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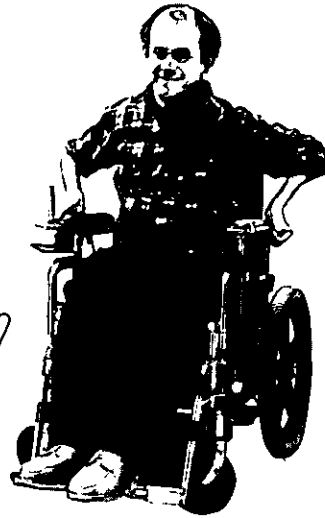
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**ELECTIONS**  
A  
Publication of State  
Secretary of State  
Michael J. Connolly

*Know your rights  
as an elderly  
or disabled voter!*



# Know your rights as an elderly or disabled voter!



## *Your right to register to vote*

To vote, you must be registered. If you are not, call your City or Town Clerk or Election Commission for times and places of local registration sessions. Registration in Massachusetts is permanent, and you will not have to register again unless you move.

If you cannot go out to register, local election officials will come to you. At least six weeks before an election, call or write your City or Town Clerk or Election Commission to request an application, fill it in, and return it so that the office receives it at least three days before registration closes for the next election. Two local officials will come to your home, nursing home, or hospital to register you.

## *Your right of access to your polling place*

Most polling places and voting equipment must be accessible to elderly and disabled voters for all elections at which a federal office is on the ballot. A few polling places are still not accessible, however, because officials have decided that no accessible place can be made available.

To find out if your polling place is accessible, call your City or Town Clerk or Election Commission, or call Secretary of State Michael Connolly's office at the telephone numbers below. Also call or write Secretary Connolly's office if you believe that a polling place ought to be accessible but is not.



## *Your right to vote by absentee ballot*

If your polling place is not accessible, or if you are unable to vote at the polls because of absence from the community, physical disability, or religious belief, you may vote by absentee ballot. Apply in writing for an absentee ballot to your City or Town Clerk or Election Commission. You have the choice of voting in the Clerk's or Election Commission's office, or of having the ballot mailed to you and returning it by mail.

(If you vote at some nursing homes or other health care facilities, local election officials may hand-deliver your absentee ballot to you rather than mail it.) If you are voting by mail, be sure to apply in enough time for the ballot to be mailed *both* ways before election day.

Some person at least 18 years old must be a witness as you mark your absentee ballot (but must not see how you vote), and this witness must sign the return envelope. A notary public is no longer needed. Note: If a doctor writes a letter to your City or Town Clerk or Election Commission stating that you are *permanently* disabled, no one need witness your absentee ballot from then on.

## *Your right to assistance in voting*

Whether you are voting at the polls or by absentee ballot, you can obtain instructions and assistance for voting.

At the polls, an election official will explain how to use the voting equipment. If you are unable to vote because you are physically disabled, or are unable to read or to read English, you may have any person you choose, or two election officials of opposite political parties (one Democrat, one Republican), assist you in marking your ballot or using the voting equipment.

If you are voting by absentee ballot and need this assistance, your witness or any other person can help you to vote.

*Models: Michael Loring and Phyllis Mitchell (with Wafer) of the Office of Handicapped Affairs*

**The Elections Division of the Office of the Massachusetts Secretary of State**

(617) 727-2828 • 1-800-462-VOTE (toll free) • 1-800-462-8685 (TDD - for the hearing impaired)

# '86 Elections Calendar

## August 16

Required Saturday voter registration session,  
12 noon to 8 pm

## August 19

Last day to register to vote\* or change party  
enrollment before State Primary

## September 16

### STATE PRIMARY

## October 4

Required Saturday voter registration session,  
12 noon to 8 pm

## October 7

Last day to register to vote\* before State  
Election

## November 4

### STATE ELECTION

*\* Registration is open during normal business hours  
throughout the year in most City or Town Clerk's  
or Election Commission's offices.*

## *On the ballot in '86*

- U.S. Representative
- Governor\*
- Lt. Governor\*
- Secretary of State
- Attorney General
- Treasurer
- Auditor
- Governor's Council
- State Senator
- State Representative
- District Attorney
- Sheriff
- County Commissioner

*\* Governor and Lt. Governor run as  
team in State Election*



## ***For more information***

about your rights as a voter, please call or  
write your City or Town Clerk or Election  
Commission, or:

**Michael J. Connolly**  
Secretary of State

Elections Division  
Office of the Secretary of State  
Room 1705, One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108

(617) 727-2828

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impaired)

