May 5: [Unite and Rise 8.5 Playbook 5 Community Call](#) | 5:00 pm on Zoom

May 6: [Unite and Rise 8.5 Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm

May 9: LWVMI Monthly Board Meeting | 9:30 am

May 10: Mother's Day

May 13: [Membership Leaders Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm

May 14: [Presidents/Leaders Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm

May 20: 33rd Anniversary of the [National Voter Registration Act](#)

May 21: [Voter Service Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm

May 22: Last Day to [Register](#) for LWVUS Convention

May 25: Memorial Day

May 28: [LWV Member Portal Training](#) | 4:00 pm

All LWVMI meetings are posted on [LWV Only page](#) of our website with links added when available.

Connect with us!

League of Women Voters of Michigan

Phone: 517-484-5383

Email: office@lwvmi.org

Website: lwvmi.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lwvmichigan/>

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