

Election Connection Vol 2

Prairie County Voters:

After much consideration, contemplation, and debate; the Prairie County Election Administration has made the very difficult decision to run the 2020 General Federal as a Mail Ballot Election with an In-Person Voting Option.

Many people have been asking: Why did Prairie County decide to do a mail ballot election when we have no active cases of Covid-19? The answer is that we simply cannot predict the future! We have no way of knowing what the status of Covid-19 will be in our county and if our main polling place (Terry High School) will be under lockdown. A mail ballot election is the most certain way to ensure your right to vote is protected even during these uncertain and complex times due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Other factors considered include the safety of the voting public and the election judges, increased costs, and the Governor's mandates on polling place elections for the 2020 Federal General.

What this means to voters: You must be an **ACTIVE, registered** voters to receive your ballot which will be mailed October 9, 2020. Once your ballot is received you have options on how to return your ballot! You can simply fill out and return the ballot in the postage-paid return envelope or if you prefer to do in-person voting, simply bring the ballot that was mailed to you to the courthouse. We will have designated private voting areas set up at the courthouse. There will also be a manned ballot drop location at the Fallon Coffeeshop at selected times leading up to the election.

Upcoming Important Events/Deadlines:

- **August 31, 2020:** Deadline for local government write-in candidates to file a Declaration of Intent for the general election.
- **October 2, 2020:** Per the Governor's Directive implementing Executive Orders, counties that "opt-in" for a mail ballot 2020 General Election **MUST** have ballots available at the Election Administrator's office or other designated location on this date until the end of the election.
- **October 9, 2020:** ALL absentee ballots must be mailed per the Governor's Directive implementing Executive Orders that states absentee ballots must be mailed 25 days before the election

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Election Administrator's office at (406)635-5575 or in person at 217 W. Park Str., Terry, MT 59349-0125.

Melanie Sheffler
Deputy Election Administrator