

Today's Discussion:

## Voting in Prospect in the Time of COVID-19



Presented by the Prospect Registrars of Voters

# Your Registrars of Voters

- Your Registrars of Voters
  - Democratic and Republican Registrar in all CT municipalities
    - Democrat Registrar: Katherine S. Blinstrubas
    - Republican Registrar: Marianne Byrne
- What do Registrars do?
  - Keep voter rolls up to date
  - Administer fair elections
  - NEW job – Run fair and safe elections in a pandemic

# Prospect Elections Pre-COVID

- For **elections**: 2 Polling Places
  - 89-1, Prospect Firehouse
  - 89-2, Prospect Community Center
  - <https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Election-Services/Voter-Information/Where-and-how-do-I-vote>
  - Absentee Ballot Central Counting (also counts EDR ballots on Election Day)
- Election Day Registration (Same Day Registration)
  - For Elections only (not primaries or special elections)
  - Town Hall, lower level
- For Referenda: 1 polling place
  - Prospect Firehouse
  - All voters

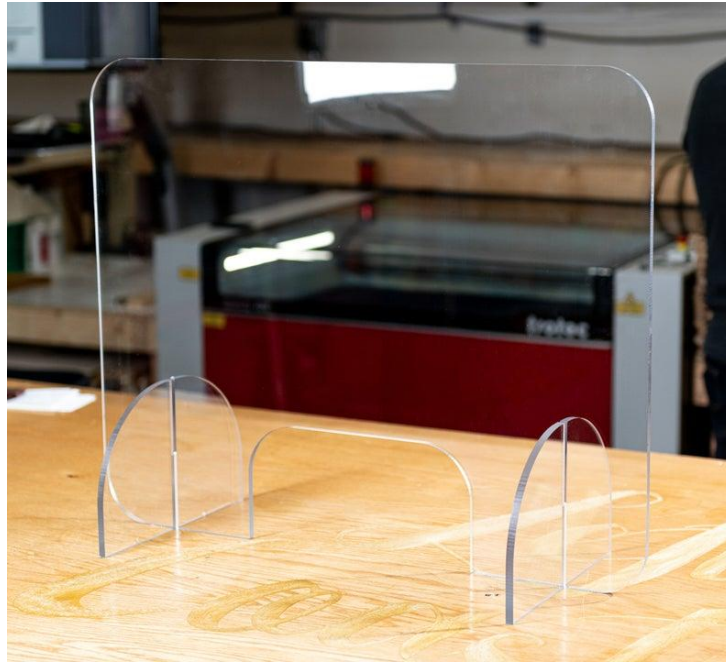
# What has happened in CT since March?

- CT's twice postponed Presidential Preference Primary is now scheduled for August 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Can I vote by absentee ballot on August 11 and on November 3?
- CT's legal framework for voting by absentee ballot
  - Governor Lamont's **Executive Order 7QQ** allows all eligible CT voters to vote by absentee ballot for the August 11 Primary modifying CGS Section 9-135  
(<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7QQ.pdf>)
  - **CGS Section 9-135** sets out 6 “excuses” allowing voters to vote by absentee ballot. One excuse is the voter's illness. The statute reads “**his or her illness**”
  - Constitution of the State of Connecticut Article Sixth, Section 7 permits absentee voting “**because of illness**”
  - CGS Section 28-9 is the legal authority for Governor Lamont's authority to issue Executive Orders related to COVID-19

# What must CT consider when planning for a pandemic?

- What about voting by absentee ballot on November 3?
- Governor's power to override state law expires September 9
- Special Session of the Legislature may consider expanding the use of absentee ballots
- Voters must feel safe voting and voters must have a comfort level with the process.

# Considerations for In-Person Voting



# Safety for Voters and Poll Workers comes first

- Masks required per Governor's Executive Order #7BB
  - Masks available for voters if needed
- Reduced staff
- Hand Sanitizer for all
- Cleaning surfaces after use
- Privacy Folders - Eliminated for the primary - single sided ballot
- Marking Devices - disposable golf pencils
- Surgical masks, face shields for poll workers
- Sneeze guards
- Gloves for poll workers
- No "I Voted" stickers

# Considerations for In-Person Voting

“Any individual who is over age two and able to medically tolerate a face-covering shall be required to cover their nose and mouth with a mask or cloth face-covering when in a public place and unable to maintain, or when not maintaining, social distance.” (Exectutive Order #7BB)

To limit nonessential visitors, electors are encouraged NOT to bring children.

Maintain 6 foot distancing throughout the Polling Place

# Considerations for Absentee Voting

- Town Clerk will process significant number of absentee ballots for primary.
- No early cutoff date for requesting an AB. You can request up to day before the election/primary.
- Absentee ballots cannot be opened or counted prior to 10 AM on election day.
- No rules about postmarks. ABs must be in the Town Clerk's Office by 8 P.M. on the day of the election event.

# Absentee Ballots for August 11<sup>th</sup> Primary

- Executive order expands Absentee ballot use. (Executive Order 7QQ)
- If voting by absentee ballot DO NOT DELAY
  - Follow the directions you receive and initiate the process promptly
  - Ballots received by the Town after August 11 cannot be counted
  - USPS estimates a 4-5 day turn around for mail.
  - There is a ballot drop box at Town Hall, 36 Center Street if you choose to drop the ballot off in person.

# August Primary - Absentee Voting

- One drop box per town
- Larger towns and cities get 2.
- Prospect will have one at Town Hall, 36 Center Street.
- Only Town Clerk will have access/keys.



# Resources

ROV contact information:

- Katherine S. Blinstrubas [kblinstrubas@townofprospect.org](mailto:kblinstrubas@townofprospect.org) (203) 758-4461 x127
- Marianne Byrne [mbyrne@townofprospect.org](mailto:mbyrne@townofprospect.org) (203) 758-4461 x 119
  - [www.townofprospect.org/registrar/registrar.html](http://www.townofprospect.org/registrar/registrar.html)
- [Secretary of the State of Connecticut](#) – CT's chief election official
- [portal.ct.gov/-/media/SOTS/ElectionServices/2020-Voting-Plan-FINAL-DRAFT-May-2-715-PM.pdf](http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SOTS/ElectionServices/2020-Voting-Plan-FINAL-DRAFT-May-2-715-PM.pdf)
- [Connecticut General Statutes Title 9 – Elections](#)
- [CDC – Recommendations for Election Polling Locations](#)