

Our Vision

All individuals with developmental disabilities...

- are contributing members of their neighborhoods and communities;
- make real choices and have control over their own lives;
- have the freedom to strive, excel, and make mistakes;
- are in a position to achieve personal goals;
- are in a position to affect policy and process decisions that affect their lives; and
- have the same rights, privileges, responsibilities, and opportunities of citizenship as does any other New Jersey resident.

My District Is:

My Polling Place Is:

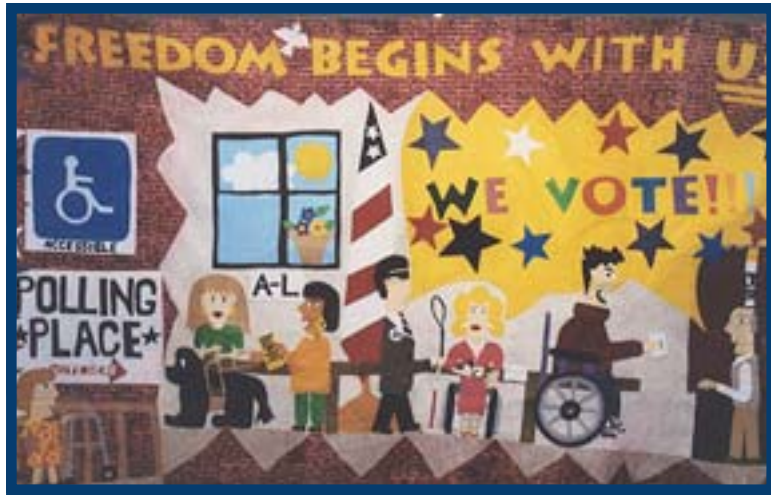
WWW.NJCDD.ORG

“Can I Vote?”



sure can...

 **Make It Happen**



Assembled by the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities
with lots of direction and help from

- Nadine Bruno,**
- Monica Rich, and**
- Vicky Dickman**

**of the Cumberland County, NJ
Monday Morning Self-Advocacy Network**

(C)2008

The Council on Developmental Disabilities

The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities is a 25-member policy advisory group that was formed under federal law to advise the Governor, the Legislature and the public about issues affecting people with developmental disabilities and their families, and to advocate on behalf of them.

Seventeen of the Council's public members are people with developmental disabilities and family representatives. Other members of the group include representatives of key state agencies, the executive directors of the Council's federally mandated sister agencies—the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities and New Jersey Protection and Advocacy. One public member represents providers of services. Public members are appointed by the Governor; other members are dictated by federal law.

The Council meets regularly to identify broad policy issues, approve short and long-range plans for influencing those issues, and to target its funding to build collaborative, innovative efforts to effect positive change in the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

**New Jersey Council on
Developmental Disabilities
PO Box 700
Trenton, NJ 08625 -0700**

courier address:

20 West State Street, 7th Floor	TEL: (609)-292-3745
Mary Roebling Building	TTY: (609)-777-3238
Trenton, NJ 08608	FAX: (609)-292-7114

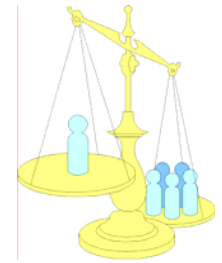
If you have trouble voting at the polling place on Election Day: Call yourself or let someone know that you want them to call the **Board of Elections** in the county you live to get the problem fixed that day.

- Atlantic: 609-645-6878
- Bergen: 201-338-6235
- Burlington: 609-265-5062 or 5114
- Camden: 856-661-3600
- Cape May: 609-465-1050
- Cumberland: 856-453-5801
- Essex: 973-621-5071
- Gloucester: 856-384-4500
- Hudson: 201-795-6552
- Hunterdon: 908-788-1190
- Mercer: 609-989-6522 or 6770
- Middlesex: 732-745-3471
- Monmouth: 732-431-7150
- Morris: 973-285-8350
- Ocean: 732-929-2167
- Passaic: 973-881-4531
- Salem: 856-935-7510 ext. 8327
- Union: 908-527-4123
- Warren: 908-475-6313



WHAT IS VOTING ?

A way to decide what or who the group wants.



President

Governor

...also we vote for Mayor, Town Council Members, State Legislators such as Assembly and Senate, and for Members of Congress.

This year is 2008.

This year we will all vote for President and Vice President.

A lot of people called ‘candidates’ are asking us to give our vote to them.

Why should we?

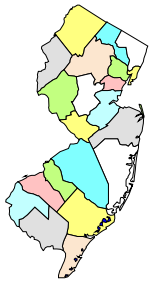
Voting is a way for us to voice our opinion about who should represent us.

Voting Machine Picture

Our elected leaders are picked by people voting in the community.



- If you have been found guilty of a crime but have served the full length of your criminal judgment and have registered to vote since then, you have the right to vote.
- If you have changed your name since registering to vote, you have the right to vote under your original name.
- If you make a mistake, spoil or damage your ballot, you have the right to receive a replacement ballot.
- You have the right to vote without anyone trying to tell you how to vote.
- You have the right to bring your children into the voting place and booth with you. This gives them the chance to see how it is done.
- You have the right to file a signed or unnamed written complaint about your polling place if you are not happy with the way an election is being run. [use the appropriate phone number]
- If your right to vote is confronted/ questioned by a voting official and you are kept/ stopped from voting, you have a right to a trial ON VOTING DAY.
- You have the right to take this bill of rights into the voting place.



The New Jersey Voter's Bill of Rights

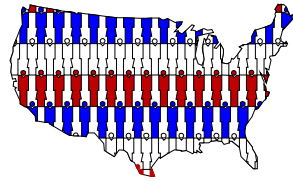
- compiled by the NJ League of Women Voters.

- If you are at your voting place any time between 6 in the morning and 8 at night, you have the right to vote.
- You have the right to vote without presenting any form of identification other than your own signature. [except if you are voting for the first time]
- If you can not sign your name, you have the right to vote after confirming your identity with a voting official verbally.
- If you cannot read or write, or you have a physical disability/ impairment, you have the right to request special help with voting.
- If a voting official can not find your name on the list and you have not moved, you have the right to vote by a temporary/ secondary ballot.
- If you have not moved, but voting records wrongly show/ state that you have, you have the right to fill out a proof of address form and vote.
- If you have moved within the same county, you have the right to fill out proof of address form and vote in your new area.

What makes a good choice for Leader?

- ✓ They listen to what the people want and need.
- ✓ Good Personality
- ✓ Good Sense — Common Sense
- ✓ Funny — Can Laugh and make some one laugh
- ✓ Smarts- what a leader does.
- ✓ The Person is Your Choice

WHY VOTE?



- ✓ As citizens we elect people who agree with **our ideas and feelings** about things.
- ✓ We vote for people we think can **work for us** and solve our problems
- ✓ We vote for **people we trust** to help us and who will set the right rules for government.
- ✓ We also vote to get **the right people** to help people and that are **for the people**.

If we Don't Vote, we can't complain about the leaders we get.

What all people should know...

- ✓ I have the right to vote
 - even though I have a developmental or intellectual disability.
 - even if I live in a developmental center, group home, or other place where I get residential care.
 - even if I have a guardian, unless a court has clearly said that I cannot vote.
- ✓ I have the right to vote by myself **or** with help.
 - If a polling place worker cannot give me the help that I ask for, we can agree on another way to help me vote.
 - ...to have someone I choose help me in the voting booth and to take some extra time to vote.
 - ...to have someone show me how to use the voting equipment on Election Day.
 - ...to have someone tell me, in a way that I understand, if I make a mistake when I am voting and how to fix it.
- ✓ No one can tell you how to vote or who you should vote for.
- ✓ I have the right to make up my own mind how I want to vote on any ballot questions.
- ✓ I have the right to vote if I am waiting in line when the poll closes.

How We Vote

Register

To be able to Vote, you need to register. This tells the people at the voting place you are a legal voter.

You have to register at least 21 days before the election you vote in.

Who can Register to Vote?

- a. a legal U.S. Citizen
- b. 18 years old by election day
- c. have lived in the state and the county for at least 30 days before the election

EXAMPLE

If Election Day is November 4, 2008 then you need to

- be 18 years old by November 4, 2008

AND

- have lived in your county at least since October 5, 2008

AND

- have lived in New Jersey at least since October 5, 2008

MY RESPONSIBILITY AS A VOTER

- ...to learn about the candidates and what they say about things important to you.
- ...to register to vote at least 21 days before the election.
- ...to bring ID to the polling place if I am voting for the first time.
- ...to find out where my polling place is. Your sample ballot has this information.
- ...to look over the sample ballot carefully.
- ...to ask any questions I may have about voting before Election Day.
- ...to request an absentee ballot if I will not be able to vote in person on Election Day.
- ...to arrange transportation to the place where I vote 3 weeks before Election Day.
- ...to let my group home staff, parents, friends or other people I get rides from that I will need transportation to the polling place on Election Day.
- ... to call the Board of Elections in my county if I cannot vote on Election Day because:
 - ✓ The polling place is not accessible (needs a ramp, the accessible entrance door is shut and/or locked, entrance door too heavy, etc...).
 - ✓ The poll worker ignored my request for help with the voting machine.
 - ✓ The poll worker did not allow me to use the accessible machine (with head phones).
 - ✓ The poll worker questioned my right to vote.
 - ✓ The poll worker refused to allow me have someone I know to help me vote.
 - ✓ Any other reason.

Going Out of Town on Election Day ?



ABSENTEE VOTING [Absentee ballot]

If for some reason if you can't make it to the polls on Election Day, check to see what your state's absentee voter policy is. Many people who are out of town or won't be able to get to the polls submit absentee ballots, which can often be sent in by mail. This is a way to make sure your vote counts when you cannot make it to the polling place.

How to Register

People use a **Voter Registration Application** to register.



You can get one on line at

www.nj.gov/oag/elections

Or, you can use the form we put in this booklet.



When you register, you will be asked to declare yourself as a...

- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent

To declare your party you either write on the form or tell the people at the polling place how you want to vote.

ELECTIONS

Everyone has an assigned PLACE TO VOTE called a POLLING PLACE.

Your assigned voting place may be...

- ✓ local school
- ✓ YMCA - YMHA
- ✓ church
- ✓ city or town building
- ✓ library
- ✓ other (ask if you are not sure)

My Polling Place is:

Accessibility in Polling Places:

- Each polling place must have accessible voting equipment.
- Under **HAVA**, this means equipment that allows voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently.
- Each polling place should be accessible to all voters with disabilities.
 - Beyond avoiding obvious barriers like stairs, election officials should ensure that polling places have an accessible, clearly-marked path from the parking area to an accessible entrance that allows voters with disabilities to enter the polling place safely and independently it should be accessible for all people using wheelchairs, walkers, guide dogs, canes, etc.
 - Unpaved parking lots or paths, especially gravel surfaces, pose a hardship for many individuals who use wheelchairs, walkers and other mobility devices.
 - Election officials should also provide a voting station with voting equipment that can be reached by a voter in a wheelchair, and election workers should know how to activate the accessible features of the equipment, they should all be accessible for physical and non-physical disabilities.

- All equipment should be accessible for all individuals no matter their ability.

