



GUIDANCE TO MUNICIPALITIES REGARDING ELECTIONS TO BE HELD APRIL 7, 2020 DUE TO THE PRESENCE OF COVID-19

My administration, along with other State, local, and federal authorities, has undertaken a wide array of actions to mitigate the effects of novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), prevent further spread, and preserve our health care resources. During this pandemic emergency, it is essential that we protect Coloradans' health and safety and limit the public's exposure to COVID-19 while preserving our right to vote in free and fair elections. After consultation and in alignment with municipalities, I am providing the following guidance to municipalities in the State that are preparing for upcoming elections on April 7, 2020 to limit the spread of COVID-19. We may update this guidance as necessary over the coming weeks.

FINDINGS

1. On March 5, 2020, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's (CDPHE) public health laboratory confirmed the first presumptive positive COVID-19 test result in Colorado.
2. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States Department of Health and Human Services recommends community mitigation strategies such as social distancing measures to limit the spread of the virus. One area of concern for possible transmission of the disease is when large numbers of people gather.
3. On March 26, 2020, CDPHE issued Public Health Order (PHO) 20-24 implementing Executive Order D 2020 017 ordering Coloradans to stay at home. PHO 20-24 excludes activities related to federal state and local elections, as they are Critical Government Functions.
4. The CDC has issued guidance concerning elections administration, including guidance for elections officials in advance of their election days, preventive actions polling workers can take to ensure safe elections administration, preventive action polling station workers can take to protect themselves and the general public, and recommendations for handling and processing mail ballots.
5. Over 100 municipal elections are being held across Colorado on April 7, 2020. While many are holding mail ballot elections, a large number of those conducting polling place elections have increased their efforts to allow absentee ballots to be cast. I want to commend the efforts of the Colorado Municipal League (CML) and Colorado's municipal clerks in cities and towns around the State for their efforts to ensure that voters can safely vote. CML's election guidance is on the CML

website at www.cml.org/covid19. As Coloradans, we are all in this together, and I am grateful to our local governments for their service to our communities.

GUIDANCE

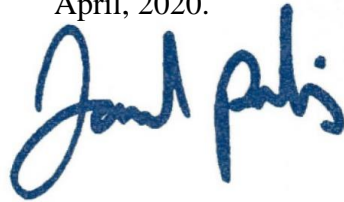
I am providing the following guidance to municipalities within the State concerning how to safely and efficiently administer upcoming elections. We encourage all elections administrators to observe the social distancing requirements contained within PHO 20-24, while also continuing to administer free and fair elections for Colorado's municipalities and citizens.

1. We encourage all municipalities to follow the CDC guidelines and State and local public health orders to the greatest extent possible. This includes encouraging voters to use voting methods that minimize direct contact with other people and reduce crowd size at polling stations. In Colorado, many elections allow for mail-in or ballot drop-off, and to the extent possible, voters should be encouraged to vote through ballot drop-off or other absentee methods. For the few elections that are not conducted via mail ballot, and for voters who desire to participate in an election but have misplaced or not received their ballots, additional steps elections administrators can take to facilitate participation include:
 1. Encouraging absentee methods of voting, where possible;
 2. Following the social distance guidance provided in PHO 20-24;
 3. Encouraging early voting, where voter crowds may be smaller throughout the day;
 4. Encouraging Drive-up voting or ballot drop off for eligible voters;
 5. Providing alternative methods of voting to at-risk populations including older individuals and those with chronic medical conditions;
 6. Encouraging in-person election day voters to arrive at off-peak times;
 7. Encouraging voters, volunteers, and staff to practice effective hand hygiene, which means washing hands for at least 20 seconds or providing hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content to voters, staff, and volunteers;
 8. Consulting CDC guidelines for the safe handling and processing of mail ballots;
 9. Regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces including voting machines, tables, desks, doorknobs, light switches, handles, railings, ballot boxes, and writing utensils, etc.;
 10. Implementing additional social distancing and other measures to protect voters, volunteers, and staff during voting; and
 11. Consulting guidance provided by the Colorado Municipal League (CML) and local health agencies regarding how to safely conduct local elections.

In addition to the foregoing guidance, I also encourage municipalities to remain apprised of any CDC recommendations concerning best practices and to work with their local elections

administrators and CML to ensure the safe administration of elections. It is vital to our democracy to ensure that all are able to participate without fear of infection. We will continue to work with our partners in local government as the COVID-19 event continues to develop and update this guidance as needed.

GIVEN under my hand
this second day of
April, 2020.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jared Polis
Governor