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Expanding Access, Strengthening Democracy: New York State Board of Elections marks Disability Voting Rights Week

ALBANY, N.Y. (09/10/2026) – Next week, the New York State Board of Elections will join with election officials, disability advocates, and organizations across the nation in celebrating **Disability Voting Rights Week** (DVRW) from September 14-18, 2026, as a way to reaffirm its commitment to ensuring that every eligible New Yorker can exercise the fundamental right to vote independently, privately, and with dignity.

Disability Voting Rights Week is a nonpartisan national observance created by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). The week is dedicated to raising awareness of voting accessibility and empowering voters with disabilities. The State Board is proud to partner with the New York State Office of the Chief Disability Officer (CDO) in this effort.

New York State has made significant strides to improve election accessibility in recent years. From top to bottom, accessibility has been – and remains – a top priority for election administration in this state.

- For New Yorkers looking to register, the State Board offers several ways to make voter registration easy and convenient, including online, mail, agency-based, and in-person options.
- For voters who wish to vote by mail, the State Board hosts an accessible ballot application portal and offers mail ballots for those with print disabilities and/or those who cannot mark a ballot by hand.
- For voters who prefer to vote in person during early voting or on election day:
 - Poll sites must meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility standards.
 - Poll workers are trained to effectively communicate and offer assistance for all access needs.
 - Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs) are available to any voter who wishes to use them.
- The State Board's redesigned website meets the highest accessibility standards so that all New Yorkers can easily obtain information related to elections and voting.

"Accessible elections are built through partnership and benefit every voter," said Kristen Zebrowski Stavisky, Co-Executive Director of the State Board of Elections. "The State Board is committed to working alongside the state's Chief Disability Officer to listen, innovate, and ensure an accessible experience for all New Yorkers."

"Every eligible voter deserves the opportunity to participate in our democracy without barriers," said Raymond J. Riley III, Co-Executive Director of the State Board of Elections. "When we remove barriers to participation, we strengthen public confidence in our elections and ensure that every voice has the opportunity to be heard."

New York's Chief Disability Officer Kimberly Hill Ridley added, "Ensuring every New Yorker has equal, unhindered access to the ballot box is essential to a healthy democracy. Disability Voting Rights Week serves as a crucial reminder that civic participation is a fundamental right for all. With over four million New Yorkers living with a disability, making processes fully accessible is not just a goal; it is our clear responsibility."

"Civic participation relies on communication access," New York State Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Office Executive Director Christopher Woodfill said. "For Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing New Yorkers, exercising

the right to vote requires information and tools that are fully accessible. Disability Voting Rights Week is a great opportunity to break down lingering communication barriers and ensure every member of our community has the clear pathways and accommodations needed to ensure their voice is represented at the ballot box.”

The New York State Board of Elections encourages all New Yorkers to learn about the accessible voting options available in their communities, verify their voter registration, and make a plan to vote in the November 3rd General Election.

If you have any questions regarding this press release, please contact Kathleen McGrath or Jennifer Wilson at the New York State Board of Elections at (518) 474-1953 or by email at INFO@elections.ny.gov.

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