



# Department of Public Health

**MAYOR**  
Dee Margo

## **CITY OF EL PASO HEALTH AUTHORITY ORDERS AND GUIDANCE FOR VOTING POLL LOCATIONS**

**CITY COUNCIL**

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Tommy Gonzalez

**July 4, 2020**

### **EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

This Order supersedes the June 10, 2020 Health Authority Order for Voting Poll Locations. This Amended Order is effective immediately and shall be in effect until terminated or modified by a subsequent Order.

The situation regarding COVID-19 in El Paso, Texas is continuously evolving and with the presence of community spread of COVID-19 in our community, the City of El Paso Department of Public Health's (DPH) Local Health Authority is issuing the following Orders and Guidance that must be followed to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, as well as the protective measures which must be undertaken at all voting poll locations within a facility to safely carry out voting activities in El Paso County with the aim of protecting the health and well-being of poll location staff and voters.

Transmission of coronavirus in general occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through contact with contaminated surfaces, but it is possible to get infected if one touches a contaminated surface and then touches their nose, eyes or mouth. Current evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials depending on the temperature and other environmental conditions. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in election polling locations.

### **General**

This guidance provides orders and general guidance for voting poll locations and facilities, poll staff, voters and campaign workers to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and infection. This order will be updated if additional information becomes available.

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20-1052-1069/1005794/LHA Order for Polling Places





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## Social Distancing and Other Public Health Interventions

- Voting polls should not be set at any facility that cares for elderly such as Nursing Homes, Assisted Living Facilities, etc.
- Ensure tables, voting stations, and chairs are at least 6-ft apart from each other to promote and ensure proper social distancing between poll staff and voters.
- Voters upon arrival must be reminded to leave space between themselves and others. Encourage voters to stay 6-ft apart at all times. Polling places may provide signs to help voters and workers remember the 6-ft distancing requirement.

## El Paso County Elections Department Staff

- The El Paso County Election Administrator must adopt and implement a health screening policy for staff and establish protocols for employee exclusion if they develop any of the following symptoms:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Cough	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sore throat
<input type="checkbox"/>	Repeated shaking with chills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of taste or smell
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diarrhea
<input type="checkbox"/>	Muscle pain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Headache
<input type="checkbox"/>	Feeling feverish or having a temperature of 100°F or greater	<input type="checkbox"/>	Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing		

- The Elections Department Staff should use a touchless infrared thermometer to check the temperature of employees each day.
- Employees with a temperature above 100°F will be sent home.
- Employees with any of the above symptoms are recommended to be sent home.
- Discourage poll workers from greeting others with physical contact.
- Do not allow employees with new or worsening signs or symptoms as listed

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above to return to work until:

- In the case of an employee who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to work when all three of the following criteria are met: No fever without the use of fever-reducing medications for at least 3 days (72 hours); **AND**
- The individual has significant improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **AND**
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; or
- In the case of an employee who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, the individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to work until the individual has completed the same three-step criteria listed above; or
- If the employee has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to work before completing the above self-isolation period, the individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis.
- All employees are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering while at work and interacting with other employees and the public in general.
- Employees may consider using gloves and should be encouraged to wash hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or use disinfectant hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

## El Paso County Poll Workers

- The El Paso County Election Administrator must adopt and implement a health screening policy for poll workers and establish protocols for poll worker exclusion if they develop any of the following symptoms:

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DELIVERING EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES



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<input type="checkbox"/>	Feeling feverish or having a temperature of 100°F or greater	<input type="checkbox"/>	Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing		

- Poll workers with any of the above symptoms are recommended to be sent home.
- All poll workers are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering while at work and interacting with other poll workers and the public in general.
- Discourage poll workers from greeting others with physical contact.
- Poll workers should wash hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or use disinfectant hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Poll workers may consider using gloves and should be encouraged to wash hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or use disinfectant hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Clean and disinfect voting-associated equipment (e.g., voting machines, laptops, tablets, keyboards) routinely after each use. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
  - Consult with the voting machine manufacturer for guidance on appropriate disinfection products for voting machines and associated electronics.
  - Consider use of wipeable covers for electronics.
  - If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or spray containing at least 70% alcohol to clean voting machine buttons and touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

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- For facilities that experience high voting traffic, consider having a polling place worker wholly or partially dedicated to ensuring the recommended health protocols are successfully implemented and followed.
- Practice hand hygiene frequently: wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Ensure bathrooms at the polling station are supplied adequately with soap, water, and drying materials so visitors and staff can wash their hands as recommended.
- Provide an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for use before and after using the voting machine or the final step in the voting process. Consider placing the alcohol-based hand sanitizer in visible, frequently used locations such as registration desks and exits.
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces: including tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.
- Frequently disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated with germs with EPA-approved products effective against emerging viral pathogens to include the virus that causes COVID-19. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, use of personal protective equipment). A list of products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens is available.

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### El Paso County Voters

- Voters are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering at all times.
- Voters are discouraged from greeting others with physical contact.
- Voters should sanitize hands upon entering and exiting voting location.
- Voters should maintain a 6 ft. distance between each other if they are not from same household.
- Voters should utilize disposable marking utensil on voting equipment or may bring their own stylus or other approved device to cast a vote.
- Voters who are unable to enter the polling site without assistance or likelihood of injuring the voter's health should contact the El Paso County Elections Department for information on curbside voting.

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- Voters should refrain from bringing other person(s) to accompany him or her unless they have a handicap and need assistance. For example, voters should be advised not to bring children, grandchildren, etc. with them as they come to vote.

### El Paso County Campaign Workers (Electioneering)

- Campaign Workers are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering at all times.
- Campaign workers should not greet others with physical contact.
- In order to protect the health of voters, campaign workers should maintain a 6-ft distance between each other and the public if they are not from the same household.
- Campaign workers should not gather in groups of more than 10 people.

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Health Authority City/County of El Paso, TX

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