

## **The Precinct Board's Role in Securing and Maintaining a Fully Accessible Polling Place**

**I.** Take note of the physical surroundings outside of the polling place when arriving on Election Day.

- Check parking lots and walkways for loose gravel, potholes and broken pavement.
- Check ramps and curb cuts for accessibility to people using wheelchairs, walkers or crutches.
- Make sure that the doors leading into the building and rooms used within the building are not blocked, making entrance difficult for people using wheelchairs, walkers or crutches.

**II.** Take note of the physical surroundings inside the polling place when arriving on Election day.

- Ensure that lighting is adequate.
- Ensure that adequate seating is available.
- Ensure that a voting station has been arranged that allows a person to vote while seated in a chair or wheelchair. Remember: the secrecy of the ballot must be maintained at all times!
- Dogs assisting people with disabilities must be admitted into all polling places. Such dogs are highly trained and need no special attention other than that provided by the owner.

**III.** Assisting Voters with the Voting Process: Know the Laws!

- The voter is not required to provide a reason for needing assistance.
- Two election workers of differing political parties must assist the voter.
- If the voter is blind, unable to read or write or has a disability, he/she may choose anyone to assist him/her, regardless of age. (Refer to the Election Inspectors' Procedure Manual for further information.)

**IV.** Treat all Voters with Respect and Dignity.

- Be considerate of the extra time it might take for a person with a disability to finish voting.
- Do not rush a person with a speech impairment.
- Always speak directly to the voter using a normal tone of voice.
- If you are not understood, write a note. Do not become frustrated or impatient.
- Ask permission to push someone in a wheelchair before doing so.
- Greet a person who has a visual impairment by letting him/her know who and where you are. Offer your arm and allow the voter to take it. Do not grab the voter's arm. Be sure to tell the voter when you are approaching any tables, chairs, steps or other obstacles.