



Guidance for Poll Workers on Curbside Voting

The purpose of this document is to provide instruction to poll workers on how they can best administer curbside voting to their voters. These practices uphold the Ohio Revised Code, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and subsequent voting rights laws which mandate that voters with disabilities be offered reasonable modifications to have equal access to vote.

What is curbside voting?

Curbside voting enables voters to cast a ballot in-person outside of a polling location; from their vehicle; or along the path of travel to the voting area. Curbside voting is considered a reasonable modification under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act (VAEH) of 1984. Ohio law also establishes the right to curbside voting for those who are physically unable to enter a polling location under R.C. 3501.29(C).

Why do some voters need to use curbside voting?

Some disabilities impact a person's mobility. Others may experience sensory conditions that are exacerbated in places like polling locations. Whatever the reason, curbside voting makes the voting process more accessible for those who request a modification. Voters do not need to explain why they are requesting to use curbside voting.

Is offering curbside voting a choice?

No, the Ohio Revised Code mandates that all polling locations offer curbside voting as a reasonable accommodation.

“The board of elections shall permit any elector with a disability who travels to that elector's polling place, but who is physically unable to enter the polling place, to vote, with the assistance of two polling place officials of major political parties, in the vehicle that conveyed that elector to the polling place, or to receive and cast that elector's ballot at the door of the polling place. Under no other circumstance may an elector vote in a vehicle or at the door of a polling place.” ([Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3501.29\(C\)v](#))

The ADA requires public entities to make, “reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability.” 28 C.F.R. 35.130(b)(7). Thus, if a voter cannot vote in a polling location due to a disability, the Board of Elections must make an accommodation to their policies in order to allow them to vote. The VAEHA requires that all polling places for Federal elections are accessible or that aging voters and voters with disabilities, “will be provided with an alternative means for casting a ballot on the day of the election.” 42 U.S.C. 20102(c).

What Best Practices Can we Follow Regarding Curbside Voting?

Disclaimer: There is always room for improvement. We welcome further discussions on how to amend these recommendations to be even more accessible and effective for voters.

Outreach:

Engage in outreach before the election to your local disability community so that voters know what to expect when they arrive to curbside vote.

- a. This might include sending out physical and digital information to regional disability organizations, via local governments, social media, or the news.
- b. A flyer explaining the right and procedure for curbside voting delivered to physical addresses will help head off misunderstandings and instruct voters on their rights.

Accessible Signage at Polling Locations:

Prepare signage for Early Voting and Election Day polling locations.

- a. This signage should instruct voters on where to park to use curbside voting from their vehicle.
- b. This signage should provide the next step on what the voter should do in order to continue their voting process.
- c. This signage should be made using accessible font, colors, and size. The Americans with Disabilities Act has regulations regarding font, color, and size that can be used to ensure signage is accessible. Some of these regulations include:
 - Signage with both visual and tactile characters;
 - Characters raised 1/32 inc (.8 mm) minimum above the background;
 - Characters should be uppercase;
 - Characters should be sans serif and not stylized or italic;
 - Braille provided, positioned below corresponding text;
 - Tactile characters on signs shall be located 48 Inches (1220 mm) minimum above the finished floor or ground surface, measured from baseline of the lowest tactile character and 60 inches (1525 mm) maximum above the finish floor or ground surface, measured from the baseline of the highest tactile character;
 - Characters and their background shall have a non-glare finish. Characters shall contrast with their background with either light characters on a dark background or dark characters on a light background;

- Letters and numbers to be a width-to-height ration between 3:5 and 1:1 and a stroke-width-to-height ration between 1:5 and 1:10;
- Characters and numbers should be sized according to the viewing distance from which they are to be read. The minimum height is measured using an uppercase X;
- Accompany pictograms with the equivalent verbal description placed directly below, with a border dimension of 6 inches (152 millimeteres) minimum in height.

Provide one or more phone numbers that the voter can call once they have parked. These phone numbers, ideally, should reach either the Polling Location Manager or the County Board of Election Office who will then call the Polling Location Manager.

Curbside Voting Procedures

When a voter with a disability arrives at the polling place, they should notify the poll workers through the telephone number provided or by sending another person in to the polling location to let them know that a person with a disability would like to vote curbside.

Once the Polling Manager is made aware of the arrival of a curbside voter, he or she should follow Ohio state procedure:

- One of the poll works should check the pollbook for the name of the voter;
- If the voter is a qualified elector and in the correct precinct, the election official places the voter's name address on a blank sheet of paper or identifies the location of the voter's name and address within the electronic pollbook;
- Two election officials of different political parties take the sheet or electronic pollbook containing the voter's name and address outside the polling location to the voter, either to the vehicle in which the voter arrived, or to the door of the polling place.
- The voter confirms the name and address are correct;
- The voter provides appropriate identification for voting purposes;
- The voter's identification is examined;
- The voter signs the sheet or electronic pollbook containing their name and address;
- The two election officials return the sheet or electronic pollbook containing the voter's signature to the polling location and attempt to verify the voter's signature in the pollbook;
- The two election officials obtain the paper ballot based on the current precinct in which the voter resides and the appropriate ballot envelope or secrecy sleeve;
- The two election officials take the appropriate ballot and corresponding envelope or secrecy sleeve to the voter located outside the polling location
- The two election officials provide instructions to the voter on how to mark the ballot
- The voter marks the ballot and places it in the appropriate envelope or secrecy sleeve
- The two election officials take the appropriate envelope or secrecy sleeve containing the corresponding voted ballot back in to the polling location place it in the appropriate ballot container.

If a voter who utilizes curbside voting is unable to sign their name, the two election officials witness the voter's mark and record next to the voter's name in the pollbook – unable to sign.

If the voter is unable to mark their ballot, the two election officials can assist that person and note that they assisted them in marking their ballot.

Speak directly to a person with a disability, not to others accompanying a voter. Remember, treat all voters equally.

Ensure that the voter has completed the process and return to inside the polling location and cast the individual's vote.