

Facilitation Measures for Electors with Special Needs

(A) Electors with mobility difficulties

1. The Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”) aims to have at least 90% of polling stations set up at venues which are accessible to electors with mobility difficulties or who are wheelchair users. Where the circumstances permit, temporary ramps will be set up at polling stations for wheelchair users.
2. Telephone number of the polling station will be posted near the ramp leading to the station. If necessary, electors with mobility difficulties can contact the polling staff for assistance.
3. The REO will indicate in the polling station location map to be sent together with the poll card to electors whether the allocated polling station is accessible to electors with mobility difficulties or who are wheelchair users. If these electors are allocated to inaccessible polling stations, they may apply to the REO at least five days before the polling day for re-allocation to a polling station set up at an accessible venue.
4. Upon request, the REO will approach the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation for arrangement of Rehabuses to transport electors with mobility difficulties to and from polling stations.
5. All accessible polling stations will be equipped with enlarged voting compartments with lower polling tables for electors who are wheelchair users.
6. If necessary, electors can seek help from the Presiding Officer (“PRO”) to mark the ballot papers on their behalf according to their choice inside a voting compartment with a polling staff serving as a witness. Where space permits, one of the voting compartments at each polling station will be separated from the remaining compartments in order to prevent electors at the adjacent compartments from overhearing the conversation between the polling staff and the electors concerned.

(B) Electors with visual impairment

1. All the election websites have incorporated accessible designs. Most of the information or documents on the websites are convenient for browsing by persons with visual impairment with the aid of screen reading software.
2. Appeal will be made to candidates to provide a text version of their “Introduction to Candidates” for uploading onto the dedicated website (www.elections.gov.hk) to facilitate online reading of the relevant information using assistive software by persons with visual impairment.
3. Electors with visual impairment may provide/update their e-mail addresses for receiving soft copy of electoral information from the REO by completing an electronic form at the Voter Registration website (www.voterregistration.gov.hk). They would be reminded through Short Message Service to read the e-mail issued by the REO.
4. The telephone number of the enquiry hotline (2891 1001) will be read out in radio Announcements in the Public Interest (“APIs”) and TV APIs so that persons with visual impairment may obtain information relating to electoral arrangements through the hotline.
5. A web accessible version of the TV APIs will be available on the dedicated website to facilitate the browsing of election-related information by electors with visual impairment.
6. A 24-hour Interactive Voice Response System (“IVRS”) (2893 3762) will be provided for electors with visual impairment to listen to the recording made from the text version of the “Introduction to Candidates” at any time. They can also be redirected to the operators of the REO’s enquiry hotline during the hotline’s operating hours to obtain other electoral information. On the polling day, electors with visual impairment will be allowed to use the telephones at the polling stations to access the IVRS through a dedicated telephone line without redirect function.

7. A braille list of candidates with the candidate numbers, candidates' names and the names of prescribed bodies will be available at polling stations to facilitate the access of electors with visual impairment to the relevant information.
8. Braille templates will be available at polling stations to facilitate the marking of ballot papers by electors with visual impairment themselves.
9. If necessary, electors can seek help from the PRO to mark the ballot papers on their behalf according to their choice inside a voting compartment with a polling staff serving as a witness. Where space permits, one of the voting compartments at each polling station will be separated from the remaining compartments in order to prevent electors at the adjacent compartments from overhearing the conversation between the polling staff and the electors concerned.
10. Electors with visual impairment may bring along their guide dogs into the polling stations.

(C) Electors with hearing impairment

1. Sign language interpretation and subtitles will be included in all election-related TV APIs.
2. An "Illustration on Guidance on Voting Procedure" ("pictorial voting aid") is available at all polling stations to assist electors with hearing impairment in understanding the voting procedures. The pictorial voting aid will be uploaded onto the dedicated website for electors' reference before the poll.

(D) Ethnic minority electors and electors in need

1. Electoral information in seven ethnic minority languages (Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi, Tagalog, Thai, and Urdu) will be available on the dedicated website.

2. Electoral information in Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Tagalog Thai, and Urdu will also be available on the homepage of the Home Affairs Department's Race Relations Unit (www.had.gov.hk/rru).
3. Information on the election will be broadcast in five ethnic minority languages (Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Thai, and Urdu) on radio.
4. Appeal will be made to candidates to provide election advertisements in English and/or ethnic minority languages to facilitate understanding by electors who do not read Chinese.
5. Polling stations will be equipped with a Language Assistance Folder which will contain guides on voting procedures written in the aforesaid seven ethnic minority languages to assist ethnic minority electors in casting their votes.
6. The REO will collaborate with the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents to provide free interpretation service in the aforesaid seven ethnic minority languages, through the REO's dedicated telephone line, to help electors of ethnic minorities understand the voting procedures and to facilitate their making of enquiries on election-related matters.
7. Electoral information in the aforesaid seven ethnic minority languages will be posted in eight support centres for the ethnic minorities run by non-governmental organisations.

(E) Other electors with special needs

1. A pictorial voting aid explaining the voting procedures will be provided at all polling stations to assist electors in need (e.g. electors with intellectual differences, electors with speech or communication impairment and electors who are not familiar with Chinese or English, etc.) in understanding the voting procedures. The pictorial voting aid will be uploaded onto the dedicated website for electors' reference before the poll.

2. Electors who are unable to cast their votes on their own can seek help from the PRO to mark the ballot papers on their behalf according to their voting choice. The whole process will be witnessed by another polling staff to ensure that the voting will be conducted in a fair manner. According to the current legislation, all polling staff (including the PRO) must sign a declaration of secrecy in the specified form and must comply with various requirements concerning voting secrecy. To further protect the privacy of the electors concerned, where space permits, one of the voting compartments at each polling station will be separated from the remaining compartments in order to prevent electors at the adjacent compartments from overhearing the conversation between the polling staff and the electors concerned.