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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

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

These Rules amend various provisions in secondary legislation in consequence of section 9 of the Elections Act 2022 (c. 37).

Rule 2 amends the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987 (S.I. 1987/1) to make provision for equipment to be provided to enable persons with disabilities to vote and to include persons who may have difficulty voting due to disabilities other than sight loss and to persons who may have difficulty voting because they cannot read.

The amendments in rules 3 to 5 replace the current requirement for polling stations to provide a tactile voting 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 in elections for councillors of a principal area in England, for councillors of a council of a parish in England and in elections for members of the London Assembly and for the Mayor of London.

These Rules also amends the criteria for who can act in the role of ‘companion’ to a person with a disability for the purposes of voting, by enabling anyone who is aged 18 or over to act in that capacity, irrespective of their relationship to the person who is voting. These Rules also update 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.