



League Links

May 2026

IN THIS ISSUE...

- Co-Presidents' Message
 - Voter Service Updates
 - Unite and Rise 8.5
 - LWVMI Program Report
 - LWVMI Advocacy Committee Report
 - LWVUS National Convention
 - LWVMI Spring Appeal Letter
 - Membership Network Notes
 - Action Alerts from LWVMI and LWVUS
 - Not Your Mother's Logo Anymore
 - LWVMI Environmental Network
 - Does Your League Love a Good Party?
 - Three Marches. Two Sisters. One Bridge
 - LWV Member Portal Trainings
 - Local Leagues
 - LWVMI Leadership 2026-2027
 - Calendar
-

Co-Presidents' Message

As the 2026 election season approaches, we are reminded every day of the extraordinary commitment of League members across Michigan. From the Upper Peninsula to our urban centers, suburban communities, and rural towns, you are doing the essential work of strengthening democracy where it matters most—locally.

Across our state, League members are stepping up—monitoring election policy, educating voters about new voting options, advocating for fair redistricting, supporting transparency in government, and defending the rights of every eligible voter to participate freely and safely. That includes speaking out against policies that create fear, confusion, or unnecessary barriers to participation—“show your papers” proposals requiring documentary proof of citizenship to register or vote, or other measures that target eligible voters, particularly seniors, students, military families, naturalized citizens, and rural voters.

We also know democracy is about more than elections. It is about ensuring that every Michigander has a voice in the decisions that shape our communities—from public education and environmental protection to reproductive freedom, civil liberties, and accountable government. These issues affect our families, neighborhoods, and the future of our state.

In a time when trust in institutions is being tested, the League continues to be a trusted, nonpartisan voice for facts, fairness, and civic participation. We do not serve parties or candidates—we serve voters and democracy.

As we prepare for the important work ahead, we invite each of you to stay engaged, bring new voices into our movement, and continue leading with courage and conviction. Our democracy is stronger because of you. Thank you for all you do.

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

Voter Service Updates

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 is available and may be customized with your local League's name. Special thanks to Pat Buckner of the Northern Lower Michigan League for designing the postcard. If you would like your League's name added, please contact Pat at patbuckner24@gmail.com. Because some postcard templates may appear fuzzy or pixelated when shared electronically, you can contact Pat, who will be happy to send the postcard directly to your printer.

The postcard size is 4 x 6 inches, and the current postage rate is \$0.61.

NOTE: A couple of local Leagues have inquired about buying stamps from a third party. This is **not recommended** since the validity of the stamps cannot be verified. Purchase stamps from the USPS.

To participate, each local League **must complete the following:**

- 2026 GOTV Postcard Campaign Application, available at this [link](#).
- Contact Pat Buckner for a personalized League postcard if one is desired
- Submit request for reimbursement **by November 13, 2026**

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).

Based on your target population, 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.



Help Strengthen Our Elections: Become an Election Inspector

Free and democratic elections depend on dedicated community members who are willing to serve. One of the most important ways League members can support democracy this year is by signing up to be an Election Inspector for the August 4 and November 3 elections.

Election inspectors play a vital role in ensuring that every voter has a smooth, secure, and accessible voting experience. They help open and close the polls, assist voters, check in voters, process ballots, and make sure election procedures are followed accurately and fairly. It is meaningful, hands-on work that directly supports confidence in our electoral system.

League members are especially well suited for this role. Our commitment to civic engagement, voter participation, and nonpartisanship makes us valuable contributors at the polls and early voting sites. Serving as an Election Inspector is a practical way to put our values into action and help our communities.

Training is provided, and many jurisdictions offer compensation for service. Whether you are a first-time volunteer or have previous experience, your time and commitment can make a real difference.

Please consider signing up to serve in the August 4 primary and the November 3 general election. Encourage friends and family members to join you as well. When League members step forward, we help ensure elections are well run, welcoming, and trustworthy for every voter.

To learn more about being an Election Inspector or serving on an Absentee Voter Ballot Counting Board, contact your local clerk's office.

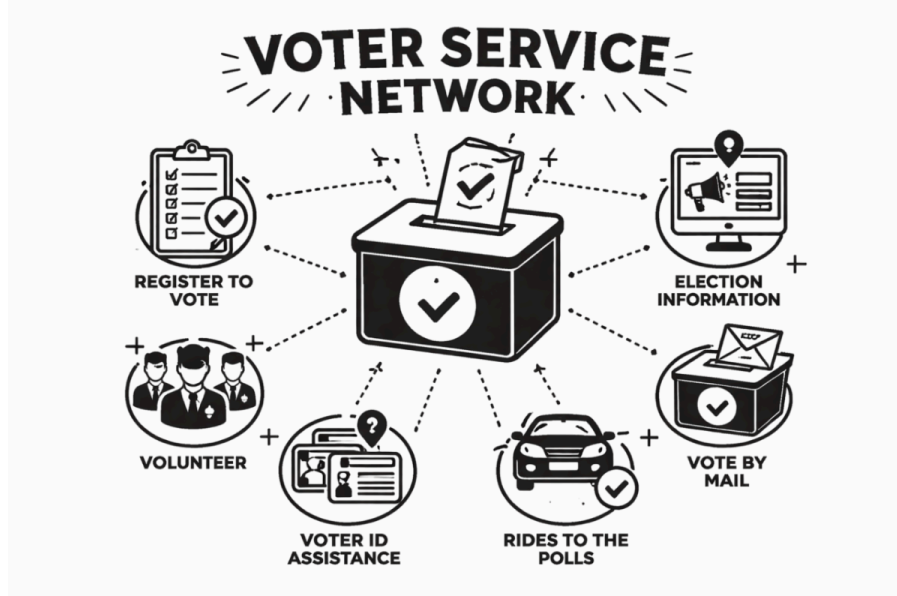


Text Banking Project

Our text banking project is back! Bob Chunn, our contact, will be reaching out within the next week to provide messaging options. The project will now be called the *Invite Them Back* campaign, which will be an effort to invite voters back who did not vote in 2024. The project will be the same—asking them to join the Permanent Mail Ballot list. As mentioned at the April Voter Service Network meeting, we currently have 26 local Leagues signed up to participate. And, local Leagues can opt to participate for the August Primary, November General Election or both. Stay tuned as we gear up for more text banking!

Voter Service Network Meeting

Mark your calendars! Our next Voter Service Network meeting will be held on Thursday, May 28, 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 May 26.



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

Unite and Rise 8.5

Given the attacks on voters through “show your papers” legislation and ballot proposals, blatant undermining of minority representation through redistricting post the Louisiana v. Callais decision by SCOTUS, mis/dis information surrounding our election systems, and anti-democracy initiatives arising almost daily, Unite and Rise mobilization has become even more urgent.

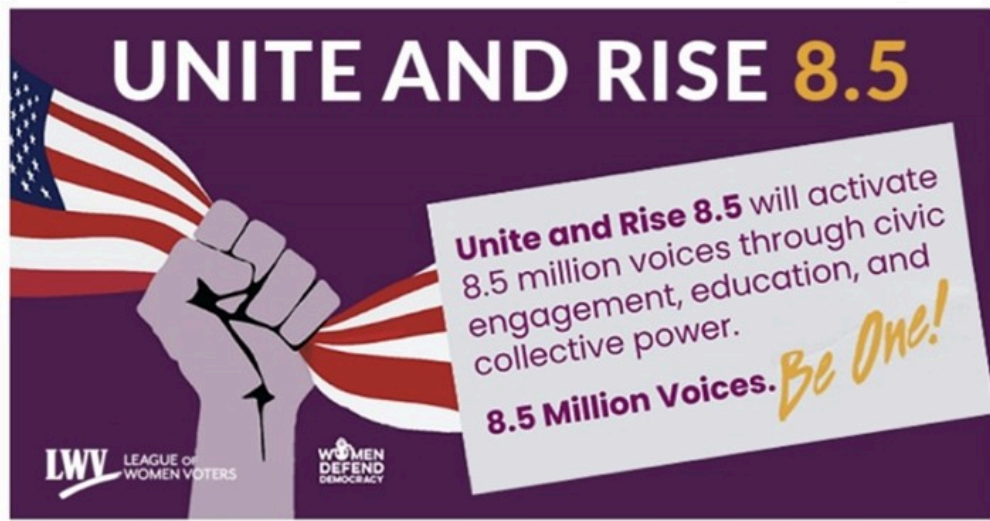
The *Unite & Rise 8.5 Playbook 5: People Power Summer* for May through July was released the end of April and can be found [here](#).

Here is the [link](#) to the LWVUS Community Call where you can view a comprehensive overview of Playbook 5 from LWVUS regional organizers. The passcode to access the recording is L.aI@Dd4. Think about what your League’s capacity is and engage accordingly.

Highlights for local Leagues include the upcoming mobilization activities:

- Save the date for National Voting Rights Activation Day on August 8. If your local League is participating, *the deadline for registering your League has been extended to May 22.*
- Begin planning now for Civic Holidays in the fall by signing your local League up for:
 - National Voter Registration Day: Tuesday, September 15
 - National Voter Education Week: October 5-9
 - Election Hero Day: Thursday, October 20
 - Vote Early Day: Tuesday, October 27

Sign up information and partnership opportunities may be found at: <https://civicholidays.org/>. Election Hero Day is sponsored by LWVUS. It is not too early to plan.



LWVMI Program Report

The LWVMI Program Committee has been carrying out the direction set by local League delegates at the May 2025 LWVMI Convention, where the following motion was adopted:

To initiate an update of the LWVMI Election Law Position, focusing on primary systems with consideration of alternative voting methods.

Background

The current Election Law Position VII reads:

An open primary system for state and local candidates for office, whereby a voter declares political party affiliation only in the privacy of the voting booth.

Our Guiding Principles

The committee is guided by a commitment to ensuring that Michigan elections:

- Encourage voter participation, especially among underrepresented communities
- Are verifiable and auditable
- Maximize effective voting over strategic voting
- Promote access to voting
- Are compatible with accepted ballot-casting methods, including vote-by-mail

Progress to Date

Our volunteer committee has greatly expanded its knowledge of primary systems and election methods used in local and state elections across the United States. We analyzed various models of open, closed, and all-candidate primary systems, followed by a review of election methods including ranked choice voting, fusion voting, proportional representation, and majority versus plurality systems.

With our research phase now complete, we have moved into drafting the study document. Discussion questions grounded in the principles of fair elections are being developed to help streamline decision-making when consensus questions are taken up by local leagues.

Looking Ahead

Our goal is to complete the election law study by fall 2026. Preparations to present the study to individual Leagues will be finalized for delivery in early 2027. Local

League responses to the consensus questions will guide the committee in drafting updated election law language, to be voted on by delegates at the May 2027 LWVMI Convention.

Ellen Lafferty
LWVMI VP of Program
program@lwvmi.org

LWVMI Advocacy Committee Report

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

MAY 9, 2026 - NEW COALITION PARTNER: VOTING ACCESS FOR ALL

The League of Women Voters of Michigan voted to participate in the [Voting Access for All Coalition](#), a statewide, non-partisan coalition that advocates for all persons in pretrial situations, individuals about to be released from prison, and those formerly incarcerated, along with their families and community members, to have the opportunity and knowledge they need to exercise their right to vote and to participate in the democratic process.

MAY 9, 2026 - PROHIBITING SOME RESTRAINTS IN TRANSPORTING JUVENILES

The LWVMI Board voted to approve support of [HB5514](#) which would prohibit the use of certain restraints while transporting youths to certain residential treatment facilities. The bill would bar transportation companies from using blindfolds, hoods, handcuffs and other forms of restraint while picking up youths to take them to residential programs. It would also bar companies running such programs from picking up youths during nighttime hours, between 9 pm and 6 am.

MAY 9, 2026 - SUPPORT FOR DEATH WITH DIGNITY BILL

The League Board voted to support HB [5825](#), [5826](#) and [5828](#) that would legalize medical aid in dying. The bill would regulate physician assistance for patient-requested life-ending medication, require safeguards for determining that a patient is qualified to receive life-ending medication, require documentation and reporting, specify certain legal consequences regarding insurance, and provide for civil and criminal immunity and freedom from professional sanctions for persons acting in conformity with this act.

MAY 13, 2026 - LWVMI TO OPPOSE ICE FACILITIES IN MICHIGAN

On May 13, 2026, the League of Women Voters of the United States approved the Michigan League's request to take appropriate action to oppose ICE facilities in Michigan.

Such action could include:

1. Joining protests opposing the existing ICE facility in Baldwin, MI and opposing construction of any new ICE facilities in Michigan
2. Requiring facilities to allow visits by state and federal elected officials
3. Requiring facilities to allow visits by state and federal agencies such as health departments and oversight committees
4. Requiring appropriate standards for humane treatment and care of detainees.

LWVMI is in contact with ACLU of Michigan and the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center to discuss appropriate actions and we will let you know soon.

LWVUS National Convention 2026

Registration for **Convention 2026: Women Unite & Rise** is open until May 22. Visit the event website to register, book your hotel accommodations. There is now information about the agenda, pre-convention webinar recordings, speakers, break out sessions and plenary.

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, by filing out the **League Delegate form**.

SAVE THE DATE: LWVMI Convention Delegate Orientation will take place June 10 from 6:00-7:00pm on Zoom. Please register [here](#) if you are a delegate. The session will be recorded and made available to all who are registered delegates.



LWVMI Spring Appeal Letter

I hope you received our spring donor appeal in the mail. We've shared why LWVMI needs your support, and the more we contribute, the more we can help your grassroots efforts to defend democracy.



The reasons are strong, and the need is urgent; now, it's time to act.

If you're like me, my appeal letter might be gathering dust on my desk. I need to take the next step and either write a check or click the donate button on the LWVMI website or above. Right now, I'm so thankful to be part of an organization that's fighting back and protecting our rights. I'll show my gratitude by supporting

the organizations I care about. Please join me in supporting LWVMI so they can keep representing you in this important fight.

Carrie Moon-Dupree
LWVMI Development Director

Membership Network Notes

May Meeting

The May 14 meeting on Shared Leadership Concepts generated a lot of interest. Organized by Connie Ferguson of the DEI group, we had panelists Jo Foley from Marquette, Susan Stuart from Calhoun, and Roberta Deering and Deborah Bunkley from Detroit present information on their shared leadership structure, agreements, and challenges faced along the way. If you would like the slides or a link to the presentation, please contact me.

Voting Site Accessibility

Eric Welsby of Detroit Disability Power (DDP) introduced Voting Site Accessibility on April 30th. This was a joint effort with Voter Service and largely organized by Martha Hutting of Grosse Pointe, in honor of Cathy McAdam, of the Grosse Pointe League.

The goal of the Voting Site Accessibility program is to encourage League volunteers to participate in assessing voting sites before the primary and general elections for compliance with the accessibility requirements.

The [recording](#) is posted on our member site. It is about 30 minutes followed by a Q&A session. DDP is offering approximately 90-minute training. If your League has a few people who would like to participate in reviewing voting sites (they can do as many or as few as they like), please contact Eric Welsby of DDP at eric@detroitdisabilitypower.org or 810-730-5711. He's frequently out giving presentations and will likely need a few days to get back to you.

Local League Highlights from Around the State

- Detroit hosted speaker Angela Davenport, Executive Director of Voting Access for All Coalition, which works at the intersection of criminal justice reform and democracy, at a recent membership meeting.
- Leelanau hosted a forum on Election Security: Understanding How the System Gets It Right, offering insight into how votes are processed, how ineligible votes are prevented, and how the system is designed to maintain accuracy and integrity.
- Berrien & Cass Counties is hosting a presentation on “Why Local Elections Matter: What Your Local Officials Do for You” featuring their President, Sarah Warner, and Stacy Loar-Porter, the Berrien County Clerk.
- Copper Country hosted Houghton County Prosecutor Daniel Helmer at their Annual Meeting. He spoke on law enforcement issues, the woeful state of the Houghton County Jail system, and answered questions on Flock cameras.
- Lansing Area hosted Erica Frantz, MSU Associate Professor of Political Science, speaking on “The Origins of Elected Strongmen: How Personalist Parties Destroy Democracy from Within”, at their Annual Meeting.
- Dearborn-Dearborn Heights is working with several high schools on voter registration activities, working with students who present information on voter registration.

- Northeast Michigan was invited to a meet-up with Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Sixteen League members attended to hear remarks from Governor Whitmer, participate in a Q&A, and get photographed with the governor.

Next Meeting

The June meeting is scheduled for June 10 at 7:00pm and can be joined using this [Zoom link](#).

We'll be sharing updates from each of the Leagues and also sharing information on different ways of engaging youth in our activities. In April, Ann Constance shared Marquette's experiences forming a student League at Northern Michigan University and Christina Schlitt talked briefly about Grand Traverse's less formal partnership with a local community college student government. There are many great ways to involve younger people in League activities and we'd like to hear about yours.

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

Action Alerts from LWVMI and LWVUS

- Take Action: [Tell Congress No More ICE and CBP Funding](#)
- Take Action: [Thank the Senate Champions Who Opposed the SAVE Act](#)
- Take Action: [Support restraints on ICE in Michigan—protect sensitive locations from ICE; prohibit ICE from wearing masks.](#)



Not Your Mother's Logo Anymore

Have you noticed that when you quickly look at a purple and gold Facebook or Instagram post, you're pretty sure it is a LWV message before you even read the text? That's because LWV uses only certain color palates, and our trademarked

name and logo, to deliver information. This practice helps all 3 levels of the League look unified and establishes "brand recall" with our supporters.

To maintain the integrity of the logo along with increasing recognition, LWVUS has easy-to-follow instructions and production tips on how to create your materials using correct LWV colors, type fonts and logos. There are do's and don'ts, as well as tools that you and your printer can use to make your internal and external projects unmistakably League-legal.

Visit the [Brand Standards section on the LWVUS here](#). Everything you ever wanted to know about colors, fonts and logos is in that section. There are examples of when you can use an alternative logo (such as the LWV Gay Pride logo) and other examples of correct color use, and backgrounds. It's a great resource!

Both LWV and VOTE411 updated their logos within the past decade, so it's time to get on board.

Paula Bowman
LWVMI Communications

LWVMI Environmental Network May 2026 Report

The LWVMI Environmental Network will meet on May 21, 2026, at 11:00 am.

We will have our usual round robin discussion of what is happening in our local Leagues on Environmental Protection and Climate Change.

The meeting link can be accessed [here](#).

All League members are welcome to join the Environmental Network.

Please contact Sandy at advocacy@LWVMI.org for more information.

Does Your League Love a Good Party?

If so, we have a great idea for you! Would you consider hosting the 2029 LWVMI Convention? The 2027 Convention is already set at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing, but we're looking for a home for the 2029 event. We need a hotel that can accommodate up to 150 members, that has a large meeting space as well as breakout rooms. There is no cost to the local League host, but we do ask for your help during some Convention events (fun!) If you'd like more information or want to propose your wonderful League area, please contact [Paula Bowman](#).



JUN 18 · 5:00 PM



26000 Evergreen Rd
Southfield

THREE MARCHES - TWO SISTERS - ONE BRIDGE

By **When You Vote - I Win**

Attend on



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



May 2026

Asian American Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander (AANHPI)
Heritage Month
Jewish American Heritage Month
Mental Health Awareness Month
May 20: 33rd Anniversary of the [National Voter Registration Act](#)
May 21: [Environmental Network Meeting](#) | 11:00 am
May 22: Last Day to [Register](#) for LWVUS Convention
May 25: Memorial Day
May 26: [Local League Advocacy Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm
May 27: Communications Network Meeting | 2:30 pm
May 28: [LWV Member Portal Training](#) | 4:00 pm
May 28: [Voter Service Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm

June 2026

Pride Month
June 5: [World Environment Day](#)
June 9: Advocacy Committee Meeting | 2:00 pm
June 10: [Communications Network Meeting](#) | 2:00 pm
June 10: [Pre Convention Meeting for Delegates](#) | 6:00 pm
June 10: Membership Leaders Network Meeting | 7:00 pm
June 12: [MI Climate Action Summit](#) | 9:30 am
June 13: LWVMI Board Meeting | 9:30 am
June 17: Observer Corps Network Meeting | 3:00 pm
June 18: [LWVMI Presidents/Leaders Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm
June 19: [Juneteenth](#)
June 21: Father's Day
June 22: Fourth Anniversary of the [Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization Decision](#)
June 23: 54th Anniversary of Title IX
June 25-28: [57th Biennial LWV National Convention](#) in Columbus, Ohio.

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/>

League of Women Voters of Michigan | 600 W. St. Joseph Street 3G | Lansing, MI 48933 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!