

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION about the August 4, 2020 Primary Election

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are strongly encouraging everyone to vote by Absentee Ballot. This is to protect our residents and Election Inspectors from potential exposure to the virus. Please read the following information carefully so you know what to do and what to expect.

### Voting Absentee:

Every registered voter in Michigan can vote absentee; no reason is required. If you want to vote absentee, please get your absentee application to the Township Clerk's office as soon as possible. You can give your application to us in the following ways:

- Mail it to the Township Clerk, Williamstown Township, 4990 Zimmer Rd., Williamston, MI 48895. (Not recommended within one week of the election)
- Drop off your application at the Township's white "Township Only" box next to the blue postal mailbox in front of the Township hall. (applies to voted Ballots also)
- Drop it in the slot to the left of the front door. (applies to voted Ballots also)
- Email it to [steinbergm@williamstowntownship.com](mailto:steinbergm@williamstowntownship.com) or [clevelandr@williamstowntownship.com](mailto:clevelandr@williamstowntownship.com). (does not apply to voted Ballots)
- Bring it into the Township hall, if necessary. (applies to voted Ballots also)

Please note:

- We must have the signed application before we can send out your ballot. Absentee ballots (and applications) require more processing time prior to Election Day (loading into the Qualified Voter File and organizing for the Absent Voter Counting Board, but Ballots are NOT opened) so the sooner you can get them in, the better!
- Ballots must be received in the Township office by no later than 8:00 p.m. on August 4, 2020 (Election Day). If it is getting close to Election Day, you may want to bring your ballot to the Township office rather than mail it. Postmarks do not count as the ballot having been received!
- Make sure you sign your own absentee application and ballot. We check signatures throughout the process and if your signature doesn't match, or is missing, your ballot will be rejected and cannot be counted. So please, do not sign for someone else (spouses, adult children, etc.); it is against the law to do so!
- If you make a mistake on your ballot, such as voting a split ticket, or if you ruin your ballot, e.g. spilled coffee or other liquid on it, the dog chewed it, etc., please bring us the ballot and we will "spoil" it and issue a new ballot to you. This also applies if you voted your ballot but change your mind on your choices prior to Election Day.

- If you are on the Permanent Absentee List, keep in mind that you will receive an Absentee Application for every election. Those applications must be completed by indicating the election(s) for which you want a ballot, be signed, and returned to the Township Clerk before we can issue a ballot to you.

If you have not received your application or ballot yet, please contact the Clerk's office during regular business hours at 655-3193. We are happy to answer any questions you have about the voting process, etc.

### **In-Person Voting:**

If you plan to vote in person, you will vote at your usual precinct. Due to the pandemic, we may have a smaller number of Election Inspectors working the Polls. Election Inspectors will be donning masks and gloves, and will be physically distanced from each other and the voters, as much as is possible.

- We plan to wipe down surfaces frequently, including wiping voting booths after each voter's use.
- We'll wipe down the pens used to mark the ballots and sign the applications to vote, but feel free to bring your own black ink pen (no Sharpies, as they bleed through to the back side of the ballot) to do so.
- Although it is permitted, we ask that you do not bring children or non-voters into the precinct with you on Election Day, if at all possible.
- According to guidelines, we can only have a small number of voters inside the precinct at a time to help maintain physical distance.
- Due to COVID protections there may be longer wait times and longer lines, so be prepared for the possibility of standing outside in inclement weather if it should rain on Election Day.
- For everyone's safety, per the Governor's recent Executive Order #2020-153, all voters are strongly encouraged to wear masks while inside the building.
- Due to COVID-19, the restrooms will not be open to the public on Election Day.

### **All Voters:**

In this State and Local Primary Election **you cannot split your ticket!** In other words, to vote in the partisan section of the ballot you can choose the Republican Party or the Democratic Party and vote for your choices within that party only. If you vote in both parties, your ballot will be rejected. You do not have to vote in every race, nor the number of choices in each race (e.g., "vote for no more than 4"). For example, you can vote for two persons in a race where the ballot indicates to vote for no more than four; however, you can't vote for five. Regardless of which party you are voting in, you can vote on all the non-partisan proposals. Remember, there is a backside to this ballot.

Other items to note:

- If you make a mistake on your ballot (or change your mind about your choice), whether absentee or in-person, you can return your ballot and it can be “spoiled.” You will be issued a new ballot at that time.
- Please read and follow the directions in the booth or on the privacy sleeve on how to mark your ballot.
- If you need to register to vote, please do so ahead of Election Day, if possible.
- If you have moved recently, are new to voting, need to register, or have any questions at all, now is the time to call the Clerk’s office (655-3193) to ask your questions. There are no dumb questions! We would rather answer your questions now than have you be unable to vote on Election Day.

### **Registering to Vote:**

If you need to register to vote, we encourage you to do this ahead of Election Day. The lines will be shorter for you! Beginning July 21<sup>st</sup>, you will need to bring photo ID as well as proof of residency in order to register to vote.

### **Tracking Your Ballot:**

To find out if you are registered to vote, where you are registered, or to simply track your ballot, you can go to <https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/>. There is additional information there as well.

Our goal is for all of our eligible voters to vote. Voting is fundamental to our democracy! Let us help you by responding to your questions and informing you on the voting process. Thanks for taking the time to vote!