



# Wisconsin Elections Commission

212 East Washington Avenue | Third Floor | P.O. Box 7984 | Madison, WI 53707-7984  
(608) 266-8005 | elections@wi.gov | elections.wi.gov

**DATE:** March 12, 2020

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

**FROM:** Meagan Wolfe  
Administrator

**SUBJECT: Guidance Regarding Election Procedures and COVID-19 Public Health Emergency**

Governor Evers issued Executive Order #72 on March 12, 2020 proclaiming that a public health emergency exists in the State of Wisconsin as a result of the COVID-19 Coronavirus. The Order designates the Department of Health Services as the lead agency in responding to the public health emergency and directs all state agencies to assist in the State's ongoing response to the emergency.

In light of Executive Order #72 and directives of the Department of Health Services, the Wisconsin Elections Commission held a special Commission meeting concerning Special Voting Deputy voting in care facilities and the relocation of polling places located in care facilities for the upcoming Spring Election and Presidential Preference Primary and Special Election in the 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. The Commission decided the following:

- **Municipalities shall not use the Special Voting Deputy process to serve residents in care facilities for these two elections and instead shall transmit absentee ballots to those voters by mail. At this point, we are asking clerks to suspend scheduling SVD visits and wait for direction from our office in terms of how to engage with care facilities that are typically served by SVDs to ensure all voters who usually use that process are able to request that a ballot be sent to them.**
- **The municipal clerk or municipal election commission executive director may relocate polling places for these two elections located in nursing homes or other care facilities, and other facilities as determined by the Department of Health Services or local health officials, without obtaining prior approval of the local governing body or municipal elections commission. Please begin working with your local health authorities to determine whether any polling places in your municipality may no longer be available. We will provide additional guidance for the process of relocating your polling place plans and notifying voters of the change.**

Additional background information is in the attached memo. Staff will provide details specific to these procedural changes on a continuous basis and will be hosting multiple webinars regarding election preparedness on Monday, March 16, 2020. Details on the webinars can be found here: <https://elections.wi.gov/node/6708>.

*Wisconsin Elections Commissioners*

Dean Knudson, chair | Marge Bostelmann | Julie M. Glancey | Ann S. Jacobs | Robert Spindell | Mark L. Thomsen

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Administrator  
Meagan Wolfe

The situation concerning COVID-19 and the upcoming elections is fluid and quickly evolving, so guidance changes daily. The WEC is working with federal and state public health officials to determine the most effective guidance to provide to local election officials dealing with this crisis. We will provide additional information to local election officials as it is available.

If you have questions, please contact the WEC Help Desk at (608) 261-2028, or [elections@wi.gov](mailto:elections@wi.gov).