

Disability Rights IOWA

Law Center for Protection and Advocacy™

What Type of Assistance Can I get in Accessing the Polling Place?

Assistance from other Persons: Voters who require assistance to vote because of blindness, inability to read or write, or any physical disability other than intoxication shall, upon request, be assisted in casting the vote. Either two officers, or the person selected by the voter, shall cast the vote of the voter requiring assistance, and shall thereafter give no information regarding the vote cast. [Iowa Code § 49.90].

Getting assistance into the polling place:

- Polling places should be accessible to you without help
- If you cannot enter a polling place due to the structural features of the building (stairs, steep ramp, narrow doorways, no working lift, etc.) you may request to vote outside near the entrance of the polling place-it's called "curbside voting" (see below "curb-side voting")
- If you have a cell phone you can call, or, ask the person accompanying you, to go into the polling place and request a curb-side ballot. Election officials, one Democrat and one Republican in partisan elections, will come to you to discuss the options you have to vote

If you need assistance in the Voting Booth:

- As a voter with a disability, you may ask anyone you want to help you in the voting booth
- The person who assists you is not allowed to try and influence you to vote a certain way. The only restrictions are the person cannot be your employer or an officer in a union that you are a member
- If you need assistance during the voting process, you and your helper are required to sign an affidavit stating you were assisted while voting
- If you wish, the election officials or the person providing assistance, can deposit the ballot in its envelope in the ballot box inside the polling place (Over)

Assistance during curbside voting:

- If you know ahead of time your polling place isn't accessible, election authorities prefer that you call ahead on the day before the election to request curbside voting. They will ask you for the approximate time you would like to vote, so they can have election officials ready to assist you.
- Two election officials, one Democrat and one Republican in partisan elections, will bring the application, affidavit to request help and portable ballot out to you. (Two poll-workers during other elections).
- They will give you any assistance you request, verify the ballot inside (letting you know if you under or over-voted)
- They will give you a chance to vote again, if you wish and then deposit the ballot in its envelope in the ballot box inside the polling place

Disability Rights Iowa

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