



Election Day and COVID-19:

Poll Worker Procedures for April 7, 2020



Introductions

Agenda

COVID-19 Background

Setting up: Polling Place Set-up, Poll Book Management

Supplies: Hand Hygiene, Surface Cleaning

Managing People: Poll workers, Voters, Observers

Process: Voter Registration, Curbside voting, Absentee Ballots

Cleaning: Voting Equipment, E Poll Book, Surfaces

Q&A Time

Resources

Be **INFORMED**
Be **PREPARED**
Be **SMART**
Be **SAFE**

Be **READY** to fight
#COVID19

For the latest health advice, go to:
www.who.int/COVID-19



UNITED NATIONS



World Health
Organization





First-

We are not Public Health Officials.

We are Election Officials.

We worked directly with Wisconsin public health officials to develop these procedures.

The options outlined here are not universal and clerks should adapt these procedures so they will work with their available polling places and resources.



Background

Novel Coronavirus, or COVID-19, is a respiratory illness that's highly contagious

WHO Officially declared a global Pandemic as of March 11th

Vulnerable populations are older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions



Wisconsin: Public Health Emergency

Governor Evers declared a Public Health Emergency on March 12th

Designated Department of Health Service as lead of crisis

Evers issued 'Safer at Home' Order in effect March 25th

DHS directed limiting public visits to nursing homes and care facilities

K-12 Schools closed indefinitely

UW campuses switching classes to online/extending spring breaks

DHS recommends all non-essential gatherings be cancelled or postponed until after the Pandemic



How it's spread

Spread from person to person

Close contact (within 6 feet)

Extended face to face interactions longer than several minutes

Respiratory droplets from infected person via coughing or sneezing

Most contagious when most symptomatic

May spread w/out symptoms

Potentially spread by touching infected surfaces



Symptoms

Fever

Cough

Shortness of breath

Aches and pains

Nasal Congestion

Runny Nose

Sore Throat



The Basics

If you not feeling well, stay home!

You must wash your hands frequently throughout the day

Keep face-to-face interactions brief and from a safe distance

Avoid unnecessary handling of materials from voters

Avoid touching of your eyes, nose and mouth without cleaning your hands first!



Polling Place Set-up

Have a station for voters to wash or hand sanitize immediately upon entering and leaving the polling place

Use volunteers to greet voters and direct them to hand washing or sanitizing areas and inform voters of procedures for voting

Have a well-ventilated polling place: Keep doors propped open, if possible, to increase air flow and eliminate unnecessary touching of doors and door handles

Potlucks and bake sales should not be offered. Communal eating such as pizza or crockpot dishes should be avoided. Pre-packaged or single serving food or snacks are acceptable



Polling Place Set-up

Wipe down tables, door handles, pens, etc. with sanitizer regularly, or at least every 10 minutes

Ban all non-election related activities in the polling location that could promote congregation and close personal contact

Ensure dedicated observer area is at least six feet away from poll workers

Limit non-voters, such as children, from the voting area



Greeters and Volunteers

Volunteers can serve in this role and do not need to meet residency and training requirements

Greeters can be stationed at the door to screen voters for symptoms and ensure proper hand hygiene is being used before the voting process begins

Greeters can also assist with line management to ensure proper social distancing guidelines are being followed

They can also be tasked with wiping down voting booths, voting equipment and other sanitizing tasks throughout election day



Line Management

Social distancing is essential to ensure a safe voting experience for both voters and election workers

Voters should be kept at least **6 feet apart**

Voters can be staggered to limit the number of voters in a facility or voting area at the same time



Signs and Visual Cues

Visual cues can be used to enforce social distancing standards

Signage can be used to create lines and establish waiting areas

Tape or other floor markings every 6 feet can be used to establish appropriate gaps between voters and poll workers

Sidewalk chalk can be used to establish appropriate gaps between voters who may be waiting outside a polling place entrance



Instructions and Signage

Here is a list of signs and instructions that should be presented in different areas of the polling place:

Can be posted at entrance and throughout polling place:

“HEALTH ALERT! Do not enter this building if you are experiencing any of these symptoms or have been in contact with anyone with these symptoms: shortness of breath, sore throat, achiness, fever (100.4F), nasal congestion, or cough.

Call () ____-____ for a curbside ballot.”

“Please exercise proper social distancing while voting by maintaining at least 6 feet between yourself and other voters and poll workers.”



Instructions and Signage

Here is a list of signs and instructions that should be presented in different areas of the polling place:

Voter Check-In/Registration:

Poll book table sign

Voter registration table sign



Poll Worker Health Screener

A health screening will be administered for each poll worker before their shift

If a poll worker answers yes to any of the screening questions, they should not serve that day



Screeners Questions

Below is the list of screening questions:

Have you come in contact with a person known or suspected to have COVID-19?

Have you had a fever in the last 24 hours?

Have you had a cough in the last 24 hours?

Have you had any difficulty breathing in the last 24 hours?

Have you had any unexplained body aches in the last 24 hours?

Have you taken any medications that would reduce a fever? (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen)



Poll Workers

Overall Precautions

Wash hands frequently or use hand sanitizer

If showing symptoms, inform clerk and stay home

Refer to CDC recommendations about travel and notify clerk if travel has occurred

Incorporate social distancing of 6 feet when possible



Poll Workers

Facemasks and Gloves

According to the CDC, facemasks should only be worn by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.

CDC & WI DHS focus on hand cleanliness. Covering hands with gloves just means the virus could be on the gloves. If a person wearing gloves touches their face, then they can get infected. Wearing gloves could cause a false sense of security. If gloves are used they should be changed frequently.



Hand and Surface Sanitizing Spray

The sanitizing spray you may have received from the State (via the county) must be used with a screw on cap with a mist setting

Voters should get a spray on both sides of each of their hands both before and after voting

The spray can be used as a surface cleaner and should be allowed to air dry.

Tables, chairs, voting booths, door handles and other areas that voters and election workers touch throughout the day should be frequently sanitized

The spray may dry out skin if used regularly so lotion should be available for use by poll workers



Poll Workers

Hand Hygiene

Poll workers should take regular breaks every 10 minutes, if feasible, to wash their hands using soap and water

Hand sanitizer can be used if a facility does not have facilities available for hand washing

Poll workers should avoid physical contact with voters and other election officials



Voters

Hand Hygiene

Voters should clean their hands using soap and water or hand sanitizer upon entering and leaving the facility or voting area

Soap and water can be used if a polling place has bathrooms or portable hand washing stations

Hand sanitizer can be used if a facility does not have facilities available for hand washing

Poll workers or volunteers can help direct voters to hand washing or sanitization areas



Observers

Clerks can require election observers to be at least 6 feet away from the voting and registration tables

Under Wis. Stat. 7.41((2), the observation area must be within 3 to 8 feet of the table where voters are announcing their name and address or where voters are registering on election day, so it is appropriate to designate an observer area that adheres to the 6 foot CDC guidelines.

Limit observers, if necessary



Poll Book

Set up poll book to accommodate social distancing standards

Avoid handling photo IDs or provide wipes to voters to clean IDs

Limit lengthy face-to-face interactions



Poll Book Process

Recommended Setup:

A line should be placed on the floor using tape six feet from the poll book table

A square should be taped off on the table for voters to place their ID for review by the poll workers

Poll workers assigned to the poll book should try and sit at least six feet from one another

This will create difficulties for the poll book team to check each other's work, as required

If poll workers sit closer than 6 feet apart when working on the poll book a system where the voter checks in at each poll book may be used



Poll Book Process

Recommended Process:

When a voter reaches that line they should be called forward and be instructed to state their name and address and place their photo ID in the taped-off square on the table

After placing their ID on the table in the square the voter should be instructed to step back behind the six foot line

The poll worker should verify the ID and find the voter in the poll book and slide the book forward for the voter to sign

The voter should step forward and sign the book and quickly move on



Poll Book Process

Issuing Voter Numbers

Any number that is issued to voters on election day should be disposable or not reused until sanitized

This may require a change in procedures for this election



E-Poll Book Process

Recommended Setup:

A line should be placed on the floor using tape six feet from the e-poll book table

A square should be taped off on the table for voters to place their ID for review by the poll workers

Poll workers assigned to the e poll books should try and sit at least six feet from one another



E-Poll Book Process

Recommended Setup:

When a voter reaches that line they should be called forward and be instructed to state their name and address and place their photo ID in the taped-off square on the table

After placing their ID on the table in the square the voter should be instructed to step back behind the six-foot line

The poll worker should verify the ID and find the voter in the e-poll book, then turn the e-poll book towards the voter, and step back



E-Poll Book Process

Recommended Setup:

The voter should step forward and sign the e-poll book, select done, and turn the e-poll book back to the poll worker, and step back

Poll worker verifies signature on e-poll book, select 'Accept Signature', pull voter number from printer and set down in ID square, and step back

Voter steps up and takes number and moves along quickly



Voter Registration Process

Reminder:

Face to face interactions should remain brief and be limited throughout election day

Poll worker or Election Registration Official (ERO) should try and remain 6 feet away from voters when interacting

Voters can complete the form from a safe social distancing spot and then place the form and their proof of residence document on the table and step back behind the six foot line

Poll worker or ERO would then verify the voter registration form and proof of residence document and sign the form while the voter waits behind the six foot line



Voter Registration Process

Poll workers or EROs should avoid handling voter devices when POR is shown electronically

Voter should zoom the screen so that required information on the proof of residence document can be verified

The voter should then place the device on the table for the poll worker or ERO to verify their POR and step back behind the 6-foot line

Alcohol wipes can be provided for voters to sanitize devices before displaying POR

Pens used to complete and sign forms can be disposed of or regularly disinfected throughout the day



Processing Absentee Ballots

Although handling absentee ballots is an unlikely source of transmission, letter openers may be used to open ballot envelopes

High volume of absentee ballots may require some modification of Election Day processing

If using gloves to open absentee ballot envelopes be sure to avoid touching your face, eyes or mouth before removing your gloves



Voting Equipment/E-Poll books

Cleaning

All vendors recommend the following procedures:

- Frequent cleaning of touched surfaces (at least every 15 minutes, if not after each use)

- Use of microfiber cloths and alcohol wipes

- Special cleaners or wipes for electronic screens (no alcohol)

- Isopropyl alcohol (70% or higher) for other surfaces

- Do NOT spray cleaning or disinfecting agents directly into/onto devices

- Do NOT use ammonia, acidic, alkali or other caustic chemicals (CLR, concentrated liquid detergents, toilet cleaner, bleach, etc.)



Voting Equipment/E-Poll books

Additional Best Practices

Take time to clean the voting equipment and e-poll books before setup and after teardown

- Unplug power cord

- Remove any batteries in things like wireless keyboards/mice

- Disconnect any external devices

Wait for touchscreens to dry before touching them



Voting Equipment/E-Poll books

Vendor Resources

[Dominion Voting](#)

[ES&S](#)

[Clear Ballot](#)

[Badger Books](#)



Voting Equipment/E-Poll books

Self-Provided Supplies

Voting equipment manufacturer's marking pens are best

Pens can be provided to each voter to use and discarded or collected after each use

Voters may bring their own marking pens

Ball-point pens may be allowable to use when marking a ballot that will be inserted into the optical scan tabulator, but this depends on the equipment

No gel pens and "sharpie"-type felt tip pens

Red ink should be avoided



Curbside Voting

General

Curbside voting should be offered for voters who cannot enter a polling place due to disability or symptomatic voters

Regular curbside administrative procedures should be followed but social distancing standards should be used

Face to face interactions are required for this process but can be minimized by verifying information through a vehicle window

Hand sanitizer should be offered to curbside voters before they vote their ballot

Marking pens used during curbside voting can be discarded or sanitized after each use



Curbside Voting Process

Poll workers should be close enough to verify the ID but do not have handle it.

They can verify it through the glass and slide the ballot through a window that has been slightly rolled down

The voter can slide the ballot back through the window into the privacy sleeve held by poll worker

Poll workers should transport voted ballot back from voter into voting area in a privacy sleeve.

Privacy sleeves can be discarded after several uses

Resources From other Agencies

[Recommended Precautions for Preventing COVID-19 Spread in Polling Places \(CDC\)](#)

[Election Officials Preparation Checklist for Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(CDC\)](#)

[How to Protect Yourself \(CDC\)](#)

[What To Do If You Are Sick \(CDC\)](#)

[U.S. Department of Homeland Security Coronavirus Information](#)

[Mass Gatherings or Large Community Guidance \(CDC\)](#)

Staying Updated

Wisconsin Department of Health Services

<https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19>

Official Wisconsin COVID-19 statistics

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/outbreaks/index.htm>

U.S. Centers for Disease Control

<https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV>

WEC COVID-19 Webpage

<https://elections.wi.gov/covid-19>



Thank you!

Questions?

Email:

elections@wi.gov

Elections

Helpdesk: 608-
261-2028