



# Voting Access in Michigan Jails

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Antoniese (Tony) Gant

Policy Analyst and Mid-Michigan Regional Coordinator  
Nation Outside





Clarify the law regarding voting rights for the jailed



Become aware of what counties are doing to make it easier for those awaiting trial to vote

People who are  
incarcerated in  
pretrial detention  
retain their right to vote.

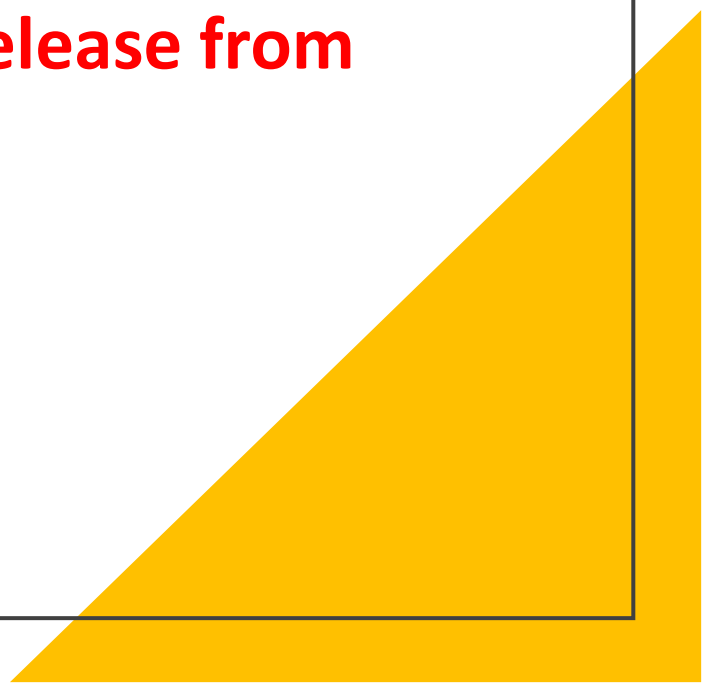
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Affirmed by the US Supreme Court in 1974





In Michigan, criminal disenfranchisement laws strip people of their right to vote **if they are serving a term of incarceration for any conviction, misdemeanor or felony, but automatically restores the right to vote upon release from imprisonment.**





At least 163,000  
people  
are booked into  
jail each year.

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# Biggest Challenge

Many people — **including sheriffs, election officials, and jailed voters themselves** — do not know when and how contact with the criminal legal system may affect voter eligibility

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## Other Challenges

- Confusion and misunderstanding of Michigan voting laws;
- Difficulty in obtaining information about upcoming elections, which is often distributed online and requires internet access;
- Problems in obtaining materials required to register and cast a ballot;
- Lack of accessibility for jailed voters to register and cast a ballot in a timely manner;
- Mail restrictions and delays experienced by the mail systems in the jails, and the United States Postal Service;
- Lack of Election Day voting opportunities inside county jails; and
- A lack of assistance for people trying to register to vote and cast their ballots





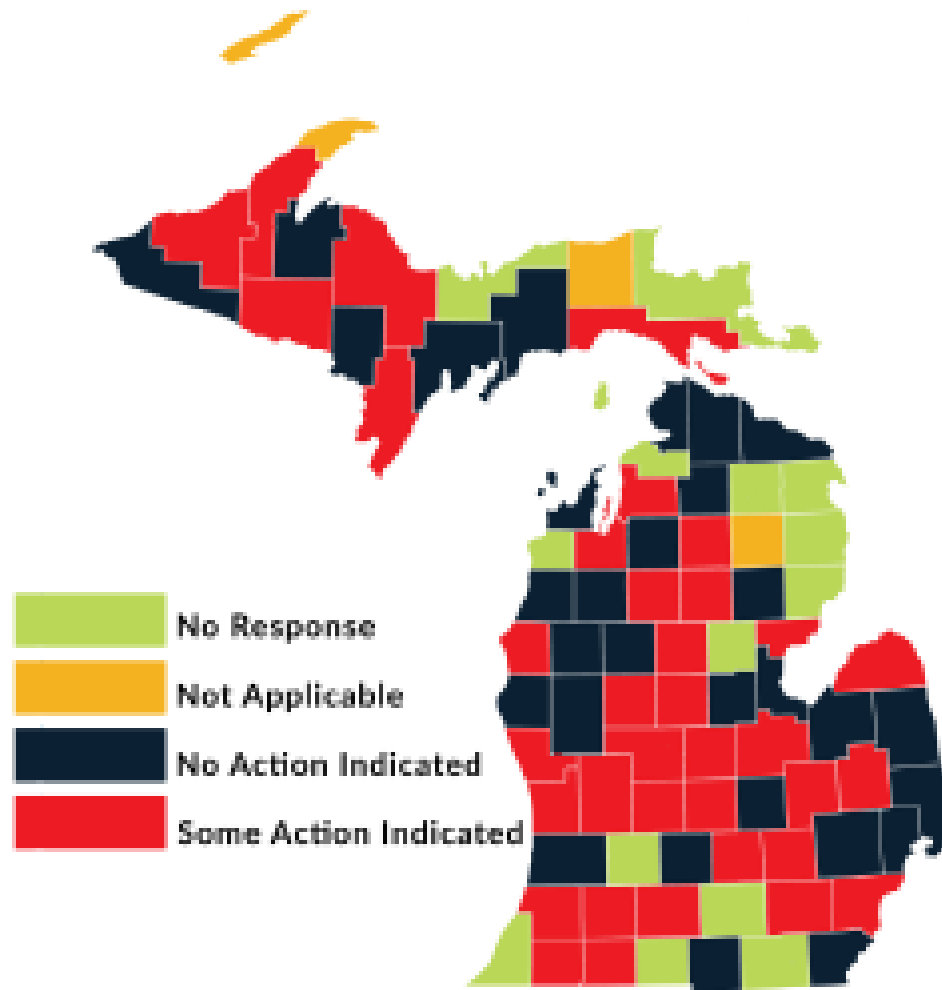
# FOIA Requests were sent to all 83 Michigan County Jails

84% (70) Responded

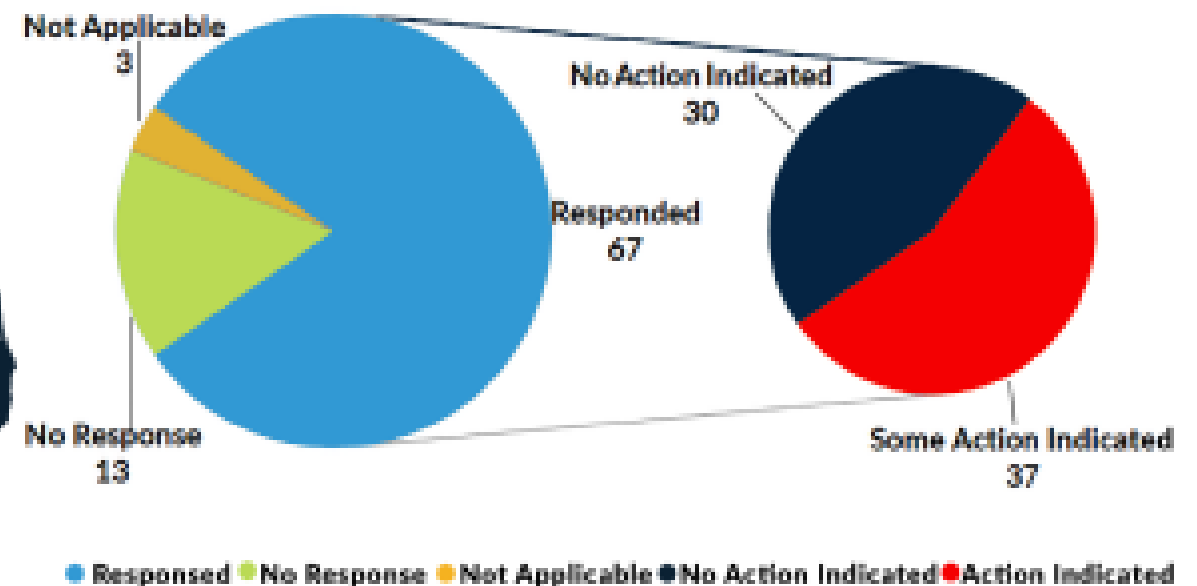
67 of those that responded have a jail where they hold  
An individual more than 72 hours



# County Response



## County Response By number of counties





11 in writing  
26 casually

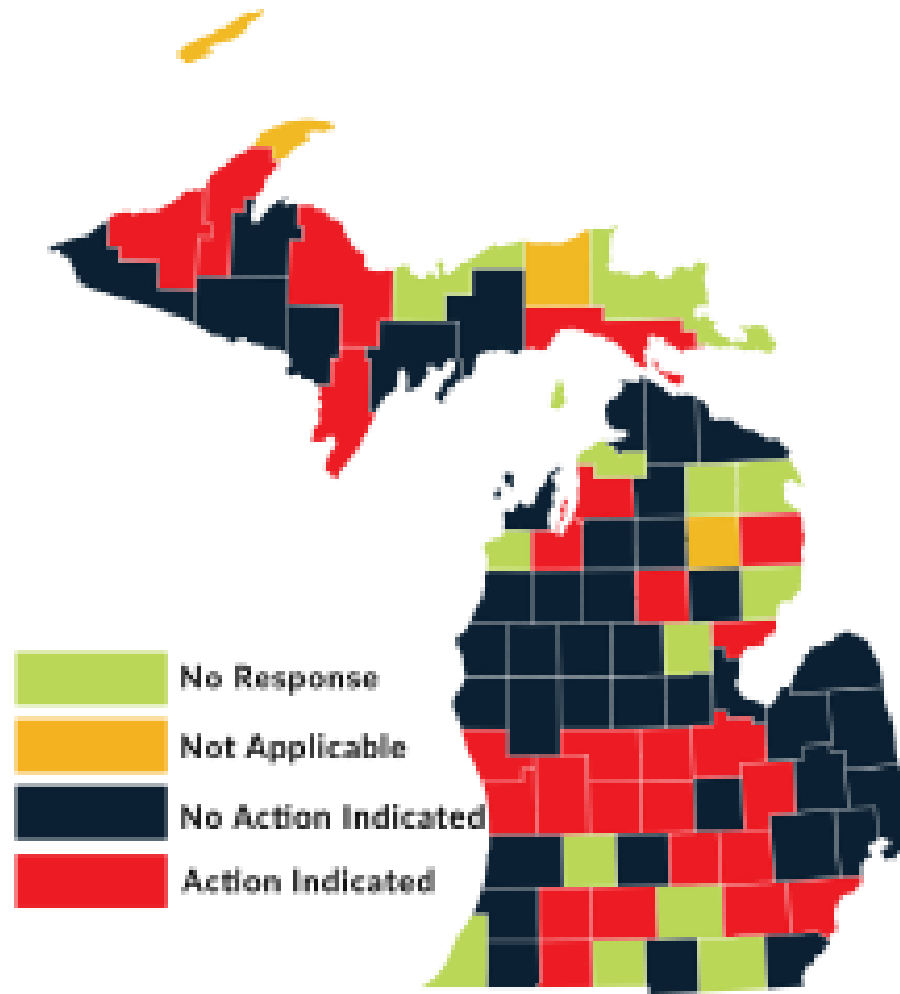
37 counties  
(55% of the counties with  
jails)  
have some procedure in  
place  
for detainees to register  
and/or vote



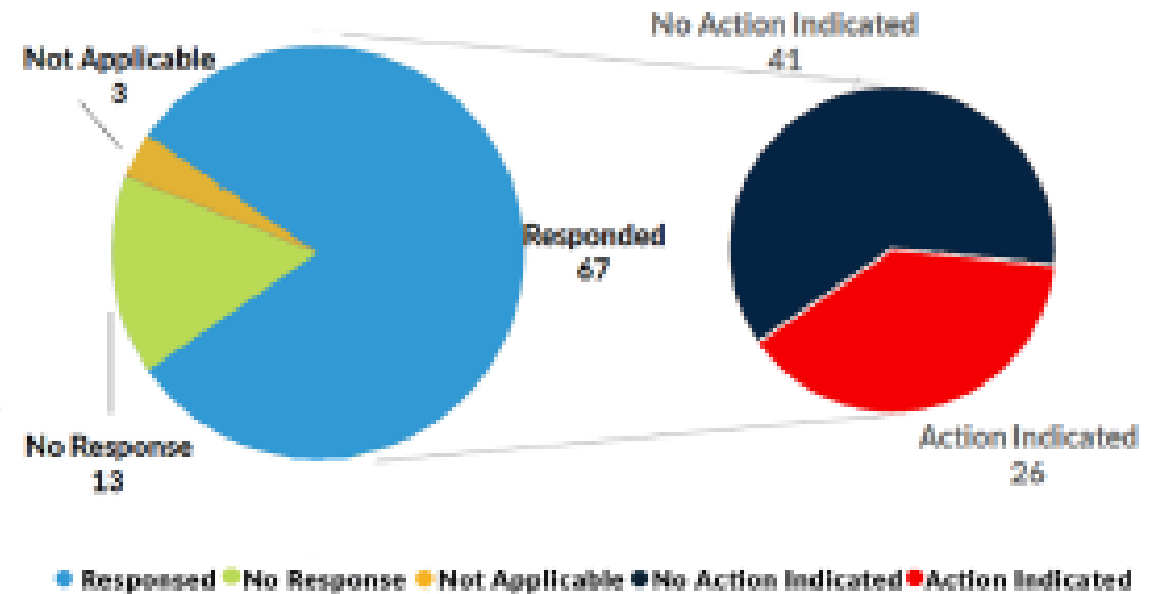
# Basic Requirements for vote-in-jail

- Voter education
- Voter Registration
- Absentee Voting
- Election Day or In-person voting
- Partnerships and Collaborations
- Transparency and Accountability

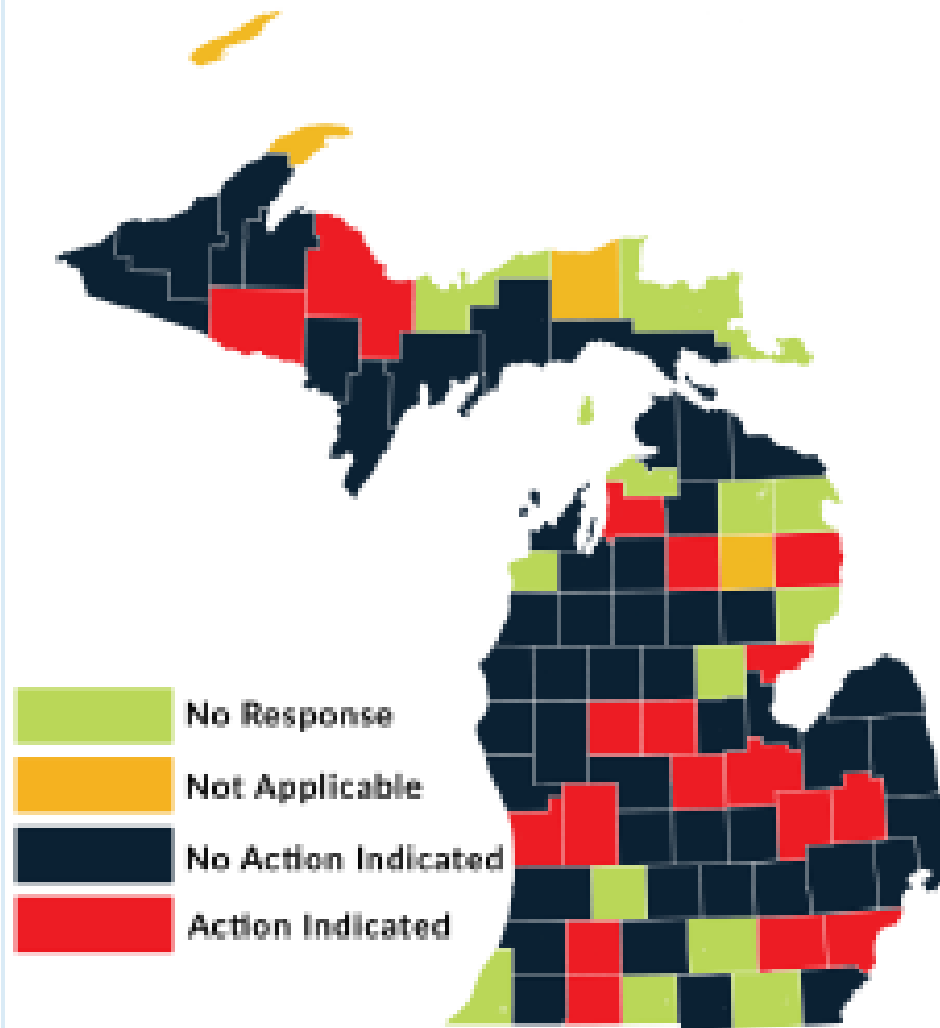
# Voter Education



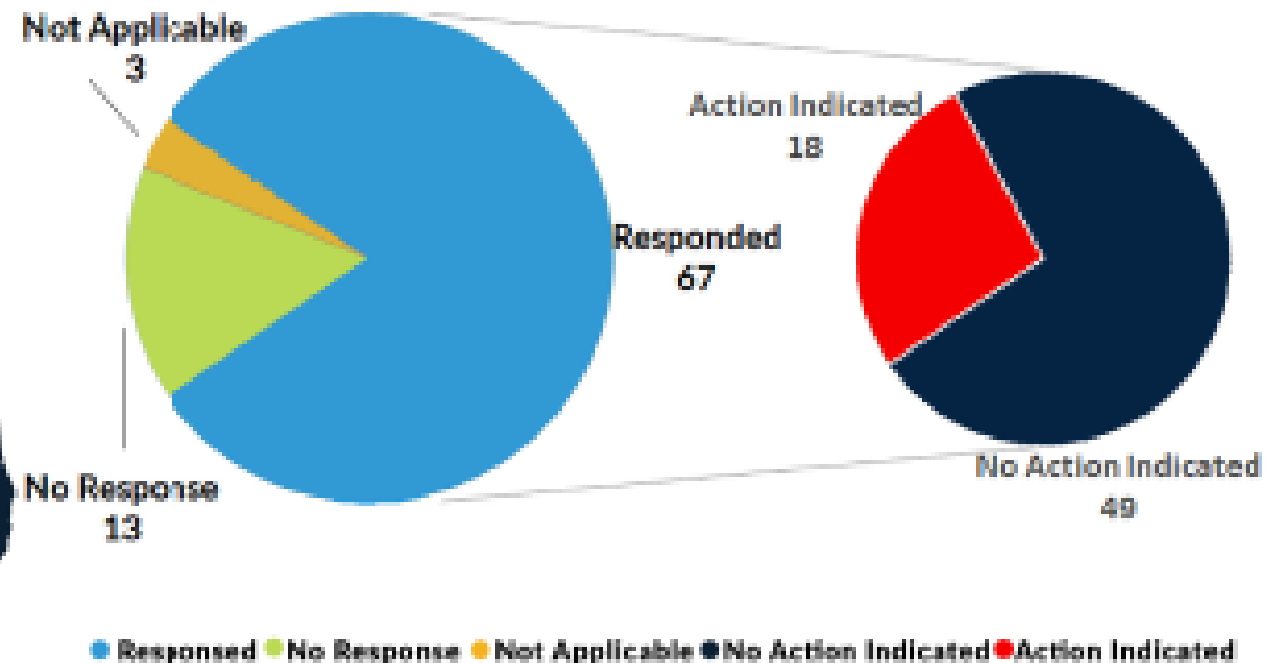
**Voter Education**  
By number of counties



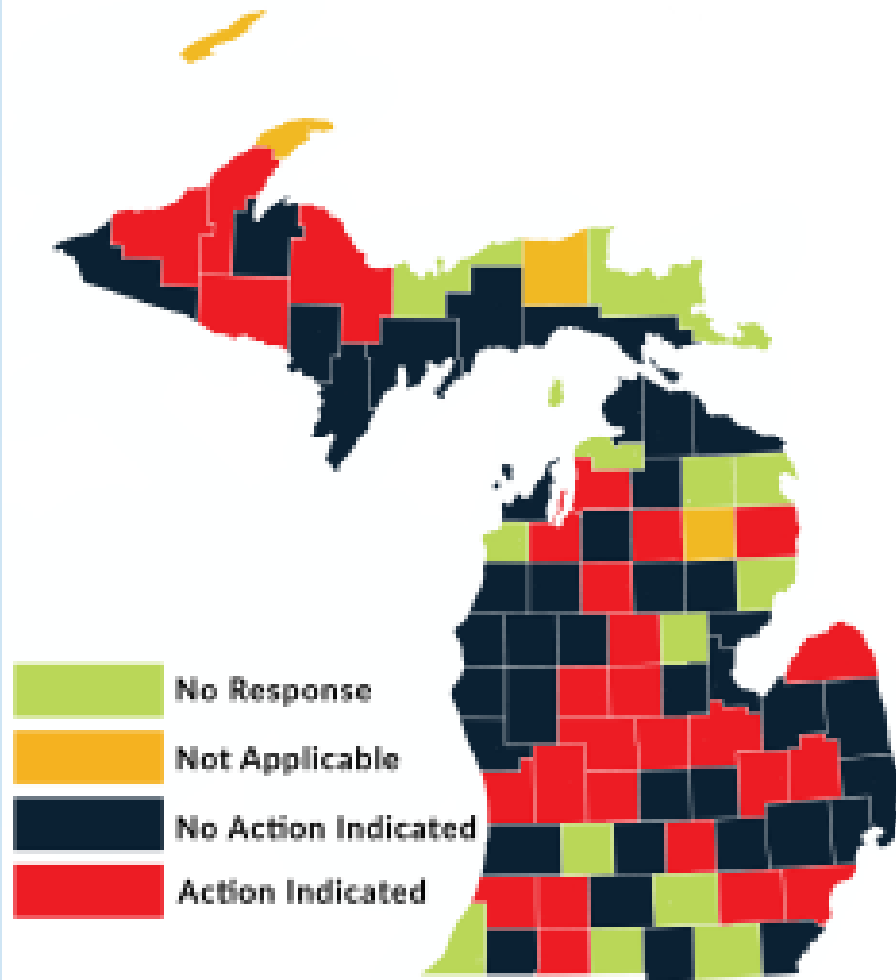
# Voter Registration



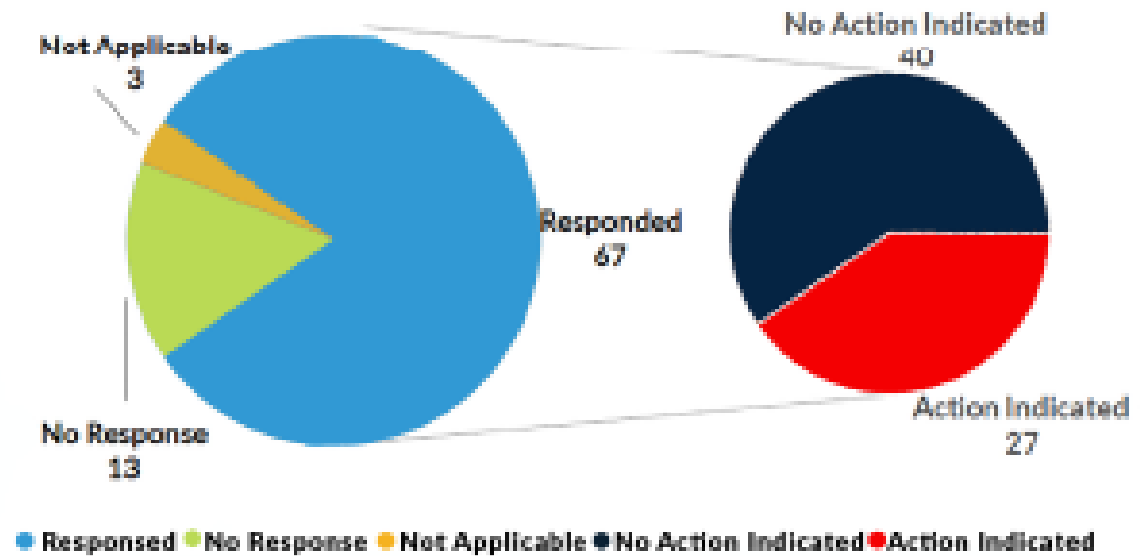
**Voter Registration**  
By number of counties



# Absentee Voting

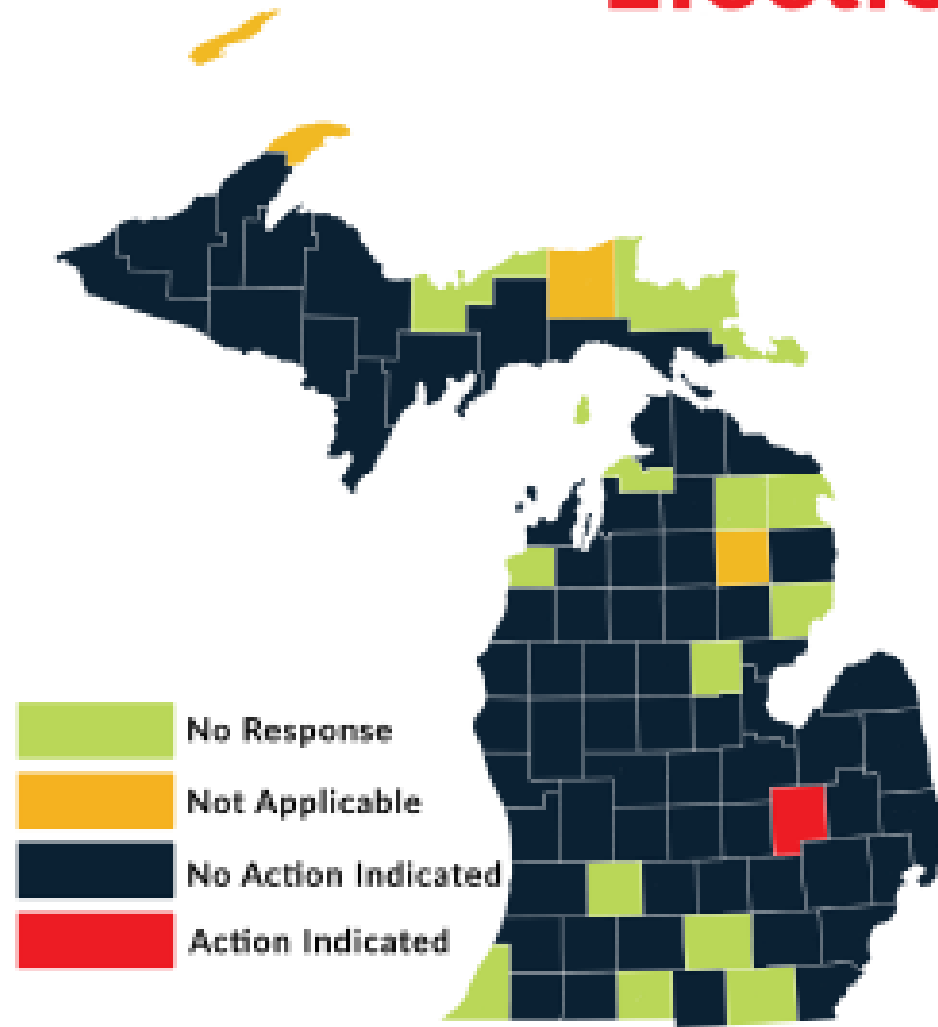


## Absentee Voting By number of counties

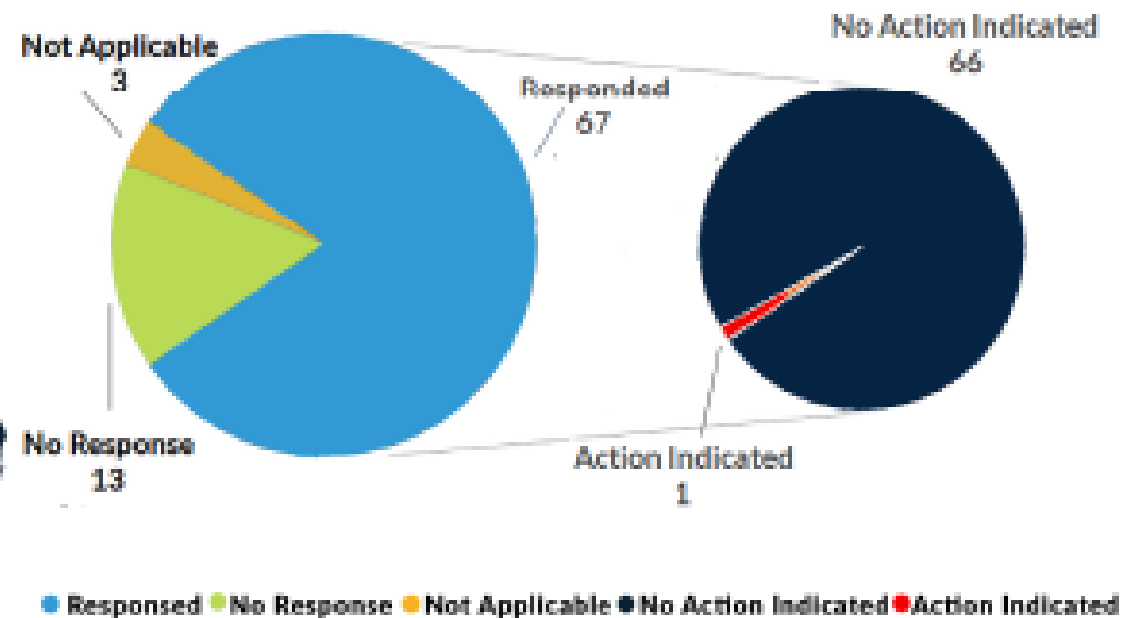




# Election Day Voting

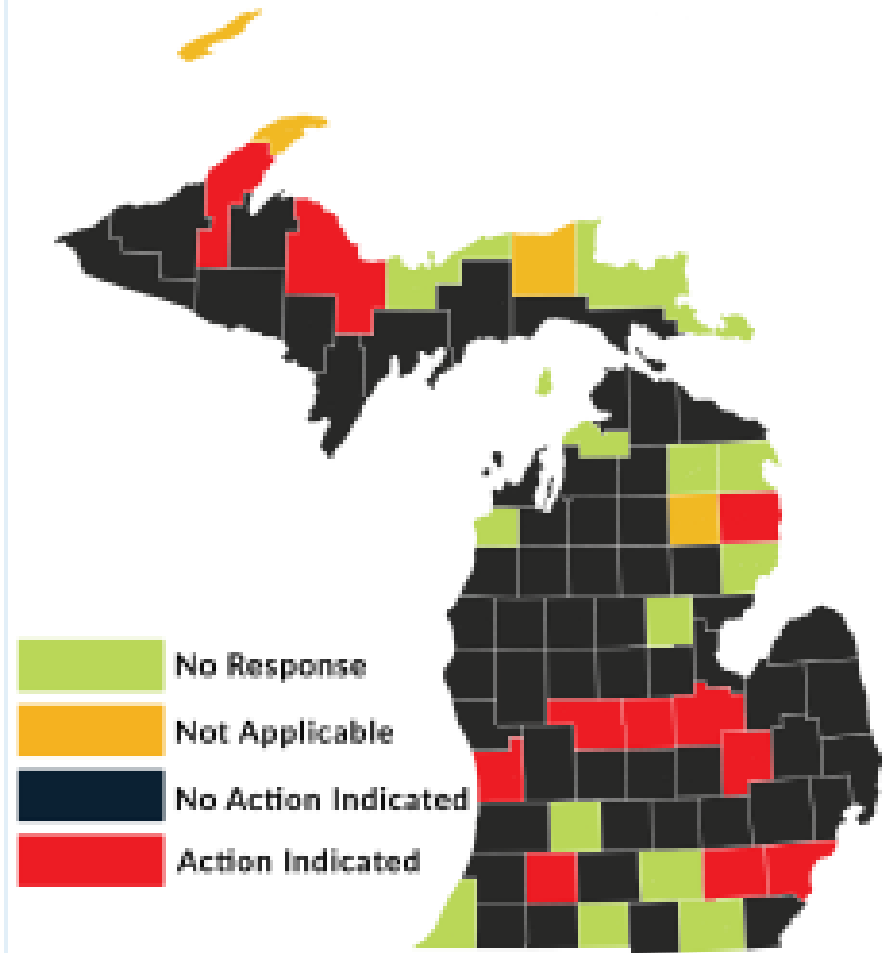


## Election Day Voting By number of counties

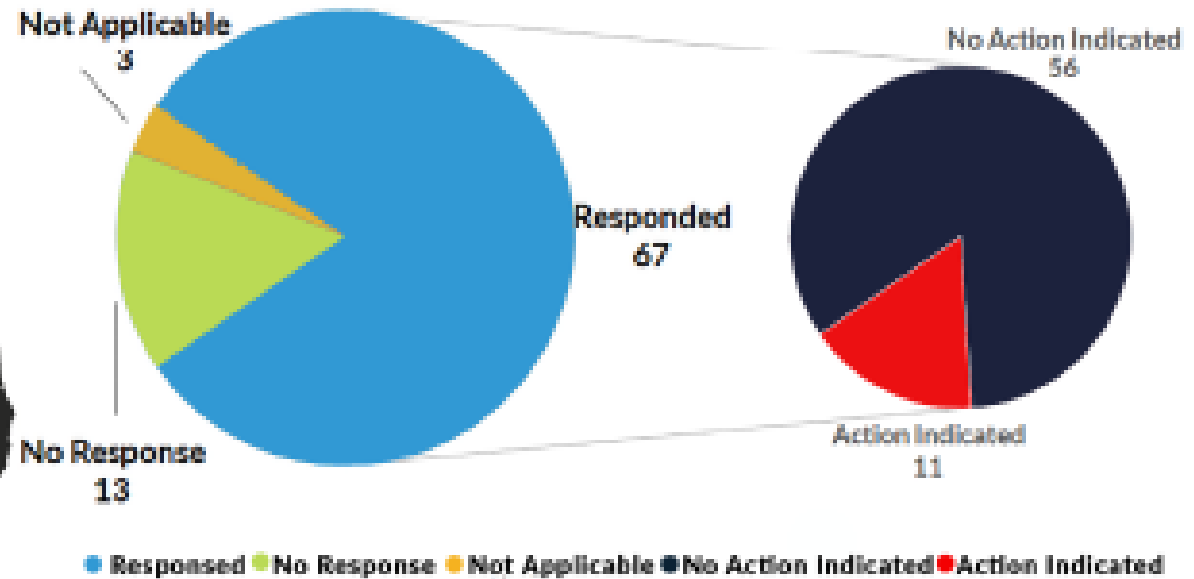




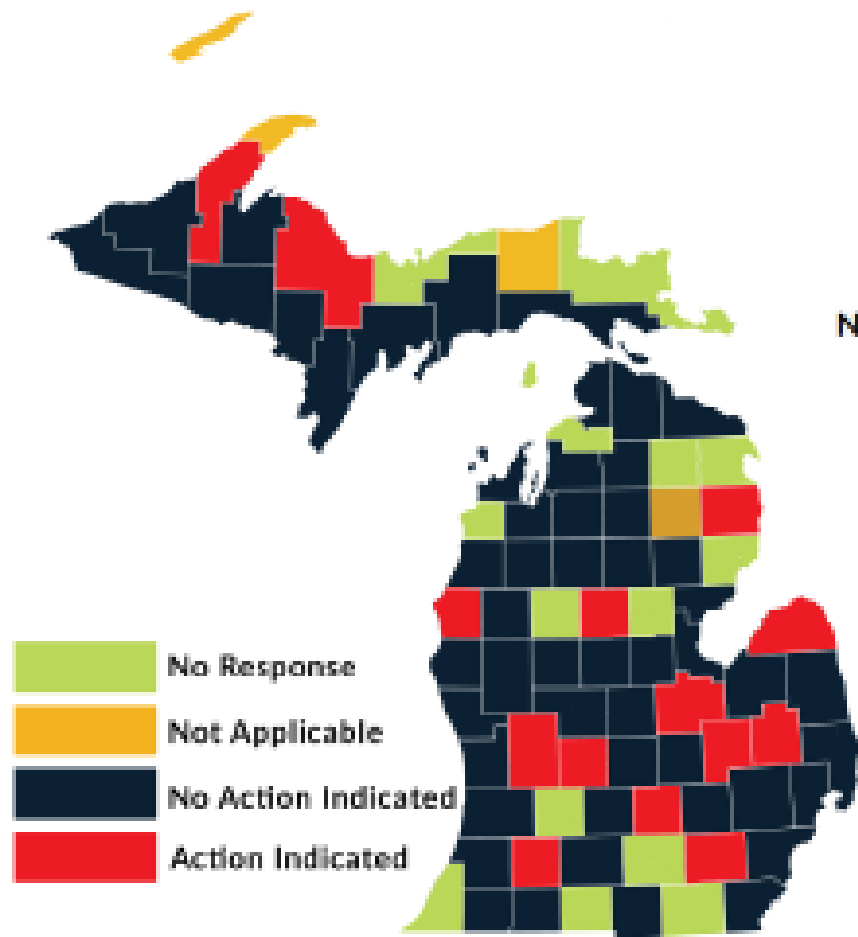
# Partnerships and Collaborations



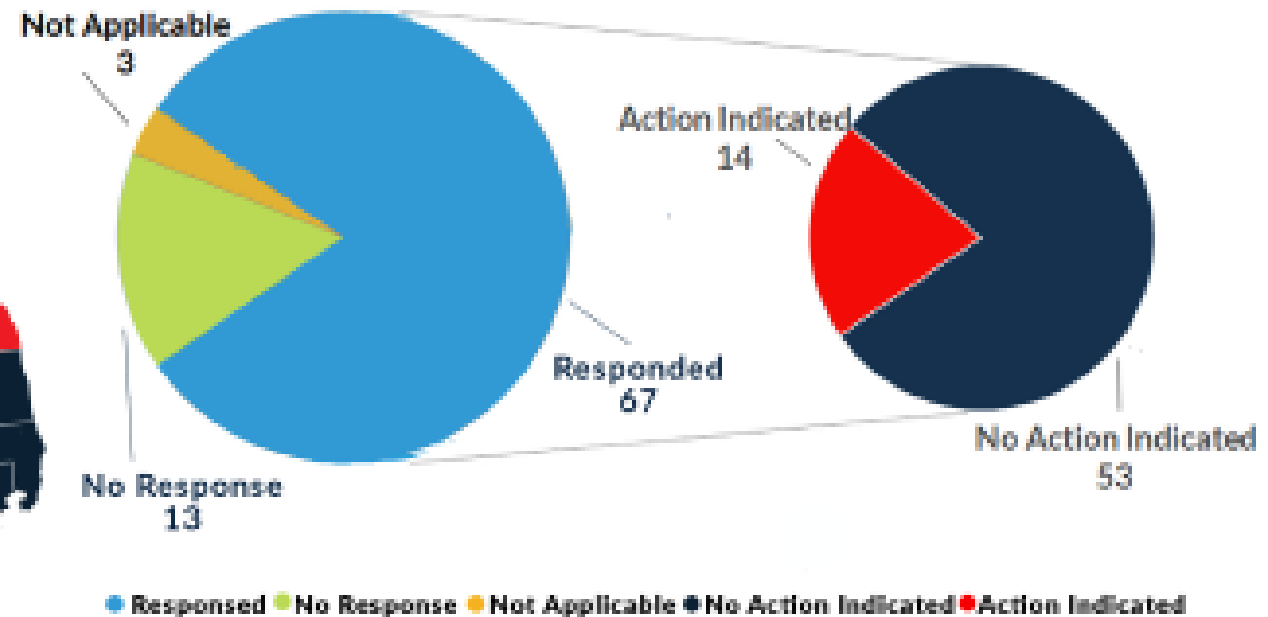
**Partnerships and Collaborations**  
By number of counties




# Transparency and Accountability



## Transparency and Accountability By number of counties





# Keep in mind that every county is different

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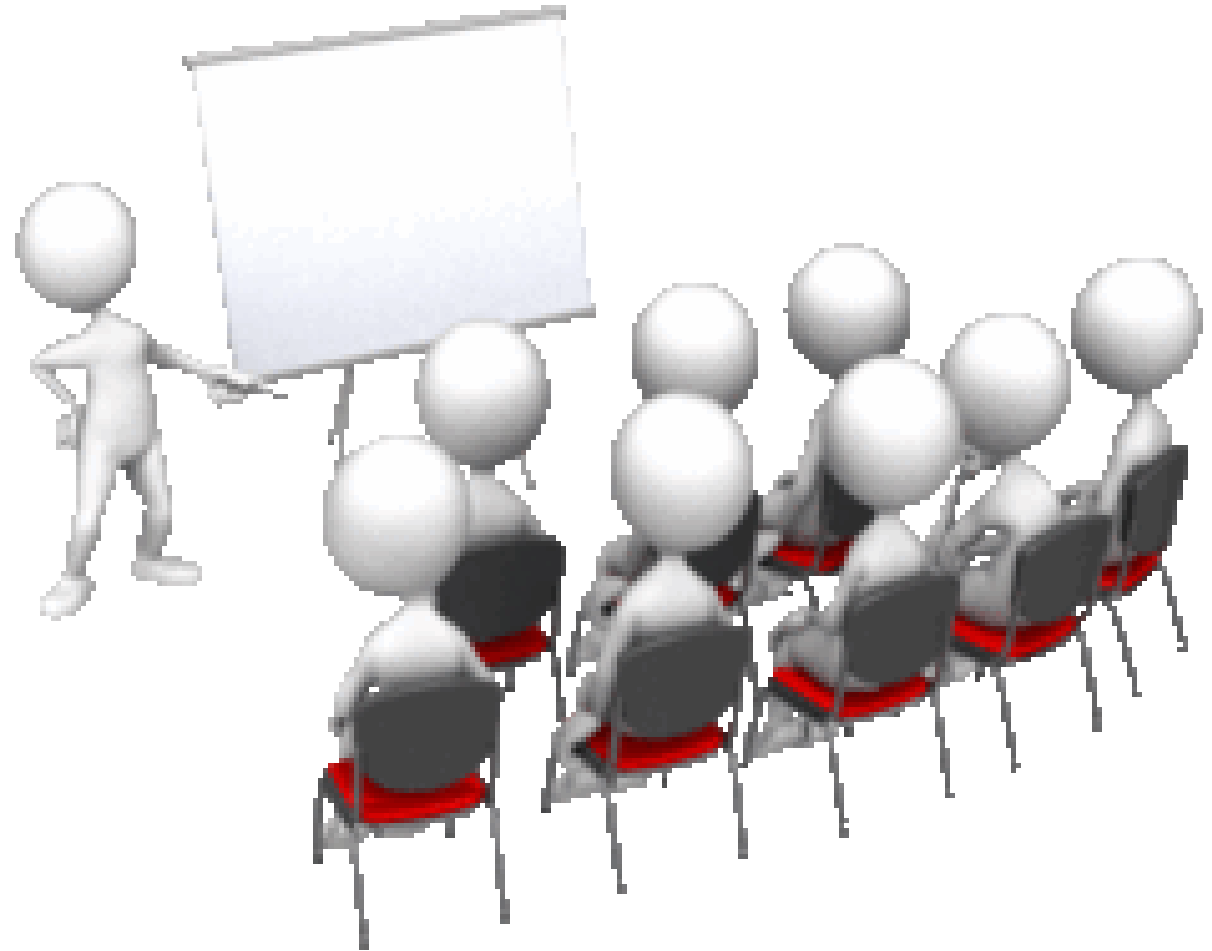
The principles remain the same;  
But the way it looks is different for  
every county.






How can  
LWVMI  
help?

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A background image of a business meeting. Several people in professional attire are gathered around a table. One person is holding a tablet displaying a document with charts and text. Another person is holding a smartphone. There are coffee cups on the table. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an office environment with large windows.

Work with local officials





Questions?