



The 2020 Primary and the Pandemic: Voters Have Options

The unprecedented time of conducting elections during a pandemic has presented challenges to ensure the safety of my team, poll workers and the voters of Pasco County, however, there will still be three options for casting a ballot in the upcoming August 18, 2020 Primary Election. While we strongly encourage voters to consider voting by mail, in-person early voting and Election Day voting will still be available with a few added conveniences for voting by mail, and the utilization of CDC guidelines for in-person voting.

Vote-by-mail ballots may be requested at www.PascoVotes.gov, by calling 1-800-851-8754, or in writing with your date of birth to PO Box 300, Dade City FL 33526. For this election cycle, voters may return their vote-by-mail ballot postage paid but should allow adequate time for delivery by the USPS. Per Florida law, vote-by-mail ballots must physically be in the elections' office by 7:00 p.m. Election Day - not just postmarked. You can track your ballot via our website with the option to receive text/e-mail notifications when delivered to the Elections' Office. For added convenience, curbside drop-off for vote-by-mail ballots at all 11 Early Voting sites during the early voting period, August 8 - 15 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily will be available. Voters may also drop off their ballots at one of our three offices countywide through 7:00 p.m. Election Day.

Voters who choose to vote in-person should expect longer wait times due to health and safety measures being implemented at Early Voting sites and Election Day polling places. Precautions such as limiting the number of people inside the polling room and continuous cleaning of equipment and surfaces will be the main reasons for longer in-person voting experiences. Knowing this in advance, we are hoping voters will be understanding and remain patient while waiting in line. Additional planned health and safety measures include:

- Masks and/or face shields will be used by poll workers
- Single-use styli will be available for voters to sign for their ballot
- Re-usable ballot secrecy sleeves will not be required
- Hands-free 2D barcode readers will be utilized for checking-in voters with Florida Driver License and Florida ID cards
- Voters will be encouraged to use their own blue or black ballot marking pen
- Masks will be available if needed, and the use of masks is strongly encouraged as there is a county directive requiring masks
- Social distancing will be maintained while in line outside and inside the Polling Place
- Touch points for voters and poll workers will be minimized through the implementation of cleaning surfaces, voting pens, voting machines, etc.

While we are anticipating some of our customary Election Day Polling Places will be unavailable for voting, the majority should be open as usual. If a Polling Place becomes unavailable for Election Day, we will send voters in that precinct postcard notifications via USPS, time permitting, as well as posting the changes on www.PascoVotes.gov. Additionally, a notice will be placed at the former polling location and voters will receive automated text alert messages through the Pasco County Emergency Management. Early voters have the option to vote at any of the 11 early voting sites, but on Election Day, voters are statutorily required to vote at their polling place.

The message for voters during this unprecedented time is simple - let's "Make it Work". Plan, accordingly, and decide today which voting method you'll use to cast your ballot in the August Primary. If you haven't requested a Vote-by-Mail ballot, request one now. If you prefer to vote in person, plan to vote during the first four days of Early Voting. If you prefer to vote on Election Day, visit www.PascoVotes.gov before you leave home to verify your assigned Polling Place.

