



## **Know Your Voting Rights**

The Help America Vote Act (“HAVA”)<sup>1</sup> is a federal law enacted in 2002 to protect the voting rights of people with disabilities. HAVA requires:

- at least one voting machine at each polling place that is accessible for people who have visual or mobility disabilities.
- full barrier-free access to polling places to enable people with disabilities to cast their votes privately as nondisabled voters do.
- ballots in multiple languages.

People with disabilities have the right to:

- vote at an actual polling site. Election officials must not force people with disabilities to vote curbside or via absentee ballots.
- register to vote online or via mail by August 16, 2010 or on Election Day.
- vote by “provisional ballot” in the event of registration on Election Day or the voter’s name is not on the registration rolls, or the voter is deemed ineligible. Provisional ballots are counted when the election officials determine voter eligibility.
- accessible communications from the D.C. Board of Elections for people with visual impairments.

Election officials must not exclude voters with disabilities based on their:

- Homelessness
- Residency in a nursing home, hospital or jail (unless currently incarcerated for a felony conviction)
- Physical disability
- Mental disability (unless a court held that you are legally incompetent to vote)
- Lack of identification.

**Need Assistance?** For information on voting, call the D.C. Board of Elections and Ethics at (202)727-2525. For assistance with voting access issues, call University Legal Services at (202) 547-0198.

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<sup>1</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 15301-15545