

OFFICE OF THE MINNESOTA SECRETARY OF STATE

Date: August 5, 2025

To: Minnesota County Auditors
League of Minnesota Cities and
Minnesota Association of Townships

From: Elections Division
Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State

Subject: 2025 Polling Place Accessibility Grants – Application Process Notification

Notice is hereby provided to all Minnesota counties and municipalities of a funding opportunity to support accessibility improvements to polling places for individuals with disabilities.

2023 Minnesota Laws, Chapter 62, Article 1, section 6 appropriated \$500,000 “for the secretary of state to make grants to counties and municipalities to improve access to polling places for individuals with disabilities and to provide the same opportunity for access and participation in the electoral process, including privacy and independence, to voters with disabilities as that which exists for voters with no disabilities. Funds may be used to purchase equipment or to make capital improvements to government-owned facilities. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2027.”

The Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State worked in consultation with the office’s Disability Advisory Council to solicit feedback on prioritization of needs to best allocate the available funds. Through those discussions, the top need identified was improved access to the buildings where polling places are located. As a result, first priority will be given to grant requests that fall into the following categories:

- Automatic/electronic door openers for entrances to government owned facilities designated for use as a polling place
- Construction of ramps for access to government-owned facilities designated for use as a polling place
- Signs that improve the access to buildings where polling places will be located
- Signs, tools, or enhancements to facilitate assistance with registration and voting outside the polling place pursuant to Minn. Stat. 204C.15 subd. 2 (curbside voting).
- Other Capital Improvements to entrances to government-owned facilities designated for use as a polling place

There will be a \$20,000.00 per jurisdiction limitation on the total amounts to be awarded for first priority, second priority, and other grants.

If there are qualified requests that total more than the available funds, the first priority grants will be awarded on a pro-rata basis (\$500,000 divided by the total qualified requests for first priority grants).

If there are still funds available after the first priority grants have been awarded, then second priority grants will be awarded. The following requests will be considered second priority grants:

- Purchase of assistive voting devices (AVDs)
- Capital improvements to government-owned facilities that will be used as polling places that enhance accessibility for voters with disabilities (any that did not qualify as first priority requests)
- Other grant requests to improve polling place access for voters with disabilities.

If there are qualified requests for second priority grants that total more than the amount available, second priority grants will be awarded on a pro-rata basis (total available funds after first priority grants are awarded divided by the total qualified requests for second priority grants).

Each county or municipality may only submit one application.

We plan to open the grant application on Tuesday, September 2, 2025.

The application process will use the Foundant grant management system and will require a detailed description of the proposed project, along with documentation, such as estimates of material costs, labor costs (if applicable), authorizations to apply, and other information. We will circulate additional details about the application process next month.

The deadline to submit an application will be October 31, 2025.

This notification is sent to give counties and municipalities enough time to consider potential uses for this funding and to plan and prepare documentation needed to apply.

We have requested that the League of Minnesota Cities and the Minnesota Association of Townships forward this information to the cities and townships that are members of those organizations.

If you have any questions, please contact the Elections Division of the Minnesota Secretary of State at Elections.Grants.OSS@state.mn.us or (651) 215-1440.