

Accessibility Checklist

Parking

- Are accessible spaces marked with signs?
- Are the parking spaces on concrete or asphalt?
- Are the parking spaces close to the entrance of the polling place?
- Is the passenger drop-off zone level?

Walkways to Voting Site

- Are walkway surfaces concrete or asphalt?
- Are walkways wide enough for a wheelchair or walker?
- Are walkways free of debris, snow, or ice?
- Is the accessible walkway route to the entrance identified?

Poll Site Accessibility

- Do doors have lever or push bar handles?
- Do stairs have textured treads to prevent slipping?
- Are steps at reasonable height levels?
- Are hallways and doors wide enough for maneuvering a wheelchair or walker?
- Are ramps and elevators available?

Voting Area

- Are voting instructions in large type?
- Is a magnifying device available?
- Is the voting area large enough for maneuvering a wheelchair or walker?
- Is seating available for persons with disabilities or elderly voters while they wait?

Voter Rights

As a pollworker, you have the responsibility to ensure that voters' rights are protected. Voters in Iowa have the following rights to:

Ask questions

Request a ballot and vote if they are 18 years of age or older, a resident of Iowa, a U.S. citizen, and are registered to vote

Review a sample ballot before voting

Vote in an accessible voting place and receive assistance with voting in a polling place, if needed

Mark a ballot privately and free from coercion or intimidation

Vote a provisional ballot if their name is not on the voter registration list or if there is another question about their qualifications to vote

Receive a ballot if they are in line at the time the polls close

Request a new ballot if they made a mistake and have not already cast their ballot

Have their ballot counted if it was cast legally and timely

Brochure created by the Iowa Secretary of State's Office, Iowa Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council, Iowa Protection and Advocacy Services, Inc., and ID Action.

Iowa Pollworker's Guide to Accessibility



Between 15 and 20 percent of all Iowans live with disabilities, according to Iowa Census data. Within this segment of the population, disability has many faces. This brochure is designed to give you some guiding principles when interacting with voters with disabilities on Election Day.

Respecting the Voter

It is your responsibility to be impartial and protect the privacy and security of each person's vote. It is also your responsibility to ensure the integrity of the election process by doing your best to prevent fraud and abuse. Always be professional, courteous, prompt, and unbiased.

Be respectful. Use common sense. Voters with disabilities want to be treated the same way as everyone else. Show them the same respect that you expect to receive.

Just ask. Don't be afraid to offer assistance, but don't automatically give help unless the person clearly needs it or has asked for it.

Communicate with the person. Some voters with disabilities may have an assistant, interpreter, or companion with them. Always look at and speak directly with the voter, not the assistant.

Respect the person's privacy. Refrain from asking questions that would otherwise be inappropriate to ask of any person.

Don't feel pressured. Don't feel as if you need to know everything and do everything "perfectly." This guide was created so you can have a reference to refer to on Election Day.

Making Accommodations

Voters with disabilities may request assistance if they need it. Do not ask why a voter needs assistance. Do not assume that someone will need assistance. Help only if the voter asks for assistance.

Two precinct election officials, one from each party, should be designated to provide assistance if requested. Voters may receive assistance from persons in the polling place **except** from their employer or their union.

Physical Disability

When communicating with voters who use wheelchairs, give them some space and speak with them at their level. When helping someone take a step, ask which is the best way to do so.

Sight Impairment

Identify who you are. If you are guiding someone, ask what is the best way to do so and describe what you are doing as you are doing it. Always face the person when you are talking so your voice will be directed toward him/her.

Hearing Impairment

Find out what is the best way to communicate with the person. Speak in a normal fashion; do not exaggerate your speaking. Try to move the conversation to a smaller, quieter area. Do not block your face when you are speaking.

Making Accommodations

Curbside Voting

The two designated precinct election officials may have to take a ballot and election supplies out to a voter's car. Follow the same procedures with the voter here as you would inside the polling place.

- Have the voter read, complete and sign the *Affidavit of Voter Requesting Assistance* and *Voter's Declaration of Eligibility*.
- Confirm that the information on the declaration matches the information in the election register.
- Write "assisted" next to the voter's name in the register.
- Give a ballot concealed within the secrecy folder to the voter.
- Have the voter complete the ballot.
- Return the voter's marked ballot concealed within the secrecy folder.

Do not take the election register to the car. Bring the information back into the building to confirm the voter's information.

Additional Questions

If you have questions or concerns, refer to the Precinct Election Official Guidebook or contact your county auditor.

REMEMBER NOT TO REVEAL OR COMMENT ON HOW A PERSON VOTED.
