

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2023 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 95  
Ways and Means

(Delegate Hill)

---

**Election Judges - Training and Signs - Accommodations for Voters in Need of Assistance**

---

This bill requires that training materials for election judges include specified instruction in the various methods an election judge may use to assist or accommodate elderly and disabled voters in voting at a polling site. The bill also requires the State Board of Elections (SBE) to develop specified signage to be posted at specified locations at each polling place that allows each polling place to state the specific methods election judges may use to assist or accommodate elderly and disabled voters in voting at that polling place.

---

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures may increase by at least \$25,000 in FY 2024. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	25,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$25,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

*Note: ( ) = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease*

**Local Effect:** Local government expenditures increase, beginning in FY 2024, as discussed below. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

---

## Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The bill requires that the training materials used by the program of instruction of election judges developed by SBE, in consultation with the local boards of elections, include oral and written instruction in the various methods an election judge may use to assist or accommodate elderly and disabled voters in voting at a polling site, including the ability to provide individualized accommodations at the request of a voter or an individual who accompanies a voter in need of assistance.

The bill also requires SBE to develop signage to be posted at specified locations at each polling place that allows each polling place to state the specific methods election judges may use to assist or accommodate elderly and disabled voters in voting at that polling place, including the ability to provide individualized accommodations at the request of a voter or an individual who accompanies a voter in need of assistance. SBE must standardize the wording of each specific method of assistance and may use a design that allows each polling place to customize the sign to notify voters of the specific methods of assistance or accommodations available if not all methods are available for use at a polling place. The signage must be, at a minimum, 24 inches by 36 inches in size and posted (1) in a prominent location outside the entrance of the building in which the polling place is located; (2) at the entrance to the room in which the polling place is located; and (3) near the check-in desk.

**Current Law:** SBE is required to develop (and oversee the implementation of), in consultation with the local boards of elections, a program of instruction of election judges. The training materials used by the program may include (1) an instruction manual and other written directives; (2) curriculum for training sessions; and (3) audiovisuals. SBE must provide election judges with uniform statewide training on the voting system, including (1) all features of the voting system that provide access to voters with disabilities and (2) the rights of voters with disabilities, including those rights guaranteed by State and federal law. Each local board must conduct election judge training based on the program developed by SBE, and each election judge, unless appointed under emergency circumstances, must participate in the program.

SBE, in consultation with the election directors of the local boards, must specify and produce certain informational materials to be posted in each polling place, including instructions relating to the availability of assistance to elderly and disabled voters.

**State Fiscal Effect:** General fund expenditures may increase in fiscal 2024 to the extent SBE needs to hire an accessibility consultant to assist the board in developing (1) the portion of the program of instruction for election judges that covers assisting or accommodating elderly and disabled voters and (2) a framework for the required signage. The cost of such a contract may be at least \$25,000, to conduct outreach to local boards of elections and the disability community, research best practices, and develop the

instructions and signage. To the extent a partnership or grant funding can be used to develop the instructions and signage, there may be no material impact on general fund expenditures.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** Local government expenditures are expected to increase, beginning in fiscal 2024, for the cost of the signs required by the bill and potentially additional training costs to implement the oral and written instruction in the various methods an election judge may use to assist or accommodate elderly and disabled voters in voting at a polling site. Costs for the signs may vary considerably, depending on the type of sign that is used to implement the bill. *For illustrative purposes*, if there are at least 1,500 polling places across the State during the 2024 elections, and three signs are purchased for each polling place, at a cost of \$25 per sign (for free-standing signs, such as A-frame signs), local government expenditures increase by at least \$112,500, collectively.

---

### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 702 of 2022 and HB 245 of 2021.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Carroll, Harford, and St. Mary's counties; State Board of Elections; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 20, 2023  
km/sdk

---

Analysis by: Arnold Adja

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510