

Missoula County Media Release

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Missoula County Announces Polling Place Election for Sept. 10 City of Missoula Primary

Due to a delay by the Missoula County Elections Office in submitting a mail ballot plan to the Montana Secretary of State, Missoula County is required to hold a polling place election instead of an all-mail election for the City of Missoula primary slated for Tuesday, Sept. 10.

Polling places will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. in each ward participating in the primary:

- **Ward 1:** Rattlesnake Elementary, 1220 Pineview Dr.
- **Ward 3:** Missoula Senior Center, 705 S. Higgins Ave.
- **Ward 4:** Lewis and Clark Elementary, 2901 Park St.

Registered voters already on the absentee mail ballot list will automatically be mailed a ballot starting Friday, Aug. 16. The Missoula County Elections Office will mail fliers Aug. 16 to voters in affected precincts who have not opted to vote by mail. The fliers will include maps of the designated polling places, as well as a pre-filled, postage-paid form allowing voters to sign up to have their ballots mailed to them if voting at the designed polling place is not convenient. Voters will simply need to sign and mail back the form by Tuesday, Sept. 3, to receive a ballot in the mail. After that date, voters will need to request an absentee ballot in person at the Elections Office.

Missoula County Elections Administrator Dayna Causby said it will cost between \$8,000 and \$10,000 to hold the polling place election for the primary, which has been factored into the fiscal year 2020 budget for the office. Though the Elections Office had planned to hold a mail-only election, the timing of the polling place election will allow them to try out new and improved processes ahead of the 2020 federal primary. The City of Missoula General Election will be an all-mail election in Nov. 2019.

“All voters in Wards 1, 3 and 4 will receive some form of communication from our office, which is different from what happens with an all-mail election, where only active voters are contacted,” Causby said. “The polling place election will also allow us to test a few proposed improvements to our website for our local district elections. In addition, we’ll count all of the ballots from this primary at the fairgrounds instead of using tabulators at the polling places.”

Starting Monday, Aug. 12, the Elections Office will be located in Building 15 of the Missoula County Fairgrounds, 1101 South Ave. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. With renovation construction continuing at the fairgrounds, the Elections Office urges voters to take care of any election-related needs as soon as possible to alleviate crowding at the facility in the days leading up to the primary.

In addition to requesting absentee ballots, Elections Office staff can help with all voter services, including voter registration, address changes, retrieving undeliverable ballots and issuing replacement ballots. Voters can check their registration status and polling place location at www.missoulavotes.com. For more information, call Causby at 406-531-4026 or email dcausby@missoulacounty.us.

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