

Facilitation Measures for Electors with Special Needs

(A) Electors with mobility difficulties

1. Around 93% of polling stations are accessible to electors with mobility difficulties or who are wheelchair users.
2. Telephone number of the polling station is posted near the ramp leading to the station. If necessary, electors with mobility difficulties can contact the polling staff for assistance.
3. Through the polling station location map sent together with the poll card to electors, the Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”) will advise 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 REO at least five days before the polling day for re-allocation to a special polling station set up in an accessible venue.
4. Where circumstances permit, the REO will upon request try to arrange, through the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation, Rehabus service to transport electors with mobility difficulties to and from polling stations.
5. All accessible polling stations are equipped with enlarged voting compartments with lower polling tables.
6. If necessary, electors can seek help from the Presiding Officer (“PRO”) to mark the ballot paper on their behalf according to their choice inside a voting compartment with a polling officer serving as a witness. Space permitting, 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 electors concerned.

(B) Electors with visual impairment

1. All the election websites (i.e. www.eac.gov.hk, www.reo.gov.hk, www.elections.gov.hk and www.voterregistration.gov.hk) 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. Encourage candidates to provide a text version of their Introduction to Candidates for uploading onto the dedicated election 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 email 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 number of the enquiry hotline (2891 1001) is 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 is available on the dedicated election website to facilitate electors.
6. Electors with visual impairment can call the dedicated telephone line 2893 3762 provided for them by the REO. Through the new 24-hour Interactive Voice Response System (“IVRS”), electors with visual impairment can obtain information on the Introduction to Candidates. The IVRS can also re-direct to operators for enquiry of other electoral information.
7. A Braille list of candidates with the candidate numbers and candidates’ names and the names of prescribed bodies is available at polling stations to facilitate electors with visual impairment to read the relevant information.
8. Braille templates are available at polling stations to facilitate electors with visual impairment to mark the ballot papers themselves.
9. If necessary, electors can seek help from the PRO to mark the ballot paper on their behalf according to their choice inside a voting compartment with a polling officer serving as a witness. Space permitting, 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 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 are included in all election-related TV APIs.
2. All polling stations provide a “Illustration on Guidance on Voting Procedure” (“pictorial voting aid”) to assist electors with hearing impairment to understand the voting procedures. The aid is uploaded onto the dedicated election website for electors’ reference before the poll.

(D) Ethnic minority electors

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

4. Polling stations are equipped with a Language Assistance Folder which will contain guides on voting procedure written in the aforesaid seven ethnic minority languages to assist ethnic minority electors in casting votes.
5. The REO will collaborate with the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents (commonly known as“CHEER”) 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 during the two weeks leading up to the election as well as on the polling day.
6. 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 is provided at all polling stations to assist electors in need (e.g. electors with intellectual differences, electors with speech or communication impairment, electors who are not familiar with Chinese and English, etc.) to understand the voting procedure. The pictorial voting aid is uploaded onto the dedicated election 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 paper on their behalf according to their voting choice. The whole process is witnessed by another polling officer to ensure that the voting is conducted in a fair manner. According to 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, space permitting, 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 electors concerned.