



assisting persons with disabilities



the assisting persons with disabilities course

This course provides poll workers with the knowledge and awareness needed to assist persons with disabilities using the Verity Touch, Touch Writer, Touch Writer Duo, and Verity Scan. This training can be summarized with the words “Putting People First” (i.e., the person before the disability). This course will also increase poll workers’ knowledge of, and confidence in, the Verity Touch, Touch Writer, Touch Writer Duo, and other accessibility features of the Verity Voting System.

Relevant portions of the *Verity Polling Place Field Guide* may be used as reference during this course.

Prerequisites: The *Verity Polling Place Operations* course is required. For elections staff, the *Verity Train the Trainer* course is recommended prior to conducting live training events with poll workers.



Module 1:

“putting people first”



put people first!

- Put the person before the disability
- Labels do not define people

awareness, respect, acceptance

- Persons with disabilities are individuals
- Neither tragic victims, nor superhuman
- Respect and acceptance, not pity or charity



slow down and think “service”

- Don't rush! Working with a person with a disability takes time.
- Relax. Slow down and adopt an open-minded service orientation.
- Every voter is unique; don't assume that you know what voters need.
- Don't be afraid to say, “I don't know how I can be most helpful to you; can you walk me through it?”
- Let voters know that they should feel free to give very specific instructions to the poll worker who is helping them.



conversation etiquette

- Look at the person to whom you are speaking.
- Relax; feel free to use common expressions.
- Identify yourself and others when interacting with a person who is visually impaired.
- Do not shout at a person with a hearing impairment.
- Do not shout at a person who is visually impaired.
- Listen attentively; repeat what you have understood; allow the person to respond.
- Place yourself at eye level to facilitate communication.



Exercise 1.1

Discussion/brainstorming: Based on your experience as a poll worker, or if you imagine yourself in the shoes of a person with a disability, what are important issues/concerns? How would you want to be treated?



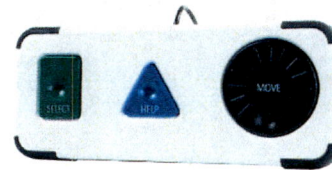
Module 2:

Verity accessibility features



Verity accessible devices

- **Verity Touch with Access** – Accessible DRE voting device
- **Verity Touch Writer** - *Accessible ballot marking device*
- **Verity Touch Writer Duo with Access** - *Accessible 'hybrid' voting device*
- These devices include **Verity Access**, an Audio-Tactile Interface (ATI)
- Verity Access includes connection port for headphones, and a connection port for tactile switches, sip-and-puff, or other dual-switch input.





Verity accessibility features

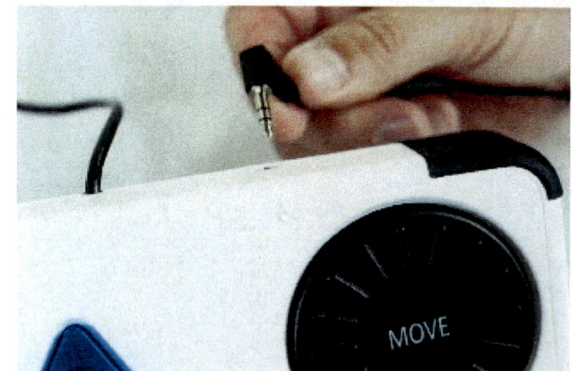
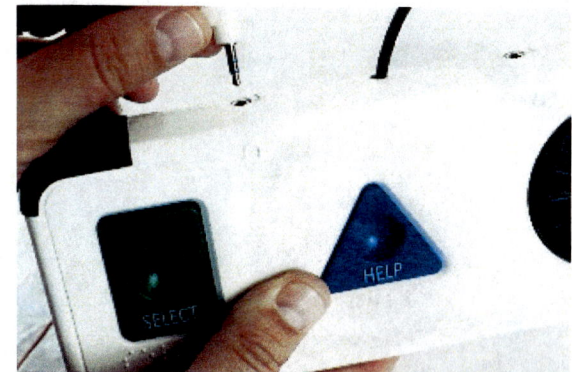
- Voters with visual impairments
 - Verity Access buttons
 - Screen options (*text size, screen contrast*)
 - Headphones and audio options (*audio speed and volume*)
- Voters with limited dexterity or mobility
 - Verity Access buttons
 - Compatible with Tactile input switches, Sip-and-Puff, etc.
 - Accessible booth design (*frontal or parallel wheelchair approach*)
 - Verity Scan ballot box design (*accessible height when resting on floor*)



about Verity Access

Access includes two connection ports:

- **Headphones** (left port)
- **Dual-switch input** (right port) – for tactile switches, sip-and-puff, etc.





about Verity Access

Three button design:

- **Move wheel:** Turning the move wheel either direction allows a voter to navigate through their ballot.
- **Select button:** The select button functions much like the Enter button on a computer keyboard; A voter uses the select button to make selections.
- **Help button:** Pressing the Help button activates help text and audio.

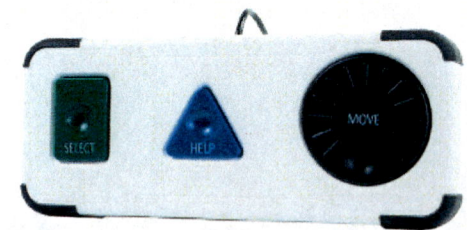




about Verity Access

The Verity Access buttons each incorporate the following accessibility features:

- Braille labels
- Color-coding
- Unique shape for each button
- Raised/beveled edges for easier tactile identification
- Button dishes (indentations), to support voters with mouth-sticks





tactile switches

- Connect to the right port on the Verity Access.
- **RED** switch = MOVE wheel; press the RED switch to navigate the ballot.
- **GREEN** switch = SELECT button; press the GREEN switch to make choices.





sip-and-puff devices

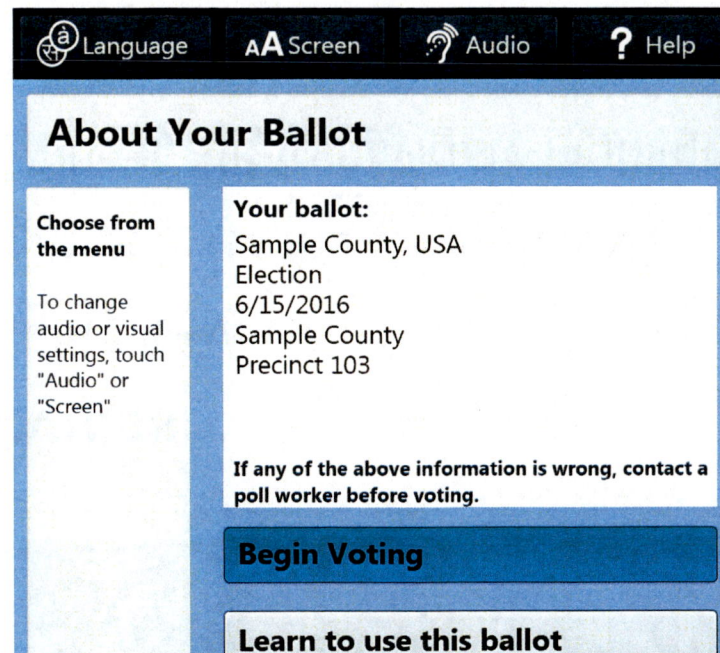
- Would be provided by the voter.
- Connects to the right port on the Verity Access.
- "Sipping" = MOVE wheel; SIP to navigate highlight bar.
- "Puffing" = SELECT button; PUFF to mark ballot choices.
- Inform voter that you are available to assist with reconnecting the device to wheelchair when s/he is finished voting.





Verity screen and audio options

- Described in the *Polling Place Field Guide*
- Accessed using the Audio and Screen buttons at the top of the screen





Module 3:

assisting a disabled voter



poll worker scripts

- Every step can be accomplished in a way that respects the voter's personal space.
- Use of scripts is optional; voters are not required to receive assistance.
- To begin voting, sighted voters can enter their Access Code (if applicable), and voters with visual impairments simply need to be told, "Turn the wheel clockwise to hear the audio."





poll worker scripts

Basic steps:

- 1) Explain the overall workflow of the voting process.
- 2) Allow voter to get physically comfortable/oriented at the voting device.
- 3) Before the ballot is activated, inform the voter about audio and screen options.
- 4) Explain the voting process, and how to mark the ballot
- 5) For Touch Writer/Duo/Scan:
 - Direct voter where to collect their printed ballot or vote record.
 - Direct voter to the Verity Scan, where they will cast their ballot.



assisting a visually impaired voter

- 1) When directing the voter to a device, offer your elbow.
- 2) Explain the overall voting workflow.
- 3) Provide a specific description of the outlines of the machine.
- 4) Offer the voter the opportunity to touch the voting machine itself, to allow the voter to get oriented.
- 5) Use precise descriptions (left, right, etc.) to describe the location of components (Verity Access, printer, scanner, etc.)
- 6) Explain what each button on the Verity Access does.
- 7) Wait until voter is totally physically oriented before explaining how to mark the ballot.
- 8) Offer to read the voter's access code so that they may enter it.



assisting a voter with limited mobility/dexterity

- 1) Allow voter space to move to and get comfortable at the voting booth; if the voter does not have a wheelchair, a chair can be offered.
- 2) Explain the overall voting workflow, and describe each component and its location (Verity Access, printer, scanner, etc.)
- 3) Ask if the voter has or would like to use an assistive device (tactile switches, sip-and-puff, mouth stick).
- 4) Explain what each button on the Verity Access does.
- 5) Wait until voter is totally physically oriented before connecting any assistive device and explaining how to mark the ballot.
- 6) While instructing an individual in a wheelchair, the poll worker should sit at eye-level if possible. A separate chair may be used.



assisting a hearing-impaired voter

- 1) Provide the voter with the appropriate flyer describing the voting process. Note that a voter with hearing impairment may be equally comfortable at a non-accessible booth.
- 2) If the voter is accompanied by a sign-language interpreter, direct your attention to the voter, not the interpreter.



remember...

- **Don't rush!** - Working with a person with a disability takes time.
- **Relax** - Slow down and adopt an open-minded service orientation.
- **Every voter is unique** - Don't assume that you know what voters need, and scripts are not one-size-fits-all.
- **Use of scripts is optional** - Voters are not required to receive assistance.



Exercise 3.1

Review the applicable poll worker script.

Have each trainee pair up with another trainee and take the roles of voter and poll worker. The poll worker will walk through the voting process with a voter who is "blind". This includes escorting the voter to the booth, giving verbal orientation to the Verity voting device, Verity Access peripheral buttons and headphones, having the voter enter the Access Code, and the "voter" voting by responding to the audio prompts only.



Exercise 3.2

Have each trainee pair up with another trainee and take the roles of voter and poll worker. The poll worker will walk through the voting process with a voter who has "limited dexterity". This includes escorting the voter to the booth, orientation to the Verity voting device, Verity Access controller, and tactile switches, having the voter enter the Access Code (if applicable), and the "voter" voting by responding using tactile switches only.



Module 4:

polling place accessibility and
troubleshooting



polling place accessibility

- Parking
 - Distance to entrance?
 - Surface of parking lot?
- Curbs and ramps
- Slope of ramps and cross-paths
- Doors
 - How wide are they?
 - Can they be easily opened
- Crevices, collision points, cords, tripping hazards





polling place accessibility

- Alternative entrances
- Elevators
- Clear visual cues and signage
- Adequate lighting
- Clear paths for traffic flow
- If possible, separate noisy and quiet areas
- Availability of extra chairs





troubleshooting accessories

- Headphones → *left* port
- Tactile Switches/Sip-and-Puff/etc. → *right* port
- Check audio volume and speed (Audio menu on device)
- Test Verity Access (Run Tests menu on device)

NOTE: If your headphones have a built-in audio switch (not recommended), check that as well



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polling place accessibility and
troubleshooting

*NOTE: The Help button is not available when using tactile
input switches or sip-and-puff devices.*





Exercise 4.1

Discuss accessibility issues and ways to avoid problems at the polling places.
Review troubleshooting steps.



Conclusion:

**review: assisting persons with
disabilities**



review

- Every voter is unique – so put people first!
- Review Verity accessibility features:
 - Verity Access buttons
 - Screen options (text size, screen contrast)
 - Headphones and audio options (audio speed and volume)
 - Compatible with Tactile input switches, Sip-and-Puff, etc.
 - Accessible booth design (supports frontal or parallel wheelchair approach)
 - Ballot box design (accessible height when resting on floor)
- Review poll worker scripts



Assisting Persons
with Disabilities

review

Questions?

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