

Facilitation Measures for Voters with Special Needs

(A) Voters whose age is 70 or above, pregnant women, and persons who are unable to queue for a long time or have difficulty in queuing

1. The Presiding Officer (“PRO”) may set up a special queue to give priority to the following voters for obtaining their ballot paper(s) from the ballot paper issuing desk -
 - (a) voters who are 70 years old or above;
 - (b) pregnant women; or
 - (c) persons who are unable to queue for a long time or have difficulty in queuing due to illness, injury, disability or dependence on mobility aids.

(B) Voters with mobility difficulties

1. The Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”) aims to have all polling stations set up at venues which are accessible to voters 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, voters with mobility difficulties can contact the polling staff for assistance.
3. Polling stations, which are all accessible, will be equipped with enlarged voting compartments with lower polling tables for voters who are wheelchair users.
4. If necessary, voters can seek help from the PRO to mark the ballot papers on their behalf according to their choices 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 voters at the adjacent compartments from overhearing the conversation between the polling staff and the voters concerned.

(C) Voters 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 voters 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 to facilitate online reading of the relevant information using assistive software by voters with visual impairment.
3. Voters 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 email 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 voters with visual impairment.
6. A 24-hour Interactive Voice Response System (“IVRS”) (2893 3762) will be provided for voters 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, voters 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 and candidates’ names will be available at polling stations to facilitate the access of voters with visual impairment to the relevant information.
8. Braille templates will be available at polling stations to facilitate the marking of ballot papers by voters with visual impairment themselves.

A Braille template contains 30 candidates' names with numbers at most. If there are more than 30 candidates in the relevant subsector, the voters with visual impairment can seek help from the PRO to mark the ballot paper on their behalf according to their choices.

9. If necessary, voters can seek help from the PRO to mark the ballot papers on their behalf according to their choices 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 voters at the adjacent compartments from overhearing the conversation between the polling staff and the voters concerned.
10. Voters with visual impairment may bring along their guide dogs into the polling stations.

(D) Voters 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 voters with hearing impairment in understanding the voting procedures. The pictorial voting aid will be uploaded onto the dedicated website for voters' reference before the poll.

(E) Voters of diverse race

1. Electoral information in eight languages of diverse race (Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi, Tagalog, Thai, Urdu and Vietnamese) 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 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 languages of diverse race to facilitate understanding by voters 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 languages to assist voters of diverse race in casting their votes.
6. The REO will collaborate with the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents (“CHEER”) to provide free interpretation service in the aforesaid eight languages of diverse race, through the REO’s dedicated telephone line, to help voters of diverse race understand the voting procedures and to facilitate their making of enquiries on election-related matters.
7. Electoral information in the aforesaid eight languages of diverse race will be posted in eight support centres for the people of diverse race run by non-governmental organisations.

(F) Other voters with special needs

1. A pictorial voting aid explaining the voting procedures will be provided at all polling stations to assist voters in need (e.g. voters with intellectual differences, voters with speech or communication impairment and voters 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 voters’ reference before the poll.
2. Voters 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 choices. 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 voters concerned, where space permits, one of the voting compartments at each polling station will be separated from the remaining compartments in order to prevent voters at the adjacent compartments from overhearing the conversation between the polling staff and the voters concerned.