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July 27, 2006

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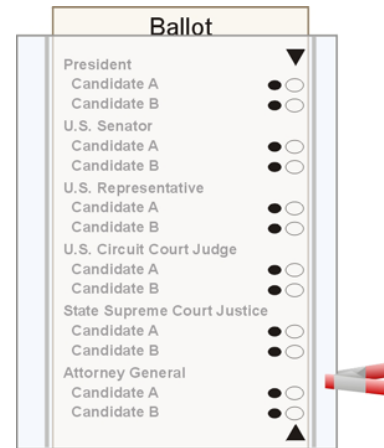
# Introduction to the Vote-PAD

The Voting-on-Paper Assistive Device, called the “Vote-PAD,” is an inexpensive, non-electronic, voter-assist device that helps people with a broad range of visual or dexterity impairments to vote independently. The Vote-PAD can be used in any jurisdiction that uses voter-marked ballots. It is customized for each ballot in each election to provide access to the precinct’s hand-counted or optically-scanned paper ballot.

The Vote-PAD is composed of one custom “ballot sleeve” for each sheet of a one-sided or two-sided ballot. The sleeve or sleeves are bound together between front and back opaque covers for privacy.

The heart of the Vote-PAD is the transparent ballot sleeve, which encloses the ballot on both sides and reveals the content of the ballot that slips into it. Holes are cut out of the sleeve at locations where a voter can mark choices. The sleeve protects the ballot from stray marks.

A page-turning aid is attached to the right edge of each sleeve and each cover to assist voters in turning the pages.

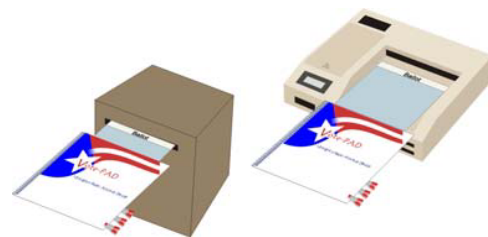


Raised dots attached to the sleeve beside each cutout provide tactile indications for voters with visual impairments. Audio instructions interpret the raised dots so listeners know which hole corresponds to which candidate and can mark their choices.

Unlike voter-assist methods that only offer audio assistance, the Vote-PAD is also accompanied by Braille instructions and large-print instructions. Voters who read Braille often prefer Braille instructions to audio instructions, and the Braille supplement makes the Vote-PAD the only system that provides independent voting for the blind-deaf.

A verification wand allows voters with visual impairments to review their selections. As they replay the audio tape, or re-read the Braille or large-print instructions, they touch the wand to each marking location to receive feedback indicating whether or not the location is marked. The wand vibrates when it senses a mark and is still when there is no mark.

An opaque, sliding “privacy shield” sits in a pocket inside the front cover and slides part-way out to conceal the ballot as it is being deposited in a ballot box or precinct scanner.



Since the ballot for each election in each jurisdiction is unique, the Vote-PAD package includes tools for customizing the ballot sleeves and preparing instructions for each ballot.

The rest of this manual explains how voters with disabilities use the Vote-PAD and gives tips for poll workers as they show voters how to use it.

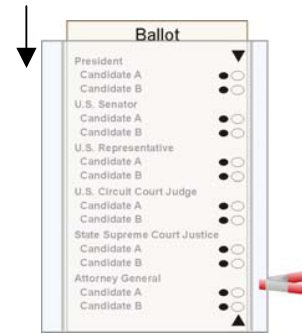
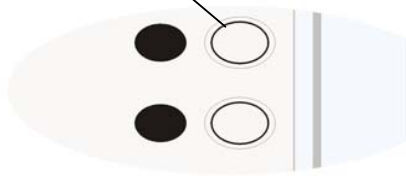
# How People with Disabilities Use the Vote-PAD

With very little instruction, most people with disabilities can learn how to use the Vote-PAD to vote independently. The Vote-PAD serves voters with visual impairments and those with dexterity impairments such as severe arthritis and spinal damage. It provides the assistance they need to mark a ballot privately and unassisted by another person. Here is a general description of how it is used in an election

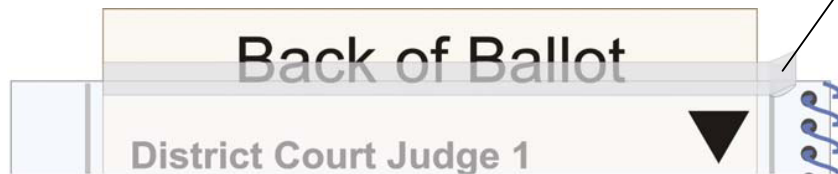
## How a voter with visual impairments uses a Vote-PAD

To prepare the Vote-PAD, the poll worker does the following:

1. Slides the normal precinct ballot into the ballot sleeve.
2. Aligns the holes in the sleeve with the marking positions on the ballot.



3. Tapes the top of the sleeve to the back of the ballot with removable tape package extended past the edge of sleeve, making sure one end of the tape is turned under so it is easy to remove the tape.



The tape holds the ballot in place while the voter marks it and can be removed without damaging the ballot.

The poll worker then escorts the voter to a booth along with the Vote-PAD and explains the assistive features. If the voter is blind or visually-impaired, the poll worker inserts the correct audio tape into the audio player and explains how to operate it. If the voter prefers Braille or large-print, the poll worker provides the appropriate booklets.

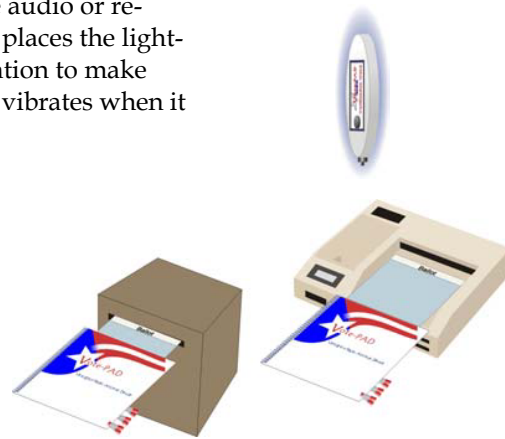
In order to mark the ballot, the voter does the following:

1. Puts on the headset, starts the audio instructions, and uses the controls on the audio player to pause and resume the instructions, or begins reading the Braille or large-print instructions.
2. Uses the page-turning aids to easily find and turn pages.
3. Follows the instructions, which explain the correspondence of raised bumps with the candidate or issue positions, and marks the choices beside the appropriate bumps, using the marking tool provided by the poll worker.



4. After marking the choices, the voter replays the audio or re-reads the Braille or large-print instructions and places the light-sensing verification wand on each marking location to make sure the desired choices are marked. The wand vibrates when it senses a mark. It is still when it does not.
5. When done, the voter closes the booklet and deposits the ballot into a ballot box, sliding the privacy shield out with the ballot to cover the ballot and protect the secrecy of the votes.

Or, in a polling place that uses precinct optical scanners, the voter slides the privacy shield and ballot out together and lays them in the optical scanner tray, moving them toward the back of the tray until the scanner rollers catch the ballot and pull it into the ballot box.

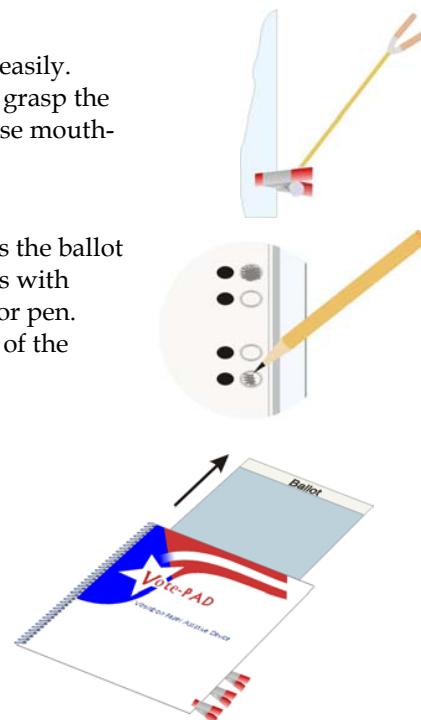


## How a voter with dexterity-impairments uses a Vote-PAD

Just like when serving a voter with visual impairments, the poll worker slides the ballot into the ballot sleeve, aligns the holes in the sleeve with the marking positions on the ballot, and tapes the ballot to the sleeve with removable tape. Then the poll worker escorts the voter to a booth and explains how to use the Vote-PAD.

In order to mark the ballot, the voter does the following:

1. The voter uses the page-turning aids to turn the pages easily. Most voters with dexterity impairments will be able to grasp the page-turning aid with a finger or a fist. Others might use mouth-stick (as shown) or a prosthesis.
2. As the voter marks the ballot, the plastic sleeve protects the ballot from stray marks, a feature appreciated by many voters with dexterity impairments. Most voters can grasp a pencil or pen. Some may need a pencil cushion to make the diameter of the instrument larger and softer.
3. If the voter needs help to deposit the completed ballot, the poll worker can assist, sliding the privacy shield out with the ballot to cover the ballot and protect the secrecy of the voter's votes.



# Instructions for Poll Workers

For each different ballot to be used at the polling place, the Vote-PAD package should include the following items, labeled and slipped into the appropriate labeled expansion folder:

- ◆ One Vote-PAD booklet (the poll worker will attach page-turning aids at the polling place)
- ◆ An audio tape with the “Guide to Contest Choices” you prepared
- ◆ A Braille booklet with the “Guide to Contest Choices”
- ◆ A large-print booklet with the “Guide to Contest Choices”
- ◆ The printed list of write-in offices and their corresponding write-in cells (for sighted voters)

The folder should also contain

- ◆ The “Overview of Using the Vote-PAD” on audio tape, in Braille, and in large print
- ◆ A copy of the Poll Workers Guide
- ◆ Several write-in sheets
- ◆ One non-skid pad

Each polling place should also be equipped with:

- ◆ One tape player with headset (and, optionally, the footswitch)
- ◆ The plastic utility box containing:
  - The verification wand
  - Removable tape
  - Small magnification sheet
  - At least six page-turning aids, more if the ballot has several pages
  - Foam grips for pencils
  - Unused foam ear pads for the headset
  - A small sheet of spare bumpons
  - Spare batteries for the tape player and the wand
  - Paper clips

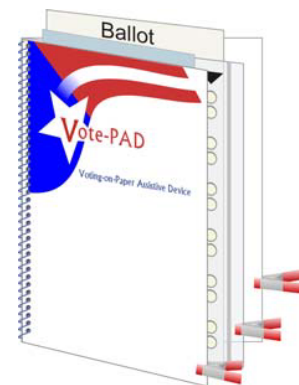
When you first set up the polling place, attach the page-turning aids (small red clamps) to each page of the Vote-PAD booklet. Normally, there will be three pages, three clamps. If the ballot for this election has multiple sheets, there will be one ballot sleeve for each sheet.

Space the clamps about one inch apart, with the clamp on the cover attached about an inch above the bottom edge — as shown in the illustration.

Make sure the clamp on the cover is low enough that it does not prevent the privacy shield from sliding out easily.

It is important for all the clamps to be attached to the lower half of the booklet pages. If they are attached too high on the page, the voter’s arm may bump against the lower part of the page as the page is turning.

The rest of this guide explains the steps to follow when a voter requests the Vote-PAD to assist in voting.



## ***1. For voters with visual-impairments: familiarize them with the Vote-PAD before you set it up for their use***

Before you escort them into the booth, take plenty of time to give them instructions on the following items and have them try the procedures in your presence so you can help them if necessary. The point is to ensure that they know how to use the Vote-PAD **before** they vote, so they can carry out all voting procedures independently and successfully.

- ◆ **Allow them to explore the Vote-PAD as you explain the layout.**
  - a. Place a sample ballot or a blank sheet of paper into the ballot sleeve.
  - b. Hand the voter the pencil or pen that will be used to mark the ballot.
  - c. Explain the general layout of the Vote-PAD and encourage them to explore it with their hands.
- ◆ **Give them feedback on the marks they make.**
  - a. Ask them to find a hole in the ballot sleeve and mark in it. They may not have marked a ballot before, so emphasize that they need to fill much of the hole, but that it does not need to be perfect.
  - b. Suggest that they begin their mark in the middle of the hole and fill in the rest of the hole around it. They should make a good mark but not be overly aggressive, which might cause damage to the paper or bleed through.
  - c. Give them attention and feed back on how well they are doing. Let them know whether the mark is dark enough or not, filled in enough or not.
  - d. Have them mark holes until they are making the marks successfully.
- ◆ **Familiarize them with the verification wand.**
  - a. After they are comfortable marking the holes, show them how to hold the verification wand and press the button to check for tactile feedback. They should hold the wand upright (vertical) and lay it gently in a hole, then press the button.
  - b. Have them point the wand at both unmarked and marked holes, experimenting until they are confident they can make marks that show up well.

## ***2. Teach voters how to use the privacy shield.***

- a. Ask them to feel the privacy shield and to slide it in and out of the front cover a few times so they are comfortable doing so. Be sure they notice that the shield will not slide all the way out, so they are not surprised when it stops.
- b. Slide a ballot into the ballot sleeve, and have them practice sliding the ballot and shield out together. They should hold the bottom of the Vote-PAD loosely with one hand, while grasping the ballot and shield in the other and sliding them out together. The ballot should stick out beyond the privacy shield, and both ballot and shield must be held firmly together with one hand when sliding them out. Let them try it themselves, rather than just explaining it to them.
- c. If they will be depositing the ballot into a ballot box, have them find the slot and practice with the blank ballot, but make sure the ballot doesn't drop in. They will need to hold the shield near the slot and feed the ballot into the slot from underneath the shield.

- d. If they will be depositing the ballot into a precinct scanner, have them practice sliding the ballot and shield out together and placing them both in the scanner tray. Let them feel where the slot is and where they will need to feed in the ballot for the rollers to catch it. Remember this may be a completely new experience for them, so give them as long as they need to be comfortable doing it independently.

### 3. Find the Vote-PAD booklet that matches the ballot

The front of each Vote-PAD booklet will have a label defining the ballot that it has been customized to contain. The content of the label will vary according to the standards for your jurisdiction, but normally it will show some or all of the following:

- ◆ State
- ◆ County
- ◆ City, town, or village, if applicable
- ◆ Precinct or polling place
- ◆ Ballot style
- ◆ Date of the election

For example:

Adams County, WI  
Town of Adams  
Precinct 1  
November 8, 2005

**Important:** Make sure the ballot you insert into the Vote-PAD sleeve is the one that matches the identifying information on the Vote-PAD label.

### 4. Align the ballot carefully in the sleeve

**VERY IMPORTANT:** After you have identified the correct ballot to use with the Vote-PAD booklet, slide the ballot into the ballot sleeve. Align the holes in the sleeve with the marking positions in the ballot. Check the back of the ballot to make sure the holes are aligned on the back as well.

To further help you align the ballot in the sleeve, the sleeve may have alignment holes near the bottom to help with the alignment of the ballot. If it does, the holes may be in a configuration on the **back** of the sleeve similar to one of those in the illustration below. If a voter with visual impairments is concerned about the alignment, show them how to use the verification wand on the alignment holes to check the alignment of the ballot.



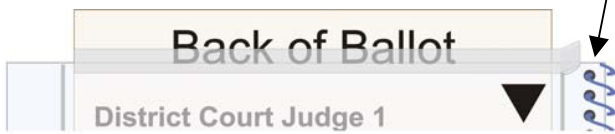
If the ballot for this election has multiple sheets, there will be one ballot sleeve for each sheet. Make sure the first ballot sheet is inserted into the first ballot sleeve, the second sheet into the second sleeve, and so on.

It is crucial for the holes to match the marking locations on the ballot. If they don't match, check to see that you are using the correct Vote-PAD. If it is the correct Vote-PAD and the holes do not align with the ballot positions, contact the election director.

### 5. *Tape the aligned ballot to the back of the sleeve carefully*

Once the ballot is aligned in the sleeve, use the removable tape to tape the ballot and sleeve together to prevent the ballot from slipping around inside the sleeve while the voter votes.

1. Turn the ballot sleeve over and apply the tape to the **back** of the ballot and sleeve. Extend the tape the full distance from the left side of the sleeve opening past the right edge of the sleeve. The sleeve is a little higher than the back cover, so if the voter wants assistance removing the tape after voting, you or another poll worker can assist them without compromising the privacy of the ballot. Be sure to apply the tape to the back, so the privacy shield won't get in the way of removing the tape when the booklet is closed.
2. Turn the right end of the tape back on itself, so it will be easy for the voter to grasp the tape and remove it before depositing the ballot. Make sure the **right** end extends past the ballot and is turned back as shown in the drawing below, since this is what the Braille and audio instructions will tell voters.



### 6. *Make sure the page-turning aids are attached correctly*

Double-check the small clamps to make sure they are correctly attached to the pages of the Vote-PAD

The clamps should be spaced about one inch apart, with the clamp on the cover attached at the lower edge. Make sure the clamp on the cover is at the bottom so it does not clamp the privacy shield to the cover, and that all the clamps are attached to the lower half of the booklet pages.



### 7. *For voters with visual impairments:*

#### a. **Double-check the raised markers**

One small, black raised marker is attached to the left of each marking hole on the ballot sleeve. One black triangular marker is attached to the sleeve at the top of each column of marking holes. The adhesive is strong, however, if any marker has come off, replace it with one from your supplies.

#### b. **Match the Vote-PAD with the audio, large-print, or Braille Guide to Contest Choices.**

A label identical to the one on the Vote-PAD should appear on the matching audio, the matching large-print guide, and the matching Braille instructions.

Before you escort the voter to a booth to use a Vote-PAD, ask whether they would prefer audio, large-print, or Braille. They may use more than one if they want to. Make sure the label on the Vote-PAD matches the labels on all instructions you leave with them.

#### c. **(Optional) Place fresh ear pads on the headset**

Slip two new pads on the headset for any voter who wants them.

## **8. *For voters who want to use the audio instructions, explain how to use the audio player***

After you escort them into the booth:

- ◆ Turn the volume all the way down. Help them adjust the headset.
- ◆ Show them how to turn the tape or CD player on and off with the buttons on the player, and have them try it. Point out the volume, play, rewind, fast forward, stop, and pause buttons. Give them a pencil with an eraser to operate the controls if needed.
- ◆ Show them the Overview instructions that apply to all elections and the Guide to Contest Choices for voting the ballot they have been given. Make sure they can navigate to both.
- ◆ Begin the Overview audio to ensure that all is working well, and ask if they can hear it.
- ◆ If they are using a tape, make sure it is rewound to the beginning.
- ◆ **IMPORTANT:** Encourage them to vote through the contests on the ballot in order.

## **9. *For voters with dexterity impairments:***

After you escort them into the booth:

### **a. Place a non-skid pad under the Vote-PAD on the voting table**

The non-skid pad may be useful to any voter, but it is particularly important for voters with dexterity impairments. As they turn the pages of the booklet, it is crucial for the booklet not to slip around unexpectedly on the surface of the voting table.

### **b. Ask if they would like to use a pencil with a foam grip**

Some voters with dexterity impairments can write with a large-diameter pencil better than a slender one. But some prefer a normal width pen or pencil. Slip a foam grip on the pencil for voters who request one. Foam grips should be included in your Vote-PAD supplies.

### **c. Ask if they have any other special needs you can supply.**

## **10. *Leave several write-in sheets and teach them how to use it***

A voter may want to use the write-in sheet instead of hand writing a name in the cutout. Place a paper clip on one of the write-in sheets so they can use it to attach the sheet to the ballot. Review the following instructions with the voter before they vote, if they are interested.

Do not ask voters if they want to write in a candidate, but if they voluntarily offer the information that they are not interested in the instructions, allow them to bypass the instructions.

On the write-in sheet is an embossed grid with Braille numbers and letters down the left side and the right side. Roman numbers and letters of the alphabet are also embossed down the left and right sides. Under each row is a horizontal line extending the full width of the page. Have them move their fingers across the page between two horizontal lines and feel the vertical lines on that row. Each row begins and ends with double vertical lines. There are also double vertical lines after every fifth cell on a row.

Point out the double horizontal lines below the second row of the grid. They divide the grid into an upper grid with two rows and a lower grid with 26 rows.



### ***11. Before you leave them alone, ask if they have any other questions***

The voter may be reluctant to take up more of your time, especially if the polling place is busy. So, invite them to ask more questions if they have any, and **make sure they know:**

- ◆ They can call on you if they have other questions or encounter problems as they vote.
- ◆ If they make a mistake, they can call on you to give them a replacement ballot.

### ***12. When the voter is done, give assistance as needed***

If the voter has used one or more write-in sheets, attach them to the ballot with a paper clip and, using the privacy shield, insert the clipped pages into the folder or envelope provided for write-in sheets.

Voters with visual or dexterity impairments may ask you to assist them in depositing the voted ballot into the scanner or ballot box. If so, remove the tape and deposit the ballot. You can do this without opening the back cover and exposing the ballot.

Make sure you keep the privacy shield over the ballot at all times to protect the privacy of the vote. As much as possible, allow them to watch or feel what you are doing so they are confident of their privacy.