



**2020 Presidential Candidates:
501c3 Guidelines and
Social Media Best Practices**

Dear PFLAG members and supporters:

The 2020 voting season is getting exciting, with a set of presidential candidates from major political parties who are supportive of LGBTQ+ equality, including an openly gay candidate, our nation's second. The 2020 election will be critical: So much is at stake, and the power of PFLAG's unique united voice of LGBTQ+ people, parents, families, and allies will affect the outcome.

This guide will provide critical information to help you share the excitement about candidates and their messages and stories in a way that won't dampen your enthusiasm, while keeping your messaging 501c3-safe!

Need support? Reach out to Director of Communications Liz Owen for messaging guidance [lowen@pflag.org or (202) 657-4026] or Director of Advocacy, Policy, and Partnerships, Diego Sanchez [dsanchez@pflag.org or (202) 657-6997].

All of us at PFLAG National truly value your leadership and your contributions to this important work, and we look forward to shaping and seeing the results of our efforts!



501c3 Guidelines

As a 501c3 organization, PFLAG and its chapters have some limits on how they advocate, and some notable restrictions on election issues. **PFLAG is not permitted to endorse or oppose any candidate elected to or seeking election for political office.** This rule encompasses all federal, state, and local candidates, and applies to all PFLAG chapters, as well as PFLAG National.

These are rules you must follow when representing PFLAG in person, including at PFLAG chapter and coalition events, as well as online, including use of PFLAG email and social media accounts. Violating these rules may result in the denial or revocation of PFLAG's tax-exempt status.

DO:

- ★ **Educate** the public about issues relating to an upcoming election.
- ★ **Attend** candidate forums and town hall meetings, whether personally or as a representative of PFLAG.
- ★ **Organize** public forums where ALL candidates are invited and have equal speaking opportunity and coverage, although please note that the event can continue even if all candidates do not participate; the requirement is that it is publicly announced that all were invited to attend and participate.
- ★ **Ask** ALL candidates about LGBTQ+ issues.
- ★ **Wear** clothing that supports specific issues, as long as it cannot be linked directly to a political party or candidate.
- ★ **Issue** public statements in favor/opposition of elected officials' positions on LGBTQ issues.



DON'T:

- ★ **Endorse** candidates in person, in writing, or online.
- ★ **Participate** in any political campaigns or conduct campaign outreach at PFLAG meetings—no flyers, announcements about campaign events, etc.
- ★ **Invite** a candidate or their staff to a PFLAG meeting to recruit volunteers or give out PFLAG membership lists.
- ★ **Donate** to any candidate on behalf of your PFLAG chapter.
- ★ **Engage** in partisan discussion at PFLAG meetings.
- ★ **Wear** clothing/paraphernalia pertaining to or endorsing specific political parties or candidates.



- ★ **Sell** chapter member email lists to campaigns.

Social Media Best Practices

The excitement around candidates, especially for the 2020 presidential race, is palpable. With so many qualified candidates—including an openly gay man—it is easy to cross the line from personal excitement shared on social media to PFLAG messaging around advocacy. With this in mind, we offer the following guidelines so that you can share enthusiastically and safely within the 501(c)(3) boundaries shared above.

- ★ We strongly recommend putting a disclaimer on your personal profile on your social media accounts that lets people know that the opinions and comments that you share are your own, and don't represent the views of any companies or organizations you work with, including PFLAG
 - To edit your Facebook profile on your computer:
 - Click on your image in the top left-hand side of your screen, which will take you to your profile page. From there, mouseover where it says "Intro" in the top left, and a small pencil will pop up. There you can edit your public profile.
 - To edit your profile on your phone:
 - Click your image at the very top of the page, which will bring you to your personal profile. Click on the space just below your large, centered profile

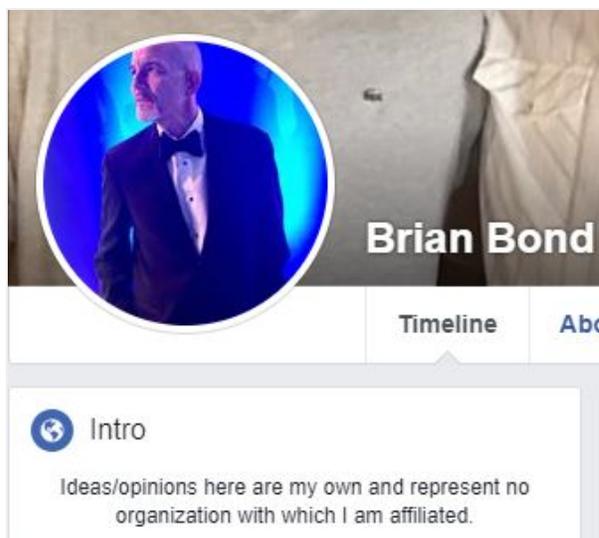


photo and a pop-up will appear that says, “Edit bio.” Click there to edit.

- ★ When moderating your page, and comments move from advocacy in legislation to advocacy around candidates, please apply an even hand, reminding people in a gentle way that we are a 501(c)(3) organization. The same even handed reminders can be used when someone replies to a post with an endorsement or opinion on the candidate.

Andy Heppelle @andytoronto

Congratulations @PeteButtigieg @Chas10Buttigieg and @TIME . Good news worth sharing @free_equal @HMilkFoundation @NOH8Campaign @ItGetsBetter @PFLAG @HRC @glaad @MattShepardFDN @TrevorProject @LEAGUEatATT @SFPride @worldpride2019 @OutandEqual @OutLeadership @outsports #LoveWins

TIME @TIME · 5h

TIME's new cover: Mayor Pete Buttigieg's unlikely, untested, unprecedented presidential campaign mag.time.com/AzdgqGz

0:14 134.2K views

8:32 AM · May 2, 2019 from Antioch, CA · Twitter for iPad

1 Like

PFLAG National ~ #EqualityStartsWithMe! @PFLAG · 1h

Replying to @andytoronto @PeteButtigieg and 16 others

We are a nonpartisan org—advocating for legislation, though not candidates. We are excited to see so many pro-equality candidates currently seeking to serve.

- ★ It's okay to share stories about candidates' views on issues of relevance to PFLAGers.
- ★ It's **not** okay to share those stories with endorsement-type language when you share it.

<p>PFLAG National 7 hrs · 🌐</p> <p>It's so important to have these conversations, which will hopefully help move equality forward for our LGBTQ+ loved ones.</p>  <p>USATODAY.COM America is at a gay rights crossroads, thanks to Pete Buttigieg and the Supreme Court</p> <p>1 Share</p> <p>Like Comment Share</p>	<p>PFLAG National 7 hrs · 🌐</p> <p>Mayor Pete 2020! We must show up at the polls to support his candidacy and protect our rights!</p>  <p>USATODAY.COM America is at a gay rights crossroads, thanks to Pete Buttigieg and the Supreme Court</p> <p>1 Share</p> <p>Like Comment Share</p>
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- ★ It's okay to share profiles of candidates for any level office.
- ★ It's not okay to share those profiles with endorsement-type language when you share it.

<p>PFLAG National 7 hrs · 🌐</p> <p>Very exciting to see so many excellent pro-LGBTQ candidates, including a candidate who is openly gay and married!</p>  <p>First Family The unlikely, untested and unprecedented campaign of Mayor Pete Buttigieg BY CHARLOTTE ALLER</p> <p>1 Share</p> <p>Like Comment Share</p>	<p>PFLAG National 7 hrs · 🌐</p> <p>It's time to send a gay man to the White House...here's to the President and First Gentleman!</p>  <p>First Family The unlikely, untested and unprecedented campaign of Mayor Pete Buttigieg BY CHARLOTTE ALLER</p> <p>1 Share</p> <p>Like Comment Share</p>
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- ★ It's okay to share any type of story about candidates on your personal page, with any language you choose, including endorsement.
- ★ It's not okay to share these types of stories in connection with your work as a chapter member or leader.



- ★ With so many qualified candidates voicing support of the LGBTQ+ community, we strongly recommend varying your social media sharing to include a wide range of stories, not just stories about one candidate