

Franklin County Accessibility Plan for Voters with Disabilities

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CHAPTER ONE – General Information

Section 1. Authorization.

The Accessibility Plan is established/implemented under the authority of Chapter 29A.04.223 RCW.

Section 2. Purpose.

To ensure accessible voting to the disabled community within Franklin County.

CHAPTER TWO – The Advisory Committee

Section 1. Composition of the Committee.

The Disability Advisory Committee is established by RCW 29A.04.223. For purposes of providing adequate services that encompass the disabled community as a whole, the committee should be composed of representatives of the various disabilities within the community. Including, but not limited to: Blind, deaf, mute, wheelchair bound, paraplegic, mental illness, illiterate, etc.

Meeting frequency: The meeting frequency is to be determined by the committee but no less than annually.

CHAPTER THREE – Voting Centers

Section 1. Locations and hours.

Per RCW 29A.40 the County Auditor shall open a voting center for each election that offers an accessible voting unit. Currently, the Auditor's Office serves as a Voting Center with an accessible voting unit and opens 20 days prior to the election during regular business hours. This site is also open on Election Day from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Section 2. Accessibility Requirements.

WAC 434-250-105 sets the accessibility standards and indicates as follows: "The Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Polling Places shall be used when determining the accessibility of a polling place." The ADA Checklist may be found at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/votingprt.pdf>. Franklin County's Voting Center has been compared and checked with the ADA Checklist and complies with the requirements.

Section 3. Accessible Voting Units (AVUs).

Franklin County uses the Dominion EDGE System. The Disabled Access Unit (DAU) with a Voter Verifiable Paper Trail/Verifiable Ballot Option (VVPAT/VBO) is a voting machine which is modified with headphones for an audio ballot, tactile switches and/or a sip & puff device for mobility impairments.

CHAPTER FOUR – Plan for Improvement of Elections Accessibility

Section 1. Number & Location of Voting Centers.

Franklin County currently designates one (1) Voting Center. The Franklin County Courthouse (1016 N 4th Ave, Pasco, WA 99301) which is open 20 days prior to each election from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Election Day from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

This determination was made based on geographic location of the majority of the voting population. The facility is ADA compliant.

Section 2. Community Outreach.

Franklin County will implement an Outreach Program that will provide education to the community with regard to the availability of the Accessible Voting Unit within various organizations in the community, including: Presentations at nursing homes and churches, distributing information with medical providers and organizations that provide services to disabled community members.

Section 3. Transportation of Voting Devices.

Should an accessible voting unit be offered in a location other than the county courthouse, it shall be logged, sealed, and transported to the location by an authorized representative of the county auditor. The voting device and ballots transmitted by the devices shall be transported securely from the site to the counting center by two authorized election officials.

Section 4. Implementation of Provisions of HAVA.

HAVA requirements indicate a need for “implementation of at least one Direct Recording Electronic voting device . . . and adequate placement of this equipment throughout counties that have adopted vote-by-mail”.

Franklin County currently has 10 Accessible Voting Units equipped with headphones for an audio ballot and tactile switches and/or a sip & puff device for mobility impairments. One unit is available at the County Courthouse 20 days prior to the election and on Election Day.

Section 5. Trainings for Use of Equipment.

Franklin County Auditor’s staff have received training for the use of the Accessible Voting Units. Additional training will be made available to new voting center workers and new staff members.