

Educating voters about their options

*COVID-19 and Election Administration:
Approaches for Election Officials*
June 4, 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

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

Today's agenda

- Introduction (5 minutes)
- Effective communication (10 minutes)
- Answer voters' top questions (10 minutes)
- Communication channels (10 minutes)
- Q&A (20 minutes)
- Wrapping up and course survey (5 minutes)

Hello, there!



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CENTER FOR
TECH AND
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Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL)

Harnessing the promise of
technology to modernize the
American voting experience

@helloCTCL

www.techandciviclife.org

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's (SCC)
- <https://www.cisa.gov/protect2020>

How can I provide information clearly?

Principles of effective communication

Acknowledge voter's fears, but offer voters a sense of clarity and calm messages.



3 in 4

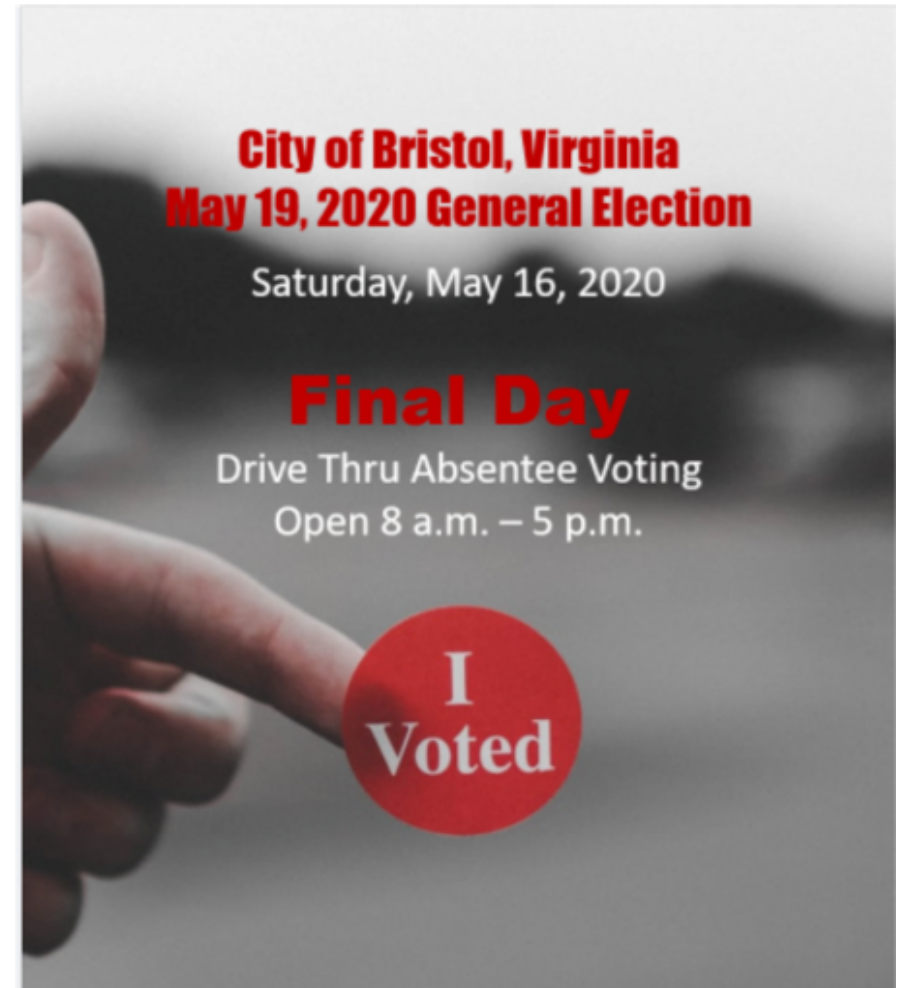
**voters support no
excuse absentee
voting**

Plain language

- Write in the positive
- Use active rather than passive voice
- Address the reader directly
- Use short words, short sentences, and short sections
- Use the words voters will be looking for, and avoid jargon

Plain design

- Include white space to make content manageable
- Use menus and headings effectively
- Use lists where appropriate
- Use a sans serif font that is at least 12 point size
- Use strong contrast between text color and background



This election, more people will be voting absentee than ever before.

Voters in our county have had the option to vote over the mail for decades. This fall, we're planning for lots of folks to choose the mail option.

How can my office proactively manage questions?

Managing voters' top questions

Top questions from voters

1. What is on the ballot?
2. How do I get an absentee ballot, and when is it due?
3. Where do I vote?
4. Who is in office now?
5. How do I register to vote?

Top question from non-voters

1. How do I participate in an election?

Questions about increased mail balloting

- General questions
- Receiving a mail ballot
- Marking and returning a ballot
- Independent and accessible voting
- Tabulating vote by mail ballots

https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/electionofficials/vbm/Election_Education_Outreach_041720.pdf

If I make a mistake marking my ballot, can I correct the mistake on my existing ballot, or do I need to request a new ballot?

How do you verify the ballot is coming from the voter authorized to vote it? (e.g., signature verification, copy of voter identification or proof of residence?)

How does an increase in absentee mail ballots affect the counting of ballots and results reporting?



Harford County Board of Elections

May 19 at 10:01 AM · 🌐

We know you have worries about putting your ballot in the mail. That's why we have ballot boxes! We want EVERY ballot to make it to us so we have many options to return your ballot.

Available Today - June 2nd at our office or the McFaul Activity Center!

[#VoteByMail](#) [#VoteByDropBox](#) [#FastFreeEasySafe](#)

BALLOT DROP BOXES

**FAST &
FREE**

**Drive - Up
Option**

**24/7
surveillance**





**Picked up
3x daily**

**SAFE &
SECURE**


**Handled by
BOE Staff**

Respond to voter concerns


 **Michael Joiner** So, what would prevent some nefarious persons from slipping hundreds of "anonymous" ballots into the system? What controls are in place, and where are they?

Like · Reply · 1w  3

 **Rachael Millner-Bawgus** I will never mail in my vote! I will stand in line ty very much! Fraud happens!

Like · Reply · 1d  3

↳ View 2 more replies

 **Author**
Harford County Board of Elections ✓ **Cliff Gelnett**
We encourage you to become an election judge and see how the process works behind the scenes! It may change your view! <https://harfordvotes.info/become-an-election-judge/>

Manage expectations for Election Day



 **Seneca County Board of Elections** was live. ⋮
April 28 · 🌐

The Election Night live stream is brought to you by the Seneca County Board of Elections. Stay tuned for a look inside how the election is conducted. We'll also have results available during the stream as soon as we have them.

BROADCAST WILL BEGIN SHORTLY


-1:51:38   

Our mission: to help our customers and encourage their trust in government

Effective communication is key to our mission – we try to anticipate our customers' information needs, and provide the same information consistently

HELPING CUSTOMERS
AND ENCOURAGING
THEIR TRUST IN
GOVERNMENT

Ottawa County
Clerk | Register of Deeds

OttawaCoElections ✓
@OttawaElections

Elections Division of the Ottawa County Clerk's Office. Follow for #voting news, Ottawa County Election information/updates. Remember to tag #ottawavotes

Holland/Grand Haven, Michigan miottawa.org/elections
Joined January 2014

424 Following 394 Followers

We focused on communicating with voters after the passage of **Proposal 18-3**, which dramatically changed voter registration and voting by mail

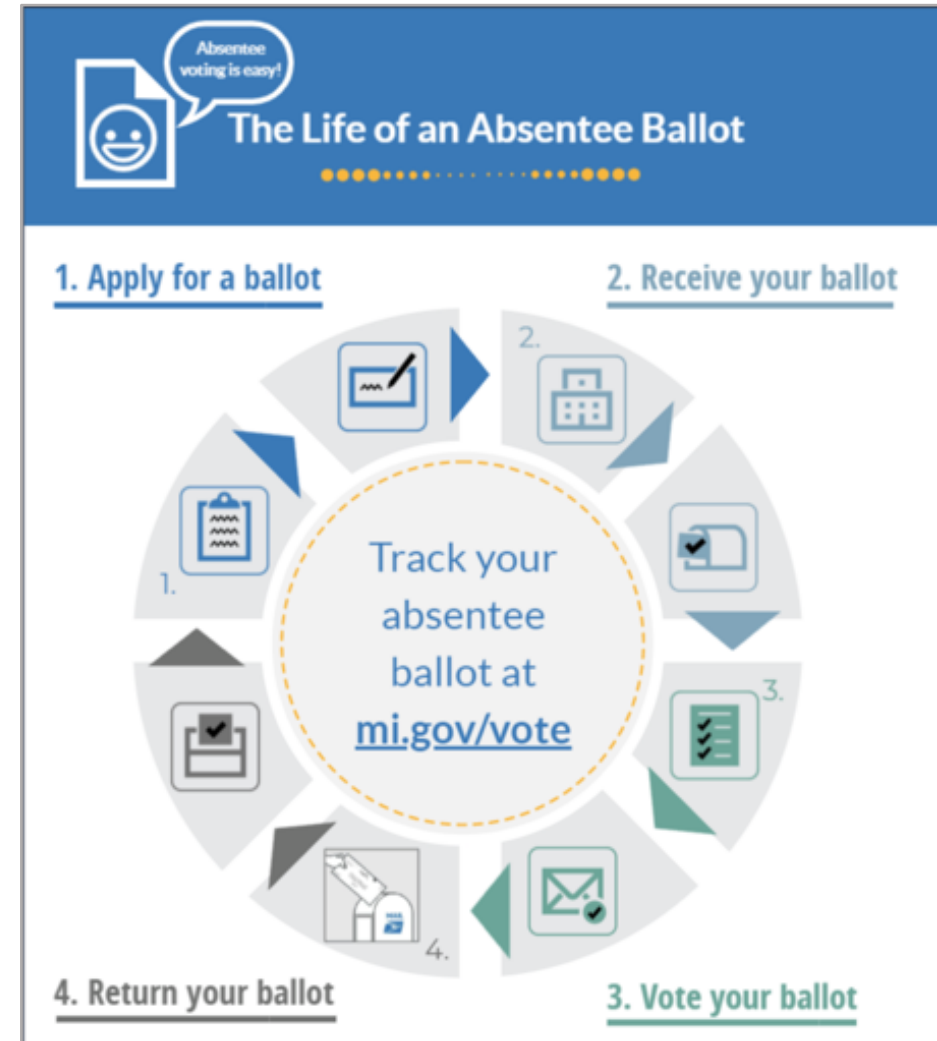
The background of the slide is a solid blue color with a repeating pattern of 'I VOTED' stamps. Each stamp features a stylized American flag with stars and stripes, and the text 'I VOTED' in a bold, sans-serif font. The stamps are arranged in a grid-like pattern, slightly offset from each other.

What is Prop 3?

Proposal 3 was a Constitutional Amendment that was passed in November 2018. This amendment affects when voters can register to vote, how they're registered, and who can vote by mail.

How we are engaging our voters

- Simple visual graphics
- Verified accounts on Facebook and Twitter
- Sharing our materials with colleagues



Final Thoughts:

- There is A LOT of national information, but there is a real need for local information:
 - Social media (especially Facebook) is a great way to reach your voters with the information they need
 - Infographic software (Visme, Canva, etc.) is worth the investment!



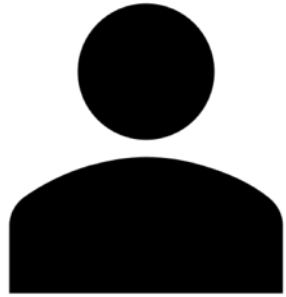
How should you conduct outreach?

Communication channels

Outreach tools

- Social media
- State and local election websites
- Television, news and media
- Email
- Inserts in utility bills or government mailings
- Direct mail
- Your staff and elections

Who can help you get the word out?



Individuals



Community
organizations



Institutions

Individuals

- What connections do people in your office have?
- What community leaders can you reach out to?



Local organizations and groups

- What organizations are active in your community?
- What groups have experience with outreach?



Institutions

- What are institutions that many voters are interacting with?
- What new target audience can you reach with a new institution?



Now in tens of thousands of Philly food boxes: Absentee ballot applications

by [Jonathan Lai](#), Updated: May 18, 2020

1 of 16  



vote.minneapolismn.gov

The screenshot shows the website for Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, Events, Jobs, Contact Us, and Translate. Below this is a search bar and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and 311. A secondary navigation bar contains links for COVID-19, Voters, Results & Data, Election Workers, Candidates, and Ranked-Choice Voting. The main banner features the Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services logo and the slogan "YourCity. YourVote." The central message is "Stay at home. Vote by mail." with a sub-header "OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOTING MATERIAL" and a blue button. Below this, it says "We're working to keep voters safe" with a red arrow button labeled "Learn how to vote by mail". The page is divided into three columns: "COVID-19 and Voting" with a link to "Apply to vote by mail now", "Upcoming Events" listing "2020 Candidate Filing Period" on May 22, "Memorial Day - Offices Closed" on May 25, and "2020 Candidate Filing Period" on May 26, and "Latest News" featuring a tweet from Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services.

MINNEAPOLIS
YourCity. YourVote.

Home Events Jobs Contact Us Translate

f t yt 311

Search

COVID-19 Voters Results & Data Election Workers Candidates Ranked-Choice Voting

Minneapolis
Elections & Voter Services

OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOTING MATERIAL

Stay at home. Vote by mail.

Signature Envelope
Voter must complete this section

OFFICIAL ELECTION MAIL

We're working to keep voters safe

> Learn how to vote by mail

COVID-19 and Voting

We're doing [everything we can to ensure a safe election season for you](#).

Our recommendation is that you stay at home and vote by mail if you can.

All Minnesota voters are eligible to [vote by mail](#) for the State Primary on August 11 and the General Election on November 3.

Apply to vote by mail now

Upcoming Events

May 22 2020 Candidate Filing Period

May 25 Memorial Day - Offices Closed

May 26 2020 Candidate Filing Period

Latest News

Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services @VoteMpls

Since we opened the week in tribute to The Office, it only feels right to end the week in the same fashion. What would your last dance with Darryl look like? 🍷

Just a reminder that our office will be closed on Monday for Memorial Day. Candidate filing will resume on Tuesday.

vote.minneapolismn.gov

Common questions about voting by mail

How it works

- + It's my first time voting by mail. What should I know?
- + Who can witness my ballot?
- + Does my ballot have to be returned by Election Day or just postmarked by then?
- + Do I need to pay for postage when I mail back my ballot?
- + Can I drop off my ballot at my polling place on Election Day?

Will my vote count?

- + I heard mail ballots only count in close races. Is that true?
- + Can I check to see that my mail ballot was counted?
- + What laws are in place to make voting by mail secure?
- + What happens after I return my ballot?

@votempls Facebook and Twitter


Post Details

Minneapolis Elections and Voter Services
Published by Hootsuite 191 · 23 hrs · 🌐

Today is the day you've been waiting for! It's the first day you can apply online to request your mail ballot for the August and November elections. To minimize direct contact with others, the CDC encourages you to vote by mail.

Apply online now for your mail ballot:
<https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/AB.../ABRegistrationStep1.aspx>

Stay at home. Vote by mail.



OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOTING MATERIAL

- ★ Make a plan, and apply online today for your ballot!
- ★ We will mail your ballot to you about 6 weeks before Election Day.

Get More Likes, Comments and Shares
When you boost this post, you'll show it to more people.

23,227 People Reached	3,110 Engagements	Boost Post
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Performance for Your Post

23,227 People Reached

1,236 Reactions, Comments & Shares 🗨️

748 Like	38 On Post	710 On Shares
52 Love	4 On Post	48 On Shares
1 Haha	1 On Post	0 On Shares
2 Wow	0 On Post	2 On Shares
4 Angry	1 On Post	3 On Shares
175 Comments	0 On Post	175 On Shares
254 Shares	254 On Post	0 On Shares

1,874 Post Clicks

218 Photo Views	509 Link Clicks 🗨️	1,147 Other Clicks 🗨️
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NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

1 Hide Post	1 Hide All Posts
0 Report as Spam	0 Unlike Page

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

Tweet Analytics

Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services @votempls

Today is the day you've been waiting for! It's the first day you can apply online to request your mail ballot for the August and November elections. To minimize direct contact with others, the @CDCgov encourages you to vote by mail.

Apply online now:
<https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/ABRegistration/ABRegistrationStep1.aspx> ... pic.twitter.com/s60U52HXBO

Impressions <small>times people saw this Tweet on Twitter</small>	10,881
Total engagements <small>times people interacted with this Tweet</small>	1,185
Link clicks <small>clicks on a URL or Card in this Tweet</small>	468
Detail expands <small>times people viewed the details about this Tweet</small>	356
Media engagements <small>number of clicks on your media counted across videos, vines, gifs, and images</small>	175
Retweets <small>times people retweeted this Tweet</small>	88

Minneapolis
Elections and Voter Services
350 S. Fifth St., Room 201
Minneapolis, MN 55415



PSRT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2140
Twin Cities, MN

For Placement Only

Minneapolis
City of Lakes

Your City. Your Vote.

2018 Voter Information Guide

Election Day is Tuesday, November 6

Voting open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Three ways to vote



Vote by mail

Return your completed ballot by Election Day. It will not count if it is received after Election Day.

Completed ballots may be returned by mail or delivery service (such as FedEx or UPS). You can also return your ballot in person **no later than 3 p.m.** on Election Day to City Hall (350 S Fifth St Room 201) or to the Downtown Early Vote Center (217 S Third St). You can drop off ballots for up to three other voters.

If you do not or cannot return your ballot by Election Day, go to your polling place and vote. You will receive a new ballot—you cannot submit your absentee ballot at your polling place.



Vote early in-person

You can vote before Election Day at any Minneapolis Early Vote Center. Early Vote Centers *are not* open for voting on Election Day.

Hours

October 31 : 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. : November 1 : 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. : November 2 : 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. : November 3 : 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. : November 4 : 12 p.m. - 5 p.m. : November 5 : 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Locations

Downtown Early Vote Center
217 S Third St

East Early Vote Center
1800 University Ave SE

North Early Vote Center
2100 Plymouth Ave N (Urban League)

South Early Vote Center
810 31st St W (Regents Assembly Church)



Vote on Election Day at your polling place

Election Day is **Tuesday, November 6**, and polls are open from **7 a.m. to 8 p.m.** You must vote at your assigned polling place. Because polling places can change from year to year, check before you vote.



Find where you vote at pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us



311 (outside Minneapolis dial 612-673-3000)

Community radio



Community organizations



DISCUSSION



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Share your thoughts

- What resonate with you from today's webinar? (Any "ah-ha" moments)?
- What are your next steps?
- What questions do you have about what we covered today?
- What questions do you have about what we didn't cover today?

As more questions come up...

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

We've covered a lot of ground

WRAPPING UP



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CIVIC LIFE

Today's resources

- CTCL Communicating Trusted Election Information
techandciviclifef.org/course/trusted-info
- Pocket voter guide template
electiontools.org/tool/pocket-voter-guide
- Voter outreach graphics
electiontools.org/tool/voter-outreach-graphics
- Vote Early Day
voteearlyday.org

Timeline considerations, 152 days out

- Pursue community partnerships now
- Get your social media accounts verified
- Focus communications on deadlines
- Encourage voters to take action before deadlines

What was your experience with today's course?

- A brief survey is linked in the chat box.
- Please complete the survey now to provide feedback and improve the course for future participants

See you soon!

- ~~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/

Thanks!

Email: hello@techandcivicle.org

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

Website: www.techandcivicle.org