



Chris Hollins · Harris County Clerk

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Harris County Clerk Chris Hollins Reaffirms Voter Safety at the Polls

(Houston, TX) – Harris County recently entered the Level 1 threat level under the County's new emergency response system due to a surge in confirmed cases of COVID-19. All polling centers will remain open to perform the essential function of voting during the 10-day Early Voting Period and on Election Day. The County Clerk's Office has put in place the [S.A.F.E. Elections Plan](#) to ensure that the health and safety of voters and poll workers are protected this election season. For those that do not qualify to vote by mail, the County Clerk's Office encourages voters to take advantage of the Early Voting Period from June 29 to July 10.

Harris County Clerk Chris Hollins issued the following statement:

"Harris County has entered the "red-alert" threat level for COVID-19, and both Governor Abbott and Judge Lina Hidalgo are urging Texans to stay home. This step to preserve the health of Texans is one that should be taken seriously. However, preserving your right to vote is also critical, especially at a time when so many of us are pleading to have our voices heard. Thus, all 57 Early Voting polling sites across Harris County will remain open during the Early Voting period — Monday, June 29 through Friday, July 10 — and on Election Day, Tuesday, July 14th.

"The Harris County Clerk's Office will continue to do everything in our power to ensure the safety of voters and poll workers during the July Primary runoffs. This includes:

- Enforcing social distancing by maintaining 6 feet between voting machines and 6 feet between voters standing in line;
- Placing hand sanitizing stations at each location's entrance for poll workers and voters to use;
- Offering a face mask to every voter who doesn't have their own. Those who decline to wear a mask will be encouraged to vote curbside, and those who insist on voting indoors will be able to vote on designated machines that are further distanced inside the polling location for their and others' safety;
- Providing finger covers to voters so voting machines can be used without physically touching the machines;
- Providing disinfectant wipes to voters to wipe down machines before and after use. Poll workers will also wipe down machines and other high-touch surfaces on a regular basis;
- Ensuring that poll workers wear masks and face shields, and separating each judge's from the public with Plexiglass;
- Creating a process to ensure that voters can show their ID without physically handing the ID to poll workers, in order to minimize contact; and
- Allowing voters who are experiencing symptoms of illness to vote curbside, without having to enter the polling center.

"Of course, the safest way to vote is to vote by mail. If you are eligible to vote by mail, our office must receive your application by July 2nd to send you a mail ballot. If you cannot vote by mail, the next safest way to cast your vote is to vote early and avoid long lines on Election Day."

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