STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE

2020 Connecticut Safe Polls Plan

Handbook



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE

165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford CT 06106

(Rev. 10/16/2020)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OUR CHALLENGE 3

THE PLAN 4-6

SAFE POLLS PLAN 7-8

COMPUTER GRANT FUNDING PROGRAM 9-15

ABSENTEE BALLOT OPINION 16-17

ABSENTEE BALLOT ROAD MAP 18-21

NOMINATING PETITION GUIDANCE EO-7LL 22-24

PRIMARY PETITION GUIDANCE EO-7LL 25-27

SUPERVISED ABSENTEE BALLOT GUIDANCE 28-29

HANDLING ABSENTEE BALLOTS AT THE POLLS 30-31

POLITICAL CLOTHING 32-33

FACE MASKS AT THE POLLS 34-36

VOTER INTIMIDATION 37-40

UNOFFICIAL CHECKER GUIDANCE 41-42

ADA BALLOT GUIDANCE 43

ELECTION SUPPORT TEAMS 44-45

EXECUTIVE ORDER 7LL 46

EXECUTIVE ORDER 7QQ 47

CDC ELECTION GUIDELINES 48-50

CLEANING GUIDELINES FOR OPTICAL SCAN EQUIPMENT 51

CLEANING GUIDELINES FOR IVS EQUIPMENT 52

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT KITS 53

BALLOT DROP BOXES 54

QUESTION & ANSWERS 55-56

OUR CHALLENGE

The foundation of democracy in America is our system of elections. The legitimacy of our electoral system is the bedrock upon which a government of the people, by the people and for the people is accepted and established. That legitimacy depends on public confidence in our election system.

This year, there are forces both foreign and domestic that are placing unprecedented stress and strain on our system of elections.

Authoritarian regimes opposed to American democracy continue to pose a threat of cyber attacks against election systems in the United States. They possess the capabilities to significantly disrupt the 2020 election cycle, thus undermining public confidence in the fairness and accuracy of election results. Disinformation campaigns being run by these authoritarian states that are currently sowing division and discord in the American electorate can also be weaponized to spread false information about the election process itself. We can expect these efforts to intensify, all in an attempt to undermine public confidence in the election system and by extension in democracy itself.

In addition to this foreign threat to the integrity of our elections, here at home a once in a century pandemic has created an unprecedented strain on election systems across the country. The ranks of election workers, donned in the gear of first responders, are thinned out due to the crisis. Our ability to conduct a general election in a pandemic is untested, and the public is rightfully concerned. Such fear may cause election officials to abandon their posts. Such fears may cause voters to stay home (and under current conditions in Connecticut) be denied their right to vote.

The forces arrayed against us are formidable. The challenge to our democracy is real.

OUR ANSWER

Here in Connecticut we are already at work to meet and master this challenge to our democracy. The Office of the Secretary of the State has been working with Connecticut’s Congressional delegation to get the resources necessary to secure election systems from cyber attack. We are working with the Governor and Legislative leadership to gain the legal authorities necessary to overcome disruptions to the election calendar. We have built an unprecedented partnership with local election officials to carry out an election in the midst of a pandemic. Our answer to the challenge before us is to build these partnerships and marshal our forces behind a plan that ensured Connecticut’s elections will be safe, secure and accessible for all voters.

THE PLAN

SAFE

1. The Safe Polls Plan- Require all municipalities to submit a plan for the primary and general elections in the 2020 election cycle that includes a list of polling locations, staffing levels for each polling location, an identified list of poll workers and moderators ready to work on election day, list of cleaning and safety products required and an emergency plan. Municipalities which complete their Safe Polls Plan will be eligible for a Safe Polls Grant from the Office of the Secretary of the State.
2. Safe Polls Grant Program- Municipalities that submit their Safe Polls Plan, will be eligible for a Safe Polls Grant which can be applied to meet the costs incurred to conduct an election in a pandemic environment. These expenses include cleaning and safety products and additional personnel if necessary.
3. Poll worker Recruitment Program- The Secretary of the State will launch a campaign to recruit poll workers for the 2020 general election. The campaign will be based on exiting models, will leverage the Governor’s efforts to recruit volunteers to respond to the COVID crisis and will direct potential recruits to municipal election officials.
4. Personal Protection Equipment- The Secretary of the State will provide personal protection equipment for all poll workers and Town Clerks offices in the state of Connecticut.
5. Town Clerk Assistance Grant- The Secretary of the State will provide grants to all municipalities for the administration of absentee ballots.

SECURE

1. National Guard Cybersecurity Assessment- The Connecticut National Guard, at the direction of the Secretary of the State, will perform a high-level assessment of the cybersecurity posture of each town as it relates to their elections infrastructure.
2. Town Network Upgrades- Our office has identified approximately 20 municipalities which have chronic issues with their connections to networks necessary for the election process. We are providing upgrades to these towns networks to eliminate cyber “hot spots” which present potential security risks.
3. Replacement Workstations- The offices of local election officials are chronically underfunded and as a result, many are using outmoded PC hardware and software that makes them vulnerable to cyber attacks. Our office will provide 50% matching grants to municipalities that commit to investing in upgrading outmoded workstations.
4. Virtual Desktop Infrastructure- We have successfully pilot tested a virtual desktop infrastructure which helps secure local cyber infrastructure from intrusion. The virtual desktop gives our technicians remote access to local election officials workstations for the purposes of ongoing security checks and upgrades. We will deploy this system statewide over the course of the election cycle.
5. Protecting the Connecticut Voter Registration System- Over the course of the past several months our office has imposed a two-factor authentication requirement to gain access to the CVRS. We will continue to keep current with this program.
6. Security Audit of Vendors- Connecticut’s election system runs on the IT services provided by private vendors. We will conduct a security audit of those firms.
7. App Development to Secure Systems- We are developing a two-factor authentication system to enhance security for the EMS. We will also reserve funds to develop applications for CVRS and OLVR so that we can react to emerging security challenges.
8. Online Courses for Certification of Registrars of Voters- The University of Connecticut is converting the certification process for Connecticut’s Registrars of Voters to online courses. A course on cybersecurity is also included. This will streamline the certification process, upgrade skills for local election officials and clearly identify those in need of removal.
9. Security Awareness Training for Local Election Officials- The Security Mentor system will provide cybersecurity awareness training for registrars of voters, town clerks and moderators. This will raise the awareness of Connecticut’s election officials to cybersecurity threats and remind them of best practices in daily operations.
10. Election Support Officers- To enhance engagement with local election officials and improve accountability within our office, The Elections Division at the Office of the Secretary of the State has recently been reconfigured into five Election Support Teams. Each Election Support Team is made up of an Elections Attorney, an Elections officer and a support staffer. In addition, each Election Support Team will have a part time staffer to be designated “Election Support Officer”. These officers will be hired by and accountable to the Secretary of the State for the purposes of serving as field support for local election officials. They will also support the post election audit process in the field.
11. Election Information Security Monitor- Foreign powers have launched disinformation campaigns against the United State designed to sow discord and division amongst the American people. US Intelligence officials see the potential for these campaigns to become weaponized and used to spread disinformation about the election process itself. Our office will hire an Election Information Security Officer to scan social media and the dark web in an effort to identify and counter misinformation about Connecticut’s elections process.
12. Cybersecurity Policy Advisor- The Secretary of the State will, for the 2020 election cycle, be advised on cybersecurity policy by former Deputy Director of National Intelligence Arthur House. In addition to his knowledge of the US Intelligence Community, Mr. House previously served as Cybersecurity Advisor to the Governor of Connecticut. His responsibilities for our office will include engaging with federal agencies and experts to ascertain current intelligence and best practices, serving as a resource to our IT Director and writing a review of our cybersecurity work to be released in early October 2020.

ACCESS

The people of Connecticut should not have to choose between protecting their health and exercising their right to vote. Current circumstances of this pandemic make that choice a reality for many of our fellow citizens. The Secretary of the State is taking action to ensure that access to voting is a reality no matter what the circumstances.

1. Expansion of Absentee Ballot- The Office of the Secretary of the State will provide an absentee ballot application to all eligible voters for the 2020 primary and general elections. After processing by their Town Clerks, those who request absentee ballots will also be provided with absentee ballots via the a mail house contracted by the Office of the Secretary of the State. Drop boxes will be provided to every municipality in which Absentee ballots may be deposited by voters. The Secretary of the State will offer a grant program to meet extra costs for processing personnel which might be required of Town Clerks. Pre-paid postage may be provided so that voters do not have to pay to mail back their ballots.
2. Public Information Campaign- The Office of the Secretary of State will conduct a public information campaign using social media as well as more traditional outreach methods to convey information about our safe polls program and the absentee ballot option for voting in a pandemic.
3. IVS Hardware Maintenance- We will pay for the maintenance of voting machines used by localities which allow for accommodation for disabled citizens to cast their votes.
4. Backup Voting Machines- We have procured fifty back up voting machines which can be used to provide for replacement parts for existing voting machines.

**SAFE POLLS PLAN**

Town Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Number of Polling Places:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Secretary of the State requires that all municipalities submit a SAFE POLLS PLAN for the 2020 election cycle that includes: (1) a list of polling locations, (2) staffing levels for each polling location, (3) an identified list of poll workers and moderators ready to work on election day, (4) a list of cleaning and safety products required, and (5) their emergency plan. Municipalities which complete their Safe Polls Plan will be eligible for a Safe Polls Grant from the Office of the Secretary of the State which can be applied to meet the costs incurred to conduct an election in a pandemic environment. These expenses include cleaning and safety products and additional personnel if necessary.

* Please provide a list of polling locations with address to be used during the 2020 election: (attach a separate sheet if necessary)
  + \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Please provide a summary of the staff levels to be used at each polling location identified above: (attach a separate sheet if necessary)
  + \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Please provide a list of replacement poll workers that are prepared to work together with title: (attach a separate sheet if necessary)
  + \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Please provide a list of cleaning and safety supplies that you have identified in coordination with your local Department of Public Heath that are necessary for the safety of your poll workers: (attach a separate sheet if necessary)
  + \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Please attached your local Emergency Plan

**SAFE POLLS PLAN**

**CERTIFICATE OF CERTIFICATION**

We hereby certify that the information contained in the Safe Polls Plan submitted on

this \_\_\_\_\_day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_ on behalf of the Town of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

is true and accurate and based upon the best information available within the municipality.

Sign and Certified:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Registrar of Voters Printed Name of Registrar of Voters

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Registrar of Voters Printed Name of Registrar of Voters

Mailing Address: Secretary of the State, ATTN: LEAD, P.O. Box 150470, Hartford, CT 06115-0470

Computer Equipment GRANT FUNDING PROGRAM

The Secretary of the State is pleased to announce a grant funding program for municipalities in the State of Connecticut. This grant funding program is intended to provide municipalities with supplemental funds necessary to replace and upgrade computer equipment that is used in connection with the operation of the Connecticut Voter Registration System (“CVRS”).

This grant funding program is administered pursuant to the additional federal funding provided to states through the Help America Vote Act.

* Election Systems have been categorized as “Critical Infrastructure” by the Department of Homeland Security
* We are aware that certain communities currently use computer equipment that runs Windows 7 or other non-supported versions of Microsoft Windows
* Running Windows 7 or other non-supported versions of Microsoft Windows without continued software and security updates creates at greater risk for viruses and malware.

Municipalities who participate in this grant funding program must adhere to the following provisions:

* The State will pay one-half (1/2) of the total cost for the purchase of new computer equipment to be used in association with the Connecticut Voter Registration and Election Management Systems in an amount not to exceed $3,000 per machine purchased.
* The Town agrees to MATCH the amount provided by the State to complete the purchase of such new computer equipment.
* The Town shall maintain its official voter registry list and enrollment lists in accordance with the provisions of Title 9 of the Connecticut General Statutes on the Connecticut Voter Registration System and shall manage all aspects of the election using the Election Management System on such computer equipment.
* The Town agrees to perform proper maintenance and install and apply all required security upgrades and patches as recommended by the computer hardware and software manufacturers.
* The Town may enter into this agreement only after both Registrars of Voters have completed the prescribed certification course established pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §9-192a.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Secretary of the State

Computer Equipment GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT

with

The Town of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Connecticut

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

THIS AGREEMENT, made this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ by and between the State of Connecticut acting by and through Denise W. Merrill, Secretary of the State (hereinafter, sometimes, the Secretary), duly authorized pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 3-77, and the Town of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Connecticut, a municipal corporation acting by and through \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, duly authorized pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-148 (hereinafter TOWN) for the ownership, operation and maintenance of the computer equipment for use in implementing the Statewide Voter Registration System, Election Management System and other associated systems, witnessed that:

**WHEREAS**, Election Systems have been categorized as “Critical Infrastructure” by the Department of Homeland Security and the State of Connecticut has created computerized Connecticut Voter Registration and Election Management Systems to be coordinated, implemented and administered by the Secretary of the State**; and**

**WHEREAS** certain computer equipment is required for use in connection with that project; **and**

**WHEREAS** we are aware that certain communities currently use computer equipment that runs Windows 7 or other non-supported versions of Microsoft Windows; **and**

**WHEREAS** running Windows 7 or other non-supported versions of Microsoft Windows without continued software and security updates creates at greater risk for viruses and malware. The Secretary of the State is offering grant funding to replace such non-supported computer equipment subject to THE TERMS, CONDITIONS, AND LIMITATIONS SET FORTH in this agreement.

**Now, therefore,** in consideration of the covenants, terms and conditions hereinafter expressed, the parties, by their duly authorized representatives, do mutually agree as follows:

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.The following definitions shall apply to terms used in this agreement:

1. **Computer equipment** means the equipment, including, but not limited to the computer, keyboard, monitor, and mouse purchased pursuant to this agreement;
2. **Connecticut Voter Registration System and Election Management System** means a computer system consisting of a mainframe or other suitable server, personal computers, associated peripherals and software on which Registrars of Voters in Connecticut store and maintain the official voter lists of their municipalities as well as manage and report election results and other required reports pursuant to Title 9 of the General Statutes.
3. **State Software** means the programs which operate the Connecticut Voter Registration and Election Management System;
4. **State** means the State of Connecticut;
5. **Secretary** means the Connecticut Secretary of the State or his authorized representative.
6. **Other Software** means any software that is not State Software and that is included or installed on the computer equipment.

2.The State hereby agrees to remit to the Town one-half (1/2) of the total cost for the purchase of new computer equipment to be used in association with the Connecticut Voter Registration and Election Management Systems in an amount not to exceed $3,000.00 per machine purchased. The Town agrees to MATCH such amount to complete the purchase of such new computer equipment. The Town further accepts, all of the State's right, title and interest in, the computer equipment subject to the terms and conditions of this agreement. Upon execution of this agreement, Town assumes the risk of loss of said computer equipment and the Town shall thereafter be responsible for any cost of insurance, repair, maintenance, and operation of said equipment.

3.The computer equipment comes with manufacturer’s warrantees. The manufacturers will supply the provisions of these warrantees. The State makes no warrantee of any kind, including any IMPLIED WARRANTEE OF MERCHANTABILITY or FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, with respect to the computer equipment or any OTHER SOFTWARE or other item referred to in this agreement.

4.Town agrees not to dispose of any computer equipment purchased with funds pursuant to this agreement without the approval of the Secretary.

5. Town agrees to assume the responsibility for the computer equipment operation costs, equipment power, printer, paper, toner, and ribbon costs, and other costs and supplies associated with the repair, operation and maintenance of said computer equipment.

6.Town shall henceforth maintain its official voter registry list and enrollment lists in accordance with the provisions of Title 9 of the Connecticut General Statutes on the Connecticut Voter Registration System and shall manage all aspects of the election using the Election Management System on such computer equipment.

7.Town shall use the computer equipment primarily for the Connecticut Voter Registration and Election Management Systems. Town may load and use on the computer equipment any OTHER SOFTWARE which does not conflict with, reduce the efficiency of, or compromise the security of, the operation of the Connecticut Voter Registration and Election Management Systems. Town shall configure or reconfigure said equipment, as directed by the Secretary, for the most efficient operation of the systems. Town shall forthwith remove from the computer equipment any software, which the Secretary, in her sole discretion, determines may conflict with, reduce the efficiency of, or compromise the security of, the operation of the Connecticut Voter Registration and Election Management Systems.

8.Connecticut Voter Registration and Election Management System Software will remain the property of the State of Connecticut; Town may use said Software in accordance with the terms and conditions of this agreement. The Software may not be altered in any way without the express written permission of the Secretary.

9. Town shall enter into and comply with any necessary licensing agreements with respect to the OTHER SOFTWARE contained on the computer equipment. Town shall indemnify and hold the State harmless from any claims arising from such licensing agreements, as well as, from Town's use or misuse of any OTHER SOFTWARE contained on the computer equipment. Town's obligations under this section survive termination of this agreement.

11.Upon termination by either party, with or without cause, the Townshall **either**, [1] forthwith return, and assign all of town's right title and interest in the computer equipment, and OTHER SOFTWARE to the secretary, **or** [2] pay to the State of Connecticut a termination fee which shall be a portion of the total funding provided by the Secretary of the State pursuant to this agreement, as set forth below. The amount of the termination fee will depend on when the termination occurs and shall be computed as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| If the termination occurs, | | |
| ***On*** or ***after*** the | But ***before***the | ***The termination fee is:*** |
| Date **Town** executes this agreement | 1st Anniversary of this agreement | 100% |
| 1st Anniversary of this agreement | 2nd Anniversary of this agreement | 2/3 of Total Reimbursable Costs |
| 2nd Anniversary of this agreement | 3rd Anniversary of this agreement | 1/3 of Total Reimbursable Costs |
| 3rd Anniversary of this agreement |  | No termination fee |

12.If Town fails to perform any of its obligations under this agreement, including but not limited to the obligations under paragraphs 6 and 7, the secretary may terminate this agreement.

13.Town agrees to perform proper maintenance and install and apply all required security upgrades and patches as recommended by the computer hardware and software manufacturers. Failure to perform such maintenance may terminate this agreement.

14.Town may enter into this agreement only after both Registrars of Voters have completed the prescribed certification course established pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §9-192a. If Town elects a new Registrar of Voters during the duration of this agreement, such new Registrar of Voters shall complete the prescribed certification course established pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §9-192a.

SEVERABILITY

It is the intent of the parties that, should any portion of this agreement be finally declared invalid by any court, all other portions shall remain in full force and effect subject to any amendments that may thereafter be made in writing by the parties.

ENTIRE AGREEMENT AND MODIFICATION

This Agreement contains the complete and exclusive agreement of the parties hereto and shall not be modified except in writing executed by an authorized representative of each party.

INDEMNIFICATION

Town agrees to indemnify and save harmless the State of Connecticut, the Secretary and his, employees against any and all claims, demands, actions, suits, and proceeding by others including, but not limited to, those based on copyright and any agreement between the State and Microsoft, against all liability to others, including but not limited to any liability for damages by reason of or arising out of any misuse of OTHER SOFTWARE or any cause of action whatsoever, including, but not limited to, any liability or cause of action based on copyright and any agreement between the State and Microsoft, and against any loss, cost, expense, and damage resulting therefrom, arising out of or involving any negligence on the part of the Town in the exercise or enjoyment of this agreement.

NONDISCRIMINATION

THIS AGREEMENT INCLUDES ADDITIONAL NONDISCRIMINATION PROVISIONS LABELED "TERMS / CONDITIONS" ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE PART HEREOF.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this agreement to be duly signed on the dates hereinafter stated.

The Town of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Connecticut  
  
By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Town Manager

Duly Authorized  
  
Dated:

State of Connecticut  
Secretary of the State  
  
By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
 Denise W. Merrill

Secretary of the State  
 Duly Authorized

Dated:

**TERMS/CONDITIONS**

EXECUTIVE ORDERS

This contract is subject to the provisions of Executive Order No. Three of Governor Thomas J. Meskill promulgated June 16, 1971, and, as such, this contract may be canceled, terminated or suspended by the State Labor Commissioner for violation of or non compliance with said Executive Order No. Three, or any state of federal law concerning nondiscrimination, notwithstanding that the Labor Commissioner is not a party to this contract. The parties to this contract, as part of the consideration hereof, agree that said Executive Order No. Three is incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof. The parties agree to abide by said Executive Order and agree that the State Labor Commissioner shall have continuing jurisdiction in respect to contract performance in regard to nondiscrimination, until the contract is completed or terminated prior to completion. The contractor, agrees, as part consideration hereof, that this contract is subject to the Guidelines and Rules issued by the State Labor Commissioner to implement Executive Order No. Three, and that he will not discriminate in his employment practices or policies; will file all reports as required, and will fully cooperate with the State of Connecticut and the State Labor Commissioner. This contract is also subject to provisions of Executive Order No. Seventeen of Governor Thomas J. Meskill promulgated February 15, 1973, and, as such, this contract may be canceled, terminated or suspended by the contracting agency or the State Labor Commissioner for violation of or noncompliance with said Executive Order No. Seventeen, notwithstanding that the Labor Commissioner may not be a party to this contract. The parties to this contract, as part of the consideration hereof, agree that Executive Order No. Seventeen is incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof. The parties agree to abide by said Executive Order and agree that the contracting agency and the State Labor Commissioner shall have joint and several continuing jurisdiction in respect to contract performance in regard to listing all employment openings with the Connecticut State Employment Service.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

The contractor agrees and warrants that, (a) For the purposes of this section, "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one per cent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) Who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of Conn. Gen Stat. §32-9n; and "good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations. "Good faith efforts" shall include, but not be limited, to those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements.

For purposes of this section, "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

For purposes of this section, "Public works contract" means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the state or any political subdivision of the state other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the state, including but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

(b)(1)The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut. The contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation, or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the commission; (3)the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the commission advising the labor union or workers representative of the contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4)the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and Conn. Gen. Stat.§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said commission pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. §46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; (5)the contractor agrees to provide the commission on human rights and opportunities with such information requested by the commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the contractor as relate to the provisions of this section and §46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, the contractor agrees and warrants that he will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works project.

(c)Determination of the contractor's good faith efforts shall include but shall not be limited to the following factors. The contractor's employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

(d)The contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the commission, of its good faith efforts.

(e)The contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §46a-56, as amended by Section 5 of Public Act 89-253, provided, if such contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the commission, the contractor may request the state of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

(f)The contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this section as they exist on the date of this contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this contract and any amendments thereto.

(g)(1)The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the state of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the commission on human rights and opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the contractor's commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (3)the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said commission pursuant to section 46a-56; (4)the contractor agrees to provide the commission on human rights and opportunities with such information requested by the commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the contractor as relate to the provisions of this section and section 46a-56 of the general statutes.

(h)The contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (g) of this section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the state and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with section 46a-56 of the general statutes, provided, if such contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the commission, the contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

Effective 7/1/89 - Amended 4/1/91 - Amended 11/1/91 - Revised 6/1/94

Said Executive Order No. Three of Governor Thomas J. Meskill is attached hereto as Schedule E and said Executive Order No. Seventeen of Governor Thomas J. Meskill is attached hereto as Schedule F.



Office of the Secretary of the State

165 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

**MEMORANDUM OF OPINION**

To: All Town Clerks and Registrars of Voters

From: Office of the Secretary of the State

Date: May 6, 2020

Re: Absentee Balloting Voting During a State of Health Emergency

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We are writing this opinion to ensure that voters are able to participate in the upcoming August 11, 2020 Republican and Democratic Primaries in the safest manner possible. More specifically, we are clarifying the definition of “Illness” for Absentee Balloting at a time when the Governor has declared a public health and civil preparedness emergency throughout the State of Connecticut.

This opinion is issued pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §9-3 which states, “(a) The Secretary of the State, by virtue of the office, shall be the Commissioner of Elections of the state, with such powers and duties relating to the conduct of elections as are prescribed by law and, unless otherwise provided by state statute, the secretary’s regulations, declaratory rulings, instructions and opinions, if in written form, and any order issued under subsection (b) of this section, shall be presumed as correctly interpreting and effectuating the administration of elections and primaries under this title, except for chapters 155 to 158, inclusive, and shall be executed, carried out or implemented, as the case may be, provided nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the right of appeal provided under the provisions of chapter 54. Any such written instruction or opinion shall be labeled as an instruction or opinion issued pursuant to this section, as applicable, and any such instruction or opinion shall cite any authority that is discussed in such instruction or opinion….”

Connecticut General Statutes §9-135 permits a voter to receive an absentee ballot if they cannot appear at their assigned polling place because of “(1) His or her active service with the armed forces of the United States; (2) his or her absence from the town of his or her voting residence during all of the hours of voting; (3) his or her illness; (4) his or her physical disability; (5) the tenets of his or her religion forbid secular activity on the day of the primary, election or referendum; or (6) the required performance of his or her duties as a primary, election or referendum official, including as a town clerk or registrar of voters or as staff of the clerk or registrar, at a polling place other than his or her own during all of the hours of voting at such primary, election or referendum.”

Webster’s dictionary defines “illness” as “an unhealthy condition of body or mind or sickness.” “*Illness.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster,* [*https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/illness. Accessed 2 May. 2020*](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/illness.%20Accessed%202%20May.%202020). It is clear that this definition as well as the statutory section referenced above, does not limit the term illness to an individual who has limited mobile function or is hospitalized or confined to a bed.

In fact, the Centers for Disease Control have identified numerous **pre-existing illnesses** that put certain individuals at increased risk when exposed to the COVID-19 virus. These include, but are not limited to: (1) People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including: People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, People who have serious heart conditions, People who are immunocompromised (Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids or other immune weakening medications); (2) People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher); (3) People with diabetes; (4) People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; (5) People with liver disease; and (6) Pregnant women.

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §1-2z, “The meaning of a statute shall, in the first instance, be ascertained from the text of the statute itself and its relationship to other statutes. If, after examining such text and considering such relationship, the meaning of such text is plain and unambiguous and does not yield absurd or unworkable results, extratextual evidence of the meaning of the statute shall not be considered.”

Looking first at the statutory language and the relationship to other statutes, “illness” cannot be limited to some affliction that leaves an individual debilitated or bed ridden. First, the statutory section itself does not define “illness” in such a way. Second, the statutory section at issue also uses the term “physical disability” which in and of itself identifies an individual with mobility issues that can be described as both an “illness” as well as a limitation on mobility. As such, it would be contrary to statutory construction to place the same or similar meaning to both phrases.

In addition, Connecticut General Statutes also provides additional methods of absentee balloting such as Supervised Absentee Balloting *see section 9-159q*, Emergency Absentee Balloting *see section 9-150c,* Permanent Absentee Balloting *see section 9-140e*, and Voting In Person After Voting By Absentee Ballot *see section 9-158n*. Given the additional meanings of “illness” or “physical disability” when used in the other sections of the General Statutes, it stands to reason that “illness” as used in Connecticut General Statutes §9-135 must have a broad definition, one that gives meaning to the special circumstances by which voters can vote using an absentee ballot.

Given the reasoning set forth above and the guidance provided by the Centers of Disease Control, the Office of the Secretary of the State has determined that any registered voter who has a **pre-existing illness** can vote by absentee ballot because that voter’s illness would prevent them from appearing at their designed polling place safely because of the COVID 19 virus.

In addition, individuals who may have been in contact with a COVID-19 infected individual such as healthcare workers, first responders, individuals who are caring for someone at increased risk, as well as those that feel ill or think they are ill because of the possibility of contact with the COVID-19 virus should also be included in the category of voters that would qualify as “ill” for the purposes of absentee voting.

**Absentee Ballot Roadmap**

**EXTENDING THE USE OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS**

CGS 9-135, Public Act 2020-3 July Special Session & HB 7005 September Special Session

Connecticut law allows you to receive an absentee ballot if you cannot appear at your assigned polling place on election day because of active service in the Armed Forces of the United States, absence from the town during all of the hours of voting, illness, religious tenets forbid secular activity on the day of the election, duties as an election official at a polling place other than your own during all of the hours of voting, physical disability, or COVID 19

Knowing an extended use of absentee ballots will increase the number of ballots the following additional procedures will be used:

* Town Clerks will be provided additional resources to allow for the hiring of additional officials to further the administration of a larger pool of absentee ballot voters.
  + Cities and towns will receive supplemental grant funding for the cost associated with the administration of absentee ballots.
  + Town Clerks will receive PPEs from the supply provided to ROVs for the polls.
  + For offices that don’t allow 6’ separation. Establish a contingency plan (i.e. work staggered shifts, use the Registrars of Voter’s office or any other location in town that can establish a connection to CVRS.)
* We will use Fort Orange Press (mail house) to facilitate the mailing of the revamped absentee ballot application to all eligible voters. All applications for this project were mailed by the mail house by September 15, 2020.
  + A one-time data extract of the Centralized Voter Registration System was sent to the mail house for the absentee ballot mailing on midnight of August 26, 2020.
  + Using this list, each eligible voter will be sent an application for absentee ballot that is pre-populated with the voter’s personal information. This application will explain that due to COVID-19 they are eligible to vote using an absentee ballot as long as they return the application to their local town clerk.
  + Applications will be printed with a bar code unique to that voter that will allow the town clerks to search for the voter within the Centralized Voter Registration System more efficiently.
* CVRS will have multiple functionalities to process absentee ballot applications. In the main Navigation Menu under “Activities” the “Elections” tab will have two (2) options for processing absentee ballot applications. The first option will allow the town clerk to process absentee applications (ED-3) with no barcode or Voter ID number as they have normally done in the past. The second option will allow the town clerk to process any application that has a pre-printed barcode or Voter ID number on the application.

**PROCESSING APPLICATIONS SENT TO THE VOTER WITH A BARCODE OR VOTER ID NUMBER**

* Once the application is returned, the town clerk will enter the return information into the Centralized Voter Registration System.
* The Town Clerk will scan the bar code or type the Voter ID Number on the application.
* The first entry for each session will require the Town Clerk to select their default values common to each application, such as the election date. Once those are selected, the selected values will remain for the entirety of the session.
* If there is a mailing address different from the voter’s residence address, the Town Clerk will need to manually select the ‘Ballot Mailing Address’ option, enter the mailing address and then scan the application. If the ballot is being mailed to the voter’s residence address, CVRS will auto populate the address.
* The ‘Serial Number’ will be generated automatically and updated in the database. The serial number will be unique and easily identifiable to each specific city or town. CVRS is programmed to assign a serial that begins with your town code and then a random number (i.e. 16400101, 16400204, etc.)
* The serial number will also populate on the voter label at the bottom of the party field.
* Once scanned, CVRS will automatically print out labels to be used on the envelopes for mailing out the absentee ballot.
* The town clerk will then assemble the absentee ballot package and mail the ballot to the voter within the prescribed timeframe. (October 2, 2020 or within 48 hours of the receipt of the application).

*Note: The Secretary of the State has provided a postage paid Serial Numbered envelope to be used in the absentee ballot package. The Town Clerk can also use existing Serial Numbered envelopes as long as postage has been affixed to that envelope before the package is issued to the voter.*

*Using the Centralized Voter Registration System will also automatically update the Secretary of the State’s voter look-up page. This will allow a voter to track (1) when the Town Clerk has processed their absentee ballot, and (2) when the Town Clerk has received their absentee ballot.*

**PROCESSING ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS WITHOUT THE BARCODE OR VOTER ID**

* Any absentee ballot application (ED-3) that does **not** have a barcode to scan must be manually entered into the “Absentee Ballot” screen. This process has not changed from past practice. Town Clerks should use this screen to process previously received absentee ballot applications, Emergency Ballot applications, Military/Overseas Ballots, requests for replacement ballots or any voter that comes to town hall to vote but did not bring the application that was automatically sent to the voter.
* This is a reminder of the current procedure for the “Absentee Ballot” process:
  + The town clerk will search for the voter by name, DOB, or street. On the Select page, select the voter by clicking the radio button displayed next to the correct voter’s name and click on “Select” button. This will navigate the town clerk to the “Add Absentee Ballot” screen.
  + To insert an absentee ballot application into CVRS, click on “Insert” button.
  + Click on the “Select” radio button and provide the required information in the fields for Election Date, Election Code, etc.
  + To mail the ballot to the voter’s residential address, click on the “Use Residence Address” radio button. CVRS will automatically populate the residential address.
  + To mail the ballot to an address other than their residential address, click on the “Use Mailing Address” radio button and enter in the mailing address.
  + The town clerk will utilize the serial number on the Ed-8 serial numbered envelope.
  + Click on the “Update” button to save the information.
  + Click on the “Generate Labels” button to print the electoral label for the serial numbered envelope and, if needed, the mailing label to mail the absentee ballot.

**RETURN OF A VOTED ABSENTEE BALLOT**

* Once the voter has completed their absentee ballot, they would be able to return their ballot in one of three ways. (1) return their ballot using the US Mail, (2) return their ballot directly to the town clerk’s office in person, or (3) return their ballot using the drop box location at the local town hall. Any ballot deposited in the drop box shall be considered ‘returned by mail.’ This will prevent ballots from being rejected if the designee section is not filled out.
* Once the ballot is returned by the voter, the Town Clerk and Registrars of Voters can begin to pre-check and pre-sort the absentee ballots 14 days prior to the election.
* Any voter who wished to withdraw their absentee ballot must do so with their Town Clerk by 5 PM of the fourth day prior to the election.
* Beginning at 5 PM of the fourth day prior to the election, the Town Clerk can provide the absentee ballots received to the Registrars of Voters who can appoint absentee ballot counter to remove the inner envelope from the outer envelope of the ballot set. No inner envelope shall be opened during this process.
* If there is an issue with the outer or inner envelope during this process, the absentee ballot shall be rejected, marked and replaced in the outer envelope.
* Once the pre-checking, sorting and opening of outer envelopes has been complete, the normal processing and counting of the ballots will occur within the municipality on election day. No ballots can be counted until election day.
* Counting of ballots may begin as early as 6 AM on election day.
* Reporting of election results must be by district and must be made using the Election Management System.
* The reporting deadline for each municipality have been relaxed. The deadline for reporting results has been moved by the legislature to 96 hours (4 days) after the close of the polls, however, result can be reported earlier than this deadline.
* Any absentee ballots returned on the days before the election will be pre-checked and a notation will be placed next to the voter’s name on the official check list “A”.
* Any ballots returned on the day of the election shall be held for counting until after the close of the polls. After the close of the polls those ballots will be compared against the registry list used at the appropriate polling place to ensure that an absentee ballot voter did not also appear at the polls to case a ballot.
* Ballot Drop boxes shall be locked at 8 P.M. on election day.

**REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL BALLOTS**

In a circumstance where an additional ballot is requested, the town clerk will still process these requests. Using existing process, the voter will use an ED-3A and submit the application to the town clerk. The town clerk will automatically reject the first ballot issued, issue a second ballot to the voter and count such ballot if it is filed by the close of the polls on election day.

**Military/Overseas Ballots** – Town Clerks shall continue to process new applications for military ballots and overseas ballots as they normally would do. 45 days before the November 3, 2020 election is September 18, 2020.

**Emergency Ballots** – Town clerks shall continue to process Emergency Ballots as they have done so in the past.



Office of the Secretary of the State

165 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

NOMINATING PETITION BALLOT ACCESS GUIDANCE

REGARDING EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 7LL

This guidance by the Secretary of the State (“the Secretary”) is for a petitioning candidate, a candidate petitioning under a party designation, including a party designation for an existing minor (“the candidate”) in the 2020 election cycle under the process established in Executive Order No. 7LL.

I. Applying for Nominating Petitions

1. The candidate must complete Application of Nominating Petition ED-602b. (“the application”) The application can be located here:

https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Election-Services/Nominating-Petitions/ Nominating-Petitions.

The application must contain all of the information required by Connecticut General Statutes §9-453b, including the following:

a. The name of the candidate(s) listed in the application must be verified by the town clerk as the name of an elector in that town. The town clerk may correct the application to conform with the name of the candidate listed in the voter registry list.

b. A signed statement by each such candidate that the candidate consents to the placing of the candidate's name on such petition;

c. The party designation, if any; and

d. The office and district for which the candidate is seeking to run.

2. The application can be signed electronically and can be signed on two different pages, if needed, to permit the candidate to sign one page and the town clerk to sign a different page.

3. Town Clerks are instructed to respond to applications submitted electronically and by mail promptly.

4. Once signed by the town clerk and the candidate, the application may be submitted to the Secretary electronically to Election Officer Taffy Womack at Taffy.Womack@ct.gov. It may also be submitted by mail to the Secretary at:

Legislation and Elections Administration Division

Attn: Taffy Womack

165 Capitol Avenue, Suite 1000

Hartford, CT 06106

II. Issuance of Nominating Petitions

1. The Secretary will issue the Nominating Petition Form ED-303 to each candidate either electronically or by mail.

2. The number of signatures required under section 9-453d of the General Statutes is reduced by thirty percent to either 5,250 signature or .70% of the prior vote total for that office for the last election.

III. Circulation of Nominating Petitions

1. A petition circulator need not witness the signature of the registered voter signed under the process established by Executive Order No. 7LL.

2. Petitions may be circulated by mail. A candidate can make copies of their petition and mail a page of the petition to voters within their district in an effort to seek support.

3. Petitions may be circulated by electronic mail.

4. Petitions may be circulated on a candidate’s campaign website.

5. Petitions may be circulated by social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter or other such social media services.

6. Petitions may be circulated in person consistent with social distancing protocols.

7. Petitions signed by more than one registered voter must continue to comply with section 9-453a to 9-453o of the General Statute, notwithstanding Executive Order No. 7LL. Consistent with existing Executive Orders, remote notarizations may be utilized for petitions signed by more than one registered voter.

IV. Signing Nominating Petitions

1. A registered voter (“voter”) may sign a petition containing only his or her signature.

2. The registered voter must then return the petition to the candidate.

3. The voter may sign the petition in ink and return the signed original signature to the candidate via mail.

4. The voter may sign the petition by printing the petition page, signing and re-scanning to return to candidate by electronic mail.

5. The voter may sign the petition by inserting an electronic image of a voter's actual signature on an electronic copy of the petition page where a voter signature is intended to be placed and return to the candidate.

6. The voter may sign the petition by using a stylus or other similar device to insert an electronic image of a voter's actual signature on an electronic copy of the petition page where a voter signature is intended to be placed and return to the candidate.

7. The candidate must retain a copy the electronic mail received from each voter containing a signed petition page as proof of the validity of the voter’s signature.

V. Submission of Nominating Petitions to Election Officials

1. The candidate is responsible for submitting petition pages received electronically that he or she wishes to submit to the town clerk electronically with information informing the town clerk of the office(s) to which the petition pages relate.

2. The candidate will compile all signatures received via electronic mail or mail and submit a single electronic file of signature pages to each town clerk.

3. Candidate will compile all signatures received via mail and submit a single packet of pages to each town clerk.

4. The candidate must submit a copy the electronic mail received from each voter containing a signed petition page as proof of the validity of the voter’s signature.

5. Information regarding the contact information for electronic submission to town clerks can be located at: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SOTS/ElectionServices/Town-Clerk/Town-Clerks-List.pdf?la=en

6. All petition pages must be received by the town clerk the deadline of 4 p.m. August 7, 2020 set in Executive Order No. 7LL.

7. Nothing within Executive Order No. 7LL precludes petitioning by any other means set forth in section 9-453a to 9-453o of the General Statutes.



Office of the Secretary of the State

165 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

PRIMARY PETITION BALLOT ACCESS GUIDANCE

REGARDING EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 7LL

This guidance by the Secretary of the State (“the Secretary”) is for a candidate seeking the nomination of a major party in the 2020 election cycle under the process established in Executive Order No. 7LL.

I. Applying for Primary Petitions

1. The candidate must complete the Application for Primary Petition (“the application”). The application can be located here:

https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Election-Services/Nominating-Petitions/ Nominating-Petitions.

The application must contain all of the information required by Connecticut General Statutes §9-404a, including the following:

• The candidate’s name and address;

• The office sought of each candidate for whom the petition is being obtained;

• A statement signed by each such candidate that such candidate consents to be a candidate for such office; and

• The candidate's name as the candidate authorizes it to appear on the ballot.

2. The application can be signed electronically.

3. All multi-town district office primary petitions requests shall be submitted to the Secretary of the State. All single town State Representative primary petition requests shall be submitted to the Registrar of Voters of the party and municipality in question.

4. All applications submitted electronically and by mail will be addressed promptly.

5. Applications may be submitted to the Secretary electronically to Election Officer Shirley Surgeon at Shirely.Surgeon@ct.gov. It may also be submitted by mail to the Secretary at:

Legislation and Elections Administration Division

Attn: Shirley Surgeon

165 Capitol Avenue, Suite 1000

Hartford, CT 06106

Registrars of Voters can be located here:

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SOTS/ElectionServices/Registrar-of-Voters/Registrar-of-Voters-List.pdf?la=en

II. Issuance of Primary Petitions

1. The Secretary or Registrar of Voters will issue the Primary Petition Form ED-619 to each candidate either electronically or by mail.

2. The number of signatures required under section 9-400 or 9-406 of the General Statutes is reduced by thirty percent to 3.5% of the total number of enrolled party members in the respective district for the office in question.

III. Circulation of Primary Petitions

1. A petition circulator need not witness the signature of the enrolled party member signed under the process established by Executive Order No. 7LL.

2. Petitions may be circulated by mail. A candidate can make copies of their petition and mail a page of the petition to enrolled party members within their district in an effort to seek support.

3. Petitions may be circulated by electronic mail.

4. Petitions may be circulated on a candidate’s campaign website.

5. Petitions may be circulated by social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter or other such social media services.

6. Petitions may be circulated in person consistent with social distancing protocols.

7. Petitions signed by more than one enrolled party member must continue to comply with section 9-404b and 9-410 of the General Statute, notwithstanding Executive Order No. 7LL. Consistent with existing Executive Orders, remote notarizations may be utilized for petitions signed by more than one registered voter.

IV. Signing Primary Petitions

1. An enrolled party member may sign a petition containing only his or her signature.

2. The enrolled party member must then return the petition to the candidate.

3. The enrolled party member may sign the petition in ink and return the signed original signature to the candidate via mail.

4. The enrolled party member may sign the petition by printing the petition page, signing and re-scanning to return to candidate by electronic mail.

5. The enrolled party member may sign the petition by inserting an electronic image of the voter's actual signature on an electronic copy of the petition page where a voter signature is intended to be placed and return to the candidate.

6. The enrolled party member may sign the petition by using a stylus or other similar device to insert an electronic image of a voter's actual signature on an electronic copy of the petition page where a voter signature is intended to be placed and return to the candidate.

7. The candidate must retain a copy the electronic mail received from each voter containing a signed petition page as proof of the validity of the voter’s signature.

V. Submission of Primary Petitions to Election Officials

1. The candidate is responsible for submitting petition pages received electronically that he or she wishes to submit to the Registrar of Voters electronically with information informing the official of the office(s) to which the petition pages relate.

2. The candidate will compile all signatures received via electronic mail or mail and submit a single electronic file of signature pages to each Registrar of Voters.

3. Candidate will compile all signatures received via mail and submit a single packet of pages to each Registrar of Voters.

4. The candidate must submit a copy the electronic mail received from each enrolled party member containing a signed petition page as proof of the validity of the voter’s signature.

5. Information regarding the contact information for electronic submission to Registrars of Voters can be located at: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SOTS/ElectionServices/Registrar-of-Voters/Registrar-of-Voters-List.pdf?la=en

6. All petition pages must be received by the Registrar of Voters by the deadline of 4 p.m. June 11, 2020 set in Executive Order No. 7LL.

7. Nothing within Executive Order No. 7LL precludes petitioning by any other means set forth in the General Statutes.



Office of the Secretary of the State

165 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

**MEMORANDUM OF OPINION**

To: All Town Clerks and Registrars of Voters

From: Office of the Secretary of the State

Date: September 28, 2020

Re: Supervised Absentee Balloting Voting During a State of Health Emergency

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We are writing this opinion to ensure that all eligible voters are able to participate in the upcoming November 3, 2020 general election. More specifically, we are clarifying the requirements for Supervised Absentee Balloting at a time when the Governor has declared a public health and civil preparedness emergency throughout the State of Connecticut.

This opinion is limited to absentee ballots issued for the November 3, 2020 election and is issued pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §9-3 which states, “(a)The Secretary of the State, by virtue of the office, shall be the Commissioner of Elections of the state, with such powers and duties relating to the conduct of elections as are prescribed by law and, unless otherwise provided by state statute, the secretary’s regulations, declaratory rulings, instructions and opinions, if in written form, and any order issued under subsection (b) of this section, shall be presumed as correctly interpreting and effectuating the administration of elections and primaries under this title, except for chapters 155 to 158, inclusive, and shall be executed, carried out or implemented, as the case may be, provided nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the right of appeal provided under the provisions of chapter 54. Any such written instruction or opinion shall be labeled as an instruction or opinion issued pursuant to this section, as applicable, and any such instruction or opinion shall cite any authority that is discussed in such instruction or opinion….”

In the State of Connecticut, supervised absentee balloting is administered pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 9-159q and 9-159r which generally require that absentee balloting conducted at a convalescent or nursing home be supervised by the registrars of voters or their designees. Specifically, Connecticut General Statutes §9-159r states, “(a) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes to the contrary, if twenty or more of the patients in any institution in the state are electors, absentee ballots voted by such electors shall be voted under the supervision of the registrars of voters or their designees of the town in which the institution is located, in accordance with the provisions of this section. As used in this section, the term “institution” shall be construed as defined in section 9-159q.”

We are aware that the Governor has issued Executive Order No. 7A which allowed the Department of Public Health to issue visitor restrictions on certain institutions.

For the duration of the aforementioned public health and civil preparedness emergencies, or until such time as I repeal or modify this executive order, notwithstanding Section 19a-550(b)(12) of the Connecticut General Statutes or any other statute, regulation, local rule or ordinance or provision of law, the Commissioner of Public Health is authorized to issue any and all orders restricting entrance into nursing home facilities, residential care homes or chronic disease hospitals that she deems necessary to protect the health and welfare of patients, residents and staff.

On September 1, 2020, the Governor extended this Executive Order through February 9, 2021, unless sooner terminated by the Governor and renewed authority for the Department of Health to regulate visitors in certain institutions during the continued public health emergency.

On September 17, 2020, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a memorandum to all State Survey Agency Directors setting forth new requirements regarding nursing home visitation and COVID-19 (CMS Visitation Memorandum). The CMS Visitation Memorandum directs and expands nursing home visitation beyond the parameters set forth in the Commissioner’s Order dated August 27, 2020.

These principles include, visitors being able to adhere to the core principles of COVID management. Facilities should limit the number of visitors per patient at one time and limit the total number of visitors in the facility one at a time (based on the size of the building and physical space). Facilities should consider scheduling visits for a specified length of time to help ensure all patients are able to receive visitors; and facilities should limit movement in the facility.

This office previously issued an opinion on May 1, 2020 determining that the current public health emergency of COVID-19 and Executive Order 7A and the corresponding Order by the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health eliminate the ability of the Registrars of Voters to conduct Supervised Balloting at nursing homes, residential care homes, and chronic disease hospitals for the August 11, 2020 Republican and Democratic Primaries. This opinion has not changed as a result of the September 1, 2020 order of Governor Ned Lamont, the previous August 27, 2020 order of the Department of Public Health or the CMS Visitation Memorandum.

Each Municipal Clerk shall provide a regular absentee ballot to each applicant of such facilities and allow residents of such facilities to vote using such regular absentee ballot and enlist any and all assistance of their choosing without the requirement of Supervised Absentee Ballot voting.

This opinion is also consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Connecticut Department of Public Heath guidelines regarding the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 within our communities which indicate that older adults are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness as well as people who have serious chronic medical conditions.

Given the risk to public health, the advice of medical experts, the Governor’s Executive Order No. 7A, after consultation with the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health, and our ability to interpret and apply Title 9 of the General Statutes to the administration of elections and primaries in the State of Connecticut, our office is duty bound to eliminate the Supervised Balloting requirement for the November 3, 2020 general election.



Office of the Secretary of the State

165 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

**MEMORANDUM OF OPINION**

To: All Town Clerks and Registrars of Voters

From: Office of the Secretary of the State

Date: October 6, 2020

Re: Absentee Ballot Procedures for November 3rd, 2020 General Election

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

We are writing this opinion to ensure that all eligible voters are able to participate in the upcoming November 3rd, 2020 general election. More specifically, we are clarifying the procedure for handling voters who present at polling locations on November 3, 2020 with absentee ballots and wish to either vote in person or cast their absentee ballot.

This opinion is limited to absentee ballots issued for the November 3rd, 2020 general election and is issued pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §9-3 which states, “(a)The Secretary of the State, by virtue of the office, shall be the Commissioner of Elections of the state, with such powers and duties relating to the conduct of elections as are prescribed by law and, unless otherwise provided by state statute, the secretary’s regulations, declaratory rulings, instructions and opinions, if in written form, and any order issued under subsection (b) of this section, shall be presumed as correctly interpreting and effectuating the administration of elections and primaries under this title, except for chapters 155 to 158, inclusive, and shall be executed, carried out or implemented, as the case may be, provided nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the right of appeal provided under the provisions of chapter 54. Any such written instruction or opinion shall be labeled as an instruction or opinion issued pursuant to this section, as applicable, and any such instruction or opinion shall cite any authority that is discussed in such instruction or opinion….”

In the State of Connecticut, absentee ballot return procedure is governed by Connecticut General Statutes C.G.S. §9-137 and §9-140b which restrict the return of absentee ballots to municipal clerks. Public Act 20-3 of July 2020 repealed and substituted §9-140b subsection (c) to allow the return of absentee ballots to secure drop boxes monitored by the municipal clerks as follows:

(c) (1) For purposes of this section, "mailed" means (A) sent by the United States Postal Service or any commercial carrier, courier or messenger service recognized and approved by the Secretary of the State, or (B) for the state election in 2020, deposited in a secure drop box designated by the municipal clerk for such purpose, in accordance with instructions prescribed by the Secretary. (2) In the case of absentee ballots mailed under subparagraph (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection, beginning on the twenty-ninth day before the state election in 2020 and on each weekday thereafter until the close of the polls, the municipal clerk shall (A) retrieve from the secure drop box described in said subparagraph each such ballot deposited in such drop box, and (B) if the drop box is located outside a building other than the building where the clerk's office is located, arrange for the clerk or the clerk's designee to be escorted by a police officer during such retrieval.

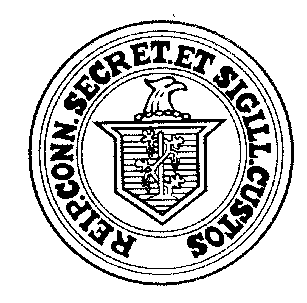
P.A. 20-3 also repealed and substituted C.G.S. §9-159o and states in relevant part:

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, for the state election in 2020, any elector who has returned an absentee ballot to the municipal clerk and who finds such elector is able to vote in person shall proceed before five o'clock p.m. on the fourth day before the election to the municipal clerk's office and request that such elector's ballot be withdrawn.

If the voter appears at a polling location on November 3, 2020 with his absentee ballot in hand and is seeking to cast that absentee ballot, the voter should be instructed to return the ballot to one of the official ballot drop boxes in the municipality or to their municipal clerk. Poll workers, registrars of voters, deputy registrars of voters, and assistant registrars of voters at polling locations should not handle or accept absentee ballots from voters on November 3, 2020. All absentee ballots should be returned to municipal clerks or to the ballot drop box on November 3, 2020 consistent with P.A. 20-3 as cited above. This is also consistent with C.G.S. §9-137(a) which states “Each absentee ballot shall be returned to the municipal clerk…”

If the voter has requested but not cast his absentee ballot and seeks to vote in person at the polling location, they may do so and should be instructed to destroy their absentee ballot at home.

If the voter has cast his absentee ballot and appears at a polling location on November 3, 2020, they are unable to vote in person as pursuant to P.A. 20-3, they had until 5:00 P.M. on October 30, 2020 to withdraw their absentee ballot from the municipal clerk. They should be instructed that they have already voted and may not vote again.



Office of the Secretary of the State

165 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

**MEMORANDUM OF OPINION**

To: All Town Clerks and Registrars of Voters

From: Office of the Secretary of the State

Date: October 6, 2020

Re: Political Clothing

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

As questions persist regarding the presentation of politically themed clothing and other paraphernalia at the polls, our office believes that registrars and other local officials may need some guidance as to when an individual is able lawfully display such paraphernalia under their Constitutionally protected right of free speech and when local officials are allowed to restrict such presentation under Section 9-236 of the Connecticut General Statutes.  In any such decision henceforth, the official shall be guided by this opinion.

This opinion is issued pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §9-3 which states, “(a)The Secretary of the State, by virtue of the office, shall be the Commissioner of Elections of the state, with such powers and duties relating to the conduct of elections as are prescribed by law and, unless otherwise provided by state statute, the secretary’s regulations, declaratory rulings, instructions and opinions, if in written form, and any order issued under subsection (b) of this section, shall be presumed as correctly interpreting and effectuating the administration of elections and primaries under this title, except for chapters 155 to 158, inclusive, and shall be executed, carried out or implemented, as the case may be, provided nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the right of appeal provided under the provisions of chapter 54. Any such written instruction or opinion shall be labeled as an instruction or opinion issued pursuant to this section, as applicable, and any such instruction or opinion shall cite any authority that is discussed in such instruction or opinion….”

In the State of Connecticut, Connecticut General Statutes §9-236 requires a 75 foot zone of neutrality surrounding a polling location. C.G.S. §9-236(a) specifically prohibits any materials which “solicit” stating:

(a) On the day of any primary, referendum or election, no person shall solicit on behalf of or in opposition to the candidacy of another or himself or on behalf of or in opposition to any question being submitted at the election or referendum, or loiter or peddle or offer any advertising matter, ballot or circular to another person within a radius of seventy-five feet of any outside entrance in use as an entry to any polling place or in any corridor, passageway or other approach leading from any such outside entrance to such polling place or in any room opening upon any such corridor, passageway or approach.

Connecticut faced the issue of what qualifies as prohibited clothing under C.G.S. §9-236(a) when Linda McMahon ran for U.S. Senate and the question emerged as to whether clothing promoting McMahon’s company, the WWE, would be barred from entering the neutral zone. McMahon, by virtue of her involvement with the company, and her husband’s position as head of the company, was clearly associated with both the WWE label and name. This raised concerns that the display of such apparel would rise to the definition of “solicit” under C.G.S. §9-236(a). However, the Secretary of the State clarified that the statute is not triggered, and WWE apparel shall not be barred, unless the clothing displays the name or image of the candidate or the campaign name. In this matter, the court found that the WWE logo did not fall under the prohibitions of C.G.S. §9-236(a) See:

<https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/judge-wear-wwe-gear-to-polls-if-you-like/1873642/>

In approaching the November 3rd, 2020 general election, the question has been raised as to whether candidate slogans that may be closely related to a particular candidate triggers C.G.S. §9-236(a) and requires the individual to either remove the clothing or conceal it to enter the 75 foot zone. It is the opinion of this office such slogans do not trigger C.G.S. §9-236(a) as they do not solicit on behalf of a candidate or against another, nor does it display a candidate’s name or photo.   Again, only paraphernalia that contains the name or photograph of a candidate may be barred from the polls.

This opinion is consistent with the holding of *Minnesota Voters Alliance v. Mansky*, 585 U.S. \_\_\_\_(2018) in which the Supreme Court struck down a Minnesota law similar to C.G.S. §9-236(a) prohibiting the wearing of a “political badge, political button, or other political insignia” inside polling places. The law was challenged by voters including one who was twice denied entry to the polls because of his “Please I.D. Me” button and Tea Party Patriots shirt with the words “Don’t Tread on Me” and was forced to record his vote with an election judge. *Id.* at 6. The Court found the statute was too vague because it failed to define the term “political” and accordingly was a violation of free speech as applied. *Id.* at 13*.*  The Court reasoned “that if a State wishes to set its polling places apart as areas free of partisan discord, it must employ a more discernible approach than the one Minnesota has offered here.” *Id.*  at 19.

If voters appear at the polls on November 3rd, 2020 wearing clothing which displays a slogan rather than the candidate’s name or photo, they should be allowed to vote as this does not trigger C.G.S. §9-236(a). Only voters who are wearing clothing, hats, buttons or any paraphernalia which display either a candidate’s name or photo or which advocates for an issue on the ballot should be asked to remove or cover the item in question before entering the polling location.



Office of the Secretary of the State

165 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

**MEMORANDUM OF OPINION**

To: All Town Clerks and Registrars of Voters

From: Office of the Secretary of the State

Date: September 30,2020

Re: Face mask requirements on Election day

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We are writing this opinion to ensure that all eligible voters are able to participate in the upcoming November 3, 2020 general election. More specifically, we are clarifying the face mask requirement adherence at a time when the Governor has declared a public health and civil preparedness emergency throughout the State of Connecticut and there is a Constitutionally protected right to vote involved.

This opinion is limited to questions regarding whether a person who refuses to wear a face mask may be denied entry to the polls during the November 3, 2020 election and is issued pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §9-3 which states, “(a)The Secretary of the State, by virtue of the office, shall be the Commissioner of Elections of the state, with such powers and duties relating to the conduct of elections as are prescribed by law and, unless otherwise provided by state statute, the secretary’s regulations, declaratory rulings, instructions and opinions, if in written form, and any order issued under subsection (b) of this section, shall be presumed as correctly interpreting and effectuating the administration of elections and primaries under this title, except for chapters 155 to 158, inclusive, and shall be executed, carried out or implemented, as the case may be, provided nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the right of appeal provided under the provisions of chapter 54. Any such written instruction or opinion shall be labeled as an instruction or opinion issued pursuant to this section, as applicable, and any such instruction or opinion shall cite any authority that is discussed in such instruction or opinion….”

We are aware that the Governor issued Executive Order No. 7BB which requires individuals to wear face masks as follows:

Cloth Face Coverings or Higher Level of Protection Required in Public Wherever Close Contact is Unavoidable. Effective at 8:00 p.m. on Monday, April 20, 2020, any person in a public place in Connecticut who is unable to or does not maintain a safe social distance of approximately six feet from every other person shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face-covering. In addition, individuals shall use a mask or cloth face covering when using the services of any taxi, car, livery, ride-sharing or similar service or means of mass public transit, or while within any semi-enclosed transit stop or waiting area. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall issue updated versions to the Safe Workplace rules issued pursuant to Executive Order No. 7V, Section 1 and the Safe Stores rules issued pursuant to Executive Order No. 7S, Section 1, which updated versions shall set forth additional requirements for face coverings within those settings. Nothing in this order shall require the use of a mask or cloth face covering by anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition, a child in a child care setting, anyone under the age of 2 years, or an older child if the parent, guardian or person responsible for the child is unable to place the mask safely on the child’s face. If a person declines to wear a mask or face covering because of a medical condition as described above, such person shall not be required to produce medical documentation verifying the stated condition. This order shall supersede and preempt any current or future municipal order.

Executive Order No. 7NNN repealed and replaced 7BB on August 14th, 2020, and renewed face mask and social distancing requirements as follows:

I. Executive Order No. 7BB, Section 2, issued on April 17, 2020, is repealed. Effective immediately, any person in a public place in Connecticut, whether indoors or outdoors, who does not maintain a safe social distance of approximately six feet from every other person shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face-covering. In addition, individuals shall use a mask or cloth face covering when using the services of any taxi, car, livery, ride-sharing or similar service, or any means of mass public transit, or while within any semi-enclosed transit stop or waiting area. a. Nothing in this order shall require the use of a mask or cloth face covering by anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition, a child in a child care setting, or anyone under the age of 2 years. Any person who declines to wear a mask or face covering because of a medical condition shall be exempt from this order and any requirement to wear masks in Sector Rules or other rules issued by the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), but only if such person provides written documentation that the person is qualified for the exemption from a licensed medical provider, the Department of Developmental Services or other state agency that provides or supports services for people with emotional, intellectual or physical disabilities, or a person authorized by any such agency. Such documentation need not name or describe the condition that qualifies the person for the exemption

On September 25th, 2020 the Governor issued Executive Order No. 9B section, which established $100 fines for individuals who violate the face mask requirements as follows:

Any person who, while in any public place or in any location where and for whom wearing a mask or face covering is required by Executive Order No. 7NNN or any DECD Sector Rules, or other lawful authority, as each is amended from time to time, other than a person who qualifies for the medical exemption set forth in Executive Order No. 7NNN or who while outdoors maintains a distance of approximately six feet from every other person, who fails to wear a mask or clothface covering shall be guilty of a violation and fined one hundred dollars. A business entity, rather than the employee, is liable for a fine of the same amount for any employee’s failure to wear a required mask or cloth-face covering while at work.

The question has been raised as to whether a person who declines or refuses to wear a face mask and seeks to vote in person may be denied entry to the polling location in light of the current face mask requirements and Executive Order No. 9B.

It is the opinion of this office that if a person appears at a polling place and is not in compliance with Executive Order No. 7NNN, the moderator and/or poll workers should offer the voter options to vote in a manner that does not endanger the health of other individuals in the polling place.  Those options include (but are not limited to) the following:

(1) Offer the voter an opportunity to return to their car without losing their space in line to obtain a mask;

(2) Offer the voter a mask;

(3) Offer the voter the option to complete their ballot outside of the polling place;

(4) Offer the voter a provisional ballot that they can complete in their car and leave the ballot with a poll worker upon completion; or

(5) Offer the voter the opportunity to compete their ballot in a segregated part of the polling location away from other voters.

If multiple voters who are unwilling or unable to wear a face covering or mask seek to vote, poll workers should make efforts to funnel these voters outside using best efforts to ensure 6 foot spacing. Should any voter become unreasonable or attempt to interfere with the process of voting, they should be removed from the polls by the moderator or police officer if necessary.

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| Office of the Secretary of the State  165 Capitol Avenue  Hartford, CT 06106 | State Elections Enforcement Commission  18-20 Trinity Street  Hartford, CT 06106 |

To: Connecticut Police Chiefs Association

From: Office of the Secretary of the State and The State Elections Enforcement Commission

Date: October 19, 2020

Re: Voter Intimidation and Polling Place Restrictions

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In Connecticut, our mission is to protect democracy and ensure that citizens can exercise their right to vote and make their voice heard. Connecticut and federal law offer strong protections to voters against intimidation.

We have no information that there will be any intentional acts of interference or intimidation at the polls in Connecticut. We have a long and proud history in our state of orderly and professionally run elections. Working together, we expect that tradition to continue.

In that spirit, we have identified several state statutes that are designed to help preserve public order, protect voting rights and defend democracy.

There are statutes that allow local election officials to partner with local law enforcement in certain circumstances. For example, if there is disorder at the polls the moderator may request assistance from the police.

**Sec. 9-230. Authority of registrars and moderators to prevent or suppress disorder.** The registrars of voters may request the head of the police department of the municipality, or, if none, a constable serving such municipality, to provide police protection at any polling place of any regular or special state or municipal election where they may anticipate disorder. The moderator of such election may, when any disorder arises in such election and the offender refuses to submit to the moderator's lawful authority, order any officer with power of arrest to take the offender into custody and, if necessary, to remove the offender from such election until the offender conforms to order or, if need be, until such election is closed, and thereupon such officer may command all necessary assistance. Any person refusing to assist when commanded shall be liable to the same penalties as for refusing to assist constables in the execution of their duties, but no person commanded to assist shall be deprived of such person's right to vote at such election, nor shall the offender be so deprived any longer than the offender refuses to conform to order.

In addition, Connecticut General Statutes Title 9 prohibits certain electioneering within 75 feet of any entrance to a polling location. Should the local moderator be unable to properly handle interference within such 75 foot zone, they may request the assistance of the police.

**Sec. 9-236. Activities prohibited in and near polling place; distance markers; entry restricted; exceptions (Excerpt)**. (a) On the day of any primary, referendum or election, no person shall solicit on behalf of or in opposition to the candidacy of another or himself or on behalf of or in opposition to any question being submitted at the election or referendum, or loiter or peddle or offer any advertising matter, ballot or circular to another person within a radius of seventy-five feet of any outside entrance in use as an entry to any polling place or in any corridor, passageway or other approach leading from any such outside entrance to such polling place or in any room opening upon any such corridor, passageway or approach…The moderator shall evict any person who in any way interferes with the orderly process of voting.

This same section also restricts access to the polls to anyone other than a voter, designee of the Secretary of the State or poll workers.

**Sec. 9-236. Activities prohibited in and near polling place; distance markers; entry restricted; exceptions (Excerpt)**….(c) No person shall be allowed within any polling place for any purpose other than casting his or her vote, except (1) those permitted or exempt under this section or section 9-236a, (2) primary officials under section 9-436, (3) election officials under section 9-258, including (A) a municipal clerk or registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the same office, performing his or her official duties, and (B) a deputy registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the office of registrar of voters, performing his or her official duties, or (4) party checkers under section 9-235. Representatives of the news media shall be allowed to enter, remain within and leave any polling place or restricted area surrounding any polling place to observe the election, provided any such representative who in any way interferes with the orderly process of voting shall be evicted by the moderator.

(d) Any person who violates any provision of this section or, while the polls are open for voting, removes or injures any such distance marker, shall be guilty of a class C misdemeanor.

Once a voter has voted and placed their ballot in the tabulator, they must leave the polling place immediately. No voter is permitted to linger in the polling place any longer than it takes to cast their ballot.

**Sec. 9-261. Process of voting (Excerpt)**….(e) If not challenged by anyone lawfully present in the polling place, the elector shall be permitted to pass to the separated area to receive the ballot. The elector shall give any receipt the elector has received to a ballot clerk who shall give the elector a ballot to vote only in the primary of the party specified by the receipt. The elector shall be permitted into the voting booth area, and shall then register his or her vote in secret. Having voted, the elector shall immediately exit the voting booth area and deposit the ballot in the voting tabulator and leave the room. No elector shall remain within the voting booth longer than the time necessary to complete the ballot, and, if the elector refuses to leave such booth after completing the ballot, the elector shall at once be removed by the election officials upon order of the moderator.

In addition to specific statutory sections regarding polling place activities, Connecticut General Statutes Title 9 expressly prohibits voter intimidation and creates a high bar to challenging the eligibility of voters:

**Sec. 9-364. Influencing elector to refrain from voting.** Any person who, with intent to disenfranchise any elector, influences or attempts to influence by force or threat, bribery or corrupt, fraudulent or deliberately deceitful means any elector to stay away from any election shall be guilty of a class D felony.

**Sec. 9-364a. (Formerly Sec. 9-344). Acts prohibited in elections, primaries, referenda, caucuses and conventions. Penalties.** Any person who influences or attempts to influence by force or threat the vote, or by force, threat, bribery or corrupt means, the speech, of any person in a primary, caucus, referendum convention or election; or willfully and fraudulently suppresses or destroys any vote or ballot properly given or cast or, in counting such votes or ballots, willfully miscounts or misrepresents the number thereof; and any presiding or other officer of a primary, caucus or convention who willfully announces the result of a ballot or vote of such primary, caucus or convention, untruly and wrongfully, shall be guilty of a class C felony.

**Sec. 9-232. Challengers.** **(Excerpt)** …..(b) Challenges shall not be made indiscriminately and may only be made if the challenger knows, suspects or reasonably believes such a person not to be qualified and entitled to vote. Any challenge by an elector and the statement of the person challenged shall be under oath, administered by the moderator.

Federal law also offers protection against voter intimidation:

**18 U.S. Code §245 Federally protected activities**. **(Excerpt)**…. (b) Whoever, whether or not acting under color of law, by force or threat of force willfully injures, intimidates or interferes with, or attempts to injure, intimidate or interfere with— (1) any person because he is or has been, or in order to intimidate such person or any other person or any class of persons from— (A) voting or qualifying to vote, qualifying or campaigning as a candidate for elective office, or qualifying or acting as a poll watcher, or any legally authorized election official, in any primary, special, or general election … shall be fined under this title, or imprisoned not more than one year, or both; and if bodily injury results from the acts committed in violation of this section or if such acts include the use, attempted use, or threatened use of a dangerous weapon, explosives, or fire shall be fined under this title, or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both; and if death results from the acts committed in violation of this section or if such acts include kidnapping or an attempt to kidnap, aggravated sexual abuse or an attempt to commit aggravated sexual abuse, or an attempt to kill, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned for any term of years or for life, or both, or may be sentenced to death. As used in this section, the term “participating lawfully in speech or peaceful assembly” shall not mean the aiding, abetting, or inciting of other persons to riot or to commit any act of physical violence upon any individual or against any real or personal property in furtherance of a riot.

**18 U.S. Code § 594. Intimidation of voters**. Whoever intimidates, threatens, coerces, or attempts to intimidate, threaten, or coerce, any other person for the purpose of interfering with the right of such other person to vote or to vote as he may choose, or of causing such other person to vote for, or not to vote for, any candidate for the office of President, Vice President, Presidential elector, Member of the Senate, Member of the House of Representatives, Delegate from the District of Columbia, or Resident Commissioner, at any election held solely or in part for the purpose of electing such candidate, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

**52 U.S. Code §10101. Voting rights** **(Excerpt)**….. (b) Intimidation, threats, or coercion. No person, whether acting under color of law or otherwise, shall intimidate, threaten, coerce, or attempt to intimidate, threaten, or coerce any other person for the purpose of interfering with the right of such other person to vote or to vote as he may choose, or of causing such other person to vote for, or not to vote for, any candidate for the office of President, Vice President, presidential elector, Member of the Senate, or Member of the House of Representatives, Delegates or Commissioners from the Territories or possessions, at any general, special, or primary election held solely or in part for the purpose of selecting or electing any such candidate.

**52 U.S. Code §20511. Criminal penalties**. A person, including an election official, who in any election for Federal office— (1) knowingly and willfully intimidates, threatens, or coerces, or attempts to intimidate, threaten, or coerce, any person for— (A) registering to vote, or voting, or attempting to register or vote; (B) urging or aiding any person to register to vote, to vote, or to attempt to register or vote; or (C) exercising any right under this chapter; or (2) knowingly and willfully deprives, defrauds, or attempts to deprive or defraud the residents of a State of a fair and impartially conducted election process, by— (A) the procurement or submission of voter registration applications that are known by the person to be materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent under the laws of the State in which the election is held; or (B) the procurement, casting, or tabulation of ballots that are known by the person to be materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent under the laws of the State in which the election is held, shall be fined in accordance with title 18 (which fines shall be paid into the general fund of the Treasury, miscellaneous receipts (pursuant to section 3302 of title 31), notwithstanding any other law), or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

Recently, the issue of firearms at the polls has been raised. According to a recent survey by Giffords Law Center PREVENTING ARMED VOTER INTIMIDATION: A State-by-State Analysis September 2020 summarizes Connecticut as follows:

CONNECTICUT - Connecticut does not prohibit guns at polling locations but does prohibit guns on school grounds. A state permit is required for open carry of handguns. Connecticut generally requires that any person seeking to carry a pistol or revolver, whether openly or concealed, obtain a state permit. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-35(a).

Finally, although Connecticut General Statutes Title 9 allows local election officials to regulate activity inside the 75 foot restricted area, it falls to any local ordinance or other state laws with regard to activity occurring outside of the 75 foot restricted area such as the placement of political signs on public property, public gatherings, and access to public or interference with traffic on public roads for example.

Our democracy rests on the consent of the citizens of the United States to the rule of their government as expressed at free and fair elections. Connecticut and federal law have strong protections for the fundamental right of Connecticut citizens to freely make their voices heard in our elections, and as election officials it is our duty to ensure that those votes are able to be cast without fear of intimidation or artificial, extralegal barriers. Every eligible voter in Connecticut must be able to exercise their fundamental right to vote. Thank you for your commitment to this ideal.

If you should you have any questions, please contact the Director of Elections at the Office of the Secretary of the State, Ted Bromley at 860-509-6122 or [ted.bromley@ct.gov](mailto:ted.bromley@ct.gov) or the Law Enforcement Unit of the State Elections Enforcement Commission, Attorney Kevin Ahern at 860-256-2940 or [kevin.ahern@ct.gov](mailto:kevin.ahern@ct.gov).

**GUIDANCE ON UNOFFICIAL CHECKERS**

To: All Registrars of Voters and Town Clerks

From: Office of the Secretary of the State

Date: October 19, 2020

RE: Unofficial Checkers

We have received several inquiries regarding "poll watchers" or "election observers"  and their status at the polls.

To be clear, Connecticut does not have "election observers" or "poll watchers".  There is no such position and they are not legally recognized by Title 9 of the general statutes.  Any such request for such positions at the polls on election day must be denied and prohibited.

Apart from traditional poll workers such as official checkers, moderators, assistant registrars of voters, tabulator tenders, and ballot clerks, there does exist UNOFFICIAL CHECKERS and CHALLENGERS.

**UNOFFICIAL CHECKERS**

Unofficial checkers and challengers are both appointed at the sole discretion of the registrars of voters of the municipality.

Unofficial checkers may be appointed by the registrars of voters at the request of the local town chair of the party who must request them no later than 48 hours prior to the opening of the polls.

**Sec. 9-235. Unofficial checkers.** (a) At least forty-eight hours prior to each election to be held in a municipality, each registrar of voters in such municipality may appoint for each line of electors in each voting district therein, to serve as unofficial checkers, not more than four electors enrolled in the party with which the registrar is enrolled, provided a registrar may establish two or more shifts for unofficial checkers, in which case such registrar may appoint not more than four such unofficial checkers for each line of electors in each district for each shift. The persons so appointed shall be designees of the town chairman of the party with which such registrar is enrolled, provided such town chairman shall submit the names of such designees in writing to such registrar at least forty-eight hours before the election. A registrar of voters shall, at the request of the town chairman of the party with which such registrar is enrolled, change such appointments of designees of such town chairman, at any time before the closing of the polls on the day of an election.

**CHALLENGERS**

Challengers are different from unofficial checkers.  They are present at the polls for the sole duty of challenging a person's right to cast a ballot.  These positions are appointed at the sole discretion of the registrar of voters.  As a challenger, a challenge can only when the challenger knows, suspects or reasonably believes such a person not to be qualified and entitled to vote.

**Sec. 9-232. Challengers. Challenges not to be indiscriminate and under oath.** (a) Each registrar may appoint one or more challengers in his town or district, one of whom may be present at the offering of any vote; and any such challenger or any elector may challenge the right of any person offering to vote, on the ground of want of identity with the person on whose name the vote is offered, or disfranchisement or lack of bona fide residence, and the moderator shall decide upon the right of the person so challenged to vote.

(b) Challenges shall not be made indiscriminately and may only be made if the challenger knows, suspects or reasonably believes such a person not to be qualified and entitled to vote. Any challenge by an elector and the statement of the person challenged shall be under oath, administered by the moderator.

**GUIDANCE ON ADA BALLOTS**

To: All Town Clerks

From: Office of the Secretary of the State

Re: ADA Ballots

Date: October 14, 2020

Below is a summary of the process to assist a voter who is requesting an ADA accessible absentee ballot.

(1) A voter will fill out a request for absentee ballot application. On that application they will identify as needed an ADA ballot sent to the by e-mail.

(2) Once received the Town Clerk should notify our office of the voter's name, email address and specific voting district needed.

(3) The Town Clerk will then send out a complete ballot set WITHOUT a ballot (meaning just envelopes).

(4) SOTS will then send a converted, ADA compliant ballot to the voter by e-mail.  This email will include instructions about how to vote the ballot and return it and SOTS will also "cc" the Town Clerk.

(5) The ballot must be returned using the absentee ballot envelopes provided.

(6) Once received, the absentee ballot will have to be hand counted.

ELECTION SUPPORT TEAMS

As you are all aware, we have been planning and working towards dividing our division into Election Support Teams. We will have FIVE teams. Each team will consist of an Election Officer, Clerical Staff, a Staff Attorney, and a Local Support Team member.

The idea is to give the towns within your district a direct contact person to facilitate greater interaction and customer service.

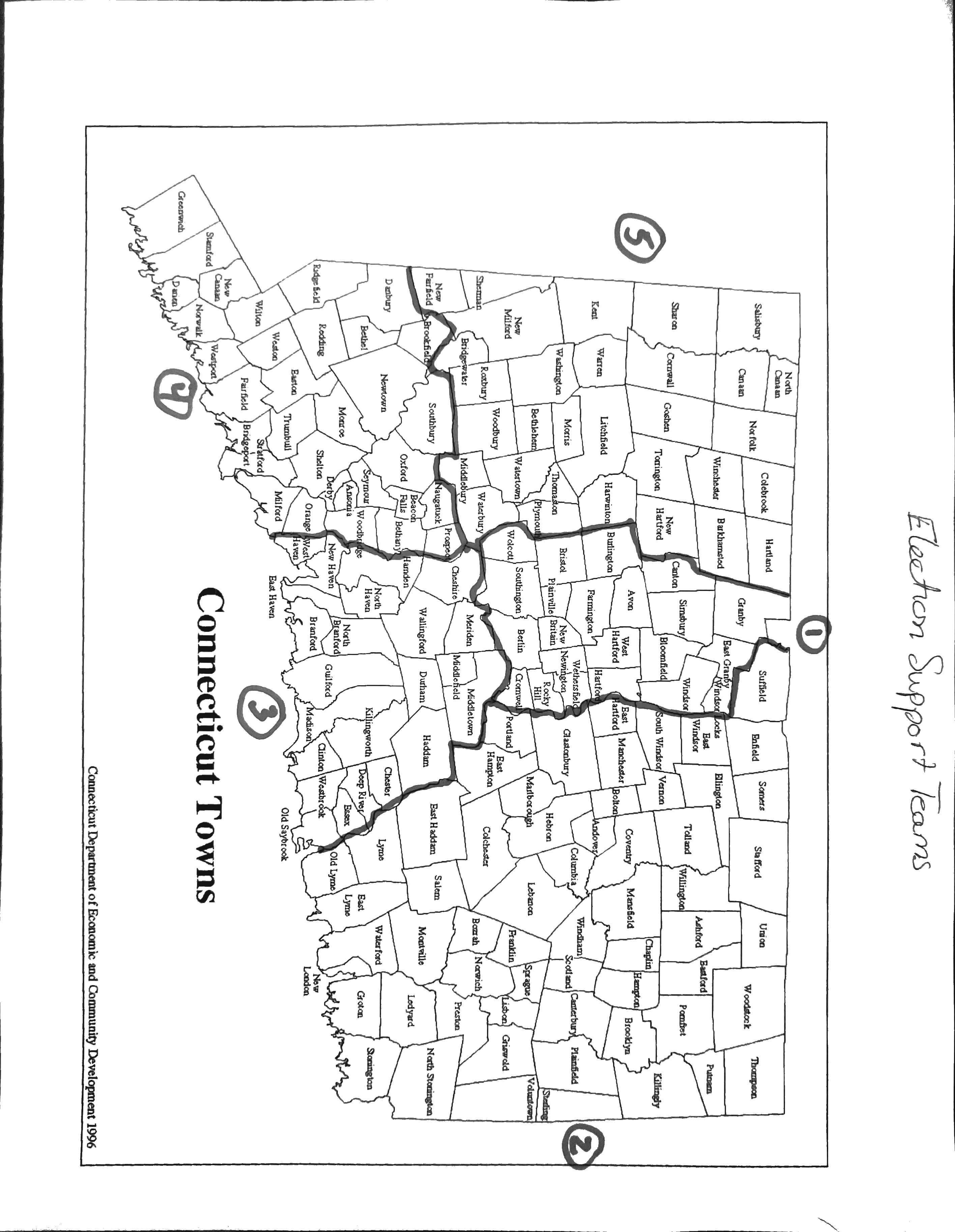
We will continue to work on this concept and develop and change it as necessary. We will continue to appoint certain people to collect filed documents so that we do not duplicate work.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| STAFF | TEAM 1 | TEAM 2 | TEAM 3 | TEAM 4 | TEAM 5 |
| CLERICAL | SANDI PENA | ILONA HAVRILLA | JESSICA GELIN | | LORI MAGORA |
| ELECTION OFFICER | JOAN GIBSON | MORIAH MORIARTY | SHIRLEY SURGEON | TAFFY WOMACK | HEATHER AUGERI |
| STAFF ATTORNEY | BERNIE LIU | LEW BUTTON | TED BROMLEY | | AIDA CARINI |
| LOCAL SUPPORT TEAM | SHANNON BERQUIST | MATT BERGER | CHRISTINE BARTLETT JOSIE | MAX MEDINA | TIM DECARLO |

Attached you will find the regions assigned to each team on the map included.

THANKS,





***DOUBLE CLICK ON IMAGE TO READ ENTIRE DOCUMENT***

***DOUBLE CLICK ON IMAGE TO READ ENTIRE DOCUMENT***



CDC ELECTION GUIDELINES

Background

There is much to learn about the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Based on what is currently known about SARS-CoV-2 and about similar coronaviruses, spread from person-to-person happens most frequently among close contacts (within about 6 feet). This type of transmission occurs via respiratory droplets. Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Transmission of coronavirus in general occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through contact with contaminated surfaces. Current evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in election polling locations.

Purpose

This guidance provides recommendations on the routine cleaning and disinfection of polling location areas and associated voting equipment (e.g., pens, voting machines, computers). It suggests actions that polling station workers can take to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by limiting the survival of the virus in the environment. This guidance will be updated if additional information becomes available.

Definitions:

Community settings (e.g. polling locations, households, schools, daycares, businesses) encompass most non-healthcare settings and are visited by the general public.

Cleaning refers to the removal of dirt and impurities including germs from surfaces. Cleaning alone does not kill germs. But by removing them, it decreases the number of germs and therefore any risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs. But killing germs remaining on a surface after cleaning further reduce any risk of spreading infection.

Actions for elections officials in advance of election day

Encourage voters to use voting methods that minimize direct contact with other people and reduce crowd size at polling stations.

Encourage mail-in methods of voting if allowed in the jurisdiction.

Encourage early voting, where voter crowds may be smaller throughout the day. This minimizes the number of individuals a voter may come in contact with.

Encourage drive-up voting for eligible voters if allowed in the jurisdiction.

Encourage voters planning to vote in-person on election day to arrive at off-peak times. For example, if voter crowds are lighter mid-morning, advertise that in advance to the community.

Encourage relocating polling places from nursing homes, long-term care facilities, and senior living residences, to minimize COVID-19 exposure among older individuals and those with chronic medical conditions.

Consider additional social distancing and other measures to protect these individuals during voting.

Preventive actions polling workers can take

Stay at home if you have fever, respiratory symptoms, or believe you are sick

Practice hand hygiene frequently: wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces: including tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.

Disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated with germs after cleaning: A list of products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claimsexternal icon is available. Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against the virus that causes COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, use of personal protective equipment).

Clean and disinfect voting-associated equipment (e.g., voting machines, laptops, tablets, keyboards) routinely. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.

Consult with the voting machine manufacturer for guidance on appropriate disinfection products for voting machines and associated electronics.

Consider use of wipeable covers for electronics.

If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or spray containing at least 70% alcohol to clean voting machine buttons and touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

Preventive action polling stations workers can take for themselves and the general public

Based on available data, the most important measures to prevent transmission of viruses in crowded public areas include careful and consistent cleaning of one’s hands. Therefore:

Ensure bathrooms at the polling station are supplied adequately with soap, water, and drying materials so visitors and staff can wash their hands..

Provide an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for use before or after using the voting machine or the final step in the voting process. Consider placing the alcohol-based hand sanitizer in visible, frequently used locations such as registration desks and exits.

Incorporate social distancing strategies, as feasible.Social distancing strategies increase the space between individuals and decrease the frequency of contact among individuals to reduce the risk of spreading a disease. Keeping individuals at least 6 feet apart is ideal based on what is known about COVID-19. If this is not feasible, efforts should be made to keep individuals as far apart as is practical. Feasibility of strategies will depend on the space available in the polling station and the number of voters who arrive at one time. Polling station workers can:

Increase distance between voting booths.

Limit nonessential visitors. For example, poll workers should be encouraged not to bring children, grandchildren, etc. with them as they work the polls.

Remind voters upon arrival to try to leave space between themselves and others. Encourage voters to stay 6 feet apart if feasible. Polling places may provide signs to help voters and workers remember this.

Discourage voters and workers from greeting others with physical contact (e.g., handshakes). Include this reminder on signs about social distancing.

Recommendations for processing mail-in ballots

Workers handling mail in ballots should practice hand hygiene frequently

No additional precautions are recommended for storage of ballots

CLEANING PROCEDURES FOR OPTICAL SCAN VOTING EQUIPMENT

For the Voter:

Quick drying hand sanitizer and/or plastic gloves should be used to avoid getting the ballots wet.

Additional hand sanitizer and garbage containers to deposit used plastic gloves should be available as the Voter exits the Polling Location, AFTER the ballot has been deposited into the tabulator.

If the voter wishes to use their own pen, it must be blue or black ink that dries quickly. Excess ink pooling on the ballot can damage the voting machines. Please remember the tabulators do not see the color red, red ink should not be used.

For the Election Officials and Staff:

Sanitizer and plastic gloves should be available to all election staff. Sanitizer should be kept away from paper ballots, paper check lists and electronic devices.

Marking Pens, Voting Booths, and any high contact surfaces (table tops, door handles, etc..) should be wiped down with disinfecting wipes.

Avoiding Damage to Paper Ballots and Voting Equipment

When using hand sanitizer, make sure hands are completely dry before touching paper ballots, check lists or voting equipment. Excess moisture can cause damage to all these items.

Disinfecting wipes can leave behind liquid residue. Make sure all surfaces are dry before placing paper ballots or checklists in the disinfected area.

If ballots become damp from sanitizer or other moisture, make sure they are not fed through your tabulator. Damp ballots can tear inside the voting machine rendering them inoperable. If ballots become damp they should be spoiled or placed in the hand count compartment.

Disinfecting wipes should not be used as gloves for handling ballots or other items in a polling place. Please have disposable gloves available if a poll worker or voter wishes to protect their hands.

If hand sanitizer is made available at the exit of the polling place, make sure it is located after the voter has deposited their ballot in the tabulator, not before.

CLEANING PROCEDURES FOR THE IVS VOTING EQUIPMENT

In light of our current Coronavirus concerns and the upcoming elections, we would like to inform you of a recommended way to clean your IVS Ballot Marking Machines.

Disinfecting wipes are ok to clean the touchscreens, keyboard and keypad before and after each use, but please be sure to wring out the excess liquid before use and do not use wipes containing bleach.

Also, make sure to use a new pair of disposable headphone covers for every voter unless they use their own headphone.

It is always good practice for people to use hand sanitizer when they arrive and leave the polling station, and that's true whether they use the ballot marking system or not.

POLLING PLACE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Each municipality will receive an Election Administrator Protective “Kit” for each polling location in the municipality. The “Kit” will include:

1. “Vote” masks;
2. Custom sanitizer;
3. Gloves;
4. Cleaning supplies for voting machines;
5. An extra box of Nitrile Gloves 200 pack per kit; and
6. A 24 pack of the Protective Face Shields.  One per town/city/municipality.

These items will be dropped shipped directly to each municipality.

BALLOT DROP BOXES

Each municipality will receive at least one ballot drop box. The top 31 municipalities in population will receive a second Ballot Box. The Ballot Boxes will be dropped shipped to each municipality. When shipped American Security Cabinets will send a shipping link so that each municipality will be able to track their own shipments.

Ballot Drop Box Model 710

Interior/exterior security cabinet made with a low-maintenance, brushed stainless steel material, used to protect your cabinet from harsh elements. Includes a slot closer for quick attachment at poll closing. ADA compliant – offers one-hand delivery at ADA height.

Each Ballot Box is:

* Low-maintenance, brushed stainless steel material makes it easy to remove graffiti and other harsh elements.  ADA Compliant to fit the needs of all the communities.
* Heavy duty, all weather construction.
* Easy installation
* Ships fully assembled

Dimensions:

* Outside Dimensions: (inches) 19″ x 20″ x 47″ high
* Material Type: Brushed Stainless Steel
* Collection Container placed inside the cabinet for easy collection.

Security:

* Double lock access (3) brass locks.
* Double bitted keys
* Lock covers
* Anti-tamper protection

Each Ballot Box meets the strict State of California specifications.

*Note: These Ballot Boxes were purchased with Federal Funds so they may not be uninstalled or disposed of without the express permission of the granting agency, in this case, Secretary of the State.*

QUESTION AND ANSWERS – COVID – 19 ELECTION OPERATIONS

1. **Question:**

What happens if we are not capable of processing all the ballots in the 48-hr turnaround time?

* 1. While you can expect more absentee ballots, we have provided numerous resources to assist you with this process. For example, the use of a mail house, PPE purchase, and providing financial assistance for any extra help you may need. We have also worked with the Governor’s office volunteer program in an attempt to solicit additional resources for your office.

1. **Question:**

What happens if COVID-19 interferes with our ability to work in our office?

* 1. We have continued to issue guidance on this issue. In addition to our guidance and additional resources, you should already be working with your town and local health department on any issued that may be unique to you locally.

1. **Question:**

What are the recommendations and standards required for the mailboxes and do they apply to all towns?

* 1. Drop boxes are used by many states. The drop box we are using meet the standards issued by the State of California as well as the Department of Homeland Security. This is also a resource to be used for those offices who are having trouble operating during the COVID-19. Also, the recent EO issued by the Governor includes the use of the drop box so it is required to be used.

1. **Question:**

Is the drop box capable of being locked and is it required?

* 1. Yes, and there is only one set of keys to be held by the Town Clerk.

1. **Question:**

Will a standard guideline or flowchart be created that will list who is responsible for each step of the process and by what date each step needs to be completed?

* 1. We have worked with the COVID response committees and have issued an Absentee Ballot flow chart which details each step of our absentee ballot process and identified who is responsible for each step of the process.

1. **Question:**

How do we deal with ballots dropped off in the Ballot Boxes that belong in another town?

* 1. We suggest that the Town Clerk of the town in question should be notified and an arrangement should be made to get the ballot to the appropriate town.

1. **Question:**

Is there a special process to get the scanners to connect to CVRS and work, or do they just plug them in to a computer that has CVRS on it and they instantly know how to scan & print?

* 1. There is a scanning function within CVRS. Each town that purchases a scanner will be able to scan any returned application.

1. **Question:**

Given the number of ABs we are anticipating, can we start opening ballots in advance of Election Day?

* 1. Yes. Ballots can be pre-sorted and pre-checked as early as 14 days before the election and the OUTER envelope only can be opened no early that the fourth day before the election. The actual counting of the ballot must be completed on election day.

1. **Question:**

Does the notice of Election have to be in the newspaper or can we simply put it on our websites?

* 1. It can be posted on the web pursuant to an EO by the Governor.

1. **Question:**

Can a Moderator or other poll worker who cannot wear a mask because of medical reasons still work at the polls?

* 1. This candidate should not be a first choice. You may consider if there is another job that this person can assist with on election day. In addition, a high risk person (nurse, doctor) should also not be a poll worker.