

THE IMPACT OF PROPOSAL 2018-3 AND COVID-19 ON ELECTIONS



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TOPICS TO BE COVERED TODAY

- Elements of Michigan's election system
- Changes from proposal 2018-3
- Impact of COVID-19 on elections
- How townships can support election officials and voters

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MICHIGAN'S DECENTRALIZED ELECTIONS

- Local clerks run elections
 - Election administration by 1,520 City/Township Clerks
- County clerks also play critical roles
 - Election equipment, canvassing, training
- State provides oversight and support
 - Training/guidance, forms, enforcement, equipment

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PROPOSAL 2018-3

- Ballot initiative, passed in November 2018
- Amended state constitution (Art. II, sec. 4)
- In effect for elections starting in 2019 Election
- Changes voter registration, absent voter ballot system, and election security practices

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PROPOSAL 2018-3: AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

- Before proposal 2018-3, most people already registered at Secretary of State
- Registration now automatic, meaning opt out if customer is eligible
- Online voter registration also enacted through legislation in 2018
- Improves registration efficiency, generally lessens burden on local clerks

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PROPOSAL 2018-3: NEW VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINES

- Before proposal 2018-3, registration deadline was 30 days before election day
- Voters can now register up to 15 days before election day using any method of registration
- Voters can also register within 14 days of an election, including election day, with local clerk
- Reduces problems at polls, but means more registration work for clerks in leadup to election

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PROPOSAL 2018-3: NO-REASON AV

- Before proposal 2018-3, voters needed a specific reason to request an absent voter ballot
- All eligible voters can now vote by absent voter ballot without giving a reason
- Absent voter ballots can be requested and voted by mail or in person
- “No-reason absentee,” “vote by mail,” “vote at home,” “early voting”. There are distinctions but they *mostly* mean the same thing.

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PROPOSAL 2018-3: NEW AV RIGHTS

- Proposal 2018-3 gives all voters the right to request and be issued an AV ballot during the 40 days before Election Day.
- Proposal 2018-3 guarantees military and other overseas voters the right to ballots during the 45 days before Election Day.
- This means ballots must be available starting on day 45 (for military/overseas) and day 40 (for domestic)

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PROPOSAL 2018-3: ELECTION SECURITY

- Proposal 2018-3 gives voters the right to have election results audited
- Michigan already conducted post-election audits but is expanding auditing
- Proposal 2018-3 grants right to secret ballot

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PROPOSAL 2018-3: SYSTEM CHANGES

- Even before COVID-19, Proposal 2018-3 was going to mean big changes for election administration
- More voting by mail (we had expected 40 – 50 percent in November 2020)
- Shift of Election Day work from polling place to clerk's office (polling places still open)

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COVID 19: VOTING BY MAIL

- Nationwide, COVID-19 has led to a massive increase in voting by mail
- In Michigan May local elections, up to 99% of voters were cast by mail or drop box
- In August, 1.8 million AV ballots already issued

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COVID-19: IN PERSON VOTING AND REGISTRATION

- People still have the right to vote and to register to vote in person
- Many clerk offices and polling places were not designed for social distancing
- Basic PPE supplies are a challenge to distribute, even if they are available

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COVID-19: STAFFING

- Many election officials or poll workers are in higher-risk groups
- Staff who can work still face challenges because of closures and unavailability of infrastructure and support
- Election workers face the same challenges of working during COVID-19 as everyone else

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FEDERAL/STATE ASSISTANCE

- Federal CARES funding: approximately \$11.7 Million to support elections during COVID -19
- Being allocated by state mostly to support more voting by mail and safety/hygiene
- Other federal CARES funding can also be used to support election functions

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HOW TOWNSHIPS CAN HELP

- Fund elections
- Provide infrastructure and staffing support
- Promote and share pollworker recruitment resources

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LOCAL FUNDING FOR ELECTIONS

- The vast majority of election functions (and election costs) are local
- Federal and state funding support are sporadic; not a reliable source of long-term funding
- Work with clerks; focus on investments that improve efficiency and functionality

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INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

- Make sure township clerks have full access to township buildings, technology, and personnel
- Work with township clerks on election security and emergency response plans
- On Election Day, close or limit township hall for non-election services, and limit other township functions on election day. Divert staff and resources to elections (including August 4)

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RECRUITMENT – DEMOCRACY MVP

- Michigan.gov/DemocracyMVP
- Over 4,500 people signed up

**OUR DEMOCRACY
NEEDS YOU!**

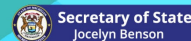


Make an impact
in your
community

Sign up today at

Michigan.gov/DemocracyMVP

and be democracy's MVP



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HOW TO PARTICIPATE

- Clerks email Colleen Garety: GaretyC@Michigan.gov
- Township leadership email Sally Marsh: MarshS3@Michigan.gov
- Promote and share on website, social media
 - @DemocracyMVP



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OTHER RECRUITMENT BEST PRACTICES

- Proactive outreach
- Potential recruits:
 - Friends/family of current election workers
 - Township staff
 - Local businesses
 - Teachers and students
 - Civic organizations

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