



FAQ: VOTER AND LANGUAGE ACCESS

Spanish: ¿Necesita ayuda en su idioma? Llame al (202) 727-2525 **Amharic:** በድንቁዎች እርዳታ ማግኘት ይቻላል? በስልክ ቁጥር (202) 727-2525 ይደውሉ።
Simplified Chinese: 需要以您的语言帮助? 拨打Call (202) 727-2525 **French:** Avez-vous besoin d'aide dans votre langue ? Appelez le (202) 727-2525.
Korean: 모국어로 도움이 필요하세요? (202) 727-2525로 전화해주세요 **Vietnamese:** Cần sự trợ giúp ngôn ngữ của bạn? Hãy gọi (202) 727-2525

- 1) **Do you have an Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Coordinator on staff to assist and answer questions from voters with disabilities?** Yes. The ADA Coordinator facilitates requests for reasonable accommodations, respond to complaints, and ensures that all eligible voters have equal access to the voting process.
- 2) **I have a disability; can I still register to vote?**
Yes. In order to register to vote, you must:
 - Be a United States Citizen
 - Be a resident of the District of Columbia
 - Be at least 16 years old (District residents may preregister to vote at age 16, but will not receive a voter registration card or be eligible to vote until they are at least 17 with a date of birth indicating that they will be 18 on or before the next general election)
 - Not have been found by a court to be legally incompetent to vote
 - Not claim voting residence outside of the District of Columbia
- 3) **How can I register to vote?**
 - **Online:** [Register to vote on our website](https://www.dcboe.org). Visit [Dcboe.org](https://www.dcboe.org).
 - **In-person:** Register in-person at DCBOE or with a local NVRA agency (Ex. DMV or DDS).
 - **Same Day Registration:** Register at your voter center/polling place on Election Day.
 - **Outreach events:** Register at local community outreach events hosted by DCBOE or other organizations, and nursing home facilities.
- 4) **Do I need to provide ID?** It depends. To register by mail you must have either a driver's license number or a DMV-issued ID number or the last four digits of your Social Security Number. When registering for the first time by mail you will additionally need to include a copy of one of the following:
 - Valid District of Columbia DMV-issued ID
 - Government check or paycheck*
 - Bank Statement*
 - Utility bill (*The issue, bill, or statement date must be within 90 days of Election Day*)
 - Lease, student housing statement/tuition bill or homeless shelter occupancy statement
 - Other government document that shows the name and address of the voter
- 5) **What programs and services do you provide for voters with disabilities, senior citizen and no or limited proficient voters?**

Voter Access Services

- **Register to vote electronically (online):** Use assistive technology to register to vote online <https://www.dcboe.org/Voters/Register-To-Vote/Register-to-Vote>.
- **Accessible vote centers/polling sites:** Vote in person, and bring your service animal.
- **Accessible ballot marking devices (BMD):** Vote in person, using BDMs equipped with visual aids (high contrast and zoom functionality), touchscreen, sip/puff access, audio-tactile pad, braille, multilanguage ballot etc.

- **Alternative voting options:** Curbside voting for voters ages 65 or older or any person with a disability, early voting, “no excuse” Absentee/Mail-in voting or voters can transfer their ballot to another accessible voting location.
- **Accessible Remote Ballot:** The Accessible Remote Ballot is a ballot delivery system that allows voters with disabilities to privately and independently mark their ballot. It meets federal ADA standards and is compatible with a wide range of assistive technology, including screen readers.
- **Voter Assistance:** All election workers receive disability etiquette training, in order to assist senior citizens, voters with disabilities and special needs. They are trained to assist voters to read their ballot, vote their ballot, use the BMD etc.
- **Election Day hotline:** Voters can call (202) 741-5283 or 711 (TTY).

Language Access Services

- Limited or Non-English proficient voters have access to translated election material in Spanish, Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, and Vietnamese.
 - Voters have access to virtual and/or in-person interpreters at all vote centers/polling sites: multi foreign language interpreters and American Sign Language Interpreters (ASL).
 - Voters also have access to LanguageLine via telephone, which includes more than 9,000 highly trained interpreters who are fluent in over 240 languages.
 - Voters also have access to multilanguage voting material, posters and directional signs at all vote centers/polling sites.
- 6) **Do I have to vote in person?** No
- **Curbside voting:** Voters who are unable, for reason of disability, seniority, or illness, to enter a polling place on the day of an election may arrange to vote from their car.
 - **Absentee/Mail-In Voting:** For the 2020 General Election, all active registered voters will receive a Mail In ballot at their registered address beginning the first week in October 2020. **Please note: All registered voters will automatically receive an Absentee/Mail-in Ballot for the November 3, 2020 General Election. Voters with disabilities can request the Accessible Remote Ballot.**
 - **Accessible Remote Ballot:** Voters with disabilities will be able to use the Accessible Remote Ballot to vote privately and independently. It meets federal ADA standards and is compatible with a wide range of assistive technology, including screen readers. The completed ballot must be printed, placed in the pre-paid secrecy envelope, and returned to the Board of Elections, via mail, a ballot drop box or dropped off an early voting or Election Day vote center.
- 7) **Is my polling site accessible?** All early voting centers in the District meet strict Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. On Election Day, we work collaboratively with other government agencies and volunteers to maintain accessible polling sites.
- 8) **Will I be allowed to bring my service animal inside the polling place?** Yes. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal’s work or the individual’s disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- 9) **Is there someone who can help me if I do not know what to do once I am at the polling place? Can my spouse/partner/child/friend/neighbor help me inside the voting booth?** Yes. Feel free to bring a relative, friend or neighbor to assist you, as long as they are not your employer, an election observer, or union representative. DCBOE Voter Assistance Clerks will also be on hand to help at every Early Voting Center and Election Day polling place.
- 10) **My assigned polling place is not accessible for my specific needs. Can I vote somewhere else?** Yes.
- **Curbside:** You can still vote in-person using our curbside voting option.

- **Transfer your ballot:** Notwithstanding DC Official Code §714.1(a), a voter whose residence is served by a polling place that has been identified as inaccessible pursuant to Section 8 of the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act may vote a regular ballot at another, accessible polling place if they: are a senior citizen or a person with a disability; and they contact the Board by no later than the seventh day prior to Election Day to request that a complete ballot for their precinct of residence be brought to the accessible polling place on Election Day.

11) Are your voting machines accessible? Yes.

The ballot marking device was designed to accommodate voters in the general voting population, including voters with cognitive, dexterity, auditory and visual impairments. Voters have several options to make candidate selections.

- Voters may select the screen or use the moveable keypad provided.
- The display includes various colors and effects to guide the voter.
- The voter may adjust the display contrast and text size in order to read the screen.
- Each key on the pad has both Braille and printed text labels designed to indicate function and a related shape to help the voter determine its use.
- Alternatively, voters may also use headphones to hear a recorded list of the instructions and candidates for each contest and then make selections on the screen, using the keypad, a two-position switch, or through a sip/puff device.
- The voter may adjust the volume and tempo of the audio.
- Language Access is also a priority as the ballot marking device allows the voter to switch the language to Spanish.

12) Can I change my vote choice(s) before I cast my vote? Yes. The federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requires any new voting equipment to allow voters the opportunity to change their choices privately and independently before the ballot is cast and counted.

13) What should I do if someone pressures me to vote for a particular candidate? Please ask to speak with the Precinct Captain immediately, and report the individual immediately. While you are able to receive help with voting from an Election Day Worker or a person of your choosing, no person or official providing voter assistance should in any way influence or attempt to influence your choice in voting. Any person who violates this rule is subject to a \$10,000 fine or imprisonment up to five years, or both, pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.14(a).

14) I have trouble reading and understanding what is printed on my ballot. I would like to be able to vote privately and without help, just like everyone else. What are my rights?

The federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requires that voters with disabilities be able to cast their vote privately and without assistance. Each polling place has at least two (2) accessible voting machines. These new voting machines use assistive and adaptive technology to provide the opportunity for voters with a wide range of disabilities to vote privately and independently.

15) May I move to the front of the line on Election Day if my disability requires it? Maybe.

It depends on your specific disability. Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), moving to the front of the line, when necessary, could be considered a reasonable accommodation. If your disability prevents you from staying in line, let an Election Day Worker know, or ask to be seated, while you wait your turn. If you choose to stay in line, the poll worker cannot make you move to the front of the line, because of your disability.

16) I have a cognitive disability, are there any restrictions on my right to vote in the District of Columbia? No. Assuming you meet all other requirements to vote, you are eligible to vote unless there is a current and valid court order that indicates that a court has found you legally incompetent to

vote. It is not up to an Election Day Worker to determine your competence to vote. Even if you have a guardian, you will still be allowed to vote as long as you are eligible.

- 17) **Can I vote if I live in a nursing home, hospital, or other facility?** Yes. You can vote in-person or via Absentee/Mail-in ballot, as described previously. Please contact your nursing home administrator or the Board of Elections if you have additional concerns.
- 18) **I filled out my Sample Ballot ahead of time. Can I bring it inside the polling place as a “guide”?** Yes. You may bring in sample ballots and other “notes” to assist you with voting, but you must take them with you when you leave.
- 19) **I lost or damaged my Absentee/Mail-In ballot; can I get a replacement?** Yes. You should contact the Board to have a replacement Absentee/Mail-in ballot mailed to you. A staff member will explain the process.
- 20) **Is there a way for me to vote if I experience a health crisis shortly before an election?** Yes. If you are unable to vote in-person at an Early Voting Center or on Election Day, you may be able to request an Emergency Absentee/Mail-in ballot. An Emergency Absentee/Mail-In ballot is made available on the **sixth day leading up to an election. Please note: All registered voters will automatically receive an Absentee/Mail-in Ballot for the November 3, 2020 General Election. Voters with disabilities can request the Accessible Remote Ballot.**
- 21) **Can I be an Election Day Worker if I have a disability?** Yes. Having a disability is not grounds to bar an otherwise qualified person from serving as an Election Day Worker, or ADA Compliance Assistant. There is an application process and training class associated with all positions. Visit our website to complete the [Application Process](#).
- 22) **Do we provide reasonable accommodations?** Yes.

Please contact the ADA Coordinator to request a reasonable accommodation (an adjustment made to the voting process to make it easier for you to vote), at tjennings@dcboe.org or call (202) 253-1741 or via 711 (TTY).

Examples:

- **Low-tech:** Any accommodation that is technologically simple or unsophisticated, and readily available (e.g. printed material in large print, magnifying glass or sound amplifier).
- **No-tech:** An accommodation that does not require the use of any technology (e.g. American Sign Language Interpreter (ASL), extra time to vote or seating).

If you have general questions or concerns, please contact our office:

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOARD OF ELECTIONS

1015 Half Street SE, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20003

(202) 727-2525 (**Office**) (202) 741-5283 (**Election Day Hotline**) or via 711 (TTY)

Website: <https://dcboe.org/> **Twitter:** @Vote4DC **Instagram:** @Vote4DC

Facebook: District of Columbia Board of Elections **YouTube:** District of Columbia Board of Elections