



## FAQ: VOTER AND LANGUAGE ACCESS

Need help in your language? Call  
 (202) 727-2525

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 (202) 727-2525 ይደውሉ።

Avez-vous besoin d'aide dans votre langue ?  
 Appelez le  
 (202) 727-2525

모국어로 도움이 필요하세요?  
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Cần sự trợ giúp ngôn ngữ của  
 bạn? Hãy gọi (202) 727-2525

¿Necesita ayuda en su idioma?  
 Llame al (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 is responsible for coordinating the efforts of our agency to comply with the ADA, respond to complaints filed by the public, and ensure 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 be in jail on a felony conviction
- 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:** Visit [www.dcboe.org](http://www.dcboe.org) or [www.vote4dc.com](http://www.vote4dc.com)
- **On your phone:** Use our mobile voter registration app, Vote4DC, which allows you to sign and send your application from your mobile phone or tablet.
- **In-person:** Register in-person at DCBOE or District government NVRA agencies. Registration is also available using the Driver License or Identification Card Application (Form DMVR-4) at DC DMV offices.
- **Polling place:** At your polling place on Election Day.
- **Outreach events:** Voter registration drives are held at various community functions, 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*)
- Student housing statement/tuition bill
- Homeless shelter occupancy statement
- Lease
- 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

- Voter registration assistance in-person, via vote4dc app or online
- Accessible polling sites and service animal friendly environment
- Accessible ballot marking devices: 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 voting or transfer your ballot
- Disability etiquette training for Election Day Workers
- Voter Assistance Clerks (VAC) to assist with voting and ADA Compliance Assistants to keep polling sites accessible
- Alternative format and multilanguage election material
- Election Day hotline and 711 (DC relay/TTY) service for voters with auditory disabilities

#### Language Access Services

- American Sign Language Interpreters (ASL) available at designated polling sites
- In-person and/or telephonic multilanguage interpreters available at all polling sites
- Language access kits with translated voting information available at all polling sites
- Multilanguage posters and directional signs

The D.C. Board of Election provides language access services for customers/voters who are limited or non-English proficient (LEP/NEP). Pursuant to the Language Access Act of 2004, we offer translated election related material in Amharic (አማርኛ), Chinese (中文), French (Français), Korean (한국어), Spanish (Español) and Vietnamese (Tiếng Việt). However, we also offer a full range of professional interpreting services via LanguageLine, including more than 9,000 highly trained interpreters who are fluent in over 240 languages

and American Sign Language Interpreters (ASL) for constituents who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing.

6) **Do I have to vote in person?** No

- A. **Vote in-person on Election Day:** Senior citizens and people with disabilities can vote in-person at their assigned polling place on Election Day. Voter Assistant Clerks will be present to provide assistance.
- B. **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.
- C. **Early Voting Center:** You can cast your ballot at any Early Voting Center using the Board's accessible voting equipment. The ballot marking device offers a voter verifiable paper audit trail of all votes cast. Each voter will be checked in at the Early Voting Center using electronic poll books that are connected over a secure network so that a voter cannot check-in and cast a ballot at more than one location.
- D. **Absentee Voting/Vote by mail:** DC offers "no excuse" absentee voting. Please contact our office during each election season to find out the deadline to request your absentee ballot. All ballots must be received by DCBOE by 8pm on Election Day. Ballots can be mailed or delivered in-person to DCBOE offices, dropped off at any Early Voting Center until the published deadline, or dropped off at any polling place on Election Day. To request an Absentee Ballot, complete the form online at [www.dcboe.org](http://www.dcboe.org) and then print, sign and mail it to the Board or send a letter to the Board's physical address at 1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20003. If you send your own letter, you must include:
  - i. Your name
  - ii. Your residence address and recent change of address;
  - iii. The address where your ballot is to be mailed (if different from your residence address);
  - iv. Your date of birth;
  - v. Your DMV-issued ID number or the last four digits of your Social Security Number
  - vi. Your signature.
- E. **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.

- 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. DCBOE offers Curbside Voting at all polling places on Election Day. You or someone you know can vote a ballot right from the comfort of your car. A Voter Assistance Clerk will be available to confirm your voter registration and bring you your ballot. Another option is to request a ballot transfer. DCBOE will provide you with a ballot at a closer, more accessible location, as long as the request is made at least seven days before 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 and report the matter/ 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?**

Yes. Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), moving to the front of the line when necessary would be a reasonable accommodation. If your disability prevents you from staying in line, let an Election Day Worker know and ask to be moved to the front of the line. If you choose to stay in line, however, the poll worker cannot make you move to the front of the line just because you have a 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 by Absentee Ballot, as described above. Alternatively, if you are living at a licensed District of Columbia nursing home, assisted living facility, or federal medical center, you may register to vote, request an Absentee Ballot, and have your ballot hand-delivered by a Board employee to your facility or bedside. Please contact your nursing home administrator immediately if you would like to request an Absentee Ballot.

- 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 ballot; can I get a replacement?** Yes. You should contact the Board to have a replacement Absentee Ballot mailed to you.
- 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 Ballot.

An Emergency Absentee Ballot is made available on the **sixth day leading up to an election**. You must meet certain criteria to request this ballot from the Board. To vote an Emergency Absentee Ballot, you must fill out an Emergency Absentee Ballot Application. This form is available at [www.dcboe.org](http://www.dcboe.org) or in office.

An Emergency Absentee Ballot must be delivered and returned by a qualified registered voter. Your ballot must be returned by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

- 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 Worker. There is an application process, which includes a mandatory training class. To request a reasonable accommodation, please contact the ADA Coordinator.
- 22) **Do we provide reasonable accommodations?** Yes. A reasonable accommodation is an adjustment made in a system to accommodate or make fair the same system for an individual based on a proven need. That need can vary.
- **Low-tech:** Any accommodation that is technologically simple or unsophisticated, and readily available (e.g., providing a magnifying glass or sound amplifier).
  - **No-tech:** An accommodation that does not require the use of any technology (e.g. American Sign Language Interpreter)

**The D.C. Board of Elections is committed to providing access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, and employment for individuals with disabilities. To request a reasonable accommodation please contact the ADA Coordinator:**

**District of Columbia Board of Elections  
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Main: 202.727.2525 or 711 (TTY) | Direct: 202.727.2524  
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Website: [dcboe.org](http://dcboe.org)**