ADA Audio Conference Series
October 16, 2018
The Right to Vote: Access for People with Disabilities

This session is scheduled to begin at 2:00pm Eastern Time

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• If you are connected via a mobile device you may submit questions in the chat area within the App.
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Please note: This webinar is being recorded and can be accessed on the ADA Audio Conference series website at www.ada-audio.org within 24 hours after the conclusion of the session. The edited written transcript will be posted at this same site within 7 business days following the conclusion of the session.

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Customize Your View, continued

• Resize/Reposition the Chat, Participant and Audio & Video panels by “detaching” and using your mouse to reposition or “stretch/shrink”.

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  1. In webinar platform: Send a private chat message to the host by double-clicking “Great Lakes ADA” in the participant list. A tab titled “Great Lakes ADA” will appear in the chat panel. Type your comment in the text box and “enter” (Keyboard - F6, Arrow up or down to locate “Great Lakes ADA” and select to send a message); or
  2. By Email webinars@ada-audio.org; or
  3. Call 877-232-1990 (V/TTY)

The Right to Vote: Access for People with Disabilities
Michelle Bishop, Voting Rights Specialist
October 2018
NDRN

- National Disability Rights Network
- The nonprofit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Systems for individuals with disabilities

The P&A Network

- Established by Congress to protect the rights of people with disabilities through legal support, advocacy, referral, and education.
- In all 50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, US Territories, and the Native American Consortium (Hopi, Navaho and Piute Nations in the Four Corner region of the Southwest).
- Largest provider of legal advocacy services to people with disabilities in the US.

PAVA

- Protection & Advocacy for Voter Access
- Federal mandate to the P&As
- Established under HAVA to “ensure the full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities, including registering to vote, casting a vote, and accessing polling places.”
Elections Are Coming

• 2018 Midterm General Election: Tuesday November 6
• Learn more: www.vote411.org

Why Our Vote Is So Important

• Disability voter turnout is 6% behind non-disabled Americans
• That’s about 3 million missing voters
• That’s enough voters to win any election

Voting Accessibility Laws

• Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
• Help America Vote Act (HAVA)
• Voting Rights Act (VRA)
• ...and there are more.
ADA and Voter Access

- Architectural access standards apply
- https://www.ada.gov/votingck.htm
- Same-day modifications can be used
- To check a specific polling site:
  - Contact your local elections official
  - Contact your P&A

HAVA and the Voting Booth

- Private and independent ballot
- Replacement of punch card systems
- Voluntary Voting System Guidelines
- US Election Assistance Commission
  - www.eac.gov

Voting Rights Act

- Section 208 provides for voters who need assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write.
- Any such voter may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer or agent of the employer or officer or agent of the voter's union.
The Current State of Poll Access

• Surveys in 2000, 2008, and 2016
• Must be requested by Congress

Path of Travel: Parking to Booth

• Accessible polling places:
  • 2000: 16%
  • 2008: 27%
  • 2016: 40%

The Voting Booth

• Voting stations with at least one impediment:
  • 2000: not studied
  • 2008: 46%
  • 2016: 65%
Types of Impediments

• Not set up for privacy:
  • 2008: 23%
  • 2016: 28%

• Not wheelchair accessible:
  • 2008: 29%
  • 2016: 42%

Types of Impediments (Cont)

• No earphones:
  • 2008: 6%
  • 2016: 9%

• Voting system powered off:
  • 2008: 5%
  • 2016: 7%

The Bottom Line

• Polling places are slowly becoming more accessible.

• Voting stations are becoming less accessible.
Options for Voters

• Curbside voting
• Early voting
• Absentee balloting
• Ballot machine delivery
• Relocation of polling place

Researching Your Options

• Your state elections website
• Your local elections officials
• Your P&A: www.ndrn.org
• www.electionary.info

When Voting Goes Wrong

• Call your P&A: www.ndrn.org
• Call Election Protection: www.866ourvote.org
• NAD’s ASL Hotline
• The Arc’s voter app
The Bottom Line

• Don’t forfeit your right to vote.

Thank You

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