Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of the Governor

Executive Order

NUMBER FIFTY-NINE (2020)

POSTPONING MAY 5, 2020 GENERAL AND SPECIAL ELECTIONS TO MAY 19, 2020 DUE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Importance of the Issue

The Commonwealth continues to respond to the threat posed by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The actions we take now will help protect the health and safety of our citizens for months to come. These actions include when to hold our elections. Voting is a fundamental right and no one should have to choose between their health and safety and their right to vote.

Directive

To continue with the Commonwealth's response to COVID-19 and in furtherance of Executive Order 51 (March 12, 2020), Amended Executive Order 53 (April 15, 2020), and Executive Order 55 (March 30, 2020), and by virtue of the authority vested in me by § 24.2-603.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, I order the following:

1. The provisions of this Order shall apply to the general and special elections scheduled to be held on May 5, 2020.

2. That the general and special elections scheduled for May 5, 2020, shall be held on May 19, 2020.

3. Only those candidates who qualified to have their names printed on the official ballot for the May 5, 2020 general and special elections shall be listed for those offices on the ballot at the May 19, 2020 general and special elections. No other person shall be entitled to qualify to have their name printed on the official ballot for any office that was scheduled to be elected at the general and special elections held on May 5, 2020.

4. Pursuant to § 24.2-603.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, only those voters duly registered to vote on the date of the original election shall be able to participate in the postponed election.

5. Pursuant to § 24.2-701(B)(1) of the *Code of Virginia*, the last day to vote absentee in person shall be May 16, 2020.

    a. Pursuant to § 24.2-701(B)(2) of the *Code of Virginia*, qualified voters shall have until May 12, 2020 to request an absentee ballot using the "my disability or illness reason" by mail, e-mail, or fax.

    b. Pursuant to § 24.2-709(A) of the *Code of Virginia*, the deadline for returning an absentee ballot shall be 7:00 p.m. on May 19, 2020, except as provided under § 24.2-709(B) of the *Code of Virginia*.

6. Pursuant to § 24.2-603.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Department of Elections shall prescribe appropriate procedures to implement the provisions of this section. The Department of Elections shall also prescribe procedures in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Virginia Department of Health to assist in ensuring the safety and well-being of election officials, officers of election, and voters. The Department of Elections shall partner with the Virginia Department of Health and the Virginia Medical Reserve Corps to train election officials on preventive actions to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and to provide support at polling locations.

Effective Date of this Executive Order

This Executive Order shall be effective on April 24, 2020 and shall remain in full force and effect unless amended or rescinded by further executive order.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 24th day of April, 2020.

Ralph S. Northam, Governor

Attest:

Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth