

Summary of the Settlement¹: *Williams v. DeSantis*, No. 1:20-cv-00067-RG-GRJ (N.D. Fla.), consolidated under the main docket with *Nielsen v. DeSantis*, No. 4:20-cv-00236-RHMJF (N.D. Fla.)

Purpose: The Settlement between the Florida Council of the Blind and its members with the 67 supervisors of elections and the Florida Secretary of State is to implement a Remote Accessible Vote By Mail (RAVBM) system in Florida pursuant to Section 101.662, Florida Statutes, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Results: The Settlement has three operative provisions: (1) Pilot Program; (2) Task Force (3) Complete Implementation.

- (1) **Pilot Program** – Miami-Dade, Pinellas, Orange, Volusia, and Nassau Counties have agreed to participate in a pilot program for implementation of RAVBM. There is no doubt that there is a difficulty in implementing a new voting system, especially for an election that record number of votes will be received by mail. Accordingly, if there is a reason that is beyond the control and creates an undue hardship for the Supervisor of Elections that would prevent the implementation, as described in detail in the agreement, the Supervisor may be excused from this duty.
- (2) **Task Force** – A task force will be established to evaluate RAVBM Ballots, which will include persons with disabilities to create a report of its findings and recommendations regarding options for cost, feasibility, administrability, security, and effectiveness of possible methods of allowing registered voters in Florida who are blind or print impaired to mark secret, independent, and verifiable vote-by-mail ballots without the assistance of another person. This would include the feasibility of all possible solutions, from systems that might be developed independently of private vendors to the security and feasibility of electronic vote return.
- (3) **Complete Implementation** - By March 31, 2022, each Supervisor of Elections will deploy and implement a Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail System.

Who does this effect?: RAVBM effects more than just persons who are blind, but will also effect all persons who are print impaired. Persons who are print impaired include all persons with disabilities who use an auxiliary device to read or to fill out a ballot. This includes persons with dyslexia, or persons with limited dexterity of their arms or hands, such as persons who are quadriplegic.

How will it work?: The vendor who is currently certified with RAVBM has contracted with all of the pilot program vendors for the OmniBallot system. The voting process would be as follows:

- When requesting a vote-by-mail ballot, the voter would also indicate that the voter has a disability and would like an accessible vote by mail ballot.
- The voter with a disability would be sent a regular vote-by-mail ballot and provided access to the RAVBM portal with a pin number and link to obtain their RAVBM electronic ballot.

¹ The Settlement Agreement contains the terms and conditions of the settlement, and this document is just a summary of such settlement and the opinions of the author of this document, and do not substitute any of the terms or conditions of the settlement.

- After obtaining access to the RAVBM electronic ballot, the form is accessible through the voter's computer, and the voter can use the voter's auxiliary aids to both read and fill out the ballot.
- The experience of filling out the ballot is identical to the experience of using the accessible voting machines in the polling location. For example, the system advises the voter when there is an undervote and does not permit an overvote.
- None of the information is uploaded to a remote server, and all the information is contained to the user's computer browser.
- After the voter with a disability has completed filling out the voter's selection, the voter then prints out the ballot.
- The voter may use the envelope and the secrecy sleeve provided in the vote by mail ballot received by ordinary mail to return the completed ballot printed out by their computer; or to place in a designated drop box, or return it to the supervisors of elections office.
- The voter would be required to sign the ballot/envelope as any other voter who votes by mail.
- When the supervisor of elections receives and opens the vote-by-mail envelope, the supervisor will scan and reprint the ballot to paper with the appropriate paper stock to be read by the optical scanner machines.
- For videos regarding how this works –
 - <https://youtu.be/nth2RC9Cfqc>
 - <https://youtu.be/TMICr-2xCNU>
 - <https://youtu.be/1WT00Jg8uk0>
 - <https://youtu.be/wtZZNPst2Y>

How many people does this effect?: This change will affect approximately 100,000 voters for the November 2020 General Election, and about 500,000 voters once fully implemented. According to the 2018 American Community Survey, there are 498,200 persons who are blind or have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses. There are also 1,020,500 persons in Florida who have an independent living disability, which is defined as having difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping because of a physical, mental, or emotional disability. For all ages, 2.5% of the population has a visual disability and for ages of 16 to over 75 years of age, 5.8% have an independent living disability. In Florida, persons with disabilities are more likely to vote than those who do not have a disability (1.1%) however, this number is within the margin of error. Furthermore, it is estimated that the percentage of vote-by-mail will exceed 40% of all voters, and the estimated turnout is 70% of all registered voters.

County	Total Registered Voters	Expected Voter Turnout (70%)	Total Blind or visually impaired (2.5%)	Independent Living (5.8%)
Miami-Dade	1,470,194	1,029,136	25,728	59,690
Nassau	67,988	47,592	1,190	2,760
Orange	845,817	592,072	14,802	34,340
Pinellas	688,672	482,070	12,052	27,960
Volusia	372,847	260,993	6,525	15,138
Total Pilot Program:	3,445,518	2,411,863	60,297	139,888
Florida	13,701,765	9,591,236	239,781	556,292