How Wisconsin is Prepared for the November 3 Election

Submitted to the Wisconsin Elections Commission

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How Wisconsin is Ready for the November 3, 2020 Election: After the April 7, 2020 Presidential Primary election, the Wisconsin Elections Commission committed to complete an analysis of the election, learn as much as we could from our mistakes and successes, develop a plan to improve the process, and show how Wisconsin is ready for the November 3, Presidential Election.

This report demonstrates how the State of Wisconsin Elections Commission has prepared for the November 3, 2020 Presidential and General Election. Preparations for this election have been underway for the last four years. From cybersecurity initiatives, development of training for Wisconsin's 1,922 local election partners, and the attention to voter usability and information on the mechanics of democracy, we have been carefully planning for the 2020 election cycle. This important groundwork was laid prior to April 2020, allowing us to quickly reinvent and repurpose election administration technology and resources amid a global pandemic. The preparations were also required to be made within the parameters of the law. The Wisconsin Elections Commission cannot change legal requirements or change dates, deadlines, or procedures prescribed in the Wisconsin elections statutes. While adhering strictly to laws that may not have been written to account for an election in a pandemic may be a source of contention, upholding these laws is of utmost importance to ensure elections are conducted with fairness and in accordance to the standards determined by the Wisconsin legislature and state constitution.

WEC staff have dissected the April election to learn all we can to prepare for November. We have analyzed the absentee-by-mail process from every angle. That analysis can be found in the April 7 Election Summary and Next Steps Report and the April 7 Absentee Ballot Report which were published in April and May, respectively. (https://elections.wi.gov/index.php/node/6908.) In light of those findings, the Wisconsin Elections Commission has prepared and adapted our technology, training, and voter information for November. The Wisconsin Elections Commission has also reinvented our technology, training, and voter information to meet the needs of a new world that we could not have imagined a mere six months ago. We have also analyzed the April election and found that our state maintains a solid and diverse elections infrastructure consisting of high-tech cybersecurity and the low-tech resiliency and resourcefulness of Wisconsin election officials.

The State of Wisconsin Elections Commission cannot administer the November election alone. There are 1,850 city, village, and town election officials who are registering voters, issuing absentee ballots, recruiting, and training poll workers, and planning for safe voting. There are 72 county election officials who are preparing and printing ballots and securing their websites for election night results. In November there will be nearly 2,500 polling places requiring more than 30,000 poll workers. More than 3 million eligible Wisconsin voters are expected to participate in the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election. Fair elections in our state are the responsibility of every Wisconsinite. We share the responsibility to have enough poll workers and supplies to adequately run safe polling places in each of our communities. We share the responsibility to question misinformation and to seek facts about how our elections are run. It is because of the efforts we each make in these roles that Wisconsin is prepared for a fair and safe election on November 3.

We have also heard from Wisconsin voters that they do not want to simply hear that we are prepared for the November election – they demand to see how we are prepared, how we will ensure fair, free, and secure elections. The Wisconsin Elections Commission staff believes that transparency is the cornerstone of democracy. We believe Wisconsin's voters have the right to know the details of what makes their elections fair. This report details the preparations the State of Wisconsin has made to demonstrate we are ready.

Section 1:
2020 Steering Committees

To begin the targeted planning for the November 3, 2020 Presidential election, WEC staff formed an internal steering committee to coordinate efforts within the agency and with our local election partners. The steering committee efforts consisted of two major efforts 1) creation of local election official workgroups, and 2) internal agency planning.

Local Election Official Committees: Wisconsin's structure for administering elections is unique in that while most other states run elections at the county level Wisconsin runs elections at the municipal level with the counties playing a supporting role. Wisconsin has 1,850 municipal election officials and 72 county election officials whose jurisdictions vary greatly in size and access to resources. The WEC is tasked with creating training, building technology, and communicating with each election jurisdiction. The needs of each jurisdiction are unique and WEC staff does not have the on-the-ground experience that local election officials do. WEC staff recognizes that the only way to build effective training, technology and communications tools for local election officials is to involve them in each step of the process and to value and incorporate their feedback. 2020 Vision was a program launched by the WEC in January 2020 focused on working with local election officials to prepare for the 2020 election cycle.

The initiative included the formation of additional clerk feedback committees to provide local election officials a platform to provide feedback and to drive the priorities of WEC planning efforts. Committees were formed on a permanent and ad-hoc basis to address new challenges. Long-standing committees included workgroups on training, security, and communications. New workgroups were also formed throughout the year that focused on the United States Postal Service, absentee processing, and COVID-19. Membership of each group was made up of volunteer clerks from all corners of the state representing jurisdictions of varying sizes. These dedicated clerks met on a weekly basis and are responsible for providing critical feedback resulting in many of the successful improvement and preparations outlined in this report.

Internal Agency Planning Committee: WEC's internal steering committee was formed in November 2019 and began creating specific plans related to each of the agency's statutory responsibilities and core functionalities and merging those plans into the overarching calendar of the 2020 election cycle, which consists of four statewide elections. Over the last year the WEC 2020 Steering Committee has met every other week to assist current agency teams and projects of the WEC through:

-Resource forecasting, including COVID-related resources
- Coordinating planning efforts across the agency specifically for the 2020 elections
- Monitoring and maintaining a 2020 calendar detailing upcoming deadlines, communications, and staffing needs
- Contingency planning
-Adjustment of overall schedule due emergent issues

The WEC 2020 Steering Committee was created with an eye towards November 3, 2020. While the impacts of COVID-19 on the April election could not have been anticipated, this team meet through the evolving crisis to adjust planning efforts including contingency plan drills, adjustment of agency resource allocation based on new needs, and the creation of additional clerk feedback committees. Due to COVID-19, the 2020 Steering Committee has increasingly used meetings to ensure staff is up to date on ongoing projects and deadlines local election officials may be facing. The sharing of project updates allows for staff to clearly identify agency priorities and adjust competing projects, as necessary. These meetings also provide opportunities for collaboration on clerk communications and coordinating clerk meetings, to ensure WEC staff are efficiently communicating with clerks.

Section 2:
Statewide Voter Registration Database Preparations

Introduction: WEC built, develops, maintains, and upgrades the statewide computer system that each of the local election officials are required by law to use in order to store voter registration records, issue absentee ballots, record participation and audit and maintain voter records. This complete end-to-end election administration system is used by over 3,000 municipal and county clerks and their designees. Wisconsin's statewide system is a real time, living system that ensures records are kept current and are maintained in accordance with statute. This system is where every voter registration is housed, along with historical records of voter moves, name changes, and participation. The statewide system is also where absentee ballots records are issued, tracked, and received ensuring only one ballot can be counted per-eligible, registered voter. Poll books are generated from this system based on voter registration records, absentee information, ineligible lists, and complex addressing that facilitates each voter receiving the correct ballot with their assigned districts and wards. WEC staff, along with the feedback of our local election partners, carefully maintain this system and have made many preparations to ensure it is ready for the November 2020 election.

Testing, Platform and Server Preparation: WEC built, develops, maintains, and upgrades the statewide computer system that each of the local election officials are required by law to use in order to store voter registration records, issue absentee ballots, record participation and audit and maintain voter records. Preparations to the system for the 2020 election cycle began in May 2019 with the decision to upgrade all servers that host elections commission technical products and the decision to upgrade the underlying platform for the voter registration system. Upon performing these upgrades, WEC systems are now postured to quickly receive necessary updates and security patches as soon as they become available. WEC staff spent the summer of 2019 preforming a full regression test of the system by testing every functionality in the voter registration system and its integration points with related applications and other government databases such as the Division of Motor Vehicles. The full regression test and subsequent upgrades were completed on November 15, 2019. These upgrades created a stable foundation on which WEC staff could build new functionality to prepare for the 2020 election cycle. Staff also implemented an improved change management process to track business requirements, development, and deployment. Through the new change management process, staff can review the history of changes and easily refer to details and decision points through the implementation which allows issues to be easily pinpointed and problematic code to be rolled back without impacting other functionality.

Once the project to upgrade the servers and underlying platform system was completed, WEC staff shifted focus to adding new features to the system. In December 2019, WEC staff implemented a new communication feature to the statewide system. This feature allows WEC to share secure communications with local election officials about the technical operation of the system without having to rely on email. This system offers a more secure way to transmit technical information and data than email which can introduce cyber risks to the data and the user's device. Using a protocol that is similar to secure messages a user may be used to seeing from their online bank or other secure transactions, when a new message is posted by WEC, users are notified of the new communication through an email alert. Users with system credentials, that include multifactor authentication, then log into the voter registration system to review the message and download any attachments. This process change has helped to minimize cyber risk, segregate technical communications, and follows safe email practices by avoiding the transmission of attachments and links through email.

Testing and fixes to prepare the system for the additional traffic and volume that only accompanies a Presidential election continued through the three other statewide elections, and one special congressional election that were held thus far in 2020. Ballots were issued for the first statewide election in early January and there has been an active election in the statewide system without a gap for the remainder of the year, making it difficult to find windows of time to make major changes to the system. While major system changes cannot occur during an active election, WEC staff still worked with clerks to identify system bugs that were not identified in upgrade testing. WEC staff also continued to incorporate other required datasets into the system to create real time efficiencies and data comparison. For example, WEC receives data sets, as required by law, from the departments of vital records and corrections, the court systems, and other sources.

These data sources are used to flag voters who are no longer eligible to vote because they are either deceased, have been deemed incompetent by court order, or have been convicted of a felony. While these checks have always been conducted in the system, the new integration allows increased efficiency for WEC and clerks to process the flagged records in order to increase the data quality of the voter rolls and produce statutorily required audits of voter participation.

Additionally, because the first statewide election was held in February, clerks and the WEC staff had opportunities to review the changes to the system in a live, low turnout election to observe any additional changes that needed to be made. On such area for improvement was identified for county users who contract with their municipalities to enter data into the system on their behalf. These users noted a lag when changing between jurisdictions during high traffic periods of use in the system. After some investigation, WEC staff adjusted storage and access protocols for these jurisdictions so county users are now able to navigate the system and complete required tasks efficiently.

System Development in Response to COVID-19: By mid-March, the COVID-19 pandemic had arrived and was driving a major change in voters participating using the absentee by-mail process. Historically, an average of 6% of voters who participated in any given election voted absentee by mail. In April 2020, more than 60% of voters who participated in that election opted to vote using absentee by-mail. When the current statewide voter registration system was built in 2016, and during subsequent upgrades, historical analytics and voter behavior were used to design and adjust the system in consideration with how Wisconsin conducts elections. While absentee by mail and by-mail voter registration options are accounted for in the system, most municipalities had never received a large volume of absentee requests or issued a significant number of ballots by-mail. This change in voter behavior occurred almost overnight. Because of this sudden change, clerk activity in the statewide system also changed significantly and without notice. Historically, in the weeks prior to an election very few clerks are using the statewide system as most have entered their election plans and have shifted their resources to in-person voting. In April, all pre-election activity shifted from in-person absentee voting preparations to clerks using the statewide system to issue, receive, and process absentee applications and ballots at the same time. This resulted in an unprecedented pre-election usage spike in the system. Ultimately, the system performed very well but required around the clock monitoring, increases to server capacity and load balancing, and auditing to handle this unique system user traffic.

The statewide voter registration system also required several updates to accommodate court-ordered extended deadlines for absentee requests and online voter registration. These extensions meant changing automation in the system to assign voter records and allow requests for the new deadlines and elections. WEC staff also monitored capacity of the system to ensure adequate memory space. Multiple increases of memory were needed to keep pace with absentee requests and attached copies of photo IDs. WEC staff also created two significant new processes to assist local election officials with the two challenges of decreased poll worker recruitment and increased absentee utilization. These changes prepared the system not only for the April election but are permanent improvements to the capacity of the system that will allow the system to handle significant changes and increase traffic to the site leading up to November.

Several municipalities approached WEC staff for help in using the voter registration system to support consolidated polling places, as many municipalities had to reduce their number of polling places due to low number of available poll workers. WEC staff created "poll book" reports or pages so that jurisdictions with consolidated polling places could use the system to check in voters, produce and print an individual poll book page for them, and record new registrations and participation in real time on election day. These processes had not been conceptualized previously and required significant development and testing in order to be completed within one week. Again, these changes are permanent improvements to the system. These changes allow jurisdiction to use the statewide system on election day in the event of an emergency consolidation or other changes in polling locations.

Another adjustment that staff created for the system to account for a large increase of absentee ballot requests was an absentee ballot request report that efficiently documents when a voter submits a request that includes a photo ID. This change was significant because it allowed clerks to view lists of applications within the system which could be verified against requests received by email. The report also allows clerks to data enter requests from a single, consistent spreadsheet rather than by opening hundreds or thousands of individual absentee request emails.

Wisconsin law requires first-time absentee by mail to submit a photo ID with their request. In 2020, many voters requested an absentee ballot by mail for the first time meaning their emailed absentee request needed to include a picture file of their photo ID. Because some clerk email accounts faced capacity limits, the new report allowed for the storage and transmission of these large files to be handled outside of email limitations. The statewide voter registration system also faced storage and capacity limits because of the volume and size of the photo files. The state system capacity, storage, and processing time have been adjusted to handle and anticipate a continued large volume of absentee request and photo ID files for November

In June, the absentee photo ID report was further augmented and integrated through the implementation of MyVote Pending Absentee Applications functionality. This new functionality was built to address the burdensome data entry required for clerks to manually enter absentee ballot requests with photo IDs submitted through MyVote. Previously, if a voter made an absentee request through the MyVote website, the system generated an email and a photo ID file that the clerk had to review and then enter the system if the request was valid. Now, requests by registered voters submitted through MyVote generate a pending record in the voter registration system. Clerks still receive an email notification that a new request has been submitted, but now can simply log into the system to review the details of the request and approve or decline the request based on the validity of photo ID. Using the new functionality, clerks remain the ultimate decision maker on if an absentee request is valid, as required by law, but it eliminates the need for clerks to data enter the request or store the application or photo file outside of the statewide system. The system also allows clerks to generate correspondence to a voter altering them to a deficiency in their application. WEC staff have also implemented a more efficient technical method for storing photo IDs within the statewide system for both initial review and for archiving on the behalf of clerks.

WEC staff are developing a similar process to provide clerks with a digital version of absentee applications returned to the WEC office because of the WEC voting mailer to be sent in early September. A WEC staffer will data enter the applications into the statewide system, clerks will then review the application through the MyVote pending functionality. Through the system, clerks will be provided all application information pre-entered in the statewide voter registration system, an electronic copy of the voter provided photo ID, and a scanned copy of the original absentee request. Clerks will then approve or deny the application in the system. If a clerk denies an application for insufficiency, WEC staff will perform some outreach to voters who provide incomplete absentee applications based on the clerk's determination. For example, if a clerk reviews the application and finds that the voter has submitted an out of state driver license as photo ID, they will check a reason for denial, this will then generate a letter to the voter explaining that they have not provided an acceptable photo ID and that they will need to provide an acceptable photo ID to their clerk before their absentee ballot can be sent. The same alert message will also be displayed in the voter's application history on the MyVote website.

Batch Label Processing: While the statewide system does not issue actual ballots, clerks are required to use the system to track when they have sent each ballot. This process includes a functionality for clerks to generate outgoing and return mailing labels and to generate milestones in the system based on the creation of the labels. Between the April and June 2020, WEC staff worked with clerks to redesign the batch process for issuing absentee ballots by-mail to meet clerk expectations, remove opportunity for error, and improve system performance. Prior to the April 7 primary, very few clerks issued large batches of absentee ballots. Most clerks had a manual process issuing single ballots and writing the address on the envelope. For the April primary, all communities received a large volume of absentee ballot requests and needed the option to use the statewide system to issue ballots and print mailing labels in batches for the first time.

While this functionality has always been available, historically only the largest jurisdiction needed or used this functionality. Based on the new volume of absentee requests, the batch ballot request process has been redesigned so that it will work well for jurisdictions of all sizes. One of the biggest improvements has been to create clear stages in the batch process. The process now starts with the clerk selecting criteria and settings and then generating a forecast of the number of ballots that will be included in the batch.

The system returns the number of absentee requests meeting the selected criteria and a list of the absentee requests the clerk may review to ensure all expected requests were captured. Clerks then decide to proceed by processing the batch ballot request, which will start the process of generating the ballot records, or the batch may be deleted if the clerk needed to recreate the batch. When all ballots have been created, a clerk can compare the "Original Application Count" number with the "Original Ballot Count" numbers to make sure all expected applications have created a ballot. Until these two numbers match, the user will not be able to print labels. Previously, clerks would print labels through a list of ballots concurrently generated against a batch.

These measures prevent users from inadvertently printing labels before the batch has finished. The additional comparison points allow jurisdictions who may be dealing with thousands of requests in a single day to have multiple opportunities to compare their numbers and identify any issues in the creation of their mailing labels versus the number of actual ballots being sent. Any changes to the original counts are clearly visible to the clerk user through the "Current Application" and "Current Active Ballot" display on the system dashboard. Further, clerks using a mailing label generated through the batch process also allows clerks to see all required information about the ballot, including a unique identifier that relates the ballot certificate to the voter registration and absentee request. As a result, a clerk uses the identifier to scan in ballots as they are received rather than data entering the receipt of the ballot. This data is then used to display in the voter's record on the MyVote website and to generate a watermark next to the voters name in the pollbook showing that the voter has returned their ballot and it not eligible to receive a ballot at the polls on election day.

Absentee Intelligent Mail Barcodes and Addressing: WEC staff began regular meetings with USPS representatives in April to review the options available to implement intelligent mail barcodes (IMB), a tracking system used by the USPS to document the journey of a piece of mail through the postal system. There is no cost associated with IMB software, though WEC was required to sign up for the Business Customer Gateway so a unique mailer ID to be included in the barcode could be assigned. There was also a significant cost associated with staff time to develop and integrate IMBs into the statewide system batch label process. An IMB also contains a barcode identifier, service type identifier, sequence number unique for a period of at least 45 days, and the delivery ZIP Code. This information combines to create a unique barcode that is scanned by USPS at various points in the mail stream, most frequently at the nearest processing center. Staff worked through May and early June to design, develop, and test how information will be displayed to clerks in the voter registration database and to voters on Myvote.wi.gov.

The system changes to associate an IMB to absentee application records were implemented in the voter registration system on June 13. All existing applications with a ballot delivery method of mail were updated with IMBs at that time. In preparation for the August 11 statewide partisan primary, clerks began to process absentee applications in the system. The new process currently provided two labels: 1) the outgoing voter address label with a printed IMB and 2) the voter information label with standard 2-D barcode applied to the certificate side of the absentee ballot return envelope. The voter information label provides consistency, reduces voter errors, increases legibility for easy processing when the ballot arrives back to the clerk office, and provides clerks an efficient method to scan ballots as returned to the clerk's office.

WEC staff began receiving data files from USPS with scan event data on June 18, 2020. Data generated from the scans are aggregated into files that are imported into the statewide system and associated to the ballot every four hours. Scan event information on each absentee ballot envelope with an IMB is visible to clerks through the statewide system where they can see when the ballot was received by USPS, where the ballot was last scanned, and the anticipated delivery date of an absentee ballot envelope. The statewide system will use the first scan event to populate the "Date Ballot Sent" field on a ballot. When scan information is available, a clerk can view the last city, state, and ZIP Code for the last scan event through the voter registration system. More general milestones are displayed on the MyVote website for voters, but clerks can reference the more detailed tracking information through the statewide system to answer voter questions and to identify mailing issues.

Since the implementation of IMBs, clerks are using the USPS data to confirm when a ballot was inducted into the mail system. In the first few weeks of use, it was discovered that some local postmasters withheld absentee ballot mail for local delivery, rather than sending it to a regional mail processing center. In these cases, no scan occurred as scanning typically happens at the regional center. While IMBs can provide verification that a clerk charged with fulfilling absentee ballot requests did indeed place a ballot in the mail, their use cannot be mandated or expected on every absentee ballot. While the statewide system provides a method to print labels for absentee ballot envelopes, it is up to the local municipal clerk to decide to use these labels. There are also some local or rural post offices that do not have scanning equipment to activate the tracking process. Therefore, for some jurisdictions who use IMBs, ballots may not start tracking until the ballot reaches a regional sorting center.

In preparation for the August 11 statewide partisan primary, clerks were able to use IMB's for absentee ballots that were issued. The process was closely monitored to identify any issues and adjust the approach in preparation for the November election. In June, staff found approximately 30,000 of 1.1 million absentee applications were associated with an "invalid" IMB. This means that USPS will be unable to decode the IMB and transmit updates on the status; however, these absentee ballot envelopes were still able to navigate the mail as previously done without an IMB. The root issue was resolved on the same day for any future applications or ballots. These absentee ballot records were flagged in the voter registration system on July 2 and communicated to clerks as invalid through a post and email from the statewide system News. An update to the IMB formula has been made that will allow clerks to more easily verify the number of ballot mail pieces processed by third parties like United Mail Service and Pitney-Bose against the number of ballots issued by their office.

Improved Functionality to Identify Errors: WEC staff have created an absentee data reconciliation report in the statewide system. This report provides statistics such as number of ballots issued or number of in-person absentee voters on a per-day basis, in addition to total numbers for the specific election specified for the report. The report will also focus on three areas of action for a clerk: 1.) applications without ballots, 2.) ballots without a date ballot sent and 3.) mailed absentee ballots without any USPS data for seven or more days. These reports will provide lists of names to help clerks identify specific voters who may need to be contacted for follow up on photo ID issues, where ballots need to be issued, ballots that are missing critical data, and ballots that should be investigated and potentially re-issued. (USPS has advised seven days is a reasonable amount of time to expect scan information.) This report will be a critical improvement that will allow clerks to identify any discrepancies in the number of ballots issued and to flag local election officials to any potential ballots that were not sent or that may have gone missing in the mail process. WEC is continuing to work with clerks to develop guidance on cancelling ballots that have experienced mailing issues and reissuing ballots as soon as these issues are identified.

In addition to the described absentee improvements, WEC staff have continued to work on pre-pandemic planned projects like the option to import lists of address into the voter registration system. The mass address tool will allow WEC staff to receive lists from municipal or county clerks in a specific format and import those address into the voter registration system.

The mass address tool will allow WEC staff to receive lists from municipal or county clerks in a specific format and import those address into the voter registration system. WEC staff will begin to use this function in a limited fashion ahead of the November election. Addressing changes occur daily because of new construction, changes to street name and addressing conventions, municipal annexations, and consolidations. Municipal and county land information offices are the custodians of this data and are the first entity to create these data sets. Voter registration relies on correct addressing data. When a voter registers to vote they need to be assigned to the correct districts and wards in their voter record. This ensures they receive the correct ballot.

Finally, staff have improved the addressing accuracy of felon records sent to WEC by the Department of Corrections and other data sources that provide ineligible voter information. With the new changes, ineligible voter records will update with geocode-informed data allowing for concise matching. These flagged records will then appear on each municipality's ineligible list which they are required to have on hand at each polling place in November. The improvements allow for more accurate matches to identify ineligible voter records, preventing ineligible voters from receiving a ballot by mail or from being issued a ballot at the polls on election day.

Section 3: MyVote.WI.gov Preparations

Summary: The MyVote.Wi.gov website is the WEC voter portal that allows voters to register to vote online, request an absentee ballot, track their absentee ballot, find their polling place, view a sample ballot, and more. All of the data displayed on the MyVote website is generated directly from the statewide voter registration database. This means the relevant data is coming from the records reviewed and created by each of Wisconsin's municipal clerks. Commission staff deployed several updates to the MyVote Wisconsin website in response to lessons learned from the April Spring Election and Presidential Preference Primary and anticipated challenges for the November General Election. These changes include an updated absentee ballot request process that better explains what is an acceptable photo ID when one is required, a request review page where voters can confirm the information they provided is accurate and are provided an opportunity to make corrections, and a new confirmation page when a request is successfully submitted. MyVote absentee information has also been updated to incorporate Intelligent Mail Barcodes (IMB) tracking information and all requests submitted via MyVote, regardless of photo ID status, create a trackable record in the statewide voter registration system. This section summarizes most of the major MyVote projects implemented or planned for the November General Election

Background: The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, followed closely by the April Spring Election and Presidential Preference Primary, produced many challenges for the MyVote Wisconsin website. Features like requesting an absentee ballot were previously used by voters, but never at the rate they were utilized in the lead up to the April 2020 election. Deadlines for online voter registration and for absentee requests were extended multiple times by court actions prior to this election and deadlines for ballots to be returned and witness requirements were also changed. Deadlines and dates are all currently hardcoded in the MyVote system and in the data exchange with the statewide voter registration system. Therefore, each change required extensive development and testing to avoid unintended consequences.
As the scale of the demand became apparent, WEC staff engaged in extensive load testing prior to the election and up to election day to ensure that the site could handle record breaking traffic. Increasing capacity as it was needed required around the clock monitoring of the site. Staff also made changes to streamline the address searching and validation processing order to reduce load on MyVote servers. Certainly there were unique challenges and obstacles for some voters at the election, but the work of WEC program and IT staff in maintaining and modifying MyVote, as well as the performance of the website itself, was a key factor in accommodating a significant level of voter turnout, second only to the record turnout for the 2016 Spring Election and Presidential Primary.

Following the April election, WEC staff conducted extensive usability studies on the MyVote site to better understand and adapt to new voter behavior patterns. Traditionally, voters used the site to facilitate in-person voting. New voter needs now drive traffic to the site for all electronic and by-mail transactions. As a result, WEC staff worked to augment voter workflows for online voter registration and absentee ballot requests. Utilizing the CARES Act grant, WEC staff also worked closely with clerks and the USPS to incorporate intelligent mail barcodes (IMBs) into the absentee process.

With the input of voters and clerks, staff ultimately identified three major objectives for the MyVote Wisconsin website prior to the November General Election. These objectives, in turn, ultimately led to the development and implementation of over 30 technical changes to system. The three objectives were/are:
1. Improve usability of MyVote absentee ballot request process.
2. Provide enhanced transparency to voters and clerks on the status and location of an absentee ballot.
3. Provide voters clear and complete information about their November voting options.

Absentee Ballot Requests: The April 2020 election introduced hundreds of thousands of voters to the absentee process for the first time. Naturally, many were unfamiliar with the process and did not understand the requirements. Common errors included:

-Providing a written request (letter or e-mail) with insufficient information

-Submitting a personal photograph instead of an acceptable form of photo ID

-Not completing the on-line application process

An additional complication resulted from third parties mailing absentee application request forms that did not adequately highlight the photo ID requirement. In these cases, the clerk was unable to fulfill the request until they could follow up with the voter to obtain a valid photo ID. Most voters do not provide a phone number or email, so the clerk must rely on a mailed notification to the voter that their request is not yet valid. Clerks in these situations were often unfairly blamed for not fulfilling a request that was not valid in the first place.

Submitting a request online through MyVote has become the most popular method to submit an absentee ballot request. Through observations of voters, WEC staff found that the previous language for photo ID upload was confusing and that voters were looking for absolute confirmation their request has been received by the clerk. To address these issues, staff have simplified and improved the instructions that accompany photo ID upload.
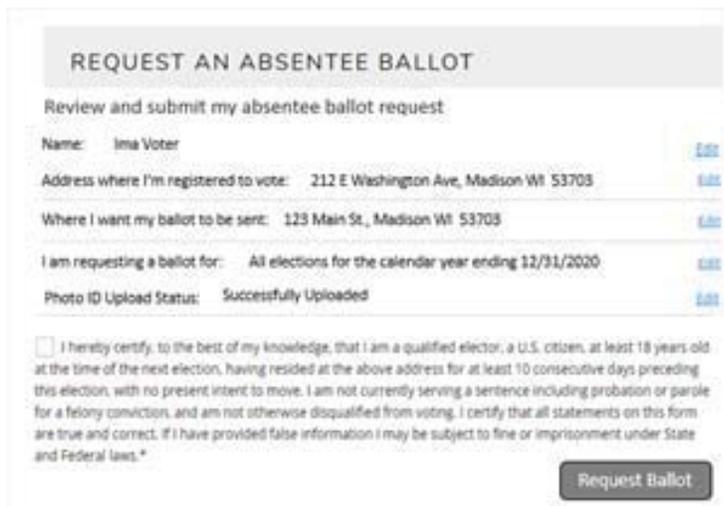
Staff also added a new step to summarize and provide the voter a final review of the information to be submitted along with their absentee ballot request, such as mailing address information. Voters are also encouraged to provide phone number or email information so that a clerk may quickly follow up on any issue with the request or ballot.

Finally, the voter's final screen in the process provides a progress bar that displays clear confirmation they are in the submission step and what additional steps they should expect through the ballot's lifecycle. The previous four step tracker was replaced by a more detailed and flexible six step tracking bar.

Old Tracker:

Thank you for successfully submitting your absentee ballot request. The request has been submitted to your municipal clerk for review, and you will receive a ballot for the election(s) you selected.

Absentee Tracking Information:

Request an absentee ballot	Ballot request received Apr 28, 2020	Absentee ballot mailed to me	My completed ballot was received

You can get more information about your absentee ballot request and view your other voting activity by visiting My Voter Information.

If you need to **change** or **cancel** your request, please contact your municipal clerk.

New Tracker:

Absentee request submitted June 3, 2020	Absentee request approved June 4, 2020	Absentee Ballot in process June 5, 2020	Absentee Ballot sent June 7, 2020	Absentee Ballot anticipated delivery June 10, 2020	Completed absentee ballot received by clerk June 14, 2020

Data presented in the tracker can also now alert voters in the event a problem is detected with their application or ballot. For example, in the previous tracking system, a request without photo ID would appear to the voter as if a request were never submitted or received. The new system allows variable messaging to alert a voter if their request was submitted by not approved by the clerk. The new tracking bar also includes variable date fields that draw information directly from USPS reporting based on the ballot's intelligent mail bar code, including anticipated delivery information. This code (shown at the arrow below) allows the USPS to track individual mail pieces in the postal system.

Sample 3.875 inches x 8.875 inches Business Reply Mail Envelope (Exclusion zone is shown in gray.)

NOT TO SCALE
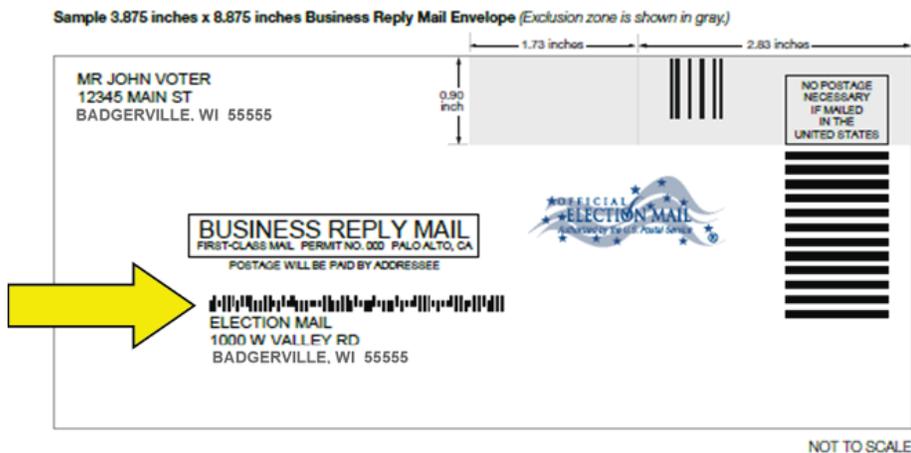
Staff also addressed the issue of the burdensome data entry required for clerks to manually enter in absentee ballot requests with photo IDs submitted through MyVote. Requests submitted through MyVote now generate a pending record in the voter registration system. Clerks still receive an email notification that a new request has been submitted, but now can simply log into the system to review the details of the request and approve or decline the request based on the validity of photo ID.

Since implementation on June 15, WEC staff have received very positive feedback from clerks on the reduction in required data entry for absentee ballot requests. Staff hope to further improve the process by reducing the image size of photo IDs so that clerks do not need to scroll through a photo for adequate review. Clerks and voter groups have also praised the improvements to the absentee request process being more user-friendly. For the remaining elections, staff and clerks will direct voters to use the updated online process, especially highlighting the ease of use of the photo ID upload step when accessed through a smart phone.

Information for Voters: Staff have also expanded the volume of information available to voters, paying special attention to several topics that proved critical in April. Voters new to absentee voting, and voting in general, found the array of deadlines to consider confusing, even before court orders caused deadlines to change with little notice. While the information was available on the agency website, the MyVote Wisconsin website is more familiar and user-friendly destination for many voters.

The MyVote site now contains relevant voter deadlines in one place, covering Voter Registration and Absentee Voting:

> **Voter Registration - Deadlines for the November 3, 2020 General Election**
> Voters can register in the following ways. All voters must provide a Proof of Residence document when registering to vote by mail, in-person in the clerk's office, or at the polls on Election Day.

October 14, 2020 - *Deadline to Register by Mail* - Your voter registration form, along with proof of residence must be postmarked to your municipal clerk no later than October 14, 2020. Find your Municipal Clerk's Contact Information here.

October 14, 2020 - *Deadline to Register to vote online.* - Voters who are able to match their name, date of birth, Wisconsin Driver License or State ID number, and address with the Wisconsin DMV can register to vote online through October 14, 2020.

October 30, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m. - *Deadline to Register in Your Municipal Clerk's Office* - Voters may register in-person in their municipal clerk's office during the clerk's business hours until 5:00 p.m. on October 30, 2020. Find your Municipal Clerk's Contact Information here.

November 3, 2020 from 7:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. - *Register to Vote at Your Polling Place* - Voters can register to vote at their polling place on Election Day, November 3, 2020. Find your Polling Place here.

> **Absentee Voting- Deadlines for the November 3, 2020 General Election**
> All voters in Wisconsin can request an absentee ballot be mailed to them for any reason. Voters must be registered before they can request an absentee ballot. Voters may request their absentee ballot in writing. To request an absentee ballot on MyVote.wi.gov click here. You must provide a photo ID with your absentee ballot request, more information on photo ID can be found here.

October 29, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m. - *Deadline to Request an Absentee Ballot - Regular and Permanent Overseas Voters* - If you are a regular or a Permanent Overseas Voter, your absentee ballot request must be received by your municipal clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 29, 2020.

October 30, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m. - *Deadline to Request an Absentee Ballot-Indefinitely Confined* - If a voter is indefinitely confined, your absentee ballot request must be received by your municipal clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 30, 2020.

October 20, 2020, possibly through November 1, 2020 - *Deadline for In-Person Absentee* - Voters can possibly request and vote an absentee ballot in-person in their municipal clerk's office through November 1, 2020. **Office hours vary by municipality**. Some municipal offices may not offer additional in-person absentee hours. Please contact your municipal clerk for absentee voting hours.

November 3, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m. - *Deadline for Hospitalized Voters* - Voters who are in a hospital may request a ballot be brought to them by an appointed agent if they are hospitalized in the 7 days preceding the election. Hospitalized electors may request an absentee ballot between October 27, 2020 and November 3, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

November 3, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m. - *Deadline to Request an Absentee Ballot-Military* - If you are a voter in the military, your absentee ballot request must be received by your municipal clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on November 3, 2020.

November 3, 2020 @ 8:00 p.m. - *Deadline to Return Absentee Ballot* - If you have already received an absentee ballot, you must return your absentee ballot by mail or delivery to your municipal clerk. Your ballot must be received by your municipal clerk no later than 8:00 p.m on Election Day November 3, 2020.

Staff also created an information page for voters interested in volunteering as a poll worker. As with voter deadlines, the information is available on the agency website but perhaps not as easy to find as it is on MyVote. The poll worker widget on the MyVote website generates an email to the voter's municipal clerk. A link to this page is also an important recruitment tool as clerks as well as groups who are undertaking efforts to recruit poll workers can share this link. WEC staff has also built a poll worker recruitment tool into the online voter registration function that allows voters to indicate that they are interested in becoming a poll worker. Municipal clerks can then generate a report from the statewide voter registration system that shows who has indicated interest in serving.

How to Become a Poll Worker

Wisconsin is looking for citizens to serve as poll workers for the August 11, 2020 and November 3, 2020 elections. Many of our veteran poll workers have to sit this one out, so we need younger citizens to step up! Due to the COVID-19 pandemic many Wisconsin cities, towns and villages are looking for extra volunteers to assist with running the election.

If you are interested, find your clerk by searching using your address here: https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/MyMunicipalClerk. Just click on their email address to send them a message with "Poll Worker Applicant" in the subject line with a few words about your interest and your contact information!

To ensure continuity of service for voters, the agency provides official, accurate address and polling place data to the Voter Information Project (VIP) prior to each election. This is to ensure other look up tools (such as Google) have accurate, official data and are not relying on another addressing data set. This also ensures that official polling place and ballot data is available on Get to the Polls, which is a backup to MyVote and part of WEC's contingency plan. At many scheduled times prior to the election, the Commission staff will take a back-up of all polling place information necessary in the address lookup process and save to a temporary database for VIP. If the searches fail on the main pathway for any reason, the staff redirect website requests to the temporary, static database.

Other Preparations: Commission staff plans for MyVote between now and November will be focused on minor changes based on feedback on how the site performed for the August Partisan Primary and other informational needs. The following updates are currently in the programming/testing phase and will be deployed to MyVote late August/early September:

- Adding additional paths on the MyVote home page where voters can access ballot tracking information.
- Adding general information about absentee ballot return requirements, options, and deadlines to the tracking page.
- Adding general information about anticipated outgoing mail timeframes so voters can recognize abnormal delays and contact their clerk.
- Adding information to the absentee tracking page that outlines voter's options and timelines for cancellations ballots and changing their method of voting. For example, state law says that voters who have returned their ballot are not eligible to cancel their absentee ballot and instead receive a ballot at the polls on election day. This information will be static and will be provided to voters in relevant areas of the site.

In addition, the following updates are currently in the planning stages, with a planned deployment in advance of the initial absentee ballot fulfillment deadline of September 17, 2020:

-Adding more detailed information regarding ballot return options and absentee process, accessible from the MyVote home page. Providing a location on the MyVote Wisconsin site where voters can quickly access information and allowing for quick updates by commission staff.
-Adding municipal clerk webpage URLs to clerk contact information, where applicable, in support of providing up-to-date resources for voters in search of municipality-specific information and to reduce unnecessary clerk contacts.

Commission staff will continue to monitor all functions of the MyVote Wisconsin website for impacts from any deployed updates and respond accordingly as we approach the November General Election.

Section 4:
Badger Books Electronic Poll Books

BADGER BOOKS ELECTRONIC POLL BOOKS

Program Update: Badger Books are Wisconsin's electronic poll books, developed and maintained by the WEC IT staff. These poll books integrate datasets directly into the statewide voter registration system, ensuring seamless data consistency, voter list security, and increased efficiency for both voters and election officials. Badger Books are a system that is a statutorily voluntary option for municipal clerks. The software was developed by the WEC and is provided to clerks free of cost, municipalities then then purchase the commercial-off-the-shelf hardware to deploy the system for their voters. The Badger Book program was launched in 2017 and has experienced steady growth in jurisdictions opting into use. After much preparation and training, 53 new municipalities implemented Badger Books in 2020, bringing the total number of municipal owners that used the technology from 17 to 70. In early January, which was the last time numbers were compiled, there were 567,399 registered voters in the 76 municipalities using Badger Books. As of the time of this writing, that number has grown to 589,351 registered voters and is expected to grow further in advance of the November General Election.

While transition and new technology are inevitably coupled with growing pains and steep learning curves for clerks and poll workers, the overall the implementation was successful. The new technology was well received by both the clerks and voters. Preparation for all elections this year was unexpectedly affected by the worldwide pandemic, and most of the Badger Book municipalities used the devices while implementing new guidelines for social distancing and disinfecting screens between voters.

In advance of the August 11 Partisan Primary, the Badger Book team spent several weeks developing, testing, and assisting communities with implementation of a software update deployed via the statewide voter registration system. This update featured improvements to the workflow used to process absentee ballots, enhancements to the search functionality used to find voters on the poll list, and minor changes to the voter registration workflow made necessary by the recent 7th Circuit Court of Appeals decision.

Staff preparation ahead of the August primary included pre-election meetings with the clerks, Election Day troubleshooting, and coordination of post-election data uploads. Staff also collected extensive feedback about Badger Book performance. Feedback from clerks, poll workers, and voters is crucial to the success of this program and the feedback received in the hours and days after an election is always the most useful. Staff also worked with individual municipalities to troubleshoot issues with the issuance of voter numbers by providing additional training on how the system's functionality for recording participation by absentee ballot is paired with the in-person election day functionality. These preparations and training to account for the new influx of by-mail absentees will better posture the Badger Books for use in November when many ballots may be again returned by mail or returned to polling places on election day. Staff have been compiling this feedback and will rely on it heavily to ensure Badger Book users are as prepared as possible for the November General Election.

As with the most recent election, a minor software update is expected in advance of the General Election. This update will offer additional improvements to the user interface and functionality of the workflow used by election officials processing absentee ballots, but pending additional user feedback, will also incorporate any other changes that will help ensure the successful administration of a major election event.

New municipalities continue to express interest in onboarding into the program, and as in prior years, it is our intention to provide a purchasing window following the General Election. WEC determined in late 2019 that it would be irresponsible and high risk to onboard additional municipalities into the Badger Book program during the busy 2020 election cycle. Therefore, during this time, interested parties will have the opportunity to purchase hardware with an expected implementation in early 2021.
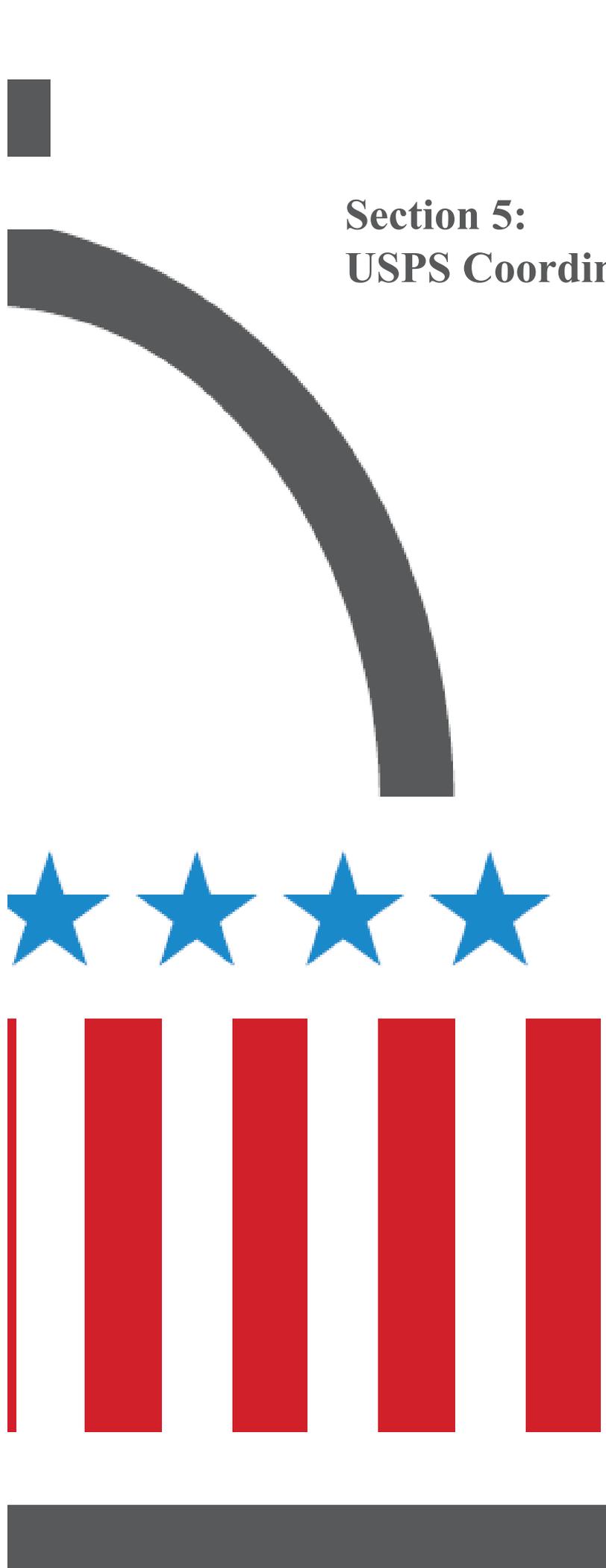
Section 5:
USPS Coordination

USPS COORDINATION

Introduction: Throughout the spring of 2020, coordination between the WEC and USPS increased in parallel with increasing demand for absentee voting. While Commission staff have long had contacts with USPS officials, the COVID-19 pandemic has led both agencies to increase their focus on the movement of ballots through the mail. As noted in the April 2020 Absentee Voting Report, absentee by mail historically constitutes just 6% of ballots cast in Wisconsin. Since the pandemic struck, Wisconsin voters have cast over 60% of their ballots by mail.

The USPS organizational structure divides the nation into large "Areas" that are further divided into smaller "Districts."

Fig. 1 USPS Postal Areas and the Number of Districts in Each Area
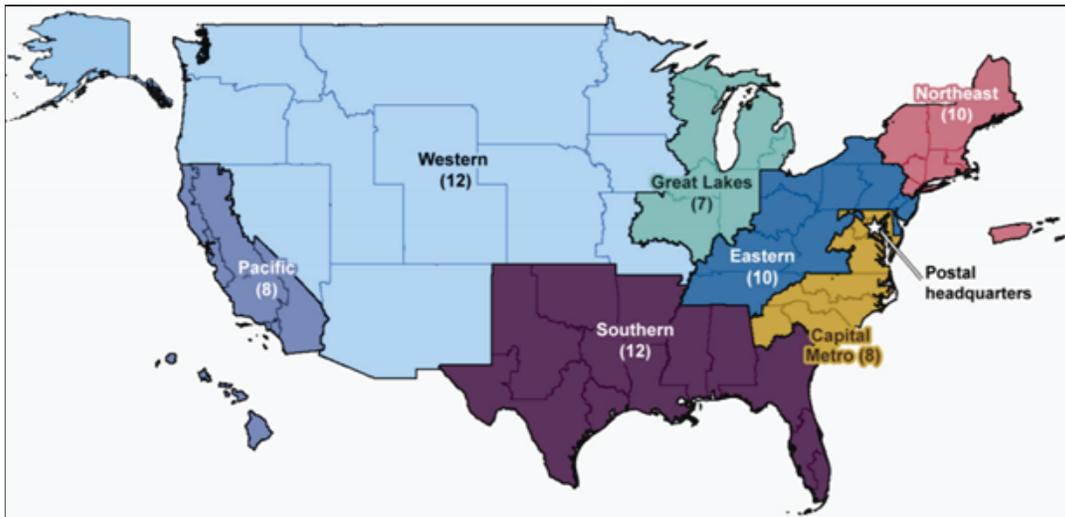
Wisconsin is one of a handful of states that straddles an Area boundary, meaning that Wisconsin is serviced by two separate USPS Areas and Districts. Voters in the eastern two-thirds of the state are part of the Great Lakes Area, Lakeland District. Voters in the western third of the state are in the Western Area, Northland District. This split means that USPS officials familiarize themselves with the election laws in multiple jurisdictions and elections officials may work with separate USPS leaders. The division has not produced any issues, as coordination between districts is regular and well established.

During the April 2020 election, Commission staff and USPS officials from both districts agreed to establish weekly coordination meetings. These meetings have proven beneficial, and thus popular, at both organizations. Representatives from the USPS have included managers from the Headquarters, Area, and District levels, as well as mail design specialists and other technical experts where appropriate. Lakeland District staff host the meetings and coordinate the attendance of other USPS representatives. Elections personnel that regularly participate include a cross-section of management, technical, and training staff. Elections representation is generally coordinated by the Technology Director or IT Project Manager.

Fig. 2 USPS Districts in Wisconsin

The coordination meetings between the USPS and WEC contributed to the development of many programs through the late spring and early summer of 2020. USPS staff helped Commission staff develop and deploy Intelligent Mail Barcodes, configure the agency's Business Customer Gateway, acquire Business Reply Permits, improve existing mailings, troubleshoot reported issues, and reply to questions from the public. The assistance of USPS staff was essential to the rapid development of these projects. Without USPS coordination, it would not have been possible to introduce IMB ballot tracking prior to the November election.

More recently, the USPS introduced three weekly teleconferences for municipal and county election officials. These open question and answer sessions allow clerks to receive information directly from USPS election coordinators and management. The calls are hosted by the Lakeland District, but all Wisconsin clerks are welcome to join the meetings. As with the WEC Coordination meetings, the Clerk Q&A teleconferences are scheduled through the November General Election.

Finally, the WEC and USPS will continue working to provide clerks guidance to better understand the postal system and to improve coordination with local postal officials. Some essential points to reinforce soon include the following:

-While first class mail typically delivers within 1-3 business days, the round trip for an absentee ballot generally takes 5-7 days – if the voter promptly returns their ballot.

-Clerks can and should coordinate with their local postmaster when ballots are coming and going.

-Ballots that remain with the local post office are not tracked by the USPS and will not display delivery data on MyVote Wisconsin.

-Clerks should use USPS approved envelope designs and labels to avoid processing problems.

-Absentee ballots should receive a special fluorescent ID tag for easy identification during postal processing (example shown at right).

Section 6:
Planning Efforts of
Milwaukee, Madison & Green Bay

Municipal Planning: Unlike most states, Wisconsin administers elections at the municipal level rather than at the county level. What this means is that each of Wisconsin's cities, towns, and villages has a local election official who, by state law, is responsible for voter registration, absentee balloting, establishing polling places, training poll workers, and tallying and certifying results. Wisconsin also has 72 county election officials who prepare, print, and distribute ballots and who post unofficial election night results to their websites. Some counties may also assist their municipalities in other ways by contracting with them to provide voting equipment programing and registration/absentee data entry services. By law, the state of Wisconsin Elections Commission provides training, manuals, forms, and technology for local election officials. WEC also develops and maintains the statewide voter registration system which in turn allows voters to interact with their official voter record, maintained by their municipal clerk, through the myvote.wi.gov website.

WEC does not have statutory authority over how municipalities conduct elections. Each municipality is responsible for adhering to the election laws established by the legislature. Some state statutes establish very specific guidelines, such as when and where a voter can register to vote, while other statutes leave decisions like how many polling places to establish entirely in the hands of each municipal clerk and their governing body. The WEC views each of Wisconsin's 1,922 local election officials as partners in administering elections. WEC does not have the authority to approve or request municipal election plans, but it will work with municipal partners to provide guidance, to alert jurisdictions if it believes election laws are not being followed, and to resolve disputes and complaints.

As part of planning efforts for the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election, WEC staff asked Wisconsin's three largest municipalities, Milwaukee, Madison, and Green Bay, to provide a plan outlining their preparations. Each municipality was asked the following questions, their responses to these questions and other supporting documents are included as Appendix A, B, and C, respectively, to this report. The questions were as follows:

The questions were as follows:

1) Please provide a detailed narrative on any changes your municipality is making to absentee by mail, including answers to the following questions:

a. What measures are being adopted to ensure ballots are sent in accordance with statutory timelines? This includes fulfilling the deadline of sending ballots by the 47th day prior to the election and then filling subsequent requests within 24 hours.

b. What internal processes or chain of custody procedures are in place to ensure all ballots requested by voters are issued? Please describe any third-party mailing vendors involved in the process. If there are not vendors, please describe the process from the time a request is received in your office until the time that a ballot hits the mail stream.

c. What measures are being taken to identify previous issues with mail vendors and to implement a fix to address issues?

d. If a problem is identified (voters not receiving their ballots, ballots not tracking) what will be done to identify the issue and the ensure it is not a result of an internal workflow error?

e. How is your municipality coordinating with the USPS ahead of November?

f. Where will your municipality voters be able to drop off their absentee ballots on election day?

g. Will your municipality voters be able to drop off their absentee ballots at polling places on election day? What will be the process for getting those ballots to central count?

h. Will there be drop boxes or other drop off opportunities for voters?

i. What steps has your municipality taken to tell voters about absentee opportunities, requirements, and deadlines?

2) Please provide a detailed narrative on your municipality's plans for in-person absentee ahead of the November Election, including answers to the following questions:

a. What dates and hours will in-person absentee be offered?
b. How many locations will be offered?
c. Will there be drive-thru, curbside, or drop off opportunities available?
d. Will there be any drive-thru or alternative options available?

3) Please provide a detailed narrative on your municipality's plan for in-person polling places on Election Day, November 3, including answers to the following questions:

a. How many polling places will your municipality have on November 3?
b. What changes were made to polling locations to ensure social distancing can be maintained or to accommodate other CDC recommendations?
c. How was the decision reached on how many polling places your municipality will have in November?
d. What considerations were weighed in terms of number of polling places and locations?
e. Will there be any drive thru or alternative methods available?
f. What line management or mitigation efforts will be used at your polling places to avoid long wait times for voters?
g. What poll worker recruitment efforts is your municipality embarking in to prepare for November? What contingency plans does your municipality have for a lack or poll workers on election day or emergency needs?

4) Please provide a detailed narrative on preparations your municipality is making to Central Count ahead of November 3, including answers to the following questions:
a. What process/personnel changes are being made?
b. What security measure are in place or being changed at central count to ensure that only authorized personnel have access to the ballot.
c. What changes are being made to accommodate larger numbers of absentee ballots being returned on election day? With the process change because of the larger volume of absentees that are likely to be returned on election day?

5) Please provide a detailed narrative on preparations your municipality is making for November 3, including answers to the following questions:

a. Communications plans? How will your municipality communicate their preparation efforts to the public? How will issues on election day, during absentee, etc. be communicated?
b. What changes have been made to MEC staff training? Chief inspector or election inspector training?
c. How will Your municipality communicate and changes to poll locations? To voter? To the state and other parties who rely on the data to populate polling place look up tools?
d. Given the larger volume of absentee ballots, will you be able to process all your absentee ballots on election night? If you believe tallying will extend beyond election night, what is you plan for processing absentees that may span over multiple days?

Section 7:
Accessibility Program Update

ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM UPDATES

Program Preperations: The Wisconsin Elections Commission has historically reviewed polling places on elections to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and to ensure polling places are accessible to all voters. The Commission approved the 2020 staff plan that recommended conducting onsite reviews for each of the four statewide elections in Wisconsin scheduled for this year. Accessible polling place reviews for the August Partisan Primary were not able to be conducted due to COVID-19 restrictions. Staff anticipates that the polling place review program will also be suspended for the November General election due to the same concerns. The polling place accessibility review program relies on volunteers from the WEC Accessibility Advisory Committee as well as temporary staff to serve as auditors around the state. This coupled with prohibitions on travel for non-essential state business means accessible polling place efforts for the November General Election will need to take a different form than in-person audits. The Commission and staff were also concerned that the onsite reviews would lead to additional traffic and congestion at visited polling places on election day when the public health guidance we have developed for our local election officials identifies the importance of limited face-to-face interactions and social distancing standards that are much easier to enforce with fewer people in the voting area.

WEC will continue to emphasize accessibility for the remainder of 2020 through the promotion of the agency's accessible voting supply program, training developed for and provided to local election officials and poll workers and by meeting with our Accessibility Advisory Committee. WEC provides an accessible polling place self-assessment tool to clerks that they can use to analyze the needs and compliance of their polling locations. To that end, WEC also maintains an accessibility supply program where local election officials can request supplies to address some issues they may identify in their assessment or to improve the overall accessibility of their polling locations. Local election officials have been encouraged to conduct updated assessments of their polling places and identify any areas for improvement.

WEC staff regularly provides local election officials with accessibility-related supplies such as accessible parking signage, wireless doorbells for curbside voting and page magnifiers and signature guides for use by voters and staff has expanded the supply program ahead of the November election. New curbside voting signs were ordered: one without a phone number and one with a box for a clerk to provide a phone number a voter could use to alert poll workers that they would like to vote curbside. Other supplies such as wireless doorbells and traffic cones were distributed upon request to support additional accessible voting options, such as curbside and drive up voting, that follow public health procedures developed by our staff in conjunction with guidance from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Additionally, many supplies were replenished in June to prepare for the August election. Between June and August, clerks ordered more than 1,429 supplies between 85 municipalities, including a few larger cities, including the City of Green Bay. These orders included many curbside sign requests: 83 curbside signs with a spot to put a phone number and 99 curbside signs without a phone number. Due to the increase in orders, most of the accessibility supplies are depleted. WEC staff are in the process of making a large order of around 2,000 supplies for roughly $18,000 to prepare for November.

Another component of the agency's accessible voting program is the Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Committee consists of representatives from twelve disability and aging advocacy groups. Agency staff meet regularly with this group and they provide feedback regarding initiatives such as voting equipment approval, poll worker training and public outreach efforts. Members of the committee also use resources developed in conjunction with WEC to conduct voter outreach and education events prior to each election. The next Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting will take place sometime in late September or early October to discuss major initiatives and public outreach and training partnerships related to the November election.

The Polling Place Accessibility Survey self-assessment tool was also updated in collaboration with the agency's Accessibility Advisory Committee. This survey is required of every clerk who is moving or opening a polling location that has not been used in the past. The new survey is much shorter (11 pages compared to the previous 26 pages) and includes the supply order form to make it convenient for clerks to make their polling places accessible.

The survey consists of questions designed to ensure compliance with ADA standards throughout the voters experience at the facility and begins in the parking area and continues to the accessible entrance and ends in the voting area with a review of the room set up and accessible voting equipment. Many municipalities have moved polling locations to facilities with larger voting areas that can better accommodate social distancing standards. Local elections officials now have a comprehensive survey tool that is more efficient when conducting site surveys during the decision-making process. This updated survey is available here: https://elections.wi.gov/clerks/guidance/accessibility/new-polling-place.

WEC staff have also provided several updated training resources that focus on accessible voting issues prior to the fall 2020 election cycle and have several other documents and training presentations planned for release prior to the November General Election. Prior to the August election, clerks received a memo regarding top accessibility considerations with COVID-19 (https://elections.wi.gov/node/6992). This document includes reminders of the common accessible voting complaints heard from the April and May elections, including waiting in long lines, cleaning accessible voting equipment, and wearing a face covering while communicating to someone who is deaf or hard of hearing.

On September 30 WEC staff is hosting a Polling Place Set-Up Webinar that will provide suggestions for accessible polling place set up and feature local speakers from the accessibility advocacy community. These speakers will be able to highlight topics related to accessible voting such as curbside voting, the importance of accessible voting equipment, and appropriate training for poll workers about accessible voting and etiquette when interacting with voters with disabilities. These speakers will also have an opportunity to highlight their organizations that promote accessibility.

Staff also developed outreach and informational materials to assist nursing home and care facility administrators and staff with voting-related questions from residents. The Commission suspended the Special Voting Deputy program for the remainder of the 2020 election cycle which requires agents from the clerk's office to conduct absentee voting in nursing homes and qualified care facilities prior to each election. All residents in these facilities will now be mailed absentee ballots for the November General Election and staff has prepared a reference document for facility staff that outlines voting procedures and provides ballot return options. Staff also created a template letter for clerks to use to communicate absentee voting information and deadlines with care facility administrators. These materials will be updated for November, but the Partisan Primary versions can be found here: https://elections.wi.gov/node/6957.

The WEC received several accessibility complaints from the August Partisan Primary. These complaints included election officials resisting access for voters who refused to wear a mask and voters with disabilities who were uncomfortable voting in polling places where election officials and/or voters were not wearing masks. There was also a complaint about accessible voting equipment not being offered to voters due to a lack of sanitization procedures and a few complaints about the difficulty of curbside voting. Staff plan to continue to incorporate these topics into future webinars and training materials.

Section 8:
Election Sanitation Supplies & PPE

Program Update: On May 20, 2020, the Commission directed Commission staff to procure critical cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) in support of the upcoming statewide elections in August and November. The Commission allocated $500,000 of federal CARES Act grant funds to be used to procure supplies and PPE on the behalf of local jurisdictions. WEC staff also worked to procure and distribute supplies for November well in advance. This was to mitigate concerns over potential shortages in the supply chain that may occur closer to the election when all 50 states are competing for resources. To frame the need and use of PPE and sanitation supplies, a polling place public health checklist was developed by WEC in coordination with DHS officials ahead of the April election. This checklist incorporates public health practices into each aspect of the polling place process. For example, the checklist prescribes that each voter be offered sanitizer before approaching the poll book table and again upon casting their ballot. This checklist allows clerks to forecast the supplies they will need to incorporate public health guidance into their election procedures. The checklist was updated for the August 11 election, and will again be updated prior to November 3 to incorporate the most current guidance.

Then, a survey of local election officials was conducted in June asking clerks to indicate their need for supplies for both the August 11 and November 3 elections. Clerks were instructed to plan for their needs for both election day, in-person absentee, and other processes such as absentee ballot processing at central count. WEC staff then used the results of this survey to place orders for supplies on the behalf of local election officials. Commission staff worked with county clerks to ensure all municipalities were able to request supplies, and to arrange regional distribution. County clerks also helped WEC to analyze the request to ensure that there were no gaps or jurisdictions who inadvertently requested fewer supplies than were recommended. From there, Commission staff submitted a request for assistance to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and Department of Health Services (DHS).

Ultimately, WEC and its SEOC partners were able to fulfill all supply requests for both the August and November elections and to distribute core supplies for both elections to election jurisdictions in July. Much like the Spring Election and Presidential Preference Primary in April, the state procurement team again encountered a nationwide shortage of sanitation supplies and PPE, but during this iteration there was more time to adapt. The incredible work of the SEOC/DHS warehouse staff and the National Guard allowed for the delivery of the most critical supplies on Friday, July 24. This critical shipment included the full August and November requested supply of surface disinfectant, hand sanitizer, and masks, along with updated social distancing and public health signs, and an elections public health checklist for each polling place. With the support of the Civil Air Patrol, delivery of these specific supplies to county clerk's offices was completed by July 31 and then attention was directed to the partial orders of additional supplies. Due to the unpredictable and delayed delivery of these supplemental supplies, Commission staff contracted with a trucking company to help support the Civil Air Patrol's delivery schedule. The delivery of supplemental supplies procured in support of the Partisan Primary was concluded August 4, apart from gloves, which did not arrive to the warehouse until the Monday before the election. Gloves are not recommended by the CDC or DHS for elections, but some clerks requested them, noting it would increase the comfort of some of their poll workers.

On August 19, Commission staff held a November planning meeting with County Clerks to again request their support in surveying the inventory of critical cleaning supplies ahead of the November election. A follow up survey was sent to local election officials in August asking them to take stock of supplies remaining for November and to submit any additional requests by early September. As the other portion of originally requested supplies remains stored in the warehouse, Commission staff will submit a request for assistance to the SEOC for the purchase of any supplemental supplies requested but not currently in stock. Staff will also continue efforts with the warehouse staff and National Guard representatives to prepare the remaining supplies for doorstep delivery to county clerk's offices. In addition to these supplies, the SEOC will accept a delivery of hand sanitizer donated by Anheuser Busch. The delivery of the balance of supplies is expected to begin by the beginning of October. WEC and SEOC partners also remain ready to address any new needs that may arise. In addition to surveying clerks on their needs in accordance with the public health checklist, the survey also contains an open-ended question where clerks can indicate additional needs that may not be anticipated by the survey. At this time, clerks have not requested other supplies. Many have indicated that they have also used the CARES Act sub-grant funds provided by municipalities to buy more customized items for their polling places such as plexiglass barriers.

In total, the following supplies have been requested and subsequently distributed to municipalities in support of the August and November statewide elections. (This number does not include supplemental orders currently being collected):

- -125,000 procedural masks (More to be sent in September based on survey)
- -130,000 pairs of gloves (More to be sent in September based on survey)
- -10,000 liters of surface disinfectant (More to be sent in September based on survey)
- -300,000 ounces of hand sanitizer (More to be sent in September based on survey)
- -5,600 empty plastic spray bottles for the liquid disinfectant (More to be sent)
- -12,000 rolls of paper towel (More to be sent in September based on survey)
- -300,000 packages of multi-purpose alcohol wipes (More to be sent)
- -500,000 isopropyl wipes for use on voting equipment (More to be sent)
- -1 million ballpoint pens so that each voter would have their own to sign the poll book and mark their ballot (More to be sent)
- -6,000 rolls of painter's tape to mark floors to facilitate social distancing (More to be sent)
- -15,000   packets containing social distancing and public health signs (which will be reviewed with the aid of our partners)

This project was an enormous undertaking by Commission staff and was ultimately made possible through the generous assistance, adaptability, and dedication of the county and municipal clerks, the state procurement team, the SEOC/DHS warehouse staff, the Wisconsin National Guard, the Civil Air Patrol, and other partners. With their support, clerks have reported relief and gratitude to having ample reserves of critical cleaning supplies and PPE for in-person absentee voting, processing of absentees, election day, tallying, and canvassing well in advance of the November 3 election.

Section 9:
Coordination with the Wisconsin National Guard

Background: In conjunction with Commission staff's efforts to assist municipalities with poll worker recruitment, staff continued our relationship with the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and Wisconsin National Guard (WING) Elections Task Force. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Wisconsin, clerks continued to report that their normal pool of poll workers, many over the age of 60 and in the most vulnerable health demographic, were unable or unwilling to serve in the August Partisan Primary and anticipate being unable to serve in November. The WEC surveyed municipal clerks about their critical and serious needs for poll workers for the April 7 Presidential Preference statewide election, May 12 Special Election in the 7th Congressional District, and statewide August 11 Partisan Primary. As a result of each of those surveys, a resource need ticket was submitted to the SEOC requesting emergency assistance with staffing polling places. The surveys and ultimately the tickets resulted in the Governor ordering the use of the Wisconsin National Guard to support each election. WING requested assistance from service members in each of the 72 counties for each election. WING service members worked in standard poll worker roles, donning civilian clothes. To voters and fellow poll workers WING members would have been indistinguishable and were serving in their home communities alongside their neighbors, friends, and families.

Use in the August 11 Statewide Election: Using the WING in three previous election has provided valuable data to structure an approach for the November 3 Presidential Election. One of the most valuable data points for planning is the August 11 statewide election. The November 3 election in many ways is a pair with the August 11 primary, in terms of polling place planning. While voter turnout is much lower in August than it is in November, a similar number of polling places are utilized. Wisconsin state statute establishes a minimum number of poll workers required at each site. In relation to the August 11 statewide primary, WEC began surveying clerks on their poll worker needs in June. The survey information was then provided regularly to the SEOC as part of the ticket. Municipalities' needs for poll workers shifted daily, with significant shifts in the number of poll workers requested occurring in the days and hours before the election. On August 5, 2020, Governor Tony Evers issued a press release announcing the mobilization of Wisconsin National Guard to support the August election. WEC staff continued to work with municipal and county clerks, the SEOC, and WING to adjust the number of service members needed. Many municipalities reported last minute changes and cancellations. Some jurisdictions continued to recruit new poll workers and were able to reduce their requests for service members in the days prior. The final adjustments resulted in the deployment of 705 National Guard Service Members in support of 40 counties, in141 municipalities, at approximately 660 polling places. This initial deployment included service members who were held in regional reserve in case they were needed in an emergency by a polling place on election day. By the end of the day, all service members, even those held in reserve, were used as poll workers.

The process to bring NGSM on duty spans three days after the initial recruitment efforts. The process used in August and in previous elections in on the Sunday before the election the service members begin initial intake including reporting to their station of duty undergo health screening. On Sunday afternoon Service Members completed online poll worker training created by the WEC. Training includes poll worker duties, voter registration, chief inspector training, and election public health training. On the Monday prior to the election, service members who are needed report to the municipality or county clerk's office where they will be assigned to complete polling place specific training and to assist with set up and pre-election tasks. On Tuesday, Election Day, WEC staff work closely at the State Emergency Operations Center, with the National Guard team, and with county clerks who help monitor and report the needs of municipalities on election day. Throughout election day, polling place shortages are managed and NGSM reallocated to ensure adequate staffing at polling locations across the state.

Commission staff and National Guard leadership have received numerous positive reports about the use of NGSM on election day and that the process was more thoughtful and seamless compared to April, despite not having much official notice. Only the Governor has the authority to activate the state's National Guard.

Once the order was issued, WING was able to provide the number of requested volunteers even with a few substantial last-minute requests. Municipal, county, and state election officials all wish to express their gratitude for the WING personnel who served their community in support of election day, and for the constant flexibility and adaptability of the WING planning team.

November Preparations: Communications are already underway between Commission staff and National Guard leadership as we approach the November General and Presidential Election. Commission staff met with County Clerks on August 19 to discuss critical cleaning supplies and PPE, in addition to the potential need for poll worker support in November. WEC submitted an initial ticket and request through the State Emergency Operations Center on August 21. The initial request is for approximately 1,100 WING service members. However, WEC will continue to update that number as clerks recruit poll workers through other means and become aware of emergency needs. WEC does not have a guarantee nor the authority to guarantee that the National Guard will be able to assist as poll workers in the November election. The ticket has been submitted and will be updated as new information becomes available. Ultimately the decision on whether this valuable state resource can be used to support elections rests in the hands of the Governor's Office. WEC will also continue to work with the SEOC and WING leadership to prepare for the possibility. The framework used in August will be used as a starting point to make improvements and preparation in the event WING service members are deployed to support the November 3 election.

Section 10:
Poll Worker Recruitment

POLLWORKER RECRUITMENT

Background: In Wisconsin, each of our 1,850 municipalities are responsible for recruiting, training, and supervising poll workers for each election. Each polling place is required to have at least three poll workers on duty during voting hours and poll workers must be at least 18-years old to serve. There are a variety of roles for poll workers to serve in on election day and they each have their own training and residency requirements. For example, each polling place is required to have a Chief Election Inspector who must be a resident of the municipality and is required to take more extensive training than regular poll workers who only have to be a resident of the county in which they serve and have fewer training requirements. Beginning with the 2020 Presidential Preference Primary and Spring Election in April, staff also promoted the use of election helpers' who can assist with enforcing COVID-19 related public health procedures, such as line management and sanitization of high traffic areas of the polling place, but do not have strict residency or training requirements. To support these efforts, WEC staff created training specific to this role that is available for ongoing use and is posted on the agency website here: https://vimeo.com/403878360.

There is an ongoing need for additional poll workers to staff Wisconsin polling places for the November General Election. Clerks have been provided with multiple recruitment ideas to increase their pool of poll workers prior to election day. Staff is aware that all these recruitment options will not be universally effective, so a variety of options has been collected through our contact with local election officials and provided as suggested options for all municipalities. The WEC is encouraging municipal clerks to reach out to local organizations to recruit poll workers for the November election. Staff plan to reissue an updated version of this guidance with the additional suggestions outline below. Additionally, multiple outreach tools have been created for clerks to use to aid their recruitment efforts. As stated in the previous section, there is no guarantee that the Governor will approve the request for National Guard assistance. If approved, it is likely that the National Guard would only be able to fill critical poll worker vacancies that prevent polling places from opening.

Recruitment Efforts. While municipal clerks are conducting recruitment efforts on the local level, WEC is also working with state partners to augment local efforts by publicizing the need for poll workers. WEC has posted resources and hosted webinars encouraging clerks to reach out to eligible poll workers in their communities. Clerks are encouraged to reach out to various organizations and groups to recruit poll workers including government organizations. Government entities, be it at the state, county or municipal level, often have the authority to shift the responsibilities of their employees on election day to serve as poll works while still offering them their standard pay and wages. WEC suggests that municipal clerks reach out to the following state entities in their area. WEC will continue to reach out to overarching government entities to augment the message. Suggestions include:

State employees: Every state agency must permit their employees to serve as an election official. In previous elections, the Wisconsin Department of Administration has sent an email to all state employees encouraging them to serve as poll workers. We anticipate these efforts to continue in advance of November. While most state offices are in Madison and Milwaukee, clerks report success in finding volunteers from other regional or satellite locations as well.

Local government employees: Each local governmental agency may permit its employees to serve as election officials. Local election officials have been encouraged to survey the availability of municipal and county employees to serve as poll workers. While chief inspectors must be qualified electors of the municipality, other election inspectors can come from anywhere in the county to serve at a polling location. WEC has encouraged county clerks to work with their county boards to encourage counties to form a pool of poll workers that can be deployed to municipalities in need. Some counties report finding success with this idea, others report that their counties are unwilling to participate.

Local elected or appointed officials: For example, the municipal or deputy clerk, town board trustees, city alders and county board supervisors, may also work as an election inspector as long as they are not a candidate on the ballot, which should not be an issue at a November election.

Any government employee who is eligible to serve as a poll worker will be allowed to do so without loss of fringe benefits or any other penalty for the entire 24-hour period of Election Day. The employee must provide the agency with at least seven days' notice of application for leave, and the municipal clerk shall verify appointment upon request. Wis. Stat. 7.33(3) and (4). The employee will tell their supervisor the amount of compensation received as an election official, which will be deducted from the employee's pay for the scheduled working hours during Election Day. Wis. Stat. 7.33(5). Alternatively, the employee may waive election inspector compensation so that their agency compensation is not adjusted.

WEC also encouraged municipal clerks to work with community organizations, school boards and students, as well as professional associations and private industry. Among the many suggestions, WEC staff has suggested to clerks that they reach out to the following organizations within their communities:

Civic, advocacy and professional organizations: Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, FFA, United Way, Disability Vote Coalition, etc.

Political parties: Local political parties may have members that are able to serve as election inspectors. The political parties are allowed under Wisconsin law to submit an election official list prior to the start of each two-year poll worker appointment term, but they can continue to send the clerk additional names if they have additional members willing to serve. If the party did not submit a list of poll workers, they are still able to suggest individuals to serve as unaffiliated poll workers.

Staff has also identified education organizations as potential sources for recruitment of additional staffing for election day. State allows high school students who have not yet turned 18 years old to serve as poll workers and other local educational institutions, such as colleges or universities, are also good sources for additional workers. A summary of these recommended recruitment options is as follows:

High School Students: Any pupil at least 16 years old with a 3.0 grade point average or the equivalent may serve as an election inspector at the polling place serving the pupil's residence with the written approval of their parent or guardian. A pupil at least 16 years old with less than a 3.0 grade point average may serve as an inspector with the written authorization of their parent or guardian and the written certification of their principal that the pupil has met any criteria established by the school board for service as an inspector.

College Students: Many college students in Wisconsin may be interested in working as a poll worker. Clerks have been advised to reach out to local community colleges, universities, and technical schools to find additional t poll workers, and clerks may be able to work with students and college or university administration and faculty to offer extra credit opportunities.

Teachers and School District Administrators: These staff, including university, college or technical college administrators and staff in any local area, may be a good way to recruit additional poll workers.

Professional organizations and local businesses are also recruitment options for additional poll workers as many of these institutions have community service programs. Here is a summary of several of the options identified for use by local election officials:

State Bar Association: Some professional organizations such as the State Bar of Wisconsin may give attorneys continuing education credits for their work as an election official.

Business Employees: All private employers must permit any employee to serve as an election inspector without loss of fringe benefits or seniority privileges earned for scheduled working hours while serving as an election inspector, but the employer is not required to pay wages for time missed while serving as an inspector. Wis. Stat.7.33(6). The employee must be appointed to be an inspector and must provide at least seven days' notice for leave, which must be granted for the entire 24-hour period of election day. Wis. Stat. 7.33(3).

Other Professional Organizations: Some communities have had success working with professional organizations for realtors, electricians, and other professions and have had success encouraging them to serve as poll workers as part of their organizations' community service or continuing education programs.

Additional Outreach Materials: In addition to suggesting groups that local election officials can reach out to recruit poll workers, WEC has also created tools to assist with poll worker recruitment. Below are links to existing poll worker recruitment materials staff has made available for use by clerks. Additional outreach materials will be created, as necessary.

Sample News Release for Poll Worker Recruitment (https://elections.wi.gov/node/6745)
This document is a sample news release that clerks are encouraged to use to put out the call for election inspectors. Clerks can customize it with their own name, or their mayor's, village president's, or town board chair s name, or whoever they think would be helpful in a public call to action.

Poll Worker Promotion on MyVote.Wi.Gov (https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/PollWorker)
Prior to each election, the Wisconsin Elections Commission updates this information to reflect the current election. This will refer voters to information on how to become a poll worker.

Election Worker and Volunteer Position Information (https://elections.wi.gov/node/6785)
Many polling places have different needs in 2020 than they have in the past. Polling Place Helpers typically did not exist prior to April 2020, but now are a necessity for many polling places. These helpers can help with sanitizing, line management, monitoring for curbside voting needs (not conducting curbside voting), and other additional tasks at the polling place. These individuals do not have to be from the county, and there are no formal requirements that they must statutorily meet. This document reviews the position descriptions of the Polling Place Helper, as well as the Election Inspector, Chief Election Inspector, Greeter, and Election Registration Official.

Adopt a Polling Place. Some municipalities have reported great success in creating an "adopt a polling place" program. This creates and opportunity for employer, community organization, etc. to get involved in their communities and often counts towards their community service activities. Participating groups provide the clerk with enough volunteers to staff their adopted polling place for election day and these programs help to ease the recruitment burden on local election officials.

When reaching out to these local organizations and voters, clerks should emphasize:

Compensation: Any poll worker is eligible to receive compensation for their time as a poll worker. Clerks may also choose to increase their pay rates (hazard pay) for poll workers as an additional plus to serving.
Public Health: Poll workers are ensuring that polling places are clean and safe for everyone while exercising their right to vote.
Civic Pride: Poll workers serve a critical role in our democracy and are ensuring that everyone can cast a ballot on Election Day.
Experience: Poll workers learn critical aspects of the polling place, including the voter registration process, state statutes, and customer service skills.
Access to PPE: All election officials are provided with masks, cleaning supplies, and hand sanitizer to protect themselves on Election Day.

It may be useful to consider using local leaders and elected officials to encourage voters to serve as poll workers.

The WEC and municipal clerks need help this November to ensure that polling places are adequately staffed. Adequate staffing ensures the process will run smoothly, that ballots can be tallied timely, and that other important tasks like social distancing is enforced. The State of Wisconsin Elections Commission encourages all eligible Wisconsinites to volunteer to be a poll worker by contacting their municipal clerk. Many communities will begin poll worker training in late September, so check now to learn more about this important opportunity to serve your community.

Section 11:
Security Preparations

Background: This section provides a high-level summary of the activities staff have undertaken and continues to undertake to ensure that Wisconsin is prepared to execute a secure, trustworthy, and successful election, even in the face of potential malicious cyber activity. Securing the integrity of elections against attack remains a top priority for the agency. While global pandemic election preparations have taken center stage in 2020, WEC remains committed to ensuring secure elections. Very important groundwork election cyber security has been laid over the last four years in Wisconsin elections. However, the threat landscape and necessary technological safeguards change daily. WEC continue to keep pace with those changes and remains a leader in the field of elections cybersecurity as we head into the November 3 election.

Security Partners: Lessons learned during the 2016 election cycle demonstrated a primary need to improve communication between local officials, the WEC, and state and federal partners who provide cybersecurity and intelligence information. Since 2016, the newly created Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has become a valuable partner for state and local election officials. CISA provides numerous services to the WEC, including threat intelligence, technical guidance, training, and both remote and in-person security assessments. In addition to coordination with CISA, Commission staff conduct weekly knowledge transfers with representatives from the Wisconsin Statewide Intelligence Center, the Wisconsin Department of Justice, the Department for Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Wisconsin's Department of Administration (DOA) Division of Enterprise Technology (DET) and other public and private partners. Staff also coordinates closely with Wisconsin's Cyber Response Teams (CRT), a joint effort between DOA and the Department of Military Affairs (DMA), to provide prompt incident response services to election officials across the state. In a new initiative, members of the CRT, including the WEC's security lead, have been trained to perform security assessments in the CISA model and, going forward, will be able to provide their own risk and vulnerability assessments for local jurisdictions.

The most obvious result of improved coordination can be seen on election day. In the 2018 General Election, staff from the DMA and DET took up temporary residence in WEC offices and secure chat rooms were created to share information within and between states. This allowed rapid communication and response to any incidents that arise. The same chat rooms were used in the 2020 Presidential Preference and Spring Election and will be used in the November General Election.

As a special project initiated in 2019, staff worked with partners from the Rock County Clerk's office, the Town of Fulton Municipal Clerk's office, Microsoft's Defending Democracy program and VotingWorks, an elections software company, to pilot a new voting software that offers voters the ability to confirm their ballot counted in the certified results. The intent of the product is to provide voters a method to verify their vote counted and to increase confidence in elections results. The pilot successfully ran on Election Day during the 2020 Spring Primary. Partners convened multiple times ahead of Election Day to train poll workers and certify the voting equipment for limited use in the Spring Primary.

Voters used VotingWorks equipment to make their selections and then received a printed copy to verify their choices were recorded correctly. Voters also received a second piece of paper that included a unique code that could be later entered into an online portal to verify their ballot was counted in the final total. While the election results were tabulated using the equipment which allowed the voter verification steps to occur, official elections results were obtained by hand counting the paper ballots. Staff believe participation in the pilot was a small investment that allowed Wisconsin's unique election statutes to be considered early in the development process. ElectionGuard could not be implemented in time for use in November, but staff are monitoring future development of that system and will continue to explore implementation and certification options.

Finally, staff have enrolled all clerks, commission staff, and commissioners in Rave Mobile Safety, a system that allows staff to rapidly communicate issues, legislative changes, and to receive updates from clerks. Rave has proved an invaluable tool in scenarios such as receiving reports from clerks that they were able to open polling places on time during the April election and disseminating notice of system maintenance.

Security Training: One of the largest and most visible security programs is the training that staff has provided or facilitated for local election officials. The WEC was the first state elections agency to create a permanent and flexible election security tabletop exercise program to raise awareness of potential security issues and create a space for local officials to work together to develop and test responses to those issues. These exercises were suspended in the face of the pandemic, but staff is now fielding the exercise in a virtual environment. This program, and other training initiatives, are discussed further in section C.15 Training Update and Schedule.

Staff has also worked closely with CISA to take part in and distribute federally produced trainings. This included participation in a national tabletop exercise on July 29 with federal agencies and representatives from other state election organizations, as well as an individualized tabletop exercise with Wisconsin-specific agencies, local election officials, and customized scenarios. Most recently, WEC and CISA recorded a joint webinar covering general election security topics as well as a deep dive into the specific threat of ransomware, how to prevent it, how to mitigate damage from it, and how to respond to an infection.

At the core of the clerk training program is the agency's online cybersecurity training modules. The WEC received national accolades in 2018 for the development of a cybersecurity awareness training system that is now required for access to the statewide voter registration system. These interactive modules cover password security, safe browsing, phishing, and other topics. Prior to the November election, staff intends to develop a module that will cover how to respond to an incident should one occur, including reminders on actions that can be taken ahead of time to mitigate the damage caused by incidents and make them less likely. The existing modules have received updates for new information and a better user experience over the past three years. Starting in 2021, additional updates will be made, and users will be required to recertify.

To reinforce training programs and answer questions, Commission staff have also provided election security presentations at multiple local conferences. These presentations included a series on security presented jointly with the Division of Enterprise Technology and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection at Wisconsin Towns Association meetings starting in late 2019 and continuing into the spring of 2020. These events reached over 2,000 town clerks and other local officials Staff also presented on the technical aspects of how elections are administered and how local IT departments can help secure elections to the Fall 2019 conference of the Government Information Processing Association of Wisconsin, which is an association of IT staff in county and municipal governments.

The WEC has also provided material support to locals in the form of grants for replacing outdated computers and acquiring essential security services. Those grants will be discussed in greater detail in C.12, but major achievements include the elimination of outdated operating systems among clerks that use the state's voter registration system, ensuring local governments have IT support available to them if they should need it, and improving the encryption used for displaying unofficial election night results.

Information Security: On a technical level, the WEC has implemented several programs designed to significantly improve security. The most visible of these is the implementation of multifactor authentication for the statewide voter registration system. This achievement, which included distributing thousands of physical tokens to local election officials statewide and running a massive training and education campaign, has ensured that even stealing a user's password is not sufficient to gain access to the system, and even control of a user's system would only provide limited access. This is because the tokens selected by the WEC supply a unique code on every use, and only supply that code when a button on the key is physically pressed by its owner. An attacker would therefore either need physical access to the key or be limited to spying on the user's session where they are more likely to be caught. WEC staff continues to expand the use of MFA in its applications. By the November election, staff will be using MFA to edit informational websites like https://elections.wi.gov and to access email when not on a state network.

Commission staff also implemented an endpoint testing tool that is available to all municipal and county clerks. The software monitors laptops and computers to ensure proper updates and patches are applied, identify users who should upgrade their operating system, and receive notifications of devices with potential infections or threats. Should local officials lose access to computer hardware because of a security incident, the WEC now has available emergency loaner hardware to ensure critical election functions can continue uninterrupted. These devices are configured, maintained, and secured by Commission staff. In the event of a crises the devices can be sent via next-day shipment to any community in Wisconsin.

Finally, Commission staff implemented internal changes in response to findings from risk and vulnerability assessments conducted by CISA. These changes include, for example, increasing internal monitoring and ensuring appropriate separation between privileged accounts. These improvements make it much harder, in the event an attacker can breach DET's external security, for that attacker to move within the network and cause damage. The WEC is currently working with CISA to conduct another remote penetration test and will implement further changes as needed to correct any findings ahead of the November election. Cybersecurity is task that is literally never complete.

Contingency Planning: In addition to preventing an attack and limiting the damage an attacker can cause, staff is also developing contingency plans for dealing with unforeseen circumstances. Staff previously worked with state partners to develop an offsite backup location where the WEC could relocate to in an emergency and conduct an election in the event the WEC offices were unavailable or services were interrupted. Portions of that plan turned out to be useful for facilitating remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff is also developing what has been termed the ' candlelight' plan. This plan outlines how staff can continue to provide essential services and ensure the election continues with integrity and security in the event of a major disaster where any or all the services the agency relies upon are unavailable. In essence, how the agency would oversee an election by candlelight. Staff considers this plan to be a vital component in ensuring that the public can trust in Wisconsin's election results, no matter what may happen.

Voting Equipment and Post-Election Audits: Agency staff have worked with each of the three voting equipment vendors who have systems certified for use in Wisconsin to approve and implement engineering change orders (ECOs) prior to the November General Election. Several of these changes were related to various components or parts of the systems going end-of-life, while others were focused on election security upgrades. In all, ten ECOs were processed by staff and approved by the Commission chair and agency Administrator. The Commission also approved several updated system versions for currently approved systems in 2019 after staff conducted testing and certification campaigns in preparation for the 2020 election cycle.

The WEC is required by state law to audit the performance of voting equipment used to record and tabulate votes after each General election. Staff have been preparing the 2020 version of the audit by revisiting the audit standards and procedures used in prior years. Wisconsin uses a fixed percentage audit where a predetermined percentage of reporting units, or wards, are randomly selected to participate in a hand count of all ballots tabulated on the voting equipment. The hand count audits are conducted by the municipal clerks and the hand count results are compared to the election night results tapes produced by the voting equipment. Any discrepancies between the two sets of totals must be reconciled before audit results are submitted to WEC for review. For 2018, each audit was required to be completed before the Commission certified the results of the election and staff are recommending the same timeline for the 2020 audit. The Commission will approve specific procedures and selection criteria during its September 1, 2020 meeting.

Staff are also recommending the continuation of the voluntary county canvass audit program. This program requires a hand count of randomly selected reporting units as part of the county canvass process. The purpose of these audits is to give boards of canvassers another tool to increase confidence in the results they are certifying. The Commission has incentivized participation in this voluntary program by offering reimbursement for the costs of conducting these audits and staff are recommending a continuation of these reimbursements for the November 2020 General Election.

Security Conclusion: For the last three years, the WEC has been working tirelessly to improve the security maturity of the entirety of Wisconsin's elections framework, down to the smallest towns. These improvements have been tested by several elections and dealt with some minor incidents at local levels. Thanks to the enormous effort and collaboration on the part of local clerks, WEC staff is confident that Wisconsin is prepared to provide its most secure presidential election to date and stands behind the integrity of its results.

Section 12:
Federal Grants and Local Subgrant Programs

Background: Federal grant funds have been vitally important to prepare both the State of Wisconsin and local election officials for the November 3, 2020 election. On January 17, 2020, the WEC was awarded with $7,818,581 of federal funds to "'improve the administration of elections for Federal office, including to enhance election technology and make election security improvements to the systems, equipment and processes used in federal elections." Wisconsin being a very decentralized election system, the Commission sought to provide access to those funds to both our counties and municipalities to increase federal election security for our state. Election participation, in part, depends on the public confidence in our election system and the security of our elections. Our state election security, including the integrity of our voter registration system, transmission of private voter data, accuracy and transmission of election results, and election officials' email accounts, are only as strong as the weakest link. The funds have been critical to both the state and Wisconsin's local election officials being able to make security improvements ahead of the November election. To strengthen our election security, $3,877,219.80 is now available to the counties and $1,214,400 available to the municipalities. In the 2019 fall season and early 2020 winter, the jurisdictions had previously received $823,700 in a similar election security subgrant program.

On March 28, 2020, the WEC was awarded with $7,332,471 of federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) funds. Again, the Commission sought to distribute these funds to municipalities to prepare for all our 2020 federal elections during the COVID-19 pandemic. The new challenges to municipalities brought on by the pandemic included the increased supplies and personnel needed to process and distribute increased requests for absentee ballots and to secure and provide safe environments for in-person absentee and election day voting. To ease some of the burden, the WEC has centralized the procurement and distribution of protective and sanitation equipment including gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectants, paper towels, pens, painters' tape for social distancing and public signage. Through the WEC CARES Subgrant program, the Commission has sought to distribute $4,144,320.20 of the federal CARES funds to municipalities so that they may meet the challenges brought on by the pandemic as they administer the 2020 federal elections.

For all these subgrant programs, the WEC has retained the responsibility of the federally required state match of $1,563,716 for the Election Security grant and $1,466,494 for the CARES grant.

WEC CARES Subgrant for Municipalities: The WEC CARES Subgrant provides funds to municipalities to offset costs related to administrating the 2020 federal election during the COVID-19 pandemic. These costs may include additional absentee ballot supplies, printing, and postage, cleaning in-person absentee and election day polling locations and additional protective equipment including plexiglass, additional staffing for processing absentee ballot requests, cleaning, or directing the public, absentee ballot drop-box purchase and installation, additional leasing of space for voting and equipment necessary to confront the challenges of administrating elections during a pandemic.

On June 17, 2020, WEC released the WEC CARES Subgrant program for pandemic relief to our municipalities. That same day, 117 municipalities returned signed agreements. A total of 458 applied in June, 325 more in July, and 161 so far in August, with additional agreements being submitted every day. As of August 24, the WEC Financial Team has distributed $2,963,875.80 of the approved $4,114,320.20 to a total of 944 municipalities.

Upon receipt of the signed WEC CARES Agreement, a voucher is entered into the payment system then audited and approved. An email confirmation is then returned to the clerk with an individualized award letter and instructions to notify our office if payment is not received as expected (five days for payment via ACH, 10 days for payment via check).

The deadline for municipalities to return their signed agreement is September 1, 2020.

The next deadline for this subgrant is September 15, 2020 for the check-in expenditure report. The purpose of this deadline is to prepare municipalities for their final report due on December 1, 2020. Municipalities have begun to return their check-in expenditure report that is due September 15. As of August 18, we have received 58 check-in expenditure reports.

County Election Security Subgrant: The County Election Security Subgrant was designed to assist counties with improvement of their overall election security posture as they prepare for the remainder of the 2020 election year and head into future election cycles. These funds are specifically earmarked for assessment, remediation, and overall improvements to election security at the county level. The County Election Security Subgrant provides a maximum allocation of a base amount of $35,000 per county, plus $0.30 per eligible voter.

This subgrant required counties to submit individualized plans they would undertake to increase their security for federal elections. Counties must have two baseline security protocols in place, or if not in place, the subgrant application will include plans to implement the security protocols. Subgrant funds may be used to implement these protocols and should be included in the county's plan submitted to the Commission to request subgrant funds. WEC staff has been reviewing those plans and recommending levels of acceptance to the Commission.

On July 30, 2020, the Commission approved the Election Security Subgrant plans for 57 counties, totaling $3,001,380.14. Prior to sending out payments, WEC election specialists undertook the final review of the grant applications to ensure the use of these federal funds would be reasonable, necessary, and allocable. Some counties have been asked to provide further documentation. As of August 24, 2020, 50 counties have been sent payment, totaling $2,707,159.54.

On August 20, 2020, the Commission met to discuss and approve revised grant applications for Iron, Milwaukee, and Waushara counties, totaling $324,379.60. WEC staff continue to work with counties that are interested in applying for an application. All applications are due no later than September 15, 2020.

Municipality Election Security Subgrant: The Municipality Election Security Subgrant seeks to bring municipalities up to a baseline of security. The baseline includes (1) an adequate computer to use on federal elections preparation, administration, and reconciliation, (2) information technology support to help the municipality keep the computer secure, and (3) election security training for the municipality's election official. Depending on the specific needs of the municipality, funds are awarded for any or all those three deficiencies in the amounts, respectively, of $600, $500 and $100, with the maximum up to $1200. This same subgrant program was offered to both municipalities and counties in the fall of 2019 and early winter of 2020.

The second iteration, now only available to municipalities, had a soft release on August 6, 2020. The subgrant documents were posted to the Clerk Communications page on our website. On August 12, WEC staff mailed printed copies of the subgrant documents to municipalities with 1,000 or fewer registered voters and that had not received funds from the first iteration of this subgrant in the fall of 2019. Staff followed up that mailing with a notification email to those municipalities. As of August 17, four municipalities have applied for a total of $4,600, of which one municipality has been completely processed, and is receiving $1,100.

The deadline for municipalities to return their signed agreement is September 1, 2020.

Section 13:
Voter Outreach Preparations

VOTER OUTREACH PREPARATIONS

The Wisconsin Elections Commission is planning a robust public education program for the Fall 2020 election. The goal is to inform Wisconsin residents about all their options for casting a ballot on or before November 3. Because the pandemic has increased demand for absentee voting by mail, the program will focus on educating voters who choose that option on how to do it successfully and about why absentee voting is secure.

Background: The WEC voter outreach plan leading up to November is multi-pronged. WEC staff will focus a significant amount of resources creating a voter outreach tool kit for local election officials that mirrors state level messaging. For example, WEC is developing an earned media strategy with planned press, media availability and social media content. WEC will then also develop a mirrored messaging kit for local election officials with draft news releases, media talking points, and social media content. In addition, WEC will conduct training for local election officials on the myriad of voter outreach tools to show local election officials how to use them. In addition, these tool kits and resources will also be available for voter advocacy grounds, campaigns, and parties to use to help spread legitimate, trusted information about elections.

WEC also has many other core voter outreach tools on all voter related topics. These topics span from voter registration, to photo ID, to guides for hospitalized and sequestered electors https://elections.wi.gov/publications/brochures/voter-guides. Voter guides and all materials in the WEC voter information center have been updated and will continue to be updated if needed closer to the election, the voter information center can be found here https://elections.wi.gov/publications/brochures/voter-guides. These materials are often used by voter groups as website content and to help educate voters through other methods of outreach. In addition, the WEC keeps information, specific to elections and photo ID up-to-date on their micro-site www.bringit.wi.gov where voters can find videos, posters, radio ads, and brochures specific to the photo ID law.

In 2019, WEC staff began planning a voter education program for 2020 focused on all aspects of Election Security because that was what many people were concerned about. With authorization from the Commission, staff hired KW2-Madison, an advertising agency with significant experience developing campaigns for state government. KW2 conducted statewide, scientific public opinion polling in late 2019, as well as focus group interviews around the state, to understand voters' concerns about election security and have the Commission's decisions about communications be driven by statistically valid data. The overarching results of that research was that voters who were concerned about election security responded well to facts about safeguards that are already in place to protect the integrity of Wisconsin elections. Based on that research, the Commission on January 14, 2020 authorized staff to amend the scope of work in KW2's current contract with the WEC to include development of a dynamic elections security education and communications plan, toolkit and assets for use by WEC staff and local election officials for use throughout 2020. The Commission also directed staff to evaluate the program's effectiveness following the Spring Election cycle and present recommendations on whether to change and/or expand the program for the Fall Election cycle.

The COVID-19 public health emergency interrupted the planned program, so WEC staff directed KW2 to resurvey if voter concerns had shifted due to the pandemic. KW2 revisited their research again and determined that voters respond best to factual statements about how elections and the absentee process works, and what security measures are in place at each step in the journey. WEC staff directed KW2 to focus its efforts on developing educational materials for voters that focuses on the absentee voting process and the security that protects its integrity. Like the original election security educational program, the absentee program will be comprised of fact-and-benefit statements and general information about absentee voting.

Public Education Program Details. WEC staff has amended the scope of work and collaborated closely with KW2 on development of a dynamic communications plan that blends information about the absentee voting process and election security. Staff and KW2 held several meetings to discuss themes, content, and format of the communications program. The program includes a dynamic communications plan, toolkit, and assets, such as website content, videos, news releases and graphics. Our primary focus has been on information that local election officials can use to communicate with voters and local news media about election security.

Because the Commission does not have funds necessary to engage in a paid advertising campaign, the public education campaign focuses on using earned media and other unpaid channels to reach the public. To accomplish that, the program will leverage earned media because of the strong public interest in stories about absentee voting and election security, the ability of local election officials to get their community media outlets to cover the issues, and unpaid social media. Specific deliverables include:

-Six, two-minute educational videos about the absentee voting process from start to finish – what it is, how to request a ballot, how to fill it out, where to return it, how they are counted and why the process is secure.
-Social media text and graphics designed to raise public awareness about how Wisconsin voters can request, vote, and return an absentee ballot, as well as the security of the absentee process.
-Web banners to raise awareness about absentee voting that the agency, clerks, and other organizations can use on their websites to educate the public and raise awareness about absentee voting.
-Earned media tools (news releases and op-ed pieces) designed to educate the public about absentee voting and address concerns about election security.
-Articles about absentee voting and election security.
-Fact sheets about absentee voting and election security.
-Text, graphics, and designs for the WEC website pages where the videos, fact sheets and other informational materials will be available.
-Text, graphics, and designs for the MyVote Wisconsin website's absentee voting pages that provide users with facts about the absentee voting process.
-A toolkit for clerks containing information about absentee voting and election security to use as they educate their local voters and work with their local media outlets.

KW2 will assist Commission staff in presenting a webinar in early September for county and municipal clerks about the toolkit. Staff is also working with Facebook on a webinar in September for Wisconsin clerks about social media best practices, as this will help clerks post messages and graphics from the public education program on their own social media accounts.

A key part of the education program is the information packet that will be mailed on September 1 to the approximately 2.6 million registered Wisconsin voters without an absentee ballot request on file (and who are not on the Movers list) that informs them about the various ways they can cast a ballot for the November General Election. (See detailed information about the voter mailer in the next section.) The WEC and KW2 will use the September 1 mailing as a kick-off data for rolling out the various parts of the public outreach plan to local election officials in early September to best reach voters before clerks start issuing ballots on September 17.

WEC staff has also developed an earned media outreach plan for September, October and November that includes weekly news releases and media briefings timed to precede election events and deadlines in the runup to November 3. The plan is to generate advance media coverage about voting activities and deadlines such as the mailing of absentee ballots on September 17, the close of online and mail voter registration on October 14 and the start of in-person absentee voting on October 20. WEC staff will also work with voter education and advocacy groups, which are welcome to use the Commission's educational materials in their own efforts.

It is important to note that the campaign is dynamic, and there is flexibility to adapt messaging as new information and concerns about voting arise in the months and weeks leading up to November 3. Following the August 11 Partisan Primary, staff worked with KW2 to revise two of the six short videos in production based on voter experiences in cities that count absentee ballots in a central location rather than at polling places. Local election officials reported issues with voters in some of the 35 central count municipalities attempting to return their absentee ballots to polling places on Election Day.

Two of the videos included information about absentee voters being able to return their ballots to the polling place on Election Day, and they were edited to mention that some municipalities count absentee ballots at a central location and to advise voters to follow the instructions provided with their ballot for where to return their absentee ballots.

In July, the WEC approved revised Uniform Instructions for Absentee Voting. Instead of one document packed with text, there are now two versions (one for mailed absentee ballots and one for those emailed or faxed to military voters) that simplify the language and helpful add graphics. Following the August 11 Partisan Primary, staff developed a third version designed for central count absentee municipalities that include specific instructions for returning absentee ballots on Election Day. The Instructions are included as Appendix E to this report.

Section 14:
Voter Mailer Preparations

VOTER MAILER UPDATE

The Commission directed staff to prepare a draft voter information mailer to be sent to approximately 2.6 million Wisconsin voters on or before September 1, 2020. The Commission approved sending the mailer to all registered Wisconsin voters (except for those in "Movers" status) who do not already have an absentee application on file. The mailer is designed to provide voters with information on their options to cast their ballot in the November 3, 2020 election. All voters are eligible to choose which method of voting works best for them: in-person absentee in the two weeks prior to an election, absentee by-mail, or in-person at the polls on election day. The mailer outlines the requirements and provide timelines for each of the three voting options that voters can use to make their decision. In the April election, WEC heard from voters who were unable or uncomfortable using technology to make their absentee ballot request. Therefore, the mailer also includes a form that eligible voters can use to request their ballot. The mailer also includes information on voter registration and photo ID requirements in addition to directions to contact WEC with questions or for assistance navigating the process. A copy of the mailer is included as Appendix D of this report.

A statewide mailing will ensure that consistent information on all opportunities and methods for voting are sent to every voter in all communities across the state who have not already chosen to vote absentee by mail. Voters would receive a mailing containing three pieces:
1. Voter information mailer
2. Absentee Application designed specifically for this mailer
3. A pre-addressed, business reply return envelope to the WEC (no postage required by voter)

Voters who wish to apply for an absentee ballot may do so either using the form provided or by visiting the myvote.wi.gov website. Wisconsin law requires voters to submit an absentee ballot application before a ballot can be sent to the voter. Only eligible, registered voters can be issued a ballot. Voters must also provide a copy of an acceptable photo ID with their first absente request. There are some exceptions for voters who certify that they are indefinitely confined. The Wisconsin Elections Commission also directed that the mailer would not be forwardable. Voters who have moved since the mailing list was populated on June 5 will not receive the mailing. Undeliverable mail will be returned to the WEC office and stored in accordance with records retention laws.

WEC further directed that the return applications should be sent to the WEC offices. WEC staff will then assist with data entry of the paper forms into a pending functionality in the statewide voter registration system. By law, only municipal clerks have the authority to issue absentee ballots upon receiving a valid request. Therefore, WEC staff will enter the applications into the statewide system where clerks will be able to review the electronic record, a scanned copy of the application, and the photo ID. Clerks will then accept or deny the application. In the case of a valid application, they will then send the voter a ballot. In case of an incomplete application or an ineligible voter, the clerk will reject the application. The mailers are not necessarily voter specific. The sophisticated statewide voter registration database ensures only one ballot can be counted per-voter and that only eligible voters receive a ballot. If an ineligible voter receives a mailer and completes the application, they will not be sent a ballot. If a voter returns multiple applications, even to different jurisdictions, they will only be sent one ballot.

Following Commission approval of the design, the DOA Bureau of Publishing and Distribution began printing and assembling mail pieces in preparation for a September 1 mailing date. As of August 24, printing is nearing completion and all 2.65 million mail pieces are scheduled for delivery to the post office on time. Commission staff are now preparing to process the anticipated questions and responses from voters and clerks.

Processing mailer responses will be a complex task. To manage the anticipated workload, Commission staff assessed all possible workflows and took steps to add temporary employees and external call center support. In addition to calls and e-mailed questions, the staff anticipates an enormous volume of mail returning to the agency during the month of September. For example, mail-only workflows resulting from the mailing are expected to include the following categories. The following numbers are forecasts used for resource planning, WEC will not know the actual volume until the mailer has been sent.

Fig. 3 General Election Mailer Processing Estimates

Workflow Type	Estimated Volume
1. Mailers Returned Undeliverable to WEC	≈ 100,000
2. Completed Application with Photo ID Returned to WEC to Data Enter	≈ 16,000
3. Completed Application w/o Photo ID Returned to WEC to Data Enter	≈ 2,000
4. Completed Application -Reject Application Mismatched Data	< 500
5. Completed Application – Reject Application Unregistered Voter	< 500
6. Incomplete Application –Reject Application	< 500
7. Voter requests change of address; Other- Reject Application	< 500

Under normal circumstances, clerks will receive just a few touch points with absentee requests received from the mailing. First, relier clerks will receive a notification email when the WEC creates a pending request. Clerks who regularly access the statewide voter registration system will simply check the Pending Absentee Applications view where they typically see requests submitted through MyVote that request photo ID review. Next, the clerk will review the pending request, validate the photo ID, and otherwise assess if the request is valid and complete. The clerk can then approve or decline the request. WEC staff follow up process on declined requests will include template letters and emails sent to voters with clerk identified deficiencies related to photo ID or a missing signature for indefinitely confined applications. Finally, the clerk will receive the original documents and a scanned copy of the full request to retain for their records. This process ensures that clerks can exercise their statutory authority to approve absentee ballot requests without requiring them to perform the raw data entry in the statewide voter system.

Commission staff will track all responses received from the mailer and will provide a summary of results at a future date. The absentee mailer is designed to better prepare Wisconsin voters for the November election. If voters wish to participate by-mail, sending their applications well in advance of the election will ensure that they are able to receive and return their ballots in time to be counted. It will also help to spread the workload for municipal clerks. By state law, the initial run of absentee ballots are sent 47 days prior to the election, September 17, 2020. After that date, ballots must be sent within 24 hours of a clerk receiving the request. The more ballot requests that clerks can process ahead of the initial deadline, the more time they will have to process returned ballots, conduct in-person absentee, and prepare for election day. Also, WEC will complete the data entry of the returned applications, allowing clerks to instead spend their valuable time on other election preparations.

Section 15:
Local Election Official Training

Overview: The Wisconsin Elections Commission is required by state law to provide training to local election officials and Chief Election Inspectors. WEC meets this requirement through a variety of training methods including in-person appearances at conferences organized by clerks and by professional organizations, live and prerecorded webinars, interactive trainings, such as tabletop exercises, and through the publication of manuals and guidance documents. Each local election official is required to provide training to their poll workers. WEC training materials are often used to conduct these trainings, but clerks can also provide additional training on procedures specific to their municipality or polling place.

Staff have augmented the training program for the November General Election to account for the increase in by mail absentee voting and to incorporate public health procedures into existing training. Materials have also been updated to provide an emphasis on procedures, such as curbside voting, that have taken on added significance due to COVID-19. Additional remote training options are being created to provide clerks with options to use when in-person training is difficult to conduct due to COVID-19 concerns or restrictions. An online curriculum has been created that provides trainees with comprehensive training on election administration procedures, COVID-19 protocols, and poll worker etiquette. This curriculum was used to train the National Guard members who served as poll workers for three Wisconsin elections already this year and will be updated with additional materials specific to the November General Election.

The following section outlines the agency's training initiatives and schedule (Fig. 4) for the remainder of the 2020 election cycle.

County and Municipal Clerk Conferences: Due to concerns with the coronavirus, most annual and district-wide clerk conferences were cancelled by the various clerk associations leading up to the November election. Commission staff will virtually attend several clerk conferences in October: Wisconsin Association of School Superintendent Assistants and the Wisconsin Town's Association Annual Convention.

Commission staff will provide election officials with a review of the agency's 2020 elections activities, including updates on public health measures, Commission decisions, election security measures, statewide voter registration system development projects and a detailed review of other election administration tasks, such as ballot access procedures and counting write-in votes.

Training Webinar Series. Commission staff introduced the new webinar training series mid-summer and have aired several election administration and statewide voter registration system training webinars in the last several months. The webinars focused on the complexities of the August Partisan Primary and the preparations and precautions clerks and election workers needed to take to ensure safe voting at the polls on Election Day.

In preparation for the November election, the "*I'm a New Clerk – Where do I Start?"* webinar will introduce new clerks to the Commission and provide detailed information about training requirements and resources. The webinar will also give clerks a virtual tour of the Elections Commission website and other web applications. The "Poll Book Management" webinar will provide election workers with training on the proper maintenance of the poll books on Election Day, how to read the absentee watermarks on the poll book, and the role and usage of the absentee ballot log. The "Polling Place Set-Up" webinar will cover best practices for polling place accessibility from parking lot to polling area and highlight some simple changes election workers may take to ensure accessibility. Finally, the "Let's Get Ready for November " webinar will review determining voter intent, counting votes for president and vice-president, rules for election observers and members of the media and the use of photography and videography at the polls.

Changes to the absentee process in the statewide voter registration system will be outlined in two different webinars:

"Absentee Overview" and *"Absentee Omnibus."* These webinars will cover the improvements made to the statewide voter registration system absentee process, changes due to the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals decision, and overall best practices for managing absentees in the statewide voter registration system. In the "MyVote Demystified" webinar, clerks will get an explanation of how MyVote works and interacts with the statewide voter registration system, including related changes, absentee request process, and address service. In addition, an interactive absentee tutorial is being updated to include the latest absentee improvements.

Commission staff also plans to supplement the published webinar training schedule with several topic-specific webinars prior to the November election, using live and pre-recorded formats. One example is a webinar that focuses on managing absentee ballots, including set up options for in person absentee voting (IPAV) that incorporate public health procedures and identify outdoor, drive up and curbside options. The webinar will also address the establishment of drop boxes as efficient ballot return options for voters and provide best practices for managing outbound and inbound absentee ballots. A November election reminders webinar will capture any questions or issues trending with election officials, voters, and advocates so they can be addressed before the election.

Manual Updates. Commission staff is updating the agency's two primary reference sources, the Election Administration Manual for Municipal Clerks, and the Election Day Manual for Local Election Officials, to reflect recent court decisions, legislative changes, procedural revisions, and incorporate statutory citations. Commission staff is updating the statewide voter registration system manual to include the latest absentee improvements. Other sections of the manual have been updated.

Poll Worker Training. Commission staff has previously developed poll worker training agendas that are task-based and modular in function so clerks can assemble a training plan depending on their training needs for a specific type of election and election worker. Several agendas will be repurposed as webinar materials and poll worker training videos. The "Poll Book Management" webinar, for example, will review the "state-show-sign" process that voters must follow in order to get a ballot and discuss photo ID requirements and common questions staff receives from voters and election workers. It will also focus on the procedures for voters who appear at the polling place on election day who have a watermark listed next to their name indicating they have been issued an absentee ballot.

Scenario Based Training (Tabletop Exercise TT). Commission staff is developing additional EA TT scenarios that reflect some common and not-so-common Election Day situations election officials may encounter during the November election. Commission staff plans to develop scripts and role-playing exercises if clerks and election workers need to address a confrontation or deescalate a disturbance regarding current public health directives or electioneering issues at the polls.

Commission staff developed a Security TT that clerks can participate in through a virtual environment. Commission staff developed scenarios that will allow clerks to discuss best practices for the areas of election administration, communication tools, escalation tactics, cybersecurity, contingency planning, and current public health guidance.

WEC has also developed a communications training that teaches clerks how to respond to security related questions or incidents using template press releases, social media posts, talking points, holding statements and more. WEC staff will also continue to make these virtual trainings available.

Fig 4. Pre-Election Clerk Training Events

Type of Training	Training	Description	Date
EA Webinar	I am a New Clerk – Where do I Start?	Introduction into clerk duties, training requirements and resources.	August 26, 2020
Statewide Reg. System Webinar	Absentee Overview	Review of best practices and new processes rolled out in June.	September 1, 2020
Statewide Reg. System Webinar	Absentee Omnibus	Managing existing application and ballot records in the statewide system and using various absentee reports.	September 8, 2020
EA Webinar	Managing Absentee Ballots	IPAV procedures that incorporate public health procedures and identify outdoor, drive up, curbside and drop box options.	September 9, 2020
EA Webinar	Poll Book Management	Provides election workers with training on proper maintenance poll books.	September 16, 2020
Clerk Conference	Wisconsin School Superintendents Assistants	Review of recall, ballot access and canvass procedures.	September 25, 2020
EA Webinar	Polling Place Set-up	Covers best practices for polling place accessibility.	September 30, 2020
Statewide Reg. System Webinar	MyVote Demystified	Exploring the relationship between MyVote and the statewide voter registration system, and recent updates to the MyVote Website.	October 6, 2020
Clerk Conference	Wisconsin Towns Association Annual Convention	Elections security updates, review of training resources and important reminders for the November election.	October 13, 2020
EA Webinar	Let's Get Ready for November!	Review determining voter intent, counting votes for president and vice-president, and rules for the polling place.	October 14, 2020
EA Webinar	Important Reminders for the November Election	Review of questions or issues trending with election officials, voters, and advocates before the election.	October 21, 2020

Section 16:
Badger Voters Data Request

BADGER VOTERS DATA REQUESTS

The Elections Commission Badger Voters website https://badgervoters.wi.gov/ provides a simple and automated way for the public to request voter lists, absentee records, and candidates nomination papers. Data can be sorted by election, office, county, municipality, ward, aldermanic district, and many more options. This allows the customer to receive only the data they are seeking. The voter list shows election activity back to 2006, when Wisconsin began using a statewide voter registration system, with the participation description of at polls or absentee.

Absentee ballot data is available from 2016. Absentee data purchases provide customers with application and ballot activity and allows the customer the option to "subscribe" for future updates to data received and the ability to receive new files at the frequency they select; twice per week, weekly, every other week or monthly. With this add-on to the initial purchase the $25 base is waived for each subsequent file which costs $5 per 1,000 new records.

Customers can also make custom requests for data beyond what is included in a standard request format or for statistics that are not posted to our Elections Commission website. The customer is provided an estimate of costs (developer time) to create and run the query and total number of records in the data set. If they choose to purchase the file, our developer will then produce the file. Custom requests that take under a half-hour of developer time are only charged for the record count.

Customer satisfaction is generally high with this program as there is no wait time for accessing data needed and the breadth of the data in standard files is very useful for many purposes. Most questions can be answered in our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) link. This section also includes data element documents outlining what fields are included and sample files are available. Badger Voters often sees an increase in activity during the spring and fall election cycles, but activity occurs steadily throughout the year.

The following statistics summarize voter data and nomination paper requests through July 31, 2020.

Fiscal Year	Total Number of Voter Data Requests	Requested Files Purchased	Percentage of Requests Purchased	Total Revenue	Total Number of Nomination Paper Requests
FY2021	368	328	89%	$106,070.00	148
FY2020*	1291	1134	88%	$654,557.00	402
FY2019	617	473	76.6%	$328,015.00	NA
FY2018	706	517	73.2%	$182,341.00	NA
FY2017	643	368	57%	$234,537.35	NA
FY2016	789	435	55%	$235,820.00	NA
FY2015	679	418	61.56%	$242,801.25	NA
FY2014	371	249	67.12%	$125,921.25	NA
FY2013	356	259	72.75%	$254,840.00	NA
FY2012	428	354	78.04%	$127,835.00	NA

*Beginning with the September 2020 report, customer refunds are being accounted for in Total Revenue

The Badger Voters system provides media, campaigns, researchers, and others with quality data they can use to conduct analysis, voter outreach, etc. to help prepare Wisconsin voters. Prior to the updates to Badger Voters many of the data queries had to be run manually by WEC staff. WEC has invested in the automation of this statutorily required system. This helps prepare Wisconsin elections for the November election as it allows the public access to data without diverting staff resources and time from other projects. This means WEC staff can spend additional time working with local election officials and voters to prepare for November while still meeting the expectations of our customers and providing transparency in election data.

Section 17:
Public Health Guidance

The April 7, 2020 primary election was well underway when concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic were elevated in Wisconsin. Ballots were sent to all absentee voters with a request on file for the April 7, 2020 election by the end of February, and in Wisconsin the first COVID-19 related Executive Order was not issued until March 12. WEC staff worked quickly to adjust existing election processes and provide guidance that includes public health information for procedures such as absentee ballot witnessing, poll book management and photo ID review. The WEC staff also worked with WI Department of Health Services public health officials through the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to produce guidance and training on public health procedures and elections procedures. The procedures and documents were first used in the April election. Public health officials continue to update their guidance about COVID-19 and WEC staff likewise continually update election-related public health documents. The documents created for April were reviewed, edited, and reissued for the subsequent May 12 Special Election, and again for the August 11 Partisan Primary.

WEC is using this base of documents and public health guidance to prepare for November and will continue work with public health officials to review the documents regularly leading up to the election to be sure the information is still up to date. WEC will also work with SEOC public health officials to identify any new resources that may need to be developed. The public health guidance documents created by WEC serve multiple audiences, including clerks and voters. For clerks, resources have been created to train them on polling place procedures incorporating public health. Voter resources are designed to help voters understand their voting options, navigate the process safely and successfully and provide voters information on what to expect at the polls if they decide to vote in-person.

A new series of resources that focuses on public health procedures and absentee voting is also being developed to supplement existing materials. These documents will share best practices for in-person absentee voting, including flexible set up options such as outdoor and drive through options as well as information on safe and efficient processing of absentee ballots. In addition, scheduled training presentations focused on poll book management and polling place set up will discuss on public health procedures while still providing information on other required procedures.

WEC staff maintains a flexible approach to updating training materials with public health guidance, understanding that new resources may become necessary, and the core documents that will be updated for November are included in the following chart. The chart is found on the following pages.

Wisconsin Elections Public Health Resources

Resources	Description	Link
COVID-19 Resources Webpage	In March, WEC created a COVID-19 specific page on the main agency website. This page indexes all COVID related materials. This link is also included on the mailer that is being sent to 2.6 million WI voters in September	https://elections.wi.gov/covid-19
Election Day Checklist	This checklist was designed to incorporate public health guidance into all election day procedures	https://elections.wi.gov/node/7013
Polling Place Signs	For each election in 2020, WEC printed and distribute signs to each polling place. Signs include: face coverings, social distancing, screener, poll book, latex glove warning	https://elections.wi.gov/node/7013
Poll Worker Screener	WEC works with public health officials to develop screener questions for poll workers	https://elections.wi.gov/node/7013
Face Coverings Guidance	Guidance on face coverings for both poll workers and voters	https://elections.wi.gov/node/6981
Absentee Witness	Guidance for voters on ways to obtain a witness signature on an absentee certificate with maintaining social distancing	https://elections.wi.gov/node/6991
Voting Equipment	Guidance on how to sanitize voting equipment and electronic poll books.	https://elections.wi.gov/node/6990
Quarantined Voters	Guidance for delivering ballots to quarantined voters	https://elections.wi.gov/node/6989
Drive Thru and Curbside Voting	Guidance on how to administer drive thru, curbside, and other outdoor voting options	https://elections.wi.gov/node/6986
COVID Specific Poll	WEC created videos and training presentations for poll	https://elections.wi.gov/node/6985

Worker Training	workers on processing absentees, sanitation at the polling place, safely administering the poll book and photo ID checks, screeners and signage, and general COVID related training	
General Poll Worker Training	Training curriculum developed by WEC that is available for training of last minute poll worker recruits. Incorporates COVID-19 specific training	https://elections.wi.gov/node/6984
Moving Polling Places	Guidance on what to do if a polling place becomes unavailable or is not a good fit considering COVID. Includes draft press release	https://elections.wi.gov/COVID-19/moving-a-polling-place
Care Facility Voting	Outlines prohibition on sending Special Voting Deputies into care facilities and how to ensure residence receive their ballots	https://elections.wi.gov/node/6939
Accessibility Guidance	COVID-19 Accessibility considerations	https://elections.wi.gov/node/6992
Drop Box Guidance	Guidance for clerks on establishing drop boxes for voters to return their absentee ballots	https://elections.wi.gov/node/7036

Section 18:
Customer Service Preparations

In the weeks around a November General Election, the WEC staff will field tens of thousands of phone calls and emails. We expect the number of contacts in the weeks around the November 2020 election to be unprecedented as voters and clerks adjust to new ways to navigate the election. Unlike some state elections office that might be associated to a larger state agency, like the secretary of state's office, the WEC does not have a peripheral, larger team to draw on during busy times. WEC is also limited by the position authority allocated to our agency, in terms of bringing in additional staff during busy times, WEC must rely on temporarily employees and call center assistance. However, many of the calls fielded by WEC staff in the months before an election require a depth of election expertise to help with real time matters of consequence for clerks of voters. Therefore, there is a limit as to how much of the customer service can delegated to temporary staff.

The current procedure for WEC customer service utilizes a helpdesk model. Calls and emails come to a central phone number and central email address and are then distributed to subject matter experts on the larger staff.

Some of the ways the WEC is preparing our customer service model for the November election include:

Toll-Free Phone Tree. In early 2020, WEC staff reconfigured the main, toll-free agency phone number 1-866-VOTE-WIS to utilize a phone tree model. There are two main branches in the phone tree: voter questions and clerk questions. From there clerks have the option to speak to staff in various areas of the agency; for example, they can speak to either an expert on election administration or an expert on the statewide voter registration system. From there the phone system will find an available expert. For voters, they can choose from popular choices like requesting an absentee ballot, registering to vote, or questions about photo ID. Using the call tree model allows us to incorporate some of the other efficiencies outlined below.

Phone Management Software. In early 2020 the state began using Skype for business to integrate phone systems across state agencies. Skype allows the WEC help desk to see who is available to take a call and who is already in a call or a meeting. It also allows us to set expert groups that stem from the phone tree, this lessens the need for customers to talk to a helpdesk representative and instead allows the call to be routed directly to an available expert. It also allows the helpdesk, or other staff, to send a message to staff who are answering a transferred call to provide them with any additional information that needs to be relayed.

Call Center. Beginning on August 26, WEC has contracted with a call center, who we have used in previous elections to help with basic voter calls. Using the phone tree, if a voter indicates that they need basic assistance with tasks such as finding their polling place, those calls are routed through the call center to answer. WEC staff trains call center employees and has also developed an escalation process so that if a customer inquiry exceeds the call center's election knowledge, they can transfer it to a WEC expert to further assist. Utilizing the call center helps to free-up WEC staff to answer questions that require election expertise, while still providing customers with more standard questions quick answers and excellent customer service.

Temporary Staff. Beginning the week of August 26, WEC will have eight temporary staff in the office through the November election. These additional staff will be primarily used to increase the capacity of the helpdesk in directing calls and emails to subject matter experts. They will also be assisting with the voter informational mailing that will be sent on September 1. They will assist with data entry into the pending absentee feature in the statewide voter registration system for clerks to approve and with scanning and uploading documents and photo ID. They will also assist with other data entry projects such as ensuring clerk contact information is kept up to date and with following up with clerks to ensure they have entered all of their data into the statewide system so it displays correctly on the MyVote website.

Spanish Language Assistance. To better serve Wisconsin voters, in the weeks around the election, WEC will also bring in additional temporary staff to assist with both phone calls and emails from voters who speak Spanish.

Extended Hours. In the weeks prior to the election, WEC staff will offer extended office hours to assist both clerks and emails. These additional hours will cover both evenings and weekends in the critical weeks around the election and on important election deadlines. On election day, WEC staff will be available for a nearly 24-hour period to assist with questions about opening polling places, assist with election day voter calls, and to assist with end of the night tally procedures.

Managing Other Contacts. Over the last four years the public profile of the WEC and elections has increased, meaning with each election the number of contacts to the agency reaches a new high. WEC staff has found that it is important to manage contacts to some customers through other platforms. WEC has created several efficiencies in this area to prepare for November. For example, through upgrades to the MyVote.wi.gov addressing workflow, if a voter encounters difficulty with entering a new address, the information the voter entered is automatically collected and sent to a special inbox for WEC staff to examine. This eliminates the number of contacts needed with the voter and helps WEC quickly identify the type of contact to quickly remedy the issue. A similar revision has been made to the statutory complaint process. There are five types of statutory complaints that can be filed with our office. WEC staff updated the flowchart for users to determine the most relevant type of complaint and then creates a pre-filled form to send to staff for resolution. Many other changes have been made to the way WEC communicates with local election officials who often have time sensitive questions. Changes include, identifying a phone number just for clerks to call WEC, creating emergency and secure communication channels to provide alerts and survey tools to clerks on their mobile devices. This is especially important on election day where clerks are not at their computer or desk phone.

Appendix A-E

Appendix A

Commissioners
Stephanie Findley
Carmen Cabrera
Jess Ripp

Executive Director
Claire Woodall-Vogg

City of Milwaukee

Election Commission

August 20, 2020

Meagan Wolfe, Administrator
Wisconsin Election Commission

Dear Ms. Wolfe,

Please find the below answers in response to your August 17, 2020 email. Additionally, I have attached strategic planning documents, communication memos to the City of Milwaukee Common Council, and my own communication with the House Committee on Administration.

1) **Please provide a detailed narrative on any changes Milwaukee is making to absentee by mail, including answers to the following questions:**

   a. **What measures are being adopted to ensure ballots are sent in accordance with statutory timelines? This includes fulfilling the deadline of sending ballots by the 47th day prior to the election and then filling subsequent requests within 24 hours.**

      i. Given the tremendous volume of absentee ballot requests and processing tasks, we are automating and expediting the assembly and mailing of requested absentee ballots. We have purchased a high-speed, envelope printer, a top-of-the-line folding machine, and a high quality folding and inserting machine. This will reduce staff costs and eliminate the use of absentee labels, by enabling the City to print directly onto inner and outer envelopes. This will also increase quality controls. This automation enables the City to eliminate the assembly delay no matter the volume of daily absentee requests, allowing experienced election workers and previously trained election temporary employees to be re-deployed to early voting sites as supervisors and lead workers.

      The City of Milwaukee Election Commission has been able to fill all absentee requests within the 24 hour period due to the changes made to the MyVote request system. Automating the assembly process will ensure that ballots are also mailed within that same 24 hour period.

   b. **What internal processes or chain of custody procedures are in place to ensure all ballots requested by voters are issued? Please describe any third-party mailing vendors involved in the process. If there are not vendors, please describe the process from the time a request is received in your office until the time that a ballot hits the mail stream.**

      i. The MEC enters or processes all absentee requests within 24 hours of receipt (whether from MyVote or via mail, email or fax). We then utilize batches within WisVote to generate ballots. We have worked with the WEC to create a report from these batches that will allow us to print directly onto the voter's inner envelope instead of adhering labels. These are counted and compared to the

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original batch to ensure that all voters within the batch are accounted for, as well as to have a manual count of how many absentee ballots per ward are issued within each batch. Then, one ward at a time, ballots are loaded into an inserter/folder machine (DS-200i by Quadient), along with the inner envelopes and absentee ballot instructions. This machine stuffs the inner envelope, ballot, and letter into an outer envelope. Using the barcode from the voter's inner envelope and the corresponding WEC report, it then prints the voter's mailing address on the outside and seals the envelope. These are then put into bins and transported directly to the USPS St. Paul Avenue branch with accompanying paperwork documenting how many ballots are being delivered. These hit the mail stream that same day/evening.

c. **What measures are being take to identify previous issues with mail vendors and to implement a fix to address issues?**

i. MEC has decided to eliminate our third party mail vendor so that there are only two parties involved – our office and the United States Postal Service. Our new automation will tell us exactly how many piece of mail have been processed by ward, which will be compared to our batch log and then documented upon transferring to USPS. The USPS requires us to submit a daily log of how many pieces are being delivered to them, which they then compare to actual ballots delivered.

d. **If a problem is identified (voters not receiving their ballots, ballots not tracking) what will be done to identify the issue and the ensure it's not a result of an internal workflow error?**

i. We track the number of ballots by ward in a batch from the time we export the report, print the inner envelopes, assemble the absentee package, and then document the number of ballots per ward being handed over to USPS. A discrepancy in our workflow would be encountered and remedied during the assembly process. All absentee activities after exporting the report will be conducted in one central location within our warehouse under video surveillance, leaving little doubt as to whether there was a human error or intervention during the assembly process.

e. **How is Milwaukee coordinating with the USPS ahead of November?**

i. We maintain continual communication with USPS at both the Juneau Ave station (where our mail is received) and at St. Paul Ave (where our outgoing mail will be taken). On Election Day, the Juneau station ensures multiple deliveries directly to Central Count so that all ballots that are at their station are counted on Election Day.

f. **Where will Milwaukee voters be able to drop off their absentee ballots on election day?**

i. The Milwaukee Election Commission will have 15 drop boxes set up across the City of Milwaukee for the duration of absentee by-mail voting. These drop boxes will be at every Milwaukee Public Library, in addition to City Hall. On

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Election Day, voters will have until 8pm to return their ballot at any drop box or at Central Count, 501 W Michigan St. Ballots will not be accepted at polling places.

    g. Will Milwaukee voters be able to drop off their absentee ballots at polling places on election day? What will be the process for getting those ballots to central count?

        i. No. The City of Milwaukee will not allow absentee ballot drop off at polling places since we utilize a Central Count process. Instead, voters will be able to deliver their ballot to 15 drop boxes across the City or to Central Count, 501 W Michigan Street. The polling place staff will have handouts with the locations of these drop boxes available for voters who bring a ballot.

    h. Will there be drop boxes or other drop off opportunities for voters? See above.

    i. What steps has Milwaukee taken to tell voters about absentee opportunities, requirements, and deadlines?

        i. The City of Milwaukee already mailed every single household a SafeVote post card earlier this year, encouraging absentee voting by-mail and offering assistance at Milwaukee Public Libraries in addition to promoting MyVote. The City of Milwaukee will send out a second post card the first week of September and staff all libraries 5 days a week to provide voter registration and absentee ballot application assistance.

2) Please provide a detailed narrative on Milwaukee's plans for in-person absentee ahead of the November Election, including answers to the following questions:

    a. What dates and hours will in-person absentee be offered? In-Person Absentee Voting will be available from Tuesday, October 20th, through Sunday, November 1st; Monday through Friday, 8am-7pm; Saturday and Sundays from 10am-4pm.

    b. How many locations will be offered? The City of Milwaukee will operate 15 in-person absentee voting locations, as published on June 11th. At this time, Manitoba School will be by appointment only due to it being a Milwaukee Public School and the possibility of school being in session.

    c. Will there be drive-thru, curbside, or drop off opportunities available? Per state law, curbside voting is available at all voting sites, whether at polling places on Election Day or at in-person absentee voting. We are still working on the feasibility of drive-thru voting at two of our in-person absentee voting locations and will publicize if and when plans are finalized. Due to the WEC's July 24th interpretation and guidance on Wis. Statute 6.855, we have not been able to expand to expand and relocate IPAV sites to be more conducive to drive-thru voting.

    d. Will there be any drive-thru or alternative options available? See above.

3) Please provide a detailed narrative on Milwaukee's plan for in-person polling places on Election Day, November 3, including answers to the following questions:

    a. How many polling places will Milwaukee have on November 3? 170 polling places are confirmed for November 3rd as of today, August 17, 2020.

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b. **What changes were made to polling locations to ensure social distancing can be maintained or to accommodate other CDC recommendations?** Plexiglass shields were at every table at every receiving table and registration table at City of Milwaukee polling places. Polling places were provided with proper PPE for disinfecting surfaces, encouraging frequent hand sanitizing, etc. All workers were required to wear a mask, strongly encouraged to wear a face shield, and were trained on CDC and Milwaukee Health Department recommended practices.

c. **How was the decision reached on how many polling places Milwaukee will have in November?** We strive to open all 180 regular polling places on November 3rd; however, this relies on the willingness of our private site partners to participate. We continue to have conversations and meetings to reopen as many sites as possible.

d. **What considerations were weighed in terms of number of polling places and locations?** Priority was made to open as many neighborhood polling places as possible under my leadership.

e. **Will there be any drive thru or alternative methods available?** Curbside voting is available at all polling places for voters unable to enter the building due to a disability.

f. **What line management or mitigation efforts will be used at your polling places to avoid long wait times for voters?** Given current trends, we expect that only 25%-30% of voters will prefer to vote in-person at their polling place on Election Day. We will staff at full capacity (2400 workers), which will ensure a fast and safe voting experience on Election Day.

g. **What poll worker recruitment efforts is Milwaukee embarking in to prepare for November? What contingency plans does Milwaukee have for a lack or poll workers on election day or emergency needs?** The City of Milwaukee had tremendous success in partnering with community organizations this summer and will continue to infuse resources into our poll worker recruitment. We will have a professional communications firm help the MEC with recruitment messaging, have brought on additional staff to help with recruitment, as well as staffed additional temporary office assistants to ensure that every application is processed and workers are contacted for training. Additionally, we are working to rewrite our training manual to be more user-friendly and up-to-date, as well as enhance virtual training opportunities to be more interactive and visual. It is my opinion that our election workers will feel confident and excited to staff the polls on November 3rd if they have received training that instills confidence and the importance of their role.

4) **Please provide a detailed narrative on preparations is Milwaukee making to Central Count ahead of November 3, including answers to the following questions:**

a. **What process/personnel changes are being made?** Please see attached strategic planning document.

b. **What security measure are in place or being changed at central count to ensure that only authorized personnel have access to the ballot.**

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c. **What changes are being made to accommodate larger numbers of absentee ballots being returned on election day? With the process change because of the larger volume of absentees that are likely to be returned on election day?**

5) **Please provide a detailed narrative on preparations the City of Milwaukee is making for November 3, including answers to the following questions:**

a. **Communications plans? How will Milwaukee communicate their preparation efforts to the public? How will issues on election day, during absentee, etc be communicated? efforts to the public? How will issues on election day, during absentee, etc be communicated?** The City of Milwaukee Election Commission has identified strong and clear needs for voter outreach and education within its voting communities, with a particular emphasis on reaching voters of color, low-income voters without reliable access to internet, voters with disabilities, and voters whose primary language is not English. This outreach is particularly necessary given the voter confusion that ensued in the lead-up to the April election, and voters' concerns and questions about voting during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is understood that our communities of color do not necessarily trust the voting process, and that there is need to work to earn trust. The Election Commission through transparency and openness seek to educate the public about what happens behind the scenes in elections, and what options are available for casting a ballot.

The Election Commission is seeking a communications firm or firms to create and implement a comprehensive voter education and election worker recruitment campaign for the November 2020 Presidential Election. We are investing $250,000 to this project. This effort will focus on appealing to a variety of communities within Milwaukee, including historically underrepresented voting communities. Additionally, part of the campaign will focus on the recruitment of new election workers, taking into consideration and communicating the unique job role during a pandemic, as well as the creation of professional training videos.

b. **What changes have been made to MEC staff training? Chief inspector or election inspector training**? Under my leadership, it was essential that we take a very critical look at election worker training, as well as staff training. I immediately sought the creation of a 9th position within the department to focus on consistent, documented processes and procedures around voter services such as registration and absentee voting. An existing staff member was promoted into this position and is already working hard to improve cross training within the office and establishing routine procedures that were previously undocumented.

Additionally, we are currently redesigning our election worker manual to be more user friendly, up-to-date, and ensure that all workers (whether chiefs or election workers) have access to a useable manual. COVID19 has required that some of our election workers serve as co-chiefs or chiefs at a moment's notice. It was imperative that we operate and train with one manual.

c. **How will Milwaukee communicate and changes to poll locations? To voter? To the state and other parties who rely on the data to populate polling place look up tools?** We contact registered voters via post card to convey any polling place changes. We also update MyVote and Where Do I Vote? (City's portal) to have current information.

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Additionally, signage is placed at previous voting sites to direct voters to the correct site on Election Day.

d. **Given the larger volume of absentee ballots, will you be able to process all of your absentee ballots on election night? If you believe tallying will extend beyond election night, what is you plan for processing absentees that may span over multiple days?** We do not anticipate that counting absentee ballots will extend into day<u>s</u> unless a court ruling determines otherwise (such as allowing ballots postmarked on Election Day to be counted). At most, processing will continue throughout the night and be completed on Wednesday. We will provide constant communication to the media and the WEC on any delays. We will also communicate in advance of Election Day, as I already have been doing during media interviews. Accepting ballots until 8pm on Election Day at our drop boxes will mean that results will not be immediately available. However, we are staffing drop boxes to be picked up throughout the day every two hours so that the 8pm returns will have minimal effect. We will continue to encourage voters to return their absentee ballot prior to Election Day as well.

Sincerely,

Claire Woodall-Vogg
Executive Director

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1. **Additional DS850's and DS450's**
   a) Requested 13 machines total;
   b) No less than 11 machines so that each machine is responsible for ~30 wards
   c) Color-code the stations: i.e. wards 1-30 are red, wards 31-60 are green, etc.
   d) Have a machine team of at least 6 people. 2 people work at the machine, 2 people are prepping ballots and bagging ballots, and 2 people reconstruct ballots as needed but are otherwise prepping and bagging. All six people will be cross-trained to allow for breaks in duties.
   e) Have one station captain who is comfortable organizing the other staff.

2. **Ballot Bins: 1 Per Ward.**
   a) Get enough long, flat postal bins to have 1 per ward. Color code them to the corresponding counting station and put the ward number on each one. i.e. Ward 1 on a red card taped to the bin.
   b) Have the bins prefilled with the goldenrod envelope and ballots to be opened.
   c) Place the bins in order in front of the corresponding counting station. The machine team keeps them in order. Volunteers take the bins to their tables to open and number ballots and then return the completed bins to the assigned place at the counting station.
   d) As more ballots come in, they are bundled and added to the ward bin.
   e) The station captain works with the machine operators to count the ballots in the bin and return it to its assigned space to await additional ballots.
   f) Keep all paperwork in goldenrod envelopes, so that what is visible in the numbered bin is ballots to be opened, ballots to be counted, Goldenrod envelope and counted ballots in the ballot bag.

3. **Additional Roles**
   a) Scanners: As additional ballots are brought in throughout the day, we will have at least 6 laptops set up to mark ballots as returned in WisVote.
   b) Sorters: Workers who sort ballots into ward order and then add them to the correct trays and redistribute them for processing. We had 4 people assigned to this role. 10 people will be assigned to this role (6 scanners plus 4 additional) for November.
   c) Volunteer assigner: check-in and check-out volunteers. Assign to stations. Redistribute volunteers as needed.
   d) Observer check-in: this role was assigned on August 11th (and has always been an assigned role in the past). However, based on reports, there was a time period where the observer table was unstaffed. Two people will be assigned this role to prevent any absence.

4. **Election Worker Hours.**
   a) Encourage workers to only work an 8 hour shift. In the past, we encouraged full shifts, but we will be able to recruit more workers and have them work later if they work split shifts.
   b) AM shift is 6:00-2:30; PM shift is 2:00-10:30. That way the changeover is during the least busy part of the day and workers are still present after the polls close.

5. **Ensure Accurate Results**

   a) **Tracking sheet:** On August 11th, a key component for ensuring ballots are not fed through a machine more than once was lacking – our tracking log that is completed for each run through the machine. This log ensures that we track if we have cleared out a ward due to numbers not reconciling, as well as tracking ballots that need to be reconstructed. It came to the director's attention on Election Day that the log was not printed and provided, an oversight by new staff who have only one election under their belts.

   b) **Precincts processed report:** All machine operators will be trained on how to run the precincts processed report, which tells them how many ballots have been counted by ward (not results). This report can be run throughout the day to make sure the ballots processed matches the last voter number and is consistent with the log above. Again, this has always been protocol but was overlooked by new staff.

6. **Executive Director at Central Count**

   a) In prior elections, the executive director has always stayed at the Election Commission office in order to be responsive to Chief inspectors and media regarding polling place operations. This was a practice I continued in August until approximately 2pm. In hindsight, given that I have nearly eight years of experience at operating Central Count and 75% of votes will be cast at Central Count on November 3rd, I plan to be at Central Count on November 3rd for the entirety of the day. I work with an extremely competent deputy director and field coordinator, and have also retained the consulting services of the former executive director who will be in the office on Election Day. We will maintain regular contact and make adjustments if needed.

Commissioners
Stephanie Findley
Carmen Cabrera
Jess Ripp

Executive Director
Claire Woodall-Vogg

Election Commission

August 19, 2020

Congressman Rodney Davis
Ranking Minority Member
Committee On House Administration
1309 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6157

Dear Congressman Davis,

Thank you for contacting me regarding our operational plans to ensure that voters have access to the polls in the November 3rd general election. Answering your questions in the order presented seems to be the most efficient way to address your concerns.

a. Closure of in-person voting locations
1. How does your office plan on reducing the time voters spend in line on November 3rd, 2020?
   a. We have ensured that 170 of our normal 180 polling places will be open for our August 11 partisan primary. These same sites have agreed to remain polling places for the November 3 General Election. Additionally, I have worked with local organizations such as Souls to the Polls, Fight for 15, and SEIU in order to recruit more poll workers who are lower-risk for COVID19 and comfortable working on Election Day. To date, we have over 1400 poll workers assigned for August and will continue to recruit at least 600 more for the General Election. This will ensure that polling places are not only open, but are well-staffed so that lines move quickly.
2. Does any effort by your office to reduce wait times include the opening of additional polling locations?
   a. Yes. Unlike April 7 where we were forced to consolidate to voting centers, we have 170 polling places secured so that neighborhood-based voting will occur.
3. What plans does your office have in place to ensure the health and safety of staff, volunteers, and voters in both early voting and on election day?
   a. We have secured plexiglass tabletop barriers that will provide a physical barrier between voters and election workers at all tables inside of the polling place or early voting site. We have worked closely with the Health Department and Wisconsin Election Commission to procure surgical masks, face shields, gloves, hand sanitizer, and surface disinfectant for all polling sites and early voting sites. The City of Milwaukee has a mask ordinance, which will require all voters to also wear a mask when voting unless they have a medical or religious exemption.
4. In March of this year over $400 million was appropriated to states for the purpose of combating COVID19 at the ballot box. Wisconsin received over $7 million of that appropriation, has that money made its way to the City of Milwaukee?
   a. Yes. We received a $323,861.80 subgrant from the Wisconsin Election Commission from these funds. The amount was calculated uniformly across the state. Each jurisdiction received $1.10 per registered voter, plus $200. This money will be utilized to cover our additional postage costs associated with the large increase of

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absentee voting, as well as our additional staffing that has been needed in order to respond quickly to every absentee request.

5. How did the Commission arrive at the decision to only open five polling places?
    a. A week prior to the April 7 Spring Election, the Election Commission's staffing numbers dropped to under 300 poll workers. We normally staff at least 2,000 poll workers for a Presidential Primary. There was widespread fear among poll workers as the virus was quickly spreading and had a high hospitalization rate, especially within the City of Milwaukee. This resulted in the decision by former executive director Albrecht to switch to a voting center model.

6. Please provide the Committee with a breakdown of the number of staff deployed, where they were deployed, and what their assigned duties were.
    a. The Election Commission deployed 471 poll workers on Election Day to the five voting centers. This number does not include the Milwaukee Health Department Staff, Milwaukee Police Department staff, or the National Guard members who were also deployed. Assigned duties included crowd control, curbside voting, voter check-in at computers, voter registration, machine attendants, greeters who confirmed correct polling place for voters, disinfecting surfaces, and more.

7. Did the Commission rely on the Governor's executive order to postpone the election, even though he had previously indicated that he lacked the authority to do so?
    a. No. The Governor's executive order was issued a day prior to the election. The five voting centers were established 4 days prior to that announcement based on an extreme poll worker shortage.

b. Lack of adequate poll worker assistance.

1. What were the Commission's efforts to recruit and train poll workers prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.
    a. Prior to Covid-19, to my knowledge, the Election Commission had recruited and trained enough poll workers to staff all 180 voting sites for the April 7 election.

2. How did these efforts shift as Covid-19's spread became more of a threat to the number of poll workers?
    a. The Election Commission began seeing a drastic drop in poll workers willing to work on April 7 two weeks prior to the election. During that time period, we continued to recruit and train new election inspectors. We also reached out to all City employees encouraging them to work. Efforts included a shift in the City's pay policy to not require employees to use a vacation day, allowing salaried employees to be eligible for the stipend, and increasing Election Day pay by $100.

3. Please describe the coordination between the city of Milwaukee, the county of Milwaukee, the Wisconsin Elections Commission, and the Wisconsin National Guard regarding poll workers ahead of the Wisconsin Primary.
    a. This question would need to be answered by the County of Milwaukee, Wisconsin Election Commission, and Wisconsin National Guard. I was not in office at the time and was not involved in coordination of the efforts.

4. Do you plan on utilizing additional National Guard troops for the November general election?
    a. The City of Milwaukee does not have the authority to deploy National Guard troops. Since becoming Executive Director, I have hired a new Deputy Director who has a background in community organizing and leadership development. He has an extensive professional network and already begun to create a communication and recruitment plan.

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Furthermore, we hired over 500 new election inspectors in the month of July. I am confident that we will not need the National Guard's assistance to serve as election inspectors in November. Instead, we will have a well-trained workforce that is prepared to serve during a pandemic.

5. What training did Wisconsin National Guard troops receive ahead of the primary election?
   a. The Wisconsin Election Commission conducted the virtual training for National Guard members. Questions about that training should be directed to their staff.

c. Staffing Crisis

1. Please use this as an opportunity to reassure the Committee that the hiring process for the position of Executive Director for the Milwaukee Election Commission was fair and open.
   a. The Executive Director of the Milwaukee Election Commission serves at the pleasure of the Mayor of Milwaukee as a member of his cabinet. I was put forth as the candidate in May, appeared at a confirmation hearing before the Judiciary and Legislation Committee on June 8 where I received the unanimous support of the entire committee, and then had my appointment sent back to Committee by the Common Council on June 16th. The Election Commission and Mayor's office were never contacted or offered a special Judiciary and Legislative hearing, which had been discussed on June 16, so that the process could be expedited and vacancies filled. On July 7, upon the motion of Alderman Borkowski, I was confirmed by an 8-7 vote of the Common Council. These were all public proceedings and are available on the City's website to watch.

2. Please use this as an opportunity to reassure the Committee of your honesty and transparency with respect to serving as Executive Director of the Milwaukee Election Commission.
   a. My record of accomplishment and reputation amongst staff, election workers, election observers, community groups, the Wisconsin Election Commission, and other peers speaks many more volumes to my honesty and integrity than one sentence from a withdrawal letter.

3. Please outline any directional changes within the office you hope to implement ahead of the November general election.
   a. Since taking my oath of office, I have hired a deputy director, added a ninth permanent position in the office, and ensured that we can open 170 polling locations in August and November. My close partnership with community organizations has helped us to recruit over 500 new election workers for August. Additionally, I have been working since May for the City to receive a grant from the Center for Tech and Civic Life in order to help us make elections more secure and safe this Fall. We just received the 2.15 million dollar award.

   In early July, the Election Commission mailed a SafeVote postcard to every single City of Milwaukee household, encouraging them to vote by mail for their own safety. We are offering assistance at Milwaukee Library branches that my own employees are staffing because the libraries are still closed due to COVID19. Another postcard will be mailed at the beginning of September, and we plan to continue to offer library assistance across the City due to its popularity. I have ordered 15 secure drop boxes for absentee ballots, which will be at every Milwaukee library as well as other municipal buildings, so that voters have a safe option to return their ballot 24 hours a day without having to rely on the United States Postal Service. Furthermore, since April, I have been working with

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nonprofit organizations that specialize in voting at home so that we can make process improvements. I have purchased equipment that will automate and expedite the absentee assembly process, freeing up employees to staff our 15 early voting sites. Prior to my administration, the City was going set to have 8 early voting sites.

I say all of this because I have been the leader in every single initiative mentioned – before, during and after my transition to the Executive Director position. Even after withdrawing, I continued to work at the Election Commission to ensure that nothing fell through the cracks and that the path of forward-thinking was maintained. I withdrew my withdrawal after requests from leaders in GOTV groups, elected officials, colleagues in other City departments and with my own coworkers to reconsider and be appointed as the executive director.

I have attached my report on Racial Equity and Inclusion, which focuses even deeper on my priorities for the department this Fall.

Sincerely,

Claire Woodall-Vogg
Executive Director

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Appendix B

City of Madison 2020 General Election Plans

Our goal is that each eligible voter will be able to cast a ballot and have that ballot counted.

After the April 2020 election, we analyzed voter turnout data and conducted an equity analysis on voter access during the pandemic. The plans we made for the August Partisan Primary and the November General Election were based on that analysis. Once we finish recording voter participation for the Partisan Primary, we will examine the data from August, and will revisit our plans for November.

The plans outlined below are our plans as of mid-August. We will adjust these plans as needed, based on the advice of Public Health and the needs of our community.

Absentee Ballot Mailings
Changes made to the state's voter registration system after the April Election have significantly reduced the amount of time required to process and approve absentee requests submitted through the My Vote website.

Full-time Clerk's Office personnel and hourly absentee clerks process our absentee requests. Full-time employees process absentee requests submitted via e-mail. Hourly employees process requests submitted via My Vote and requests submitted through the mail. We follow up with each voter who submits an insufficient request, e.g., missing voter ID or not registered at current address.

As we did for the Partisan Primary, we will have socially distanced poll workers assemble absentee mailings daily, ensuring that ballots are mailed within one business day of being requested. Full-time Clerk's Office employees generate absentee mailing labels every morning and, as demand requires, several times throughout the day.

We make sure that the poll worker pulling the ballots for an absentee mailing is not one of the poll workers putting the ballots in envelopes. The poll workers assembling the ballot mailing use a ballot style guide to double-check that each voter is receiving the correct ballot style. Before we take each tray of ballots to the mailroom, we double-check that each envelope contains a ballot. As we finish checking each tray for ballots, we use a laminated label to signify that we have verified that the tray is ready to mail.

Our absentee ballot mailings are postmarked, sealed, and mailed out by the employees in the Dane County mailroom.

We have worked with the Center for Civic Design to improve the supplemental materials we include with the state's uniform instructions in every ballot mailing. Our absentee certificate envelopes are being printed with the voter signature line, witness signature line, and witness address box pre-highlighted.

We are communicating with our Postmaster and mail carrier. Some of the feedback we have received is that it would be helpful if the voter label on the certificate envelope was not in a mailing address format. Even though the label is sideways on the back of the

envelope, voters sometimes find that the certificate envelope they had mailed to the City Clerk's Office gets delivered back to their own mailbox.

If a voter notifies us that they did not receive their ballot in the mail, and it has been at least a week since we mailed the ballot, we verify the voter's mailing address and reissue the ballot. If we notice a pattern of issues, we notify the Elections Commission.

We are ordering 14 ballot drop boxes that we plan to install in early October. We are working with City of Madison Planning and City of Madison Engineering to finalize installation plans and other logistics. It is too early in our planning process to be able to provide a complete plan for the ballot drop boxes.

We will also once again offer locations where voters can drop off their absentee ballot with poll workers stationed outside of a library, the City-County Building, or other locations throughout the city, beginning September 22. Poll workers will be wearing high visibility vests and face masks, and will be able to serve as a witness, if needed. Poll workers will sanitize pens and clipboards after each use. At the end of each shift, another poll worker will show up with an absentee delivery bag and chain-of-custody form. The poll worker serving as an absentee courier and another poll worker will count the number of absentee ballots being taken back to the Clerk's Office, document that number on the chain-of-custody form, seal the ballots in the courier bag with a tamper-evident seal, document the seal serial number, and both sign the chain-of-custody form. The absentee delivery bag will be taken directly to the City Clerk's Office, where Clerk's Office personnel verify the seal number and number of ballots against the chain-of-custody form.

On Election Day, voters may return their absentee ballots directly to their polling location. Absentee ballots are processed at the polls in Madison.

In response to our equity analysis, we are not pushing voters to vote by mail. Many African Americans do not trust voting by mail, and voting by mail is not an accessible option for many voters with disabilities. We are working to provide safe options to vote in person or to vote by mail, and are letting voters know they have options. We are communicating with voters through social media, our website, local media, community organizations, and neighborhood groups. We will also be conducting a voter outreach advertising campaign this fall.

Because COVID-19 has made it impossible to follow the usual process of sending two poll workers to each nursing home and assisted living facility to deliver absentee ballots, we are offering each of our care facilities an informational session with Clerk's Office personnel via Zoom.

We are working with the Dane County Sheriff's Office and the County Clerk's Office to ensure that eligible voters who are in the Dane County Jail will be able to get their ID photocopied at intake so they are able to request an absentee ballot.

In-Person Absentee Voting
We have 25 potential in-person absentee voting locations for the General Election, as we did for the Partisan Primary. In-person absentee voting will begin on October 20, and

will conclude on November 1, as allowed by state law. The dates and hours for each location have yet to be finalized, and will be weather dependent if the facilities hosting absentee voting remain closed to the public in October, pushing absentee voting to the curb.

As we did in April and in August, we will offer drive-up and walk-up in-person absentee voting. We plan to set up large tents for absentee voting on the UW-Madison campus, as we did in August.

We have ordered carts that will allow voters with disabilities to independently cast secret ballots using the ExpressVote ballot-marking device without leaving their vehicle. For many voters with disabilities, absentee voting by mail is not an accessible option.

Election Day Polling Locations
If there wasn't a pandemic, we would have 92 polling locations in the City of Madison this November. Our goal for the 2020 General Election is to have at least 92 polling locations, each with enough space to facilitate social distancing. The decision to establish as many polling locations as possible, as close to the ward voting at that polling location as possible, was based on our equity analysis.

We are searching for spacious, accessible facilities that will open their doors for voters on November 3. If we cannot find enough facilities willing to serve as polling locations, we will set up large tents for voting like we did at Elver Park in August.

We will continue working with Public Health on poll worker instructions and safety precautions. The current plan, which may be adjusted based on advice from Public Health, is to use the safety precautions we used in August. All poll workers wore masks and were encouraged to frequently wash/sanitize their hands. Curbside voting poll worker teams wore high visibility safety vests, face masks and face shields. Poll workers sat behind Plexiglas screens at the poll book table, ballot table, and voter registration table. Poll workers sanitized pens, clipboards, voting booths, and touchscreens after each use. Voters were offered hand sanitizer as they entered and exited the polling place. Each polling location used painter's tape to indicate where voters should stand in order to stay six feet apart in line. Every hour, the poll workers at the ballot table reminded everyone in the polling location to practice social distancing.

We always split the poll books to minimize voter lines, and use the MIT Voter Technology Project tools to ensure that each polling place will be adequately staffed. Chief Inspectors are instructed to call the City Clerk's Office for additional help if the voter line becomes 15 minutes long. Poll workers keep track of how long it takes to get through the voter line as they stand in line with absentee ballots to process. We dispatch members of our poll worker Rapid Response Team to polling locations that are developing lines or have last-minute vacancies.

We will pay our poll workers $21.79 an hour on November 3, which will be 60% more than the Living Wage rate we usually pay our poll workers. We are working with UW-Madison to recruit college students to work at the polls. We are recruiting city employees to work at the polls. We have worked with the UW PEOPLE Program to recruit poll workers, and have recruited licensed bartenders to work at the polls. We will

be paying poll workers to both conduct voter outreach and recruit poll workers throughout the community this fall.

Processing Absentee Ballots at the Polls

The City of Madison processes its absentee ballots at the polls. Each polling location is sent its absentee ballot certificate envelopes in bankers boxes sealed with tamper-evident seals bearing unique serial numbers. The envelopes are alphabetized before the Clerk's Office seals each box. Poll workers compare seal serial numbers to the chain-of-custody form, and document the seal numbers as they open each box of absentees.

Poll workers check each envelope for sufficiency, and check absentee voter names against the ineligible voter list before carrying five envelopes at a time to the poll book. A poll worker announces each absentee voter's name and address at the poll book, where poll book officials assign and record the voter number. Once voter numbers have been assigned, poll workers slice open the envelopes, separate the envelopes from the ballots, and feed the ballots into the tabulator to be counted.

Poll workers work in pairs whenever they are handling a ballot that has been marked by a voter. As poll workers process absentee ballots, they wear an Election Official badge on their back that says "Processing Absentees" so voters in the polling location are aware of what these poll workers are doing with multiple ballots in their hands.

Each polling location calls the Clerk's Office with voter turnout at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. For elections held during the pandemic, each polling location also provides the Clerk's Office with 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. updates on the number of absentee ballots processed. The Clerk's Office compares these numbers to the overall number of absentee ballots returned for each ward, and sends additional poll workers from the Absentee Response Team to polling locations that have the greatest percentage of absentee ballots left to process. As polling locations finish processing their absentee ballots, Chief Inspectors notify the Clerk's Office that they have poll workers who are available to help other polling locations process absentees.

Absentee ballots will be processed on Election Day, as usual, and results will be run on election night November 3. Poll workers are instructed to process absentee ballots throughout the day, and not to stop processing absentees when voters are present, for transparency purposes.

Voter Outreach

The City Clerk's Office uses Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to communicate with Madison residents. Public Information Officers in multiple city agencies help promote information voters need to know, as does the Emergency Operations Center communications team. The Mayor, Alderpersons, and the City of Madison neighborhood listserv also will help communicate information to voters.

We are working with Madison City Channel to release an elections podcast series in September. We plan to issue at least 24 press releases related to the General Election. When it has enough notice, the Civil Rights Department gets our press releases translated into Spanish.

We are partnering with community organizations to offer question and answer sessions for voters via Facebook Live. We also are partnering with community organizations to provide voting information through podcast episodes produced by these community partners.

We will hold curbside voter registration drives and Get Your ID on File drives throughout the city in September and October, particularly in areas of Madison where voters are less likely to have the ability to register and submit absentee requests online. We are paying poll workers from neighborhoods at greater risk of disenfranchisement to conduct curbside voter outreach.

If polling locations change up to two weeks before an election, the Clerk's Office sends all registered voters in the affected ward a postcard notice. Polling place assignment plans in the state's voter registration system and on the City of Madison website are updated as soon as a polling location is confirmed. City of Madison Planning prepares an online polling place map to help voters determine whether their polling location may have moved since the last election. When a polling location does move, we post signage at the previous polling location on Election Day in case any voters show up at the old polling location out of habit.

Poll Worker Training

Until it is safe to gather for training in person, poll worker training will be conducted through webinars produced by Madison City Channel, and through Zoom question and answer sessions for Chief Inspectors. Training for new poll workers will be offered via Zoom with both Clerk's Office personnel and experienced poll workers answering questions.

As the Elections Commission develops resources that poll workers may find helpful, we send our poll workers links to these resources. An example would be the Election Day & COVID-19: Poll Worker Procedures webinar released by WEC on August 3.

About half of our poll workers in April and in August were new poll workers. Chief Inspectors pair new poll workers with experienced poll workers at the beginning of each shift so the new poll workers are able to ask questions as they become familiar with each task. Our poll workers rotate tasks throughout the day so they understand the big picture of the checks and balances in place at the polls.

After each election, the Mayor sends all poll workers a heartfelt thank you message.

Appendix C

Answers to November Preparation Plan Questions provided by City of Green Bay Clerk, Kris Teske

1)Please provide a detailed narrative on any changes Green Bay is making to absentee by mail, including answers to the following questions:

Answer: Since the changes the WEC has made to the absentee voting process we were able to process absentee ballots in a timeline dictated by statutes. We approve the absentee requests-photo ID the night before and the next morning approve the remaining and then create a batch. Print the labels and then have other City departments help with the labelling of the envelopes and inserting the ballots with directions/info.

a. What measures are being adopted to ensure ballots are sent in accordance with statutory timelines? This includes fulfilling the deadline of sending ballots by the 47th day prior to the election and then filling subsequent requests within 24 hours.

b. What internal processes or chain of custody procedures are in place to ensure all ballots requested by voters are issued? Please describe any third-party mailing vendors involved in the process. If there are not vendors, please describe the process from the time a request is received in your office until the time that a ballot hits the mail stream.

Answer: The Clerk or Deputy Clerk approves the photo ID in WisVote, Clerk processes emailed absentee requests, and the Deputy Clerk does mail requests. Other City departments help with the labelling of the envelopes and inserting the ballots with directions/info. The envelopes are then taken to the Printing Department to be mailed. The City does have a third party mail service to get cheaper rates. We also have other Clerk staff and City staff trained in WisVote to help if the need arises.

c. What measures are being take to identify previous issues with mail vendors and to implement a fix to address issues?

Answer: We will follow our normal procedure. If we can investigate and fix the problem we will and mail it out again.

d. If a problem is identified (voters not receiving their ballots, ballots not tracking) what will be done to identify the issue and the ensure it's not a result of an internal workflow error?

Answer: If someone calls to say they didn't receive their ballot we will cancel the first ballot and reissue a second one.

e. How is Green Bay coordinating with the USPS ahead of November?

Answer: A discussion was had with the postmaster in April about our concerns about the envelopes going to a different city to be sorted and then being returned to Green Bay for   distribution. Our Post Master has always brought us absentee ballots later in the day (not our regular mail run) to make sure we get all of the absentee ballots we can to be counted on Election Day.

f. Where will Green Bay voters be able to drop off their absentee ballots on election day?

Answer: The City of Green Bay has a drop box right outside our door.

g. Will Green Bay voters be able to drop off their absentee ballots at polling places on election day? What will be the process for getting those ballots to central count?

Answer: No, I was told the absentee ballots need to go to the place they are being tabulated at. Which means they need to be brought down to City Hall's drop box for Central Count.

h. Will there be drop boxes or other drop off opportunities for voters?

Answer: We are working on this and using the guidance that I just received from the WEC.

i. What steps has Green Bay taken to tell voters about absentee opportunities, requirements, and deadlines?

Answer: We sent out a flyer to all citizens for the August 2020 Election. It told them what they needed to do to absentee vote and how to return the ballot and the deadline. In the envelopes we provided instructions on the different options to return the ballot and the deadline.

2) Please provide a detailed narrative on Green Bay's plans for in-person absentee ahead of the November Election, including answers to the following questions:

a.   What dates and hours will in-person absentee be offered?

Answer: We will start in-person absentee voting starting Tuesday, October 20, 2020.

October 20 – 8 am to 4:30 pm

October 21 – 8 am to 6:30 pm

October 22 – 8 am to 6:30 pm

October 23 – 8 am to 4:30 pm

October 24 – 10 am to 4 pm

October 26 – 8 am to 4:30 pm

October 27 – 8 am to 4:30 pm

October 28 – 8 am to 6:30 pm

October 29 – 8 am to 6:30 pm

October 30 – 8 am to 5:00 pm

October 31 – 10 am to 4 pm

b. How many locations will be offered?

Answer: One – the Clerk's Office.

c. Will there be drive-thru, curbside, or drop off opportunities available?

Answer: We always have curbside voting.

d. Will there be any drive-thru or alternative options available?

Answer: No

3) Please provide a detailed narrative on Green Bay's plan for in-person polling places on Election Day, November 3, including answers to the following questions:

a. How many polling places will Green Bay have on November 3?

Answer: This hasn't been decided yet.

b. What changes were made to polling locations to ensure social distancing can be maintained or to accommodate other CDC recommendations?

Answer: We have PPE (masks, face shields, gloves, cough/sneeze guards, disinfecting products, hand sanitizer, one time use pens) greeters and tape on the floor to maintain social distancing.

c. How was the decision reached on how many polling places Green Bay will have in November?

Answer: This will be decided by who will allow us to use their facility and if we can get any new facilities.

d. What considerations were weighed in terms of number of polling places and locations?

Answer: Availability of facilities and poll workers.

e. Will there be any drive thru or alternative methods available?

Answer: Curbside voting

f. What line management or mitigation efforts will be used at your polling places to avoid long wait times for voters?

Answer: Each ward will have their own "pod" in a polling location if there are more than one ward.

g. What poll worker recruitment efforts is Green Bay embarking in to prepare for November?

Answer: We have a grant team who is working with the Chief of Staff to get the word out.

g.2 What contingency plans does Green Bay have for a lack or poll workers on election day or emergency needs?

Answer: We will use City staff.

4) Please provide a detailed narrative on preparations Green Bay is making to Central Count ahead of November 3, including answers to the following questions:

a. What process/personnel changes are being made?

Answer: We are purchasing a DS450 and I have teams (number depends on absentee requests) starting at 7 am which worked very well for the August election.

b. What security measure are in place or being changed at central count to ensure that only authorized personnel have access to the ballot.

Answer: We haven't discussed this yet but if COVID-19 is still bad City Hall will be closed. I have a doorbell outside the door for observers to ring when they want to come in. They have a designated area to observe. If City Hall is open we can move to Council Chambers or our fourth floor can be locked down.

c. What changes are being made to accommodate larger numbers of absentee ballots being returned on election day? With the process change because of the larger volume of absentees that are likely to be returned on election day?

Answer: The only difference from August to November is I will keep teams until 8 pm or when the absentee ballots are completely done.

5) Please provide a detailed narrative on preparations the City of Green Bay is making for November 3, including answers to the following questions:

a. Communications plans? How will Green Bay communicate their preparation efforts to the public? How will issues on election day, during absentee, etc be communicated?

Answer: If the public needs to be notified we will send out a press release and on social media.

b. What changes have been made to MEC staff training? Chief inspector or election inspector training?

Answer: We are doing training virtually (WEC videos and manuals) with the Chief Inspector's being given last minute instructions/information by email and relaying this to their Election Inspector's.

c. How will Green Bay communicate and changes to poll locations? To voter? To the state and other parties who rely on the data to populate polling place look up tools?

Answer: We had already sent the flyer informing people to use MyVote.WI.Gov and to the City Clerk's website. Once we have decided the polling locations we will contact the WEC to make sure the correct information is in WisVote. We also put signs on the prior polling location on Election Day directing people to the polling location they need to use that day. We will also share information on social media.

D. Given the larger volume of absentee ballots, will you be able to process all of your absentee ballots on election night? If you believe tallying will extend beyond election night, what is you plan for processing absentees that may span over multiple days?

Answer: I don't know how many we will have for November. My goal, with the DS450, is to be able to process all of the absentee ballots by 8 pm. on Election Day. If for some reason that is impossible I would like to stop processing at 11 pm and start again at 7 am but I would have thought we would be getting direction from the WEC on what is appropriate.

Wisconsin Elections Commission
P.O. Box 7984
Madison, WI 53707-7984

Appendix D
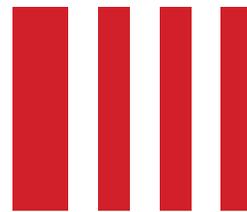
You Have Three Ways to Vote in the Election on **November 3, 2020**

OPTION 1

Voting at the polls

You can cast your ballot at your polling place on Election Day, November 3, 2020. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. To find your polling place, visit myvote.wi.gov or call 1-866-868-3947.

OPTION 2

In-person voting by absentee ballot

You can cast an absentee ballot in person before Election Day. Contact your municipal clerk's office to learn more about your community's in-person absentee voting options, locations, and hours of operation. To find your clerk, visit myvote.wi.gov or call the Wisconsin Elections Commission.

OPTION 3

Voting absentee ballot by mail

You can request an absentee ballot at myvote.wi.gov. You can also make your request by mail, using the included request form and postage-paid envelope. To learn more, turn to the next page. **Your request must be received by the Wisconsin Elections Commission or your municipal clerk no later than 5 p.m. on October 29, 2020.**

To learn more about public health and elections, visit our website, https://elections.wi.gov/covid-19

MAKE SURE YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION IS UP TO DATE

You must be registered to vote, and your name and address must be current, before you can vote in person or request an absentee ballot. The name and address on this mailer may be your current voter registration information. If you need to check your registration or update your registration you can visit myvote.wi.gov. You can also register to vote by mail, in person at your municipal clerk's office, or at your polling place on Election Day. Every option has its own deadline. Visit myvote.wi.gov or call 1-866-868-3947 to learn more.

NEED ASSISTANCE? WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

Visit myvote.wi.gov or call 1-866-868-3947 (TTY 1-800-947-3529) for assistance.

Para obtener información en Español, llama 1-866-868-3947 o visita myvote.wi.gov/es-es/

Wisconsin Elections Commission

This is an Official Mailing from the State of Wisconsin

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Requesting an Absentee Ballot

Visit **myvote.wi.gov** to request your absentee ballot online. It's easy, especially when you use a mobile device.

STEP 1
Visit
MyVote.wi.gov

MyVote.wi.gov

STEP 2
Click
Vote Absentee

STEP 3
Enter your name
and date of birth

Search

STEP 4
Upload a picture or file of
your acceptable photo ID

WISCONSIN
PHOTO ID

No internet? No problem.

Don't have easy access to the internet? Use the enclosed absentee ballot request form and postage-paid envelope to make your request.

Here are the three things you have to do:

✔ Fill out the enclosed request form.

✔ Get a photocopy of your acceptable photo ID.

✔ Mail your completed form and the photocopy of your photo ID in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible. It must arrive by October 29.

Don't wait. Request your absentee ballot today.

Your request must be received by October 29. It takes time to receive an absentee ballot, and once you receive your ballot you will need to arrange for a witness to observe and to sign your ballot return envelope. **All absentee ballots must be received by your municipal clerk no later than 8 p.m. on Election Day, November 3, 2020.**

YOU NEED A PHOTO ID TO VOTE

No matter how you cast your vote, most voters will need to show an acceptable photo ID, like a Wisconsin driver license or state ID card, US passport, or Veterans ID card. Your photo ID does not need your current address. Visit **bringit.wi.gov** to see a complete list of acceptable photo IDs and learn how to get a photo ID for free, if you don't have one.

★ **At the polls or clerk's office**
Just show your photo ID to receive your ballot.

★ **Requesting an absentee ballot online**
Upload a picture of your photo ID. It's easy when you use a mobile device.

★ **Requesting an absentee ballot by mail**
Include a picture or photocopy of your photo ID with your application.

ARE YOU INDEFINITELY CONFINED?

If you are indefinitely confined due to age, illness, infirmity, or disability, you may certify your status by checking "indefinitely confined" on the enclosed application. Wisconsin law exempts indefinitely confined voters from the requirement to provide a photo ID when requesting an absentee ballot by mail.

Wisconsin Absentee Ballot Request

! **You must be registered to vote before requesting an absentee ballot.**

! **You must provide a copy of your photo ID with this request.**

! **You must return this request to the WEC or your municipal clerk so it is received <u>no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 29, 2020</u>.**

! **This request must be completed by the voter unless assistance is required due to physical disability.**

! **If you have questions while completing this request, please contact us at (866) 868-3947.**

Please complete legibly
Additional instructions on reverse

(Wisconsin Elections Commission seal)

Voter Information provide your name and residential voting address as they appear on your Wisconsin voter record	**1**	First Name _____ Middle Name _____ Last Name _____ Suffix (Jr. II, etc.) _____ Street Address _____ Apt/Room # _____ City/Town/Village of _____ State _____ Zip _____ If you are a military or overseas voter, please check the appropriate box: See additional info on back ☐ Military ☐ Permanent Overseas ☐ Temporary Overseas
Where do you want your ballot sent?	**2**	☐ Mailing address same as above (check box and proceed to section 3). If you would like your ballot mailed to a different address, provide that information below: **Street Address (or P.O. Box)** _____ **City/State/Country/Zip** _____ Please see the back of this form for information on receiving your ballot by email or fax.
For which election(s) do you want a ballot? mark only one	**3**	☐ **The General Election on November 3, 2020** ☐ **For indefinitely-confined voters only:** I certify that I am indefinitely confined due to age, illness, infirmity, or disability and request absentee ballots be sent to me automatically until I am no longer confined or I fail to return a ballot. *Anyone who makes false statements in order to obtain an absentee ballot may be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned for not more than 6 months or both. Wisconsin State Statutes sections 12.13(3)(i) and 12.60(1)(b).* X _____ To certify as indefinitely confined your signature is required here (or an assistant may sign on your behalf if you are unable to sign because of a physical disability).
Make sure you're providing a photocopy of acceptable photo ID additional info on back	**4**	☐ Please check this box to affirm that, if required, you are providing a photocopy of acceptable photo ID. **These are common types of acceptable photo ID. Check the box for the type you are including with your request:** (see table below) **Please do not include the original physical version of your photo ID when returning your request.**
Contact Information	**5**	Please consider providing your contact information in case the WEC or your clerk need to follow up on your request (optional). Phone Number (_____) _____ Email Address _____
Voter Signature	**6**	☐ I am a registered, eligible voter in the State of Wisconsin and my name and address are up-to-date in my voter registration record. *By signing this absentee ballot request form, I attest that the information provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and ability and I have not provided any false information for the purpose of obtaining an absentee ballot. Wisconsin State Statutes sections 12.13(3)(i) and 12.60(1)(b).* X _____ _____ Voter Signature Today's Date
Assistant if someone signed this form on your behalf	**7**	*I certify that the application is made on request and by authorization of the named elector, who is unable to sign the application due to a physical disability.* X _____ _____ Assistant Signature Today's Date

Section 4 photo ID table:

Wisconsin driver license or state-issued ID card	University, college, or tech college ID (with enrollment verification)	Military ID card or photo ID issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs	U.S. Passport booklet or card	Certificate of Naturalization	ID card issued by a federally recognized Wisconsin Tribe	A receipt for a Wisconsin driver license or state-issued ID
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Wisconsin Absentee Ballot Request Instructions

1	• Provide your **name** as you are registered to vote in Wisconsin. If applicable, please provide your suffix (Jr, Sr, etc.) and/or middle name.
	• Provide your **home address** (legal voting residence) with full house number (including fractions, if any).
	• Indicate the municipality. Use the municipality's formal name (for example: City of Ashland, Village of Greendale, or Town of Albion).
	• You may not enter a P.O. Box as a voting residence. A rural route box without a number may not be used.
	• Please indicate if you are an active duty military voter, a permanent overseas voter, or a temporary overseas voter.
	   • A military voter is a person, or the spouse or dependent of a person who is a member of a uniformed service or the Merchant Marine, a civilian employee of the United States, a civilian officially attached to a uniform service and serving outside the United States, or a Peace Corps volunteer. Military voters do not need to register to vote.
	   • A permanent overseas voter is a person who is a United States citizen, 18 years old or older, who last resided in Wisconsin prior to leaving the United States, is not registered at any other location and has no present intent to return. An adult child of a United States citizen who resided in Wisconsin prior to moving abroad qualifies as a permanent overseas voter. Permanent overseas voters will receive ballots for federal offices only and must be registered prior to receiving a ballot.
	   • A temporary overseas voter is a person who is eligible to vote in Wisconsin and has a present intent to return. They will receive the full ballot and need to be registered to vote prior to receiving a ballot.

2	• Mark the first box if you would like the ballot mailed to the address listed in section 1. • If you would like your ballot mailed to a different address than the address in section 1, please list this address or P.O. Box here. • If no preference is indicated, your absentee ballot will be mailed to the address you provided in section 1. • If you would like to receive your ballot by email or fax, please contact us at (866) 868-3947 for additional information. • Voters who request their ballots by email or fax will require access to a printer and must provide their own envelope and postage to return their ballot.
3	• Mark the first box if you would like to receive a ballot for the November 3, 2020 General Election. • Mark the second box only if you are indefinitely confined due to age, illness, infirmity, or disability and wish to request absentee ballots for all elections until you are no longer confined or until you fail to return a ballot. **Indefinitely confined voters are not required to provide photo ID with this request.**
4	• Please confirm that you are attaching a copy of acceptable photo ID to your absentee ballot request. • There may be delays in receiving your absentee ballot if you do not attach a copy of acceptable photo ID to your request.
5	• Consider providing your phone number or email address so the Wisconsin Elections Commission or your municipal clerk can contact you about your request if necessary. Providing this information is optional and, if included, your contact information will be subject to public records requests.
6	• By signing this absentee ballot request form, you certify and attest that the information provided is true and correct to the best of your knowledge and ability, and that you have not provided any false information for the purpose of obtaining an absentee ballot. Anyone who makes false statements in order to obtain an absentee ballot may be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned for not more than 6 months or both. Wisconsin State Statutes 12.13(3)(i) and 12.60(1)(b). • You must be registered to vote before you can request an absentee ballot. Please check this box to confirm that you are registered and that your name and address are current in your voter registration record. • To confirm that you are registered to vote and that the information in your registration record is up-to-date, please visit https://myvote.wi.gov or contact us by phone at (866) 868-3947.
7	• In the situation where the elector is unable to sign this form due to a physical disability, the elector may authorize another elector to sign on his or her behalf. Any elector signing an application on another elector's behalf shall attest to a statement that the application is made on request and by authorization of the named elector, who is unable to sign the application due to a physical disability.

(!) **This request must be received by the WEC or delivered to your municipal clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 29, 2020.**

Return your request by mail to the WEC:

Wisconsin Elections Commission
P.O. Box 7984
Madison, WI 53707-7984

or

To find contact information for your municipal clerk,
visit https://myvote.wi.gov

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Uniform Instructions for Wisconsin Absentee Voters

E

Confirm the envelope from your clerk contains your ballot and the envelope you'll use to return your ballot.

1 Read and follow the instructions on your ballot. Mistakes may prevent your votes from being counted.

2 You must vote your ballot in the presence of an adult witness:

- Start by showing the witness your unmarked ballot.
- Mark your ballot in the presence of your witness.
- Your witness must confirm that you are the one completing your ballot but, because voting is a private activity, your witness cannot tell you who or what to vote for and cannot see the choices you make on your ballot.

Who can be a witness?

- A witness must a U.S. Citizen who is at least 18 years old.
- For military or overseas voters, your witness must be at least 18 years old but is not required to be a U.S. Citizen.
- A witness can be a friend, spouse, family member, neighbor, etc.

Who cannot be a witness?

- A candidate on the ballot for this election.

If you're having trouble finding a witness or have questions about the witness requirement, please contact your municipal clerk or the Wisconsin Elections Commission for assistance. Contact information can be found on the back of this page.

3 Refold your voted ballot and place it inside of the return envelope.
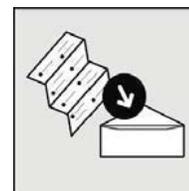
4 Seal the envelope in the presence of your witness.

5 Fill out the required sections of the form on the absentee return envelope.

To make sure your ballot is counted, double check the following before you return it:

- **Your voter information**: this section is usually completed by your clerk and includes the date of the election, the county and municipality in which you are registered, your name, the address where you are registered, city, and zip code.
- **Voter Signature:** you (or your assistant) must sign in the Certification of Voter section.
- **Witness Signature and Address:** your witness must sign and provide their **full** address (street number, street name, city) in the Certification of Witness section.
- Make sure your ballot is in your envelope and make sure the envelope is sealed properly.

If any of the required information above is missing, your ballot **will not be counted**.

6 Return your ballot.

- Your ballot must be received in time to be delivered to your polling place **no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.** There are a few options for returning your ballot.

  You can:
  - Mail it back
  - Drop it off at your municipal clerk's office
  - Drop it off at your polling place or central count location
  - Drop it off in an absentee ballot drop box (if available)
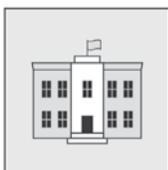
- The United States Postal Service recommends mailing your ballot at least one week before Election Day. Returning a ballot from overseas may take longer.
- **Absentee ballots may not be returned by email or fax.**

Getting Assistance

If you need help reading or filling out your ballot or absentee return envelope, you may ask for assistance from anyone who is not your employer or a representative of your labor union. Your assistant may also serve as your witness. Explaining how to fill out your ballot or return envelope is not "assistance."

With your ballot	With your absentee return envelope
• Your assistant must sign in the Certification of Voter Assistance section. • Your assistant can read your ballot to you or fill out your ballot under your direction, but cannot tell you how to vote.	• If someone signs your absentee return envelope on your behalf, make sure they also sign in the Certification of Assistant section. • Your assistant may also serve as your witness.

Correcting Ballot Mistakes

- If you make a mistake while marking your ballot or otherwise require a replacement ballot, contact your municipal clerk. Your municipal clerk's contact information is listed below.
- If there is not enough time to request a replacement ballot and you have not returned your ballot, you may still vote in-person at the polls on Election Day.
- Different types of voters have different deadlines for requesting a replacement ballot. Please see below for additional details.

5:00 p.m. on the Thursday before the election	5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the election
• Regular absentee voters • Permanent overseas voters • Temporary overseas voters	• Military voters* • Indefinitely confined voters

*If the ballot contains federal offices, military voters away from home may request replacement ballots until 5:00 p.m. on Election Day

Voter Photo Identification Information

- If you have received your ballot, then a copy of your photo ID is already on file or you are exempt from the requirement. You do not need to provide another copy of photo ID unless instructed by your clerk.
- If you have questions about the photo ID requirement, please contact your municipal clerk.

If you have any questions, please contact your municipal clerk for assistance.

Municipal Clerk Contact Information	State Election Official Contact Information
(Name of Municipal Clerk)	Wisconsin Elections Commission
(Name of Municipality)	**Help Desk:** (608) 261-2028
Phone:	**Email:** elections@wi.gov
Email:	**For voter information, check out MyVote.wi.gov**
Fax:	

Uniform Instructions for Wisconsin Absentee Voters
| Rev 8-2020 | Wisconsin Elections Commission, P.O. Box 7984, Madison, WI 5377-7984 | (608) 261-2028 | web: elections.wi.gov | email: elections@wi.gov

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