

Civic Time Off

Toolkit



U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Foundation



WHAT IS CIVIC TIME OFF?

Civic Time Off (CTO) would mirror Volunteer Time Off, a policy that allows employees to receive their regular compensation for hours spent in service to an approved charitable or community organization. Under an employer-approved and adopted CTO policy, employers provide paid time off (PTO) for employees to volunteer in supporting non-partisan election activity (poll workers, Judges of Election, other non-partisan election support roles, etc.) as well as any required training to serve.

Poll workers are essential to the successful functioning of our election system—one of the key elements of our democracy. Additionally, evidence points to the fact that direct involvement in our elections instills a sense of pride and confidence, along with reassurance in the integrity of the system. At a time when our nation is experiencing deep divisions and polarization, we believe the business community has an important role to play in bringing communities together and supporting key democratic processes.

NON-PARTISAN FOCUS OF CIVIC TIME OFF

Civic Time Off (CTO) is specifically designed to support and enable volunteerism in non-partisan volunteer activities related to our elections. As envisioned, only non-partisan volunteer activities will be eligible for paid time off under the CTO initiative.

CTO should help encourage volunteerism in the “infrastructure” of our elections and is not intended to facilitate partisan, political, or advocacy-based activities.

Implementation Overview

CIVIC TIME OFF

Steps to implementing a corporate Civic Time Off program





DECIDE

Senior Leadership decides to implement CTO Program



Communicating the rationale for the decision to implement a CTO program will be critical to setting up the program for success.

To support that effort, we have developed communications templates to help roll-out and gain support for the initiative from senior organizational leaders.

We have also developed the framework for a peer-mentoring program to provide you with access to colleagues from other organizations that have successfully implemented similar programs.

KEY STEPS

- Communicate/engage with senior staff prior to announcement to full staff
- Reach out to Chamber (national and local) for additional info
- Consider "Mentor" relationship with another company

[CTO Internal Announcement Emails.docx - Google Docs](#)

[CTO Resources \(Mentoring, Recruitment, Retention\).docx - Google Docs](#)

[CTO Frequently Asked Questions](#)

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ORGANIZE

Work with relevant departments to establish program logistics (time tracking, HR policies, eligible activities, etc.)



Each organization will establish parameters and specific requirements to govern their CTO programs. Suggested steps include:

- Confer with Human Resources to establish tracking procedures (how to request CTO, how CTO is allocated, etc.)
- Confer with General Counsel and HR to determine eligible activities (Voting, Non-Partisan Election Support, Early Ballot Counting, etc.)

KEY STEPS

- Formalize policies for requesting, using and tracking CTO
- Determine eligible activities for use of CTO
- Speak with key stakeholder/functions like HR, Finance, Legal, Communications



COMMUNICATE

Plan announcement to employees (internal emails, intranet, signage in staff work areas)



[EMAIL TEMPLATES](#) >

KEY STEPS

- Develop communications plan for company announcement. Elements should include:
- Message from the CEO (all-staff email, video, etc.)
- Message to Department Heads/Senior Leaders proposing the CTO program
- Message from Department Heads providing specific information on scheduling, reporting, etc.
- Intranet presence, physical signage, collateral materials for staff meetings, etc.

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SUPPORT

Identify supportive resources for employees to engage as poll workers or in other non-partisan election roles



There are several organizations with tools that could support your organization's implementation of your Civic Time Off program. Below, we have provided links to a few great resources:

Power the Polls—Provides resources for employees to learn more about and sign up to serve as poll workers. Visit the Chamber Foundation's page at www.powerthepolls.org/TheCivicTrust to volunteer as an election poll worker.

National Association of Secretaries of State—Professional organization providing support and resources from Secretaries of State across the U.S. Provides direct links to state election authorities and relevant voting/poll worker information.

Civic Alliance—Provides information and resources on a broad range of civic engagement activities.

KEY STEPS

- Identify and provide resources for Poll Worker Recruitment opportunities.
- Power the Polls
- NASS
- Civic Alliance



LAUNCH

Formally Launch CTO Strategy using elements developed in Steps 1–4



ADDITIONAL STEPS

- Develop physical signage for placement in work areas
- Promote at company events
- Develop additional collateral materials to announce/promote launch
- Develop external press strategies (release, media advisory, press event, etc.)



SHARE

Develop internal mechanisms to promote CTO volunteer experiences with fellow employees



An important part of the CTO initiative is improving civic engagement among Americans. By encouraging employees to volunteer in one of the pillars of our system of government, the goal is to instill greater faith in the integrity of our elections system. Central to that goal is the act of sharing the volunteer experience with fellow employees and others within the community.

POTENTIAL MECHANISMS INCLUDE:

- Testimonials from CTO participants on intranet and other internal communications tools
- Spotlight or “Day in the Life” of a CTO volunteer
- Social Media posts