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Governor



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TO: Interested Stakeholders

FROM: Governor Jay Inslee

DATE: October 27, 2020

SUBJECT: Elections, Voting Center, and Student Engagement HUB Operations Clarifications – Proclamation 20-25, “Stay Home – Stay Healthy” et seq. and Proclamation 20-12, “Higher Education” et seq.

This memorandum serves to clarify application of COVID-19 requirements for voters and for voting service operations, including county elections offices, county voting centers, and student engagement HUBs throughout the state.

Essential Workers, Services and Activities

Elections personnel, including volunteers, are essential workers. In addition, all county elections offices, county voting centers and student engagement HUBs, wherever located in the State, are essential services and businesses. Voting, whether by mail or in person, is an essential activity. Nothing in Proclamation 20-25, et seq., Proclamation 20-12, et seq., or in any order issued by other government entity under my authority, may be interpreted to limit the operations of, or access to, any voting office, voting center or student engagement HUB, or to hinder the ability of any voter to register to vote or to cast his or her vote by mail, ballot drop box, or in person delivery. All voting centers, student engagement HUBS, and persons engaged in voting activities should practice physical distancing requirements (six feet between persons) and use personal protective equipment, including facial coverings, as recommended by the Department of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Gatherings

Voters who are in attendance at, or outside of, any voting office, voting center, or student HUB, and who are there for the purpose of registering to vote, casting their vote, or otherwise seeking the assistance of elections personnel, are not engaged in “gathering” for the purpose of *Safe Start* gathering restrictions. Each such voter is deemed to be engaged in an essential activity, regardless of the number of other voters and elections personnel present; as a result, gathering restrictions are not applicable, regardless of the *Safe Start* Phase in which the voter is located. However, all face coverings and social distancing safety measure requirements are applicable and must be adhered to.

In-Person Voter Registration and Voting Shall Not be Impaired

The intent of this memorandum is to clarify that no proclamation or amendment issued under Proclamation 20-05 shall be interpreted or applied in such a way as to prevent or impair operations or staffing of election facilities or access to in-person voter registration, ballot issuance, and ballot deposit..

General questions about how to comply with Proclamations 20-25 et seq., can be submitted [here](#).

Violations related to Proclamations 20-25 et seq., can be reported [here](#).