



Voting Protections for Citizens Who Do Not Read or Speak English Very Well

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Every eligible American citizen has the right to vote. Federal law protects that right even if you do not read, speak, write, or understand English very well. These protections apply when you register to vote or cast a ballot.¹

You can bring a person to help you vote.

- If you have trouble reading or writing, election officials must allow you to get voting help from someone you choose (but not your employer or union representative). You may have this help at every step in voting—registering to vote, voting absentee, or voting in person. This rule protects you no matter what language you speak. (Section 208, Voting Rights Act)

Election officials cannot discriminate against you.

- In all places and elections, officials cannot discriminate against you because you belong to a "language minority group." Under the law, you belong to one of these groups if you are American Indian, Asian American, Alaskan Native, or a person of Spanish heritage. The law also does not allow discrimination based on race or color. (Section 2, Voting Rights Act)

You can receive bilingual assistance and materials in some places.

- The Census Bureau has [listed](#) places that must provide language help to American Indians, Asian Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Hispanics who cannot speak English very well.
- For all elections in the places on this list, election officials must translate written materials into the languages the list identifies. They also must have polling place workers who can answer your voting questions in those languages. (Section 203, Voting Rights Act)

¹ This guide provides information on the rights of language minority groups. The guide does not impose legal obligations and is not intended to be comprehensive.



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- Voting machines in these places must provide ballots and instructions in the relevant language. (Section 301, Help America Vote Act)
- Federal law also protects voters who attended public school in Puerto Rico and who do not speak English very well. (Section 4(e) of the Voting Rights Act)

Do You Have Questions or Need Help?

More information about voting rights for voters who do not speak English very well appears at www.justice.gov/crt/about-language-minority-voting-rights and in our [Guide on Voting Protections for Language Minority Citizens](#), available in [multiple languages](#), including the following—

[English](#) 简体字 ([Simplified Chinese](#)) 繁體中文 ([Traditional Chinese](#)) 한국어 ([Korean](#))

Español ([Spanish](#)) Tagalog Tiếng Việt ([Vietnamese](#)) বাংলা ([Bengali](#)) ગુજરાતી ([Gujarati](#))
हिन्दी ([Hindi](#)) Hmoob ([Hmong](#)) ខ្មែរ ([Khmer](#)) ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ([Punjabi](#)) Yup'ik

For more information about these and other voter protections, please visit justice.gov/voting/voting-rights.

How to report a violation of your voting rights.

- If you believe your voting rights have been violated, contact the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division's Voting Section by calling **1 (800) 253-3931** or by completing a form at www.civilrights.justice.gov.