



Know Your Voting Rights

A Toolkit for Voters with Disabilities



Table Of Contents

Voter Registration 1

Your Voting Rights at a Glance 1

10 Things Voters with Disabilities Need to Know 2

A Closer Look at:

 Absentee Voting..... 4

 Accessible Voting..... 4

 Accessible Absentee Voting..... 5

About Disability Rights Center-NH 6



Voter Registration

Minimum Requirements to Register to Vote in New Hampshire:

- Be a U.S. Citizen;
- Be 18 years old on or before the date of the election;
- Reside in the town or ward where you seek to vote; and
- Proof of your identity, age, citizenship, and residence.

- You can register at your city or town clerk's office up to 10 days before the election.
- You can also register on election day at your polling location.

Your Voting Rights at a Glance

The rights of voters with disabilities are protected under federal law. These include:

- ✓ The right to vote privately and independently.
- ✓ The right to vote in a polling place that is accessible and free of physical barriers.
- ✓ The right to vote using an accessible voting machine to mark your ballot.
- ✓ The right to get help with voting from a person of your choice except your employer or union representative.
- ✓ Individuals under guardianship do not lose their right to vote.

10 Things

Voters with Disabilities Need to Know

1) You Have the Right to Vote Independently and Privately

No one can tell you how to vote or stop you from voting if you are eligible. It is your choice. Your vote is private and you can keep it a secret.

2) Someone Can Help You Vote

Help can be provided by a friend, family member, caregiver, service provider, or a poll worker. The only people who cannot help you mark or cast your ballot are your employer or union representative.

3) You Can Vote by Absentee Ballot

If you can't vote in person because of your disability, you have the right to request an absentee ballot. An absentee ballot allows you to complete your ballot at home and either mail it in or deliver your ballot to your town or city clerk. You can get more information on how to vote absentee at: <https://drcnh.org/voting-rights/know-your-voting-rights-absentee-voting/>.

4) You Have the Right to an Accessible Polling Place

Federal laws require all polling sites to be physically accessible. These laws ensure equal access for people with disabilities, including voters who use wheelchairs or who have vision loss. If your polling place is not accessible, you have the right to have an absentee ballot brought to you in your car or other accessible location outside of the polling location.

5) You Can Use the one4all Accessible Voting System

In NH, our accessible voting system is called the one4all and it consists of a tablet, keyboard, headphones, and printer. It is available at every polling place for federal elections. The one4all is not connected to the internet and it is secure. All registered voters of all abilities can use the system. A blind or vision impaired person can use the system independently. Assistance is not necessary to vote but help is available if needed. For a demonstration go to: <https://futureinsight.org/blog-and-news/accessible-voting-training-sessions-with-one4all/>.

6) You Can Register Anytime, Even on Election Day

There is no minimum period of time you are required to have lived in New Hampshire before being allowed to register. You may register to vote as soon as you move into your new community. Simply visit your local town or city clerk's

office. You will need to complete a standard Voter Registration Form and show proof that you reside in the town or city where you will vote. For more information on where to register visit: <https://app.sos.nh.gov/viphome>.

Remember, in New Hampshire you can register to vote on election day at the polling place.

7) You Have the Right to Bring Your Service Animal with You to the Polling Place

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, service animals are allowed to go in areas of the polling place where the public is allowed to go.

8) You Have the Right to Vote Even if you Have a Guardian

New Hampshire law protects your right to vote. Your right to vote cannot be taken away because you are under a guardianship, nor can a judge deny you your right to vote because you have a guardian.

9) You Have the Right to Complain About Voting Issues

If you believe that your right to vote has been violated, you can file a complaint with the New Hampshire Secretary of State. You can also contact Disability Rights Center- NH at mail@drcnh.org for assistance.

10) Learn About the Candidates Before Election Day

It is important to learn about the issues and candidates before voting. You can visit the following sites to learn about ballot measures and candidates, and to find out about upcoming debates or forums:

- <https://drcnh.org/issue-areas/voting/>
- <https://justfacts.votesmart.org/>
- https://ballotpedia.org/New_Hampshire
- <https://sos.nh.gov/elections/elections>



A Closer Look At:

Absentee Voting

To vote absentee, you must request a ballot from your town or city clerk. You can make a request by mail or in-person. The request form is available through the Secretary of State's website sos.nh.gov.

- If you request an absentee ballot but are not registered to vote, your town or city clerk will send you both your absentee ballot and your absentee voter registration form and instructions.
- You can request an absentee ballot for both the primary election and general election on the same form. However, you will need to request an absentee ballot each and every election cycle in which you wish to vote.
- You can return your absentee ballot either by mail or in person.
- ✓ **If returning by mail:** If you are mailing your ballot, it must be received by 5 p.m. on Election Day. If your ballot arrives after the deadline, it will not be counted. To ensure your ballot arrives on time, mail it at least two weeks before Election Day.
- ✓ **If returning in person:** If you return your absentee ballot in-person, you must do so by 5 p.m. on the day before Election Day. You will need to bring a form of identification. Town and city clerks must be available between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. on the day before the election to receive your ballot. You can also bring it earlier. Call your town or city clerk to find out when the office is open.
- If you are voting absentee and cannot mail or deliver your ballot in-person, there are other ways to make sure your ballot is counted. The laws and rules around these alternatives are very complex and you should contact your city or town clerk to learn more.

Accessible Voting

- All polling locations must be physically accessible. A polling place is physically accessible if you have an accessible place to park and you can move from the parking place to a well-marked accessible entrance to the voting booth without barriers.
- For all state-wide federal elections, the polling place must have at least one accessible voting booth and one accessible voting system. The accessible voting system in New Hampshire is called the one4all. Any voter can use one4all accessible voting system. Assistance to use the one4all should not be necessary, but is available if needed. Currently, the one4all voting system is not available for most local and town elections. For a demonstration of the one4all visit: <https://futureinsight.org/blog-and-news/accessible-voting-training-sessions-with-one4all/>.

- Your service animal is allowed to enter the polling place and accompany you while you vote.
- If your polling place is not accessible, an absentee ballot can be brought to you in your car or other accessible location outside of the polling station.
- Someone can help you complete your ballot as long as they are not your employer or union representative. Although you do have to tell the moderator that you need assistance completing your ballot, you do not need to tell them why you need help. The person you choose to help you must swear to the moderator that they will mark the ballot as you direct and keep your choices private.
- If you make a mistake on your ballot, you may return it to the moderator and request a new one. If you make a mistake on a second ballot, you may request a third and final ballot. However, if you make a mistake on the third ballot, you will not be permitted an additional ballot and must decide whether to cast it with the mistake.

Accessible Absentee Voting

For federal elections, people with print disabilities, including people who are blind or people who are unable to mark a paper ballot by hand can vote using an accessible absentee ballot. Voters who have print disabilities must specifically request an accessible absentee ballot and sign an affidavit (a written statement under oath) confirming that they need one. The accessible absentee ballots should be compatible with commercial screen reading and marking software.

- Once your request for an accessible absentee ballot is approved, an electronic version of the ballot is emailed to you and an official absentee envelope is mailed to you.
- Once you receive an electronic ballot, you can fill it out on your computer and print out a paper copy of your ballot.
- You must return your completed accessible absentee ballot through the mail or in-person; you cannot email it back. You may either mail your completed ballot to your city or town clerk for processing or hand-deliver your ballot before election day.
- The Application for an Accessible Electronic Absentee Ballot is available through the Secretary of State's website sos.nh.gov



Contact Disability Rights Center-NH to learn more about accessible absentee voting.



DRC-NH protects, advances, and strengthens the legal rights and advocacy interests of all people with disabilities. Call us to schedule a free consultation on a disability discrimination issue with an experienced attorney.

Advocating for the legal rights of people with disabilities in these areas:

- Abuse and Neglect
- Access and Accommodation
- Children’s Issues
- Employment
- Special Education
- Developmental Disabilities
- Representative Payee
- Voting
- Housing
- Medicaid and Healthcare
- Mental Health
- Traumatic Brain Injury

VISION STATEMENT

We envision an inclusive, accessible, and just society:

Where all are treated with dignity and respect.

Where people with disabilities live the lives that they choose, lives that are free from abuse, neglect, and discrimination.

Where people with disabilities have equal opportunity to participate fully in their community and enjoy their lives.

Disability Rights Center - NH

Protection and Advocacy System for New Hampshire

64 North Main Street, Suite 2
3rd Floor, Concord, NH 03301-4913

MISSION: Disability Rights Center – New Hampshire protects, advances, and strengthens the legal rights and advocacy interests of all people with disabilities.

twitter.com/DRCNH

facebook.com/DisabilityRightsCenterNH

WEBSITE: www.drcnh.org

EMAIL: mail@drcnh.org

VOICE AND TDD: (603) 228-0432
1-800-834-1721

FAX:..... (603) 225-2077

TDD access also through NH Relay Service

VOICE AND TDD: 1-800-735-2964

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This brochure is not meant to be legal advice. For specific legal advice an attorney should be consulted.