

Orientation: COVID-19 and Election Administration

COVID-19 and Election Administration:

Approaches for Election Officials

May 19, 2020

Housekeeping

- Be gracious about **work-from-home setups**
- **Restart Zoom** if needed
- **Slides and captioned recordings** will be available on the registration page
- Use the **chat panel** to say hello, chat with other attendees, and ask questions

Today's objectives

- Get clear on terminology and processes associated with **mail balloting and other pandemic-related election responses**
- Review key **election timelines** to prioritize policy, process, and tech decisions
- **Preview resources** to support your work, including the federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) framework and this CTCL webinar series

Today's agenda

- Introduction (5 minutes)
- Context and terminology (10 minutes)
- Series preview (15 minutes)
- Helpful resources (10 minutes)
 - Update from CISA
- Discussion (20 minutes)

Hello, there!



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Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL)

Harnessing the promise of
technology to modernize the
American voting experience

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Federal resources

- Set of documents provide guidance for state, local, tribal, and territorial election officials
- Written by the Joint COVID-19 Working Group
 - Cyber Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
 - Elections Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council (GCC)
 - Elections Infrastructure Sector Coordinating Council (SCC)

<https://www.cisa.gov/publication/covid-19-election-resources>

Keep in mind

1. This is tough!
2. One size doesn't fit all
3. Things will change
4. Preparation and flexibility > certainty
5. A supportive team > a solo mission
6. Your work *matters*, and it's hugely appreciated

Getting on the same page

CONTEXT AND TERMINOLOGY

It's an unprecedented year

Anchorage municipal election ballot deadline extended

Friday, April 3rd 2020, 12:01 AM AKDT

NEWS

Vote-by-mail allows residents to vote at home amid public health concerns

Voting during coronavirus? Primary turnout record smashed

By Erin Grace and Steve Liewer World-Herald staff writers May 12, 2020 Updated May 13, 2020

Milwaukee's long lines could be a warning ahead of November

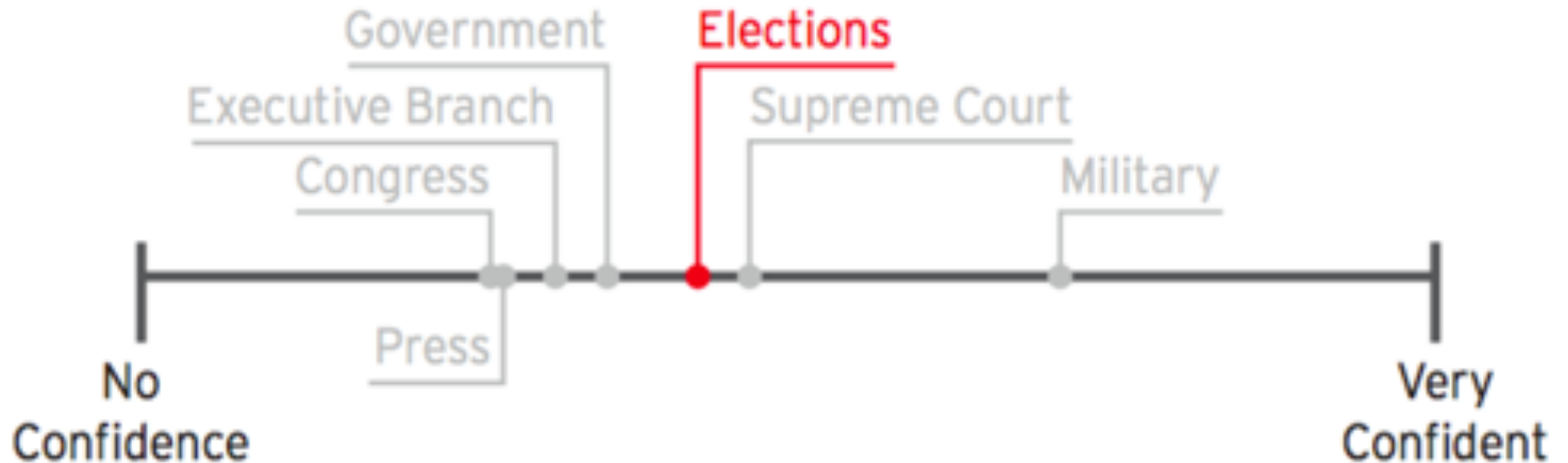
By ZACH MONTELLARO | 04/08/2020 10:00 AM EDT

Ohio Primary Postponed At Last Minute Due To Coronavirus After Legal Struggle

March 16, 2020 · 3:32 PM ET

Election officials are positioned to make a big difference

Election administration ranks well when compared to other institutions in trust.



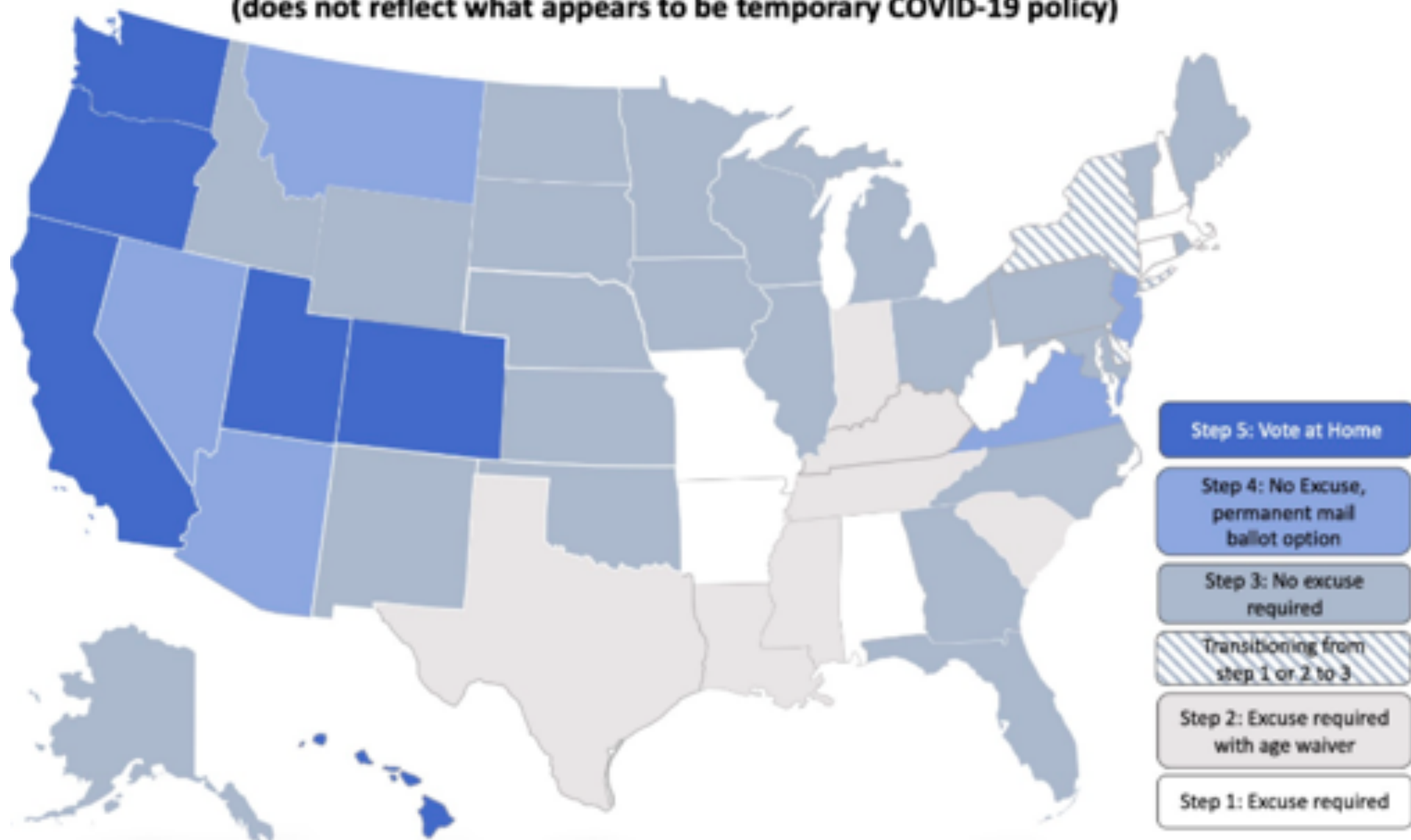
Mail balloting

- Absent voter ballots
- Absentee voting
- Vote by mail
- Vote at home
- and more!

Mail balloting: steps

- Step 1 - excuse required
- Step 2 - excuse required (age waiver)
- Step 3 - no excuse required
- Step 4 - no excuse required + permanent list
- Step 5 - all voters mailed a ballot + in-person options

Vote at Home Status by State – May 2020
(does not reflect what appears to be temporary COVID-19 policy)



In-person balloting

- Precinct-based polling places
- Vote centers
- Variations
 - Traditional lines
 - Curbside voting
 - Drive through voting

Overlaps: mail and in-person balloting

- Dropboxes
- Dropping off ballots at office or voting location
- Surrendering ballots at office or voting location
- In-person absentee voting

POLL: What's your biggest concern as we approach the 2020 General Election?

Approaches for state and local election officials

SERIES PREVIEW

Four themes

Webinars every Tuesday and Thursday through Tuesday, June 30th

Except Tuesday, June 2

- Making sense of the moment
- Getting ballots to voters
- Receiving and processing ballots
- Conducting in-person voting

Supporting election officials

Thursday, May 21 | 2pm-3pm EST

***Guest speakers:** Pam Anderson – Colorado County Clerks Association & Jennifer Morrell – Elections Group*

- Put together a resiliency plan for you and your team
- Know who to reach out to (colleagues, state officials, and experts) when questions come up
- Engage your state association in an effort to support fellow local election officials

Planning 2020 workload and resource allocation

Tuesday, May 26 | 2pm-3pm EST

***Guest speaker:** Noah Praetz – Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)*

- Estimate the number of voters requesting mail ballots in your community
- Understand how shifts in voting methods impact your resource allocation plans
- Use new tools to update plans as pandemic conditions change

Ensuring access, equity, and inclusion

Thursday, May 28 | 2pm-3pm EST

***Guest speakers:** Indra Arriaga – Alaska Division of Elections & Michelle Bishop – National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)*

- Ensure all voters can cast a ballot by prioritizing practices like curbside voting, electronic ballot delivery, and partnerships with local community groups
- Translate election materials appropriately, including new mailed materials
- Respond to the needs of voters displaced by the pandemic

Educating voters about their options

Thursday, June 4 | 2pm-3pm EST

***Guest speakers:** Steve Daitch – Ottawa County, MI & Jeff Narabrook – Minneapolis, MN*

- Clearly communicate changes with voters using principles of plain language and design
- Proactively answer voters' top questions online and over the phone
- Explain expanded options for casting a ballot, including their history of security and reliability

Maintaining voter lists

Tuesday, June 9 | 2pm-3pm EST

- Understand how the COVID-19 pandemic may result in new voter registration patterns
- Implement best practices for increasing voter list accuracy
- Proactively streamline voter registration and mail ballot requests

Managing mail ballot request forms

Thursday, June 11 | 2pm-3pm EST

- Apply best practices to plan for and respond to increased volume
- Adapt simplified templates for your office's forms
- Consider creative approaches for distributing and receiving mail ballot requests

Organizing ballot dropoff locations

Tuesday, June 16 | 2pm-3pm EST

- Create a ballot dropoff plan for your community based on voter preferences
- Implement best practices for the ongoing management of ballot dropoff locations
- Communicate with voters about ballot dropoff locations, rules, and timelines

Streamlining the inbound ballot process

Thursday, June 18 | 2pm-3pm EST

- Use simple tools to estimate ballot volume, processing time, and resource needs
- Plan for time-intensive processes like ballot remakes and spoiled ballots
- Update guidelines for tracking, reconciling, adjudicating, and securing more mail ballots

Verifying and curing signatures

Tuesday, June 23 | 2pm-3pm EST

- Train election workers on the fundamentals of signature verification
- Review options for helping voters “cure” signature issues after they submit their ballots
- Audit and expand your existing signature files

Recruiting and training election workers

Thursday, June 25 | 2pm-3pm EST

- Recruit more people from less vulnerable populations and keep them safe
- Plan efficient and effective online trainings for election workers
- Prepare election workers to handle questions, paperwork, and processes related to the pandemic

Implementing public health guidelines for voting locations

Tuesday, June 30 | 2pm-3pm EST

- Adjust voting location processes, layouts, and supplies lists based on public health guidelines
- Plan for a variety of voting location types, such as clerk offices and consolidated precincts
- Communicate clearly with voters, before election day and on-site, to keep everyone safe

Timeline considerations: 4-6 months out

- **Making sense of the moment**
 - Analyze space and staffing needs (165 days)
- **Getting ballots to voters**
 - Update request forms and contract for production (152 days)
 - Get envelope artwork approval from USPS (140 days)
 - Institute CISA best practices for data transfers to vendor (150 days)
 - Identify quantity for ballot printing paper order (152 days)
- **Receiving and processing ballots**
 - Review voter database for voters without signature files (123 days)

Additional support for election officials

HELPFUL RESOURCES



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- COVID-19 webinar recordings
techandcivicliflife.org/covid-19-webinars/
- Communicating Trusted Election Information recordings
techandcivicliflife.org/course/trusted-info/
- Vote at Home webinar recordings
techandcivicliflife.org/vote-at-home/

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- Resource library

[voteathome.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/NVAHI-Reference-Library.pdf](https://www.voteathome.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/NVAHI-Reference-Library.pdf)

- Policy updates

<https://www.voteathome.org/>

@VoteatHome

[voteathome.org](https://www.voteathome.org)



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Civic Design

- Scaling up vote by mail
civicdesign.org/tool-kit-for-scaling-up-vbm/
- Designing vote at home envelopes
and materials
civicdesign.org/fieldguides/104-designing-vote-at-home-envelopes/

@CivicDesign

civicdesign.org

civicdesign.org/projects/roadmap/

ElectionTools.org

- Civic icons and images
electiontools.org/tool/civic-icons-and-images/
- Voter outreach graphics
electiontools.org/tool/voter-outreach-graphics/
- Pocket voter guide
electiontools.org/tool/pocket-voter-guide-template/

electiontools.org



- Sign up for weekly or daily emails
- News, best practices, training opportunities and more!

@Electionline
electionline.org

Federal resources

- Ballot Drop Box
- Election Education & Outreach for Increased Absentee or Mail Voting
- Electronic Ballot Delivery and Marking
- Helping Voters to Request a Mail-In Ballot
- Importance of Accurate Voter Data When Expanding Absentee or Mail Ballot Voting
- Inbound Ballot Process
- Managing an Increase in Outbound Ballots
- Signature Verification & Cure Process
- Vote By Mail Project Timeline
- Telework

<https://www.cisa.gov/publication/covid-19-election-resources>

<https://www.cisa.gov/telework>

Cybersecurity Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

- Vulnerability Scanning
- Remote Penetration Testing
- Phishing Campaign Assessment

To request services email:
vulnerability_info@cisa.dhs.gov



Let's talk

DISCUSSION



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Share your thoughts

- Which webinars are you most excited about?
- Any webinars you want to share with colleagues?
- What questions do you have about what we covered today?
- What questions do you have about what we *didn't* cover today?

Up next

- Supporting election officials (Thursday, May 21)
- Planning 2020 workload and resource allocation (Tuesday, May 26)
- Ensuring access, equity, and inclusion (Thursday, May 28)
- Educating voters about their options (Thursday, June 4)
- Maintaining voter lists (Tuesday, June 9)
- Managing mail ballot request forms (Thursday, June 11)
- Organizing ballot dropoff locations (Tuesday, June 16)
- Streamlining the inbound ballot process (Thursday, June 18)
- Verifying and curing signatures (Tuesday, June 23)
- Recruiting and training election workers (Thursday, June 25)
- Implementing public health guidelines for voting locations (Tuesday, June 30)

techandcivicle.org/covid-19-webinars/

As more questions come up...

- Reach out to CTCL
 - We'll help out, or
 - We'll try to find someone for you who can

Thanks!

Email: hello@techandcivicle.org

Twitter: [@HelloCTCL](https://twitter.com/HelloCTCL)

Website: www.techandcivicle.org