

STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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August 4, 2020

**Via Electronic Mail Only**

The Honorable Larry Hogan  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
Annapolis MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan,

Since we received your letter dated July 8, 2020, defining how the November 3 election will be held, we have been working closely and diligently with the local boards of elections to plan for an election as defined by the Election Law Article.

Before responding to your specific requests, I would like to thank you for offering 16 hours of administrative leave to State employees who agree to serve as election judges in the upcoming election. Since your offer was emailed to State employees, we have received over 2,500 online submissions from individuals wanting to serve.

This work includes preparing for a statewide mailing to over 4 million eligible voters. The timeline below outlines the steps to plan and execute this large mailing.

- On July 9, we held a conference call with the local boards of elections to discuss your letter, including the request to mail an application to all eligible voters. We discussed whether the mailer should be pre-populated with voter's information and other ways to streamline the processing of completed forms and the proposed timeline for mailing these applications.
- On July 10, we asked a usability expert at the University of Baltimore to review the existing application for mail-in ballot and make recommendations to improve the usability of the form.
- On July 13, we asked the Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE), a preferred provider for State agencies, if they would be able to print and mail applications for a mail-in ballot to over 4 million voters. MCE informed us on July 14 that they were not able to complete this job.
- On July 15, we asked the Department of General Services (DGS) if we could amend an existing contract to include the printing and mailing of these applications.
- On July 16, we held another conference call with the local boards of elections. After conducting a survey, the local boards recommended mailing the applications in mid-to-late August.
- On July 21, the State Board of Elections approved sending with the application mailer an envelope with prepaid postage.
- On July 22, we received from the University of Baltimore's usability expert a revised application mailer. On the same day, DGS approved our request to amend an existing contract to include the printing and mailing of these applications.

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- On July 29, DGS and the vendor fully executed the contract modification.
- On August 5, the application mailing will be presented to the State Board of Elections for approval.
- Once the application mailing is approved by the State Board of Elections, we will send it to the State's vendor for Spanish translation. The Spanish version is expected within 5 days.
- No later than August 6, we must provide the vendor with the application, instructions, and envelope artwork.
- No later than August 7, we must approve the vendor's envelope artwork proofs. Producing the 4 million envelopes will take 14 business days.
- From August 7 and 9, we must provide the vendor with the data files.
- On August 10 or 11, the vendor will provide application and instruction proofs. Printing will begin after we approve the proofs.
- Inserting the application and instructions into the envelopes will begin on August 21.
- The first mailing will occur on August 24. Mailings will continue until all applications have been mailed. The final mailing is expected to be August 28 but no later than August 31.

Concurrent with these tasks, we are seeking a data center to help with the processing of completed forms. Since neither SBE nor the local boards of elections have the capacity to process the significant number of forms we expect to receive, we need another resource to help with this effort or voters will not receive their mail-in ballots in time to vote and return them.

Several local boards of elections have submitted requests to consolidate voting locations, and these requests will be considered at the August 5 State Board meeting. I am confident that the State Board will carefully consider these requests, receive advice from the Office of the Attorney General, and take appropriate action. Until the local boards of elections submit their requests and the State Board takes action on these requests, I am not able to provide you with the requested minimum number of polling places that will be open.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Department of Budget and Management, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and DGS for their assistance. We are fortunate that MEMA and DGS were able to provide some quantities of protective supplies, and budget officials are working to find funding for the unexpected expenses for this election.

Sincerely,



Linda H. Lamone  
State Administrator

cc: The Honorable Robert K. Hur, United States Attorney, District of Maryland  
The Honorable Adrienne Jones, Speaker, Maryland House of Delegates  
The Honorable Bill Ferguson, President, Senate of Maryland  
The Honorable Michael R. Cogan, Chairman, Maryland State Board of Elections  
Members, Board of Public Works