

July 26, 2022

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL COMMEMORATES AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT
ANNIVERSARY WITH NEW VOTER GUIDE**

Chicago — To mark the 32nd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Attorney General Kwame Raoul today launched an online guide for voters with disabilities in Illinois.

“Thirty-two years ago, the Americans with Disabilities Act finally prohibited discrimination against people with disabilities under the law, and it was a hard-won victory for activists who demanded equality and opportunity for people with disabilities,” said Raoul. “People with disabilities are entitled to fair and equal opportunities in all aspects of their lives, including voting. This new guide will help to inform voters with disabilities of their rights and offer practical information on the options they have for accessing their ballots.”

The landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law July 26, 1990 and was designed to guarantee people with disabilities equal opportunities to be active participants in society. Considered by many to be the most sweeping civil rights legislation since the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the ADA resulted from tireless advocacy by disabled activists who demanded civil rights for people with disabilities. In passing the ADA, Congress acknowledged the historic isolation and segregation of people with disabilities, as well as the discrimination they experience in critical areas such as employment, housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, recreation, voting and more.

[The voter guide](#) now available on the Attorney General’s website highlights a new law that expands vote-by-mail options for voters with print disabilities. A print disability is defined as a temporary or permanent physical or mental impairment that prevents effective reading, writing, or use of printed materials. Print disabilities include blindness, low vision, physical dexterity limitations, and learning or cognitive disabilities. Beginning with the November 2022 general election, Illinois voters with print disabilities may request electronic delivery of their mail-in ballots. Using the Illinois State Board of Elections’ remote accessible vote-by-mail system, voters will be able to privately and independently read and mark their ballots using assistive technology.

Additionally, the Attorney General’s new guide offers a more general overview of rights for voters with disabilities protected by the state’s election code and also provides details about several options for accessible voting, including voting by mail and curbside voting.

[Attorney General Raoul’s Disability Rights Bureau](#) is responsible for investigating complaints related to noncompliance with state and federal laws, including the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Environmental Barriers Act, the Fair Housing Act, and the ADA. Attorneys and specialists in the bureau work to resolve violations of these laws and, when necessary, take legal action against violators.

In addition to its enforcement work, the Disability Rights Bureau provides technical assistance to individuals with disabilities and to public and private entities seeking to comply with disability rights laws. The bureau also conducts disability rights training programs for law enforcement, architects, engineers, building code officials and inspectors, judges and court personnel, business owners, disability rights organizations, and other groups throughout the state. Bureau staff members also serve on a number of committees that address a variety of issues impacting the lives of people with disabilities.

For more information about disability rights or to file a complaint, please contact the Attorney General’s Disability Rights Bureau by emailing disability.rights@ilag.gov. Additional information about the voting process and

voter registration status can be found on the [Illinois State Board of Elections](#) website or through [local election authorities](#).



Voter Guide for People with Disabilities

Office of the Illinois Attorney General, Disability Rights Bureau

People with disabilities are entitled to fair and equal opportunities in all aspects of their lives, including voting. The Illinois Election Code provides specific rights for voters with disabilities:

Vote by Mail (10 ILCS 5/19-1 & 19-2)

- Any Illinois voter can vote by mail for any reason.
- You may request a mail-in ballot online 90 days before an election and up to 5 days before the election. You may request a mail-in ballot in person 90 days before an election and up to the day before the election. To request a mail-in ballot, contact [your local election authority](#).
- If you return your ballot in person, you must return it to your local election authority before the polls close on Election Day.
- If you return your ballot by mail, your ballot must be postmarked by midnight on Election Day.

Remote Accessible Vote by Mail (10 ILCS 5/19-2.6)

- Voters with print disabilities may request electronic delivery of their mail-in ballot from their local election authority.
- To request electronic delivery of your mail-in ballot, you will be required to sign an application certifying that you have a print disability.
- A print disability is defined as a temporary or permanent physical or mental impairment that prevents effective reading, writing, or use of printed materials. Print disabilities include blindness, low vision, physical dexterity limitations, and learning or cognitive disabilities.
- After reading and marking the ballot using assistive technology, you must print out the ballot and return it to your local election authority by mail or in person.

Curbside voting (10 ILCS 5/17-13)

- If you wish to vote in person on Election Day but cannot enter the polling place because it is inaccessible to you, you may request curbside voting.
- You must request curbside voting from your local election authority by the close of business on the day before the election.
- Two election judges (one from each political party) will bring a ballot and portable voting booth to you so that you can mark your ballot privately.
- Local election authorities may also establish curbside voting programs that allow you to vote from your vehicle. Contact [your local election authority](#) for more information. (10 ILCS 5/17-13.5).

Assistance with Voting (10 ILCS 5/17-14)

- You may receive assistance with voting if you sign an oath swearing that you need assistance because you are blind, have a physical disability, or cannot read, write, or speak the English language.
- You may choose any person to assist you with voting, except you may not choose your employer, an agent or officer of your union, or a candidate on your ballot. The person assisting you must sign an oath swearing that they will not influence your choice of candidates, party, or votes on ballot measures.
- If you are voting in person, you may also ask the election judges to assist you. Two judges (one from each political party) will assist you with marking your ballot.

Voting in a Nursing Home or Long-Term Care Facility (10 ILCS 5/19-12.1)

- If you have lived in a nursing home or long-term care facility for more than 14 days before the election, you may vote by mail.
- In-person voting may also be arranged at the nursing home. If this happens, two election judges (one from each political party) will come to the nursing home to supervise voting, collect ballots, and return the ballots to be counted by the local election authority.
- For a full list of the types of facilities covered by this section of the law, see 10 ILCS 5/19-12.1.

Voting when admitted to a Health Care Facility less than 14 days before an election (10 ILCS 19-13)

- If you are admitted to a hospital, rehabilitation center, or nursing home less than 14 days before an election, you are entitled to personal delivery of a mail-in ballot.
- In order to receive your ballot, you must complete and sign an application for qualified voter admitted to hospital, nursing home, or rehabilitation center, available from [your local election authority](#). Your doctor or other health care professional must also complete and sign a portion of the application.
- After you complete the application, a relative or any person registered to vote in your precinct must then bring your application to your local election authority. The relative or person must sign an oath swearing that they are your relative or a voter in your precinct and that you have authorized them to pick up your ballot. Then, the relative or person must bring the ballot to you in the health care facility, you privately mark your ballot, and the relative or person must return your ballot to the local election authority where it will be counted.

For additional information or to file a complaint, please contact the Disability Rights Bureau at disability.rights@ilag.gov

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