NAMI Texas Advocacy Newsletter
January 24, 2020

NAMI Texas Public Policy Committee Applications

If you are interested in serving on the NAMI Texas Public Policy Committee for the 2020-2021 and haven’t submitted an application yet, you have until January 31st to send your application to policy.fellow@namitexas.org.

This committee provides feedback to shape our public policy platform and the positions NAMI Texas takes on key legislation. The application can be found here.

#Vote4MentalHealth Volunteers Needed!

We still need volunteers for our election project. We are working on a candidate questionnaire for individuals running for state legislative seats this year. Texas has over 300 candidates running for the state legislature in 2020, so we need all the help we can get sending the questionnaires via email to these candidates before the March 3rd primary.

Please contact me at policy.fellow@namitexas.org if you are interested in volunteering for this project.

If you have anything you would like to share with NAMI Texas advocates in these emails, please send the information to my email.

- Alissa Sughrue and the NAMI Texas Public Policy Team

Protect SSDI and SSI

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Social Security Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provide needed financial assistance to many people in the U.S. who have a mental health condition and are unable to work.

The U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) has proposed a new rule that would increase how often adults and children with disabilities, including mental illness, must prove that they have a disability. This process is called Continuing Disability Reviews and can be extremely complicated.

It is already too complicated for people to access these important benefits, and these changes would only make it more difficult – putting benefits at risk.
Submit comments to the SSA here. Let them know how harmful this rule will be. Numbers count, so it is important for you to raise your voice to object to this proposed rule.

Want to have more impact? Add a personal story to the letter about how you or somebody you know relies on SSDI or SSI.

Count All Young Kids in the 2020 Census

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau carries out a constitutionally mandated count, or census, of the nation’s residents that determines the number of representatives Texans have in Congress and the distribution of billions of dollars in federal funds annually for key public services.

Young children have been historically undercounted in past censuses. When we miss kids, it harms children and their communities for a decade because our state loses billions of federal dollars for programs that give kids a healthy start in life: Head Start, Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly "food stamps"), Title I education funding, child care subsidies, Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), and school lunches.

Please visit txchildren.org/census for resources that you can share with your network to make sure every young kid is counted in the 2020 Census, which starts in mid-March 2020. Contact kmitten@txchildren.org for more information.

NAMI Texas is nonpartisan. We support policies that help people with mental health conditions and their families.

Please visit our website at NAMITexas.org.

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