

**New York State
Board of Elections**

**Non-Technical Guide
Describing Standards for
Poll Site Accessibility**

NON-TECHNICAL GUIDE DESCRIBING STANDARDS FOR POLL SITE ACCESSIBILITY

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GENERAL GUIDELINES ON POLLWORKER TRAINING AND VOTER EDUCATION

The State Board of Elections has developed these general guidelines on pollworker training and voter education for use by County Boards to implement education programs on the proper use of new voting systems, including ballot marking devices.

- Pollworker training and voter education programs will be conducted by County Boards, in consultation with and with the assistance of State Board staff.
- The State Board will work to ensure that programs continue as necessary to ensure the smooth functioning of the election process.
- In developing these guidelines, the State Board considered, among other things, pollworker recruitment and training, voter education classes, the use of direct mail, public service announcements on television and radio, print media – daily and weekly papers, and local community public appearances and events.

A web-based **Training and Voter Outreach Resource Library** for county produced materials will be established by the State Board which will be accessible to County Boards. This library will serve as a tool for county boards to disseminate or research best practices in poll worker training, voter outreach services and other related activities.

These guidelines present tips, reminders and practical recommendations and are intended to help bolster public confidence in the election process by providing guidance to election administrators on methods for keeping the process secure while ensuring that every eligible voter can cast a vote and have that vote counted.

I. Issues and Shared Practices in Developing Education Programsⁱ

A. Pre-Election Management

- Ten Election Tips
- Introducing New Voting Systems

1. Ten Election Tips

1.1 Develop Strategic Plans and Checklists

As you deal with the daily challenges that come in an election year, it's easy to lose track of what needs to happen in order to meet key pre-election deadlines. Develop a "pre-election checklist" and operations calendar, as well as task-specific checklists. Meet regularly with staff to go through checklists. Conduct a pre-election strategy session with staff, vendor and selected pollworkers, and hold weekly status meetings.

Examples

The Election Center has developed a series of checklists on a variety of election topics. Completed checklists include a “Voting Systems Checklist” and an “Accessibility Preparations Checklist”. By going to the following link, <http://www.electioncenter.org/electionresources.html>, you may review copies for use in your county programs or use these samples to develop your own checklists.

1.2 Build Partnerships with Stakeholders

Strengthening relationships with elected officials, the community and voters will make the election run more smoothly and may help gain you public support. Solicit support from local government leaders and establishing an elections steering committee to create channels of communication. Conduct pre-election briefings with media, candidates, political leaders and community organizations. Conduct training programs for the media, candidates, political leaders, pollwatchers, community organizations, and the public. Prepare, update and disseminate regular status reports.

1.3 Focus Early on Pollworker Recruitment and Training

Recruiting, managing, training and retaining pollworkers is difficult enough without the additional challenges posed by implementing new requirements. Many jurisdictions are working to recruit more pollworkers for the upcoming elections. Develop a recruitment plan and timeline for public service announcements, interagency solicitations, and, if money allows, paid media advertising.

Consider hiring professional recruiters and trainers. Develop a training schedule and system for managing new and experienced pollworkers. Some new components to include in pollworker training programs are: awareness training for serving voters with disabilities, ensuring poll workers know how to assist voters with the ballot marking device, security and contingency plans in the event of voting system failures.

Example

Create a ‘Making Voting Popular’ program to help recruit Election Day workers through a number of objectives:

- To educate the voting public about the voting process.
- To create opportunities for individuals and organizations to commit to and meet civic responsibilities of inspectors.
- To create channels of communication that can be used for other election related outreach programs.

1.4 Identify and Recruit Accessible, Reliable, Well-equipped Polling Places

Develop a strategy and timeline for reaching out to most likely polling place hosts such as public schools, churches, and community centers. Involve community

organizations and interest groups representing voters with disabilities in the search for new polling places. Using the guide starting on page 25 created by the Catskill Center for Independence (CCFI) and the Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY (CIDNY), along with the DOJ checklist, complete a written survey for each potential site you visit. Ensure commitment in writing from each polling place host. After you conduct your polling place location survey, produce sample layouts, dimensions, and equipment/materials placement for your pollworkers. This site specific template should also include instructions for the placement of signage and for making sure pathways remain free of obstructions throughout the day.

As you conduct the survey, keep in mind that polling places should be accessible, comfortable, sizable, visible, technology-friendly, and reliable.

1.5 Develop Communication Plans

Educating all stakeholders – and most importantly, the voters – on the Election process will help strengthen your relationships with key constituencies.

Obtain Professional Support: County Boards may consider obtaining the services of a professional advertisement firm to create an advertisement campaign to educate the public on new voting systems. Some areas of consideration include:

- Advertisement available in multiple languages.
- Publicity efforts using: Television; Radio; Video(s); CDs and other electronic transmission systems like MP3 or digitized videos.

Outreach to Voters. Train outreach organizers to assist voters in the proper use of new voting systems to ensure that their vote is counted and to thoroughly understand new voting procedures. Update your website to include information that voters need to participate effectively in the voting process, including voting system-specific instruction materials, instructions on casting votes using your new voting system, sample ballots, polling place look-up, and accessibility status of polling places. Also, provide information on absentee voting procedures in your county.

Outreach/Education of Media. Educate media on what to expect during the election process including Election Night. Give them a timeline for results on Election Night, plans for supplemental counts of absentee ballots and affidavit ballots, as well as final certification of results. Explain the significance of each component, for example, who casts affidavit ballots and the process of verifying the eligibility of those voters. Make sure the media understand the difference between unofficial and official results.

Outreach/education of community organizations. Actively solicit engagement in the election process from stakeholders, including political parties, candidates and public interest and advocacy organizations.

Example

Invite community leaders, community-based organizations (CBO's), disabled community advocates, political party representatives, and other interested individuals to attend Community Voter Outreach Committee (CVOC) meetings that you establish. Such committees have been effective in creating a partnership between the County and CBO's, toward maximizing voter outreach and education efforts, providing better services to all voters, and providing feedback on important election issues such as affidavit ballot design, and voting system and legislative changes and challenges.

1.6 Prepare Back-up and Emergency Plans

Conduct an analysis of the election process and points in the process where things are most likely to go wrong – a risk analysis – and develop a plan for dealing with worst-case scenarios. For example, could you conduct the election if you were denied access to your central office? Prepare contingency plans for disaster, which might come in the form of, for example, technology failure, delay in election returns, natural disasters impacting polling place set up, voting or return of results, security/back-up of all computer systems, pollworker shortages, among others.

Example

Develop checklists on who to notify of an emergency, what constitutes an emergency, recovery plans for pollworkers and guidelines for rescheduling an election, etc.

1.7 Develop a Budget and Procurement Plan

With new requirements and new voting equipment, come new and sometimes unexpected costs. Establish budget priorities. Work well in advance with your local budget officers and local legislative leadership so that they understand trends and needs. Make sure the procurement process is open to public scrutiny and abides by state and county or municipal guidelines. Build in plenty of time for procurement – and have back-up plans in the event that certain deadlines for printing, mailing, equipment or supply delivery are not met.

Review and submit training, voter education and poll site accessibility funding plans to the State Board to access funding sources for services and expenses related to: poll worker training; voter education; and, to improve access to polling places, improving voter outreach to voters with disabilities, training of election officials and volunteers on accessibility issues.

1.8 Hire a Usability Consultant

Creating more legible polling place signs, reader-friendly voter guides, clear voting instructions, and user-friendly, accessible websites will make it easier for voters to participate, reduce voter errors and build good will on the part of the voting public. Usability consultants can help identify where such improvements can be made. Usability consultants are professionals who specialize in making forms and

computer interfaces easier to use; they can help to make instructions more voter-friendly.

The Election Assistance Commission provides access to multiple resources regarding accessibility throughout all aspects of the voting process. These can be found and downloaded at the Commission's web site, <http://www.eac.gov>, and include

- Election Management Guidelines: Accessibility
- Quick Start Guide: Accessibility

1.9 Review the Legal Environment

Review the laws as they pertain to that particular election. Ensure that all stakeholders have been educated about the applicable rules and laws prior to the election. Update your county contact sheets with the appropriate judicial duty assignments and make sure that appropriate staff can route calls appropriately.

1.10 Review Documentation to Ensure Accountability/Transparency of Election Processes

In every election, sound documentation of all election processes – from voter registration list maintenance to ballot definition to the compiling of results on Election Night -- can help reassure the public that the election was conducted fairly and accurately. Remember that the objective of documenting election processes is, in part at least, to be able to recreate events after the Election in the event that questions arise.

- Keep copies of everything, good and bad: all documentation from tests, all copies of proofs from vendors, all submissions from candidates, etc. Review all materials in bipartisan teams, initialing and dating materials and completed milestones. You can determine after the election what can be thrown out and what should be retained according to legal retention standards and your own common sense.
- Documentation could include information about the experiences of users with disabilities; the operation of voting systems, the effectiveness of polling places accommodations; the reaction by voters, community leaders and media to outreach efforts and the effectiveness of strategic planning that was inclusive of the needs of all stakeholders, including those with disabilities.

2. Introducing New Voting Systems

Develop a plan to analyze, select, purchase, use and maintain electronic voting equipment, with a particular focus on new requirements with voting procedures including the security issues related to electronic voting equipment.

1. Communicate and consult with colleagues who have made this transition recently or who are using the same system. If your budget and time allows, travel to a jurisdiction served by your vendor or voting system to observe an election, borrow training materials, and consult with staff on lessons learned.

Example

Obtain valuable information on rating and selecting a vendor; on key warehouse storage, layout and electrical needs; sample acceptance testing procedures; sample voting machine diagnostics; suggested guidelines for logic and accuracy testing; tips for Election Day troubleshooting and a sample audit tracking mechanism.

2. Conduct voter and media outreach. Develop brochures and provide them in alternative formats such as large print, Braille and audio. Set up self-help voting areas or kiosks at city and town halls, libraries, etc. Prepare demonstrations for community organizations, with an emphasis on outreach to organizations serving senior citizens and people with disabilities. Educate everyone about the BMD because people without obvious disabilities may benefit from the BMD. Make sure that senior citizens know how to use the feature of the BMD that enlarges the font size. Prepare materials for media outreach and conduct pre-election briefings.

Example

A successful implementation of a new voting system with a myriad of voter outreach and education services included: conducting over 600 speaking/demonstration events in one year, demonstrating the system at large community venues, a mall tour of the voting system performed by a community-based organization, full color display features in the local print media and numerous smaller events throughout the community. Work with any local Speaker's Bureau programs to conduct outreach. Require that such speakers participate in the County's training program, which covers information on the basic operations of elections as well as the setup and use of the new voting system.

3. Develop a change management plan. Election officials who have made the transition to electronic voting systems advise quadrupling the amount of time allotted to test every piece of new equipment before it is deployed. Assess the new polling place requirements and ensure all polling places meet them. Some polling places may have to be reconfigured – make sure poll workers understand the reason for changing polling place layout. Consider how the new equipment will affect supply delivery schedules. Consider how you will secure voting equipment after it is delivered.
4. Provide extensive hands-on training for pollworkers. Train pollworkers on the appropriate approach in assisting voters who will not be familiar with the equipment, particularly those voters with disabilities. Make sure every poll

worker practices marking ballots using the BMD accessories so they will be confident assisting a variety of voters with disabilities on the BMD.

Example

“Practice Makes Perfect” Hands-On Voting Machine Training for Election Workers, where pollworkers can drop by your training sites by appointment or at their convenience to practice opening and closing the voting machines, clearing paper jams, and get additional hands-on experience with voting equipment.

5. Establish a clear understanding between you and your vendor(s) regarding the level of support you expect. For example, specify the number of vendor staff who will be available to you before the election, on Election Day and in the post-election period. Specify who will be responsible for training staff on programming the equipment and pollworkers on setting up and operating the new systems.
6. Review records retention policy to determine if policy or records will change because of new technology.
7. Keep track of all costs, especially hidden or unanticipated costs, such as upgrading storage facilities to accommodate new voting systems or whether there will be any additional delivery systems.
8. Conduct a post-election debriefing with your pollworkers and stakeholders.
9. Recycle used voting supplies, booths, and provide election supply containers. Many are readily available and in good condition from counties that have changed to other systems. Consider election publications such as Election Administration Reports to announce that you are seeking supplies or have supplies for sale.

3. Voting System Vendor Management and Contract Issues

3.1 Timing

Vendors should provide training materials to election officials at an early stage so that you can adequately train internal staff and prepare pollworker training materials. Vendors should highlight accessibility features in the machines. Establish timelines for equipment delivery, ballot printing, delivery and testing, etc. Develop a plan or schedule that is contingent on deliverables and milestones.

3.2 Communication and Security Checks

Start or join a users group that is user-driven. Election officials should share post-election summary of issues with each other for mutual education, and to help identify solution to problems.

3.3 Vendor Responsibility

Ask your vendor to supply you with the qualifications, experience and number of personnel you will have available pre-election, on Election Day and post-election? You may wish to get the names of the project staff and especially the name and background of the project manager.

How can you become more independent from your vendor?

Develop other resources such as colleagues, user groups, independent technology consultants, and technology professionals working for local or state government agencies, technology professionals teaching at universities. You will want to develop in-house programming and technology expertise.

B. Voter Outreach

- Five Tips on Reducing Voter Error
- Five Considerations for Accommodating Voters with Disabilities
- Five Considerations for Accommodating Voters with Limited English Proficiency

1. Five Tips on Reducing Voter Error

1.1 Provide a Demonstration Unit or Video

Provide a demonstration unit (preferably one that is fully accessible) or, as an alternative, a continuous-running demonstration video, at every voting site and encourage every voter to try it. If possible, use video that is also accessible to deaf and blind voters. A resource for making the video accessible is National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM) website at <http://ncam.wgbh.org/>.

1.2 Illustrations Will Make Voting Instructions Much More Effective

Illustrations will make voting instructions much more effective. Remember that most people are visual. Keep instructional wording short, simple and focused on avoiding common voter errors.

Example

The Cook County, Illinois, Clerk's office has redesigned its ballot pages, polling place signs and instructions, election judge manual, and envelopes and forms to make them easier to read and more intuitive for voters and pollworkers. Cook County employs recent graduates of the University of Illinois-Chicago to provide more graphics and step-by-step diagrams to help polling places run more smoothly. Information about this program, can be found at the Design for Democracy link: <http://www.designfordemocracy.org/>

1.3 Conduct Focus Groups

Conduct focus groups to test how clear and effective your voting instructions are. These focus groups need not be sophisticated – ask college classes, family

members, members of the public or community, city or county employees, disability and advocacy organizations, etc. to read and follow the instructions. Focus groups may be as simple as requesting verbal feedback or asking participants to fill out a survey or a more extensive approach such as providing varying layouts of voting instructions to dozens of participants and asking participants to attempt to implement the instructions.

1.4 Survey Voters on their Polling Place Experience

Survey voters on their polling place experience. Work with disability organizations to survey voters with disabilities.

1.5 Encourage Community Organizations to Assist in Spot-checking

Encourage community organizations to assist in spot-checking aspects of the elections that occur off-site, such as voter outreach and materials and polling place operations, the availability and clarity of voting instructions. Provide representatives with checklists and request that they provide specific feedback so that you can follow up as necessary.

2. Considerations for Accommodating Voters with Disabilities

2.1 Design an Accessible Website

The federal Access Board has developed accessibility standards for various technologies. For more information on standards and assistive technologies, visit the Access Board website at www.access-board.gov.

The following sites have information on building and testing accessible websites:

<http://webaim.org/>

<http://www.accessible.org/>

<http://www.mardiros.net/bobby-accessibility-tool.html>

<http://userite.com/>

<http://www.w3.org/WAI/RC/tools/complete>

2.2 Accessible Voting Materials

Provide voter material in accessible formats such as large print (18 point font, sans serif), audio and Braille. Create ASL videos of voter information. Publicize that alternative formats are available and inform the public how to obtain them. Each time new voter materials are developed, ask disability organizations to review content and layout.

Additionally, any posted materials such as sample ballots, instructions, applicable Federal and State laws, should be located at both 48” and 60” from the finished floor. Posting materials at both heights provides everyone, including persons of short stature or anyone who uses a wheelchair, adequate and comfortable viewing.

2.3 Accessible Polling Places

Conduct surveys of polling places to assess them for compliance with ADA and NYS requirements.

Use the guide created by the Catskill Center for Independence (CCFI) and the Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY (CIDNY), along with the DOJ checklist. Both CCFI and CIDNY are organizations that can train County Board employees on how to conduct a physical assessment of a polling site. CIDNY provides training and technical assistance to counties in the downstate area including, NYC, Putnam, Westchester, Rockland, Nassau and Suffolk. CCFI services all the other counties in New York State. Contact CIDNY's Voting Rights Coordinator at (212) 674-2300. Contact CCFI's PAVA Coordinator at (607) 432-8000.

Implement a policy that makes the accessible entrance the only entrance used by voters on Election Day.

Distribute an Election Day checklist for poll workers to ensure that temporary accessibility elements are properly placed and that pathways remain free of obstacles.

Example

The Election Center's Accessibility Task Force has developed an [Accessibility Preparations Checklist](#), using federal and state standards, which can be used as a survey tool.

2.4 Disability Awareness Training for Pollworkers

The New York State Board of Elections in collaboration with the Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (CQCAPD) has developed a training program to offer instruction on meeting the needs of voters with disabilities. CQCAPD conducted six training sessions through the Election Commissioners' Association of the State of New York – Regional structure. The State Board will provide ongoing training and support, as needed for new County Board staff and to refresh current worker knowledge.

In addition, Disability Awareness Trainings for County Board employees are also provided by CCFI and CIDNY. County Boards should work to incorporate disability awareness training in their education programs and ongoing office procedures.

2.5 Voter Outreach and Education

Invite disability organizations to drop-in centers in order for individuals to practice and become comfortable using the BMD. Offer to bring the voting system to disability organizations when they have outreach events.

Develop an outreach campaign to encourage voters with disabilities to become poll workers. Establish procedures for soliciting and providing accommodations for people with disabilities to be able to participate in poll worker trainings and work on Election Day. Making half day shift options available to poll workers will increase the numbers of people with disabilities who will be able to work as poll workers.

Establish a procedure for voters to request ASL interpreters at their poll site and for the County Board to provide them. Provide a communications board at every check-in table or at least one per polling site. A communication board is a simple tool affording a means of non-vocal interactions and can be designed with voter/poll worker communication needs in mind. Communication boards can be easily achieved by creating a computer-generated word document containing what is pertinent to the voting process. These boards usually contain the alphabet and numbers 0-9 around the margins and should include pictures (BMD, scanner, ballot, pen) as well as words and phrases (Yes, No, Do you have a voter card? What is your district number? Please, Thank you! etc.) . Print the board on regular paper. Laminating or placing it in a plastic sleeve will enhance its longevity.

2.6 Feedback from Voters with Disabilities

Encourage organizations representing voters with disabilities to provide feedback, especially through on-site evaluations and review of materials utilized by voters with specific needs.

2.7 Public Debriefing with Disability Organizations

Conduct a debriefing with your community organizations and pollworkers to review Election Day concerns and to solicit with recommendations for future improvements. Issue a public report on barriers identified and action plans to remedy them.

2.8 ADA Compliance Plan

Create an ADA compliance plan for all polling sites, with input from the disability community, that is public and prominently displayed on the County Board website and reviewed annually. Distribute the plan to all polling site supervisors and deputies. Monitor compliance with the ADA plan and report publicly all poll sites and procedures that do not meet the plan's standards after each election. The ADA compliance plan should include notifying the public on how to request and receive voter materials in alternative formats such as large print, audio, and Braille.

3. Five Considerations for Accommodating Voters with Limited-English Proficiency

The Voting Rights Act, passed in 1975, requires that language assistance must be provided to voters who indicate a need for assistance in a targeted language or who reside in an area with a high concentration of multilingual citizens. The Act has the

objective of enabling members of applicable language minority groups to participate effectively in the electoral process. The language minority provisions are contained in Sections 203 and 4(f)(4) of the Voting Rights Act. Section 203 is codified at [42 U.S.C. 1973aa-1a](#); Section 4(f)(4) is codified at [42 U.S.C. 1973b\(f\)\(4\)](#).

Where you are required by law to provide written and oral assistance to limited-English proficiency voters in your community, it is a good idea to work with community advocates to target populations and recruit bilingual pollworkers for oral assistance at polling places. If possible, involve sign language experts to develop your voter service and voter outreach programs.

3.1 Bilingual Pollworkers and Interpreters.

Issue identification badges to bilingual pollworkers and interpreters so they can be readily identified by voters. Train bilingual pollworkers and interpreters to assist voters with limited-English proficiency and help them feel more comfortable in a polling place. Demonstrate the voting system and translate election terms such as “affidavit ballot” or “roster”. It is a good idea to translate and post basic signs. As described under section 2.2, provide communication boards in languages other than English.

3.2 Alternative Language Website

Provide translated materials on your website.

3.3 Hire Bilingual Staff for Your Election Operations for Key Election Periods

Recruit temporary and permanent staff by working in partnership with community organizations.

3.4 Pollworker Sensitivity Training

Provide sensitivity training to pollworkers on how to assist voters with limited-English proficiency. Make sure your pollworkers are aware that in many jurisdictions services for voters with limited-English proficiency are required by federal law. Provide pollworkers with simple talking points to explain why it is important to provide these services. (For example, complex ballot propositions and measures are difficult to read in English. Even translating titles of offices will enable voters to cast an informed vote.)

Pollworker training should make clear the importance of assisting these voters throughout the voting process – not just by providing alternative language ballots.

3.5 Outreach to Minority Language Communities

Work with your community organizations and language-specific community media in preparing limited-English voters for the voting experience. The organizations can help develop and proof your absentee voting instructions, polling place voting

instructions, etc. They can help ensure that the translation is accurate and sensitive to local usage.

C. Pollworkers and Polling Places

- Pollworker Recruitment and Retention
- Pollworker Testing and Training
- Five Methods for Directing Voters to the Correct Election district

1. Poll Worker Recruitment and Retention: “Partners in Democracy”

Pollworker recruiting and retention have become increasingly challenging. The pollworker work force is aging; volunteerism is declining.

Further, with the introduction of new voting systems, some pollworkers may be reluctant to continue to serve because of increasingly complicated procedures. The following examples illustrate some solutions that election officials have devised to overcome these challenges through expanding their bases and retaining the best workers from the pool of veteran volunteer pollworkers.

1.1 College Pollworker Program

Recruit college or university students to serve as pollworkers. It is recommended that students and sponsoring college administrators/professors coordinate with all the professors with whom the student is usually in class on Election Day. Some jurisdictions have established programs where students may receive class credit and the pollworker stipend.

1.2 Student Pollworker Program

Student Pollworker Programs typically encourage 18-year-old high school seniors or college students, who are likely to be tech-savvy, to serve as pollworkers. Students receive class credit or volunteer service hours and, the pollworker stipend. Students are also motivated to serve because the service looks good on college applications.

To ensure that school administrators and parents are aware of the students’ plans and where-abouts, those with experience implementing the program have found that the nominating form should include parental/custodial permission.

Examples and Samples from Colorado schools can be found at:

<http://www.elections.colorado.gov/DDefault.aspx?tid=568>

Examples of College poll worker recruitment programs can be found at:

http://www.eac.gov/coll_poll.asp

1.3 County/City Pollworker Program

Work with local officials to arrange for county or city employees to work at the polls. Local government employees may be given an “alternate work assignment” at the County Board of Elections on Election Day. County/City pollworker applications should include approval by their immediate supervisor. The advantage of such programs is that municipal employees are community-service oriented, often tech-savvy and may be bilingual.

1.4 Corporate Pollworker Program

Program goals include increasing the number of election workers available to election authorities, expanding public knowledge of the voting process and creating opportunities for individuals to commit to serving as an election worker. Approach corporate leaders to encourage staff to serve as pollworkers as a commitment to community service.

Sample Program: Johnson County, Kansas, has a well-developed corporate pollworker program, called *Making Voting Popular Program* to promote civic pride by loaning employees to work in the elections. More information can be found at: <http://www.jocoelection.org/workers/MVP-Program.htm>

1.5 Bilingual Pollworker Program

Bilingual pollworkers can play a critical role in assisting voters with limited-English proficiency to understand how to navigate the process of voting. (See “Top 5 Considerations Regarding Access for Voters with Limited-English Proficiency”) Bilingual pollworkers can be recruited through community organizations, by placing news stories and ads in community newspapers and by dispatching recruiters to community events. Supplemental training classes can be offered to assist bilingual pollworkers in fully understanding voting procedures and terminology.

1.6 Interpreter Program

Some jurisdictions that are required to recruit bilingual pollworkers have resorted to hiring bilingual interpreters. Interpreters can play a critical role in assisting limited-English proficiency voters.

1.7 Adopt-a-Poll

Some jurisdictions have successfully encouraged community organizations to “adopt a poll” as a fundraiser. Adopting a poll may encompass the organization’s recruiting members to serve as pollworkers and possibly providing a polling place such as a church or club headquarters.

Example

Ventura County, CA, pioneered an Adopt-a-Poll Program in 1996 with 23 organizations participating. To date, 44 organizations are participating to show their

civic pride and support democracy. Visit Ventura’s website for more information at: <http://recorder.countyofventura.org/apoll.htm>

1.8 Incentive Programs

Ideas that focus on recognizing pollworker service include: election-specific lapel pins, pollworker newsletters, legislative proclamations for Inspector Service Day, and other similar community recognition events or activities.

1.9 Creative Ideas for Pollworker Retention

Pollworker retention is also a challenge for election officials. To the extent that you can retain pollworkers by easing the labor involved and by creating incentives for them to continue serving, you reduce your recruitment needs. The EAC has published.

Example

Los Angeles County, California, communicates with its 22,000 pollworkers via a pollworker newsletter, “The Poll Cat.”

This newsletter serves at least 3 purposes:

- educates pollworkers on the county’s strategic initiatives such as new voting systems, Neighborhood Voting Centers and the Inspector Supply Pick Up Program,
- briefs pollworkers on key procedures for that particular election such as changes in the roster of voters,
- highlights interesting pollworkers such as long-time pollworkers, pollworkers who went above and beyond the call of duty, student pollworkers, etc. and;
- repeatedly seeks input from and gives thanks to the pollworkers.

1.10 Additional Resources for Pollworker Retention

The Election Assistance Commission also developed a *Guidebook on Successful Practices for Poll Worker Recruitment, Training, and Retention*, and the chapter specifically related to pollworker retention is accessible at: <http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/Page/Section%203%20-%20Retention.pdf>

2. Pre-Election Poll Worker Testing and Training

In addition to the challenge of recruiting and retaining a sufficient number of pollworkers, election officials face the difficult task of training an army of pollworkers to conduct the election. This task will be even more challenging in a time when new requirements go into effect for the first time. The following suggestions aim to ensure pollworkers are adequately prepared on Election Day.

2.1 Hands-on training

Give pollworkers an opportunity for extensive hands-on training close to the election. This training can be offered outside the normal curriculum and training schedule in the form of “pollworker clinics.” Observing pollworkers in this context may help you identify who is willing and able to take on more sophisticated assignments.

Make sure every poll worker practices clearing paper jams and marking ballots using the BMD accessories and using privacy sleeves when scanning the ballots so they will be confident assisting a variety of voters with disabilities on the BMD.

2.2 Training Content

The State Board has updated the Poll Worker Training Curriculum for distribution to County Boards in April, 2011. Also, training sessions will be scheduled and conducted throughout 2011 by way of the Election Commissioners Association Regions to instruct and train individuals in the proper surveying of poll sites for accessibility and the training of others to perform these surveys properly.

- Remember: It’s not about **YOU**; it’s about **THEM**. Training presentations need to be developed and conducted from the pollworkers’ perspective. As you develop the program, put yourself in the pollworkers’ position and provide the information and tools they will need to do the best job possible. In addition to the focus on their responsibilities, provide details about meals, pay, responsibilities, how they should communicate with you, and *how much you appreciate them*.
- Include training on Help American Vote Act (HAVA) requirements such as affidavit ballots, assisting voters with the voting process to prevent over-voting, and/or handling new identification requirements for first-time voters who need to present identification before voting on the voting system.
- Include training on polling place accessibility and sensitivity to persons with disabilities. Emphasize to pollworkers the importance of setting up the voting booths in accessible areas of the voting space. (For instance, encourage pollworkers to be careful not to move the voting area from the floor of a high school auditorium up to an inaccessible stage.) Emphasize hands-on knowledge of the BMD. Include training on eliminating commonly found but easy to fix barriers on Election Day, such as inadequate signage and pathway obstructions.

2.3 Training Methods

- Develop training programs based adult learning models which prescribe three repetitions of the content:

- 1) Review all components of the training.
 - 2) Review again and focus on the most important procedures and concepts.
 - 3) Review the most important procedures and concepts again using hands-on practice and feedback sessions.
- Provide training manuals that are user-friendly and contain explanatory graphics.
 - Hands-on training is key to a successful polling place on Election Day. Pollworkers should practice each important component of the election process, especially using the voting equipment.
 - Provide checklists and train pollworkers on how to use them.
 - Provide training videos to vary the format and, ensure consistency in training on key information and practices. Reinforce the videos by providing copies of the videos in the election supplies and/or work with your cable access channels to show the videos.
 - Training the trainer. Consider partnering with or employing local continuing education professionals.
 - Coordinate with a local university in developing your training materials. For example, a local university may be able to work with you to establish a certification program or to develop training videos.
 - Remember the “WHY”: Pollworkers will better retain and properly implement procedures if you help them understand WHY they are being asked to follow the many steps and follow the checklists. In training class, interactively practice filling out all documents that the pollworkers will be required to read, comprehend and complete such as use of the poll book, affidavit ballot envelopes, etc.

2.4 Follow Up

To evaluate your training and make improvements, and also to help retain pollworkers, keep in contact with pollworkers and follow up on problems related to the pollworker program after the elections.

- Pollworker Testing and Certification. Some jurisdictions have teamed with local colleges to train election officials and pollworkers in accreditation programs.
- Evaluate pollworker performance via analysis and tracking of errors to a specific election district. Use the analysis to constantly improve your training approach and materials...and to help select the best pollworker teams.

Example

Solano County, CA, provides bonus incentives for excellent implementation of pollworker procedures. The program pays for itself over time as canvass staffs spend less time researching pollworker errors.

- Provide the name of a reliable, single point of contact for pollworkers at the county board of elections.

Example

Los Angeles County, California, recently began an “Ask Wanda” program. Trainers distributed business cards after training classes for pollworkers to call staff member Wanda with questions. The program has been enormously popular and valuable for identifying and tracking those areas that needed to be strengthened in training.

- Conduct a pollworker debriefing following the election to get the pollworkers’ perspective and evaluate training. Solicit information about accessibility issues that arose and follow up with actions to address them.

3. Five Methods for Directing Voters to the Correct Polling Place

3.1 Polling Place Look Up

Many jurisdictions have added a “polling place look up” function to their websites. Special consideration could be provided to blind voters using this function.

Example

The State Board of Elections offers a polling place look up tool on its website:

<https://voterlookup.elections.state.ny.us/votersearch.aspx>

3.2 Pre-election Notices to the Voters

The Annual Notice to Voters post card advises voters about the name, location and accessibility of their polling place and how to get other information through the County Board of elections web site, etc.

3.3 Employ a Phone Bank and/or Automated Voice System

Employ a phone bank and/or automated voice system to serve those voters who may not have access to the Internet that provides information on polling place location and accessibility. The automated voice system may also direct voters to the website or to other governmental or community entities that can advise voters of their correct polling place.

3.4 Provide Street Finders or Election district Maps to Polling Places

In the polling place, provide street finders or election district maps (showing adjacent election districts or countywide) which helps identify polling places.

Utilize the services of automated systems that can locate correct voter polling places and to provide access to other election day instruction materials.

3.5 Train One of Your Workers to Serve as a “Greeter” at Each Polling Place

Use a polling place coordinator in sites serving more than one election district. Train the coordinator to serve as a “greeter” to ensure voters are directed to the correct polling place. The greeter may be stationed outside the election district to assist voters before they waste time standing in line at the wrong location.

D. Election Operations/Technology and Equipment

- Before the Election: Challenges and Solutions
- Election Day/Election Night: Challenges and Solutions
- Post-Election Period: Challenges and Solutions

1. Before the Election: Challenges and Solutions

1.1 Ensuring System Integrity

In light of increased public and media scrutiny of elections and heightened concerns regarding the security of the election process, consider the following actions to protect the integrity of your voting system. In doing so, County Boards will help make the election go more smoothly and may help gain you public support.

- Obtain documentation from the State Board and your voting system vendor regarding the testing and certification that the system (hardware and software) has been through (for example, state certification requirements) to substantiate that your system as installed has been certified.
- Verify that you are using the correct, certified version of the software.
- Test every piece of voting equipment prior to deployment, using the ballot styles for that election. Accommodate the public and media to view the pre-election test of the system at which you may include other information that they will need to know.

1.2 Ensuring Transparency

To bolster public confidence, take steps to make every component of administering your voting system as transparent as possible.

- Invite the public and media to view all aspects of testing.

1.3 Establish Chains of Custody

A chain of custody allows you to track who has handled the systems -- including paper ballots, optical scanners and DRE's – and who performed what functions. In the event of any malfunction or irregularity, you will be able to trace the problem back to the cause. In addition, a chain of custody will promote stricter accountability on the part of both county board staff and pollworkers.

- Separate staff duties for each test you conduct and require staff signatures to ensure each procedure has been completed and appropriately documented.
- Draft and implement well-organized procedures that identify the chain of custody for every instance when the ballots and/or voting equipment changes hands.

2. Election Day/Election Night: Challenges and Solution

2.1 Ensuring Trouble-free Polling Place Opening and Closing

- Prior to Election Day, double-check that the proper equipment and supplies have been delivered to the correct polling places. Many jurisdictions are using a bar code system to ensure accurate delivery of voting systems, ballots and supplies.
- Be sure to provide the pollworkers extension cords of sufficient length to lay out the polling place properly and adequate table space and chairs for pollworkers and voters, including voters who use wheelchairs, walkers, canes and other mobility equipment. Be sure to tape down any cords and mats to avoid accidents.
- Require each chief polling place official to contact other team members to confirm they will serve on Election Day.
- Provide alternate contact or emergency numbers in case polling place is locked or inaccessible.
- Check that the ballot box is empty.
- After the polls have closed, have pollworkers verify the number of voted ballots, unused ballots, affidavit ballots, emergency ballots, if any, absentee ballots (if the jurisdiction allows voters to drop absentee ballots at the polling place) and spoiled ballots to make sure the number of ballots corresponds with the number of ballots issued by the supervisor of elections. If there is a difference, the pollworkers should report such differences in

writing to the county election officials, with an explanation, if known, so that any discrepancy can be evaluated during the canvass period.

2.2 Troubleshooting Strategies

- Develop a Troubleshooter Program.

Example

The Monroe County, [Election Inspector Coordinator Handbook](http://www.monroecounty.gov/p/boe-05CoordinatorHandbook.pdf) is located at: <http://www.monroecounty.gov/p/boe-05CoordinatorHandbook.pdf>

- Provide fully documented procedures for dealing with Election Day problems, such as equipment failures, supply delivery snafus and voter complaints. These procedures should be covered in troubleshooter pollworker training and be available in writing at the polling place. Have pollworkers keep a log documenting problems with equipment.
- Enlist support from community partners to assist in reviewing polling place operations.

Example

Montgomery County, Maryland, has instituted a “Polling Place Support Program” in partnership with the local League of Women Voters. LWV members are provided a stipend for intensive training and Election Day duties.

The League surveys five to seven polling places for a minimum of 30 minutes each, to observe and fill out a checklist. Results are shared with the chief pollworker. A post-election debriefing helps the election office to develop its training methods and provides feedback on pollworker performance.

- Develop an effective communication plan to handle calls from voters, pollworkers and stakeholders on Election Day.
- Require staff and pollworkers to keep an Election Day “problem log” for all problems that are reported and how they were handled.
- To help provide privacy to the voter and maintain order in the polling site, instruct pollworkers not to allow a voter to sign the roster/register until a voting booth is available.

While experts may disagree over technological security, election officials can take some effective steps to protect the integrity of the election process by ensuring the physical security of voting systems and election materials.

- If you must deliver election equipment or supplies to the polling place prior to Election Day, seal equipment, supply boxes, and each sensitive item in the equipments container so you will know if tampering has occurred.
- Restrict access to your County Board office both before and after election. At the polling place, provide badges to pollworkers, poll clerks, coordinators, machine inspectors and custodians. Require staff and visitors to sign-in, sign-out and wear badges. Consider placing a video camera in the ballot room or other sensitive areas at your Board of Elections office.

Example

Some jurisdictions use “swipe cards,” which are coded to log who entered and exited the election office.

- Provide well-marked supplies with thorough instructions and a check-off sheet.
- Establish a chain of custody to protect all ballots in the polling place (including affidavit ballots, emergency ballots and absentee ballots dropped off at polls).
- Provide well-marked containers for issuance and return of ballots.
- Create reconciliation checklists to account for all ballots.
- Include chain of custody instructions in pollworker training.

Example

San Bernardino, California, uses large, zip-lock baggies with pre- and post-processing checklists affixed to side of bag.

3. Protecting Voter Privacy/Voting Accessibility

- Instruct pollworkers on how to configure polling place to maximize voter privacy.
- Instruct pollworkers on how to configure polling place to ensure routes to voting units are safe and accessible. Use the Poll Worker Election Day Checklist to ensure accessibility throughout the day.

4. Preventing Problems at Polling Places that Contain More Than One Election District (“Multiples”)

Some jurisdictions are required to house several election districts in one polling place. Such multiple-election district polling places present a special set of

requirements for election officials, including directing voters to the correct line and ensuring voters either receive the proper ballot, or vote on the proper machine.

- Provide pollworker instructions that include information on model polling place configuration to avoid voter confusion.
- Provide color-coded supplies and well-marked voter rosters/registers.
- Provide election district maps, if possible.
- Recruit a polling place coordinator.

5. Election Night

- Test the equipment and services prior to Election Day to ensure that it is correctly operating for Election Night.
- Educate media and candidates regarding the difference between unofficial Election Night results and official results at the legal deadline. Explain that additional ballots are likely to be included in the official certified results such as absentee and affidavit ballots, which can impact the results of close elections.
- Reconcile that the number of votes cast matches the number of voters who signed each election district's roster.
- Check the voting system's public counter to verify that the number of voters who signed in matches the number of the public counter. Account for any discrepancies.
- Use "Ballot Reconciliation Statements" or "Ballot Supply Record" as an audit to reconcile various types of ballots issued/ballots returned and votes cast as well as keys issued and check-in of critical supplies.
- Develop administrative procedures (or implement those procedures developed by state officials) to audit the accuracy of your election results.
- Designate a particular space for pollwatchers where they can see, hear and observe the process but not disrupt the flow of voters or the work of election inspectors.

E. Post-Election: Challenges and Solutions

1. Post-Election Audits

- Conduct the New York State Election Law § 9-211 Audit. Additional instruction material will be provided to you by the State Board.

ⁱ These guidelines include sections from the Election Assistance Commission’s “Best Practices Tool Kit”. The link for the EAC Tool Kit is: <http://www.eac.gov/bp>

GUIDE TO FEDERAL AND STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR POLL SITE ACCESSIBILITY

I. Introduction

This document provides guidance on the federal and state requirements for physically accessible polling sites. It is intended to be a road map for election officials as they ensure accessibility for voters with disabilities.

Polling places designated by New York county boards of elections must meet the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The DOJ's ADA Check List for Polling Places is provided in the Appendix for your use as you determine if polling places meet minimum accessibility standards of New York State Election Law, Chapter 505 and other relevant laws and regulations.*

Minimum standards for accessible polling places include requirements for:

- Parking Areas
- Paths of Travel to the Polling Place
- Doorways, Hallways and Entrances
- Voting Areas
- Signage
- Ramps, Curb-Ramps and Slopes
- Elevators and Lifts

This guide will not only help you determine whether a polling place has the accessible features needed by most voters with disabilities, but also whether temporary or permanent modifications can be made to create an accessible polling site. You will find information about possible modifications that can be used to meet accessibility standards throughout this guide. If modifications are made, county elections officials may consider having modification equipment evaluated by the PAVA Agencies** prior to primary or election day to determine whether it is appropriate for its intended purpose.

Records of each polling place's on-site inspection must be kept on file and available for public inspection.

*Illustrations appearing in this guide are taken from the February 2004 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Checklist for Polling Places, prepared by the United States Department of Justice. Additional sources for materials and photos are the Catskill Center for Independence, the Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY, the California Secretary of State and the Maine Secretary of State.

** Protection and Advocacy for Voter Access (PAVA) is a voting-related program established within the New York State Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities that seeks to ensure the full participation of individuals with disabilities in the electoral process and is funded under the federal Help America Vote Act. The Catskill Center for Independence (CCFI) in Oneonta, NY and the Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY (CIDNY) in Manhattan are the PAVA contract agencies for New York State. Both organizations have expertise in the Americans with Disabilities Act, voter rights and education, polling site access, training for polling workers and polling site surveyors, and voting technology. Both organizations are available to county boards of elections for technical assistance.

Nothing in these guidelines prevent county election officials from enacting additional programs, procedures, or features to promote greater accessibility than the minimum standards provided in the guidelines.

II. Taking Measurements

This section is designed to help surveyors become familiar with what to measure and how to take measurements. Although one person can complete a survey, it is often quicker and easier if two people work together. With a team of two, one person can take the measurements and the other can record the information on the DOJ's ADA Checklist for Polling Places, see Appendix.

Tools

- A rigid metal tape measure at least 20-feet long
- A digital or bubble level at least twenty-four inches long
- A clipboard or a hard surface for writing
- A copy of the PPAC (one copy per polling place)
- Pens or pencils
- Digital camera with which to document areas that may need to be reviewed later
- A standard push/pull force gauge to measure the force required to open a door
- Distance measure (for measuring long distances)

Sloped Surfaces

Ramps: The maximum slope allowed for any ramp that provides access for elderly voters and voters with disabilities is 8.33 percent. The percent of slope is determined by dividing the number of inches of vertical rise (height) for each 12 inches of horizontal run (length). For example, a slope with 1 inch of vertical rise for every 12 inches of horizontal run is the maximum slope of 8.33 percent ($1/12 = 8.33$ percent).

Cross Slopes: A cross-slope is the incline from side to side across the path of travel. The maximum cross-slope allowable is 2 percent. Cross slopes can cause considerable difficulty in propelling a wheelchair in a straight line. Severe cross slopes make it difficult for wheelchair users and other pedestrians to maintain their balance because they must work against the force of gravity. People using crutches or canes may be forced to turn sideways in order to keep their base of support. Cross slopes can also cause wheelchairs to veer to the side, which increases their risk of rolling into the street. The impacts of cross slopes are compounded when combined with steep grades and uneven surfaces. For more information, go to <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalk2/sidewalks214.htm>.

Taking Measurements of Sloped Surfaces with a bubble level

One way to measure slope is to use a 24-inch level with leveling bubble and a tape measure.



Figure 1

- Rest one end of the level at the highest point of the sloped surface and lift the lower end (as shown in the Figure 1) until the bubble is in the middle of the tube. This is the “level” position.
- While the level is in this position, measure the distance between the bottom edge of the level and the sloped surface below.
- If the distance is 2 inches or less, then the slope is 1:12 or less. When the distance is greater than 2 inches, record the distance on the checklist so the exact slope can be calculated later.
- For cross-slopes, if the distance is $\frac{1}{2}$ ” or less, then the slope is 2 percent or less, which is the maximum slope allowed.

Taking Measurements of Sloped Surfaces with a digital level

- A digital display replaces the bubble in a standard level and gives a reading shown as a digital bubble, in degrees, or as a percent.
- If the digital display can be set to percent or degrees, set it for the maximum slope allowed: 8.33% or 4.76 degrees for a 1:12 slope. Always keep a record of the measurements.
- When measuring cross-slopes, the maximum cross-slope allowed is 2% or 1.1458 degrees for a 1:50 slope.
- It is recommended that digital levels be calibrated each time they are used. Before using a digital level, make sure to read the directions.

Level Changes

A stable, regular surface is necessary for people who have difficulty walking, restricted gaits, balance difficulty or those who use wheelchairs, crutches, canes, or walkers. Surface changes such as cracks or bumps in concrete or asphalt or other surface disruptions can create slipping and tripping hazards. Irregular surfaces such as cobblestones can significantly impede those with vision, walking or balance difficulties and those who use wheelchairs.

- Walkways must be free of abrupt level changes that are over $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
- Level changes between $\frac{1}{4}$ " and $\frac{1}{2}$ " must be beveled (see Figure 3).
- Any level changes greater than $\frac{1}{2}$ " must be ramped.

Door Thresholds

Thresholds and surface height changes in doorways are difficult for people who use wheelchairs or walkers because complex maneuvering is required to get over the level change while operating the door. The change in level from the ground or floor to the threshold at any accessible door must be less than $\frac{1}{2}$ ". A level change can be up to $\frac{3}{4}$ " if it is beveled on both sides.



Figure 2
This is a photo of an inaccessible doorway because the threshold is higher than $\frac{1}{2}$ " and is not beveled.

Beveled Threshold: Figure 3 is a beveled threshold. It fits over a doorway threshold and creates an accessible slope. The sloped sides make the doorway accessible for someone using a wheelchair.

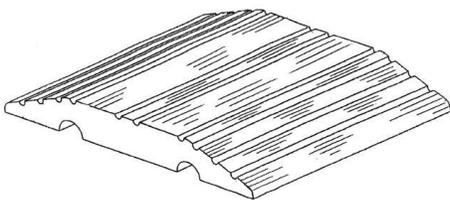


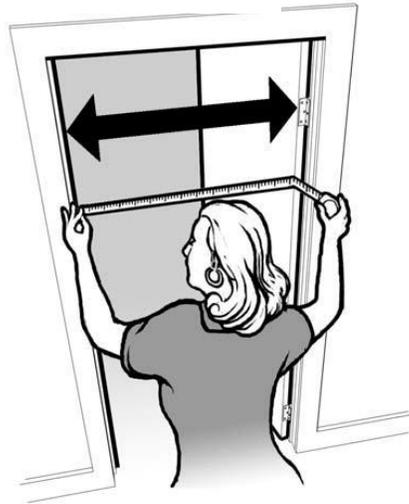
Figure 3

Door Openings

Any door opening must be 32 inches or wider at its narrowest point. Take door measurements of the clear open width of the door, not from doorframe to doorframe. To measure the clear opening of an accessible door:

- Open the door to 90 degrees.
- Place the end of the tape measure on the side of the door frame next to the clear (unhinged) opening (as shown on the women’s left hand in the drawing).
- Measure the door opening from the inside face of the door at the hinged side to the inside of the doorframe on the opposite side. This measurement is the clear open width of the door (typically less than the width measured from doorframe to doorframe).

Figure 4



Parking Spaces

When measuring the width of a parking space, measure from the center of the painted line to the center of the painted line on the opposite side of the space. For example, if the painted line is two inches wide, measure one inch from the side to the center-line of the opposite painted line.

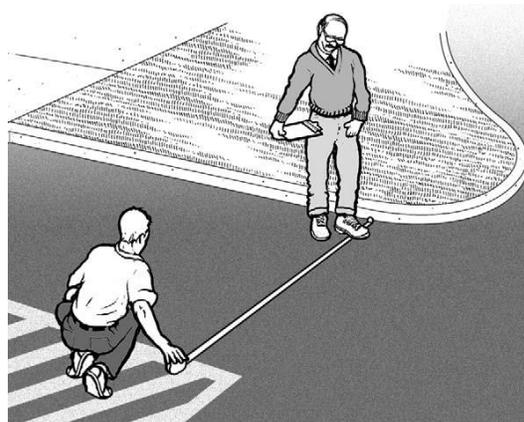


Figure 5

Cane Detectable Objects

Objects along the walkway, like drinking fountains, fire extinguishers, etc., that protrude too far from the side or hang too low from above the path of travel may be a hazard for people who are blind or have impaired vision. These are the types of things that cannot be detected by the sweep of a cane.



Figure 6

Objects that are lower than 27 inches above the floor are cane detectable. Objects, such as a wall mounted display case, are hazards when they are located more than 27 inches off the ground and protrude from the side more than 4 inches into the path of travel.



Figure 7

Placing a cane detectable object or barrier (such as a traffic cone) on the floor directly below the protruding or low hanging object (see Figure 8) should allow people who are blind and use canes to avoid a hazard.



Figure 8

Check low-hanging tree branches to ensure they are at least 80” above the ground and prune when necessary. Objects that hang over a walkway must be higher than 80” at their bottom edges.

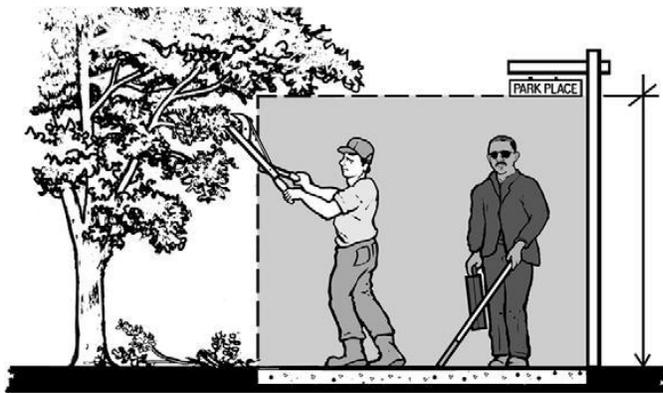


Figure 9

The undersides of exterior stairs must be enclosed or protected with a cane detectable barrier, like traffic cones or railings (see Figure 10).



Figure 10

III. The Parking Area

If there is a parking lot at the polling place, accessible parking must be provided. The number of accessible spaces depends on the total number of spaces in the lot. Please refer to Table 1 for the number of accessible spaces required.

TABLE 1 -The required number of accessible parking spaces

Total Spaces in Parking Lot	Required Minimum Number of Accessible Spaces
1-25	1
26-50	2
51-75	3
76-100	4
101-150	5
151-200	6
201-300	7
301-400	8
401-500	9
501-1,000	2% of total
1,001 AND OVER	20 plus 1 for each 100 spaces over 1000

The distance from the designated accessible parking area to the voting area must be on the shortest accessible route possible to the accessible voting area entrance. The shorter the distance, the easier it is for voters with heart and lung conditions or mobility disabilities to vote on Election Day.



Figure 11

Requirements at a Glance: Parking Spaces

- Each accessible parking space and access aisle must be 8' or 96" wide

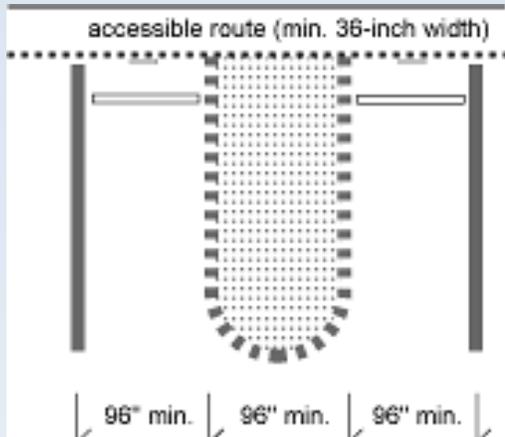


Figure 12

- Two accessible parking spaces may share one access aisle

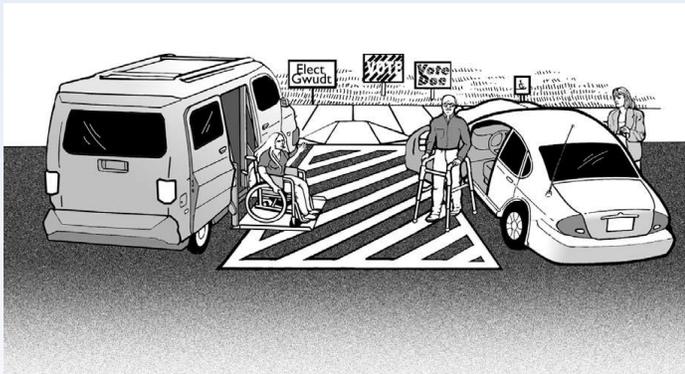


Figure 13

- Surface of parking area shall be stable, firm, slip resistant, and free from abrupt level changes over $\frac{1}{2}$ " (level changes between $\frac{1}{4}$ " and $\frac{1}{2}$ " should be beveled). People who have difficulty walking or maintaining balance or who use crutches, canes, or walkers, and those with restricted gaits are sensitive to slipping and tripping hazards. A stable and regular surface is necessary for safe walking. People using wheelchairs can navigate most easily on hard surfaces that are stable and regular. Soft loose surfaces such as loose sand or gravel, or wet clay, and irregular surfaces such as grass or cobblestones can be a significant barrier for a wheelchair user. To eliminate these hazards, provide an asphalt or concrete parking area, access aisle, and walkway to the building.
- Parking area must be level (not exceeding 1:50 or 2% maximum slope in any direction). A sloped surface on an access aisle may cause a wheelchair to roll away from a car or van. A transfer from vehicle to wheelchair on this kind of slope would not be safe for the wheelchair user and also prevents a van-mounted wheelchair lift from being fully lowered to the access aisle surface.
- To provide an accessible path of travel that is also a safe path of travel, the accessible parking spaces must be arranged so a voter using an accessible space is not required to enter the vehicular path of travel.

Requirements at a Glance: Parking Signage

- Signage is required for each accessible parking space AND each access aisle
- Signage must be permanently mounted 5' to 7' above grade
- Parking space and/or parking space sign MUST display the International Symbol of Accessibility (ISA).



Figure 14

- Access aisle sign MUST read “No Parking Any Time” and must not obstruct accessible route from the access aisle

Temporary Parking Created on Election Day

When temporary parking is created, whether in a parking lot or on-street, it must comply with all accessible parking requirements.

Parking lot

If no accessible parking is designated in the parking area, temporary accessible spaces and access aisles can be created with temporary equipment, such as traffic cones and portable curb ramps.

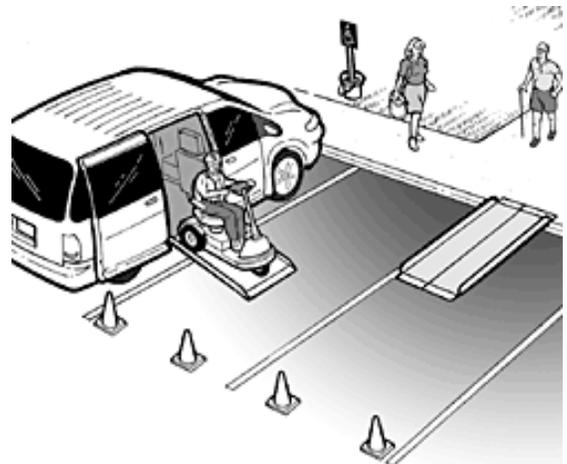


Figure 15

On-street parking

If no parking exists for a building housing a polling place, temporary accessible parking can be created on the street for primary and election day. Choose a curbside space that is level and free of crumbling pavement, which is closest to a curb cut and the accessible route to the accessible entrance. Provide temporary signage (between 5' and 7') denoting accessible parking and place cones on sidewalk at front end and back end of parking space.

Tips and Solutions for Parking Areas

1. ***Parking is available, but no accessible parking is provided or there are not enough accessible parking spaces.***

Suggestion: Find a relatively level parking area nearest to the accessible entrance and then designate the area for accessible parking spaces and adjacent access aisles. Use three parking spaces to make two accessible parking spaces with an access aisle. Traffic cones or other temporary elements may be used to mark the spaces and access aisles (see picture above). Provide a sign designating each accessible parking space(s) and access aisle and make sure the access aisle of each space is connected to the accessible route leading to the accessible entrance.

2. ***Accessible parking is provided, but it does not have a marked access aisle next to each accessible space.***

Suggestion: Restripe the accessible parking spaces to provide an access aisle. As a temporary solution for Election Day, use traffic cones to mark off the access aisle and curb ramp area. Be sure each space or access aisle created is 96 inches wide.

3. ***Accessible parking spaces or access aisles are on a sloped surface.***

Suggestion: Find a parking area that is closest to the accessible entrance and more level. Provide accessible parking spaces and access aisles in that area. Make sure the accessible parking spaces connect to an accessible route leading to the accessible entrance. Provide a sign designating each accessible parking space and access aisle.

4. ***Accessible parking spaces or access aisles are irregular, unstable or have cracks in the asphalt.***

Suggestion: Filler can be purchased to repair damaged areas where surfaces are not stable and create abrupt level changes (e.g., cracks in asphalt) that can be hazardous. You may also purchase surface-smoothing mats which can be placed on grass or gravel to allow easy passage for wheelchairs.

5. ***There is no curb ramp between the vehicle area and the sidewalk leading to the accessible polling place entrance.***

Suggestion: Provide a portable curb ramp with edge protection in an area where the vehicle area and the sidewalk are level. The curb ramp must connect to an accessible route leading to the accessible polling place entrance.

6. ***No sign with the international symbol of accessibility is installed at each accessible parking space.***

Suggestion: Provide a temporary sign in front of each accessible parking space making sure it meets the height requirement for parking signage between 5' and 7' (Figure 16).



Figure 16

IV. Path of Travel to the Polling Place

Many people with mobility impairments can move only at very slow speeds, even on level ground. On pathways over 100 feet, people with disabilities are apt to rest frequently, which substantially increases their trip times. In inclement weather, slow progress and resting can greatly increase a disabled person's exposure to the elements.

The accessible route is essential for people who have difficulty walking or who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids to get to the accessible entrance of the polling place. The accessible route should, to the fullest extent possible, coincide with the route for the general public.

If the direct route is not accessible, check to see if there is another less direct route that can serve as the accessible route. Routes that are indirect but level or those with running slopes less than 1:20 (1-inch of vertical rise for every 20 inches of horizontal run) can sometimes provide more ease than direct routes with maximum allowable slopes.

Where an accessible route is different from the route used by most voters, signs will be needed at key decision points to direct voters with disabilities to the accessible building entrance. (Figure 17)



Figure 17

Filler can be purchased to repair damaged areas where surfaces are not stable and/or create abrupt level changes (e.g., cracks in asphalt) that can be hazardous.

Objects along the walkway that protrude too far from the side or hang too low from above the path of travel may be a hazard for people who are blind or have impaired vision when they cannot detect an object by using the sweep of their cane. Placing a cane detectable object or barrier below the protruding or low hanging object (see Figures 8 & 9) should allow identification of these hazards. Check low-hanging tree branches to ensure they are at least 80” above the ground and prune when necessary.



Figure 8

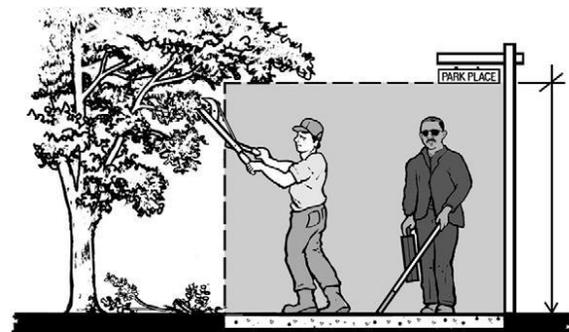


Figure 9

If any areas along the accessible pathway are used to store garbage, furniture or other material, or used as work spaces by janitorial services, make sure the site is notified that these areas must stay clear of any items throughout election day. If an accessible pathway is through a school yard or parking lot, make sure that there are no barriers such as locked gates or doors during polling hours.

Requirements at a Glance: Path of Travel

- If parking is provided for voters, an accessible route from the parking area to the building entrance must be provided.
- An accessible route must be provided from public sidewalks and public transportation stops (where public sidewalks and transit stops are evident) to the accessible entrance of the polling place.
- Post signage to indicate the accessible route to the building entrance.
- The minimum width for an accessible route is 36". It may narrow to 32 inches wide for a distance of 2' or less where utility poles, post-mounted signs, furniture, and doorways are located along an accessible route.
- Walkways must be free of abrupt level changes over 1/2" (level changes between 1/4" and 1/2" should be beveled).
- If the route to the accessible entrance crosses a curb or stairs, a portable ramp with a slope no steeper than 1:12 (that is, one inch of vertical rise for every 12 inches of ramp length) and edge protections should be used.
- Any portion of a walkway with a slope greater than 1:20 is considered a ramp and must adhere to ADAAG requirements for ramps (<http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/ada-standards-doj.cfm#a405>).
- Objects located along a walkway must be cane detectable (with a bottom edge no higher than 27" and not protruding from wall more than 4").
- Objects that hang over a walkway must be placed with their bottom edges higher than 80".
- The undersides of exterior stairs must be enclosed or protected with a cane detectable barrier (see Figure 10).



Figure 10

Tips and Solutions for Path of Travel to the Polling Place

1. ***The sidewalk connecting parking to the polling place entrance is too steep to be accessible.***

Suggestion: Check to see if there is another sidewalk that provides an accessible route to the accessible entrance. Sometimes there is a less direct route that can serve as the accessible route.

2. ***The accessible route crosses a curb and no curb ramp is provided.***
Suggestion: Install a portable ramp with edge protection.
3. ***One or two steps are part of the walkway leading to the accessible entrance.***
Suggestion: Install a portable ramp no steeper than 1:12 slope with edge protection and handrails.
4. ***Branches or other objects over a walkway or pedestrian route are lower than 80 inches above the route.***
Suggestion: Prune the branches or remove the items that are hanging below 80 inches. Another approach is to install a detectable barrier (such as a traffic cone) under the item that is too low. The detectable barrier or object must be within the detectable range of 27 inches or less above the ground.
5. ***One or more objects protrude too far from the side into the path of travel causing a hazard for people who are blind or who have low vision.***
Suggestion: To make a protruding object detectable: 1) Place an object or a barrier (such as a traffic cone) below the protruding object in the cane-detectable area not more than 27 inches above the floor. 2) If the protruding object can be moved, lower the object so its bottom is within the cane detectable area (not more than 27 inches above the floor). 3) Prune or alter tree branches or shrubs object so they do not protrude over the path.

V. Doorways, Hallways and Entrances

All polling places must have at least one accessible entrance. If the accessible entrance is not the main entrance to the polling place, then signs must be located at inaccessible entrances to direct voters to the accessible entrance.



Figure 17

The accessible entrance must remain open when the polling place is open. The accessible door must provide maneuvering space, accessible door hardware, and enough clear width to allow people who use crutches, a cane, walker, scooter or wheelchair to use it. In addition, a stable, firm surface is necessary for safe walking.

If accessible entrances are normally locked during the day (this is often true at schools), make sure that the need for a door monitor is noted or that the site agrees to keep the door open during polling hours.

Requirements at a Glance: Doorways, Hallways and Entrances

- Post signs to indicate the accessible entrance using the International Symbol of Accessibility (ISA).
- All doors, including interior doors, along the accessible route must provide at least 32” clear passage width when the door is open at 90 degrees.
- Door handles on any accessible doors must have a shape that can be operated with a closed fist and does not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist to operate.

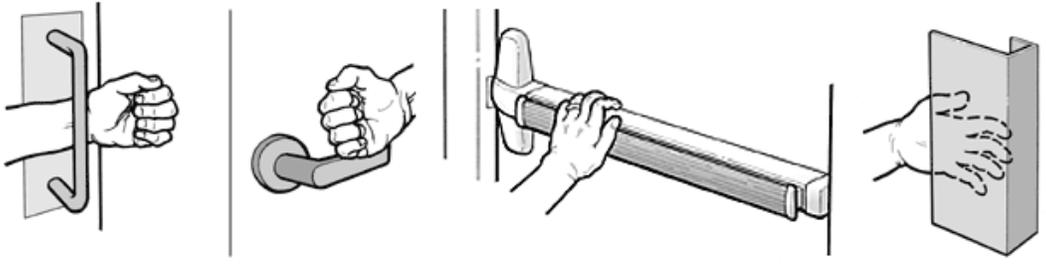


Figure 18

- Door handles must be mounted no higher than 48” above the floor.
- The allowable door opening force for an interior door is 5 pounds of pressure. An exterior door pull force should be between 5 and 10 lbs. of pressure. If you don’t have a door pressure gauge, if you can open a door with your pinky, then it is within range.
- If the door is not automatic or power-operated, there must be at least 18” clearance provided on the pull side of the door for wheelchair users to be able to reach the door handle.

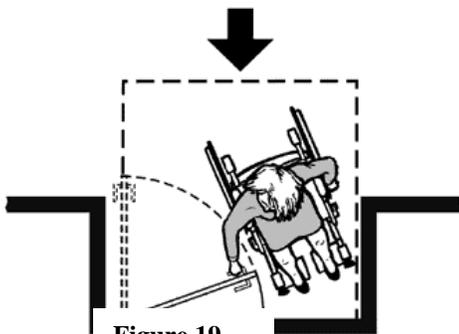


Figure 19

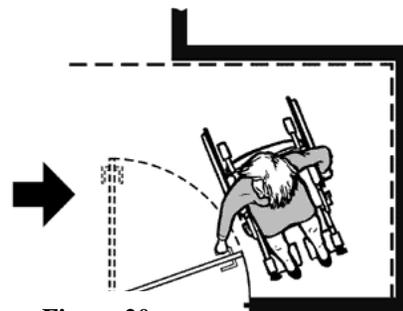


Figure 20

- The change in level from the ground or floor to the threshold at any accessible door must be less than ½", or may be up to ¾" if beveled on both sides.
- If the entryway at the accessible entrance includes a vestibule (area between 2 doors), then the clear floor space must be at least 30" x 48" beyond the swing of both doors. (Figure 21)

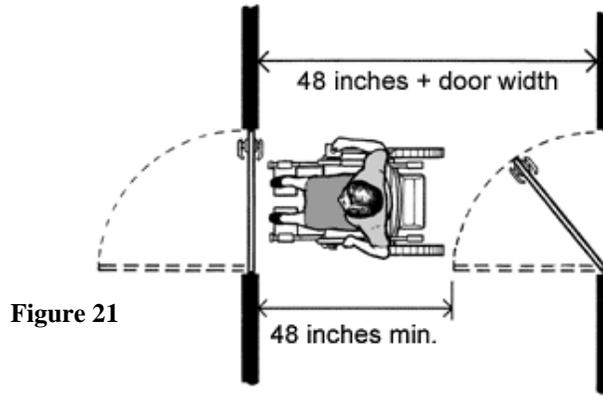


Figure 21

- Minimum width for an accessible route is 36".
- The accessible route must be free of abrupt level changes over ½"; changes in level between ¼" and ½" must be beveled.
- If an accessible route has changes in level greater than ½", or if the voting area is located on a different floor than the accessible building entrance, then a ramp, elevator, or lift must be provided.
- Objects located along hallways/corridors must be cane detectable (bottom edge may not be between 27" and 80" from the floor and protrude from the wall more than 4"). Objects that hang over a walkway must be placed with their bottom edges higher than 80".



Figure 22: (1) & (2) If higher than 27", may not protrude more than 4"; (3) Bottom edge must be higher than 80"

- The undersides of interior stairs must be enclosed or protected with a cane detectable barrier (see Figure 10).

Tips and Solutions for Doorways and Interior Path of Travel

Thresholds and surface height changes in doorways are particularly inconvenient for wheelchair users because complex maneuvering is required to get over the level change while operating the door. Threshold ramps, a helpful and affordable solution for removing threshold barriers, are designed to assist wheelchair or scooter users over small thresholds, such as those found in doorways. They can be purchased in various lengths and widths to fit your needs. There is a large selection of pre-built ramps available to fit almost any situation.

If an exterior door exceeds the allowable door opening force, a temporary door bell can be placed outside or a poll worker can be posted at the door.

Cones can be placed under potentially hazardous objects that are not cane detectable, such as wall-mounted display cases and fire extinguishers. This will alert a person to go around the hazardous object.

Swing-away hinges to modify doorways that are not wide enough

Replacing regular door hinges with swing-away hinges can provide an extra 1½” to 2” of clear passage width.



Figure 23

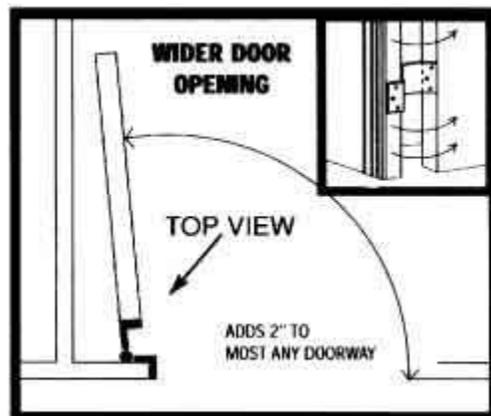


Figure 24

Door knob retro-fit levers to modify inaccessible door knobs

Retro-fit levers snap over a regular door knob making it easier to operate with a closed fist.



Figure 25

Velcro or double sided tape to secure mats or rugs

Use Velcro (Figures 26a &b) or double sided tape (Figures 27a &b) to securely attach weather mats or other small rugs at entry way or along the path of travel. Doing so will greatly decrease the potential tripping hazard unsecured mats or rugs present.



Figure 26a



Figure 26b



Figure 27a



Figure 27b

Tips and Solutions for Polling Place Entry

1. ***One or two steps at the entrance prevent access.***
Suggestion: If another entrance is accessible and on an accessible route, designate it as the accessible entrance and install a sign at the main entrance directing voters to the accessible entrance. Keep the accessible entrance unlocked during voting hours. If another accessible entrance is not available, install a temporary ramp with edge protection and handrails.
2. ***There is a small step at the entrance.***
Suggestion: Install a temporary ramp to provide a smooth transition.
3. ***Entrance door threshold has an abrupt change in level of more than 1/4 inch and no beveled sides.***
Suggestion: If the threshold is not more than 3/4 inch high, add beveled surfaces to both

sides of the threshold or replace with a new threshold that is no more than 1/2 inch high and has beveled sides.

4. ***Entrance door to the building is heavy and difficult to open.***

Suggestion: Keep the door propped open with a wedge or small object that does not create tripping hazards, install a latch mechanism to keep door open, station volunteers near the door to open it for voters or set up a wireless door bell system.

5. ***The door handle and/or latch at the entry door is not accessible.***

Suggestion: Add an accessible pull or handle to the outside of the door and leave the door unlatched, or install an accessible door handle and hardware. As an alternative, prop the door open with a wedge or small object that does not create tripping hazards, install a latch mechanism to keep door open, station volunteers near the door to open it for voters or set up a wireless door bell system.

Tips and Solutions for Hallways and Corridors

1. ***One or more steps in the hallway block access.***

Suggestion: Install a portable ramp with edge protection and handrails or relocate the voting area to an area that is on an accessible route.

2. ***The voting area is not on an accessible route and cannot be made accessible.***

Suggestion: Look for another area where accessible voting may be provided. For example, if a polling place in a private home has stairs, perhaps the garage may be accessible when entered from the driveway. If a church's basement is used as a polling place and it is not accessible, perhaps one of the ground floor rooms could be used as the accessible voting area.

3. ***A wall-mounted display case is a hazard because it projects more than 4 inches from the wall and the bottom of the case is more than 27 inches above the floor.***

Suggestion: Place a detectable object, such as a traffic cone on the floor below the case.

4. ***A ceiling- or wall-mounted television monitor has less than 80 inches of clearance between the floor and the bottom of the unit.***

Suggestion: Place a detectable object, such as a traffic cone, on the floor directly below the unit.

5. ***The bottom of a staircase is open, and voters who are blind or have low vision can hit their heads on the underside of the staircase.***

Suggestion: Provide a detectable fence or other object so voters cannot walk under the staircase.

VI. The Voting Area

The interior accessible path must connect the accessible entrance to the voting area. If the accessible path is different than the path generally traveled, then appropriate signage must properly designate the accessible path. Always inquire if there are other activities being held during voting such as luncheons, meetings, bake sales, etc. If so, you must determine if these activities infringe on the accessibility of the site.

Requirements at a Glance: Voting Area

- Any door leading into or out of the voting area shall be accessible as described in the Doorways, Hallways and Entrances Requirements section.
- The voting area should provide adequate space for check in tables, at least one accessible voting booth, and must have an accessible route (36" wide) throughout the voting area.
- Along the general path of traffic throughout the voting area, there should be no undetectable objects protruding into the walkway (more than 4" out from the wall if an object's bottom edge is higher than 27") or hanging too low into the walkway (lower than 80").
- The interior floor surface must be level, free from abrupt level changes over ¼" and must be stable, firm and slip resistant. When possible, ensure exposed floors stay as dry as possible in wet weather.
- If runners and mats are being used in entryways make sure they are secured with double-sided tape
- Keep 5' x 5' clear floor space in front of machines for turning, or provide a T-shape for more constrained spaces. (see Figures 28 & 29)

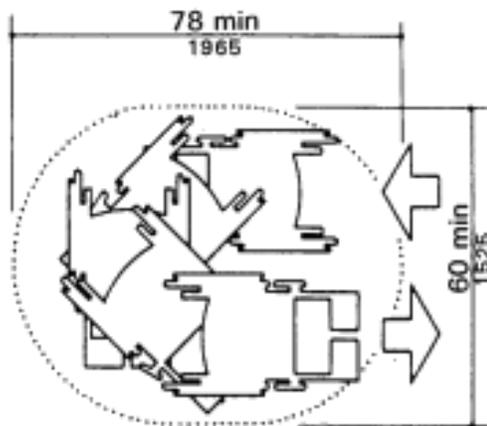


Figure 28

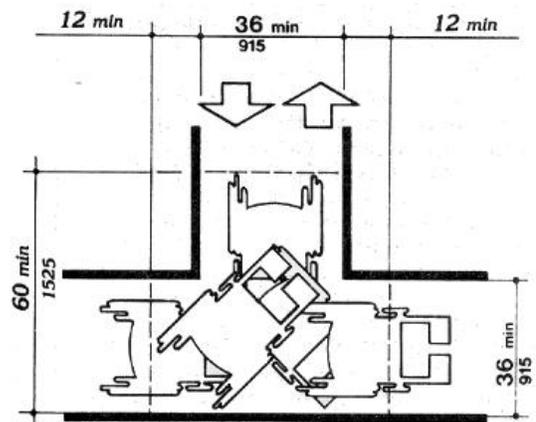


Figure 29

For Check-in Tables and Table Mounted Machines:

- Ensure 30" w x 48" l clear floor space in front of any table (approximate dimensions of a wheelchair)
- Table dimensions of 30" w x 19" d x 27" h are accessible for a wheelchair user. The bottom of the table should be no lower than 27", with a table height range between 28" and 34".
- When choosing a chair for the BMD, a sturdy, backed chair with seat height between 17" and 19" will make it easier to stand up from, especially for those with less flexibility in their hips and knees. Avoid folding chairs and chairs with wheels. Providing solid seating is a courtesy especially for senior voters.
- Ensure that the BMD screen does not face a window or the public area, and if there are no other options, cover the window to reduce glare.

VII. Signage

Signage is used extensively on Election Day to direct voters arriving at the polling place to the voting area. Additional directional signs shall be provided to guide voters toward and through the accessible path of travel to the voting area. The standard symbol used to identify facilities and features that are accessible to elderly voters and persons with disabilities is the International Symbol of Accessibility (ISA).

Accessible signage should have a non-glare finish. For signage that must be laminated to withstand exterior weather conditions, it is recommended that a matte or satin finish laminate be applied to reduce glare.

Requirements at a Glance: Signage

- Accessible signs must also have character and symbol colors that contrast with the background color. (Dark symbols on a light background or light symbols on a dark background.)



Figures 30a & 30b

- Characters must be conventional (not italic, oblique, script, highly decorative, or otherwise unusual) in form and selected from sans serif fonts, if computer-created. Example: Using Word document, choose Calibri font bold at 360 point size. This will provide 3” high letters. As only a few letters will appear on each page, overlapping pages or cutting to size will be necessary. Once a sign template is created, copies can be made and laminated or put into clear plastic sleeves. Signs can be handmade as long as the same guidelines are adhered to.
- All accessible building entrances must be identified with the ISA. Entrances which are not accessible on Election Day must have directional signage that indicates the location of and route to the nearest accessible entrance. Using the ISA, in conjunction with large bold arrows and/or other directional symbols guides voters along the accessible route. Directional signs shall have contrasting colors and non-glare finish.
- Height requirements - Directional signage shall be posted no lower than 40” from floor and no higher than 70” from floor. Size of letters shall be at least 3” high if being viewed from a distance of 20’. Be sure to place signs at intervals of 20’ from the accessible parking all the way to the accessible voting area. See 703.5.5, Visual Character Height, at <http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/ada-standards-doj.cfm#communication>

VII. Ramps, Curbs & Slopes

Any part of an accessible route, either along an outside sidewalk or an interior hallway, with a slope greater than 1:20 must meet the requirements for an access ramp. Level changes up to ¼” along an accessible route are allowable. Level changes between ¼” and ½” must be beveled.

Any level changes greater than ½” must be ramped. Keep in mind that all walkways and ground surfaces along an accessible route must be stable, firm and slip resistant.

A ramp landing that is not level causes individuals using wheelchairs to tip backward or bottom out when the ramp is approached. A cross slope on any walkway or floor surfaces can cause considerable difficulty in propelling a wheelchair in a straight line or cause difficulty for people with gait, balance or other mobility issues, especially on a ramp or otherwise sloped surface. The cross slope of ramp surfaces shall be no greater than 1:50.

There is a large selection of pre-built ramps available to fit almost any situation. Ramps may be used as either permanent or temporary solutions.

Requirements at a Glance: Ramps

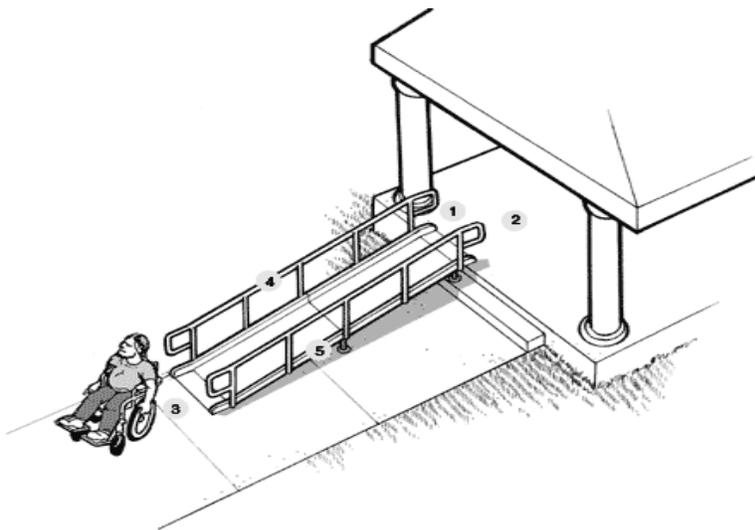


Figure 31

(1) At least 36” between handrails; (2) Top landing part of walk; (3) Bottom landing part of walk; (4) Handrail height 34 to 38 inches; and (5) Edge protection

- An accessible route does not include stairs, steps, or escalators. If an accessible route has changes in level greater than ½”, then a curb ramp, ramp, elevator, or platform lift shall be provided.

- The least possible slope shall be used for any ramp. The maximum slope of a ramp shall be 1:12. A slope of 1:12 is one inch of vertical rise for every 12 inches of ramp length.
- If a ramp run has a rise greater than 6” or is longer than 6 feet, then handrails must be provided on both sides of the ramp.
- The ramp surface must be at least 36” wide.
- The diameter or width of the gripping surfaces of a handrail or grab bar shall be 1¼” to 1½”. Handrails cannot rotate within their fittings.
- The handrails must be mounted between 34 and 38 inches above the ramp surface, be continuous the full length of the ramp and continue at least 12 inches past the end of the ramp surface. The handrail extensions must be rounded or return to the ground, a wall, or post as shown in the image above. By extending the handrail 12 inches past the slope of the ramp, voters with balance difficulties will be on a level surface when they release their grip on the handrail.
- If a ramp is not adjacent to a wall, there must be a wheel guide curb or edge protection at least 2 inches high on both sides of the ramp to prevent wheelchair wheels from rolling off the edge of the ramp. A wheel guide on one side of the ramp is permitted when the other side adjoins a wall or other vertical surface.
- The maximum rise for any ramp section is 30 inches, or 30 feet maximum length.
- Level landings must be provided at the bottom and top of each ramp and at each ramp section of 30 feet.
- The landing must be at least as wide as the ramp run leading to it. The landing length must be a minimum of 60” (clear of any doors or other obstructions).
- If a ramp changes direction at the landing, the minimum landing size is 60” by 60”. Ramps and landings with vertical drop-offs must have edge protection of at least 2” high in the form of curbs, walls, or railings.
- If handrails are mounted adjacent to a wall, the space between the wall and the handrail shall be 1 ½”. People with disabilities often rely upon grab bars and handrails to maintain their balance and prevent serious falls. Many people brace their forearms between supports and walls to give them more leverage and stability in maintaining balance or for lifting. The 1½” clearance provides adequate gripping room while helping to prevent injuries that may result from arms slipping through a larger opening.

IX. Elevators and Lifts

An accessible route does not include stairs, steps, or escalators. If the building entrance and the voting area are located on different floors of the building, then a ramp, elevator, or platform lift must be provided.

If an elevator is the only accessible path of travel to the voting room, it must be accessible. Elevators that are adjacent to the voting area, but are not needed to enter the voting area, do not have to be surveyed.

Requirements at a Glance: Elevators and Lifts

- Both sides of the elevator hoist way entrance must have 2” long, slightly raised letters and Braille character floor designation signs. The characters shall be centered on the hoist way 60” above the floor.
- Call buttons in elevator lobbies and halls must be centered at 42” above the floor. People who are blind or visually impaired are trained to find tactile signs in a consistent location. They cannot find the sign if it is not mounted at the correct height.
- The elevator door must provide at least 36” clear passage.
- The floor area of the elevator must provide enough space for wheelchair users to enter, reach the controls, and exit the car. The minimum depth from the door entrance to the rear of the cab is 54”. The width from side to side is 80” for a center door and 68” for a side door entrance.
- Raised letters and Braille characters must be used to identify each floor button and each control.
- Floor control buttons in the elevator cab should be mounted no higher than 54” for a side reach or 48” for a forward reach.
- The elevator must be equipped with audible tones or bells that announce each floor as it is passed.
- Elevator doors must stay open long enough to enter safely (minimum 5 seconds) and remain open for at least 3 seconds in response to a car call.
- The lift must allow a wheelchair user to enter, operate, and exit without assistance.
- The change in level from the floor to the lift surface must be less than ¼”, or may be up to ½” if beveled.

- The clear floor space of the lift must be at least 30” by 48”.
- The lift controls or operating mechanisms must not be mounted more than 54” above the floor for a side reach or 48” for a forward reach.
- The lift controls or operating mechanisms must be usable with one hand without tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist.

X. Restrooms

The ADA does not require polling sites to have accessible bathrooms. However, selecting polling sites with accessible bathrooms enables people with disabilities to work as poll workers on primary or election day.

Appendix A

Glossary of Terms

A **Access** - a way or means of approach

Access Aisle – An 8 foot wide space adjoining an accessible parking space allowing for safe maneuvering into and out of a vehicle.

Accessibility – building features and informational materials arranged and presented in such a way for people with a range of disabilities to approach, enter, use, or understand

Accessibility Stick – measuring tool containing bubble level and retractable ruler

ADAAG – Americans with Disabilities Accessibility Guidelines, a complete listing of specifications and requirements for accessibility features
<http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm>

B **Barrier** – any obstacle to access that can be removed or overcome with temporary measures

Beveled Threshold - provides a smooth, gradual transition from the ground to a doorway threshold

Braille - a communication method that is widely used by blind people to read and write; the first digital form of writing. Each Braille character, or *cell*, is made up of six dot positions, arranged in a rectangle containing two columns of three dots each.

Bubble Level - an instrument designed to indicate whether a surface horizontal (level) or vertical (plumb).

C **Cane Detectable** –an object is cane detectable if it is within range of a cane sweep: up to 27 inches above the floor. If objects are lower than 80” and protrude more than 4” into the path of travel a cane detectable warning must be provided.

Checklist – refers to list of accessibility features for poll workers to review on Election Day.

Cross slope – slope that appears across the width of a path of travel.

Curb Cut –recessed pavement feature allowing smooth transition from street or parking area to sidewalk or walkway. Curb cuts must meet specific requirements for slope, width and detection by cane.

Curb Ramp – temporary feature placed at the edge of curb allowing access from street or parking area and must meet specific requirements for slope, width and edge protection.

D **Detectable Warning** – an item such as a cone, large planter or chair, placed below and in front of an object protruding more than 4” into the path of travel, but does not reach all the way to the floor, ex.: fire extinguisher, water fountain, wall hung cabinet. The detectable warning alerts people using canes to the objects’ existence.

Digital Level – See Smart Tool

Distance Measure - used for measuring long distances. To use, reset the counter to zero, place the wheel at the point you want to start measuring, and roll in a straight direction to the stopping point, then read the counter.

Door Hardware – refers to door opening features (handles , panic bars) and hinges (regular and swing-away).

Door Pressure Gauge – (DPG) a device to measure the force required to open a door

Door Threshold – the sill of a doorway

E **Edge Protection**- refers to the vertical slat adhered to the side of a ramp enabling detection by cane and preventing feet or wheels from going over the edge of ramp.

Elevator – refers to device enabling vertical mobility between floors of a building. In terms of accessible elevators, freight elevators are generally *not* an acceptable alternative.

Exterior – refers to any features on the outside of a building, i.e., exterior door, exterior path of travel

F **Finish Floor** – refers to the finished surface of a floor, includes any covering such as carpeting or tile

G **Grade** – surface from which height of an object is measured.

H **Handrail** – rail that is designed to be grasped by the hand so as to provide stability or support

Handrail Height - Handrails must be mounted between 34 and 38 inches above the ramp surface to be considered accessible

Height Requirement – a measurement standard for any item or feature placed or mounted in such a way as to make it accessible

I **International Symbol of Accessibility (ISA)** – a simple graphic depicting a figure in a wheelchair, most often shown in high contrast white/ and blue or white and black, used to indicate and accessible feature.

Interior – refers to any feature on the inside of a building, i.e., interior door, interior path of travel

J

K

L **Latch Side Clearance** – the space on the pull side of the door where the door’s locking mechanism is located. At least 18 of clear floor space is required for accessibility

Large Print – refers to 18 point sans serif style fonts.

Level Change – refers to changes in elevation along a path of travel. In terms of accessibility, a level change of up to ¼ inch is allowable, anything over that needs to be addressed by either permanent or temporary means.

Lift, Platform Lift – a device for bridging a gap in elevation, usually on the same floor of a building, generally spanning a few feet. Example: To overcome a barrier of a short stairway (3 – 4 steps) a lift can be installed next to the stairs when a ramp would be architecturally impractical or impossible.

M **Measurement** – the process or result of determining the width, length, height of an building features. When surveying for accessibility, specific measurement requirements must be met in order to deem a location compliant.

N

O **Obstacles** – any barriers or impediments to safe and comfortable traversing of a path of travel or use of an architectural feature

P **Path of Travel** – refers to walkways, hallways, sidewalks or any swath of ground or floor area adjoining one location to another.

Permanent – refers to architectural or other features that are unlikely to change in status, condition, or place, or refers to a feature that can be made so.

Pull Force – pertains to the continuous application of force necessary to fully open a door, not the initial force needed to overcome the inertia of the door. Maximum pull force allowance for interior doors is 5 lbs. of pressure. There are no standards for exterior doors, however a pull force of between 5 and 10 lbs. of pressure

R **Ramp** – an architectural feature, permanent or temporary, allowing smooth and safe transition between level changes along a path of travel

S **Signage, Directional Signage** – refers to any kind of visual graphics created to display information and guide people to a particular destination

Slope - describes steepness, incline, or grade

1:12 – this ratio of height to length describes the maximum allowable slope for a ramped surface. For every 1 inch of vertical rise, 12 inches of ramp length is necessary to be considered accessible. Metrically a 1:12 slope is 8.33 %.

1:50 - this ratio of height to length describes the maximum allowable slope for a parking area, path of travel or cross-slope of a ramp. For every 1 inch of rise, 50 inches of length is needed to be considered accessible. Metrically a 1:50 slope is 2%.

Smart Tool - A digital tool that can be used as a level, plumb and clinometer. It digitally displays angles in degrees, percent slope and pitch (inches of rise or fall per linear foot) to an accuracy of 1/10 degree.

T **Tape Measure** – a tool for measuring distance in inches and feet. When surveying, it is best to use a tape measure that extends to 30 feet.

Temporary – an item or feature not permanently affixed or an item or feature that can be affixed for a short period of time

U

V

W **Warning, Detectable** - an item such as a cone, large planter or chair, placed below and in front of an object protruding more than 4” into the path of travel, but does not reach all the way to the floor, ex.: fire extinguisher, water fountain, wall hung cabinet. The detectable warning alerts people using canes to the objects’ existence.

X

Y

Z

Appendix B
ADA Checklist for Polling Places
Survey Tool

Appendix C

Best Practices

Sample Poll Worker Election Day Checklist

*The requirements for creating and maintaining accessibility should have been addressed in a previous in-depth survey conducted by Board of Elections staff with the qualifications to do so. This checklist provides a snapshot of how well accessibility is created and maintained, using temporary measures if needed, on Election Day.

Poll Worker Election Day Checklist

Poll Site Name: _____

Address: _____

Date Completed: _____ Time: _____

Completed by: _____

Please complete the following checklist. Use the comments section at the bottom of the checklist to describe steps taken to correct problems noted or to report issues that need to be addressed.

Parking

1. Is there accessible parking designated closest to the accessible entrance?
Yes___ **No**___ **N/A**___

2. If permanent accessible parking is not present, have approved temporary measures been taken to create accessible parking i.e., properly arranged orange cones and signage?
Yes___ **No** ___ **N/A**___

Accessible Route

1. Is the route from the designated accessible parking slip resistant i.e., removing snow, ice or wet leaves? **Yes**___ **No** ___ **N/A**___

2. Does the accessible route maintain a clear width of 36"? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___

3. Are all required temporary detectable warnings in place i.e., large planters or cones identifying a protrusion (object sticking out from the side or hanging too low from above) in the path of travel? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___

Exterior Signage

1. If the main entrance is not accessible is there permanent or temporary signage indicating the direction of the accessible entrance?
Yes___ **No**___ **Entrance is accessible** _____
2. The accessible entrance is clearly marked with the International Symbol of Accessibility?

Yes ___ **No** _____

Temporary Ramps and Thresholds

1. Are required temporary ramps properly secured in place? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___
2. Are required temporary thresholds properly secured in place? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___
3. If a ramp is longer than 6' does it have handrails? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___

Entrance

1. If the door hardware is not accessible (i.e., lever handle or D-Style loop handles) are the doors propped open with a small wedge or wall latch? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___
2. If the doors cannot be propped open is there a monitor posted for the duration of Election Day to open the door for ALL voters? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___
3. If rugs/weather mats are present along the path of travel, are they securely attached i.e., Velcro or double sided tape? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___
4. Is there interior signage that indicates the accessible route to the voting area?
Yes___ **No**___ **N/A**___

Interior Accessible Route

1. Is the accessible route from the accessible entrance free of obstacles and at least 36"wide? **Yes**___ **No**___
2. Are all required temporary detectable warnings in place i.e., large planters or cones, identifying any protrusions (object sticking out from the side or hanging too low from above) into the path of travel? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___
3. Do all doorways along the interior accessible route provide a minimum 32" of clear width? **Yes**___ **No**___ **N/A**___

Voting Area

1. There is space for at least one wheelchair user to access each information table, check-in tables, privacy booths and voting machines. **Yes**____ **No**_____

2. There is an accessible privacy booth. **Yes**____ **No**_____

3. The BMD is positioned so only the voter using the BMD can view the screen. **Yes**____
No_____

4. There is 5' x 5' turning radius available in front of the BMD for a wheelchair user.
Yes____ **No**_____

5. There is 5' x 5' turning radius available in front of the scanner for a wheelchair user.
Yes____ **No**_____

Comments:

Sample Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between County Boards of Elections and their Designated Polling Sites That Ensures Accessibility for Voters with Disabilities

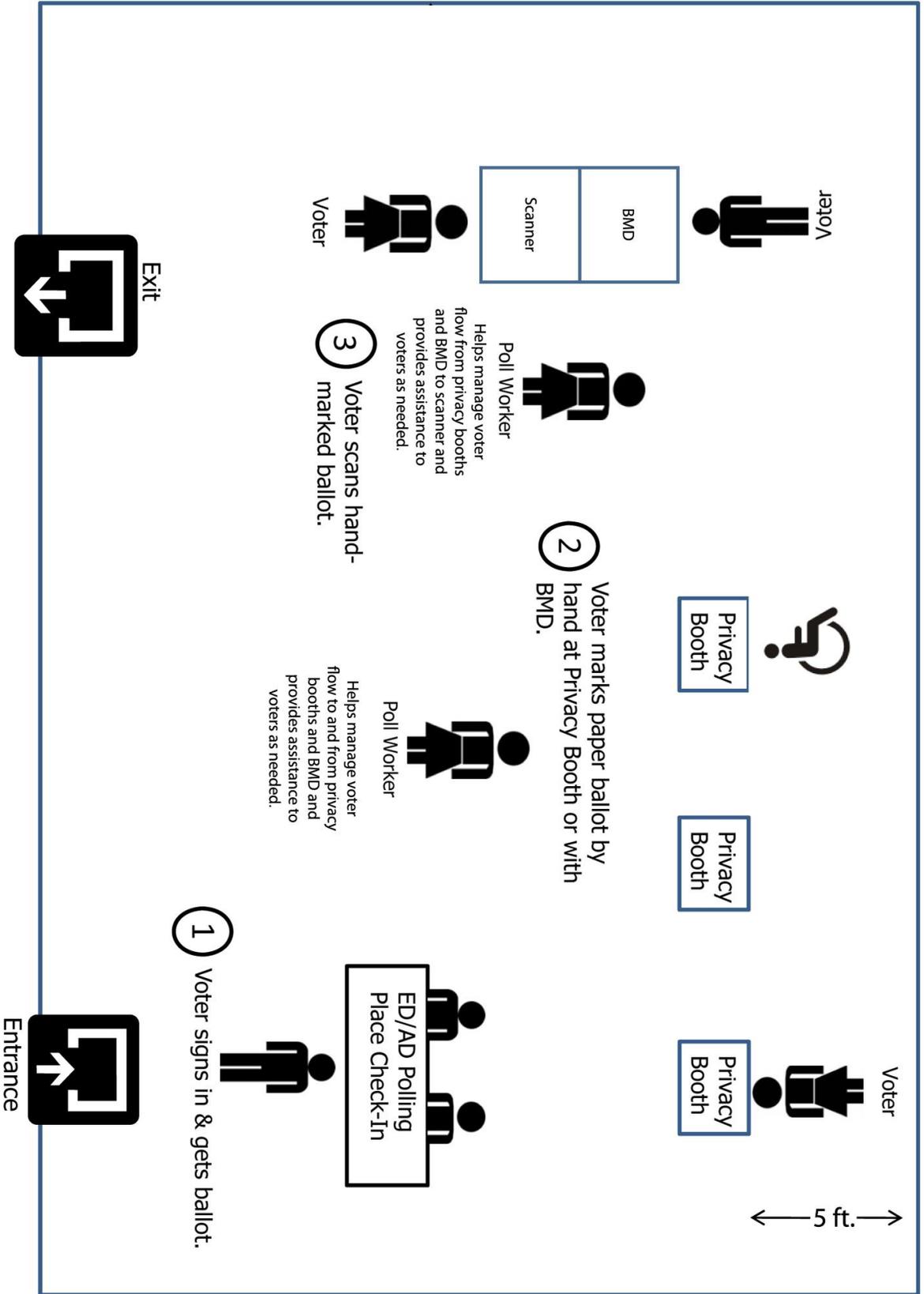
The facility designated to be a poll site is responsible to ensure that on Election Day:

1. All pathways leading to the accessible entrance and from the accessible entrance to the voting area must be kept clear of any physical obstructions including, but not limited to furniture, garbage or garbage containers, ladders, pails, or other janitorial equipment, construction equipment, etc. during polling hours. No work will be permitted in accessible pathways during any election day.
2. All doors leading to or from accessible entrances must stay open during polling hours or the County Board of Elections must be notified at least 7 days prior to any election day that the door is required to be locked so that they can provide a door monitor.
3. If the accessible entrance must be reached through a playground or parking lot, the playground or lot must be accessible to voters during polling hours. If the site requires that the playground or parking lot be locked or otherwise inaccessible, they must notify the County Board of Elections 7 days prior to any election day.
4. The polling site must notify the County Board of Elections 7 days prior to any election day if there is planned activity at the site on Election Day. No activity (including bake sales, raffles, fundraisers, entertainment, etc.) can take place in the polling area or accessible pathways or entry ways to the voting area without permission in writing from the County Board of Elections. Activities will only be permissible if they do not cause the accessible pathway to become less than 36” wide.
5. Interior voting area changes cannot be made without approval from the County Board of Elections at least 7 working days prior to any election day. If approved, the substitute interior site must have an accessible entry and pathway and comparable space, electrical outlets and lighting as the originally approved site.

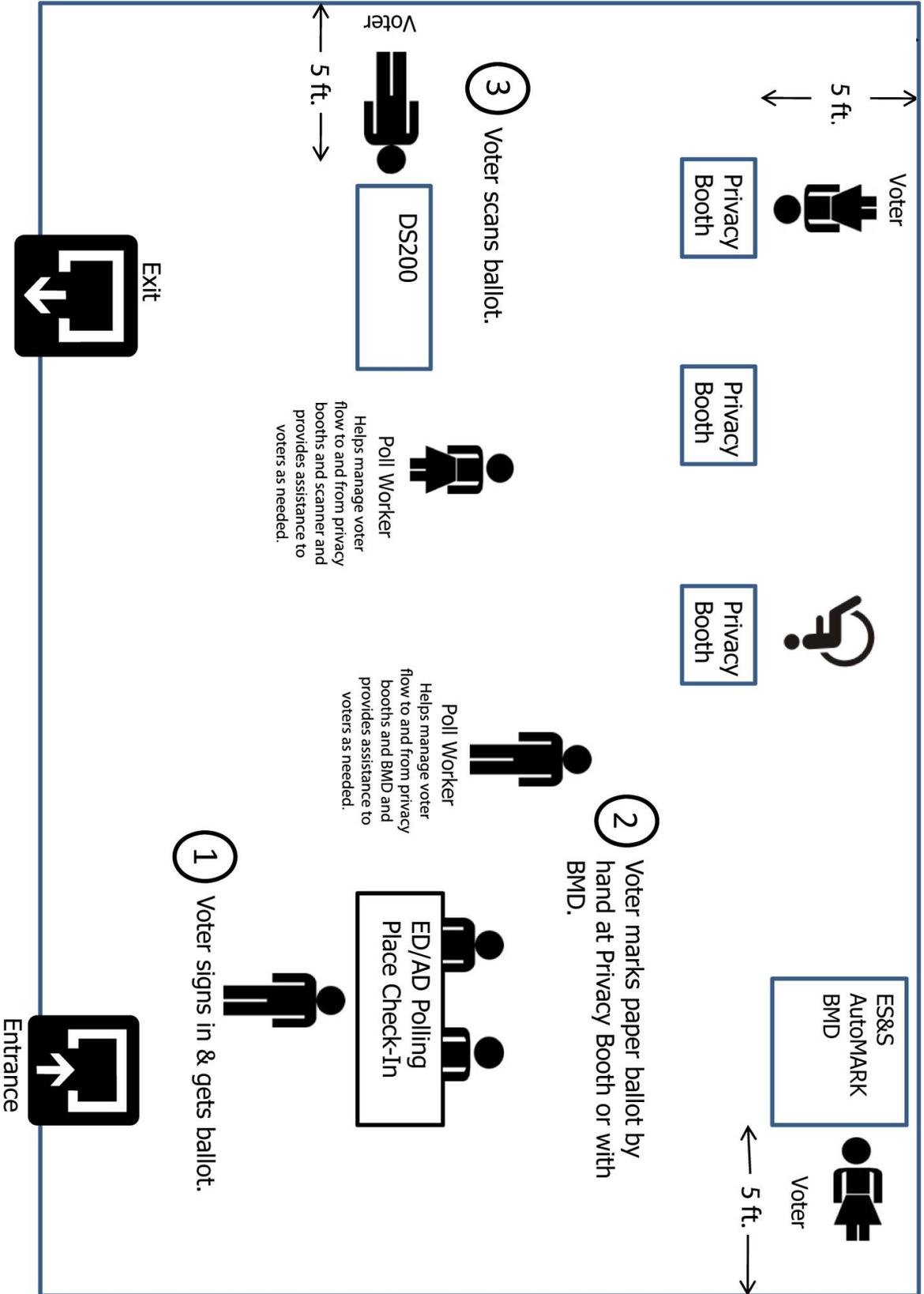
The County Board of Elections is responsible to:

1. Provide any temporary accessible equipment such as ramps, traffic cones, signage, etc. to ensure that voters with disabilities can access the site and the voting area.
2. Provide signage for voters identifying entrances and pathways to voting areas.
3. Provide all equipment and materials to ensure an accessible voting area.
4. Provide door monitors in cases where doorways at ramps or other accessible entrances must be locked.

Sample Sequoia Poll Place Configuration



Sample ES&S DS200 & AutoMark BMD Poll Place Configuration



Appendix D

Disability Awareness: Interacting with People with Disabilities