



Greetings!

This is the Accessible Polling Place Locations and Equipment class (otherwise known as APPLE) presented by Contra Costa County Elections Department. We are excited about this opportunity to share this information with you.

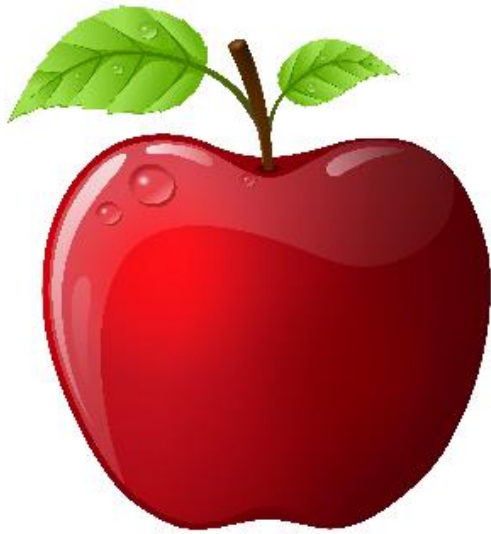
The goal of this class has been to help poll workers understand all of the tools at their fingertips to create a welcoming and accessible polling location for all voters.

Contra Costa County Elections Department does an extensive survey well before Election Day to determine if a polling location is accessible. Sometimes little tweaks are necessary, and we supply those. We took this opportunity to help the poll workers understand all of the effort that goes into finding polling locations, and the final step they need to implement to complete the process.

Thank you for your interest.

The APPLE class was designed by:

- Sophie Lehman (Manager)
- Jose Gonzalez (Supervisor)
- Mary Sanchez
- Camille Cain
- Christopher Juell



Accessible
Polling
Place
Locations and
Equipment

How to create an
accessible and welcoming
environment for all voters

Welcome

Welcome to the new Accessible Polling Place Locations and Equipment class, otherwise known as APPLE for short.

We're excited to be talking about what it means to operate in an accessible and welcoming manner on Election Day.

We're glad you signed up for this class and are joining us today.

This class is full of a lot of great information that we know will be helpful to you as you prepare your polling location for voters.



Click

Housekeeping

But before we get started I want to review a couple housekeeping items.

Click

Please take this opportunity to turn off your cell phones or turn them to vibrate.

There is a sign in sheet by the door.

I'll pass it around to make sure everyone has signed in so you get credit for attending today.

Click

Restrooms are located [info specific to site].

Click



Trashcans are located by the exit doors. Please help us keep this room clean by checking around your area before you leave and clearing away all of your trash.

Class will take approximately 1½ hours before questions, and we'll be going outside for an activity.

When we do, please make sure you dress accordingly.

We will take a few questions throughout this presentation. For those we are unable to get to, for the sake of time, there are index cards at the end of each table for questions. Just jot them down and we will address them at the end of the session

Click

But I'm sure what you really want to know is when you get your new, limited edition APPLE pin.

We'll be passing them out at the end of the class in exchange for your survey/worksheet which will be distributed later in class, when we do a brief exercise to see how accessibility should look.

Introduction

As you know, this is a new class. And it came about for a few different reasons.

Click

(this will be blank at first)

Real life Election Day...

We have a wonderful polling location in the cafeteria during a school day.
Easy access for everyone.

Pollworkers decided to create the polling location ***up*** on the stage, the ***only*** inaccessible location in the entire room.

Click

Who can tell me, why would the stage be inaccessible?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 30 seconds

The stage seemed perfect, more private area without the hustle and bustle of the students.

That small change actually made a huge difference where some voters would lose their accessibility, and a person on crutches would have a difficult time navigating the stairs.

Even poll workers would have a difficult time navigating the stairs and moving the equipment

Click

It's worth mentioning here, not all disabilities are visible.

Who can tell me about some health challenges that might be invisible, or even a temporary challenge, ***anything*** that may force someone to move about differently?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

Click x 5

We don't want to assume creating an accessible but welcoming environment is only for challenges we **SEE** a person having.

Click

The Elections Division in-house team has been working hard to make sure we not only comply for the law's sake.

Bottom line, put yourself in their position to help ensure we make a welcoming environment for all voters and poll workers.

Our goal is to make sure **all** voters have the opportunity to vote independently, and that all voters and poll workers have a barrier free, welcoming environment, that creates a good voting experience for everyone, and that it continues to happen throughout the day.

The Elections Division in-house team wants to take this opportunity to let our poll worker team know the importance of **why**, and **how** to prepare a polling location to be accessible.



The implementation is equally important because it is the final piece of the puzzle. We want to make sure we take the mystery out of the process, while letting you know how critical it is to Election Day.



Student Learning Objectives

Our learning objectives for today are to:

Click x 3

- Understand what it means to operate in an accessible way.
- Understand our role, your role, and how we work together to operate in an accessible way.
- Know the tools you have at your disposal and how to use them.

Agenda

That leads us to our agenda.

Click x 5

We will be talking about:

- What accessibility is and who it applies to
- Physical access to polling places
- Access to the ballot

And

- We are going to introduce you to our new Ballot Marking Device.

Click

Why is this important to you?

Click

You are the guardians of democracy. If you don't do it, who will?



Click

What is accessibility? Let's take a look at several different definitions.

Click

Accessibility can be defined as friendly and easy to talk to. This applies to everyone. We want all voters to feel welcome at the polls. And it starts with you and the quality customer service experience you provide.

Little things matter, like the name tags you wear that make you more approachable.

Overall, being friendly and greeting voters might seem small but they make a huge difference. That's one broad but important way of looking at accessibility.

Click

Another definition is a place that is able to be reached or entered. Again, this applies to all voters and we're talking about physical access to the polls.

We look for polling locations that are easy to get to (not off the beaten path, or in some remote area), have parking, and other criteria that make it possible for voters to get there on Election Day.

Once we've identified those locations we make sure that all voters are able to enter them, and we'll get into more detail later about how we do that.

Then there's our third definition: able to be easily obtained or used.

Click

This refers to ballot access and it starts with voter information before Election Day--things like the Voter Information Guide you get in the mail, notifying voters of their polling place, and information we put up on our website.

On Election Day, once you're at the polls and have your ballot, we have tools to help you understand it and tools to help you mark it.

Accessibility is quite broad and also deeply linked to almost all of the work we do. And as you'll see, you're also involved in a lot of it.

We started off by talking about accessibility that's friendly, but we're not going to get into that today because I expect most of you don't need a class in that.

So we'll move into physical access--a place that is able to be reached or entered.

Click

Physical Access
Selecting a Polling Place

How many of you have ever wondered how we select polling locations?

Allow class participants to show hands – 5 seconds

Click

Right now we have a pretty stable pool of polling places, but when we're scouting locations, we start by looking for buildings that are:

- Centrally located
- Near the population centers
- Are close to public transportation

And

- Are easy to find or reach.

We review all of this, along with a variety of other criteria to determine if they would make good polling locations.

We're also looking for potential red flags--features that would make it impossible for some voters to access the building or the room.

For example:

Suppose we found a perfectly located community center but the only rooms available were on the 2nd floor and there were only stairs. Would this be a good location to consider?

Pause and ponder – 2 seconds

Once we've identified a potential site we have to talk to the building owner and see if they're willing to be a polling place.

Click

If they are, we'll do an extensive survey of the property, inside the building, and the actual room we will use for voting.

Then we'll talk details and get them booked for specific election dates.

And remember that it's not a small commitment: they have to be willing to host us for a long Election Day, give us a way to get into the building early that morning, need to accept delivery of equipment and supplies ahead of Election Day, and more.

Polling places have to meet certain state and federal rules.

There are minimum standards for parking areas, doorways, hallways, entrances, voting areas, ramps, and more.

The point of these guidelines is to promote full access to polling places for elderly voters and voters with disabilities.

Our office uses a detailed survey to collect data.

We then analyze the measurements we collect to evaluate each polling place in relation to California state law and ADA standards.

Click

When we go out to survey each site, we take tools to measure distances, slopes and inclines, and door pressure, and a camera to document our findings.

Click

There are 3 key areas we examine when conducting the survey

- The parking area
- The path of travel

And

- The voting area

Parking Area

Click

We usually start by taking a look at the parking lot.

Click

First, we count the total number of parking spots and then check to see if the lot has the required number of accessible spaces in relation to that number.

We also look to see if there is a designated spot that is van accessible.

We check to see if the spaces are properly marked with visible signs and stripes.

Click

We measure the accessible parking spaces to see if they are as long and wide as required and if they have access aisles, which is the additional striped area on the side of the parking space.

Click

We measure the slope of the parking spots and look for impediments--for example, if it's too steep, a wheelchair lift would not be able to set down safely, or it could be difficult for a wheelchair to navigate.

From the accessible parking spots, we will begin to mark a path of travel to the building and the room where voting will occur.

Path of Travel

Path of travel may seem like a generic term, but in this context we're looking at a very specific path. While there may be multiple ways of getting into a polling place, we are required to identify and mark an ***accessible*** path.

Click

We measure the slope of the path the entire way to ensure the route stays within the required limits.

We choose a path that avoids stairs.

We keep an eye out for tree branches and other landscaping that can be hazardous or get in the way.

It may be easy for some to walk around, step over, or even duck when necessary--but that isn't the case for everyone.

We look for grates, cracks or other issues that would need to be addressed.

We want as smooth a surface as possible to avoid snags, trips, and falls.

Voting Area

Last but not least, we look at the voting area.

We want to ensure it is accessible, there is plenty of open space, plenty of room to move and turn around, and clear visibility to all accessible equipment and voting booths.

Click

Let's start with the door at the entrance to the voting area. That seems simple enough, doesn't it?

How many of you think the door is easy to open?

Show of hands – 5 seconds

Let's take a look.



- One of our markers is the “closed fist test”, **or** can the door be opened with a closed fist? Does **this** door pass our “closed fist test”?

Pause and ponder – 2 seconds

Doorknobs or some handles can be difficult for a person with arthritis or a number of other challenges to grip and easily gain access to the voting area.

While we’re on the door, we look to see if the bottom portion is made of glass, which would make it unsafe for a person to open it with their foot, or push open with a wheelchair or stroller.

With **just** the right amount of pressure in the right spot, the glass on the bottom of the door could shatter.

Most doors no longer have glass on the bottom but this is something we also look out for, which would require a door to be propped open.

We also measure the width of the door when it is open, which needs to be at least 32 inches wide so that wheelchairs and strollers can easily pass.

We take a look at the door frame and measure any thresholds that can be barriers or tripping hazards.

Once we’ve looked at and measured the door, we want to know how heavy it is.



We use a door pressure gauge to test the door pressure and determine if it exceeds what is allowed.

If it does, then we'd probably use the same quick fix we've mentioned-- propping the door open with a door stop.

Once we're in the building, we evaluate the hallways to see if they are at least 44 inches wide so a wheelchair can easily turn around.

Click

We look for anything hanging or dangling from the walls or ceiling that could cause an obstruction, and anything protruding more than 4 inches from the walls, such as a water fountain, to make sure we have a clear path.

Click

Now, let's take a look at this picture again.

Do you see any potential challenges?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

That was a lot, and it's really just the tip of the iceberg, but we wanted to give you a sense of the variety of things we look at and all the issues that may be invisible because they might not impact you.

Click

As we begin to set up our polling locations for Election Day, we want to look at the room and determine the best way to set up the tables and equipment to ensure accessibility and mobility. We want to make sure there are no cords or trip hazards in the way, and the accessible voting equipment and booths are set allowing accessibility yet privacy.

In 2017 we surveyed *all* of our polling locations--almost **300** different sites--looking at all of these questions.

And it's important to conduct surveys on a fairly regular basis, as things can change because of construction, landscaping, or anything that might change the location's accessibility.

Any questions?

Click + 1

Once we've collected the data from each of the polling places, we come back and analyze it to see how we can address some of the issues and make sites ADA compliant and fully accessible.

Click

Then we develop individual plans to make each polling place temporarily accessible for Election Day.

Every polling place has its own profile--some require no modification, while most just need minor tweaks to make them accessible.

For example, a polling place might have 3 door issues, but they are all solved with a single solution: the doorstep.

Click

We develop the solutions, ***which we call a mitigation packet***, for each location. We identify and package the supplies required, and provide instructions on how to properly implement the supplies at the polling place. Then we turn it over to you.

Click

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How many of you have set up a polling locations?

Allow class participants to show hands – 5 seconds

Who has used all of the mitigation items that came with your supplies?

Allow class participants to show hands – 5 seconds

Click + 2

We've done all of the planning and packaging.

Now we are giving it to you to execute.

If your polling place requires mitigation, you will receive instructions and supplies.

Nothing is particularly complex and you just need to follow directions.

Please note, not all polling locations receive a mitigation packets.

If you do, rest assured all if the instructions will direct you to where things go.

Click

Breadcrumb signs define the **accessible** path of travel. You may have noticed them directing you to our classroom today.

These are not to be used to direct the voter to the polling entrance, **but** to the **accessible** path of travel to the polling entrance and voting area.

There is a **huge** difference!

If there are stairs outside to the polling location and there is a ramp nearby, the breadcrumb signs should direct the voter to use the ramp (**not** the stairs) and continue to direct the voter all the way to the voting area.

We may have identified hazards and ask you to place cones to identify a protruding object or trip hazard.

All polling locations receive 2 doorstops in their generic supplies. If you are **required** to prop a door, there will be specific instructions.

You may also get door ramps or mats to smooth a surface and prevent trip hazards

Questions?

Click

Let's look at another scenario...

It's Election Day.

Your polling location is completely set up.

Voters come, cast their votes, everything is going well, democracy is happening.

Click

A person in a wheelchair arrives and makes it all the way to the polling location entrance.

What do you see?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

What could we do here?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 30 seconds

For this door challenge, there is a very simple fix.

The doorstep is one solution.

This voter went home discouraged because they were stopped by the door. There are no push buttons, and they have no other way to get into the polling location to vote because no one knows they are there.

No matter how smoothly things seem to be going on **inside** the voting area, we want to continually monitor both **outside** and **inside** to make sure our voters have access until the polls close.

Most of the accessibility problems are outside.

Perhaps Sally got cold and removed the door stop from the door, now making the door and yes, the polling location inaccessible.

Click

Remember to check throughout the day to make sure all of the items are still in place. Weigh down the breadcrumb signs as needed.

Click

Lastly, we ask that at the end of the day you bring everything back inside that you set up under your mitigation instructions.

Survey Activity

We're going to take this opportunity to see how it all comes together. We are going on a survey hunt.

Let's take a look outside to see why things have been placed where they are.

Click

Distribute Worksheet about 1 minute

Remember, this worksheet is your ticket to getting a new, limited edition APPLE pin at the end of class.

We're going to step outside for about 5 minutes and look to see why the cones and signs have been placed where they are.

Once you return to the room, we will look at a few pictures of inside the voting area and discuss any challenges you find.

Class Discussion – 10 minutes

Let's go over our findings and see why the mitigation item has been placed there.

- Bread Crumb Signs – what were they directing you (the voter) to?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

- Were there any barriers such as steps?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

- Cones – What were they alerting a voter to?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

- Door Stop

- Were there any challenges with the door?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

What challenges do you see inside the “polling place”?

- Carousel voting booth – Is it facing correctly?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

- Ballot Marking Device – Is it accessible?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

- Aisles and path ways – Are they all clear and accessible?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 1-2 minutes

We just talked about physical access, now we're going to transition into talking about ballot access which is your experience when you're voting. It starts before you even have your ballot in hand.

Click

Ballot Access the voter's ability to decide when and where they want to vote, using several options. We offer vote-by-mail, regional early voting, and of course polling place voting on Election Day.

California doesn't require a reason to vote by mail and about 62% of our county's registered voters are permanent vote by mail voters.

Ballots are mailed 29 days before an election giving you time to thoroughly study your ballot and make your selections in the comfort of your home or wherever you want to vote.

Click

In June 2016, we offered regional early voting for the first time to all voters. Any voter can go to one of the 8 regional early voting sites across the county, including our office.

Click

That means any voter can cast their ballot prior to Election Day at a location near their work, rather than their home, or make it one of their stops on a shopping trip.

One perfect example of this is our poll worker team – you!

Any poll worker is free to use any regional early voting site so you can have the opportunity to vote in the election without worrying about Vote by Mail or voting on election day.

You may not be assigned to your home precinct on Election Day, and we want to make sure you have an opportunity to vote as well.

Regional Early Voting typically starts the Monday or Tuesday the week before the election and runs through the Saturday prior to the election. In November 2016, over 8,000 voters were able to cast their ballot at a Regional Early Voting site.

Click

And if you like the Election Day hustle and bustle voters can of course cast their ballot at their polling place on Election Day from 7am until 8pm.

Questions?

Click

Curbside Voting

I want to now do a quick refresher on curbside voting.

Has anyone in here ever assisted with curbside voting?

Wait for hands. If yes, ask them to share experience *for about 1-2 minutes*

It's not common, but it's important because regardless of how accessible or compliant a polling location is, there are still voters who may not be able to navigate it.

Curbside voting is available to anyone who requests it and is similar to voting inside the polling place, except that signing the Voter Roster and voting the ballot occurs outside of the polling place. We take the entire voting process to the voter in their car.

Once you've been asked to perform curbside voting, you look up the voter's name in the roster and determine the correct ballot type for the voter.

You'll take the roster, pen, ballot, a secrecy folder, and an "I Voted" sticker outside to the voter. The voter will sign the roster which is then returned to the polling place so voting can continue.

The voter then marks their ballot and puts it in the secrecy folder. When they're done, you give them an "I voted" sticker and a poll worker or someone with the voter takes the ballot inside and places it in the ballot scanner.

In addition to curbside voting, there are other ways you can offer voters assistance.

Voter Assistance

Your most typical tasks are to check in voters, issue ballots, monitor the polling place, and pass out stickers, the basic stuff.

But the assistance you provide is equally important. Any voter who wants or needs assistance to vote, for any reason, has the right to receive voting assistance from a poll worker or any other person of their choice.

A voter is able to bring in their mom, dad, sister, brother, any family member or close friend to assist them with the voting process.

This assistance is available to any voter, not just voters who have a disability. If **you** assist a voter and see their ballot, we want to make sure we have complete transparency.

Please remember to make a note of it in the Assisted Voter List located in the roster. This allows us to improve our operation as well.

Click

Why do we do that?



Great question!

With poll watchers, challengers and concerned citizens, busy bodies, we want to make sure we keep everyone safe. This way, we create a paper trail and offer complete transparency. We identify all of the *“out of the basic norms”* of voting by writing in the Assisted Voter List.

This way, the Elections Division always has a way to go back just in case it ever becomes necessary.

Assisting voters can sometimes be tricky, so we’re going to review some guidelines on how assistance should be given to help you recognize and respond to specific needs and sensitivities. This information is in your reference guide as well.

First off, use common sense. People who need assistance want to be treated the same way as everyone else. Show them the courtesy and respect that you expect to receive from others.

- Ask before you help. Before providing assistance, ask the voter if he or she would like assistance.
- Communicate directly with the voter. Some people who need support may have an assistant, interpreter, or companion with them. When communicating with voters who have their assistant with them, be sure to direct your questions and responses to the **voter** and not the voter’s assistant.

- Use “people-first” language that emphasizes the person rather than the disability. For example, a person who is blind rather than a blind person, a person with a physical disability rather than a physically disabled person, or a person who uses a wheelchair rather than a wheelchair bound person.
- Do not refer to people as handicapped. A handicap is a physical or attitudinal constraint that is imposed upon a person, regardless of whether that person has a disability. For example, narrow doorways and curbs are handicaps imposed upon people with disabilities who use wheelchairs.

Click

Voters with a Physical Impairment

When talking with a person using a wheelchair, sit down in a chair and speak to the person at “eye level.”

Do not push a wheelchair or move a walker or cane without the owner’s permission.

Click

Voters Who Are Blind or Have a Visual Impairment

What do you do if a voter is blind or has a visual impairment?

Identify yourself as a poll worker, give them your name, and ask the voter if they would like any assistance.

If guiding the voter, offer your arm to the voter rather than taking the voter's arm.

Give specific ***non-visual*** information when giving directions. For example, "Walk 20 feet forward until you reach the table."

If the person has a service animal, walk on the opposite side; do not pet or engage the service animal without permission from the owner.

Click

Voters Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

What do you do if a voter is deaf or hard of hearing?

Follow the voter's cue to determine whether they prefer to communicate by speaking, writing, or gesturing.

Before speaking with a voter who is deaf or hard of hearing, make sure that you get their attention by lightly tapping the voter on the shoulder or waving your hand.

When talking, speak calmly, slowly, and directly to the voter.

Do not speak any louder than normal, unless requested.

Do not obscure your face when communicating with a person who is hard of hearing, allowing them to see facial cues.

Rephrase, rather than repeat sentences that the person does not understand.

If a voter is accompanied by an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, speak directly to the voter and not to the interpreter.

Click

Voters with a Speech or Communication Disability

What do you do if a voter has a speech or communication disability?

Give the voter your full attention. Don't interrupt or finish the voter's sentences.

If you are having difficulty understanding the voter, ask the voter to repeat what was said or to spell the word(s).

If after trying, you still cannot understand the voter, you may ask them to write it down.

Questions?

Tools

Now that we have gone over some tips on how to approach voters requesting assistance, let's review some of the tools that you will have at your disposal to assist voters in the polling place.

The following items are manual tools that you will have at your polling place to assist voters regardless of disability on Election Day.

These tools are not only for the use of voters with disabilities, but can be used by ***any*** voter.

Click

By now you're all familiar with the carousel voting booths. You may remember that each carousel has one accessible voting stall that is placed lower to accommodate a voter who is seated or uses a wheelchair or power scooter.

Click

Every polling place provides additional chairs to use on Election Day. Chairs can be used with the accessible voting station on the carousel voting booth, or when using the Ballot Marking Device for voters who prefer to sit while marking their ballot.

Click

Magnifying sheets are available to assist voters in reading their ballot. In a lot of cases voters who have some sort of vision impairment or maybe just forgot their glasses at home use the sheet which allows them to read their ballot on their own without requiring the assistance of someone reading it for them.

Click

An equally important part of ballot access is being able to understand it. We make an effort to provide clear, plain language instructions and are moving toward using images rather than text to convey ideas and information.

Click

Are there any bilingual poll workers in the room?

Allow class participants to show hands – 5 seconds

What languages do you speak?

Allow class participants to show hands and discuss for about 15 seconds

We also provide information in languages other than English. This starts with poll workers and being able to provide assistance to voters at the polls in their preferred language. That's one reason we make a strong effort to recruit bilingual poll workers.

If you do speak another language, please identify your additional language by using the “I Speak” tag along with your nametag. Our Election Day voter call center is also multilingual, and staff are able to help voters in 3 languages.

Different federal and state laws determine when we're required to provide voting materials in languages other than English.

The ballot in Contra Costa County has been bilingual in English and Spanish for a number of years.

Click

2018 is the first time we will have a trilingual ballot in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

Click

The additional language will not only be a part of the official ballot, but also the Voter Information Guide you receive in the mail, and any official voting instructions.

Language Assistance Guides

In addition to those three languages we also provide information in several other languages.

One way we have done this previously is by providing a facsimile ballot at the necessary polling locations, but we're trying something new this year.

This year, we're introducing Language Assistance Guides.

Click

Unlike facsimile ballots which were only available in some languages and at some polling places, the Language Assistance Guides will be available at all polling locations in the following languages:

Click + 3

- Korean
- Filipino
- Vietnamese

A Language Assistance guide is a tool that helps you mark your ballot. Instead of being an identical copy of the ballot at your polling place, it will have every contest in the county translated in one document.

A voter will match their ballot headings to those in the document and then mark their official ballot.

We're really excited about this because facsimile ballots were only available to voters who lived in certain areas, but now this translation tool will be available to any voter anywhere in the county.

The Guides should be placed visibly on the Ballot Issue Table so that voters can see and request them.

We've talked about some manual tools and language tools. Now we're going to talk about the mechanical tool you have at your disposal, the Ballot Marking Device.

Ballot Marking Device

Click

What on earth is a Ballot Marking Device?

I'm so glad you asked!

A Ballot Marking Device is just that—a tool to allow the voter to mark votes on a physical ballot, or now, on a single piece of paper, which is then tabulated and deposited into the ballot scanning device.

Ballot Marking Devices can be used by anyone and are **not** limited to individuals with disabilities.

Features Ballot Marking Devices offer

A Ballot Marking Devices have a range of features that help a variety of voters cast a ballot privately and independently.

Click

Our Ballot Marking Devices support multiple languages so it reflects the official ballot and can be read or heard in English, Spanish and Chinese.

A voter might know how to read and write in English, but might prefer to read proposition or measure questions in a different language.

Click

There are display features that allow voters to increase font size, change contrast of screen and text.

The Ballot Marking Device comes with headphones and can read the ballot and instructions to a voter.

Click

The listener can increase or lower the volume as well as speed up or slow down the speed of the audio track.

The voter makes selections as they proceed and at the end, the device will read back all of their choices before marking the ballot.

Click

Some Ballot Marking Devices come with an Audio Tactile Interface that has buttons that are described in both color and shape in audio instructions.

The buttons on the Audio Tactile Interface are also labeled in braille for voters who are blind or have difficulties with their sight.

They are also compatible with other Accessibility Input Devices such as:

Click

A personal sip and puff device

For voters, who don't have use of their hands or feet.

It allows the voter to navigate and make selections by sipping or puffing into their personal device as instructed by audio from the Ballot Marking Device.

Voters who use this feature will bring their own device that the poll worker can assist by connecting it to the Audio Tactile Interface.

Click

Paddles

For voters who have difficulty pushing buttons, because of a stroke or restricted movement in their hands.

The paddles allow the voter to navigate through their ballot and make selections by pressing the left or right paddle as instructed by the audio from the Ballot Marking Device.

Ballot Marking Devices ***do not*** record or count votes.

A Ballot Marking Device will alert the voter whenever there is an oversight, such as under voting.

They simply assist voters in marking their ballot, using its features.

We've been talking generically about what Ballot Marking Devices can do.

Click

I know you've all been thinking about the Ballot Marking Device you're familiar with--the AutoMARK, which has been the ballot marking device at your polling places since 2005.

Who would like to tell me about some of the challenges they've experienced when setting up the AutoMARK?

Allow class participants to show hands and tell stories for about 2-3 minutes

Even though the AutoMARK has most of the features I just mentioned, it's hampered by the fact that it's difficult to set up, troubleshoot, and keep in operation--all which very important on Election Day.

For voters, it isn't very intuitive and user friendly.

New Voting Equipment
What we like about it

Click

We have an opportunity to make things much easier for you.

Click

I'm excited to share some great news!

Starting this year, we have a new Ballot Marking Device that is exactly like using an iPad, tablet, or smartphone (only with a much bigger screen).

It's simple, efficient, and flexible for both voters and poll workers.

It starts with usability. The system is easy to set up, ensure its operation, and troubleshoot throughout the day.

Not only that, all equipment pieces are easy and safe, and lightweight enough for one person to lift and or handle.

Voting Process

The new Ballot Marking Device gives voters the option to navigate and mark their ballot using a tablet with touchscreen or with a hand held device.

The Ballot Marking Device is not only an accessible voting unit; it is an option for ***all*** voters to use to mark their ballot.

How poll workers facilitate the voting experience

Poll workers will be responsible for setting up and taking down the Ballot Marking Device.

After setting up, the poll worker will open the polls on the Ballot Marking Device, and make sure all accessories are ready, and in place to accommodate voters. Steps to assist a voter who wishes to use the Ballot Marking Device are as follows:

- Voters will check in at the Voter Check-in station, and sign the roster
- The poll worker will fill out the Ballot Selection Ticket with the appropriate Ballot Type for each voter
- The voter's ballot type will be the activation code that the poll worker will use to activate the appropriate voting session.

How to Activate and use the Accessible features

Poll workers will be able to manually initiate voting sessions under two different types, accessible or standard voting.

- Voters using any of the accessible input devices we talked about earlier will hear their ballot and instructions through a set of headphones
- Voters may use their own headphones if preferred.
When using the Audio Visual mode, you can tap the “Audio” icon at the top of the tablet screen to lower or increase the volume. You can also slow down or speed up the voice on the Audio Track.
- A voter can change the contrast or completely blank out the screen. This helps when a voter who is blind or with a vision impairment is using the Ballot Marking Device. If they choose to blank out the screen, no one can observe them while they are voting.
- Voters have the ability to change the language by tapping the “Language” icon. They may then select English, Spanish, or Chinese.
- Voters can also change the text size by tapping the “text” icon and selecting their size of choice, either normal or large.
- Voters can change the contrast by tapping the “View” icon.
The different contrast options are black on white, and white on black.

Making Selections and Navigating the Ballot Using the Ballot Marking Device

- To make their selections, voters can simply tap the box with the candidates' name of their choice.
- A checkmark will appear next to the candidate that has been selected.
- If voter decides to change or cancel the selection, they would touch the candidates name again to deselect it, and make another selection.

Navigating through Ballot

- Voters can move between contests using the back and next buttons at the bottom of the touchscreen.
- Voters can also select the various contests from the ribbon above the description at the top of the touchscreen.
- If a voter chooses to write in a candidate, they can do so by tapping ***“Write-In”***.
- The write-in screen will display a keyboard to type the name of their selection.

- The keyboard appears in alphabetical order instead of qwerty.
The reason for this is because any person using an accessible input device to assist with voting has a better understanding of the alphabet than a qwerty keyboard layout. This allows them to easily predict what letters are approaching.

Once the name has been typed in, a voter must tap the “Accept” button at the bottom right of the touchscreen.

- A voter may review the selections that have been made on the ballot at any time in the voting session, by tapping the “Review” button at the bottom of the touchscreen.
- The review screen will show all of the contests on the ballot including the voter’s selections.
- The review screen will alert the voter if there is any issue with the ballot, such as an under-vote or blank contest.

If they choose, the voter can then go back to modify a contest by tapping on the contest line.

After the voter has marked their selections using the touchscreen, reviewed and accepted their choices, the voter is selects “Print Ballot” at the bottom right corner of the touchscreen.

The tablet is connected to a printer, which will print a paper ballot in the voting booth.

The paper ballot that is printed contains the ballot type, a list of the voter's selections and a QR code.

Once the ballot is printed, the voter takes their paper ballot to the Ballot Scanner inserts and the vote is cast.

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Wrap Up

While I know your heads are spinning from all of this information, please know we are here to support you and continue to work with you as a team.

Click

We talked about what it means to operate in an accessible way.

Who would like to tell me their take-away?

Allow class participants to show hands discuss about 1-2 minutes

Click

What additional tools do you have at your disposal?

Allow class participants to show hands and tell stories for about 1-2 minutes

The bottom line is to be aware of your surroundings.

Look around you.

We are all a part of the same team.

We want to make sure accessibility **continues to happen throughout the day.**

We must all work together to make sure our polling locations are accessible to everyone, and remain so until the close of the polls at the end of the night.

During slow periods, lunch, or whenever you leave and enter the building, just take a quick look to see that breadcrumb signs are still directing the voter to the accessible path of travel.

Make sure door stops, and any other mitigation items you may have received are still in place.

Additionally, we've talked about

- Language guides
- Magnifying sheets
- Trilingual ballots
- Voter assistance
- accessible booths

And

- Ballot Marking Devices

Click

All of this information will be available to you on Election Day in the Poll Worker Reference Guide

I hope we've taken some of the mystery out of the process and explained the importance of making sure the mitigation items are placed properly.

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As always, please feel free to call the Command Center on Election Day if there are any questions or concerns.

We will be hosting open houses at our office later this spring if you're interested in becoming more familiar with the new equipment.



We will thoroughly go over the new equipment at that time.

Also remember, training for the June election will begin in April and that attending class is required to work the election.

If you know of anyone who wants to become a poll worker, let them know they can sign up and get into our monthly orientation class to get the process started.

Click

There is a short survey on the other side of your worksheet for you to fill out so we can see if you found this class to be effective and informative. Once you have turned in your survey/worksheet, you will receive your brand new, limited edition APPLE pin!

Thank you again for helping us keep this room clean by checking around your area as you leave and clearing away all of your trash.

Thank you again for coming.