



Wisconsin Elections Commission

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DATE: August 10, 2020

TO: Wisconsin County Clerks
Wisconsin Municipal Clerks
Milwaukee County Election Commission
City of Milwaukee Election Commission

FROM: Meagan Wolfe Administrator

SUBJECT: Updates – Use of National Guard Service Members and Critical Cleaning Supplies

This communication is to provide a few last-minute updates regarding the deployment of National Guard Service Members to assist as poll workers during tomorrow's Partisan Primary and to give an update about the critical cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) that was distributed.

National Guard Service Members

On Friday afternoon, WEC staff provided the last updates to the National Guard team related to the poll worker support needed today and in support of tomorrow's Partisan Primary.

What happens if there is an emergency and a polling place requires last minute support on Election Day (e.g., polling place cannot open due to lack of minimum number of poll workers, critical number of poll workers call in sick on Election Day)?

If a municipality finds they cannot open a polling place on Election Day, or a large number of poll workers call in sick leaving a polling place with a critical shortage of poll workers, the municipal clerk should:

- Implement their contingency plan and contact back-up poll workers to ensure the polling location is sufficiently staffed. If polling place support is still needed, the municipal clerk should:
 - Contact the county clerk's office, who will contact WEC staff, Michelle.Hawley@wi.gov (608-261-2004) or Robert.Kehoe@wi.gov (608-261-2019) directly.
 - If for some reason the municipal clerk is unable to contact the county clerk's office, the municipal clerk should contact WEC staff, Michelle.Hawley@wi.gov (608-261-2004) or Robert.Kehoe@wi.gov (608-261-2019) directly.
 - To aid in prompt communication between WEC and the National Guard, WEC staff member Michelle Hawley will be working in Madison with the National Guard team on Election Day.

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- Please note that for contingency planning, a small number of National Guard Service Members will be on standby at regional locations. Depending on the need and the location of the polling place, it may take a while from the time WEC is alerted and when the Service Member drives to and arrives at the final destination. The sooner WEC knows, the sooner the Service Member will be on the road. We appreciate your patience and will do everything we can to get someone there as soon as possible.

What else should clerks know about using National Guard Service Members (NGSM) in support of the Partisan Primary?

- All NGSM will report to polling places (as provided by county clerks) at **6:30 a.m. on Election Day** and should be expected to be there all day. NGSM are working in support of the requests submitted either by county clerks on behalf of municipal clerks or requests submitted directly by the municipalities. Since the final requests for support were confirmed with the National Guard on Friday, it is possible municipal clerks may have found additional individuals to work the polls. The National Guard is working from requests that were submitted on your behalf – please do not turn NGSM away – they are there to help. Consider using them in support of tasks like greeting voters, line management, processing absentees, etc.
- NGSM were provided a training curriculum as directed by WEC staff; however, many have probably never previously worked at a polling place.
- Except for rare circumstances, NGSM will be local residents of your county (municipal clerks are encouraged to verify the county of residence upon arrival). They will not be in uniform.
- NGSM will be paid by the State of Wisconsin.
- Unlike the April election (which also extended the time to process absentee ballots), NGSM are not authorized to return to provide additional support after Tuesday.

Critical Cleaning Supplies and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Over the last two weeks, WEC staff has worked with the Emergency Operations Center warehouse staff, the National Guard, and the Civil Air Patrol to disseminate these supplies prior to Election Day. As we have previously discussed, there is a critical shortage of supplies and therefore we received some supplies, as ordered via the county clerks, for both August and November, and partial supplies to support tomorrow's election.

What was delivered?

Full orders for August and November Elections:

- 1. Surface disinfectant (one or a combination of these)**
 - Yahara Distillery
 - State Line Distillery
 - Twin Oxide (do **NOT** use to disinfect/clean hands)

2. **Hand Sanitizer** (liquid and gel)
3. **Face Coverings** (procedural masks ordered for poll workers) – poll workers may also wear their own personal face coverings, if so desired

Partial Orders – to Supply August Election:

4. **Empty spray bottles for use with surface disinfectant**
5. **Paper towels**
6. **Alcohol wipes** (general purpose – we do not recommend using on touch screens or electronic poll book screens – please see equipment manuals for guidance on cleaning electronic equipment)
7. **Painters tape** (can be used to help encourage social distancing and to hang signage)
8. **Pens**

Unfortunately, as of 5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 7, no gloves had arrived at the warehouse. Gloves are in very short supply across all industries, especially the medical field. As a reminder, the current CDC guidance is that poll workers should not wear gloves. The CDC stresses the importance of clean hands to help combat the spread of COVID-19. It is important that poll workers frequently wash their hands and use hand sanitizer throughout the day. We do expect to be able to provide some gloves for the November election.

To alleviate the undoubted competition for these resources leading up to the November election, WEC staff already submitted supply orders for both August and November. We expect the other partial orders to arrive in the warehouse soon and as a result, we expect that we are already in a good place regarding the critical cleaning supplies and PPE needed for November. After the Partisan Primary, WEC staff will conduct another survey to determine what additional supplies may still be needed for November to ensure we place any supplemental orders as soon as possible.

Thank you to all Wisconsin clerks for all of their hard work and continued dedication, especially during this challenging time. Please know that your efforts are sincerely appreciated! Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office at elections@wi.gov or 608-261-2028.