# Voting with Verity

Voters in Washtenaw County use a secure, accurate and easy-to-use voting system called Verity® Voting. This system is federally certified and meets our state's most stringent standards.

To cast your ballot in the polling place, mark your choices on the paper ballot; then insert the ballot into the ballot tabulator. You will know your ballot was successfully cast when you see the image of the waving flag on the screen.

Verity is user-friendly and provides an accessible device that enables all voters, including those with disabilities, to mark their ballots privately and independently. This accessible ballot marking device includes an audio ballot reader and accommodates adaptive devices such as sip-and-puff technology.

## Frequently asked questions

**Q: Does this system have paper backup?**

A: Yes. Every voter uses a ballot tabulator to cast a paper ballot, regardless of whether the voter hand-marks the ballot or prints it from the accessible ballot marking device. That original paper ballot is retained throughout the process and remains the official record of the vote.

**Q: Does the system use touchscreens?**

A: Yes. Plain language, step-by-step instructions on the scanning machine and the ballot marking device touchscreens walk you through the entire voting process. The accessible ballot marking device includes ADA-compliant accessibility features such as tactile buttons, audio ballots, and compatibility with common adaptive devices. The scanning machine provides on-screen instructions and controls for voters whose hand-marked ballots contain errors.

**Q: I have never been able to vote without someone helping me. Will someone be there to help me with this system?**

A: Yes. You may be assisted by poll workers, but the system is designed to be easy for you to use without assistance. If your eyesight is poor or you have difficulty reading the ballot for some other reason, headphones are available so the entire ballot, including your selections, can be read to you. If you cannot make your selections by using the touchscreen, you can use accessibility features such as the device's rotary wheel and button or a standard two-button device, such as jelly switches or a "sip and puff" device. In addition, a Help button is on every screen.

**Q: How do I know my votes are private and there is not a database in the computer somewhere that records how I have voted?**

A: There is no way for the system to connect your vote to you. The process of voting is completely removed from the process of checking-in and being qualified to vote. When you vote, no identifying information is connected with your ballot.

**Q: How do I know the voting system recorded my vote the same way I cast it?**

A: Extensive hash testing as well as state-mandated logic and accuracy testing are performed before each election to verify the integrity of installed software and to ensure that the system is recording votes correctly. Additionally, the system uses paper ballots. Every voter uses the scanning machine to cast a paper ballot, regardless of whether the voter hand-marks the ballot or prints it from the ballot marking device. That original paper ballot is retained throughout the process and remains the official record of the vote.

**Q: What if I change my mind or make a mistake on my ballot?**

A: Your vote is not officially cast until after you select the Cast ballot button and see the "Your vote has been recorded" screen. At that point, it is no longer possible for you to make any changes. However, if you change your mind before you cast your ballot, you can change your selections. When using the ballot marking device, a ballot review screen appears before you print your ballot. This screen lists all the choices you have made and lets you know if you missed voting in any race. From this screen, you can return to any contest on the ballot and change your selections, if you wish. If you want to change your ballot selections after you have hand-marked or printed your ballot using the accessible ballot marking device, you can ask a poll worker to "spoil" the ballot and issue you a new ballot.

**Q: What if I don't want to vote in a particular race?**

A: It is your decision and right to choose not to vote in any race. If you are hand-marking the ballot, simply skip the race(s) you do not wish to vote in. If you are using the ballot marking device, just select the Next button to move forward past any race you want to skip.

**Q: What if I accidentally vote twice in a race? Will my vote be discarded?**

A: If you are hand-marking your ballot and mark more than the permitted number of votes in a race, the scanning machine returns your ballot, and the touchscreen displays a message indicating any races that have too many choices marked. You may request a new ballot to mark, or touch "Cast the ballot as is." If you choose "Cast the ballot as is," your vote will not count in that over-voted race. If you are using the ballot marking device, the system does not allow you to select more than the permitted number of votes in a race. The touchscreen displays an error message and prompts you to select only the permitted number.

**Q: How do I know that my vote has been cast and counted?**

A: After you insert the ballot into the tabulator and the ballot is scanned, you will see the "Your vote has been recorded" screen, and an audible chime sounds. This lets you know your vote has been cast and counted.

**Q: If the power fails or if there is some other system failure, will my vote be lost?**

A: No, your vote cannot be lost once you have inserted your ballot into the tabulator and you see the "Your vote has been recorded" screen. Your vote is stored in three separate places, and all data is protected and cannot be lost in the unlikely event that the system fails. In addition, both the accessible ballot marking device

and the ballot tabulator have built-in power back-up systems, so they will still function even if the main power supply fails.

**Q: What if a recount is necessary?**

A: The system employs the use of paper ballots. Officials can conduct a manual recount of the ballots.