

HOUSE BILL 781

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5lr3046
CF SB 66

By: **Delegates Roberts, Davis, Fennell, J. Long, Martinez, Roberson, Schmidt,
Taylor, Vogel, and Woods**

Introduced and read first time: January 29, 2025

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Election Law – Polling Place Procedures – Voting by Elderly Voters and Voters**
3 **With Disabilities**
4 **(Accessible and Expedited Voting Act of Maryland)**

5 FOR the purpose of requiring the State Board of Elections to establish guidelines for the
6 local boards of election to implement a process to accommodate and expedite voting
7 for elderly voters and voters with disabilities at each early voting center and polling
8 place; requiring the local boards to implement the guidelines and collect feedback on
9 the process from elderly voters and voters with disabilities and make immediate
10 adjustments to the process; requiring the training program for election judges to
11 include instruction on best practices for assisting elderly voters and voters with
12 disabilities; and generally relating to in-person voting by elderly voters and voters
13 with disabilities.

14 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
15 Article – Election Law
16 Section 1–101(a) and (u) and 10–206(e)
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

19 BY adding to
20 Article – Election Law
21 Section 10–206(f) and 10–310.1
22 Annotated Code of Maryland
23 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

24 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
25 Article – Election Law
26 Section 10–206(f) and (g)
27 Annotated Code of Maryland

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Election Law

1–101.

(a) In this article the following words have the meanings indicated unless a different meaning is clearly intended from the context.

(u) “Elderly” means 65 years of age or older.

10–206.

(e) The State Board shall 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.

(F) THE TRAINING PROGRAM SHALL INCLUDE INSTRUCTION ON BEST PRACTICES FOR ASSISTING ELDERLY VOTERS AND VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES, AS DEFINED IN THE FEDERAL AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, AS REQUIRED UNDER § 10–310.1 OF THIS TITLE.

[(f)] (G) Each local board shall conduct election judge training based on the program developed by the State Board.

[(g)] (H) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, each election judge shall participate in the training program provided for in subsection (a) of this section.

(2) An election judge who is appointed under emergency circumstances is not required to attend the course of instruction.

10–310.1.

(A) THE STATE BOARD SHALL ESTABLISH GUIDELINES FOR THE LOCAL BOARDS TO IMPLEMENT A PROCESS TO ACCOMMODATE AND EXPEDITE VOTING FOR ELDERLY VOTERS AND VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES, AS DEFINED IN THE FEDERAL

1 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, AT EACH EARLY VOTING CENTER AND
2 POLLING PLACE IN THE STATE.

3 (B) THE GUIDELINES ESTABLISHED BY THE STATE BOARD UNDER
4 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL INCLUDE:

5 (1) DEDICATED EXPEDITED LINES FOR ELDERLY VOTERS AND
6 VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES;

7 (2) CLEARLY MARKED SIGNAGE INDICATING THE AVAILABILITY OF
8 EXPEDITED SERVICES;

9 (3) PRIORITY SEATING FOR ELDERLY VOTERS AND VOTERS WITH
10 DISABILITIES IN WAITING AREAS; AND

11 (4) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR HIGH-TRAFFIC EARLY VOTING
12 CENTERS AND POLLING PLACES.

13 (C) THE LOCAL BOARDS SHALL:

14 (1) IMPLEMENT THE GUIDELINES ESTABLISHED BY THE STATE
15 BOARD UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION; AND

16 (2) COLLECT FEEDBACK FROM ELDERLY VOTERS AND VOTERS WITH
17 DISABILITIES ON THE ACCOMMODATIONS AND EXPEDITED VOTING PROCESS WHILE
18 VOTING AT EARLY VOTING CENTERS AND POLLING PLACES IS IN PROGRESS AND
19 MAKE IMMEDIATE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PROCESS AS NECESSARY.

20 (D) THE STATE BOARD SHALL MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
21 GUIDELINES ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION BY THE LOCAL
22 BOARDS AND SUBMIT A REPORT ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 15 EACH YEAR TO THE
23 GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT
24 ARTICLE THAT INCLUDES:

25 (1) ANY CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTING THE GUIDELINES;

26 (2) AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ACCOMMODATIONS
27 AND EXPEDITED VOTING PROCESS;

28 (3) A SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK ON THE ACCOMMODATIONS AND
29 EXPEDITED VOTING PROCESS FROM ELDERLY VOTERS AND VOTERS WITH
30 DISABILITIES; AND

1 **(4) ANY RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE GUIDELINES.**

2 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the guidelines required under
3 § 10–310.1 of the Election Law Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act:

4 (1) shall be implemented beginning with the statewide primary election
5 held in 2026; and

6 (2) are not required to be implemented for any special elections that may
7 occur before the statewide primary election held in 2026.

8 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
9 1, 2025.