

## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations amend various provisions in secondary legislation in consequence of, or to make similar provision to, section 9 of the Elections Act 2022 (c. 37). The Regulations make provision in respect of a number of types of elections and referendums, and also petitions for the recall of MPs.

These Regulations replace the current requirement for Returning Officers (or other equivalent officials) to provide polling stations with a device for voters with sight loss with a new requirement to provide each polling station with such equipment as is reasonable to enable, or make it easier, for voters with disabilities (including, but not limited to, sight loss) to vote (or to sign a signing sheet in the case of petitions for the recall of MPs).

These Regulations also amend the criteria for who can act in the role of ‘companion’ to a person with a disability for the purposes of voting (or signing a signing sheet), by enabling anyone who is aged 18 or over to act in that capacity, irrespective of their relationship to the person who is voting (or signing a signing sheet). These Regulations also amend various electoral forms that contain the declaration to be made by the companion of a voter with disabilities.

An impact assessment has been produced in relation to the Elections Act 2022 and copies can be obtained at [<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/44886/documents/1304>] or from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities at 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.