

# Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources: Older adults have a right to vote whether living in their own homes or care facilities

Posted on Thursday, Nov 4, 2021

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Older adults do not lose their right to vote when they move (short- or long-term) to a care facility even if they have cognitive disabilities or need assistance to cast their ballots. Nor does age, having a particular diagnosis, or having a family member question one's ability to vote provide grounds to deny someone of their right to cast a ballot.

The fact is, every Wisconsin resident age 18 and older, who is a U.S. citizen, regardless of where they reside, has the right to vote, unless they:

- Have not resided in Wisconsin at least 28 days prior to the election,
- Are currently serving a sentence for a felony conviction, including probation, incarceration, and supervision, and/or
- Have been determined **by a court** to be ineligible to vote.

Over the past week much attention has surrounded who is lawfully allowed to assist voters in care facilities. The reality is voters with disabilities, of all ages, face numerous barriers to voting related to polling place accessibility, accessible ballots, transportation to obtain photo IDs or to get to a polling site, access to technology and digital literacy, and more. "We would like to see more attention focused on compliance with laws that protect the rights of older voters and other voters with disabilities," said Robert Kellerman, Executive Director of the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. (GWAAR), "and ensuring the accessibility of our elections for people of all abilities."

All voters, no matter where they reside, have a right to be free of interference, coercion, discrimination, and reprisal in exercising their rights. No one should ever be coerced or otherwise influenced as part of exercising their right to vote. If a care facility resident or any other voter has their ballot improperly completed, that is against the law and should be reported promptly and investigated.

### **About GWAAR**

*The Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. is a nonprofit agency committed to supporting the successful delivery of aging programs and services in 70 counties and 11 tribes in Wisconsin. We provide lead aging agencies in our service area with advocacy support, training, and technical assistance to ensure the availability and quality of programs and services to meet the changing needs of older people in Wisconsin.*