



Voting with Assistance

Voting laws allow you to vote in a way that is most convenient for you. You can vote from your home, at a polling site, or in a facility. You can vote early or on Election Day. You also can get someone to help you vote. It's up to you!

Using help to vote is easy and quite common. You may have assistance for the whole process of voting—registering to vote, requesting your ballot, entering the voting booth, completing your ballot, and exiting the booth.

Who CAN Provide Assistance?

You can always have a near-relative help you vote, whether you are voting from home, at a polling site, or in a facility. A near-relative is a spouse, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, stepparent, or stepchild.

If you are voting at a polling site, almost any person you choose can help you (including poll workers and people who aren't your near-relatives) if:

- You have a physical or visual disability and are unable to enter the voting booth or mark the ballot without assistance; or
- You are unable to read without assistance.

If you are voting in a facility, like a hospital or nursing home, your local county board of elections can send a Multipartisan Assistance Team or "MAT" to help you vote.

Who CANNOT Provide Assistance?

There are certain people who cannot help you vote. You cannot get assistance from your employer, an agent of your employer, or an agent of any union to which you belong. A poll worker may not force you to accept assistance from someone you do not choose.

If you are voting in a facility, like a hospital or nursing home, the people who own or work at the facility CANNOT assist you in marking or witnessing your absentee ballot.

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How Can I Request Assistance?

Tell the chief judge of the polling site that you will be using assistance and why, and identify the person who will be helping you. It is enough to tell them something like "I have a physical/visual disability and need assistance." You do not need to reveal your diagnosis or personal medical information. Poll workers are not qualified to make medical decisions about whether you have a disability and whether it impacts your ability to vote.

Also, you do not have to communicate verbally with poll workers if you have difficulty doing so. You can communicate in writing or with other assistance.

If you are voting from a facility, like a hospital or nursing home, contact your county board of elections. They can send a MAT to assist you with requesting and completing your ballot. You can find the contact information for your county board of elections on the State Board of Elections website at www.ncsbe.gov.

What Types of Assistance are Prohibited?

The person assisting you may not:

- Try to persuade or induce you to cast a vote in a particular way,
- Make or keep any notes about how you are voting, or
- Directly or indirectly reveal to anyone how you voted.

Curbside Voting

Curbside voting (voting from a car) is available at every voting site, including Early Voting sites. You can vote curbside if you cannot vote inside without assistance due to age or physical disability. Being unable to stand or wait in line is enough. You don't have to "try and fail" at voting inside before you are allowed to vote curbside.

If you think your voting rights have been violated for any reason, contact Election Protection at 866-687-8683, or Disability Rights North Carolina at 877-235-4210 or 888-268-5535 for TTY.

Have more questions? Visit www.accessthevote.nc.org to learn more.

Disability Rights North Carolina is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Raleigh. It is a federally mandated protection and advocacy system with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Social Security Administration.

Contact us for assistance or to request this information in an alternate format.

Disability Rights North Carolina
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