



J. KENNETH BLACKWELL
Ohio Secretary of State

180 E. Broad Street, 16th Floor, Columbus OH 43215
614.466.2655 / Toll Free: 877.767.6446 / Fax: 614.644.0649
e-mail: blackwell@sos.state.oh.us
www.sos.state.oh.us

DIRECTIVE NO. 2005-19

September 1, 2005

TO: BOARDS OF ELECTIONS

Members, Directors & Deputy Directors

Handicapped Accessible Polling Locations: Survey - Request For Exemption

R.C. 3501.29(B) requires each board of elections to assure that polling places, including the board office, are accessible to physically disabled persons.

◆ **Survey**

Enclosed is the 2005 survey concerning the number of handicapped accessible polling locations in your county. In completing this survey form, *please refer to polling locations*, not precincts. You may return the completed survey to my office via fax, e-mail or U.S. Mail, but it must be received in my office no later than **Friday, September 16, 2004**.

◆ **Exemption Request – Existing Polling Location Only**

Any board of elections that continues to use a polling location that does not satisfy state and federal accessibility standards must submit to my office a written request for an exemption for that polling location. Enclosed is the prescribed exemption form 10-I, *Request for Renewal of a Polling Place Exemption*. You may duplicate this form should you need additional copies. Each completed form must be accompanied by appropriate documentation that supports the exemption requested.

Polling location exemptions are valid **only for the remainder of 2005**. Thus, all exemptions granted in 2004 will expire by operation of law on October 31, 2005. If a polling place exempted in 2004 still will not be in compliance with applicable standards by November 1, 2005, and if an alternative accessible location is not available, then the board must submit a written request for an exemption for 2005. **All requests for exemptions for 2005 must be received in my office by September 16, 2005.**

Please note that newly selected polling places are *ineligible* for exemption; only polling places currently in use and exempted in 2004 are eligible for exemption in 2005. Additionally, please be advised that exemptions are not renewed automatically. Each request for exemption will be reviewed on its individual merits. My office may grant an exemption *only* if the board demonstrates that it has made a "good faith, but unsuccessful, effort ... to modify, or change the location of, such polling place" since the 2004 exemption was granted.

R.C. 3501.39(C) requires that each *exempted* polling place have two polling place officials -- one representing each major political party -- available to assist a disabled person in voting.

If you have any questions regarding this directive, please contact the Elections Division at (614) 466-2585.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Kenneth Blackwell".

J. Kenneth Blackwell

**OHIO SECRETARY OF STATE
2005 SURVEY OF
HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE POLLING LOCATIONS**

(Please refer to number of polling locations, not precincts)

_____ County Board of Elections

1. Number of **polling locations** (not precincts) in your county? _____
2. How many of these polling locations are accessible to
handicapped persons? _____
3. Is the office of the Board of Elections accessible to the
handicapped? (Circle one.) YES NO
4. Name of designated employee, if applicable: _____

Director's Signature

Telephone Number

Please return your completed survey in person or via fax, e-mail or U.S. Mail to:

Joy West, ADA
Office of the Secretary of State - Elections Division
180 E. Broad St., 15th Floor
P. O. Box 2828
Columbus, OH 43216
Fax: 614-752-4360
e-mail: jwest@sos.state.oh.us

Your completed survey must be received no later than Friday, September 16, 2005.