

Voters with disabilities



The Central Elections Commission is committed in respecting every citizen's right to vote, including persons with disabilities. Voting Centers throughout the country, according to CEC¹ Instructions, **will be located** on the ground floor of buildings and should have appropriate light. A questionnaire on Voting Centers' accessibility standards has been distributed to Commissions of Electoral Administration Zones **and local authorities** so that measures are taken in due time before the Elections. In those buildings where there is no ramp in the entrance, CEC will cover the costs of a permanent ramp, so that it can benefit the building in long term even in its other functions i.e. as a school and not only as a Voting Center. A voting booth which is accessible, meaning adjusted in its height, will be available in every Voting Center. In order to guarantee complete independent and private voting of blind voters, special ballots will be provided for them. Education materials for voters will be provided in accessible formats i.e. sign language, audio etc. so that all voters' right for information is guaranteed.

Attention! Voters with disabilities are given priority in queues at the Voting Center.

¹ Central Elections Commission

Voting by assistance

Apart from the above mentioned measures undertaken so that voters with disabilities can vote independently and privately, Article 108 of the Electoral Code foresees assistance by another person for those voters that are unable to fill independently the ballot due to physical impairments.

The voter, that because of physical impairments is unable to fill the ballot independently, can request the assistance of a family member or of another voter, that is registered in the list of voters of the same Voting Center area.

Before helping the person with a disability filling out the ballot, the person assisting should make a declaration in the Book of Meetings' Protocol of the Commission of the Voting Center:

- that will follow the instructions of the voter with a disability and that will not influence his/her decision-making;



- that he hasn't assisted and will not assist another voter with a disability unable to fill independently the ballot;
- will not make public the vote of the person being assisted.

Both the person assisting and the voter needing assistance should be present at the Voting Center while using this form of voting procedure.

-It's mandatory that the ballot should be filled out secretly in the voting booth.

Attention! A person can not assist more than one voter needing assistance to fill the ballot.

Attention! Members of the Voting Center Commission and the secretary cannot assist voters that are unable to fill out the ballots independently because of physical impairments.

Local authorities that have in their lists persons with disabilities, have the obligation to take all the measures so that Voting Centers comply with accessibility standards provided by law.

Also, local authorities have the obligation to provide to the Central Elections Commission the number of blind voters in their area, so that appropriate measures are taken to send special ballots for them to the Voting Centers.

Attention! **Voters with disabilities (that will need voting by assistance)** have the right to request to the mayor of the local authority to be registered as such voters **within the period of reviewing voters' lists, not later than 40 (forty) days before the election date.**

The request should be accompanied by official documents proving **the type of disability.**

Such registration is done so that the voting procedure for these voters is facilitated.

Voter's eligibility

In order to vote in the General Elections of June 23rd, 2013 according to Article 44 of the Electoral Code, a voter should:

- have Albanian nationality;
- be 18 years old, even if complied on the day of the Elections;
- not be under a guardianship by court decision;
- be registered in the National Civil Registrar;
- be a registered resident in one of the areas of the Voting Centers;
- be registered as a voter in the list of only one Voting Center.


Voting process

During the voting procedure, voters with disabilities will go through the same stages as all the other voters.


Voters with disabilities, on entering the Voting Center:

- say their name and will introduce to the Voting Center Commission one of the identification documents mentioned above.

○ ID card  ; or

○ Valid passport  .

-The Head of the Voting Center Commission will check for the name in the list of


voters.

In the meanwhile 

- A member of the Commission **will check the voter on both hands**, if he has been or not previously stained with a special ink.

Attention! If the voter has been previously stained with the special ink, the member of the Voting Center Commission will inform about this fact the other members. The name and surname of this voter will be registered in the Book of Meetings' Protocol and he will not be given a ballot.



-The Head of the Commission, **after verifying** that the identity of the voter is the same as that on the list of the voters, **will add** the ID type and ID number and will draw a line on the name of this voter.



- The voter will sign next to his name. If the voter is unable to sign himself/herself because of physical limitations, the assistant can do that.

-Another member of the Commission of the Voting Center, will stain the voter with a special ink which lasts 24 hours on the left thumb.



Attention! If a voter doesn't agree to be stained with the special ink, he will not be given a ballot and his identity will be added in the Book of Meetings' Protocol.

If a voter is missing his left thumb, he will be stained with a special ink on the right one.

-Before a ballot is given to the voter, it should be stamped on the backside by:

- The secretary with the stamp of the Voting Center; and
- The Head of the Commission with his own stamp.



-The Head of the Commission gives the ballot to the voter.

Ballot sample

The voter makes his choice in the ballot and then **folds** the ballot so that the choice is not visible but at least one of the stamps is visible on the backside.



For more information and accessible formats of this leaflet please visit:

www.cec.org.al