

## The Elderly and Voters with Disabilities

*Information Provided by the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board*

### What has changed in the law?

- Wisconsin law requires voters to show an acceptable photo ID to vote at the polling place.
- A valid photo ID, or acceptable substitute, must be provided when voting by absentee ballot, unless you are part of a group exempted by law. Voters who are indefinitely confined, or who reside in nursing homes or other residential facilities, may have their witness verify their identity instead of submitting a copy of their photo ID.

### When must I provide a photo ID with my absentee application or ballot, and when are alternatives available?

- **Indefinitely confined voters** may provide a copy of their photo ID, but may also choose to have their absentee witness verify their identity. These electors must indicate on their application form that they are indefinitely confined because of age, illness, infirmity, or disability.
- **Voters residing in facilities visited by Special Voting Deputies** (usually **nursing homes**) may provide a copy of their photo ID, but may also have the Special Voting Deputies verify their identity before signing as witnesses to the absentee ballot.
- **Voters residing in other facilities** that are eligible for Special Voting Deputy procedures, but are **not visited by Special Voting Deputies**, may provide a copy of their photo ID or ask an authorized representative of the facility to verify their identity by signing the absentee certificate envelope. If the voter is indefinitely confined, the signature of an authorized representative is not required, but a witness must still sign the certificate envelope (see above).
- **Hospitalized electors** must provide a copy of their photo ID with their absentee application unless another exception applies, but may have another person serve as their agent in signing the necessary forms and delivering them to the municipal clerk.
- **Other absentee voters** must provide a copy of their photo ID with their absentee ballot request. Once photo ID is provided, the voter no longer has to provide proof of ID with any absentee ballots sent by mail, until they re-register (their name or address changes). Regular absentee voters may apply for absentee ballots for up to one calendar year.

For detailed information about the Voter Photo ID law, visit [bringit.wi.gov](http://bringit.wi.gov).  
For other information on the Government Accountability Board, visit <http://gab.wi.gov>  
or call the G.A.B. Help Desk at 608-261-2028.

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### What accommodations are available if I vote at my polling place?

- **Curbside voting is available** if a voter cannot enter the polling place due to a disability on Election Day. Proof of residence must be provided if you are not registered. Proof of identification must also be provided. Two poll workers will bring a ballot to the individual needing assistance, and conduct voting at their vehicle, or at the polling place entrance. These voters are not required to sign the poll list. Instead, the poll workers will write “Exempt by order of inspectors” in the signature space on the poll list.
- **If a voter inside the polling location cannot sign the poll list** due to a physical disability, they should inform a poll worker. The poll worker will write “Exempt by order of inspectors” in the signature space on the poll list.
- **An accessible voting machine will be available in every polling place.** This machine will allow voters to independently mark the ballot. These machines will be low enough for voters in a wheelchair to reach the controls, and have an audio ballot-marking option for voters with visual impairment.
- **If a voter needs help marking the ballot**, he or she may have a person assist them. That person does not need to be qualified to vote. The voter may not receive assistance from an employer or a representative of that voter’s labor organization. Any other person, including a poll worker, may assist the voter to mark the ballot. The assisting elector must sign their name on the ballot under the section entitled “Signature of Assisting Individual.” Poll workers must record the fact that the voter received assistance, and the full name and address of the assisting person, in the poll list. This includes voters who have difficulty reading and writing in English.
- **Other reasonable accommodations can be requested.** Speak to the chief inspector at the polling place or the municipal clerk.

### What accommodations are available if I vote by absentee ballot?

- **If a voter needs help registering to vote**, any person may assist them to fill out a form and mail it in to their municipal clerk. The assisting person must sign the voter registration form in the space provided.
- **If a voter needs help requesting an absentee ballot**, any person may assist them to fill out a form and mail it in to their municipal clerk. The assisting person must sign the absentee ballot request form.
- **If a voter needs help marking the ballot**, see the section above.
- **No one may mark or cast a ballot without the voter’s knowledge or contrary to the voter’s wishes**, even if they have power of attorney or other guardianship status.

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