

Florida Division of Elections' Guidance
Request of U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Funds for
Voting Access for Individuals with Disabilities Grant
(Polling Place Accessibility)

Updated 12.17.2015

The 2011 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) VOTE Program grant funds are now available upon request. The funds totaling \$666,589 are to be used to make polling places accessible to the disability community.

Each Supervisor of Elections for the respective county is eligible to receive an amount of this 2011 HHS grant based on a distribution formula that includes the number of polling places that were used on 2014 General Election Day as reported in the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) 2014 Election Administration and Voting Survey. These funds are now available until September 30, 2016.

HHS Funds can only be spent in any one or more of the following major categories of accessibility:

- **Category 1:** Making polling places accessible to individuals with disabilities (this includes the path of travel, entrances, exits, and voting areas of each polling facility);
- **Category 2:** Providing access and participation to individuals with disabilities (this means providing the same opportunities for access and participation, privacy and independence provided to all other voters);
- **Category 3:** Training election officials, poll workers, and election volunteers on how best to promote the access and participation of individuals with disabilities in elections for Federal office; and
- **Category 4:** Providing individuals with disabilities with information on accessibility of polling places.

The Supervisor of Elections determines which category (or categories) to use the funds based on the respective county's specific needs. If a county needs to use funds from a category that is normally used for other purposes, the county simply has to write a justification explaining the county's needs regarding polling place accessibility and why the county is using a category that normally would be used for other purposes.

When a county is ready to submit a request for reimbursement, the Supervisor must sign and date the Memorandum of Agreement, the Debarment and Suspension form, a Certificate for Reimbursement for Use of HHS VOTE Program Grant Funds, and a copy of the paid invoices with the check number and check date. These documents will then be mailed to the Division of Elections. The Division will provide the Supervisor with a fully executed copy of the Agreement when the warrant is provided to the Supervisor's office.

A Certificate must be submitted with each request that identifies the purpose and amount of funding being requested by category. No limit exists on the number of requests that a supervisor may submit but

the total amount of the requests cannot exceed the maximum allocated amount for the respective county. Very specific supporting documents must be submitted with each of the items reference on the Certificate:

Copies of invoices as backup for the amount on the certificate should include the following:

- Clear description of the items purchased or services performed;
- Abbreviations need to be spelled out;
- Explain unusual terms that are not common knowledge;
- Explain what the items were used for;
- List which polling places are being made accessible or which polling places the items were purchased for. Examples:
 - Concrete for handicapped ramps at polling place number 5, Lake Worth Community Building
 - Batteries for wireless doorbell for handicapped access at polling place number 33, Bradfordville Baptist Church
 - Tables for voting equipment so that voters in wheelchairs can pull up to the voting machine to vote. These will be used at the following polling places:
 - Precinct 10, Camp Taylor Fire Department
 - Precinct 15, Faith Christian Church
 - Precinct 22, Durrett High School
 - Precinct 41, Jefferson County Courthouse
 - Precinct 55, Eastside Community Center

Proof of payment:

- Copy of cancelled check; or
- Check number and date paid written on the invoice; or
- Receipt paid by a bank card and a copy of the bankcard statement on the bank's letterhead.

Proof of salaries paid:

- A payroll register or similar documentation; or
- A document reflecting hours worked times the rate of pay will be acceptable for any individual paid by the hour.

These documents should include the following information: Employee's name, hourly rate, number of hours worked, and project or polling place.



EXAMPLES OF ALLOWABLE EXPENSES. *Most of the following expenses have been requested in the past. The particular mention of a product, service or vendor is based on Supervisors' past requests and do not represent an official endorsement from the Division of Elections. All categories can be used to request reimbursement for the purchase, rental and/or lease of certified accessible voting systems or equipment.*

Category 1

- Construct permanent handicapped ramps at polling places. (NOTE: On private property—consider temporary fixes or entering into a long term contract with the private entity to use their location as a polling place)
- Portable ramps (transition, threshold, and curb, etc.) to make polling place entrances accessible
- Temporary mats¹ to make parking lots and entrances accessible at polling places
- Paint for handicapped parking stripes on parking lots
- Widen sidewalks and doorways to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Door grips to retrofit doors to make them easier for individuals with disabilities to grasp
- Door pressure gauges to measure door pressure for accessibility
- Install buttons so that a person with a disability could simply push a button to enter or exit a polling place
- Safety cones to designate handicapped accessible parking places
- Crowd control barriers to keep walkways large enough for wheelchairs to pass through
- Permanent and temporary signs—ADA parking and directional—to designate handicapped parking areas and handicapped-accessible entrances
- Contract with a consultant to survey new polling places for handicapped accessibility
- Acquire small and medium curb ramps, threshold ramps, temporary signs and matting for accessible parking for kits that would be stored at the county's warehouse. These kits would be deployed in the case of a need to relocate a polling site due to a situation such as a power outage, fire, storm damage or other threat. The kits may only be used for polling sites.

Category 2

- ADA compliant e-sample balloting tool²
- Purchase, rental and/or lease of certified accessible voting systems or equipment³ *NOTE: Unless the accessible voting machines are used SOLELY for voters with disabilities, the amount of reimbursement must be pro-rated 50%*
- Voice files (voice cards) for a direct recording electronic voting system ballot with a touch screen interface⁴
- Flashcards used to record the voice files for a direct recording electronic voting system with a touch screen interface⁵
- Headsets and headset disposable covers for a direct recording electronic voting system with a touch screen interface

¹ E.g., Mobi-mats

² E.g., Democracy Live' "Live Ballot"

³ E.g., AutoMark Voting Systems, Democracy Suite—Image Cast Evolution (ICE) Voting Systems, or ES&S—Express Vote Voting Systems

⁴ E.g., ES&S iVotronics ballot

⁵ E.g., ES&S iVotronics

- Rolling cart/carrying cases to facilitate the transportation of accessible voting equipment to and from polling places *-Allowable if they are used for the purpose of accessibility and not just for storage;*
- ADA accessible voting booths with or without lights
- Folding tables to make voting booths and voting equipment accessible to individuals in wheelchairs
- Curbside call bells (ballot call) to request entry or curbside voting assistance from poll workers
- Batteries for wireless doorbell for access for persons with disabilities at polling places
- Purchase signature template or gripper stylus with optical scan holes for the visual/mobility impaired
- Personal electronic ballots (PEBs) to hold the ballot for voting
- Text Telephone (TTY) phones to be used by and for hearing- or speech- impaired individuals
- Custom button for poll workers to wear that say, “May I help you?” or “Need Assistance? Please ask me.” They would have recognized or universal symbols for disability so that a person with a disability will know who to ask for assistance.
- Construction of portable counters that are ADA compliant to use at early voting sites

Category 3

- Contract with a recognized disability-related organization to develop and assist with training the trainers in disability sensitivity program that includes polling place accessibility
- Contract with an agency or entity that is dedicated to serving blind or visually impaired persons⁶ for poll worker training on sensitivity to persons with visual impairment
- Purchase videos and books to use in conducting sensitivity training (including polling place accessibility issues) for poll workers

Category 4

- Advertisement to let people in the disability community know that all polling places are accessible by using forms of communication unique to the disability community, such as:
 - disability newspapers or newsletters
 - radio reading service that may be used by persons with visual impairment
- Create an audio recording in compact disc (CD) format providing information on availability and accessibility of the audio-enhanced machines⁷ at polling places. The CD could be distributed through a center for independent living, Florida Division of Blind Services, the local library and a supervisor of elections’ website
- Advertisement in local newspaper (In smaller counties that don’t have any disability organizations, this is one way to get information that all polling places are accessible to voters with disabilities

EXAMPLES OF NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENSES:

- Tools to build handicapped ramps, etc., including sledge hammers, saw horses, extension cords, table saws, miter saws, gloves, etc. These are permanent items and could be used for purposes other than making polling places accessible.
- Surge protector
- Contract with a consultant to survey or resurvey polling places for accessibility
- Costs incurred in conducting surveying and design of existing polling places. (Funds should be used for actual remodeling, i.e., construction of ramps at entrances to facility, and not for pre-determination work to determine if construction/remodeling is needed.)

⁶ E.g., Center for the Visually Impaired, Inc.

⁷ E.g., Accuvote TXS machines