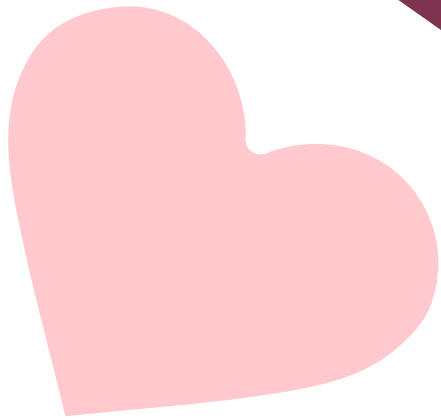


NORTHERN BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COALITION

LETTER WRITING AND PHONE BANKING

A GUIDE TO VIRTUAL SERVICE OPTIONS



MLK JR. DAY OF SERVICE 2021

Letter writing and phone banking are powerful ways to encourage folks to vote and push for political and social change. It's also an important way to remain engaged, even as we find ourselves physically separated by the pandemic. In this collection, please find a variety of ways to connect to others this MLK Jr. Day of Service. Note that NBCC does not necessarily align politically with any of these resources, and they are not comprehensive.

For letter writing, you will need postcards or paper, a pen or pencil, and stamps. If needed, you may pick up kits with these materials at NBCC (413-663-7588).

For phone and text banking, you will need a cell phone and access to internet. This packet contains the following information:

Get Involved Nationally and Internationally

1. [Postcards to Voters](#)
2. [Virtual Phone Banking: Human Rights Campaign](#)
3. [Veterans United: Support our Troops, Write a Letter](#)

Get Involved Locally

1. Find contact information for your [government representatives here](#).
2. At the [NBCC 2020 Resource Guide](#), you can contact particular places and agencies to ask their policy before sending letters.

Contacting Your Representatives

Contacting your representatives is impactful and important; their job is to represent us and our interests and to answer our questions and concerns. There are many ways to contact your federal representatives; below, find information about four ways to do so.

1. Call them

It's as easy as picking up the phone! Many former congressional aides have said that phone calls are the most effective way to contact your representatives. Each Congressperson has an office with a team of people to field your calls. These staffers log all of the calls that they receive during business hours. When you call them, make sure you know what you're going to say. Tell them how you want them to vote on a certain issue, prepare any questions that you want to ask, and be ready to provide your personal information so they can verify that you're calling from the right district.

2. Sign a petition

But not one of those Change.org petitions. Change.org isn't the best for actually making a change, because the website doesn't verify who signs their petitions, which means that people can sign the same petition multiple times or under fake accounts. If you want to make a real change with a real petition, use a [whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov/petition) petition. If the petition gets 100,000 signatures (that are from verified email accounts) in 30 days, then it has to be reviewed by the White House. The White House will even send the people who signed the petition an email when they've reviewed and responded to the requests.

3. Email them

Democracy.io makes it super easy to email your representatives. All you have to do is enter your address and Democracy.io will find your Senators and district representative for you. An automated email system is already in place that lets you choose the topic you wish to write about, whether it's Social Security or foreign affairs. This ensures that your email will get where it needs to be. Make sure that you specifically state in your letter what you want the Congressperson to do and why, but keep it short - they get tons of emails every day!

4. Send them a letter

Once you've found your representative's office mailing address, write them a letter! Again, make sure that your letter is concise and to the point, because these people have hundreds of pieces of mail to sort through every day. Tell them why you're writing, what specific bill you're referring to, and what action you want them to take. Be sure to address them properly and to include your information as well so it can be verified for accuracy. For more tips on writing to your Congressperson, [click here](#).

Letter writing and phone calls are also wonderful ways to lift people's spirits and foster connection at a time when we are unable to access one another as we usually do.

There are many ways to support one another in Berkshire County through letter writing, including sending letters to front-line healthcare workers, the elderly at nursing homes, veterans, and folks in prison. Different places (including hospitals and homes) have different policies on whether or not they can accept letters, so remember to check first. At the [NBCC 2020 Resource Guide](#), you can contact particular places and agencies to ask their policy before sending letters. If you have any questions, contact NBCC (413-663-7588).

You can also write letters to or check in virtually with family members, neighbors, and/or friends. It is amazing the impact you can have by reaching out! Caring for one another is service, and it is especially important in this difficult time that we are facing together.

Remember, MLK Jr. Day is a Day On, not a Day Off!