



★ VIRGINIA ★
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

News Release

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Virginia Department of Elections Wins National Communications Award

~The Center for Plain Language Recognizes Best Plain Language Award Winners~

RICHMOND, VA – On May 7, the Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT), in collaboration with the Center for Civic Design (CCD), received the prestigious **Before and After: Print** award, which recognizes organizations that successfully develop plain language communications. The honor also helped to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the 2019 ClearMark Award ceremony.

“We are excited to receive this award from the Center for Plain Language” **said Christopher Piper, Commissioner, Department of Elections.** “As a government agency, we can no longer rely on a ‘one size fits all’ approach to communications; we have to use a diverse set of tools to be able to reach every eligible voter in our Commonwealth. The work that we do encourages Virginia voters to actively participate in our democracy.”

ELECT and CCD were honored for their entry, *What Ifs: A Complete Guide for Helping Voters with Exceptional Situations*, which is a guide filled with frequently asked questions and solutions for voters. The Center for Civic Design is an educational research organization dedicated to encouraging better communication between government agencies and the communities they serve. The complete *What Ifs* guide can be viewed [here](#).

“Winning the ClearMark is well-deserved recognition for all the hard work ELECT and the Usability Review working group of General Registrars have been doing over the last couple of years to make voting easier in Virginia” **said Maggie Ollove, Civic Researcher and Designer, Center for Civic Design.** “One key element of that is making better tools for election workers. This award-winning piece is just an example from the dozens of pieces we have worked on together. Virginia is definitely for voters.”

The ClearMark Awards, sponsored by the Center for Plain Language, recognizes the best plain language communications written for consumers and developed by North American organizations. The theme for this year’s ceremony was “Plain Language is Everywhere,” and the award recipients were honored for using plain language to express their message.

The Center for Plain Language is a 501(c)(3) organization with the goal of helping government agencies and businesses write so clearly that their intended audience understands what they are saying the first time they read or hear it. For more information about the categories and finalists, please visit the Center’s [website](#).

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