**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Blind New Yorkers Win Victory on Absentee Voting**

*State agrees to Implement System Allowing the Blind to Cast Absentee and Mail-in Ballots Privately and Independently*

**New York, New York (June 3, 2020):** A federal district judge has approved an agreement requiring the New York State Board of Elections (NYSBOE) to instruct local election boards to provide accessible absentee ballots to blind voters for the June 23, 2020 primary election. The ruling resolves a request for a preliminary injunction in a [lawsuit](https://www.dropbox.com/s/9ihq2g9wzd9vsak/Filed%20Complaint.pdf?dl=0) filed by the National Federation of the Blind of New York and [other disability rights groups](https://www.nfb.org/about-us/press-room/coalition-disability-groups-demand-access-new-yorks-inaccessible-absentee), as well as individual voters with disabilities.

Blind voters will be able to request an accessible electronic absentee ballot through a [page on the NYSBOE website](https://www.elections.ny.gov/MeetingVoterAccessNeeds.html) or through their local county board of elections. They must do so by June 16, 2020. The National Federation of the Blind of New York is also asking blind voters to provide feedback on the accessible absentee voting process. They can complete a survey by calling 716-222-3NFB (716-222-3632) or visiting [www.nfbny.org](https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/sK_bC1wB50s2kL6iGPZwP?domain=nfbny.org).

The court’s order is the third in a recent string of victories for the National Federation of the Blind to protect the rights of blind voters as states shift to absentee and mail-in ballots because of the coronavirus pandemic. Battles for accessible absentee voting in primary elections have also been won in [Michigan](https://www.nfb.org/about-us/press-room/blind-michigan-voters-win-groundbreaking-lawsuit) and [Pennsylvania](https://www.nfb.org/about-us/press-room/blind-pennsylvanians-win-victory-absentee-voting).

“We are pleased that an agreement has been reached swiftly regarding the June 23 primary,” said Mike Robinson, president of the National Federation of the Blind of New York. “We hope to work productively with NYSBOE to identify a more permanent solution and that other jurisdictions across the country will take note of our efforts in the empire state.”

The lawsuit, which will continue in order to resolve the question of accessible absentee and mail-in ballot solutions for elections later this year, alleges violations of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The National Federation of the Blind of New York is represented by [Eve Hill](https://browngold.com/team/eve-hill) of [Brown Goldstein Levy LLP](https://browngold.com/).

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**About the National Federation of the Blind**

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB), headquartered in Baltimore, is the oldest and largest nationwide organization of blind Americans. Founded in 1940, the NFB consists of affiliates, chapters, and divisions in the fifty states, Washington DC, and Puerto Rico. The NFB defends the rights of blind people of all ages and provides information and support to families with blind children, older Americans who are losing vision, and more. We believe in the hopes and dreams of blind people and work together to transform them into reality. Learn more about our many programs and initiatives at [www.nfb.org](http://www.nfb.org).

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