Voting access temporarily expanded for blind citizens

MAY 1, 2020

Work continues for long-term solution

ELECTION NEWS

Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson announced today an agreement had been reached with the Michigan Affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind to temporarily expand voting access for the May 5 elections.

“I am proud we collaboratively identified a temporary solution to expand voting access for blind citizens in Michigan,” said Benson. “I am confident we will continue our work to successfully identify and implement a long-term solution as well. Ensuring all citizens have equal access to their right to vote is a priority for my administration.”

The Bureau of Elections will extend blind voters the option of receiving a Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting (UOCAVA) ballot, which are typically reserved for overseas voters and members of the military. The Bureau of Elections will ensure that these ballots can be completed by blind individuals independently by using electronic screen reader software. Forms for requesting accessible electronic ballots will be available on the Bureau’s website.

All requests for accessible UOCAVA ballots must be submitted by Tuesday May 5, 2020 at 4 pm, along with a declaration that the individual requesting the ballot is blind or otherwise disabled, leaving them unable to complete a traditional paper absentee ballot. Disabled voters may then return the ballots to their local clerk in one of the following ways:

- By hand-delivering them to the clerk’s office by 8:00 p.m. on May 5,
- By requesting that they be picked up by their local clerk’s office by 4:00 p.m. on May 5,
- Or by first-class mail postmarked on or before May 5.

A copy of the court order **is available here**. Full instructions for voters are available at **Michigan.gov/Elections**.

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For media questions, contact
Tracy Wimmer at 517-281-1876.

We welcome questions and comments at the **Contact the Secretary of State** page.

Customers may call the Department of State Information Center to speak to a customer-service representative at 888-SOS-MICH (767-6424).

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