Assisting Persons With Disabilities
Module 1

Getting Started
This course provides poll workers with the knowledge, awareness and sensitivity needed to instruct and assist persons with disabilities using the Verity Touch and Touch Writer. After completing this course, trainees will successfully instruct and assist persons with disabilities in the accessibility features of the Verity Touch and Touch Writer systems.
**Usability** – Verity makes election administration and voting easier, by providing user-friendly tools that reduce complexity and streamline productivity.

- Modern, intuitive, friendly software design, across the entire suite
- Innovative hardware that is easy to store, transport, set up and operate.
- Usable, plain language ballot design and reporting.
Adaptability – Verity is designed to support any kind of election (in-person voting, by-mail voting, convenience voting etc.), and to be flexible enough to change as your needs change.

• Election management (Verity Election Office) + voting system (Verity Voting) is a unique “ecosystem” approach that can respond to legislative changes and support new apps over the long term.

• Modular parts allow Hart to convert Verity devices from electronic to paper and back, as your jurisdiction’s needs evolve.
Transparency – Verity provides for open, secure and easily auditable elections.

- Store images from Verity Scan scanning devices.
- Robust filters to print and export ballot images from Verity Central, with adjudication notes, if desired.
- Built-in Auditing Dashboard in Verity Count, to export Cast Vote Record data according to your specific, customized desires.
- Usable, easy-to-read plain language audit reports from every software application.
- Easy, efficient methods to validate software on voting devices and desktop workstations.
Touch Writer with Access

- Easy for voters to learn to vote
- Impossible for voters to overvote
- Ballot Summary Page allows voters to review choices and make changes
- Voters with disabilities may vote privately and independently
- A paper ballot prints when the voter finishes making their selections
• Allows voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently.
• Includes headphones for voters with visual impairments
• Supports Tactile Input Switches
• Supports Sip and Puff devices
• Navigate through a ballot with the Move wheel
• Make selections on a ballot with the Select button
• Request poll worker assistance with the Help button
Available Accommodations

Access™

Headphones

Tactile Switches

Sip and Puff Device

Curbside Voting
Put People First!

- Put the person before the disability
- Labels do not define people

Awareness, Respect, Acceptance

- Persons with disabilities are individuals
- Neither tragic victims, nor superhuman
- Respect and acceptance, not pity or charity
General Considerations

**Slow Down and Think “Service”**

- Don’t rush! Working with a person with a disability takes time.
- Relax. Slow down and adopt an open-minded service orientation.
- Every voter is unique; don’t assume that you know what voters need.
- Don’t be afraid to say, “I don’t know how I can be most helpful to you; can you walk me through it?”
- Let voters know that they should feel free to give very specific instructions to the poll worker who is helping them.
• Look at the person to whom you are speaking.
• Relax; feel free to use common expressions.
• Identify yourself and others when interacting with a person who is blind or visually impaired.
• Do not shout at a person with a hearing impairment.
• Do not shout at a person who is blind or visually impaired.
• Listen attentively; repeat what you have understood; allow the person to respond.
• Place yourself at eye level to facilitate communication.
Voter Assistance

• Monitor accessibility of travel paths.
• Inform voters with disabilities of available accommodations; **Ask, do not assume!**
• Assist in signing poll book, if necessary.
• Offer your arm to accompany persons with visual impairments to the voting booth.
• Orient individuals to voting devices by giving detailed verbal instructions.
• Orient individuals to Verity Access buttons, if necessary.

**NOTE:** While instructing an individual in a wheelchair, the poll worker should sit at eye-level if possible. Craning one's neck upward to make eye-contact with a person who is standing is not comfortable. Having a chair near the ADA booth for this purpose also ensures that one will be available for those who may choose to sit while voting for whatever physical reason.
Point to the voter instruction script and/or speak to the voter and say:

You will be voting on the Verity Touch today. Mark your selections and enter them by using...

• the MOVE wheel and SELECT button; (or)
• tactile input switches; (or)
• a sip-and-puff device.
Follow these steps:

1. Select the language (if a multilingual ballot is available).

2. Enter your ACCESS CODE, or have an assistant enter the ACCESS CODE.

3. Navigate the highlight bar to see or hear selections on the ballot, and enter the selections. Do this for each contest.

4. Read or listen to the BALLOT SUMMARY carefully, or Review Ballot by returning to the first page. Only after all of your desired choices have been made, select CAST BALLOT.

5. Your vote has been recorded when the waving American flag is displayed, or when the audio indicates that your vote has been recorded.
Exercise 1.1

Discussion/brainstorming: Based on your experience as a poll worker, or if you imagine yourself in the shoes of a person with a disability, what are important issues/concerns? How would you want to be treated?
Exercise 1.2

Read the “Guide to Serving Voters with Disabilities” section of the course handbook. Review local voter assistance guidelines and forms.
Module 2

Assisting a Voter Who is Blind or Visually Impaired
• Use a signature guide, if necessary

Escorting a Voter to the Booth

• When guiding the voter to the Touch booth, allow the voter to take your arm (at the elbow), not the reverse.

• Ask if the voter would like to use headphones to hear the ballot.
Orientation to the Verity Touch Writer

Verity Touch Writer

Verity Access
Headphone Jack

Disabled Access Jack
Using Verity Access

- Rotate the MOVE wheel to navigate the highlight bar.
- Press the ENTER switch to mark ballot choices.
- To skip a contest, press the ENTER switch while the contest’s title bar is highlighted.
- Press the HELP button to view on-screen help or to summon a pol worker.
Plug the headphone into the headphone jack on the top left side of the Verity Access.
• Read the ACCESS CODE to the voter, allowing the voter to enter the code independently;

• Or, ask if the voter would like you to enter the ACCESS CODE.
Exercise 2.1

Pair up with another trainee. Take the roles of voter and poll worker. The poll worker will walk through the voting process with a voter who is “blind”. This includes signing the qualification log, being escorted to the booth, giving verbal orientation to the Verity Touch or Touch Writer Touch Screen, Verity Access peripheral buttons and headphones, entering the Access Code for the voter, and the “voter” voting by responding to the audio prompts only.
Module 3

Assisting a Voter with Limited Dexterity
• If applicable, follow local procedures if voter is unable to sign the poll book.

• Escort the voter to the Verity Touch or Touch Writer booth.

• Ask if the voter would prefer to sit or stand while voting; keep a chair available nearby.

• Consider placement of tactile input switches.
Plug the tactile input switches into the disabled access jack on the top right side of the Verity Access.
Using Tactile Input Switches

- RED switch is similar to MOVE wheel; press RED switch to navigate highlight bar
- GREEN switch is similar to ENTER button; press GREEN switch to mark ballot choices.
- To skip a contest, press the GREEN switch while the contest’s title bar is highlighted.
Note: The Help button is not available when using the Tactile Input Switches or Sip and Puff devices
• When the voter reaches the end of the ballot, s/he is given a choice to Review Ballot by returning to the first page, or to Cast Ballot.

• The voter will not see a Ballot Summary Page.
Exercise 3.1

Pair up with another trainee. Take the roles of voter and poll worker. The poll worker will walk through the voting process with a voter who has “limited dexterity”. This includes signing the qualification log, being escorted to the booth, orientation to the Verity Touch or Touch Writer, Verity Access interface, and the tactile input switches, and the “voter” voting by using the tactile input switches only. Review tactile input switch written directions for voting.
Module 4

Assisting a Voter with Sip-and-Puff Device
• If applicable, follow local procedures to note that voter is unable to sign the poll book.

• Escort the voter to the Touch or Touch Writer booth by walking beside wheelchair.

• Pull up a chair and explain how to vote BEFORE connecting sip-and-puff device to the Verity Access. Be patient, and offer to hold written instructions if the voter would prefer to read.
Plug the sip-and-puff device into the disabled access jack on the top right side of the Verity Access.
Using a Sip-and-Puff Device

- “Sipping” is similar to MOVE wheel; SIP to navigate highlight bar.
- “Puffing” is similar to ENTER button; PUFF to mark ballot choices.
- To skip a contest, PUFF while the contest’s title bar is highlighted.
- Inform voter that you will assist with reconnecting the device to wheelchair when s/he is finished voting.
Note: The Help button is not available when using the Tactile Input Switches or Sip and Puff devices
• When the voter reaches the end of the ballot, s/he is given a choice to Review Ballot by returning to the first page, or to Cast Ballot.

• The voter will not see a Ballot Summary Page.
• Inform voter that you will assist with reconnecting the device to wheelchair when s/he is finished voting.
Exercise 4.1

Observe and discuss the use of the sip and puff device. Review sip and puff written directions for voting.

NOTE: While instructing an individual in a wheelchair, the poll worker should sit at eye-level if possible. Craning one's neck upward to make eye-contact with a person who is standing is not comfortable. Having a chair near the ADA booth for this purpose also ensures that one will be available for those who may choose to sit while voting for whatever physical reason.
Only the Verity Touch can be used for Curbside voting.

You are taking a BALLOT to the voter.

- Qualify voter and assign an ACCESS CODE
- If applicable, enter language choice
- Check for battery power on the Touch
- Enter Voter’s ACCESS CODE
- Disconnect the Touch tablet and take the ballot to the voter
- Voter votes and casts ballot
- Re-connect the Touch tablet to the system and confirm that ballot was cast
Curbside Voting with the Verity Touch

5 Disconnect Verity Access from the device case.
6 Unlock and remove the Verity Touch tablet from its cradle.
7 Plug the Verity Access into the USB port on the bottom left of the Verity Touch tablet.
8 Take the Touch tablet, access (and, if requested, headphones or tactile switches) to the voter
9 Voter votes and casts ballot
10 Re-connect the Touch tablet and Access to the system and confirm that ballot was cast
Exercise 5.1

As a group, perform the steps required for a successful curbside vote. One member of the group act as the voter.
Module 6
Polling Place Accessibility and Troubleshooting
Polling Place
Accessibility

Things to consider:

• Parking
  • Distance to entrance?
  • Surface of parking lot?
• Curbs and ramps
  • Slope of ramps and cross-paths
• Doors
  • How wide are they?
  • Can they be easily opened?
• Alternative entrances
• Elevators
• Clear visual cues and signage for persons with visual impairments (simple, short, clear typeface)
• Adequate lighting
• Clear paths for traffic flow
• If possible, separate noisy and quiet areas
• Availability of extra chairs
• Crevices, collision points, cords on the floor, tripping hazards
Troubleshooting Accessories

• Make sure headphones are plugged into the left port on the Verity Access.

• Make sure Tactile Switches or Sip-and-Puff devices are plugged into the right port on the Verity Access.

• Headphones may contain a volume slider on the cord; if no audio is coming through headphones, check that the volume is not turned off.

• Check that audio volume is set properly on the device settings.
Exercise 6.1

Discuss accessibility issues and ways to avoid problems at the polling places. Review troubleshooting steps.
Module 7

Review and Conclusion