



REV UP MA Meeting

Thursday October 30, 2025

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Agenda

- Housekeeping and Accessibility
- Introductions
- Upcoming municipal elections
- Polling Place Accessibility Report
- Advocacy Updates

Accessibility

- Captioning is being provided by our CART provider, Stefanie.
 - To view captions: Click the Streamtext link (you can edit font, backgrounds, text color): www.streamtext.net/player?event=DLC-REVup
 - Or click CC button at the bottom of your Zoom screen (it may also be under the 'More' button). To adjust the font size and color of the text, click the ^ up arrow and 'Caption Settings.'
- ASL Interpreters James Pope and Alicia Brand will be spotlighted on your screen. (Otherwise, click the three dots on the ASL interpreters' screens and press 'Pin'.)
- Please let us know if you have issues with viewing CART or ASL interpreters, or if you have any other access needs.

Housekeeping

- Say your name before you speak.
- You can use the raise hand feature by clicking the 'Reactions' and 'Raise hand' feature at the bottom of your screen. If joining by phone, press *9 to raise/lower hand and *6 to unmute/mute.
- Keep chat use to a minimum if possible.
- Any questions?

Introductions

- Name, organization (if applicable), location, pronouns
- Do you have any exciting local elections happening in your town/city this Fall? [List](#) of local elections happening in MA

Upcoming Municipal Elections

- On **Tuesday, November 4th**: 55 towns and cities hold local elections. Some are holding early voting.
 - Check whether your city or town is holding local elections by visiting the Secretary of State's [Upcoming Elections page](#).
- Find your polling place using the Secretary of State's [Polling Site search tool](#).
- Check your [Voter Registration Information online](#) (voter registration deadline has passed, but you can still cast a ballot if you are on the [inactive list](#)).
- [Contact your local election office](#) for your city or town's early voting schedule, important deadlines, and polling locations!

Vote by Mail, Accessible Vote by Mail (AVBM), or Absentee Ballot

- **Vote by mail:** Return your ballot in-person at your [local election office](#), during your municipality's early voting hours, or at a [ballot drop box](#). Check out the Secretary of State's [Vote by Mail page](#) for more information.
- **AVBM:** If you have a disability and applied to vote with an [accessible electronic ballot](#), you may submit your ballot electronically, or print your ballot and submit it by mail, during early voting hours, or at a ballot drop box.
- **Absentee ballots:** In some cases, you may need to use an absentee ballot. Absentee ballots can be submitted the same way as vote by mail ballots. **Emergency absentee ballots – next slide.**

Emergency Absentee Ballots

- If you were admitted to a healthcare facility (like a hospital, nursing home, or other healthcare program) within 1 week of an election (Tuesday October 28th through Tuesday November 4th), **you can apply for an emergency absentee ballot.**
- The application for absentee ballots is available until polling places close on Election Day (**Tuesday, November 4th**).
- Ask someone you trust to help deliver your absentee ballot application and absentee ballot. Family, friends, neighbors, or facility staff are examples of people who can help. Your boss or a representative of your labor union are the only people who cannot help you vote.
 - Check out this [Absentee Voting resource](#) or contact your [local election office](#) for more information.

Know Your Rights & Resources

- **Know your rights:** Check out the [Massachusetts Voters' Bill of Rights](#) before you vote!
- If you have any issues voting **on election day**, including inaccessible polling places or issues with the AutoMARK machine, here is a list of contacts who can help:
 - Try contacting your [local election office](#) first: Staff should help answer questions or resolve problems that are time sensitive.
 - Contact the Secretary of State's office by phone at 1-800-462-VOTE (1-800-462-8683) or email at elections@sec.state.ma.us.
 - Call or text the [Election Protection Hotline](#) at 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683). Trained Election Protection volunteers can help answer questions about voting and connect you to helpful resources.

Resources, Continued

- **Share your voting experiences with DLC** (Note: not for time-sensitive issues):
 - Fill out DLC's [short online survey](#) to share your voting experiences and report any issues at your polling place.
 - Call DLC's Intake Line at 617-723-8455 or 800-872-9992.
 - Since we do not have the bandwidth for a live voter hotline this year, we may not be able to resolve issues immediately on Election Day. However, it is important that we know about problems that voters with disabilities experience. We can help advocate for making polling places accessible!

2024 Polling Place Accessibility Report

- **What are polling place accessibility surveys?**
 - Accessibility surveys involve making sure every part of a polling place is accessible. This includes measuring and checking compliance of sidewalks, parking lots, ramps, entrances, voting booths, and making sure the AutoMARK machine is set up accessibly, turned on, and working.
 - Surveyors measure different areas to check compliance and often take pictures of exterior issues.
- DLC/REV UP MA have conducted polling place accessibility surveys in the past, but this is the first comprehensive [polling place accessibility report](#) we have published.
- Surveys were done by DLC staff, Independent Living Centers, law firms doing pro-bono work like Nelson Mullins, League of Women Voters of Massachusetts

2024 Polling Place Accessibility Report, Continued

- **137 polling place accessibility surveys total** – a small sample of polling places in Massachusetts
- Reports from voters:
 - Individual experiences reported by voters were not included in the quantitative part of the report, but in a separate section.
 - Voter experiences are still important for our advocacy work! Many identified issues with AutoMARK machines.
 - We collected individual experiences through our [short survey](#) and the Voter Hotline on Election Day 2024 – staffed by Supervising Attorney Tom Murphy on General Election Day.
 - **Read the [complete report](#) (in an accessible PDF).**

Polling Place Accessibility Report: Takeaways

- **69% of polling places surveyed across MA had at least one accessibility issue.**
 - **Most common:** Exterior paths of travel issues (external paths of travel include sidewalks, parking lots, ramps)
 - **2nd most common:** AutoMARK issues
 - **3rd most common:** Parking issues
 - **4th most common:** Interior issues (sample ballots not posted accessibly, areas inside too narrow, issues with doors inside polling places)
 - **5th most common:** Entrance issues (doorways too narrow, uneven, step or threshold to get inside, unable to be opened independently)
- **Takeaway: More oversight is needed!**

Advocacy Updates

- **September 16, 2025:** The Joint Committee on Election Laws held a hearing for several important bills that would expand voting access.
- We testified in support of **An Act enforcing accessibility for voters with disabilities** ([H.820](#) by Rep. Kate Donaghue & [S.504](#) by Sen. Cindy Creem). This bill would:
 1. Require the Secretary of Commonwealth to arrange inspection of all polling places and early voting sites at least once every 4 years to make sure that polling places are following state and federal voting accessibility laws;
 2. Require cities and towns that are not in compliance with accessibility laws to take immediate action to fix issues and file a plan to show how they will comply with state and federal laws; and
 3. Allow the Attorney General to enforce compliance in court.
- Testimony by Barbara L'Italien (DLC) Brianna Zimmerman (DLC), and Nathan Persampieri: Check out the [recording](#) around the 2 hour 17 minute mark

Legislative Advocacy & How to Help

- Visit www.votingrightsma.org/legislation for information about the three bills we are advocating for.
- Support our advocacy on the Voting Access Campaign!
 - Organizations, coalitions, faith groups, and businesses may endorse legislation by filling out a [quick endorsement form](#).
 - Individuals should consider reaching out to their lawmakers using [this quick and easy tool](#)!

Volunteer: Polling Place Accessibility Surveys

- If you are interested in conducting longer, more detailed polling place accessibility surveys:
 - Check out our [longer polling place accessibility survey](#) form. Note that you will need a tape measure and something to take notes with!
 - Check out these video resources before your survey for helpful training, tips, and instructions:
 - Longer [polling place survey training video](#) (2023) (53 minutes long)
 - Shorter polling place accessibility training overview: Skip to the 54-minute mark of [last year's REV UP MA webinar](#) (2024) (30 minutes long)
- **Contact Brianna Zimmerman:** bzimmerman@dlc-ma.org / 617-315-4593 if you are interested in volunteering to survey your polling place.

Wrapping Up

- **Future REV UP MA meeting** to be scheduled in later November or early December.
- Sign up for the [REV UP MA email list](#) to stay up-to-date on future meetings, events, and advocacy updates.
- **Upcoming REV UP national meeting** on November 19, 2025 @ 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM: [registration required](#).

Contact Information

For questions/concerns about voting, volunteering to conduct polling place accessibility surveys, or ideas about topics to cover in future REV UP MA meetings...

Contact Brianna Zimmerman (she/her/hers), Voting Rights Advocate, Disability Law Center, Inc.

Email: bzimmerman@dlc-ma.org **Phone:** 617-315-4593