

# More Disability Etiquette

## Wheelchair Users



The wheelchair is part of a person's body space. Do not grab, lean on, etc. an individual's wheelchair.

If someone is having obvious difficulty, such as getting over a threshold or pushing a door open, ask the person if they need help. Never push a wheelchair without first getting permission from the wheelchair user!

Keep "path of travel" clear. Wheelchair users need to have a clear path to the ballot box, etc. For instance, keep folding chairs pushed close to tables when not in use.

## Blindness/Low Vision



**Identify yourself.** A simple "Hi, I'm Mary and I am the polling volunteer" ensures to the voter that they are working with the right person.

**Provide specific directions to locations.** Instead of "the accessible voting machine is at the back of the room" say "we have an accessible voting machine about 20 feet to your right in the back of the room."

### Guiding

- If a person needs to be guided to a location, offer your arm, elbow or shoulder. Give the person information such as "I'm offering you my arm".
- When moving, describe what is on the path ahead. Example: "We are moving through a doorway and taking a right down a hallway".
- Let the person know when you are leaving. Example: "I'm going to go back to the front area, now".

## Speech Impairments

Allow the person time to speak. Don't complete the person's sentences!

Use the same tone of voice and volume that you would normally use, unless the person asks for you to speak louder and/or slower.

Don't show impatience—pay attention to what your body language/facial expressions are conveying.

Repeating what you understood the person to say and then letting the voter verify that you are correct is one technique to ensure communication is effective.

## Hearing Loss/Deafness



Speak normally—hearing aids are tuned for normal volume of speech.

Keep your face and mouth visible for lip reading.

When a companion or interpreter is present, be sure to address the voter, not the other person.

Two-way communication can occur by nodding, gesturing or writing notes. When you point to something, such as a different area in the room or to some preprinted information, be sure you maintain or regain eye contact before speaking.

It may be helpful or necessary to touch the person's shoulder or arm to get his/her attention. **Do not grab, pull or tap a person from behind!**

## ADA Checklist for Polling Places

This 25-page document recently released by the U.S. Department of Justice (June, 2016) consists of three parts.

- Part 1 discusses polling place accessibility with a focus on the areas of a facility that may be used as a polling place on Election Day.
- Part 2 includes a list of the tools election officials will need in order to use the Checklist, some helpful tips on taking measurements and photographs, and a useful list of the most common tools for temporary remedies and the circumstances in which they may be used.
- Part 3 is the 2016 Facility Checklist.

<https://www.ada.gov/votingchecklist.pdf>

<https://www.ada.gov/votingchecklist.htm>

## United States Election Assistance Commission Website

Provides numerous resources for voters with disabilities.

[www.eac.gov/voter\\_resources/voting\\_accessibility.aspx](http://www.eac.gov/voter_resources/voting_accessibility.aspx)

## Polling Places Accessible Video

Although only 4 minutes, this video contains a wealth of information to assist in providing an accessible polling place and accessible voting.

[http://www.eac.gov/making\\_polling\\_places\\_accessible/](http://www.eac.gov/making_polling_places_accessible/)

## Bazon Center: Information on Voting Rights and Mental Health

[www.bazon.org/Where-We-Stand/Self-Determination/Voting.aspx](http://www.bazon.org/Where-We-Stand/Self-Determination/Voting.aspx)

## Voter Resource Center

**American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)**

<http://www.aapd.com/our-focus/voting/voter-resource-center/>

## Non-Profit Vote.org

Links to information related to voting with disabilities for each state.

<http://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/special-circumstances/voting-with-a-disability/>

## Nonvisual Election Technology: National Federation of the Blind

<https://nfb.org/hava-intro>

## ADA National Network (ADANN) 1-800-949-4232

The regional centers that make up the ADA Network provide technical assistance and materials on all areas of the ADA including solutions to create accessible facilities. <http://www.adata.org>