

Voting Access Equity Plan for the 2020 Fall Elections

Our goal is that each eligible voter will be able to cast a ballot and have that ballot counted. We intend to lead with equity for the fall elections. This plan is based on the Pandemic Voting Access Equity Analysis conducted in June 2020. We understand and respect the fact that voting by mail is not the best option for some voters, even in the midst of a pandemic.

Polling Places

- Offer as many polling locations as possible, as close as possible to the ward voting at the polling location.
- Establish polling locations as early as possible.
- Consider the impact of reduced bus service on the ability of voters to not only access the polling place but to find time to vote before or after commuting to and from work via Madison Metro.
- Review current polling locations and make changes as needed to avoid using police department community rooms as polling locations.
- Avoid using locations that do not provide adequate space for social distancing.
- Work with Alders and City Planning to identify alternatives for polling locations that are too small for social distancing.
- Request that the Madison Metropolitan School District polling locations provide adequate space for social distancing, using the gymnasium or field house wherever possible.
- If we are able to secure funding through a grant, provide each polling location with a stipend to put toward the expense of disinfecting the space during this pandemic.
- If we are able to secure funding through a grant, rent additional space for the storage of election equipment so we are able to practice social distancing while working in our election equipment storage facility (the Plexiglas screens take up a substantial amount of our storage space).

Absentee Voting

- Do not push people to vote by mail; many African Americans do not trust voting by mail, and voting by mail is not an accessible option for voters with disabilities.
- Work with Public Health to develop a safety plan for in-person absentee voting.
- Offer Zoom Q&A sessions for nursing home and care facilities.
- Make the ExpressVote available for curbside absentee voters.
- Prioritize curbside/in-person absentee voting opportunities in the areas of Madison where most ballots were cast in-person in April.
- If we are able to secure funding through a grant, obtain signage to help draw attention to curbside voting sites.
- Offer at least 12 absentee drop sites throughout the city.
- Offer a potential witness at each absentee ballot drop site.

- For November, review absentee instructions for simplicity, conduct usability testing, and make absentee instruction letter available in other languages
- Encourage WEC to simplify the uniform instruction letter sent with all absentees.
- Follow-up with the Dane County Sheriff's Office on the request to copy inmate IDs on intake so inmates can request absentee ballots.
- Work with Information Technology to determine how to send tagged absentee ballot pdf files to absentee voters with vision impairments so they can mark their absentee ballots using a computer. Ask the Wisconsin Elections Commission if this option could be offered on the My Vote website.
- If we are able to secure funding through a grant, set up tents for curbside absentee voting so we can protect ballots and equipment from precipitation. Otherwise, curbside absentee voting may need to be weather permitting.

Voter Outreach

- If the state does not translate the new voter registration form into Spanish and Hmong, work with Civil Rights to get the form translated.
- Work closely with the Library because it is a vital, trusted community resource.
- Focus on the readability of written materials.
- Offer curbside voter registration with volunteers using personal protective equipment.
- Offer curbside Get Your ID on File opportunities with volunteers using personal protective equipment and digital cameras.
- If we are able to secure funding through a grant, obtain tablets and hot spot access for curbside registration drives and curbside absentee voting.
- Obtain permission to offer voter registration and Get Your ID on File opportunities alongside the Dream Bus this summer.
- Obtain permission to offer curbside voter registration at the libraries this summer.
- Work with All Voting is Local to offer voter Q&A sessions online.
- Work with the City Media Team to produce a podcast series about the voting process.
- Work with UW-Madison to provide voter registration forms, absentee request forms and drop boxes on campus.
- While the City Media Team is unavailable for video production this summer, explore ways we can work with our other community partners to develop voter education videos in multiple languages.
- For November, work with neighborhood businesses to get voting information posted in each neighborhood.
- Request permission to conduct curbside voter outreach at food pantry locations.
- Partner with the League of Women Voters and landlords on voter registration drives at apartment complexes.
- Encourage other city agencies to provide voting information to their customers.

- Partner with MMSD to offer curbside voter registration opportunities for high school seniors.
- Explore initiating a citywide voter registration challenge (by ward or aldermanic district), like the Big 10 voter participation challenge.
- If we are able to secure funding through a grant, work with Alders to develop ward-specific signage.
- Encourage the state to expand its mobile DMV centers.
- If we are able to secure funding through a grant, develop a voter education advertising campaign targeted toward eligible voters who are most likely to be disenfranchised.

Poll Worker Recruitment

- If we are able to secure funding through a grant, pay poll workers 60% more (in line with census worker pay) for working the fall elections.
- Coordinate with the city's RESJI team on the development of poll worker recruitment materials and messaging.
- If we are able to secure funding through a grant, pay some of our poll workers to recruit additional poll workers in the neighborhoods where we have poll worker shortages.

Poll Worker Training

- Cover curbside voting in training.
- Review absentee processing, including Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWAB) and e-mail absentee ballots.
- Stress the expectation that poll workers continue processing absentees while voters are in the polling place, for greater transparency.
- Talk to poll workers about inclusivity, cultural competency, and pronoun usage.
- If the libraries remain closed, offer some poll worker training sessions via Zoom so poll workers without internet access can participate via phone.

Election Day

- Provide enough Plexiglas screens at each polling location to allow the poll books to be split and to provide a screen for the voter registration station.
- Provide each polling location with extra face shields to allow additional poll book splits as needed.
- Provide each polling location with enough face masks for all poll workers and observers.
- Instruct poll workers to watch for curbside voters from the door of the polling location; signage is not large enough to grab attention.
- Set up additional ExpressVote accessibility devices at polling locations, where possible, to destigmatize their usage.
- Provide each polling location with additional signage, and check that the placement of signage is helpful.

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- Require each polling location to report the number of absentees processed when they call in with turnout numbers at 11:00 and 4:00 so we can determine which polling locations need extra help processing absentees.