
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2022 No. 1284

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE, ENGLAND

The Assistance with Voting for Persons with Disabilities (Principal Area, Parish and Greater London Authority Elections) (Amendments) Rules 2022

Made - - - - *5th December 2022*
Laid before Parliament *7th December 2022*
Coming into force - - *29th December 2022*

The Secretary of State makes these Rules in exercise of the powers conferred by paragraph 18(8) of Part 3 of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972(1) and by section 36(1) and (2A) of the Representation of the People Act 1983(2).

The Secretary of State has consulted the Electoral Commission in accordance with section 7(1) and (2)(d) of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000(3).

Citation, commencement, saving and extent and application

1.—(1) These Rules may be cited as the Assistance with Voting for Persons with Disabilities (Principal Area, Parish and Greater London Authority Elections) (Amendments) Rules 2022 and come into force on 29th December 2022.

(2) The amendments made by these Rules do not apply to an election or poll in respect of which the date of the poll specified in the notice of election or poll is on or before 3rd May 2023.

(3) The amendments made by these Rules have the same extent and application as the provision amended, except for the amendments made by regulation 2 which do not apply to polls consequent on a community meeting in Wales.

Amendment of the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987

2.—(1) The Schedule to the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987 (poll rules)(4) is amended as follows.

(1) 1972 c. 70. Paragraph 18(8) was inserted by section 42(3) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (c. 2).
(2) 1983 c. 2. Section 36(1) was amended by section 13(2) of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (asc 1). Section 36(2A) was inserted by paragraph 4 of Schedule 3 to the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (c. 29).
(3) Section 7(2)(d) was amended by the paragraph 11 in Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
(4) S.I. 1987/1, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Rules.

- (2) In the arrangement of rules before rule 1 (timetable)—
- (a) in the entry relating to rule 21 (voting by blind persons), at the end insert “: polls in Wales”;
 - (b) after that entry insert—
 - “21A Voting by persons with disabilities: polls in England”;
 - (c) in the entry relating to the form of declaration to be made by the companion of a blind voter, at the end insert “for a poll in Wales”;
 - (d) after that entry insert—
 - “Form of declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities for a poll in England”.
- (3) In rule 11 (equipment of polling stations)—
- (a) after paragraph (3)(c) insert—
 - (d) for a poll in England, such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons to vote independently in the manner directed by rule 19 (voting procedure), including in relation to voting secretly; and for this purpose “relevant persons” means persons who find it difficult or impossible to vote in that manner because of—
 - (i) blindness or partial sight, or
 - (ii) another disability.”;
 - (b) after paragraph (3) insert—
 - “(3A) For a poll in England, paragraph (10) of rule 29 of Schedule 1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 (Parliamentary elections rules: guidance to returning officers)(5) applies for the purposes of paragraph (3)(d) of this rule as it applies for the purposes of that rule, but as if the reference in that paragraph to paragraph (3A)(b) were a reference to paragraph (3)(d) of this rule.”.
- (4) In rule 13(a) (notification of requirement of secrecy), after “blind voter”, insert “, or for a poll in England a voter with disabilities,”.
- (5) In rule 14(f) (admission to polling station), after “blind voters”, insert “or, for a poll in England, the companions of voters with disabilities”.
- (6) In rule 21 (voting by blind persons)—
- (a) in the heading, at the end insert “: polls in Wales”;
 - (b) before paragraph (1) insert—
 - “(A1) This rule applies to a poll in Wales.”.
- (7) After rule 21 insert—

“Voting by persons with disabilities: polls in England

21A.—(1) If, in respect of a poll in England, a voter makes an application to the presiding officer to be allowed on the grounds of disability or inability to read to vote with the assistance of another person by whom the voter is accompanied (in these rules referred to as “the companion”), the presiding officer must require the voter to declare whether the voter is so incapacitated by the voter’s disability or inability to read as to be unable to vote without assistance.

- (2) The presiding officer must grant the application if the presiding officer—

(5) Rule 29(10) was inserted by section 9(1) and (2)(c) of the Elections Act 2022 (c. 37).

- (a) is satisfied that the voter is so incapacitated, and
 - (b) is also satisfied by a written declaration made by the companion (in these rules referred to as “the declaration made by the companion of a voter with disabilities”) that the companion—
 - (i) is a qualified person within the meaning of paragraph (3), and
 - (ii) has not previously assisted more than one voter with disabilities to vote at the poll,and anything which by these rules is required to be done to or by that voter in connection with the giving of the voter’s vote may be done to, or with the assistance of, the companion.
- (3) For the purposes of this rule, a person is qualified to assist a voter with disabilities to vote if the person is aged 18 or over.
- (4) The name, and number in the register of electors of every voter whose vote is given in accordance with this rule and the name and address of the companion must be entered on a list (in these rules referred to as “the list of voters with disabilities assisted by companions”).
- (5) The declaration made by the companion—
- (a) must be in the form in the Appendix;
 - (b) must be made before the presiding officer at the time when the voter applies to vote with the assistance of a companion and must forthwith be given to the presiding officer who must attest and retain it.
- (6) No fee or other payment must be charged in respect of the declaration.”.
- (8) In rule 25(1)(f) (procedure on close of poll)—
- (a) after “by companions” insert “or the list of voters with disabilities assisted by companions”;
 - (b) after “blind voters” in the second place it occurs, insert “or the declarations made by the companions of voters with disabilities”.
- (9) In rule 34(c) (delivery of documents to district council)—
- (a) after “by companions”, insert “or the list of voters with disabilities assisted by companions”;
 - (b) at the end, insert “or the declarations made by the companions of voters with disabilities”.
- (10) In the Appendix—
- (a) in the heading for form of declaration to be made by the companion of a blind voter, at the end insert “for a poll in Wales”.
 - (b) after that form, insert the form in Schedule 1 to these Regulations.

Amendment of the Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006

3.—(1) The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006⁽⁶⁾ are amended as follows.

(2) In Schedule 2 (rules for conduct of an election of councillors of a principal area where poll is not taken together with poll at another election)—

- (a) in Part 3 (contested elections)—
 - (i) in rule 26 (equipment of polling stations)—
 - (aa) for paragraph (5)(b) substitute—

⁽⁶⁾ [S.I. 2006/3304](#); relevant amending instruments are: [S.I. 2014/494](#), [2018/1310](#).

- (b) in Part 7 (appendix of forms), for the form of declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities, substitute the corresponding form in Part 2 of Schedule 2 to these Regulations.

Amendment of the Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006

4.—(1) The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006(7) are amended as follows.

(2) In Schedule 2 (rules for conduct of an election of councillors of a parish where poll is not taken together with poll at another election)—

(a) in Part 3 (contested elections)—

(i) in rule 26 (equipment of polling stations)—

(aa) for paragraph (5)(b) substitute—

“(b) such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons to vote independently in the manner directed by rule 35 (voting procedure), including in relation to voting secretly; and for this purpose “relevant persons” means persons who find it difficult or impossible to vote in that manner because of—

(i) blindness or partial sight, or

(ii) another disability.”;

(bb) after paragraph (5) insert—

“(5A) Paragraph (10) of rule 29 of Schedule 1 to the 1983 Act (Parliamentary elections rules: guidance to returning officers) applies for the purposes of paragraph (5)(b) of this rule as it applies for the purposes of that rule, but as if the reference in that paragraph to paragraph (3A)(b) were a reference to paragraph (5)(b) of this rule.”;

(cc) omit paragraph (9);

(ii) in rule 37(3) (voting by persons with disabilities), for the words from “shall be qualified” to the end substitute “is qualified to assist a voter with disabilities to vote if that person is aged 18 or over.”;

- (b) in Part 7 (appendix of forms), for the form of declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities, substitute the corresponding form in Part 1 of Schedule 3 to these Regulations.

(3) In Schedule 3 (rules for conduct of an election of councillors of a parish where the poll is taken together with the poll at a relevant election or referendum)—

(a) in Part 3 (contested elections)—

(i) in rule 26 (equipment of polling stations)—

(aa) for paragraph (6)(b) substitute—

“(b) such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons to vote independently in the manner directed by rule 35 (voting procedure), including in relation to voting secretly; and for this

purpose “relevant persons” means persons who find it difficult or impossible to vote in that manner because of—

- (i) blindness or partial sight, or
- (ii) another disability.”;

(bb) after paragraph (6) insert—

“(6A) Paragraph (10) of rule 29 of Schedule 1 to the 1983 Act (Parliamentary elections rules: guidance to returning officers) applies for the purposes of paragraph (6)(b) of this rule as it applies for the purposes of that rule, but as if the reference in that paragraph to paragraph (3A)(b) were a reference to paragraph (6)(b) of this rule.”;

(cc) omit paragraph (11);

(ii) in rule 37(3) (voting by persons with disabilities), for the words from “shall be qualified” to the end substitute “is qualified to assist a voter with disabilities to vote if that person is aged 18 or over.”;

(b) in Part 7 (appendix of forms), for the form of declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities, substitute the corresponding form in Part 2 of Schedule 3 to these Regulations.

Amendment of the Greater London Authority Elections Rules 2007

5.—(1) The Greater London Authority Elections Rules 2007(8) are amended as follows.

(2) In each of Schedule 1 (constituency members election rules), Schedule 3 (mayoral election rules), Schedule 5 (constituency members election rules where authority election combined with another form of election or referendum) and Schedule 7 (mayoral election rules where authority election combined with another form of election or referendum), in Part 4—

(a) in rule 28 (equipment of polling stations)—

(i) for paragraph (5) substitute—

“(5) The CRO must also provide each polling station with such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons to vote independently in the manner directed by rule 38 (voting procedure), including in relation to voting secretly; and for this purpose “relevant persons” means persons who find it difficult or impossible to vote in that manner because of—

- (a) blindness or partial sight, or
- (b) another disability.

(5A) Paragraph (10) of rule 29 of Schedule 1 to the 1983 Act (Parliamentary elections rules: guidance to returning officers) applies for the purposes of paragraph (5) of this rule as it applies for the purposes of that rule, but as if—

- (a) the reference in that paragraph to the returning officer were a reference to the CRO, and
- (b) the reference in that paragraph to paragraph (3A)(b) were a reference to paragraph (5) of this rule.”;

(ii) omit paragraph (6);

(b) in rule 40(3) (voting by persons with disabilities), for the words from “if that person” to the end substitute “if that person is aged 18 or over.”.

(3) In both Schedule 2 (London members election rules) and Schedule 6 (London members election rules where authority election combined with another form of election or referendum), in Part 4—

(a) in rule 29 (equipment of polling stations)—

(i) for paragraph (5) substitute—

“(5) The CRO must also provide each polling station with such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons to vote independently in the manner directed by rule 39 (voting procedure), including in relation to voting secretly; and for this purpose “relevant persons” means persons who find it difficult or impossible to vote in that manner because of—

(a) blindness or partial sight, or

(b) another disability.

(5A) Paragraph (10) of rule 29 of Schedule 1 to 1983 Act (Parliamentary elections rules: guidance to returning officers) applies for the purposes of paragraph (5) of this rule as it applies for the purposes of that rule, but as if—

(a) the reference in that paragraph to the returning officer were a reference to the CRO, and

(b) the reference in that paragraph to paragraph (3A)(b) were a reference to paragraph (5) of this rule.”;

(ii) omit paragraph (6);

(b) in rule 41(3) (voting by persons with disabilities), for the words from “if that person” to the end substitute “if that person is aged 18 or over.”.

(4) In Schedule 10 (schedule of forms)—

(a) for form 19 (declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities), substitute the corresponding form in Part 1 of Schedule 4 to these Regulations.

(b) for form 19A (declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities: combined election), substitute the corresponding form in Part 2 of Schedule 4 to these Regulations.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Lee Rowley
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities

5th December 2022

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally made). This item of legislation is currently only available in its original format.

SCHEDULE 1

Rule 2(10)(b)

Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987: New Form
Declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities for a poll in England

Declaration for the companion of a voter with disabilities	
The Poll demanded in a Parish Meeting	
Date of poll [day] [date] [month] [year]	
A voter with disabilities is a voter who has made a declaration that he or she is so incapacitated by his or her blindness or other disability, or by his or her inability to read, as to be unable to vote at this poll without assistance. In this form, "voter" means the person casting the vote at the poll.	
Part 1 To be completed by the voter's companion	
Companion's name	
Companion's address	
Voter's name	
[Only for use if the disabled voter is acting as a proxy] Voter is acting as proxy for:	
Elector's number [If the disabled voter is acting as a proxy, this is the number of the person for whom the voter is acting]	
<p>I have been requested to assist the voter named above to record their vote at this poll. I declare that:</p> <p>(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aged 18 or over <p>AND</p> <p>(2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not previously assisted more than one voter with disabilities at this poll. If I have assisted one other voter their name and address is: 	
[Complete if appropriate] Name and address of other person assisted	

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NOTE – It is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false statement in this form.			
Companion's signature		Date	
Part 2 To be completed by the Presiding Officer			
I, the undersigned, being the Presiding Officer for:			
Polling station		Ward of	
Hereby certify that the above declaration was signed in my presence.		Presiding Officer signature	
Date		Time (exact)	

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SCHEDULE 2

Rule 3(2)(b), 3(3)(b)

Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006: New forms

PART 1

Form for use at an election of councillors of a principal area where poll is not taken together with the poll at another election

Form of declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities

Declaration for the companion of a voter with disabilities	
Election of Councillors to [name of local authority]	
Date of election [day] [date] [month] [year]	
A voter with disabilities is a voter who has made a declaration that he or she is so incapacitated by his or her blindness or other disability, or by his or her inability to read, as to be unable to vote at this election without assistance. In this form, "voter" means the person casting the vote at the election and includes a person voting as a proxy.	
Part 1 To be completed by the voter's companion	
Companion's name	
Companion's address	
Voter's name	
[Only for use if the disabled voter is acting as a proxy] Voter is acting as proxy for:	
Elector's number [If the disabled voter is acting as a proxy, this is the number of the person for whom the voter is acting]	
<p>I have been requested to assist the voter named above to record their vote at this election. I declare that:</p> <p>(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aged 18 or over <p>AND</p> <p>(2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not previously assisted more than one voter with disabilities at this election. If I have assisted one other voter their name and address is: 	
[Complete if appropriate] Name and address of other person assisted	

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NOTE – It is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false statement in this form.			
Companion's signature		Date	
Part 2 To be completed by the Presiding Officer			
I, the undersigned, being the Presiding Officer for:			
Polling station		Electoral division/ward of	
Hereby certify that the above declaration was signed in my presence.		Presiding Officer signature	
Date		Time (exact)	

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PART 2

Form for use at an election of councillors of a principal area where the poll is taken together with the poll at a relevant election or referendum

Form of declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities

Declaration for the companion of a voter with disabilities	
<p>*[Election of Member of Parliament for the <i>[insert name of constituency]</i> constituency]</p> <p>*[Election of councillors to <i>[insert name of local authority/parish council in full]</i>]</p> <p>*[Election of London Assembly [London member] [constituency member for <i>[insert name of constituency]</i>]]]</p> <p>*[Election of the Mayor [of London] [for <i>[insert name of authority]</i>]]]</p> <p>*[[<i>insert title of election/referendum</i>] election/referendum]</p> <p><i>*Delete or amend as appropriate</i></p>	
Date of election(s) [and referendum(s)] <i>[day] [date] [month] [year]</i>	
<p>A voter with disabilities is a voter who has made a declaration that he or she is so incapacitated by his or her blindness or other disability, or by his or her inability to read, as to be unable to vote at [this] [these] election(s) [and referendum(s)] without assistance.</p> <p>In this form, "voter" means the person casting the vote at the election or referendum and includes a person voting as a proxy.</p>	
Part 1 To be completed by the voter's companion	
Companion's name	
Companion's address	
Voter's name	
<p><i>[Only for use if the disabled voter is acting as a proxy]</i></p> <p>Voter is acting as proxy for:</p>	
<p>Elector's number</p> <p><i>[If the disabled voter is acting as a proxy, this is the number of the person for whom the voter is acting]</i></p>	

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<p>I have been requested to assist the voter named above to record their vote at [this] [these] election(s) [and referendum(s)]. I declare that:</p> <p>(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aged 18 or over <p>AND</p> <p>(2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not previously assisted more than one voter with disabilities at [this] [these] election(s) [or referendum(s)]. If I have assisted one other voter their name and address is: 			
<p>[Complete if appropriate] Name and address of other person assisted</p>			
<p>NOTE – It is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false statement in this form.</p>			
Companion's signature		Date	
<p>Part 2 To be completed by the Presiding Officer</p>			
<p>I, the undersigned, being the Presiding Officer for:</p>			
Polling station		Electoral division/ward of	
<p>Hereby certify that the above declaration was signed in my presence.</p>		Presiding Officer signature	
Date		Time (exact)	

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SCHEDULE 3

Rule 4(2)(b), 4(3)(b)

Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006: New Forms

PART 1

Form for use at an election of councillors of a parish where the poll is not taken together with another election or referendum

Form of declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities

Declaration for the companion of a voter with disabilities	
Election of councillors to <i>[insert name of parish/ council]</i>	
Date of election <i>[day] [date] [month] [year]</i>	
A voter with disabilities is a voter who has made a declaration that he or she is so incapacitated by his or her blindness or other disability, or by his or her inability to read, as to be unable to vote at this election without assistance. In this form, "voter" means the person casting the vote at the election and includes a person voting as a proxy.	
Part 1 To be completed by the voter's companion	
Companion's name	
Companion's address	
Voter's name	
<i>[Only for use if the disabled voter is acting as a proxy]</i> Voter is acting as proxy for:	
Elector's number <i>[If the disabled voter is acting as a proxy, this is the number of the person for whom the voter is acting]</i>	
I have been requested to assist the voter named above to record their vote at this election. I declare that:	
<p>(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aged 18 or over <p>AND</p> <p>(2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not previously assisted more than one voter with disabilities at this election. <p>If I have assisted one other voter their name and address is:</p>	
<i>[Complete if appropriate]</i> Name and address of other person assisted	

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NOTE – It is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false statement in this form.			
Companion's signature		Date	
Part 2 To be completed by the Presiding Officer			
I, the undersigned, being the Presiding Officer for:			
Polling station		Electoral division /ward	
Hereby certify that the above declaration was signed in my presence.		Presiding Officer signature	
Date		Time (exact)	

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PART 2

Form for use at an election of councillors of a parish where the poll is taken together with a relevant election or referendum

Form of declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities

Declaration for the companion of a voter with disabilities	
<p>*[Election of Member of Parliament for the <i>[insert name of constituency]</i> constituency]</p> <p>*[Election of councillors to <i>[insert name of local authority/parish council in full]</i>]</p> <p>*[Election of London Assembly [London member] [constituency member for <i>[insert name of constituency]</i>]]</p> <p>*[Election of the Mayor [of London] [for <i>[insert name of authority]</i>]]</p> <p>*[[<i>Insert title of election/referendum</i>] election/referendum]</p> <p><i>* Delete or amend as appropriate</i></p>	
Date of election(s) [and referendum(s)] <i>[day] [date] [month] [year]</i>	
<p>A voter with disabilities is a voter who has made a declaration that he or she is so incapacitated by his or her blindness or other disability, or by his or her inability to read, as to be unable to vote at [this] [these] election(s) [and referendum(s)] without assistance.</p> <p>In this form, "voter" means the person casting the vote at the election or referendum and includes a person voting as a proxy.</p>	
Part 1 To be completed by the voter's companion	
Companion's name	
Companion's address	
Voter's name	
<p><i>[Only for use if the disabled voter is acting as a proxy]</i></p> <p>Voter is acting as proxy for:</p>	
<p>Elector's number</p> <p><i>[If the disabled voter is acting as a proxy, this is the number of the person for whom the voter is acting]</i></p>	

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<p>I have been requested to assist the voter named above to record their vote at [this] [these] election(s) [and referendum(s)]. I declare that:</p> <p>(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aged 18 or over <p>AND</p> <p>(2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not previously assisted more than one voter with disabilities at [this] [these] election(s) [or referendum(s)]. If I have assisted one other voter their name and address is: 			
<p>[Complete if appropriate] Name and address of other person assisted</p>			
<p>NOTE – It is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false statement in this form.</p>			
Companion's signature		Date	
<p>Part 2 To be completed by the Presiding Officer</p>			
<p>I, the undersigned, being the Presiding Officer for:</p>			
Polling station		Electoral division / ward	
<p>Hereby certify that the above declaration was signed in my presence.</p>		Presiding Officer signature	
Date		Time (exact)	

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SCHEDULE 4

Rule 5(4)

Greater London Authority Elections Rules 2007: New Forms

PART 1

Form 19: Declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities

Declaration for the companion of a voter with disabilities	
<p>*Election of the London Assembly Constituency Member for [insert name of constituency]] *[Election of the London Assembly London Member] *[Election of the Mayor of London]</p> <p><i>* Delete or amend as appropriate</i></p>	
Date of election [day] [date] [month] [year]	
<p>A voter with disabilities is a voter who has made a declaration that he or she is so incapacitated by his or her blindness or other disability, or by his or her inability to read, as to be unable to vote at [this] [these] election(s) without assistance. In this form, "voter" means the person casting the vote at the election and includes a person voting as a proxy.</p>	
Part 1 To be completed by the voter's companion	
Companion's name	
Companion's address	
Voter's name	
<p>[Only for use if the disabled voter is acting as a proxy] Voter is acting as proxy for:</p>	
<p>Elector's number [If the disabled voter is acting as a proxy, this is the number of the person for whom the voter is acting]</p>	
<p>I have been requested to assist the voter named above to record their vote at this / these election(s). I declare that:</p> <p>(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aged 18 or over <p>AND</p> <p>(2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not previously assisted more than one voter with disabilities at this election. If I have assisted one other voter their name and address is: 	
[Complete if appropriate] Name and address of other person assisted	

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NOTE – It is a criminal offence to communicate at any time to any person any information as to the way in which the voter intends to vote or has voted.			
Companion's signature		Date	
Part 2 To be completed by the Presiding Officer			
I, the undersigned, being the Presiding Officer for:			
Polling station		Constituency of	
Hereby certify that the above declaration was signed in my presence.		Presiding Officer signature	
Date		Time (exact)	

PART 2

Form 19A: Declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities: combined election

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Declaration for the companion of a voter with disabilities	
<p>*[Election of Member of Parliament for the <i>[insert name of constituency]</i> constituency]</p> <p>*[Election of councillors to <i>[insert name of local authority/parish council in full]</i>]</p> <p>*[Election of London Assembly Constituency Member for <i>[insert name of constituency]</i>]</p> <p>*[Election of the London Assembly London Member]</p> <p>*[Election of the Mayor of London]</p> <p>*[[<i>Insert title of election/referendum</i>] election/referendum]</p> <p>* <i>Delete or amend as appropriate</i></p>	
Date of election(s) [and referendum(s)] <i>[day] [date] [month] [year]</i>	
<p>A voter with disabilities is a voter who has made a declaration that he or she is so incapacitated by his or her blindness or other disability, or by his or her inability to read, as to be unable to vote at [this] [these] election(s) [and referendum(s)] without assistance.</p> <p>In this form, "voter" means the person casting the vote at the election or referendum and includes a person voting as a proxy.</p>	
Part 1 To be completed by the voter's companion	
Companion's name	
Companion's address	
Voter's name	
<p><i>[Only for use if the disabled voter is acting as a proxy]</i></p> <p>Voter is acting as proxy for:</p>	
<p>Elector's number</p> <p><i>[If the disabled voter is acting as a proxy, this is the number of the person for whom the voter is acting]</i></p>	

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<p>I have been requested to assist the voter named above to record their vote at [this] [these] election(s) [and referendum(s)]. I declare that:</p> <p>(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aged 18 or over <p>AND</p> <p>(2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not previously assisted more than one voter with disabilities at [this] [these] election(s) [or referendum(s)]. If I have assisted one other voter their name and address is: 			
[Complete if appropriate] Name and address of other person assisted			
<p>NOTE – It is a criminal offence to communicate at any time to any person any information as to the way in which the voter intends to vote or has voted.</p>			
Companion's signature		Date	
<p>Part 2 To be completed by the Presiding Officer</p>			
<p>I, the undersigned, being the Presiding Officer for:</p>			
Polling station		Constituency of	
Hereby certify that the above declaration was signed in my presence.		Presiding Officer signature	
Date		Time (exact)	

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Rules)

These Rules amend various provisions in secondary legislation in consequence of section 9 of the Elections Act 2022 (c. 37).

Rule 2 amends the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987 (S.I. 1987/1) to make provision for equipment to be provided to enable persons with disabilities to vote and to include persons who may have difficulty voting due to disabilities other than sight loss and to persons who may have difficulty voting because they cannot read.

The amendments in rules 3 to 5 replace the current requirement for polling stations to provide a tactile voting device for voters with sight loss with a new requirement to provide each polling station with such equipment as is reasonable to enable, or make it easier, for voters with disabilities (including, but not limited to, sight loss) to vote in elections for councillors of a principal area in England, for councillors of a council of a parish in England and in elections for members of the London Assembly and for the Mayor of London.

These Rules also amends the criteria for who can act in the role of ‘companion’ to a person with a disability for the purposes of voting, by enabling anyone who is aged 18 or over to act in that capacity, irrespective of their relationship to the person who is voting. These Rules also update various electoral forms that contain the declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities.

An impact assessment has been produced in relation to the Elections Act 2022 and copies can be obtained at <https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/44886/documents/1304> or from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities at 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.