

# BENEFITS FOR VOTERS

**Voting is connected with a host of positive benefits for the individual voter.** Compared to non-voters, voters are more likely to volunteer, contact their elected officials, and stay informed about local affairs. Voting is associated with:

## Active Citizenship

Registered voters are more likely to engage in civic and political activities than those who are not registered. They are also more likely to talk to elected officials and be an advocate for themselves and their families. Voters are more likely to be active and engaged citizens who connect with their neighbors and participate in community activities.

## Social Connections

Voters tend to have stronger social connections, leading to a greater quality of life and longevity. Census surveys suggest that registered voters are, compared to non-voters, more strongly connected with their neighbors and family members. They are more likely to discuss political issues with family or do favors for their neighbors.<sup>1</sup>

## Personal Agency

Voters have the satisfaction of knowing that they have expressed their opinions. Voting is a form of personal empowerment that gives you the opportunity to voice your opinion on issues that matter to you, your family, and your community.

## Other Benefits

- **Better health outcomes.** Voters have higher levels of self-reported health and voting could also potentially boost mental health.<sup>2</sup>
- **Reduced unemployment.** Voting and other forms of civic engagement have been tied to lower unemployment rates.<sup>3</sup>
- **Lower recidivism rates.** Ex-offenders who have their civil rights restored are less likely to return to prison. The Florida Parole Commission reported that over a two year period ex-offenders who had their voting rights restored were three times less likely to end up back in custody.<sup>4</sup>

Even if the winner of an election was not their preferred choice, "people are happier with the outcome and they feel more in control of their lives, if they voted."

—Psychologist Marc Zimmerman,  
professor at the University of Michigan's  
School of Health

<sup>1</sup> CIRCLE. "Civic Engagement among Registered Citizens and Non-Registered Eligible Citizens," <http://www.civicyouth.org/civic-engagement-among-registered-voters-and-non-registered-eligible-citizens/>

<sup>2</sup> Huffington Post. "Voting and Health: Five Reasons Why It's Good For You." [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/06/voting-good-for-health-election-day\\_n\\_2078569.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/06/voting-good-for-health-election-day_n_2078569.html)

<sup>3</sup> NCoC. *Civic Health and Unemployment*. <http://www.ncoc.net/unemployment>

<sup>4</sup> Florida Parole Commission. "Status Update: Restoration of Civil Rights Cases Granted 2009 and 2010," <https://fpc.state.fl.us/docs/reports/2009-2010ClemencyReport.pdf>