



Leslie R. Swan

Indian River County Supervisor of Elections

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Indian River County Supervisor of Elections Highlights

Accessible Voting Options for Visually Impaired Voters

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FL – A team from the Indian River County Supervisor of Elections Office presented information on accessible voting options to the Vision by the See Low Vision Support Group on Friday, September 4, at the Florida Eye Institute in Vero Beach. The presentation focused on voting options available to visually impaired voters and how they can cast their ballot privately and independently.

Supervisor of Elections Leslie Swan spoke to the group about the various accessible voting options available to visually impaired and blind voters. She explained that the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), enacted by Congress in 2002, established important federal requirements designed to provide voters with disabilities the opportunity to mark, cast and verify their ballots in secret, without the assistance of others.

“Every voter should have the opportunity to participate in the election process unassisted,” said Supervisor Leslie Swan. “Our office is committed to making sure voters with visual impairments know about the options available to them and feel comfortable using the resources provided.”

Elections Administration Coordinator Katie Otto explained how visually impaired voters can use an accessible vote-by-mail option. An accessible ballot can be delivered electronically to the voter via email, allowing the voter to use a computer and compatible screen-reader technology to navigate and mark the ballot. Another option for the voter involves printing the emailed ballot and manually marking it. Voted ballots must be returned by mail or in person; they cannot be returned electronically.

Elections Warehouse and Logistics Manager Joe Crowley demonstrated the features of the ExpressVote accessible ballot-marking device, which is available at all early voting locations and polling places on Election Day. The device provides an accessible way for voters with disabilities to mark their ballots, including through audio and other accessibility features. Florida requires at least one accessible voting device at each polling place.

Supervisor Swan also discussed Supervised Voting, a service available to residents residing in assisted living facilities and nursing homes. When requested, the Supervisor of Elections team coordinates with the facility, delivers the ballots and provides election staff to supervise the voting process. Arrangements are coordinated with the facility administrator.

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The presentation provided members of the Vision by the See Low Vision Support Group with an opportunity to learn about the resources available to them and ask questions about accessible voting. The Supervisor of Elections Office encourages voters with disabilities to contact the office before an election to learn about the accessible voting options available to them,

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