

WEC: Important things voters should know for Primary day

Posted on Friday, Aug 7, 2020

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Elections Commission today released its list of the top things Wisconsin voters should know for the Partisan Primary, Tuesday, August 11.

- 1. The Wisconsin Elections Commission unanimously recommends all voters wear face coverings for voting on Election Day, but they are not required.**

The WEC has developed public health guidance with the assistance of public health officials from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services that face coverings are recommended for use by voters and poll workers on Election Day. However, the Executive Order issued by the Governor on July 30, 2020 that requires face coverings in certain situations does not apply to voters, but does apply to poll workers and election observers. Voters cannot be refused a ballot for not wearing a face covering at the polls on Election Day.

“We are asking voters to observe social distancing inside and outside of polling places, and not to create disturbances about the wearing or not wearing of masks or face coverings,” said Meagan Wolfe, Wisconsin’s chief elections official.

- 2. Wisconsin polling places are prepared for voting during the pandemic.**

The WEC has worked with the Wisconsin National Guard and Civil Air Patrol to deliver sanitation supplies, personal protective equipment (PPE) and other necessary supplies to every county in the state for distribution to polling places. There will be special signage at polling places with social distancing instructions. The WEC has also provided clerks and poll workers with training on proper

sanitation and social distancing procedures. Like April, National Guard members may be serving at your polling place, in civilian clothes as citizens of your local community.

Things may look a little different when you go vote and voters will be asked to wash or sanitize their hands before and after voting. Social distancing is essential even at polling places on election day. There will be procedures in place to allow for six feet between voters and poll workers to ensure a safe voting experience for everyone.

For more information about voting during the pandemic, please visit the WEC's COVID-19 information page: <https://elections.wi.gov/covid-19>.

3. Voters who have not already mailed their absentee ballots back should make arrangements to drop them off by Election Day.

USPS advises that it can take up to one week for mail to be delivered, so voters who still need to return absentee ballots should drop them off at their municipal clerk's office as soon as possible, Wolfe said. Some municipalities offer secure drop boxes. On Election Day, voters may deliver their absentee ballots directly to their normal polling place, but it must arrive before polls close at 8 p.m. Voters who return absentee ballots to their clerk's office or a municipal drop box on Election Day should do so as early as possible, because the ballot must be picked up and delivered to the polling place by 8 p.m.

4. You may only vote for candidates of one party in the primary.

Unlike most other states, Wisconsin law gives voters the freedom to choose which political party's primary they wish to vote in without having to register to vote with a party affiliation or designation. However, they may only vote within one party's primary on the August ballot.

"If you vote for candidates in more than one party, your votes will not be counted," said Wolfe, administrator of the Wisconsin Elections Commission. "But if you make a mistake, like voting for candidates in more than one party, when voting on Election Day, you may ask to spoil the ballot and cast a corrected one, up to three times.

Wolfe noted that the "party preference" section at the top of the ballot is an important safeguard, especially for people who are voting by absentee ballot.

“Selecting a party preference is not required, but if you select a party preference, it ensures that your votes are counted for that party’s candidates if you accidentally vote for a candidate in another party.”

5. You need an acceptable photo ID to vote and your ID for voting does not need to show your current address.

“If you are wearing a face covering, a poll worker may ask you to lower it momentarily if they need it to verify your identity when checking photo ID,” Wolfe said. “However, most voters should not need to remove or relax their face covering.”

Your acceptable photo ID for voting does not need to show your current address. Wolfe said most voters already have the photo ID they need to vote, such as a Wisconsin Driver License or ID, and urged anyone with questions to visit the Bring It to the Ballot website (<https://bringit.wi.gov>) or call 1-866-VOTE-WIS for information. A voter who does not have an acceptable photo ID must be offered a provisional ballot and the opportunity to submit a photo ID within three days after the election.

6. Voters can find their polling place on the mobile-friendly MyVote Wisconsin website.

Many polling places have been changed for the August 11 Partisan Primary. The Wisconsin Elections Commission’s popular MyVote Wisconsin website, <https://myvote.wi.gov>, allows you to verify your polling place and provides directions to every polling place in the state, as well as information about what will be on voters’ ballots when they get there.

Voters can also check whether their registration is current. If it’s not, they can start the voter registration process online, print their filled-out voter registration form and bring it to the polls with them on Election Day so they can sign it in front of a poll worker. Voters can also complete a paper registration form at their polling place on Election Day.

Online voter registration, that doesn’t require the voter to print or sign a paper form, for the November 3 General and Presidential Election resumes after the August 11 Partisan Primary and runs through October 14.

7. Your vote is secure.

Wisconsin's election systems are secure thanks to the Wisconsin Elections Commission's strong partnerships with federal and state agencies and local election officials.

"The WEC has found no evidence that Wisconsin's election systems have ever been compromised," said Wolfe. "We have taken extraordinary steps to ensure that our voter registration and vote counting systems are secure."

Voters with questions about election security can read more about the WEC's efforts here: <https://elections.wi.gov/elections-voting/security>.

8. Consider becoming a poll worker.

Because of the pandemic, many older poll workers are no longer able to serve, meaning Wisconsin cities, villages and towns need more civic-minded people to help out on Election Day, especially for the November general election. If you vote at the polls, take a look around to see if it's something you'd like to do. Many places offer split shifts if you can't work the entire day. Contact your local municipal clerk's office for more information or visit the MyVote Wisconsin website: <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/PollWorker>.

Other Basics:

- Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, August 11.
- Eligible voters can register at the polls on Election Day if they have a proof-of-residence document with a current address. For details, check out the Voter Registration Guide: <https://elections.wi.gov/voters/first-time-registration-guide>.
- Turnout for a Partisan Primary in August is typically between 15% and 20% of voting-age adults, compared to about 70% in a typical November presidential election.