

# **Health Protocols for Houston County Voters**

## **CHECKLIST FOR VOTERS**

The following are the minimum recommended health protocols for all voters in Texas. These minimum health protocols are not a limit on the health protocols that individuals may adopt. Individuals are encouraged to adopt additional protocols consistent with their specific needs and circumstances to help protect the health and safety of all Texans.

**The virus that causes COVID-19 can be spread to others by infected persons who have few or no symptoms. To mitigate this threat, everyone should rigorously follow the practices specified in these protocols, all of which facilitate a safe and measured reopening of Texas. The virus that causes COVID-19 is still circulating in our communities. We should continue to undertake practices that protect our communities.**

Please note, public health guidance cannot anticipate every unique situation. Individuals should stay informed and take actions based on common sense and wise judgment that will protect health and support economic revitalization.

### **Health protocols for voters:**

- To the extent feasible, maintain at least six feet separation from other individuals at the polling location. In addition to practicing such distancing when feasible, other measures such as hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation should be rigorously practiced.
- Houston County will be providing each voter a new pen to use when checking-in to vote and for marking the ballot.
- Upon entering a polling place disinfectant will be provided for disinfecting hands. You should disinfect hands after any interaction with election workers, poll watchers, or other individuals at the polling place and after using voting system equipment or marking a ballot.
- Voters are encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer into the polling location and should use hand sanitizer to disinfect their hands after leaving the polling location.
- Consistent with the actions taken by many individuals across the state, consider wearing cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth) when entering the polling place, or when within six feet of another person who is not a member of the individual's household. If available, individuals should consider wearing non-medical grade face masks.
- If the election judge is not able to determine the identity of a voter wearing a face covering, the voter should be prepared to lower or remove their face covering when checking-in at a polling place. After the voter's identity has been confirmed, the voter should wear their face covering through the rest of the voting process.

## Voters who are sick or 65 and older:

- Self-screen before going to a polling place for any of the following, new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Diarrhea
  - Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
  - Known close contact with a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19
  
- Voters who exhibit any of the above-mentioned symptoms associated with COVID-19 when they arrive at a polling location may want to consider utilizing curbside voting, to the extent they meet the eligibility requirements, which is available at all polling locations. These voters should contact their county election office with questions about the curbside voting process in their county and the eligibility requirements.
  
- If a voter contracts COVID-19 (or other sickness or physical condition that prevents the voter from appearing at the polling place on election day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or of injuring the voter's health) after the deadline to submit an application for a ballot by mail, the voter should contact their county election officer for more details about submitting an Application for Emergency Early Voting Ballot Due to Sickness or Physical Disability.
  
- Individuals aged 65 or older are at a higher risk of COVID-19. To the extent possible, avoid contact within six feet with individuals aged 65 and older. Individuals aged 65 and older should stay at home as much as possible. Such individuals may consider submitting an Application for a Ballot by Mail to their county election officer so that they can receive a blank ballot and return their voted ballot by mail.