Voter Access & Poll Worker Training

EAC Public Meeting

July 28, 2015

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**NATIONAL
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NETWORK**
Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities

The P&A Network

- Established by Congress to protect the rights of people with disabilities through legal support, advocacy, referral, and education.

- In all 50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, US Territories, and the Native American Consortium (Hopi, Navaho and Piute Nations in the Four Corner region of the Southwest).

- Largest provider of legal advocacy services to people with disabilities in the US.

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PAVA

- Protection & Advocacy for Voter Access

- Federal mandate to the P&As

- Established under HAVA to "ensure the full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities, including registering to vote, casting a vote, and accessing polling places."

NDRN

- National Disability Rights Network

- The nonprofit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Systems for individuals with disabilities

RAAV

- Research Alliance for Accessible Voting

- Established to advance the state of elections and voting through applied research, development, evaluation, dissemination and implementation of concepts, and technologies that increase access to and participation in democracy.

Paraquad

- Center for Independent Living
(St. Louis, Missouri)

- Collaborated with voters and election administrators to develop and pilot improved poll worker training materials and best practices

Current State of Voter Access

- The **most accessible polling places** and the **best voting equipment** cannot solve access barriers alone.

- Voter accessibility is ultimately determined by **effective implementation** on Election Day.

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Current State of Voter Access

- Elections professionals are expected to be experts on an increasingly broad range of topics in the face of rapidly changing technology.

- Poll workers are expected to perform at near perfection with virtually no training.

Current State of Voter Access

- Eliminating polling places is not a panacea.

- All methods of balloting raise access concerns.

Current State of Voter Access

- Access is not optional.

- Voters with disabilities care about security, but not at the expense of their right to vote.

RAAV Poll Worker Training Pilot Project

August 2012 Missouri state primary

Voter Experience Surveys

- Phone survey of 1,200 voters with disabilities in Missouri and Tennessee

- Major Findings:

  - Polling places continue to be inaccessible
  - Voters feel that poll workers do not know enough about available accommodations
  - Voters feel that poll workers are uncomfortable with and not knowledgeable about accessible voting equipment

County Clerk Interviews

- Interviewed 10 Missouri county clerks

- Observations:

  - Most common poll worker training methods are PowerPoint and lecture

  - Average of 1 ½ to 2 hours allotted for training

  - Many clerks opposed to collecting formal evaluations

  - Lack of funding prevents county clerks from making some improvements

County Clerk Interviews

- Needs Expressed by Administrators:

  - Poll worker retention of information

  - Interactive, hands-on trainings are well-received but hard to implement

  - Need for checklists and visual aids

  - Need to recruit additional poll workers

 - Accessible signage and placement of signage

Adult Education: Best Practices

- Use mixed methods

- Adults learn more by participating

- Distribute handouts

  - Clear and concise

- Repeat and reinforce

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Election Day Pilot Project
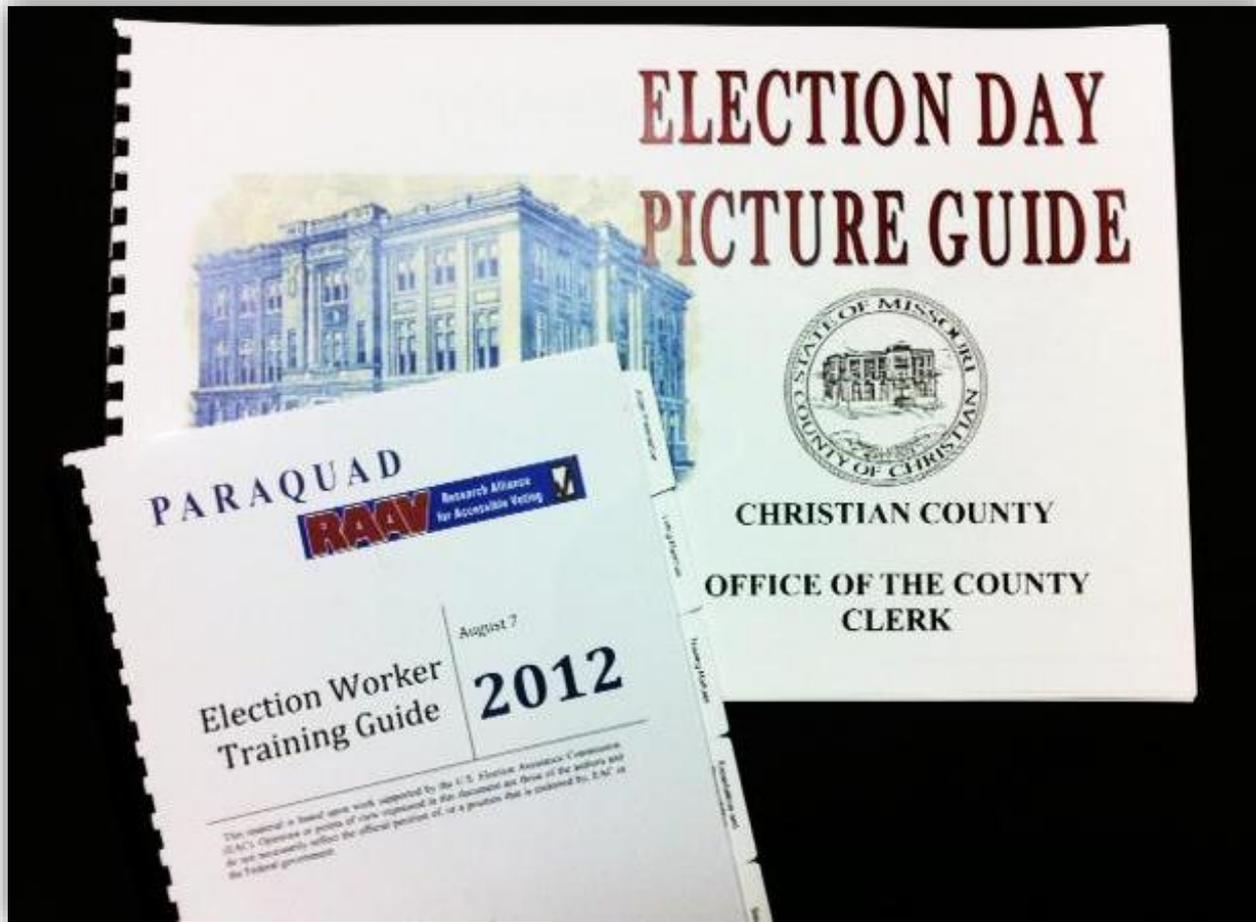
Curriculum Focus Areas

- Expectations and responsibilities

- Use of voting equipment

- Polling place setup

- Interaction and accommodation

- Providing curbside voting

Methodology

- Adaptable, modular curriculum

- Integrating training focus areas throughout the training

Piloted Training Curriculum
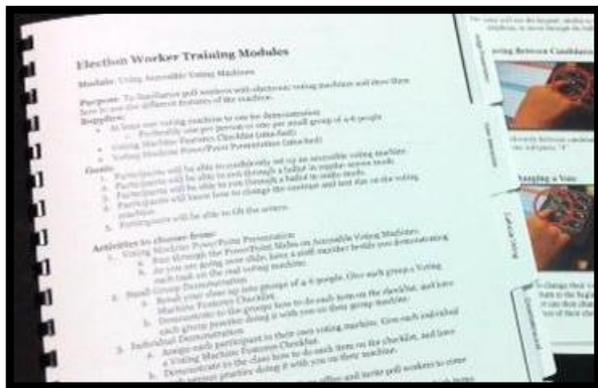
Lesson Plans
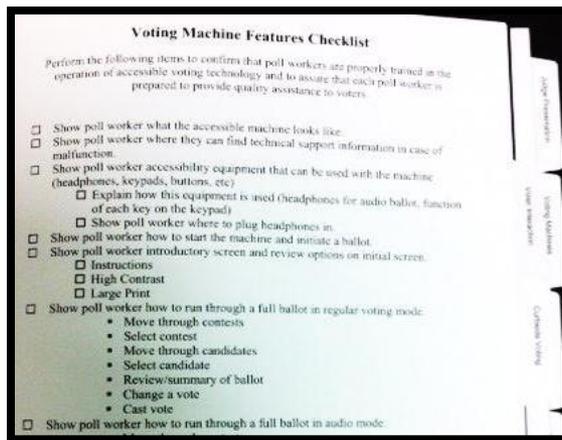
Handouts/Checklists
for Poll Workers
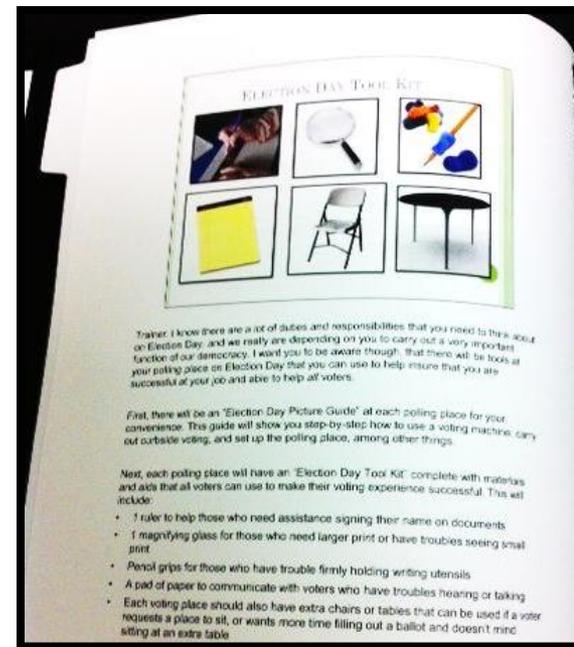
Sample PowerPoint
Slides and Notes

Election Day Job Aid

- "Election Day Picture Guide"

- Modeled after St. Louis City's guide

- Step-by-step picture guide focused on:

  - Polling place setup

  - Using accessible voting machine features

  - Curbside voting

Piloted Election Day Job Aid

Ideal Polling Place Map
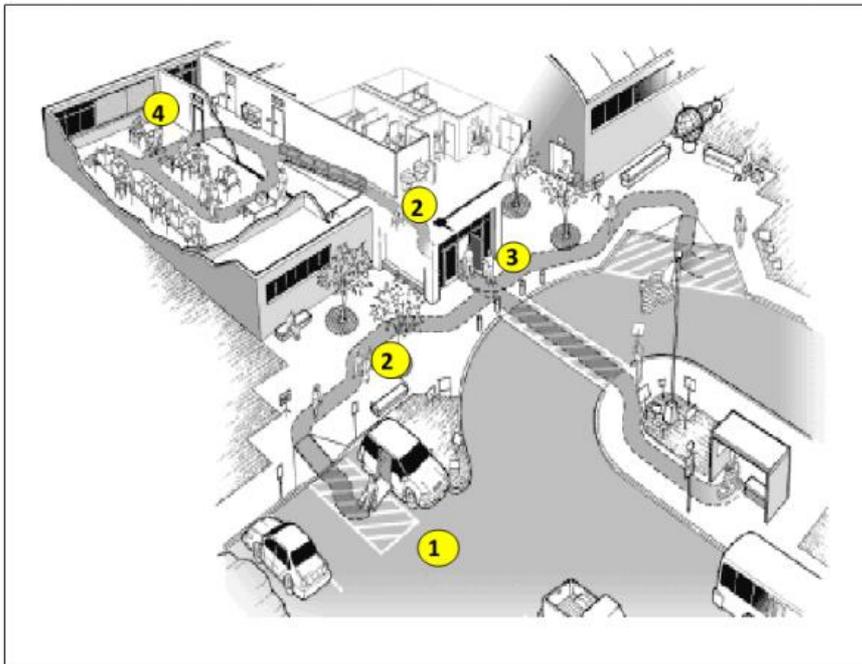
1. **Parking**
   a. Accessible parking is clearly marked
   b. Access aisle next to accessible parking is 8 feet wide (van) or 5 feet wide (car)
   c. Parking spots are reasonably level
   d. Parking can be created using cones

2. **Accessible Route**
   a. Accessible routes located and marked with signage
   b. Route does not contain steps
   c. Curb cut located if curb present
   d. Routes are free of debris and clutter

3. **Entrances and Doorways**
   a. Accessible Entrance located and marked
   b. Doorway at least 36" in width (If no, prop open)
   c. Doorway has handle that is easily opened with closed fist and not excessively heavy (If no, prop open)

4. **Voting Area (On Back)**

Pictures from US Dept. of Justice: ADA Checklist for Polling Places

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Piloted Election Day Job Aid

Ideal Polling Place Map
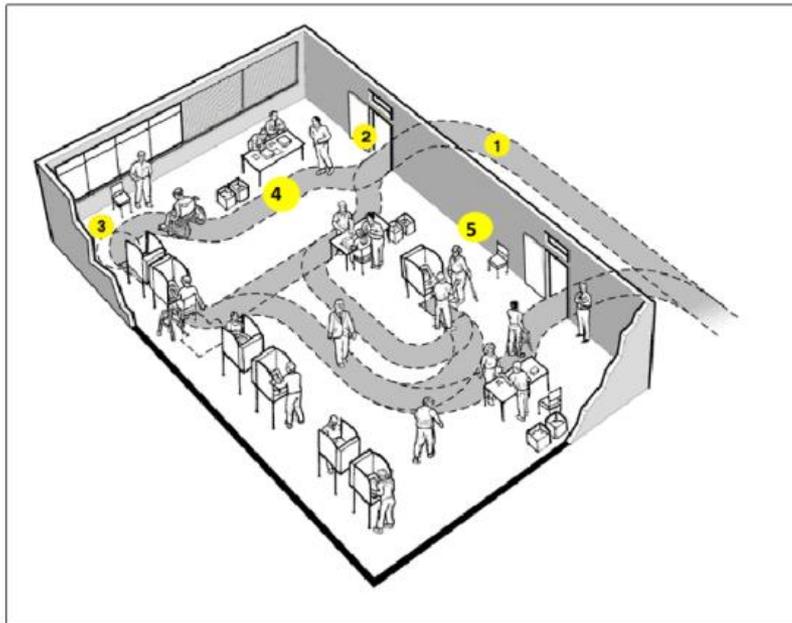
1. **Pathways**
   a. Clear and free of debris and clutter
   b. At least 36" wide

2. **Entrances and Doorways**
   a. Doors that are heavy or narrow are propped open

3. **Voting Machine Set-Up**
   a. There is enough space between machines and walls for maneuverability (especially wheelchair maneuvering)
   b. At least one accessible voting station is set up (lower than other voting stations)

4. **Sign-In Tables**
   a. Ample space in front of table for maneuverability
   b. Height of table is 28-34 inches

5. **Tables and Chairs**
   a. There is an extra table and chairs available for voters who request them

Pictures from US Dept. of Justice: ADA Checklist for Polling Places

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Piloted Election Day Job Aid

Using the Electronic Voting Machine

AccuVote

This is the Electronic Voting Equipment at your precinct. It is set up for all voters and has features that improve accessibility.

Accessibility Equipment

The AccuVote comes with headsets and a keypad, which are used during audio voting.

Initiate Ballot

To start the voting process, insert the voter's card into the slot shown here.

Start Up Screen
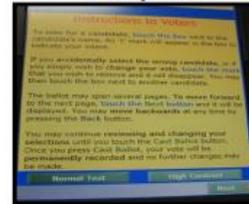
When the ballot is loaded, this screen appears. Notice the options at the bottom of the screen.

High Contrast
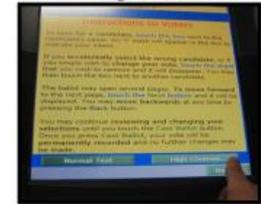
If a voter requests high contrast, press "High Contrast" on the bottom right of the screen.

Large Print
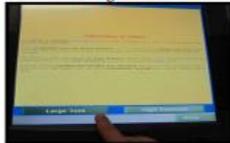
If a voter requests large print, press "Large Text" on the bottom left of the screen.

Adjust Screen Tilt

If the voter complains of glare on the screen or requests the screen be tilted, adjust the screen by pushing the button on the back bar and lifting the screen up

Proper Space

When setting up the machine, make sure there is ample space between the machine and the wall for maneuvering.

Selecting Contest
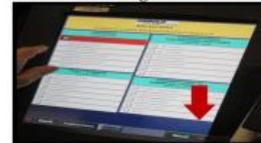
To move between contests, select the "Next" button on the bottom right side of the screen.

Select/De-Select Candidate

To select and de-select candidates, just touch the name of the candidate you wish to select.

Review/Summary of Ballot

When a voter is finished moving through the ballot, a summary screen will appear. Use the arrows to review choices.

Changing a Vote

If a voter wished to change their vote in one or more contests, they will push "Reject Ballot." All ballot choices will still be selected, the voter can change votes in the contest of their choice.

Cast a Ballot

After filling out a ballot, press "Cast Ballot" to officially record votes.

Confirmation

A confirmation screen will appear when ballot has been cast successfully.

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Piloted Election Day Job Aid

Using an Audio Ballot

Necessary Equipment
To utilize the audio ballot, you will need headphones and a keypad.

Initiating Audio Ballot
To initiate the audio option, simply plug the headphones in.

Moving Through Ballot
The voter will use the keypad, similar to that of a telephone, to move through the ballot.

Keypad Functions
4&6: Move between candidates; **2&8**: Move between contests; **5**: Selects and de-selects; **9**: Casts vote; **7**:Rejects ballot

Controlling Volume
To adjust audio volume, use volume control on headphones.

Moving Between Contests
To move from one contest down to the next, the voter will press "8"

Moving Between Contests
To move from one contest up to the previous, the voter will press "2"

Moving Between Candidates
To move backwards between candidates, voter will press "4"

Moving Between Candidates
To move forwards between candidates, voter will press "6"

Select/De-Select Candidates
To select or de-select a candidate, voter will press "5"

Repeat Instructions
If voter needs instructions repeated, voter can wait and instructions will automatically repeat
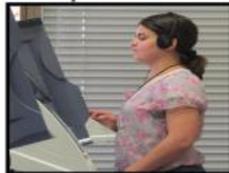
Review/Summary of Ballot
When voter has completed ballot, a summary screen will appear. The audio will read through every contest and selection.

Changing a Vote
If a voter wishes to change their vote, they will press "7" to return to the beginning of the ballot. The voter can then change their vote in the contest of their choice.

Casting a Vote
Once at the summary screen, the voter will press "9" to cast a ballot.

Confirmation
Once the vote has been officially recorded, the audio will announce that the vote has been cast

General Findings

- Piloted leading up to and during August 2012 state primary in 4 Missouri counties

- Poll workers find it helpful to have variety of training methodology

- Election Day Picture Guide was well received and used by poll workers

Training Guide/Curriculum

- More than 1 in 3 poll workers interacted with voters with disabilities or experienced challenging interactions with voters

- 100% confident with voter interaction

- 89% comfortable setting up equipment

- 71% comfortable using accessibility features

Election Day Job Aid

- 51% used picture guide

- 90% guide was helpful

- Picture guide uses:

  - Voting machines: 47%

  - Polling place setup: 36%

  - Curbside voting: 13%

If We Learn 3 Things Today…

- Train poll workers for accessibility, not just equipment setup.

- Provide job aids and train poll workers to use them, not memorize.

- Build relationships with the disability rights and access community.

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Moving Forward

Future Directions

- The onus for preparing poll workers is on elections administrators.

- We have to innovate with limited time and resources.

- There is a very real and urgent need for the EAC.

Thank You

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