I. **COVID-19 pandemic changes** - There are a number of unprecedented issues facing voters this election cycle due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Georgians. Some of these changes are summarized below:

a. **Polling place changes**: Due to poll workers declining to work the polls for the June 9th election because of the health risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for social distancing, many counties have closed or consolidated polling locations for the June 9th elections. This includes advance voting and election day polling locations.

Note that last minute changes may continue to be made due to staffing or other concerns. If there is any question about whether polling location changes have been made, contact the county registrar’s office for confirmation.

Most counties will also provide some level of protection from the COVID-19 virus to voters, including making hand sanitizer, a stylus for use with the ballot marking device, social distancing and limitations on the number of voters inside of the poll at a time. Voters should be encouraged to also wear masks, gloves or bring their own hand sanitizer in the event the poll does not provide this protection for the voters.

b. **Absentee voting changes**: The Georgia Secretary of State pro-actively mailed absentee ballot applications to Georgia’s active voters. This has resulted in an unprecedented number of voters making requests for absentee ballots and there have been significant delays in the processing of the absentee ballot applications by the counties and there have also been delays in the receipt of the ballots by voters because the ballots are being processed by a mail vendor located in Arizona which was retained by the Secretary of State.

c. Voters who have not received absentee ballots by Election Day will have no option but to vote in person under existing law. However, voters who have received absentee ballots may have the option to drop those ballots off at drop boxes in counties which have implemented an emergency State Election Board rule allowing for the establishment of absentee ballot drop boxes.

The same rules for delivery of the ballots to the drop boxes that apply to the delivery of absentee ballots by mail and in person also apply to the delivery of ballots to the drop boxes. Specifically, the ballots must be personally taken to the drop box by the voter, one of the voter’s mother, father, grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, spouse, son, daughter, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or an individual residing in the household of the voter unless the voter is disabled or confined in a hospital or jail. If the voter is disabled, the voter’s caretaker can return the ballot regardless of whether the caretaker is related to the voter or resides in the voter’s home.

**Note that all absentee ballots must be received by no later than the close of the polls on June 9, 2020. As of May 30, 2020, there have been no extensions of this deadline by the Secretary of State or as a result of litigation.**

2. **Poll Schedule** - The polls must be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Eastern, on Election Day. A voter in line at the polling place by 7:00 p.m. must be allowed to vote.

3. **Voter ID** - Georgia requires Photo ID in order to vote, except for some first time Georgia voters described below who can produce certain forms of non-photo ID. Acceptable forms of photo ID are: a Georgia driver’s license, even if expired; any valid state or federal government issued photo ID, including a free Voter ID Card issued by the voter’s county registrar or Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS); valid U.S. passport; valid employee photo ID from any branch, department, agency, or entity of the U.S. Government, Georgia, or any county, municipality, board, authority, or other entity of the state of Georgia (including IDs from certain Georgia public colleges, universities and technical colleges, but not from private colleges, universities or other private schools); valid U.S. military photo ID; and valid tribal photo ID

If the voter is a first time Georgia voter and registered by mail (including through a voter registration drive) or has
been flagged as a result of Georgia’s “exact match” voter registration process because the voter’s name, date of birth, Social Security or driver’s license number entered into the Georgia voter registration system does not exactly match that same information about the voter on file with the Georgia Department of Driver’s Services or Social Security administration, the voter will be required to produce one of the forms of photo ID described above or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of such elector.

If a first time voter is in pending status because they were inaccurately flagged as a potential non-citizen as a result of the “exact match” voter registration process, the voter will be required to produce one of the acceptable forms of proof of citizenship to a poll manager, who will be present at the poll on Election Day and during early voting in order to cast a regular ballot. The voter also has the option of providing the proof of citizenship to their county registrar or deputy register when they request an absentee ballot or prior to Election Day to resolve the issue.

A voter who does not present the required identification may vote a provisional ballot which shall be counted only if the registrars are able to verify current and valid identification of the elector within three days of the election.

4. **Accessibility** - Each polling place must be accessible to elderly voters and to voters with disabilities. In elections with federal candidates on the ballot, such as the June 9th election, federal law requires that the county registrar ensure that polling places are accessible. Exceptions are allowed if all potential polling places have been surveyed, no accessible place is available, and the county or cannot make one temporarily accessible. In these cases, voters with disabilities must either be reassigned to an accessible polling place or provided another means for voting on election day, such as curbside voting or other alternatives. Voters with disabilities should contact their county registrar’s office in advance to determine whether their polling place is accessible and, if not, what alternative options exist for voters with disabilities. In addition, under Georgia law, voters who are 75 years or older or are physically disabled and need assistance to vote, shall, upon request to a designated poll official, absentee ballot clerk, registrar or deputy registrar be authorized to vote immediately at the next available voting compartment or booth without having to wait in line if such location utilizes direct recording electronic voting systems or be authorized to go to the head of any line necessary to cast a written absentee ballot.

5. **Assistance at the polls** - Any voter who requires assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write may be given assistance by a person of the voter’s choice, other than a candidate (or his or her family member), the voter’s employer or agent of that employer or officer or agent of the voter’s union.

6. **If a voter has moved** - If a registered voter has moved within a precinct or to a different precinct in the same county prior to the election, they have the right to vote at the polling place of their old residence and update their voter registration information at that time. If they have moved to a precinct in a different county before the registration deadline for the next election (i.e. before the fifth Monday before the election), they must register to vote in their new county by the close of registration for the election. If they moved to the new county after the close of registration for the election in which they wish to vote, the voter may vote one last time at the polling place of their prior residence.

7. **Mistake ballot** - If a voter makes a mistake or “spoils” their ballot, and has not cast the ballot, the voter has the right to receive a replacement ballot after returning the spoiled ballot.

8. **Polling place boundary** - Voters have the right to wait to vote (or to vote) without anyone electioneering or trying to influence their vote in any other way within 150 feet of the outer edge of the building in which the polls are located, within any polling place, or within 25 feet of the voter standing in line.

9. **Provisional ballots** - Inquire why the voter was offered a provisional ballot. A voter should be offered a provisional ballot only when: the voter’s name does not appear on the list of registered electors; the voter does not have the required ID or proof of citizenship; the voting machines at the polling place malfunction; or other similar situations in which the voter believes they are entitled to cast a ballot. If a voter voted a provisional ballot because their name did not appear on the list of registered voters in the precinct, the county registrar has up to three days after the election to determine if they were properly registered to vote in that election. If a voter voted a provisional ballot because they failed to produce required ID or proof of citizenship, the voter has up to three days to present proper ID or...
proof of citizenship to the registrar’s office or the provisional ballot will not count. If they were not eligible to vote in that election, they will be notified in writing. If they were eligible to vote but voted in the wrong precinct within their correct county, only the votes for candidates for which they were entitled to vote will be counted, and they will be notified in writing that their ballot was partially counted for the correct precinct. Other than for these reasons, the voter should be able to cast a regular ballot. **A provisional ballot should be a last resort.** Note, however, that voters who are issued emergency paper ballots (which may be referred to as an emergency provisional ballot) are not required to take any post-election day actions to make that ballot count unless they are required to vote a provisional ballot for other reasons.

10. **Voting in the 2020 primaries**- Georgia operates an open primary, meaning that registered voters may select one party’s ballot and vote for candidates for that party’s nomination regardless of the voter’s party affiliation or membership. Please note that as a result of the postponement of the completion of the presidential preference primary from March 24, 2020 to June 9, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, voters who previously voted in person or by absentee ballot when the presidential preference primary was scheduled to occur on March 24th will only receive ballots for the June 9, 2020 partisan local, state, Congressional primaries and nonpartisan general elections and will not receive a ballot which includes presidential preference candidates on it. Voters who have not yet cast ballots in the presidential preference primary when it was scheduled to occur on March 24th will receive a ballot with the same candidate AND the presidential preference primary candidates on it.

11. **Voting machine problems**- If a voter experiences problems with Georgia’s new voting machine equipment while attempting to vote, they should notify a poll official about the problem before they scan their ballot. Once the ballot is scanned, the voter is considered to have completed the voting process. If a voter encounters long lines and delays of thirty minutes or more because of voting machine malfunctions, the voter should report the delay to poll officials and request an emergency paper ballot. Voters who are issued an emergency paper ballot due to voting machine malfunctions or problems may be told these are emergency “provisional” ballots. However, these ballots due not require any further post-election day action by the voter to make those ballots count unless the voter was required to vote a provisional ballot for other reasons.

If you have any questions or to report any problems, call **866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)**