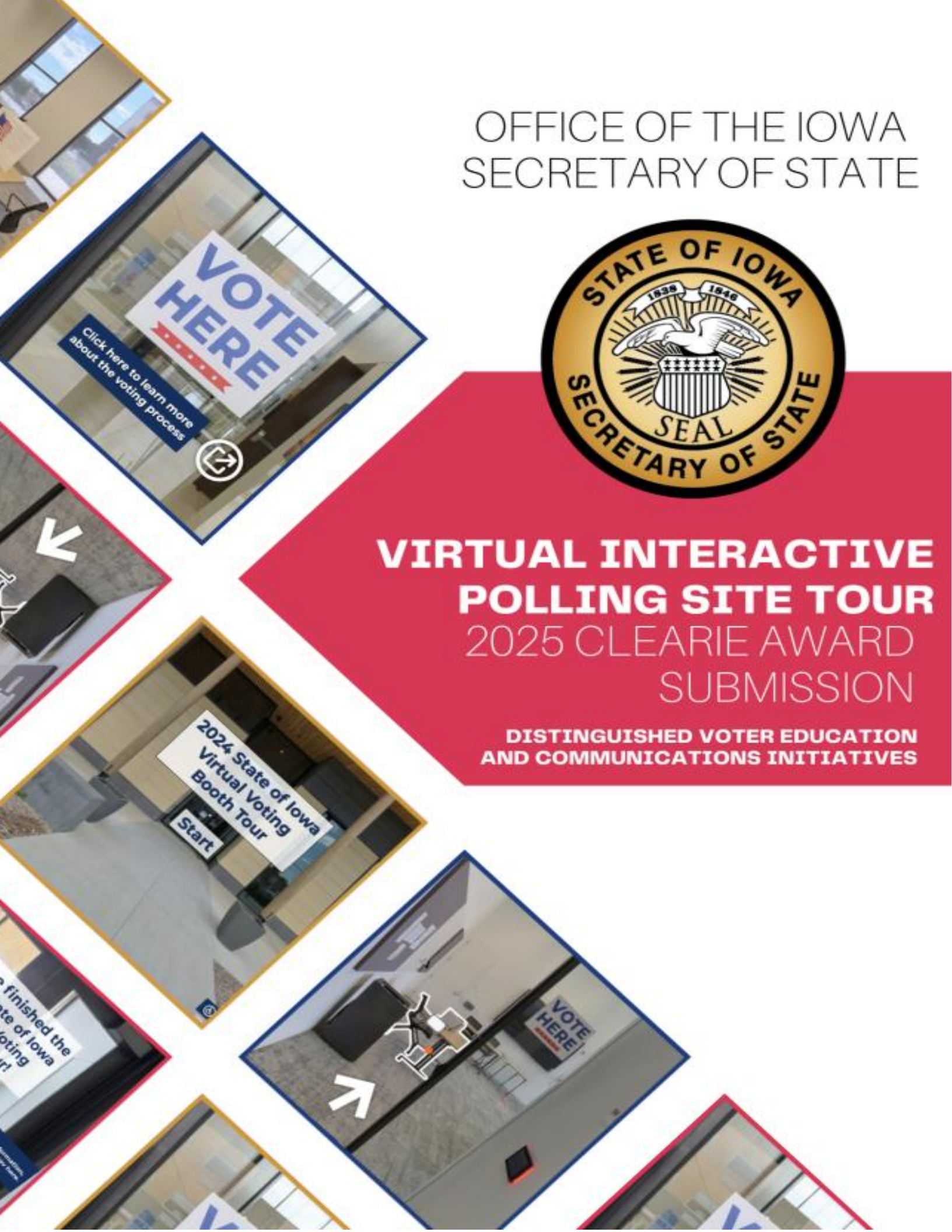


OFFICE OF THE IOWA  
SECRETARY OF STATE



**VIRTUAL INTERACTIVE  
POLLING SITE TOUR**  
2025 CLEARIE AWARD  
SUBMISSION

**DISTINGUISHED VOTER EDUCATION  
AND COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVES**



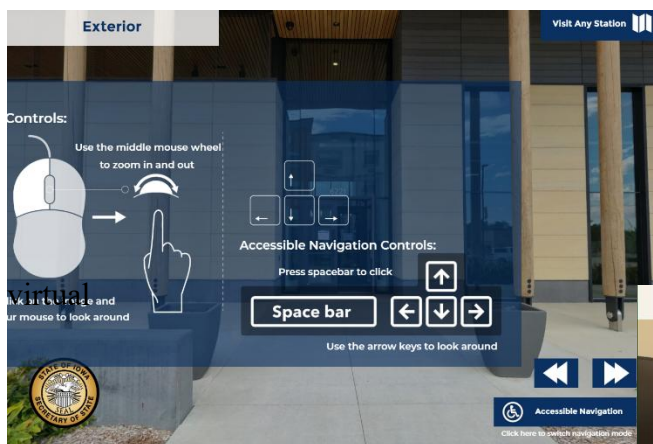
## SUMMARY

As the commissioner of elections for the state of Iowa, Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate is passionate about seeing every eligible voter participate in Iowa elections. In addition to ensuring Iowa elections are safe, secure, and fair, Secretary Pate prioritizes public education and informational campaigns so that Iowa voters have all the tools necessary to engage in and participate in the election process.

One of Secretary Pate's cornerstone initiatives is focused on increasing participation and registration rates among Iowa high school students through the Carrie Chapman Catt Award program ([Clearinghouse Communication Initiative Award Winner 2023](#)). As Secretary Pate traveled the state and spoke with new registered voters, he sensed a growing unease and nervousness about heading to the polls.

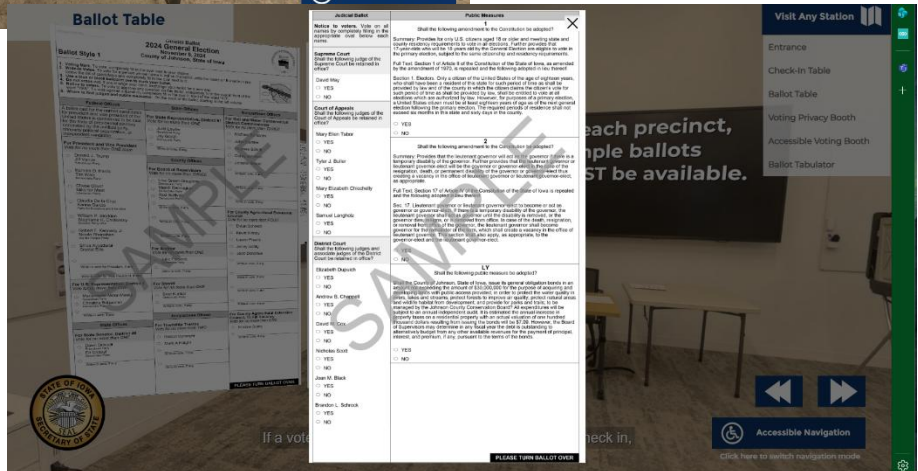
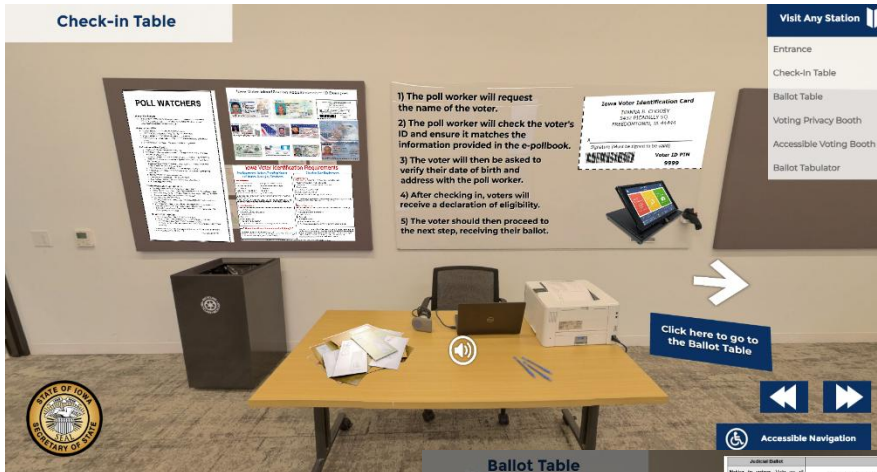
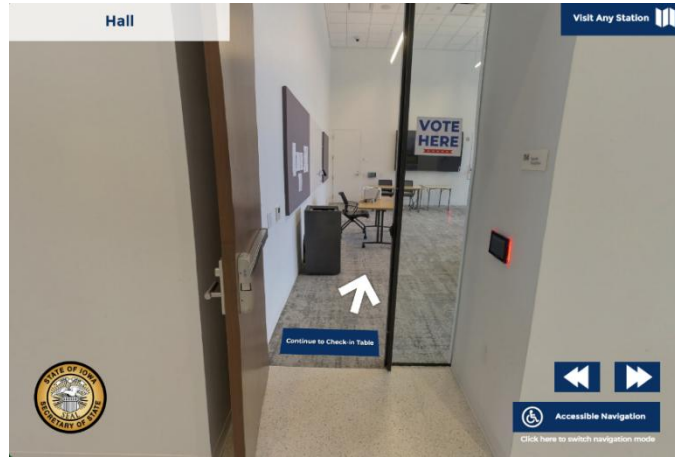
Under the belief that if Iowans had a better sense of what to expect when voting at a polling place, the Iowa Secretary of State's office contracted with a vendor to produce an [interactive virtual tour of a typical Iowa polling site](#). This video project had a second goal: transparency in the election process and building trust in the security and integrity of Iowa elections.

## TAKE THE INTERACTIVE TOUR HERE.



# CREATIVITY

After an RFP process, Iowa contracted with an Iowa-based video production company to produce an interactive, click-through tour of a mock polling site. Viewers could click arrows to see different areas of a typical polling site, including curbside voting areas, check-in tables, voting booths, accessible voting options, and tabulators. Users could zoom in to different ‘stations’ within a polling site, where a separate video would play to explain the process for that particular area. Users could also zoom in to see details and signage required to be on display in polling sites.





The team also considered making a regularly filmed tour video, which would have been slightly more cost-effective at first. However, the nature of the click-through tour had one substantial benefit: the videos and voiceovers played at specific ‘stations’ in the tour could be re-recorded at little cost and input into the larger tour. This was an essential asset to the project – the video now had longevity and adaptability and could easily be updated to reflect any change in state or federal laws. This future-proof design sets a replicable standard for other states.

During these additional videos and voiceovers, supplemental photos, videos, text, and links would be overlaid onto the virtual tour. Viewers could move on to the next station or click more to learn about specific components of that “station.” For example, in the Accessible Voting Booth section, after the voiceover with additional information, viewers could click through to watch additional videos that explained each type of accessible voting machine in use in Iowa. These videos were created in the years prior for a separate project.



## **COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND REPLICABILITY**

Due to time constraints and staff bandwidth, the office worked with an Iowa-based video production company to produce, develop, and edit the tour. Further, because the video included a click-through tour, the development process required strong technical expertise. Similar vendor costs vary state-to-state.

For other jurisdictions, a simple video tour with a voiceover can be easily replicated and done in-house with readily accessible equipment, such as a smartphone and a Bluetooth microphone.

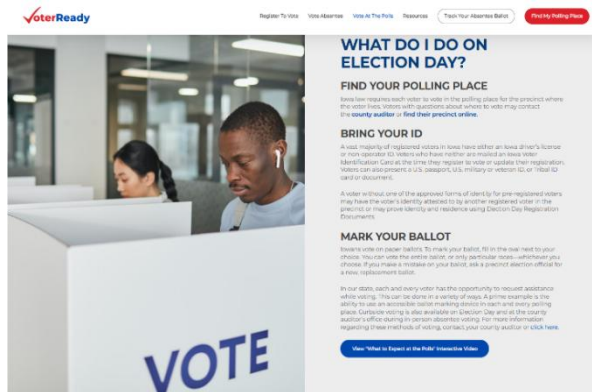
There were no additional costs outside of the video production vendor. The office rented out a room in a public library at no cost. In Iowa, many polling sites are located in public libraries – in fact, this specific public library is regularly used as a polling place. The generic nature of the room allowed viewers to focus on the polling site's setup and envision the same equipment and layout in their own polling site.

Elections staff set up the room with election equipment on hand. The Iowa Secretary of State already has voting tabulators, e-pollbook equipment, voting booths, mock ballots, and signage in storage for public education purposes. An ADA-accessible voting machine was borrowed from a local jurisdiction for the day.

Most local jurisdictions will, of course, have most or all of this equipment on hand. State offices that do not keep such polling equipment on hand can coordinate with local jurisdiction offices to collaborate on the video and use sample equipment for the mock polling site.



## IMPROVED OUTCOMES



The Iowa Secretary of State launched the video in the week leading up to the November 5, 2024, general election. It was shared on social media channels and in the monthly Pate Report, which reaches more than 250,000 subscribers.

The video also lives on the Iowa Secretary of State’s microsite dedicated to voting and election information – [voterready.iowa.gov](https://voterready.iowa.gov), under the section, “Vote at the Polls.”

Since its development, the video has been used on social media and in newsletters several times. Leading up to 2025’s City-School Election, the office once again shared it on social media and placed a social media ad – targeting registered voters in Iowa. The ad, which ran for two days, cost \$3,299.38 and resulted in:

- 109,793 impressions
- a reach of 73,713
- 4,622 link clicks.

The Iowa Secretary of State's Facebook page has just over 14,000 followers, resulting in a strong engagement rate.

The video has also been shared with high school students as part of the Carrie Chapman Catt Award, included in promotional materials, and shown to participating classes. The office also has a “New American Voter Guide,” which is shared with newly naturalized citizens, and the guide includes a QR code that directs new citizens to take the tour.

Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate  
Sponsored

During #NationalVoterEducationWeek, experience Election Day through a voter's eyes and see exactly how the process works.

Our interactive video experience gives Iowans a firsthand look at what to expect when voting at the polls, so you can cast your ballot with confidence. Whether you're a first-time voter or have been voting for years, it's always a good time to refresh your knowledge.

Visit the experience at <https://nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/aatvts-booths/voting-booth-tour/index.htm>

Are you #VoterReady?  
Know what to expect at the polls.

STATE OF IOWA  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
SEAL

National  
VOTER  
Education  
WEEK

[HTTPS://NYC3.DIGITALOCEANSPACES.COM/AATVTS-BOOTHS/VOTING-BOOTH-TOUR/INDEX.HTM](https://nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/aatvts-booths/voting-booth-tour/index.htm)

Are you #VoterReady?  
What to Expect at the Polls

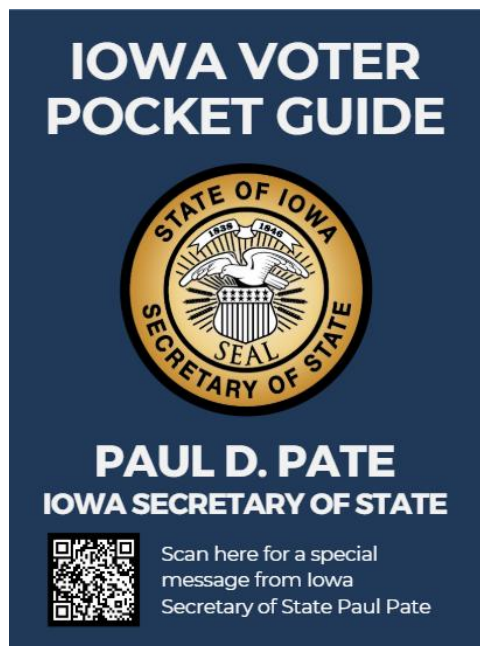
Learn More




In 2026, the office launched a voter registration initiative focused specifically on college students. The video is included in promotional and educational materials for the Catt Collegiate Challenge as well, including a “College Voter Guide: which follows the same format as the “New American Voter Guide.”

This initiative not only demystifies the voting process but sets a replicable standard for voter education nationwide – building trust, providing transparency, and increasing voter participation.


[Access the “College Pocket Voter Guide” here.](#)



**IOWA VOTER  
POCKET GUIDE**



**PAUL D. PATE**  
**IOWA SECRETARY OF STATE**



Scan here for a special message from Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate

## WHAT DO I NEED TO REGISTER?

### Registering to Vote at Your County Auditor's Office or By Mail

When registering to vote at your county auditor's office or by mail, you will need to fill out a Voter Registration Form. You will need either your driver's license, non-operator ID, or to know the last FOUR digits of your Social Security Number.

### Registering to Vote Online

When registering to vote online, you will need either your driver's license or non-operator ID or the last FIVE digits of your Social Security Number.

More information about voter registration can be at [voterready.iowa.gov](http://voterready.iowa.gov)

## AT THE POLLS ON ELECTION DAY



At check-in, you will show the poll worker your photo ID and your voter registration card. If you are not already registered, you will also be asked for proof of residency.



The poll worker will hand you a blank ballot that shows the races for your voting precinct.



In the voting booth, vote for the candidate(s) of your choice. Make sure you completely fill in the oval.



Exit the booth and place your ballot in the tabulator (large ballot-counting device).

Scan the QR code to watch a video tour of a polling place



**[TAKE THE INTERACTIVE TOUR HERE.](#)**

