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Universal Accessibility Electoral Design

+ *Undergraduate Research Manual*

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+

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*Parts to the Universal Accessibility Electoral
Design research project.*

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Introduction

Inspiration for this research project and project introductions are included in this section.

+ Preface

Why the designer chose this project.

I remember the first time that I participated in a U.S. democratic election. I was 18 years old, and I came from a well-educated, white family in rural Pennsylvania. My parents were avid voters and instilled in me an understanding of the importance of voting. I remember asking them many questions about the electoral process before heading to the local polling place. I also remember how I had to rely on their answers because I was unsatisfied with the amount of information I found on-line, especially about the potential candidates I might see on my ballot.

I eagerly drove to the local polling place and navigated my way to the front door of the building but had wished that there were signs pointing me in the right direction. I experienced feelings of anxiety as volunteers and local politicians began asking me which side I was on or if they could count on my vote. I found the ballot layout confusing the first time I saw it. There was no information about the candidates or even about the areas of Congress in which I was voting for. I filled out the ballot, unsure if I completed it right, and inserted it into the ballot reader.

Many voting citizens in the U.S. have shared their experiences of confusion, anxiety, and frustration with electoral processes. Voting can be especially

difficult for those with disabilities who may have trouble navigating electoral materials or traveling to on-site polling places. In an effort to make voting accessible to everyone, I chose to take on the *Universal Accessibility Electoral Design* research project to create universally accessible materials that I designed with all voters in mind. The success of future electoral processes relies on the design changes detailed in this manual.



Jackie Eberle
Multimedia Designer
Juniata College



But the fundamental problem is that the voters with disabilities are being offered a ‘separate but equal’ approach to voting. And, as ever, separate is not equal.¹

– **Juan E. Guilbert**

*Associate Chair of Research at
the University of Florida*

1. Gilbert, Juan E. “How Universal Design Can Help Every Voter Cast a Ballot.” The Conversation, December 22, 2021. <https://theconversation.com/how-universal-design-can-help-every-voter-cast-a-ballot-54373>.

+ *Project Disclaimer*

Some notes about the project.

Jackie Eberle wrote and designed with manual independently with the guidance provided by the project's sponsors. Due to limited resources and project timeline, the newly designed electoral materials and manual were unable to be translated into all minority languages used in the U.S. If voters register with their preferred language, these materials will need to be translated accordingly.

In an effort to achieve full project transparency and availability, the author and designer have supplied all materials for free on-line. The first third of this project received a small portion of grant funding from Juniata College to help to pay for the upfront cost of researching the design issues and tools discussed throughout this manual.



Photo by Edmond Dantès from Pexels.⁶

². Dantès, Edmond. People Casting Their Votes. February 27, 2021. Photograph. Pexels. <https://www.pexels.com/photo/people-casting-their-votes-7103199/>.

+ Introduction

Some notes about the project.

The 2020 Presidential Election took place in the middle of a global pandemic.

Many voting citizens were forced to risk their health to vote in person or try to navigate the complicated process of voting by mail.

Mail-in ballots also faced scrutiny over its assumed lack of voter security.

Whether trying to find a nearby polling place, or filtering through paid candidate advertisements, transparent and accessible resources are hard to come by. Current voting processes place an unequal burden on low literacy readers and those with disabilities.³ Studies indicate that residual voting rates (votes that remain unrecorded) are much higher in low-income and minority communities, as well as among elderly voters.⁴

In the 2012 presidential election, only 15.6 million people with disabilities reported voting, which is 5.7% lower than people without disabilities.⁵ Adults with low literacy skills may also struggle with word recognition and have difficulties reading

instructions, making it difficult to participate in voting processes.⁶

To address ongoing electoral issues, the *Universal Accessibility Electoral Design* project highlights necessary design improvements made to ballots, polling signage, and informational materials throughout this manual. This project is intended to decrease residual voting rates and provide voters with accessible voting options.

3. Summers, Kathryn, Dana Chisnell, Drew Davies, Noel Alton, and Megan McKeever. "Making Voting Accessible: Designing Digital Ballot Marking for People with Low Literacy and Mild Cognitive Disabilities." USENIX. Journal of Election Technology and Systems (JETS), April 2014. https://www.usenix.org/system/files/conference/evtvote14/jets_0202-summers.pdf.

4. Norden, Lawrence, Chen, Kimball, and Quesenbery. "Better Ballots." Brennan Center for Justice, July 21, 2018. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/better-ballots>.

5. Gilbert, Juan E. "How Universal Design Can Help Every Voter Cast a Ballot."

6. Norden, Lawrence, Chen, Kimball, and Quesenbery. "Better Ballots."

+

Electoral Design

Considerations for language, typography, color palettes, and graphics are included in this section.

+ Language

Language used for electoral materials.

The United States Congress identified a common issue seen across the country where citizens of language minorities have been excluded from participation in electoral processes.

In order to address this ongoing issue and eliminate discriminatory practices, Congress enacted language minority provisions of the Voting Rights Act. The provisions required state and political groups to provide all electoral process materials in the language most used by the language minority groups.⁷

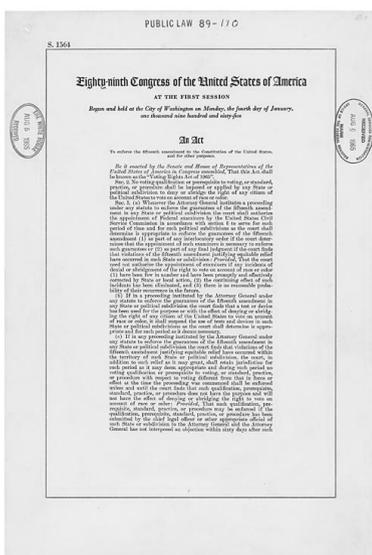


Photo from the National Archives.⁸

+ More on the Voting Rights Act

The Voting Rights Act, signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson, outlawed literacy tests and appointed Federal examiners to register qualified citizens to vote. The Act also challenged poll taxes, which had been abolished the year prior.⁹

As reported by the U.S. general records and the National Archives, the Voting Rights Act led to over a quarter of a million new Black voters being registered at the end of year.¹⁰

7. Clarke, Kristen. "About Language Minority Voting Rights." The United States Department of Justice, January 4, 2022. <https://www.justice.gov/crt/about-language-minority-voting-rights>.

8. Voting Rights Act (1965). February 8, 2022. Photograph. National Archives. National Archives . <https://www.archives.gov/files/milestone-documents/images/doc-100-big.jpg#.YIQV5-EPNfc.link>.

9. Constitution of the United States. "Voting Rights Act." National Archives and Records Administration, August 6, 1965. <https://www.archives.gov/historical-docs/voting-rights-act>.

10. Ibid.

When voters register to vote, they must be given the option to select the language that they prefer so that all electoral materials they interact with are provided in that language. The Plain Language Action and Information Network (PLAIN) is an organized group of federal employees who are working together to enact the Plain Writing Act of 2010 to provide citizens with clear government communications.¹¹ They emphasize using language that is audience appropriate and that it's best to simplify written materials.

+ Language Design Guidelines

Design guidelines inspired by the Plain Writing Act of 2010.¹²

- 1 Address your audience.**
- 2 State the purpose clearly.**
- 3 Use chronological organization.**
- 4 Create useful, simplified headings.**
- 5 Shorten section verbiage.**
- 6 Use concise language.**
- 7 Use simple present tense verbs.**
- 8 Indicate requirements clearly.**
- 9 Eliminate abbreviations.**
- 10 Use examples, not definitions.**

11. "Law and Requirements: Plain Writing Act of 2010." PlainLanguage.gov, October 13, 2010. <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/law/>.

12. Ibid.

+ Fonts

Accessible fonts for electoral materials.

To make electoral materials accessible for those who have vision, neurological, and cognitive disabilities, an appropriate font should be used. Keep in mind the size, color, and contrast of a font. Overusing uppercase letters reduces readability of text due to low contrast between characters.¹³ Fonts with unusual kerning (the spacing between letters), or decorative details would make the text inaccessible.

Some of the most common ADA accepted fonts are Tahoma, Calibri, Helvetica, Arial, and Verdana.¹⁴ Helvetica Neue is the font used for the redesigned materials highlighted throughout this manual. Text used in these designs are limited to black and white when presented on a contrasting background.

Tahoma Bold.
Calibri Bold.
Helvetica Bold.
Arial Bold.
Verdana Bold.
Helvetica Neue Bold.

Comparison of bolded text in different ADA accepted fonts.

13. Lausen, Marcia. Design for Democracy Ballot and Election Design. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014.

14. "Accessible Fonts: How to Choose a Font for Web Accessibility." Siteimprove. Accessed March 22, 2022. <https://siteimprove.com/en-us/accessibility/most-accessible-fonts/>.

+ **Font Design Guidelines**

Design guidelines inspired by the Plain Writing Act of 2010.¹⁵

- 1 Use accessible fonts approved by ADA.¹⁶**
- 2 Body text of 12-points or higher.**
- 3 Heading text 13-points or higher.**
- 4 Limit the use of color.**
- 5 Only use left aligned text.**
- 6 Do not use all capital letters for names or titles.**
- 7 Use bold and italics to make concepts stand out.**
- 8 Do not include important information in the header or footer.**
- 9 Use larger type size for instructions or areas of emphasis.**

15. "Law and Requirements: Plain Writing Act of 2010." PlainLanguage.gov.

16. "ADA Compliance Best Practices in Word." Campus Controller's Office, December 8, 2020. <https://www.colorado.edu/controller/ada-compliance-best-practices-word>.

+ Color Palette

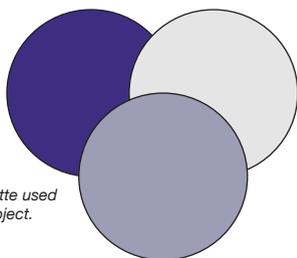
Using color for electoral materials.

Using color not associated with political parties will ensure unbiased interactions with the government issued materials.

In 1976, with the creation of color TV, the first full color maps presented to the public consisted of varying colors.¹⁷ In 2000, major news stations adopted the colors that we use today for consistency. The Democratic party selected blue, and the Republican party selected red. These colors created the highest contrast for viewers.¹⁸

Photo from the National Archives.¹⁹

The color purple, a combination of red and blue, is worn as a sign of bipartisanship for Inauguration Day and can be used universally for electoral materials. Using purple for electoral materials can communicate messages of pride, confidence, and resilience to the user.

Photo by Tim Boyle from Getty Images.²⁰

Color palette used for this project.

+ More on the Color Purple

Purple also holds diverse electoral meanings for people across the world. In countries like India, Iraq, and Afghanistan, voters will dip their fingers in purple ink as they cast their ballots to represent their participation in the electoral process.²¹

17. Pappas, Stephanie. "Why Is Red for Republicans and Blue for Democrats?" LiveScience, November 2, 2020. <https://www.livescience.com/why-blue-democrats-red-republicans.html>.

18. History.com Editors. "America 101: Why Red for Republicans and Blue for Democrats?" History.com. A&E Television Networks, September 26, 2016. <https://www.history.com/topics/us-presidents/america-101-why-red-for-republicans-and-blue-for-democrats-video>.

19. NBC News. Photograph. November 2, 2020. Smithsonian Magazine. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/when-republicans-were-blue-and-democrats-were-red-104176297/>.

20. Tim, Boyle. Photograph. February 10, 2010. Foreign Policy. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2010/02/18/purple-fingers-alone-dont-point-to-democracy/>.

21. Allam, Hanah. "Iraq Election: Purple Fingers, but Hard Work Ahead." The Christian Science Monitor. McClatchy Newspapers, March 7, 2010. <https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0307/Iraq-election-Purple-fingers-but-hard-work-ahead>.

+ Color Design Guidelines

- 1** Use nonpartisan colors for materials.
- 2** Select vibrant colors for design accents.
- 3** Utilize lighter color backgrounds to distinguish sections.
- 4** Rely on bold and italic text for text emphasis, not color.
- 5** Use neutral colors like shades of black and white.

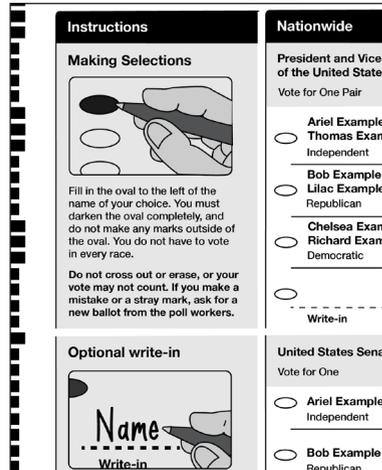
+ Graphics

Using graphics in electoral materials.

Graphic elements such as icons, decorative and instructional illustrations, and imagery can make electoral materials more accessible. Using digital illustrations can create a visual appeal and capture the voter's attention. However, overusing graphics can overwhelm voters.

+ Instructional Illustrations

Instructional illustrations provide a way for users to better understand voter processes that might otherwise be difficult to navigate. Using simple line-work illustrations with a heavy line weight creates a consistent visual appearance. Shades of gray or a single color in the illustrations will ensure that they don't become too complex. Illustrations can be used instead of black and white images to simplify the information that is being conveyed.²²



Redesigned ballot illustrations by Jackie Eberle.

+ Icons

Use few icons consistently throughout materials to emphasize important areas. Designating a specific color palette for the icons will help to simplify the visuals.²³



Redesigned exterior signage by Jackie Eberle.

+ Photography

Photographs contain many textures, setting elements, and objects, which complicates the material and should be used sparingly. According to the Design for Democracy's *Ballot and Election Design Manual*, black and white photography is recommended for all images used. Photography used only for environmental context or decorative purposes is considered best practice.²⁴



Photo by Edmond Dantès from Pexels.²⁵

22. Lausen, Marcia. Design for Democracy Ballot and Election Design.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Dantès, Edmond. People Inside the Voting Precinct. February 27, 2021. Photograph. Pexels. <https://www.pexels.com/photo/people-inside-the-voting-precinct-7103148/>.

+ *Graphics Design Guidelines*

- ① Use simplified illustrations for instructions.**
- ② Photographs should not be used for instructional purposes.**
- ③ Photography can be used for atmospheric or aesthetic purposes.**
- ④ Photographs should be black and white.**
- ⑤ Strategic icons can help with the navigation of materials.**

+

Ballot Design

*Considerations for paper ballots, digital ballots,
and absentee ballots are included in this section.*

+ Paper Ballots

The design of paper election ballots.

Every year, hundreds of thousands of votes are lost or miscalc in every election as a result of poorly designed ballots. A simple alteration to the layout of a ballot can change the trajectory of election results. By following the necessary design guidelines to create accessible ballots, more voting citizens will successfully cast their ballots on election day.

+ Paper Ballot Design Issues

The Brennan Center for Justice and ProPolitica design experts highlighted ballot design issues, which inspired the solutions listed in the following design guidelines.

+ Ballot Spacing Issue

In the 2000 General Election in Duval County, Florida, candidates for the same race were spread across five separate pages creating confusion. This issue led to voters selecting more than one candidate for each office. Nearly 22,000 votes were thrown out due to this design flaw.²⁶

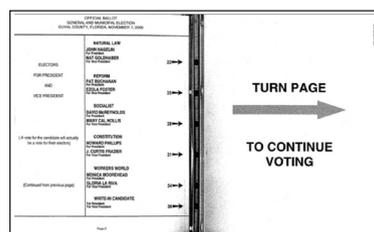


Photo from New York Times.²⁶

+ Column Cuts in a Contest

In the 2002 General Election in Kewaunee County, Wisconsin, voters were presented with a ballot that divided the Governor's race into two columns. This issue resulted in about 11.5% of voters not recording their vote for this race.²⁷

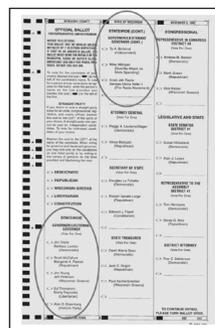


Photo from Brennan Center for Justice.²⁹

26. Norden, Lawrence, Margaret Chen, David Kimball, and Whitney Quesenbery. "Better Ballots."

27. Ibid.

28. Duval County Untitled Document. Photograph. New York Times. Accessed April 11, 2022. https://www.nytimes.com/images/2001/11/12/politics/recount/ballots/BALLOT_duva_2.html.

29. Norden, Lawrence, Margaret Chen, David Kimball, and Whitney Quesenbery. "Better Ballots."

+ Confusing Vote Selection

In the 2002 General Election in Hamilton County, Illinois, voters were presented with a ballot that displayed options for voters to fill in an arrow on either side of the first column. This resulted in voters selecting candidates in the adjacent column. This design flaw resulted in a 9.35% residual vote rate in the county compared to the statewide rate of 4.5%.³⁰

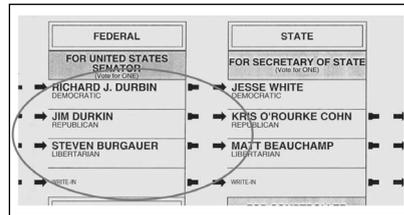


Photo from Brennan Center for Justice.³⁰

+ Missing Contest Headers

In the 2008 General Election in East St. Louis, Illinois, voters were presented with a ballot that was missing a header that specified which level of government they were voting for. This issue resulted in almost 10% of lost votes compared to the state average of 4.4%.³¹

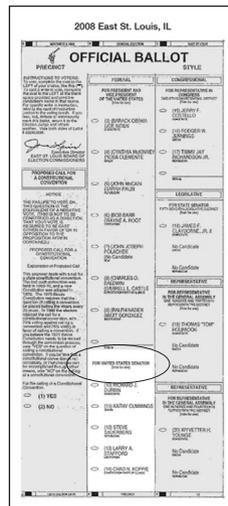


Photo from ProPublica.³¹

+ Confusing End of Ballot

During a usability test conducted in 2008 in Florida's Sarasota and Duval counties, most participants got to the end of the ballot but didn't turn it over due to the "End of Ballot" indicator being placed at the bottom of all columns. An estimated 28,000 fewer votes were lost after the indicator was placed in the right most column.³²

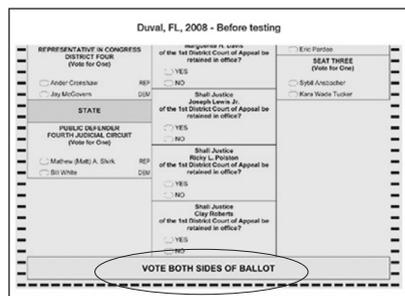


Photo from ProPublica.³²

30. Norden, Lawrence, Margaret Chen, David Kimball, and Whitney Quesenbery. "Better Ballots."

31. Groeger, Lena V. "Disenfranchised by Bad Design." ProPublica, October 20, 2016. <https://www.propublica.org/article/disenfranchised-by-bad-design>.

32. Ibid.

33. Norden, Lawrence, Margaret Chen, David Kimball, and Whitney Quesenbery. "Better Ballots."

34. Groeger, Lena V. "Disenfranchised by Bad Design."

35. Ibid.



Official Demonstration
General Election Ballot

Side 1 of Ballot

Tuesday, November 5, 2024
Example County, USA

Instructions

Making Selections



Fill in the oval to the left of the name of your choice. You must darken the oval completely, and do not make any marks outside of the oval. You do not have to vote in every race.

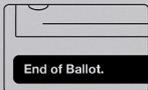
Do not cross out or erase, or your vote may not count. If you make a mistake or a stray mark, ask for a new ballot from the poll workers.

Optional write-in



To add a candidate, fill in the oval to the left of the "Write-in" and print the name clearly in the space provided.

Reach the End of Ballot



Make sure you have voted on both sides of the ballot. Reach the end of the ballot.

Nationwide

President and Vice President of the United States

Vote for One Pair

Ariel Example and Thomas Example Independent

Bob Example and Lilac Example Republican

Chelsea Example and Richard Example Democratic



Write-in

United States Senator

Vote for One

Ariel Example Independent

Bob Example Republican

Chelsea Example Democratic



Write-in

United States Representative

Vote for One

Ariel Example Independent

Bob Example Republican

Chelsea Example Democratic



Write-in

Statewide

Governor and Lieutenant Governor

Vote for One Pair

Ariel Example and Thomas Example Independent

Bob Example and Lilac Example Republican

Chelsea Example and Richard Example Democratic



Write-in

Attorney General

Vote for One

Ariel Example Independent

Bob Example Republican

Chelsea Example Democratic



Write-in

Secretary of State

Vote for One

Ariel Example Independent

Bob Example Republican

Chelsea Example Democratic



Write-in

Vote Both Sides!



Official Demonstration General Election Ballot

Side 1 of Ballot

Tuesday, November 5, 2024
Example County, USA

Instructions

Making Selections



Fill in the oval to the left of the name of your choice. You must darken the oval completely, and do not make any marks outside of the oval. You do not have to vote in every race.

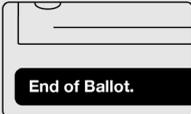
Do not cross out or erase, or your vote may not count. If you make a mistake or a stray mark, ask for a new ballot from the poll workers.

Optional write-in



To add a candidate, fill in the oval to the left of the "Write-in" and print the name clearly in the space provided.

Reach the End of Ballot



Make sure you have voted on both sides of the ballot. Reach the end of the ballot.

Nationwide

President and Vice President of the United States

Vote for One Pair

Ariel Example and Thomas Example
Independent

Bob Example and Lilac Example
Republican

Chelsea Example and Richard Example
Democratic

Write-in

Statewide

Governor and Lieutenant Governor

Vote for One Pair

Ariel Example and Thomas Example
Independent

Bob Example and Lilac Example
Republican

Chelsea Example and Richard Example
Democratic

Write-in

United States Senator

Vote for One

Ariel Example
Independent

Bob Example
Republican

Chelsea Example
Democratic

Write-in

Attorney General

Vote for One

Ariel Example
Independent

Bob Example
Republican

Chelsea Example
Democratic

Write-in

United States Representative

Vote for One

Ariel Example
Independent

Bob Example
Republican

Chelsea Example
Democratic

Write-in

Secretary of State

Vote for One

Ariel Example
Independent

Bob Example
Republican

Chelsea Example
Democratic

Write-in

Vote Both Sides!

+ Paper Ballots Design Guidelines

- 1** Contain all title information in outlined boxes.
- 2** Use left aligned text only.
Left aligned text is best practice in the U.S. because most voters read from left to right.
- 3** Use a bubble marking method for voting.
This type of voting method correlates to standardized testing methods used throughout the U.S. making it familiar and consistent for the voters.
- 4** Keep all instructions in left column only.
- 5** Use only three columns on single side of ballot.
- 6** Use plain language throughout the ballot.
- 7** Use simplistic and realistic instructional illustrations.
Use these illustrations to demonstrate how the voter should fill out their ballot and limit ballot errors.
- 8** Create clear section titles.
Use bold section titles at the top of columns for section clarity.
- 9** Create clear contest sections.
Use this area to clarify votes allowed per contest and include candidates' party titles.
- 10** Use light gray shading for the title areas on ballot.



Official Demonstration
General Election Ballot

Side 2 of Ballot

Tuesday, November 5, 2024
Example County, USA

Statewide continued

Treasurer

Vote for One

- Ariel Example
Independent
- Bob Example
Republican
- Chelsea Example
Democratic
- _____
Write-in

Statewide continued

Court of Appeals Judge

Vote for One

- Ariel Example
Independent
- Bob Example
Republican
- Chelsea Example
Democratic
- _____
Write-in

Statewide continued

Proposed State Constitutional
Amendment A

Should the Constitution of the Example State be amended to allow those in debt from legal fees that were from a legal issues surrounding a specific topic to be excused from that debt if they meet certain criteria?

- For the Amendment
- Against the Amendment

State Senator

Vote for One

- Ariel Example
Independent
- Bob Example
Republican
- Chelsea Example
Democratic
- _____
Write-in

Retention Question 1

Keep Example Name as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

- Yes
- No

Retention Question 2

Keep Example Name as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

- Yes
- No

Proposed State Constitutional
Amendment B

Should the Constitution of the Example State be amended to allow people within a specific category to be able to apply to an example program that will help them in some way, the budget of this program costing \$50,000 per year in the Example state?

- For the Amendment
- Against the Amendment

State Assembly

Vote for One

- Ariel Example
Independent
- Bob Example
Republican
- Chelsea Example
Democratic
- _____
Write-in

Retention Question 3

Keep Example Name as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

- Yes
- No

End of Ballot.

+ Paper Ballots Design Guidelines Continued

- 11** Use bordering lines to indicate where sections continue and end.
- 12** Include retention questions in shaded gray title areas and use “Yes” or “No” voting options.
- 13** Include amendment questions in shaded gray title areas and use “For the Amendment” or “Against the Amendment” voting options.

Creating options that include accurate amendment language will allow voters to better understand what is being asked of them.

- 14** Create “Vote Both Sides” and “End of Ballot” indicators.
- 15** Offer ballots in language registered by voter.

Including multiple languages on a single ballot can make it inaccessible and complicated. Instead, offering a ballot only in their registered language is the best option.

+ Mail-In Ballots

The design of mail-in ballots.

Mail-in voting is a reliable and accessible voting method. Mail-in ballots provide voting access to those who cannot vote in person. Voters with disabilities and voters who do not have access to transportation on election day can use this voting method to cast their ballots from a location of their choice. During a global pandemic, mail-in voting also provided a safer method to voting. Mail-in voting has become more common and can benefit all voters.

Like in-person ballots, mail-in voting materials can be confusing to navigate. Without having access to in-person election day resources, such as election judge assistance, voters must follow the printed mail-in voting instructions independently to accurately cast and mail their ballot. To limit ballot and signature errors, the entire mail-in voting experience must be simplified, and instructions must be clearly emphasized. The design guidelines in this section were created for each redesigned mail-in voting material to greatly reduce mail-in voting errors.



Photo by Element5 Digital from Pexels.³⁶

³⁶. Element5 Digital. Crop Person Putting Envelope in Mailbox on Street. February 26, 2016. Photograph. Pexels. <https://www.pexels.com/photo/crop-person-putting-envelope-in-mailbox-on-street-1550335/>.

+ Mail-In Ballot Design Issues

The Brennan Center for Justice and ProPolitica design experts highlighted ballot design issues, which inspired the solutions listed in the following design guidelines.

+ Signature Area Issue

In the 2008 General Election in Minnesota, voters were presented with mail-in ballot envelopes that did not clearly specify where the voters needed to sign the envelope. This issue resulted in over 4,000 uncounted ballots.³⁷

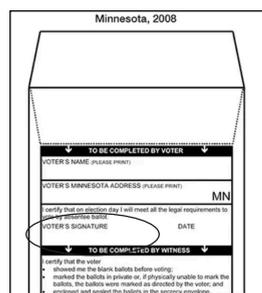


Photo from ProPublica.³⁹

+ Signature Area Issue

In the 2018 General Election, 42 million mail-in ballots were mailed to voters. About 30 million of those ballots were returned. More than 425,000 mail-in ballots were discarded. The most noted reason for this high rejection rate was due to the ballots not being properly signed or the signatures on the ballots not matching the signature on the voter's registration card.³⁸



Photo by Justin Sullivan from Getty Images.⁴⁰

37. Groeger, Lena V. "Disenfranchised by Bad Design."

38. Han, Nydia, and Cheryl Mettendorf. "Vote 2020: Analyzing Pennsylvania Ballot Rejection Rates in Previous Years." 6abc Philadelphia. WPVI-TV, October 22, 2020. <https://6abc.com/voter-rejection-rate-making-sure-ballot-counts-pennsylvania-voters-voting-in/7247769/>.

39. Groeger, Lena V. "Disenfranchised by Bad Design."

40. Sullivan, Justin. Photograph. October 19, 2020. ABC News. Getty Images. <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/750000-mail-ballots-rejected-2016-2018-matters/story?id=73645323>.

1 Information Card

Example County Election Office
123 456 789

<p>Envelope Contents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Information Card 2 Official Ballot 3 Safety Envelope 4 Return Envelope 	<p>Voting Instructions and Checklist</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Write on the Official Ballot (B) 2 Place completed Official Ballot (B) into the Safety Envelope (C) 3 Seal the Safety Envelope (C) 4 Place the Safety Envelope (C) into the Return Envelope (A) 5 Seal the Return Envelope (A) 6 Sign Inside the Voter's Declaration and Signature Section on the back of the Return Envelope (A) 7 Place a first class postage stamp on the front of the Return Envelope (A) if you are returning the ballot in return option.
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Return Options

Option 1
Mail your ballot at least 7 days before Election Day

Option 2
Drop-off: Mail your ballot in a sealed envelope to the election office located at the address on the return envelope

Option 3
Third Party delivery: Only a third party can deliver your ballot to the election office. You must provide the name and address of the third party who will deliver your ballot.

2 Official Demonstration Official Mail-In Ballot

Side 1 of Ballot
Tuesday, November 3, 2004
Example County, USA

<p>Instructions</p> <p>Making Selections</p>  <p>Use the arrow to the left of the name of your choice. We must clearly identify the candidate, and the ballot must be clearly marked to avoid any confusion.</p> <p>Do not mark or check in any other way on the ballot or on the envelope.</p> <p>Optional Write-In</p>  <p>To write a candidate, use the arrow to the left of the "Write-In" and carefully write the name of the candidate.</p> <p>Reach the End of Ballot</p>  <p>Make sure you have marked on both sides of the ballot. Return the end of the ballot.</p>	<p>Nationwide</p> <p>President and Vice President of the United States Vote for One Pair</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Arnd Example and Thomas Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example and Lila Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Charles Example and Richard Example Democratic</p> <p>Write in _____</p> <p>United States Senator Vote for One</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Arnd Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Charles Example Democratic</p> <p>Write in _____</p> <p>United States Representative Vote for One</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Arnd Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Charles Example Democratic</p> <p>Write in _____</p>	<p>Statewide</p> <p>Governor and Lieutenant Governor Vote for One Pair</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Arnd Example and Thomas Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example and Lila Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Charles Example and Richard Example Democratic</p> <p>Write in _____</p> <p>Attorney General Vote for One</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Arnd Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Charles Example Democratic</p> <p>Write in _____</p> <p>Secretary of State Vote for One</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Arnd Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Charles Example Democratic</p> <p>Write in _____</p> <p>Vote Both Sides!</p>
--	--	--



4 Return Envelope

Return Demonstration Ballot

1. Place completed Official Ballot (B) into the Safety Envelope (C)

2. Seal the Safety Envelope (C)

3. Place the Safety Envelope (C) into the Return Envelope (A)

4. Seal the Return Envelope (A)

5. Sign Inside the Voter's Declaration and Signature Section on the back of the Return Envelope (A)

6. Place a first class postage stamp on the front of the Return Envelope (A) if you are returning the ballot in return option.

Return Envelope

Return by mail

Return by hand

Return by third party

Return by hand

Return by mail

Return by third party

+ Redesigned Mail-In

Ballot and Materials

1 Information Card		If you have questions, contact your local elections office.	Example County Elections Office +1 (123) 456 - 7890																
Envelope Contents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Information Card 2 Official Ballot 3 Safety Envelope 4 Return Envelope 		Voting Instructions and Checklist <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td>Vote on the Official Ballot (2).</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td>Place completed Official Ballot (2) into the Safety Envelope (3).</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td>Seal the Safety Envelope (3).</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td>Place the Safety Envelope (3) into the Return Envelope (4).</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">5</td><td>Seal the Return Envelope (4).</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">6</td><td>Fill out the Additional Information section on the back of the Return Envelope (4).</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">7</td><td>Sign inside the Voter's Declaration and Signature section on the back of the Return Envelope (4).</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">8</td><td>Place a first class postage stamp on the front of the Return Envelope (4) if you are choosing the Mail In return option.</td></tr> </table>		1	Vote on the Official Ballot (2).	2	Place completed Official Ballot (2) into the Safety Envelope (3).	3	Seal the Safety Envelope (3).	4	Place the Safety Envelope (3) into the Return Envelope (4).	5	Seal the Return Envelope (4).	6	Fill out the Additional Information section on the back of the Return Envelope (4).	7	Sign inside the Voter's Declaration and Signature section on the back of the Return Envelope (4).	8	Place a first class postage stamp on the front of the Return Envelope (4) if you are choosing the Mail In return option.
1	Vote on the Official Ballot (2).																		
2	Place completed Official Ballot (2) into the Safety Envelope (3).																		
3	Seal the Safety Envelope (3).																		
4	Place the Safety Envelope (3) into the Return Envelope (4).																		
5	Seal the Return Envelope (4).																		
6	Fill out the Additional Information section on the back of the Return Envelope (4).																		
7	Sign inside the Voter's Declaration and Signature section on the back of the Return Envelope (4).																		
8	Place a first class postage stamp on the front of the Return Envelope (4) if you are choosing the Mail In return option.																		
Return Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Mail-In Mail your ballot at least 7 days before Election Day. 2 Drop-Off Drop off your ballot before 7 pm on Election Day to the elections office located at the address on the return envelope. 3 Third Party Delivery Use a third party to deliver your ballot to the elections office located at the address on the return envelope. 																			

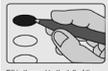
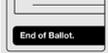
+ Information Card Design Guidelines

- 1 Separate all information into boxes.**
- 2 Use single sentences and simplify written content.**
- 3 Number corresponding envelope contents.**
Reiterating the numbers associated with each material will help the voter navigate through the instructions.
- 4 List all possible return options.**
Update dates in this section for each election.
- 5 Create a voter checklist with corresponding instructions.**
- 6 Add local election office contact number for questions.**

+ Official Mail-In Ballot Design Guidelines

2 Official Demonstration
Official Mail-In Ballot

Side 1 of Ballot
Tuesday, November 5, 2024
Example County, USA

Instructions	Nationwide	Statewide
<p>Making Selections</p>  <p>Fill in the oval to the left of the name of your choice. You must darken the oval completely, and do not make any marks outside of the oval. You do not have to vote in every race.</p> <p>Do not cross out or erase, or your vote may not count. If you make a mistake or a stray mark, ask for a new ballot from the poll workers.</p>	<p>President and Vice President of the United States Vote for One Pair</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Ariel Example and Thomas Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example and Lilac Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chelsea Example and Richard Example Democratic</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	<p>Governor and Lieutenant Governor Vote for One Pair</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Ariel Example and Thomas Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example and Lilac Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chelsea Example and Richard Example Democratic</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>
<p>Optional Write-In</p>  <p>To add a candidate, fill in the oval to the left of the "Write-in" and print the name clearly in the space provided.</p>	<p>United States Senator Vote for One</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Ariel Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chelsea Example Democratic</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	<p>Attorney General Vote for One</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Ariel Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chelsea Example Democratic</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>
<p>Reach the End of Ballot</p>  <p>Make sure you have voted on both sides of the ballot. Reach the end of the ballot.</p>	<p>United States Representative Vote for One</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Ariel Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chelsea Example Democratic</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	<p>Secretary of State Vote for One</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Ariel Example Independent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Example Republican</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chelsea Example Democratic</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>

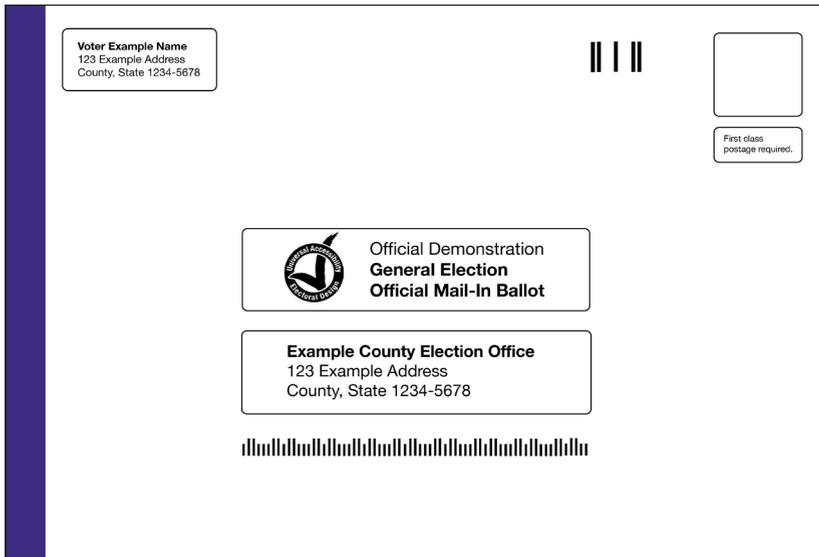
Vote Both Sides!

- 1 Use ballot design guidelines listed in previous sections.
- 2 Clearly label with the corresponding envelope content number and title listed on the information card.



+ *Safety Envelope Design Guidelines*

- 1** Clearly label with the corresponding envelope content number and title listed on the information card.
- 2** Do not add additional text or other informational elements on this envelope.



+ Return Envelope Side A Design Guidelines

- 1 Place all information in boxes.
- 2 Do not add additional information on this side.

4 Return Envelope

Voter's Declaration and Signature

1 Read the declaration below:

I declare that:

- I am a resident of and a voter in the county.
- I am the person whose name appears on this envelope.
- I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.
- I declare that I have completed this mail-in ballot to the best of my knowledge and belief.

You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature on your voter registration card. Voting twice in an election is a crime.

2 Voter must sign to the right of the "X" in black ink.

X _____

3 If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:

X _____

Additional Information

1 Print the voter's name: _____

2 Print the date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

3 Print your voter registration address: _____

Third Party Ballot Deliver Option

1 Read the authorization below:

I authorize the person below to return my Official Ballot.

2 Print their name: _____

3 Print their relationship to the voter: _____

4 Third party must sign to the right of the "X" in black ink.

X _____

+ Return Envelope Side B Design Guidelines

- 1** Clearly label with the corresponding envelope content number and title listed on the information card.
- 2** Place the voter's declaration and signature in a single section.
- 3** Use light gray shading to emphasize signature area.
- 4** Add an additional voter information section.

Some ballots may require additional voter information to confirm a voter's identity.

- 5** Add the third-party ballot delivery option section.

Provide this information to voters create an additional accessible voting option.

+ *Digital Ballots*

The design of digital ballots.

Traditional voting methods have become more accessible with the introduction of mail-in ballots, but digital voting technologies will provide voters with a universally accessible voting method. Digital voting allows voters to bypass in-person or mail-in voting and instead affords voters the option to vote at any time and place that they choose. For those who may not have access to digital devices or who may still choose to vote in person, digital voting technologies can be used at in-person polling places and provide a single method to voting that is accessible for all voters.

+ Digital Voting Technologies for In-Person Voting

To integrate voting technologies on-site, Juan E. Guilbert, Associate Chair of Research in the Computer, Information Science, and Engineering Department at the University of Florida, created the Prime III voting technology in 2003. Prime III was developed as a way for voters to mark their ballots using touch, voice, or both in combination which creates a new level of accessibility for voters.⁴¹ Prime III was released as an open-source software and has been used in partnering states.⁴² Guilbert explains that though there is a lot of controversy surrounding election technologies, when those fears are overcome, the technology can be integrated to benefit all voting citizens.⁴³



Photos from the Lemelson Foundation.⁴⁶

+ Digital Voting Technologies for Anywhere

To integrate voting technologies for voters in any place, a team of researchers with the ITIF Accessible Voting Technology Initiative, in partnership with the Center for Civic Design, created the Anywhere Ballot. The Anywhere Ballot was designed to give voters anywhere, on any device, the option to vote.⁴⁴ The Anywhere Ballot highlights the necessary design tools needed to create accessible and functional digital ballots and has been implemented in many voting systems.⁴⁵ The Anywhere Ballot is available under the Creative Common License and has inspired the materials for this section.

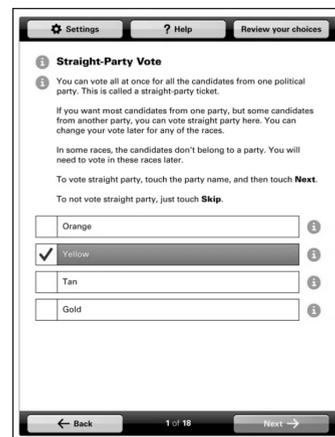


Photo from the Center of Civic Design.⁴⁷

41. Gilbert, Juan E. "How Universal Design Can Help Every Voter Cast a Ballot."

42. Foundation, Lemelson. "Inventing for Equity: This Technology Makes Voting More Accessible." Medium. Invention Notebook, October 29, 2020. <https://medium.com/invention-notebook/inventing-for-equity-this-technology-makes-voting-more-accessible-a4931c810d88>.

43. Gilbert, Juan E. "How Universal Design Can Help Every Voter Cast a Ballot."

44. Chisnell, Dana, Drew Davies, Kathryn Summers, Whitney Quesenbery, Noel Alton, Megan Mckeever, and Caitlin Rinn. "Anywhere Ballot: Center for Civic Design." Center for Civic Design, December 13, 2021. <https://civicedesign.org/projects/anywhere-ballot/>.

45. Ibid.

46. Foundation, Lemelson. "Inventing for Equity: This Technology Makes Voting More Accessible."

47. Ibid.

+ Digital Ballot Design Issues

Digital ballots are a more recent voting technology and can still contain design flaws. The following design guidelines were created to limit digital ballot issues. Digital ballots should follow the same design guidelines as used in previous ballot design sections.

+ Inconsistent Headings

In the 2006 General Election in Sarasota County, Florida, voters were presented with an electronic ballot interface that displayed candidates for the separate races on the same screen. There were also inconsistent color-coded headers throughout the ballot. These design issues resulted in more than 14,000 invalid votes due to voters not voting for a race.⁴⁸

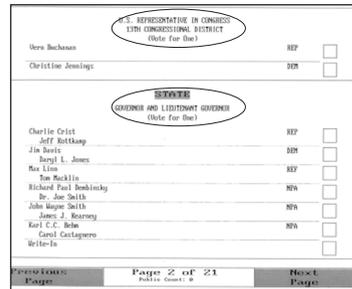


Photo from the National Academy of Engineering.⁵⁰

+ Multiple Contests on Single Screen

In the 2018 Midterm Election in Georgia, some ballots displayed multiple races on the same screen. This caused some voters to only cast a single vote for both races. This design issue resulted in about 4% fewer votes for the lieutenant governor race than for the governor race.⁴⁹

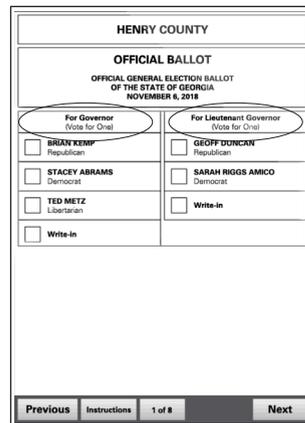
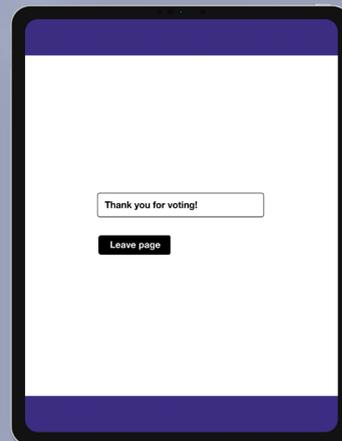
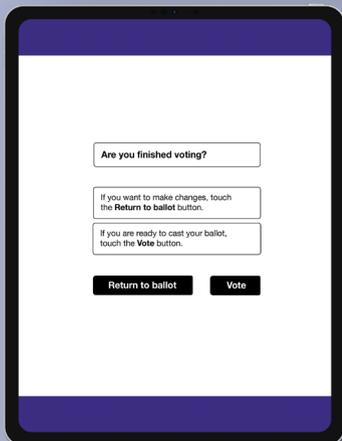
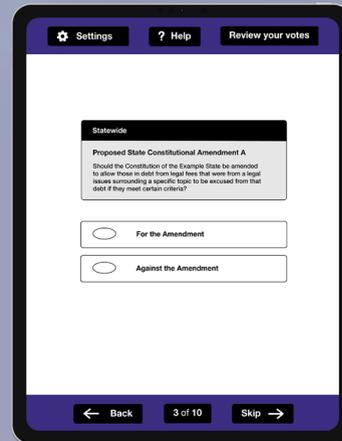
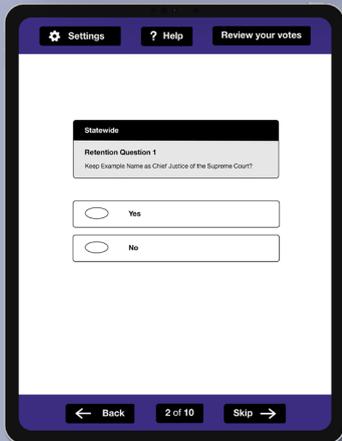
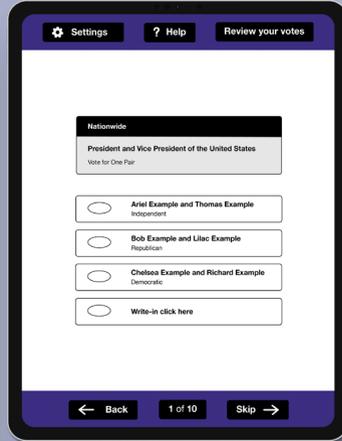
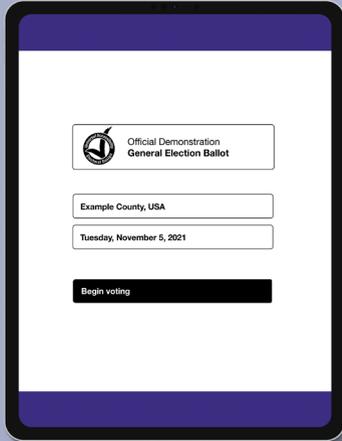


Photo from the Brennan Center for Justice.⁵¹

48. Norden, Lawrence, Margaret Chen, David Kimball, and Whitney Quesenbery. "Better Ballots."
 49. McCadney, Andrea Córdova, Lawrence Norden, and Whitney Quesenbery. "Common Ballot Design Flaws and How to Fix Them." Brennan Center for Justice, February 3, 2020. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/common-ballot-design-flaws-and-how-fix-them>.
 50. Sarasota County CD13 Ballot. June 1, 2007. Photograph. National Academy of Engineering. <https://www.nae.edu/7665/WhatHappenedinSarasotaCounty>.
 51. Ibid.



+ Redesigned Digital Ballot

+ Digital Ballot Design Guidelines

- 1** Keep one contest to a single screen.
- 2** Indicate when voters need to scroll on a single screen.
- 3** The title screen must include ballot title, county and country, and date.
- 4** Navigation must be presented to the voter during every contest.
- 5** Inform a voter when they have selected more candidates than allowed in a single contest.
- 6** Settings for the digital ballot must allow for voters to change the language, font size, and accessibility toggles.
- 7** A help function in the top navigation should be added to assist voters with questions.
- 8** Including an option to “Review Your Vote” allows voters to remain in their contest while checking on previous votes.
- 9** Retention questions must use “Yes” and “No” options.
- 10** Amendment questions must use “For the Amendment” and “Against the Amendment” options.
- 11** An “Are you finished voting?” screen should appear to confirm completion of ballot.
- 12** A ballot confirmation screen should appear to let the voter know to leave the page.

Official Demonstration
General Election Ballot

Example County, USA

Tuesday, November 5, 2021

Begin voting

Settings Help Review your votes

Statewide

Proposed State Constitutional Amendment A

Should the Constitution of the Example State be amended to allow those in debt from legal fees that were from a legal issue surrounding a specific topic to be excused from that debt if they meet certain criteria?

For the Amendment

Against the Amendment

Back 3 of 10 Skip

Settings Help Review your votes

Nationwide

President and Vice President of the United States

Vote for One Pair

Ariel Example and Thomas Example
Independent

Bob Example and Lilac Example
Republican

Chelsea Example and Richard Example
Democratic

Write-in click here

Back 1 of 10 Skip

Are you finished voting?

If you want to make changes, touch the Return to ballot button.

If you are ready to cast your ballot, touch the Vote button.

Return to ballot Vote

Settings Help Review your votes

Statewide

Retention Question 1

Keep Example Name as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

Yes

No

Back 2 of 10 Skip

Thank you for voting!

Leave page



Informational Materials

*Considerations for Election Schedule Mailers and
Voter's Guide are included in this section.*

Voters access election information through a variety of print and digital media sources. These sources are often sponsored by candidates or political affiliates and can be biased or misleading. Instead, transparent, reliable, and nonpartisan electoral information should be supplied to voters annually through a single delivery method.

Mailing information directly to voters is the most accessible option, especially for those who may not have access to on-line media outlets. The following newly designed Election Schedule Mailers and Voter's Guide provide the necessary resources to voters and will greatly reduce ballot errors and increase voter confidence on election day.

+ Election Schedule Mailers

The design of election schedule mailers.

The Election Schedule Mailers were designed to supply voters with election dates, registration options, and mail-in ballot information prior to elections.

The first scheduled mailer must be mailed annually to voters at the beginning of the new year. The General and Primary Election Mailers must be mailed to voters one month prior to upcoming elections.

+ Election Schedule Mailers Design Guidelines

- 1** Create bold title sections.
- 2** Include all necessary updated dates and times.
- 3** Use shading to highlight main elections in schedule.
- 4** Keep all content contained in boxes.
- 5** Use italic and bold text for differentiation.
- 6** Use large numbers to highlight different options in a section.
- 7** Provide voter help lines for questions or concerns.
- 8** Highlight voter registration and mail-in ballot options.
- 9** Provide appropriate on-line links and resources.
- 10** Leave space for mailing information.



Pennsylvania 2022 Election Schedule

Pennsylvania 2022 Election Schedule	
April 5	Special election for 19th, 24th, and 116th Legislative Districts.
May 2	Last day to register before the Primary Election.
May 10 <small>Received by 5:00 p.m.</small>	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive mail-in or absentee ballot applications.
May 16 <small>Delivered by 11:59 p.m.</small>	Last day for military and overseas absentee ballots to be delivered.
May 17 <small>Received by 8:00 p.m.</small>	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive completed mail-in and civilian absentee ballots.
May 17 <small>7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.</small>	Primary Election <i>*Special election for 5th Senatorial District included.</i>
May 24	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military and overseas absentee ballots.
October 24	Last day to register before the General Election.
November 1 <small>Received by 5:00 p.m.</small>	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive mail-in or absentee ballot applications.
November 7 <small>Delivered by 11:59 p.m.</small>	Last day for military and overseas absentee ballots to be delivered.
November 8 <small>Received by 8:00 p.m.</small>	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive completed mail-in and civilian absentee ballots.
November 8 <small>7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.</small>	General Election
November 15	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive completed military and overseas absentee ballots.

All dates are subject to change without notice. For an updated schedule or more information, visit: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/About-Elections/Pages/Upcoming-Elections.aspx>.

If you have questions, contact your local elections office or the PA voter help line.

Example County Elections Office
1-123-456-7890
PA Voter Help Line
1-877-VOTESPA or 1-877-868-3772



Voter Example Name
123 Example Address
County, State 1234-5678



Voter Registration Options

- 1
Register Online
 Register online at: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>
- 2
Deliver in person to your County Voter Registration Office.
 Find your county voter registration office at: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>.
- 3
Mail to your County Voter Registration Office.
 Application must be received 15 days before election. Mail 5 business days prior those days. A blank registration form can be found here: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/voteregistrationstatus.aspx>.

* If you are on active duty in the military, or you are hospitalized or a bedridden veteran, you can register at any time through the Federal Voting Assistance Program at <https://www.fvap.gov>.

Mail-In Request Options

Applications for mail-in and absentee ballots must be received by the elections office 7 days prior to an election. Request ballots earlier to ensure on-time delivery.

- 1
Apply Online
 Apply online at: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/vot-ing-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>.
- 2
Apply by Mail
 Apply by mail at: <https://paebprod.powerappsportals.us/EBR/DOV-VotesPA-Paper-Application/>
- 3
Apply at Your County Election Board's Office
 Find your county election board's office at: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/Resources/Pages/Contact-Your-Election-Officials.aspx>.



Pennsylvania Primary Election

Upcoming Primary Election Dates	
April 5	Special election for 19th, 24th, and 116th Legislative Districts.
May 2	Last day to register before the Primary Election.
May 10 <small>Received by 5:00 p.m.</small>	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive mail-in or absentee ballot applications.
May 16 <small>Delivered by 11:59 p.m.</small>	Last day for military and overseas absentee ballots to be delivered.
May 17 <small>Received by 8:00 p.m.</small>	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive completed mail-in and civilian absentee ballots.
May 17 <small>7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.</small>	Primary Election <i>*Special election for 5th Senatorial District included.</i>

All dates are subject to change without notice. For an updated schedule or more information, visit: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/About-Elections/Pages/Upcoming-Elections.aspx>.

Voter Registration Options

- 1
Register Online
 Register online at: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>
- 2
Deliver in person to your County Voter Registration Office.
 Find your county voter registration office at: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>.
- 3
Mail to your County Voter Registration Office.
 Application must be received 15 days before election. Mail 5 business days prior those days. A blank registration form can be found here: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/voteregistrationstatus.aspx>.

* If you are on active duty in the military, or you are hospitalized or a bedridden veteran, you can register at any time through the Federal Voting Assistance Program at <https://www.fvap.gov>.



Voter Example Name
123 Example Address
County, State 1234-5678



Primary Election Search Tool

To locate your polling place for Election Day, use the First Your Polling Place on the search tool below.

Find Your Polling Place search tool through the Department of State <https://www.vote.pa.gov/About-Elections/Pages/Find-Your-Polling-Place.aspx>.

Mail-In Request Options

- 1
Apply Online
 Apply online at: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/vot-ing-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>.
- 2
Apply by Mail
 Apply by mail at: <https://paebprod.powerappsportals.us/EBR/DOV-VotesPA-Paper-Application/>
- 3
Apply at Your County Election Board's Office
 Find your county election board's office at: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/Resources/Pages/Contact-Your-Election-Officials.aspx>.

If you have questions, contact your local elections office.

Example County Elections Office
1-123-456-7890



Pennsylvania General Election

Upcoming General Election Dates	
October 24	Last day to register before the General Election.
November 1 <small>Received by 5:00 p.m.</small>	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive mail-in or absentee ballot applications.
November 7 <small>Delivered by 11:59 p.m.</small>	Last day for military and overseas absentee ballots to be delivered.
November 8 <small>Received by 8:00 p.m.</small>	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive completed mail-in and civilian absentee ballots.
November 8 <small>7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.</small>	General Election
November 15	Last day for County Board of Elections to receive completed military and overseas absentee ballots.

All dates are subject to change without notice. For an updated schedule or more information, visit: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/About-Elections/Pages/Upcoming-Elections.aspx>.

Voter Registration Options

- 1
Register Online
 Register online at: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>
- 2
Deliver in person to your County Voter Registration Office.
 Find your county voter registration office at: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>.
- 3
Mail to your County Voter Registration Office.
 Application must be received 15 days before election. Mail 5 business days prior those days. A blank registration form can be found here: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/voteregistrationstatus.aspx>.

* If you are on active duty in the military, or you are hospitalized or a bedridden veteran, you can register at any time through the Federal Voting Assistance Program at <https://www.fvap.gov>.



Voter Example Name
123 Example Address
County, State 1234-5678



Primary Election Search Tool

To locate your polling place for Election Day, use the First Your Polling Place on the search tool below.

Find Your Polling Place search tool through the Department of State <https://www.vote.pa.gov/About-Elections/Pages/Find-Your-Polling-Place.aspx>.

Mail-In Request Options

- 1
Apply Online
 Apply online at: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/vot-ing-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>.
- 2
Apply by Mail
 Apply by mail at: <https://paebprod.powerappsportals.us/EBR/DOV-VotesPA-Paper-Application/>
- 3
Apply at Your County Election Board's Office
 Find your county election board's office at: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/Resources/Pages/Contact-Your-Election-Officials.aspx>.

If you have questions, contact your local elections office.

Example County Elections Office
1-123-456-7890

+ Voter's Guide

The design of the Voter's Guide.

The Voter's Guide creates a reliable way for voters to access all electoral information in one place.

This guide should be mailed to potential voters annually.

It highlights general electoral information, such as descriptions of the three branches of the U.S. government, so that voters understand which part of the government each contest on their ballot refers to. It also makes voters aware of their rights as voters in Pennsylvania and provides instructions and resources for voter registration, methods to voting, finding your polling place, and ballot navigation. The following design guidelines were created to highlight each part of the Voter's Guide.



Photo by Edmond Dantès from Pexels.⁵²

+ Automatic Voter Registration

The most effective way to ensure voter registration is through Automatic Voter Registration (AVR), which removes registration barriers for eligible voters by automatically registering them when they obtain any legitimate government license.⁵³ As of 2022, only 22 states and Washington D.C. have enacted AVR.⁵⁴ Since Pennsylvania has not enacted AVR, providing potential voters with this amount of information and resources will greatly increase the chances of voter participation in the future.

52. Dantès, Edmond. A Person Holding White iPad Mini. February 27, 2021. Photograph. Pexels. <https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-person-holding-white-ipad-mini-7103161/>.

53. Underhill, Wendy. "Automatic Voter Registration." National Conference of State Legislators, January 12, 2022. <https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/automatic-voter-registration.aspx>.

54. Ibid

**Pennsylvania Elections
Voter's Guide**

**Universal Accessibility
Electoral Design**

Example County Elections Office
1-322-455-7390
PA Voter Help Line
1-877-VOTESPA or 1-877-868-3772

If you have questions, contact your local elections office or the PA voter help line.

1 3 Branches of U.S. Government

The Constitution of the United States
The Constitution determined these three branches to make sure that no individual or group will have too much power.

1

Legislative Branch
Makes Laws

Congress

Senate
Two elected per state.
Term is six years.
There is no term limit.

House of Representatives
435 Representatives elected according to state population.
Term is two years.
There is no term limit.

2

Executive Branch
Carries Out Laws

President
Head of state, leader of federal government, and Commander in Chief of the U.S. armed forces.
Term is four years.
Two-term limit.

Vice President
Supports the President and serves if President is unable to.
Term is four years.
There is no term limit.

Cabinet
Advisors to the branch.
1-322-455-7390 by President, approved by majority of the Senate.
Serves during term of President.

3

Judicial Branch
Evaluates Laws

Supreme Court
Justices nominated by President and approved by Senate.
There are nine members.
No term time or limit.

Other Federal Courts
Other federal courts and agencies are created to support the courts and policies.

*All branches include agencies that support their work.
Information and graphics collected from <https://www.usa.gov>*

2 PA Voter Bill of Rights

You have the following rights:

- The right to vote if you are a registered voter.**
You are eligible to vote if you are:
 - A U.S. Citizen living Pennsylvania for more than 30 days.
 - At least 18 years old.
 - Registered where you currently live.
 - Not in prison or on parole for a felony.
- The right to vote if you are a registered voter even if your name is not on the list.**
You will vote using a provisional ballot. Your vote will be counted if elections officials determine that you are eligible to vote.
- The right to vote if you are still in line when the polls close.**
- The right to cast a secret ballot.**
You can request a secret ballot slip and can cast your ballot without anyone bothering you or telling you how to vote.
- The right to get a new ballot if you have made a mistake, if you have not already casted your ballot.**
 - Ask an elections official at a polling place for a new ballot; or
 - Exchange your vote-by-mail ballot for a new one at an elections office, or at your polling place; or
 - Vote using a provisional ballot, if you do not have your original vote-by-mail ballot.
- The right to casting your ballot from anyone you choose, except from your employer or union representative.**
- The right to drop off your completed vote-by-mail ballot at any polling place in the county where you are registered to vote.**
- The right to election materials in a language other than English.**
Register with your preferred language to ensure that materials are provided to you in your preferred language.
- The right to ask questions to elections officials about election procedures and watch the election process.**
If the person you ask cannot answer your questions, they must send you to the right person for an answer. If you are disruptive, they can stop answering you.
- The right to report any illegal or fraudulent election activity to an elections official or the Secretary of State's office.**
 - On the web at <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/ReportElectionComplaints.aspx>
 - On the phone at 1-717-787-5280
 - By email at RA-BCEL@pa.gov

You have protected rights as a voter. It is illegal for any state or local government to discriminate against anyone by denying them the right to vote based on their race, ethnicity, national origin, or membership in a language minority.
It is illegal for any person or corporation to intimidate or coerce you to vote for or against a particular candidate or political issue.

3 Voter Registration

Reasons to Fill Out Registration Form

- New Registration
- Change of Name
- Change of Address
- Change of Party
- Federal or State Employee Registering in County of Last Residence.

Registration Eligibility

Applications for registration must be received by the elections office 15 days prior to an election. Request registration earlier to ensure voting on election day.

- Must be 18 years of age on they day of the next election.
- Must have a Pennsylvania driver's license, PennDOT ID, social security number, or photocopy of an acceptable ID.
- Must be a U.S. citizen for at least 30 days before new election.
- Must be a resident of Pennsylvania and in their election district for at least 30 days before next election.

Registration Options

- Register Online**
Register online at: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>
- Deliver in person to your County Voter Registration Office.**
Find your county voter registration office at: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/VoterRegistrationApplication.aspx>.
- Mail to your County Voter Registration Office.**
Application must be received 15 days before election. Mail 5 business days prior those days. A blank registration form can be found here: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/voterregistrationstatus.aspx>.

* If you are on active duty in the military, or you are hospitalized or a bedridden veteran, you can register at any time through the Federal Voting Assistance Program at <https://www.fvap.gov>.

+ 3 Branches of U.S. Government Page Design Guidelines

- 1** Use simple illustrations.
- 2** Use numbers to highlight areas of government.
- 3** Use bold title sections.
Include additional resources.

+ PA Voter Bill of Rights Page Design Guidelines

- 1** Highlight voter's rights for election day.
- 2** Provide resources to report illegal or fraudulent election activity.
- 3** Include resources to eliminate voter intimidation.

+ Voter Registration Page Design Guidelines

- 1** Include information on voter registration such as uses of registration forms, registration eligibility, and registration options.
- 2** Include updated registration resources.

4 Mail-in and Absentee Voting

What is it?

Mail-in and absentee voting are options to vote for those who are unable to or choose not to make it to the polls in person. It is an accessible and reliable way to vote in PA.

Check Registration

In order to request a mail-in or absentee ballot, you must be registered to vote.

You can check your registration status here:
<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/voterregistrationstatus.aspx>

Mail-In Request Options

Applications for mail-in and absentee ballots must be received by the elections office 7 days prior to an election. Request ballots earlier to ensure on-time delivery.

- 1 Apply Online**
Apply online at: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>.
- 2 Apply by Mail**
Apply by mail at: <https://paebprod.powerappsportals.us/EBR/DOCS/VotesPA-Paper-Application/>
- 3 Apply at Your County Election Board's Office**
Find your county election board's office at: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/Resources/Pages/Contact-Your-Election-Officials.aspx>.

Return Options

- 1 Mail-In**
Mail your ballot at least 7 days before Election Day.
- 2 Drop-Off**
Drop off your ballot before 7 pm on Election Day to the elections office located at the address on the return envelope.
- 3 Third Party Delivery**
Use a third party to deliver your ballot to the elections office located at the address on the return envelope.

5 In-Person Voting

First Time Voters

If you are a first time voter at your polling place, you must show an identification document (ID) to vote.

Acceptable forms of ID include Pennsylvania driver's license, PennDOT ID card, ID issued by Pennsylvania or the US government, US passport, US military ID, student or employee ID, a confirmation issued by the County Voter Registration Office, firearm permit, or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, or a government check that includes your name and address.

In-Person Voting Instructions

Once you arrive to your designated in-person polling place, you will follow the entrance signs to enter the building. Below are the voting instructions to follow after entering.

- 1** The polling signage will not be provided in all languages, so it's important that you review these steps at this time.
If you have questions or need help, talk to an election judge or call the number located on this packet or your ballot for assistance.
- 1 Follow the arrows on the floor to the registration table.**
At the registration table there will be three steps to complete.
 - 1 Register your name.**
Here you will confirm you have registered to vote.
 - 2 Verify your signature.**
Here you will sign your name to confirm your signature.
 - 3 Pick up your ballot.**
Here you will pick up your ballot to begin voting.
- 2 Take your ballot to an open voting area. Vote on your ballot using the instructions located on the ballot.**
Vote using only the blue or black ink pen they provided you. If you spill your ballot (mark outside of the designated areas, vote for the wrong candidate, or vote for more candidates than allowed in a contest) take your ballot back to the registration table and ask for a new ballot.
- 3 Once you finish voting, follow the arrows to the ballot reader and follow the instructions below.**
 - 1 Insert your ballot into the reader where the arrows are.**
 - 2 Wait until the ballot is read. You must wait until the ballot reader gives you a check mark symbol or "V" which means the ballot was read.**
If your ballot gives you an "X" symbol, your ballot is spoiled. If this happens you have the option to review your ballot, discard your ballot, or receive a new ballot.
- 4 You have completed the voting process, you may now follow the arrows and exit the building.**

6 Finding Your Polling Place

Polling Place Search Tool

To locate your polling place for Election Day, use the Find Your Polling Place on-line search tool below.

Find Your Polling Place search tool through the Department of State:
<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/PolingPlaceInfo.aspx>

District Map

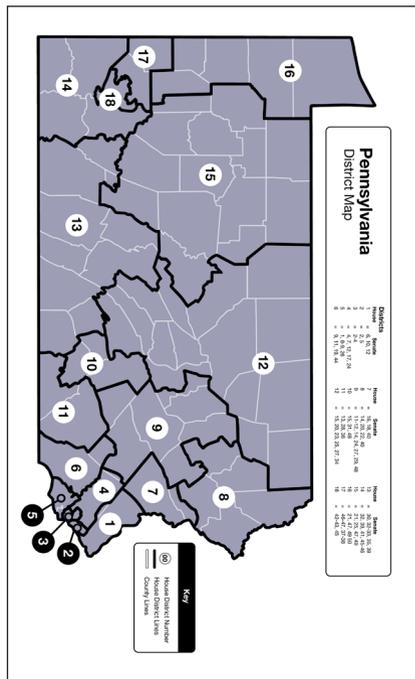
Use the district map on the following page to locate your house district or using the Find Your District on-line search tool below.

Find Your District search tool through the Department of State:
<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/FindYourDistrict.aspx>

Local County Elections Office

Contact your local county elections office below to find more information on your district and polling place.

Find your local county elections office through USA.gov:
<https://www.usa.gov/election-office>



+ *Mail-In and Absentee Voting Page Design Guidelines*

- 1** Provide reliable information about mail-in and absentee voting.
- 2** Include instructions on how to check voter registration statuses.
- 3** Include mail-in request and return options.

+ *In-Person Voting Page Design Guidelines*

- 1** Include an in-depth set of instructions highlighting each step of election day processes for voting in-person.
- 2** Instruction must use similar language that will be seen throughout the signage on-site.

+ *Finding Your Polling Place Page Design Guidelines*

- 1** Provide voters with the necessary search tools and district information.
- 2** An additional district map should be included.

7 Ballot Navigation

Candidate Information

To find updated information on candidates on your upcoming ballot, visit these on-line resources closer to election dates.
 Ballotpedia Sample Ballot: https://ballotpedia.org/Sample_Ballot_Lookup

Vote 411 Voter's Guide: <https://www.vote411.org/ballot>

Deciding Who to Vote for: <https://www.usa.gov/voter-search>

What Are Ballot Measures?

In the United States, a ballot measure is a law, issue, or question that appears on a statewide or local ballot for voters of the jurisdiction to decide, according to Ballotpedia.

To find ballot measures that may appear on your upcoming ballot, visit these on-line resources closer to election dates.

Ballotpedia PA 2022 Ballot Measures: https://ballotpedia.org/Pennsylvania_2022_ballot_measures

PA Department of State Ballot Measures: <https://www.dos.pa.gov/Voting/Elections/Pages/Join-Resolution-2021-1.aspx>

Ballot Layout & Instructions

Familiarize yourself with current ballot layout and instructions by reviewing it on the following page or on-line at the resources below.

This link will be generated as digital forms of example ballots are provided on-line in future elections.

Example Ballot Side A

Official Demonstration General Election Ballot
 Tuesday, November 5, 2024
 Example County, USA

Instructions

Making Selections
 Vote for One Pair

Nationwide

President and Vice President of the United States
 Vote for One Pair

Statewide

Summer and Livestock Resources
 Vote for One Pair

Optional write-in

Write in

Reach the End of Ballot

Mail-in Ballot

Vote Both Sides

Example Ballot Side B

Official Demonstration General Election Ballot
 Tuesday, November 5, 2024
 Example County, USA

Statewide continued

Treasurer
 Vote for One

Statewide continued

Court of Appeals Justice
 Vote for One

Statewide continued

Proposed State Constitutional Amendment A

Statewide continued

Proposed State Constitutional Amendment B

Statewide continued

Retention Question 1
 Keep Example Name as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

Statewide continued

Retention Question 2
 Keep Example Name as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

Statewide continued

Retention Question 3
 Keep Example Name as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

Mail-in Ballot

Vote Both Sides

Contents

- 1 **3 Branches of U.S. Government**
 Learn about the contests and areas of the United States government.
- 2 **Pennsylvania Bill of Rights**
 Learn your rights when participating in PA electoral processes.
- 3 **Voter Registration**
 Learn who is eligible to vote and how to register.
- 4 **Mail-in and Absentee Voting**
 Learn about the request and return options.
- 5 **In-Person Voting**
 Understand the instructions for in-person voting.
- 6 **Finding Your Polling Place**
 Learn about the resources you can use to find your polling place and polling district.
- 7 **Ballot Navigation**
 Become familiar with the ballot layout and instructions before election day.

+ *Ballot Navigation Page Design Guidelines*

- 1 Provide on-line sample ballot and candidate resources.**
- 2 Include upcoming ballot measures.**
- 3 Include blank ballots for voters to become familiar with.**

+ *Optional Contents Page Design Guidelines*

- 1 Highlight all contents of the Voter's Guide.**
- 2 Use corresponding number labels for each section.**
- 3 Include this page at the beginning of the Voter's Guide if used.**

+

Polling Place Signage

*Considerations for exterior and interior signage
are included in this section.*

+ Exterior Signage

The design of exterior signage.

On election day, an in-person voter should be greeted with simplified exterior signage to help with outdoor navigation of the polling site. A large, portable exterior banner should be installed to capture the attention of voters and identify polling place times and repeat election resources. Additional signage should identify main and accessible entrances and exits throughout the building. Although the signage can't contain all minority languages, the top three most common languages used in the U.S. are represented instead.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Lyons, Dylan. "What Are The Most Spoken Languages In The U.S.?" Babel Magazine, May 18, 2020. <https://www.babel.com/en/magazine/most-spoken-languages-in-the-us>.



**Official Pennsylvania Election
On-Site Polling Place**

**VOTE
HERE**

**May 17, 2022
7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
General Primary Election**

Resources:

Nonpartisan Voter Help Lines:

- **English:** 1-866-OUR-VOTE or 1-866-687-8683
- **Spanish:** 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA or 1-888-839-8682
- **Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Urdu, Hindi, and Bengali:** 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA or 1-888-839-8682

PA Voter Help Line:

- 1-877-VOTESPA or 1-877-868-3772

Example County Elections Office

- 1-123-456-7890



+ Exterior Signage Design Guidelines

- ① Limit additional decorative graphics on signage.
- ② Indicate “Vote Here” on main banner.
- ③ Indicate date and time the polling place is open on main banner.
- ④ Highlight voter help hot-lines in multiple languages on main banner.
- ⑤ Provide signage in three most common languages used in the U.S.
- ⑥ Highlight main entrance and exit.
- ⑦ Highlight accessible entrance and exit with icons and direction arrows.
- ⑧ Provide an area for additional directions on accessible entrance and exit signs.

+ Interior Signage

The design of interior signage.

After a voter enters their in-person polling place, they should be greeted by an election judge volunteer. Arrows on the floor and numbered signage must be used to guide the voter throughout the polling site. The numbered signage will reflect the election day process that begins as voters register their names, then verify their signatures before picking up their ballots. Voters should then follow the arrows to the voting areas to cast their votes, then lastly insert their ballots into the reader. These interior materials work to create a seamless voting experience and familiarize voters with this process for upcoming elections.

5
Ballot Reader
 Lector de boletas
 選票閱讀器

4
Voting Area
 Área de votación
 投票區




Accessible Entrance
 Entrada accesible
 殘障人士入口


Accessible Exit
 Salida Accesible
 殘障人士出口

Main Entrance
 Entrada principal
 主要入口

Main Exit
 Salida principal
 主要出口

1 **Register your name.**
 Registre su nombre.
 註冊你的名字。

2 **Verify your signature.**
 Compruebe tu firma.
 驗證您的簽名。

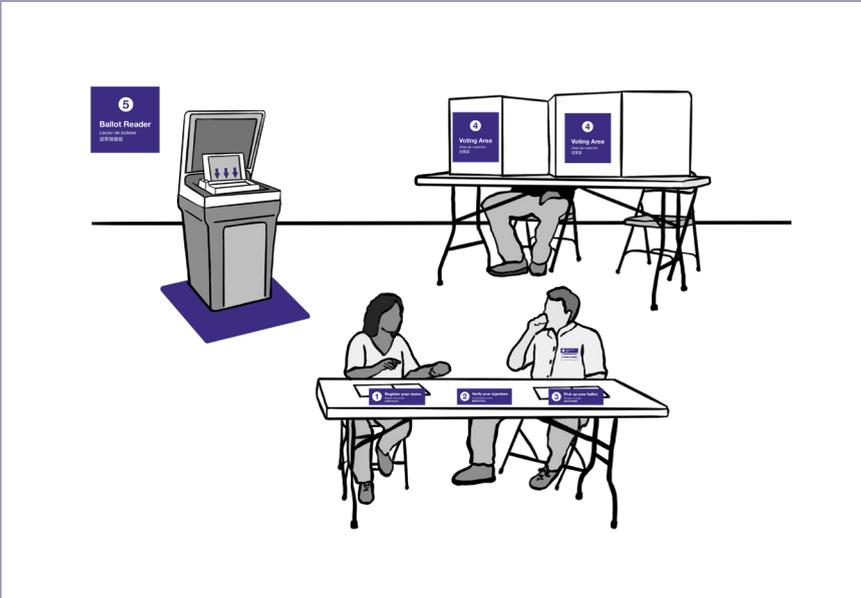
3 **Pick up your ballot.**
 Recoge tu boleta.
 拿起你的選票。

1 **Election Judge**
 Jefe de mesa
 選舉主任

Name	
<input type="text"/>	
Signature	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

+ Interior Signage Design Guidelines

- 1** Create a 5-step voting system with signage.
- 2** Use numbers to highlight each step.
- 3** Provide signage in the three most common languages used in the U.S.
- 4** Use clear arrow markings on the floor for navigation.
- 5** Create election judge volunteer name tags.
- 6** Highlight voting areas.
- 7** Highlight ballot reader with both signage and designated floor area.
- 8** Use arrows to highlight where the ballot must be inserted on the reader.



1 Register your name.
Registre su nombre.
 註冊你的名字。

2 Verify your signature.
Comprueba tu firma.
 驗證您的簽名。

3 Pick up your ballot.
Recoge tu boleta.
 拿起你的選票。

4
Voting Area
Área de votación
 投票區

5
Ballot Reader
Lector de boletas
 選票閱讀器

1 Election Judge
Jefe electoral
 選舉法官

Name

Township

2 Election Judge
Jefe electoral
 選舉法官

Name

Township

3 Election Judge
Jefe electoral
 選舉法官

Name

Township District

+

Conclusion

Final conclusions, acknowledgments, and bibliography are included in this section.

+ Final Conclusions

Some notes about the project.

This design manual aims to inform electoral designers and voting citizens about the many design issues that have existed in U.S. elections over the past two decades and introduce possible solutions. These solutions work to eliminate voter disenfranchisement and instill voter confidence in all voting citizens.

The importance of design cannot be highlighted enough throughout this manual. Design is all around us and impacts us in ways that we may be unaware of. These new universally accessible electoral materials were created with all voting citizens in mind. They work to provide accessible and transparent options to all voters. From simplified ballot resources to nonpartisan electoral informational materials, and finally to in-person polling signage, this manual addresses the many ways design can help benefit all voting citizens.

Not every solution could be identified throughout this process, but as more designers and elected officials recognize and address the current design

issues at hand, beneficial changes will follow. It can take years to enact many of these changes, but with persistence and the sharing of ideas, we will be able to work together to create a brighter future.



All designed materials are available for download at www.eberledesigns.weebly.com with credit to the project and designer or through www.lulu.com for print.

+ About the Designer

Information about Jackie Eberle.

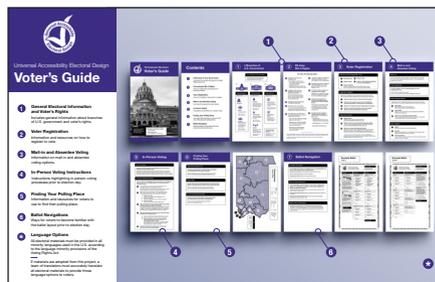
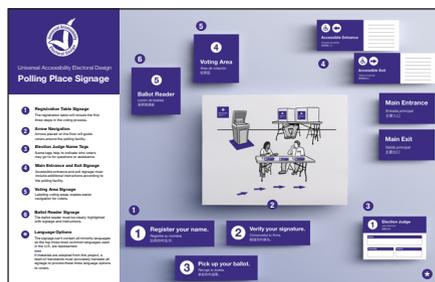
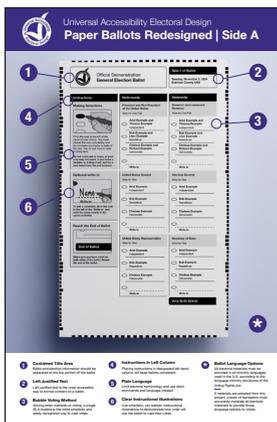
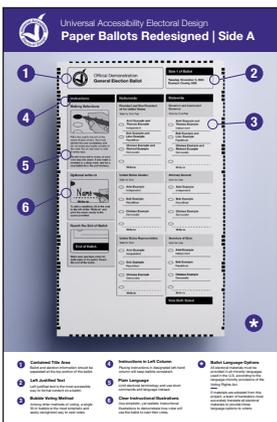
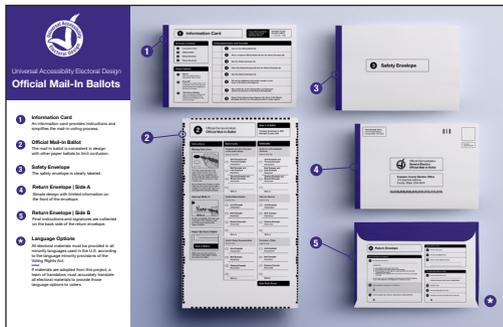


Jackie Eberle
Multimedia Designer
Juniata College

Jackie Eberle is a designer and artist based in Pennsylvania. Since 2018, they have been working to obtain a Bachelor of Art's Degree (B.A.) in Multimedia Design with a minor in Studio Art from Juniata College. Jackie works primarily on creative digital design projects and often incorporates fine art skills. Jackie has experience working as a lead designer on multiple design projects, ranging from team-driven community partnerships to independent client work.

Jackie's passion for art began at a young age, but by thinking deeply and experimenting with new mediums and techniques, their passion has evolved into a love for universal, human-centered design work. By creating meaningful visual designs, they feel they can work towards addressing real-world problems and make a difference.

This universal Accessibility Electoral Design research project was completed as part of their yearlong Distinction Research at Juniata College in 2022.



+ Acknowledgments

A thank you to the project's sponsors from the project designer.

The Universal Accessibility Electoral Design research project could not have been completed without the unwavering support and guidance from my project's sponsors. With their individual expertise in design, writing, and accessibility services, I learned so much from them during our collaboration. I cannot thank them enough for instilling much of the confidence and knowledge needed in me to complete this project.

Ryan Gibboney, M.F.A.

Professor of Integrated Media Arts

Juniata College

Without your initial support I would not have taken on such an ambitious project, but you taught me so many of the tools I use every day in my career as a designer. You encouraged me to make an impact on the world in whatever ways that I can. I am so thankful for the impact you made on my time at Juniata, and I will always value your support and mentorship.

Laura Feibush, Ph.D.

Professor of English

Juniata College

I am forever grateful for your constant support throughout this project. You have taken the time to guide me and reassure my work along the way. I couldn't have done this without your creative ideas and inspiring insights.

Patty Klug, M.A, M.S.

Director of the Chaiken Center for Student Success

Pennsylvania State University, College of the Liberal Arts

The excitement for accessibility design that grew from our first conversations inspired me throughout this process. With your deep passion for universal accessibility, I was able to learn so much from you. I am so thankful for your willingness to support me throughout this project.

Finally, a special thanks to Arya Dixit and Pamela Cray for your editing support and to all the people who shared their voting experiences with me which inspired me to complete this work. I am appreciative for all of those who I've learned from in my life and who have worked to achieve the lasting change we so desperately need to see in the U.S. Completing this project made me hopeful for all the possible changes we can make to achieve fairer elections in the future.

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