



Vermont Center for Independent Living
Kate Larose
Pandemic Equity Coordinator

Senate Committee on Government Operations
March 30, 2023



VOTE
TOMORROW

1991

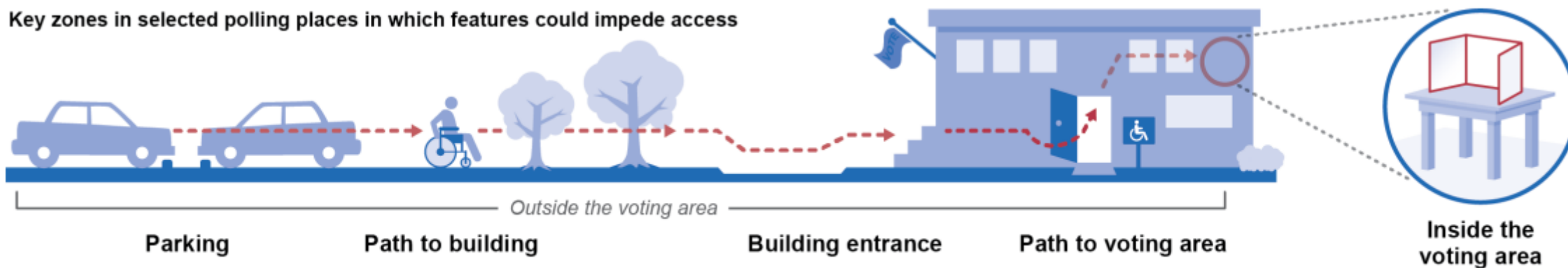
Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Regulations

Part 35 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local
Government Services.

2017

Voters with Disabilities: Observations on Polling Place Accessibility and Related Federal Guidance

Key zones in selected polling places in which features could impede access



Source: GAO analysis of polling place data collected during the 2016 general election. | GAO-18-4

60%

of polling places
are inaccessible

2018



Accessibility

Vermont's election laws are designed to make it easy for all eligible Vermonters to vote and to register to vote. One of the specific purposes of the Vermont Election Laws is "to provide equal opportunity for all citizens of voting age to participate in political processes" [17 V.S.A. §2101](#).

Vermont's Accessible Voting System

In 2018, beginning with the August Primary, the Secretary of State's Office introduced a [new accessible voting system](#). This is a tablet-based system that marks the voter's selections onto the same paper ballots used by all voters at the polls, increasing the privacy and independence of the vote for a voter with disabilities. The system also contains an online-based ballot marking interface which enables voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently from home during the early voting period.

We are very proud to offer this state-of-the-art [accessible voting system](#) to Vermonters voters with a disability. Please feel free to [contact us](#) with questions.

2020

H.681

An act relating to government operations in response to the COVID-19 outbreak

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

* * * Elections * * *

Sec. 1. LEGISLATIVE INTENT; PROTECTION OF CITIZENS AND OF
ELECTIONS

It is the intent of the General Assembly that, if the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic continues its expected spread in the State of Vermont, the citizens of Vermont should be able to protect their health, safety, and welfare while also continuing to exercise their right to participate in elections in order to maintain our democratic institutions. Accordingly, this act sets forth temporary elections provisions in response to COVID-19.

The Pandemic Has Opened Up Civic Life to Vermonters With Disabilities

By **PAUL HEINTZ**



Published October 28, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. | Updated November 2, 2020 at 9:05 p.m.



Maria Rinaldi

| GLENN RUSSELL

2021

**GOVERNOR'S DIRECTIVE TO THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**


Today, June 14, 2021, because of the hard work of so many Vermonters and their commitment to each other, 80 percent of eligible Vermonters have now received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. This figure makes Vermont the envy of the nation, the safest state in the United States and a global leader. This achievement meets the threshold set for lifting State restrictions.

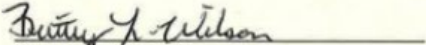
I, Philip B. Scott, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of Vermont by the Constitution of the State of Vermont, the emergency powers set forth in 20 V.S.A. §§ 8, 9 and 11 and other laws, hereby direct the Secretary of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to rescind all remaining mandatory Specialized and Universal Guidance measures set forth in the Vermont Forward Plan.

This Directive shall take effect upon signing.



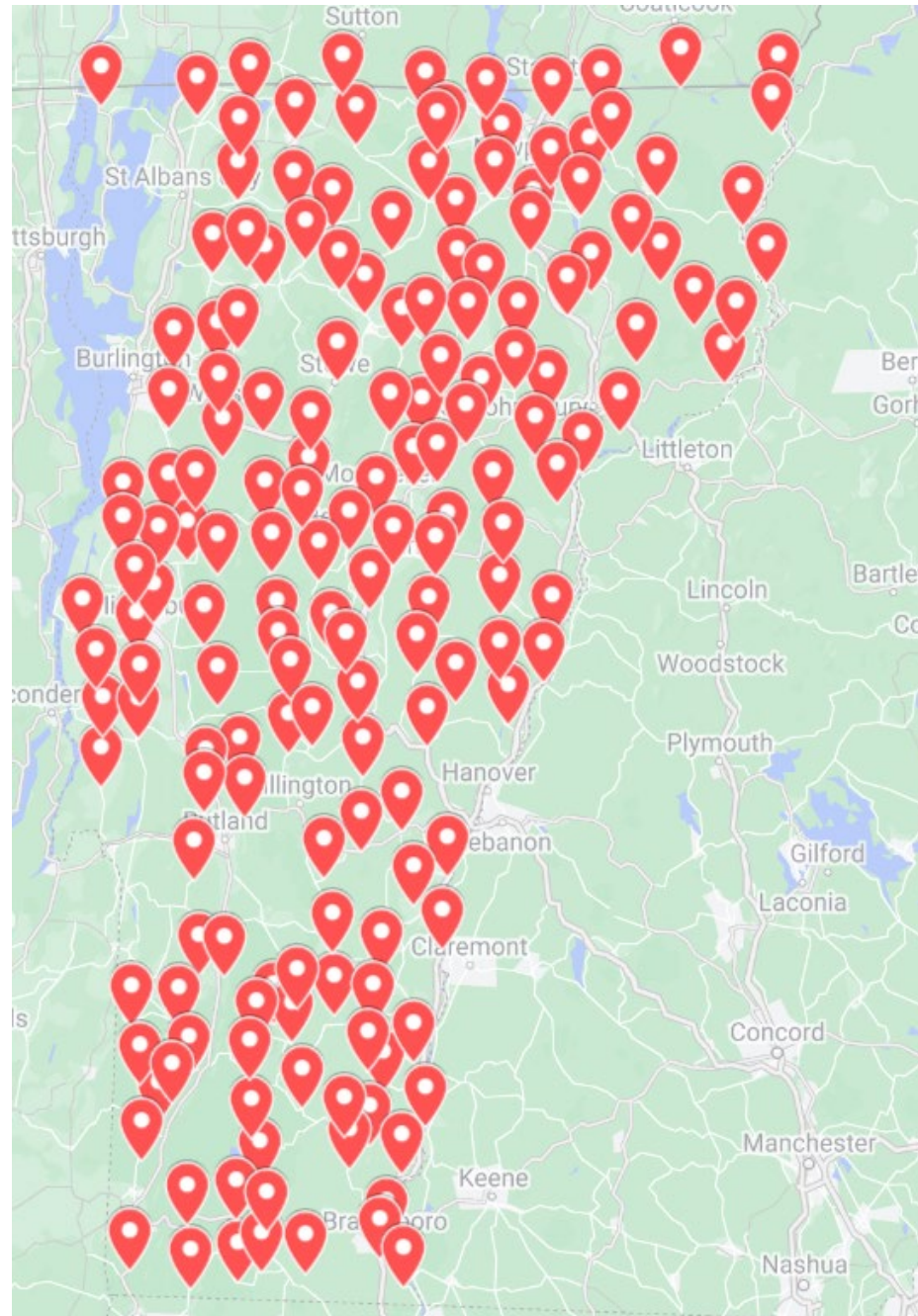
By the Governor:


Philip B. Scott
Governor


Brittney L. Wilson
Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs

Dated: June 14, 2021

2023





In Vermont's small communities, the big Town Meeting news is its in-person comeback

By **Kevin O'Connor**

Feb 28 2023

Ask East Montpelier Clerk Rosie Laquerre about this year's March Town Meeting agenda and she'll respond, "Nothing exciting or unusual."

Then again, after a pandemic pause, just the fact the meeting is taking place is exciting and unusual.

"East Montpelier is back to business," Laquerre says.

Voting and Polling Places

September 21, 2022

The ADA requires state and local governments and their election officials to ensure that people with disabilities have a full and equal opportunity to vote in all elections. This includes federal, state, and local elections. And it includes all parts of voting, like voter registration, selecting a location for polling places, and voting, whether on election day or during an early or absentee voting process.

Brattleboro Reformer

Turbow: Brattleboro's Representative Town Meeting should be more accessible


By Sarah Turbow Feb 8, 2023

“...covert barriers to access like these make it difficult or impossible for young people, disabled people, and working people to participate. Instead, even our most ostensibly accessible bodies are dominated by those who have the most free time, the most resources, and the most robust health. In other words, the most privileged. So much for democracy by the people, for the people.”

NEWS & CITIZEN

Town Meeting Day 2023

Cambridge grants disability request at town meeting

Aaron Calvin | Staff Writer | Mar 9, 2023  0

After members of the Cambridge Selectboard decided to hold their annual meeting in person, they also took the rare step of granting a reasonable accommodation request from a resident who invoked the Americans with Disabilities Act, allowing them to attend the meeting in person but separate from the crowd.

Kate

Kate (she/her)

Recording

Town of Newark

Play

10:14 AM

“VCDR recognizes that
community and democracy
are both stronger when
everyone is able to take part.”

