



Election Accessibility for People with Disabilities

MESSAGE FROM HAWAII'S OFFICE OF ELECTIONS



STATE OF HAWAII

To the voters of the State of Hawaii,

The U.S. Constitution guarantees every U.S. citizen age 18 and over the right to vote. Our Hawaii State Constitution additionally requires that voters be residents of the State of Hawaii and registered to vote in the county of their residence to participate in our elections. With the enactment of the Help America Vote Act of 2002, the State of Hawaii was able to initiate many changes to make our elections more accessible to voters with disabilities.

I am pleased that the State of Hawaii remains committed to improving and expanding the accessibility of our elections and will continue to ensure that all voters of the State of Hawaii have an equal opportunity to participate in our election process.

Scott T. Nago
Chief Election Officer
Office of Elections
State of Hawaii



THE HELP AMERICA VOTE ACT (HAVA)

President George W. Bush signed the Help America Vote Act into law on October 29, 2002. Congress authorized \$3.88 billion in federal money to be distributed to all states for election upgrades, including the purchase of new voting machines, the creation of a statewide voter registration database and other voting improvements.

The State of Hawaii received HAVA funds used to improve the administration of elections, including voter education and upgrading voting systems and technology. The 2004 election reflects some of the changes, including the use of temporary ramps and accessible parking at the polls, training poll workers on how to assist voters with disabilities, and the use of the Direct Recording Electronic Voting System (DRE) that made the voting process accessible to people with disabilities.

IMPROVING THE ACCESS TO POLLING PLACES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Help America Vote Act also helps states establish, enhance and improve access to polling places and elections for people with disabilities. This includes people who are blind or visually impaired, Deaf or hard of hearing, and people who have mobility, emotional or cognitive impairments.

In Hawaii, the State Office of Elections and the State Disability and Communication Access Board are working together to improve the accessibility to polling places for people with disabilities. Improved accessibility includes removing barriers to offer voters with disabilities the same opportunity for access and participation as other voters enjoy.

MAKING POLLING PLACES ACCESSIBLE

Polling places on all islands throughout the state of Hawaii are being surveyed and checked for barrier-free accessibility. Some of the

ways that polling places will be made more accessible for voters with disabilities on Election Day are:

- Relocating the accessible parking space for persons with disabilities closer to the polling place entrance.
- Installing portable curb ramps from the accessible parking area to the sidewalk.
- Posting signs directing people to the accessible parking area and to the polling place entrance.
- Leaving doors to the polling place open and having wide aisles inside for easy access for people who use wheelchairs, walkers or crutches.
- Placing cane detectable barriers under protruding objects and stairways along the route to the polling place for people who are blind or have low vision.
- Having accessible voting booths with chairs at all polling places.



POLLING PLACE WORKERS ARE TRAINED TO ASSIST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

On Election Day, polling places will have workers who are trained to assist voters with disabilities and provide good customer service. This means:

- To provide effective voter assistance, all polling place workers are trained in communicating with and assisting people who are blind or visually impaired, Deaf or hard of hearing, and people with mobility, emotional or intellectual impairments.
- All polling places will have a Voter Assistance Official where voters can request special assistance.
- Voters at the polling places may request assistance in having information and the ballot read to them.
- Each polling place will be equipped with an Auxiliary Aids Kit with tools to assist voters with disabilities, such as magnifiers, signature guides, and Communication Cards for voters who are Deaf or hard of hearing.
- Voters who are blind or have low vision will be offered

assistance in getting around inside the polling place.

- People with mobility impairments, who have difficulty walking or standing, will be offered assistance to move to the head of long voter lines.

PROVIDING THE SAME OPPORTUNITY FOR ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Equal access and participation for people with disabilities in the voting process includes being able to vote independently and in private.

- All polling places will have one accessible voting machine. People with disabilities who use this voting machine will be able to vote independently and in private.
- Voters who use the accessible voting machine can wear headphones to listen to the ballot being read to them.
- The accessible voting machine will be adaptable for “sip and puff” voting for people with limited or no use of their hands.
- The accessible voting machine will be located in a private accessible voting booth.

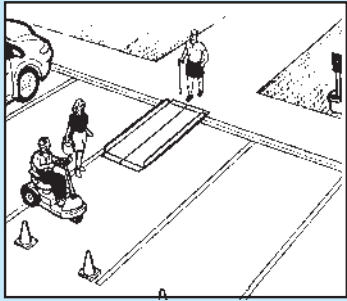


INFORMING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ABOUT THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ELECTIONS

Election accessibility and general voter information will be provided to the community through scheduled workshops statewide.

Individuals with disabilities and organizations that serve people with disabilities will sponsor or host these workshops. Listed below are some of the disability groups focused on; however, all interested people with disabilities are welcome to attend.

- Election informational outreach workshops about accessibility are planned for individuals who have:
- Mobility impairments
 - Blindness or visual impairments
 - Deafness or who are hard of hearing
 - Mental illness
 - Developmental disabilities



Standard parking spaces are made into accessible parking spaces. A temporary curb ramp leads to the accessible route to the polling place.

ACCOMMODATIONS

- For people who need accommodations, please call the Office of Elections or your county clerk's office.

- American Sign Language interpreters are available only for the early walk-in absentee voting process. If you need one, please contact the county clerk's office on your island to request an interpreter.

- The clerk's office will arrange for a qualified interpreter or other specific requests you make.

- To request accommodations, please call at least five working days prior to the date you wish to vote. Please provide following information with your request: the early absentee walk-in polling site where you will be voting, as well as the date and time you plan to vote.

- Although each office will try to fill your request, resources are limited and depend on availability. If a resource is not available, an alternative method may be used to meet your need.

INFORMATION

Please call your City/County Clerk's Office on your island if you have questions about voter registration, whether you are registered to vote or where your polling place is located.

County	Phone	TTY
City and County of Honolulu	768-3800	768-3848
Hawaii	961-8277	961-8985
Kauai	241-4800	241-5116
Maui	270-7749	270-7849

You may also call the State of Hawaii, Office of Elections for information and assistance at phone 808-453-VOTE (8683), 808-453-6150 TTY.



STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS

Office of Elections

802 Lehua Avenue • Pearl City, HI 96782

808-453-VOTE (8683) Voice

808-453-6150 TTY

Neighbor Islands Toll Free: 1-800-442-VOTE (8683)

Neighbor Islands TTY Toll Free: 1-800-345-5915

Internet: www.hawaii.gov/elections

This information is available in alternate format by contacting the Office of Elections.