

Mapping Disabled Americans' Access to Democracy: Colorado

By Casey Doherty | October 29, 2026

Author's note: The disability community is rapidly evolving to use identity-first language in place of person-first language. This is because it views disability as being a core component of identity, much like race and gender. Some members of the community, such as people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, prefer person-first language. In this report, the terms are used interchangeably.

In July 2026, the Center for American Progress introduced the [Accessible Democracy Tracker](#), a new resource that provides users with comprehensive, state-specific voting and election accessibility scores based on survey data from state and local disability and civic organizations. The tracker also offers stories from disabled voters across the country, national and state action targets, and national and state disability and civic organizations to which users can turn for more information on voting accessibility efforts.

The tracker examines accessibility across five areas of the voting process: voter registration efforts, voting information, in-person voting, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, and voting by mail. Together, these data provide a snapshot of where disabled voters experience barriers and where states have opportunities to improve voting accessibility.

As part of CAP's continued analysis of voting accessibility, this fact sheet takes a closer look at the experiences of disabled voters and opportunities to strengthen voting access in Colorado.

Early findings in Colorado

The [Accessible Democracy Tracker](#) found that, according to local and state disability and civic organizations, Colorado's overall voting accessibility score was 4.1 out of 5, above the national score of 3.3.



Explore the map:

<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/accessibledemocracy/>

Colorado voting accessibility scores

3.2

Registration
efforts

4.3

Voting
information

4.2

Voting
in person

4.7

ADA
compliance

4.4

Voting
by mail

Colorado scored above the national average in every category measured by the [Accessible Democracy Tracker](#). The state's highest score was for ADA compliance, at 4.7, compared with the national score of 3.8. Colorado also scored highly for voting information at 4.3 compared with 3.1 nationally; voting in person at 4.2 compared with 3.4 nationally; and voting by mail at 4.4 compared with 3.7. Registration efforts received Colorado's lowest score, 3.2, which was also above the national score of 2.3.

Several features of Colorado's electoral system provide important context for these findings. Colorado [automatically mails ballots](#) to registered voters, and voters can register and vote [through Election Day](#). Additionally, Colorado recently passed legislation related to voting accessibility. In 2025, the state enacted the [Colorado Voting Rights Act](#), which includes a requirement that care facilities serving disabled people must publicly display voting notices in advance of elections. In 2026, another bill, [Accessible Language Statutory Ballot Title Requirements](#), passed, requiring the use of accessible language when setting a ballot title. Accessible language is [defined](#) as "plain language that is understood by the widest possible audience." A few years prior, a 2019 law titled [Voting Rights For Voters With Disabilities](#) established procedures for disabled voters to independently and privately mark their mail-in ballots using assistive technology. The law also allows disabled voters to request that ballots and voting materials be delivered electronically, including by email, before printing and returning their ballots to election officials.

These policies provide important protection for voting access, and while the [Accessible Democracy Tracker](#) shows fairly high voting accessibility scores for Colorado, there are areas where voting accessibility could be improved. For example, despite Colorado's registration score exceeding the national score, registration received the lowest of Colorado's five voting categories measured. Respondents identified statewide voter registration efforts focused on the disability community as one opportunity for improvement.

A disabled Coloradan shares

Julie, a disabled voter, described voting in Colorado as highly accessible for both disabled and nondisabled voters.

Julie specifically mentioned how in Colorado, registered voters receive ballots by mail without having to request them. She also shared that there is online access for voters with print disabilities and mentioned that Coloradans can register to

vote through Election Day, which, according to Julie, “makes it much easier to vote than in other states.”

Julie also spoke about the utility of voting centers in Colorado. She shared that voters can go to voting centers and receive assistance with completing a ballot from an “independent, neutral, trained person,” or bring someone of their choice to assist them.

While Julie described voting in Colorado as very accessible for the disability community, she recommended that the state publicize its online voting options and the support they provide.

Targeted issue areas

The [Accessible Democracy Tracker](#) features state-specific issue area targets, gathered from state and local disability and civic organizations working to ensure disabled people can vote.

Common ideas for improvement in Colorado include:

- Ensure candidate information is available in accessible formats, including multiple languages, larger font, and plain language
- Provide enhanced accessibility training for poll workers, developed and taught by disabled people
- Provide statewide registration efforts specific to disabled voters

Continuing to map voting accessibility

The [Accessible Democracy Tracker](#) is designed to grow as CAP collects additional data. CAP plans to continue collecting survey submissions from state-based and local disability and civic organizations in order to conduct state-level analysis, produce additional state-based fact sheets, and perform longitudinal analysis of changes in voting accessibility scores over time. CAP is also continuing to collect stories from disabled voters about their experiences participating in elections.

Please contact accessible_democracy@americanprogress.org if your organization is interested in completing the survey, and complete [this form](#) if you are a disabled voter interested in sharing your voting experiences.

Ensuring that disabled people can participate fully in elections is essential to American democracy. The [Accessible Democracy Tracker](#) offers advocates, policy-makers, and community organizations a tool to identify where voting accessibility progress has been made, where barriers exist, and what reforms would increase accessibility for disabled voters.

“In Colorado, where I live, voting is very, very accessible for everyone, including but not limited to people with disabilities, of all types of disabilities.”

Julie R., disabled voter in Colorado



Learn from Julie's experiences – VIDEO:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlbCyvaKe6g>

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