

**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
AN ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**

AN ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER DIRECTING THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TO ENGAGE WITH THE FULTON AND DEKALB COUNTY BOARDS OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS TO IDENTIFY HOW THE CITY OF ATLANTA MAY ASSIST THE BOARDS OF ELECTIONS THROUGH THE POSSIBLE PROVISION OF CITY FACILITIES AND RESOURCES AS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT ALL ELIGIBLE PERSONS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE AND VOTE SAFELY, AND TO COORDINATE WITH THE CITY ATTORNEY TO PREPARE ANY INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND LEGISLATION NECESSARY TO AUTHORIZE THE PROVISION OF SUCH ASSISTANCE BY THE CITY; DIRECTING THE CHIEF OF STAFF TO ENGAGE WITH THE ATLANTA POSTMASTER TO OBTAIN A COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF ANY OPERATIONAL CHANGES MADE BY THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WHICH MAY AFFECT OR INHIBIT MAIL DELIVERY SERVICES FOR CITY OF ATLANTA RESIDENTS BETWEEN NOW AND THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 3, 2020; AND DIRECTING THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TO COORDINATE WITH THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICE TO UPDATE THE ATLANTA 311 MOBILE APPLICATION SUCH THAT IT PROVIDES CITY OF ATLANTA RESIDENTS ALL NECESSARY VOTING INFORMATION.

WHEREAS, like much of the world, the United States, the State of Georgia, and the City of Atlanta are currently responding to an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus named "SARS-CoV-2" and the disease it causes named "coronavirus disease 2019" (abbreviated "COVID-19"); and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020 the President of the United States announced a national emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which included two emergency declarations: one under the National Emergencies Act and one under the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020 Governor Brian Kemp signed a public health state of emergency to address the COVID-19 pandemic through assisting health and emergency management officials

across Georgia by deploying all available resources for the mitigation and treatment of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 15, I declared there to be an emergency in existence within the City of Atlanta pursuant to Section 2-181(a) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control (“CDC”) has issued guidance on the emerging and rapidly evolving situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, including how to protect oneself from this illness; and

WHEREAS, social distancing is recommended by the CDC to prevent the continued spreading of this illness in the community; and

WHEREAS, the need to maintain social distancing and to avoid large gatherings of people during the COVID-19 pandemic may make voting in the 2020 General Election and the January 2021 in person on election day more difficult; and

WHEREAS, during his lifetime the great Congressman John Lewis reminded us through his words and actions that “the right to vote is precious, almost sacred”; and

WHEREAS, in his parting essay written to us, Congressman John Lewis reminded us that if we fail to exercise our right to vote, we can lose it; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 General Election, scheduled to occur on November 3, 2020 may be the most important election in our lifetimes; and thus, turnout is expected to exceed all previous levels; and

WHEREAS, it is my desire to ensure that City of Atlanta residents shall have every opportunity and ability to pass on the gift that John Lewis sacrificed to give us all, to exercise their right to vote; and

WHEREAS, it is my desire to encourage City residents to cast their ballots however they’re most comfortable doing so, including voting by mail, voting in person during Georgia’s early voting period, and voting in person on Election Day; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Constitution, Article IX, Section 2, Paragraph 3, except as otherwise provided by law, prohibits cities and counties from exercising governmental authority within each other's boundaries except by Intergovernmental Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the City of Atlanta and Fulton and DeKalb Counties have mutual interests in providing their residents with whatever may be necessary for them to safely exercise their right to vote; and

WHEREAS, so as to help ensure that all eligible persons have an opportunity to vote and vote safely in the General and Special Elections scheduled for November 3, 2020, I am hereby directing

the Chief Operating Officer to engage with the Fulton and Dekalb County Boards of Registration and Elections to identify how the City of Atlanta may assist the Boards of Elections through the possible provision of city facilities and resources as necessary;

WHEREAS, thereafter, I am hereby directing the Chief Operating Officer to coordinate with the City Attorney to prepare any Intergovernmental Agreements and legislation necessary to authorize the provision of such assistance by the City of Atlanta; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ga. Code § 21-2-380, *et seq.*, Georgia citizens are allowed to vote by mail which is a secure, and undoubtedly the safest, way to exercise the sacred right to vote during a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Postmaster General of the United States has taken actions restricting and slowing the public's access to the U.S. Postal Service ahead of this upcoming general election¹; and

WHEREAS, due to the concerns raised by these actions, I am hereby directing the Chief of Staff to engage with the Atlanta Postmaster to obtain a comprehensive understanding of any operational changes made by the United States Postal Service which may affect or inhibit mail delivery services for City of Atlanta residents between now and the General Election on November 3, 2020; and

WHEREAS, to increase participation in this year's General Election and Special Elections making sure every eligible voter is registered and ready to vote, I am hereby directing the Chief Operating Officer to coordinate with the Chief Information Officer and the Executive Director of the Department of Customer Service to update the Atlanta 311 mobile application such that it provides the public with all necessary voting information.

NOW, THEREFORE, BY THE POWER VESTED IN ME AS MAYOR OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, pursuant to Section 3-104 of the City of Atlanta Charter and Section 2-182(4) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, it is hereby ordered that:

SECTION 1:

- (a) The Chief Operating Officer shall engage with the Fulton and Dekalb County Boards of Registration and Elections to identify how the City of Atlanta may assist the Boards of Elections through the possible provision of city facilities and resources as necessary, to help ensure that all eligible persons have an opportunity to vote and vote safely in the General and Special Elections scheduled for November 3, 2020.

¹ See, e.g., https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/n7wk9z/the-post-office-is-deactivating-mail-sorting-machines-ahead-of-the-election (unexplained deactivation of mail sorting machines); <https://www.oregonlive.com/news/2020/08/usps-removes-mailboxes-in-portland-and-eugene-cites-declining-mail-volume.html> (removal of blue post office drop boxes across the country); <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/07/14/postal-service-trump-dejoy-delay-mail/> (changes to USPS include slower mail delivery).

(b) The Chief Operating Officer shall thereafter coordinate with the City Attorney to prepare any Intergovernmental Agreements and legislation necessary to authorize the provision of such assistance by the City of Atlanta.

SECTION 2: The Chief of Staff shall engage with the Atlanta Postmaster to obtain a comprehensive understanding of any operational changes made by the United States Postal Service which may affect or inhibit mail delivery services for City of Atlanta residents between now and the General and Special Elections on November 3, 2020.

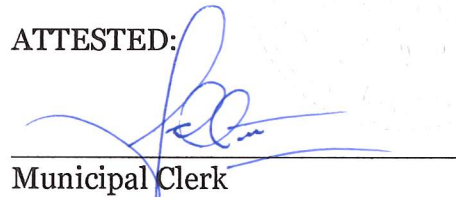
SECTION 3: The Chief Operating Officer shall coordinate with the Chief Information Officer and the Executive Director of the Department of Customer Service to update the Atlanta 311 mobile application such that it provides the public with all voting information necessary to ensure every eligible voter is registered and ready to vote.

SO ORDERED this 28th day of August 2020.



Keisha Lance Bottoms, Mayor

ATTESTED:



Municipal Clerk