

## ASSISTANCE WITH VOTING

A voter entitled to assistance may choose any person as his or her assistant except the voter's employer, or agent of that employer, or officer or agent of a labor union to which the voter belongs. [Sec. 64.032(c); 52 U.S.C. § 10508]

Such person must be permitted to serve as an assistant regardless of:

- i. The fact that that person has already assisted another voter;
- ii. The residence of that person;
- iii. The citizenship of that person;
- iv. The voter registration status of that person; or
- v. The age of that person.

No other person except for the person rendering assistance is permitted to be present while the voter prepares his or her ballot. [Secs. 33.057(b), 34.002(b), 64.002, 64.032]

The name and address of the person rendering assistance must be entered next to the voter's name on the Poll List. However, the name and address of election officers assisting voters do not have to be recorded on the Poll List. [Sec. 64.032(d)]

An election officer must ask the voter if he or she wants to have the entire ballot read, and if he or she does, the officer must instruct the person who is rendering assistance to read the entire ballot to the voter. [Sec. 64.033(b)]

A voter who is eligible for assistance but who does not choose a person to assist him or her may receive assistance from two election officers. [Sec. 64.032(a)] If a voter is assisted by election officers in the general election for state and county officers, each officer must be aligned with a different political party unless there are not two or more election officers serving the polling place who are aligned with different parties. [Sec. 64.032(b)]

A person voting an early voting ballot by personal appearance who is assisted in preparing the ballot may be assisted by a single officer. [85.035] NOTE: It is recommended that one of the two election officers rendering assistance be the presiding judge.

Poll watchers and inspectors can observe the assistance rendered by election officers, and a poll watcher may inspect the ballot before it is deposited in the ballot box to determine if it was prepared in accordance with the voter's wishes. [Secs. 33.057(a), 34.002] Neither a state inspector nor a poll watcher may observe the preparation of the ballot of a voter not being assisted by an election officer. [Secs. 33.057(b), 34.002(b)]