

## **League of Women Voters of Juneau Policy Position Statement**

### **Local Election Procedures – 2022**

The League of Women Voters of Juneau supports election procedures, which balance a voter’s access to the ballot with protections for the integrity of the election process. We support non-partisan local elections. We believe that both “poll based” and “by-mail” are valid methods by which to conduct elections. Election procedures should be transparent and include emphasis on voter education and engagement. To the extent possible, procedures of local elections should be consistent with state procedures to eliminate confusion among voters and election officials.

#### **All Elections**

Access to the ballot includes, but is not limited, to the following elements:

- Provide for voting for persons with disabilities:
  - Any voter may request any person to assist them, including reading the ballot aloud, marking the ballot for the voter and delivering the voted ballot to ballot receptacles approved by the Election Official. This voter assistance does not include signing any required voter signature.
  - All election facilities shall comply with ADA accessibility standards and provide adequate parking for voters.
- Allow “No Excuse” Absentee Voting:
  - At any election a qualified voter may vote an absentee ballot for any reason.
- Allow Electronic Voting:
  - The Election Official shall provide secure electronic methods to enable voter access to forms, instructions and the ballot.
- Provide Security:
  - The Municipality shall provide for the security of the ballots and the safety of the voters and election workers during every election.

Election Integrity includes, but is not limited to, the following elements:

- Coordinate with the State of Alaska Division of Elections to ensure the accuracy of the voter registration list, the ability to use the current voter list for each election, to update voter information and signatures in the voter database, and to provide voter participation records (voter history).
- Coordinate with the U.S. Postal Service on the conduct of an election, including the design of election mailings, security and expediency in handling, delivery and return of election mail.
- Coordinate with a professional printer (and mailer, if conducting an election by mail.)
- Provide safeguards in processing and counting ballots to ensure valid election returns.
- Ensure the security of all election facilities, including polling places, vote centers, and ballot processing/storage facilities.
- Allow for reasonable public inspection of all stages of the election process.
- Require a paper ballot and a paper record of ballots cast, including those cast electronically.
- Continue municipal participation in municipal official financial disclosure and campaign disclosure programs administered by the Alaska Public Offices Commission, or by a voter approved locally administered program.

Voter Education and Engagement includes, but is not limited to, the following elements:

- Provide clear wording and layout on the ballot.
- Provide simply written forms and instructions.
- Maintain neutrality and accuracy in any municipally published information regarding ballot measures and candidates.
- Document and publish the safeguards used in processing and counting ballots in order to demonstrate the validity of election returns.

- Determine the method of the regular October election (polling place / by mail / other) in a timely manner, in order to give voters, candidates and the election official the maximum time to prepare for the election.

### **Poll-Based Elections**

- To the extent possible, poll locations should be the same as used by the State of Alaska Division of Elections.
- Hours that the polls are open on Election Day should be the same as used by the State of Alaska Division of Elections.
- When a precinct polling location is moved, every voter registered in that precinct should be notified in writing, in a timely manner, that the poll has been moved and given instructions on where to vote, prior to election day, unless an emergency prohibits the use of the poll on election day.
- Continue to provide absentee ballot application forms directly to qualified voters who are designated on the State of Alaska voter registration list as “Permanent Absentee Voters.”
- Early Voting:
  - Qualified voters shall be allowed to vote early, as soon as the ballots are available from the election official, up to and including Election Day, in locations and at places and times determined by the municipal election official. Such places and times shall be included in the Notice of Election and other election publications.
- Require voter identification in order to cast a ballot as outlined in Alaska Statute 15.15.225.<sup>1</sup>

### **By-Mail Elections**

- Require the voter to sign and date the ballot return envelope.
- Provide a unique bar code to identify each registered voter’s mailed ballot.
- Require signature verification of the voter’s signature.
- Provide for ballot tracking to allow voters to track their ballots through the process.

- Allow for replacement ballots to be issued in the event that the voter’s original mailed ballot is lost or missing.
- Provide a timely signature cure process in the event that a voter’s signature does not match the voter’s signature on file in the voter registration database.
- Provide a sufficient number of drop boxes per number of registered voters:
  - Drop boxes located outside of buildings should be well lit and have a 24/7 security camera.
- Provide a sufficient number of accessible, in-person vote centers for those who prefer to vote in person, need additional assistance, or do not have a reliable mailing address. The vote center should be able to provide replacement ballots to those voters who spoil a ballot (make a mistake and wish to obtain a new ballot) or have not received a ballot by mail.

<sup>1</sup> **Sec. 15.15.225. Voter identification at polls.**

(a) Before being allowed to vote, each voter shall exhibit to an election official one form of identification, including

(1) an official voter registration card, driver's license, state identification card, current and valid photo identification, birth certificate, passport, or hunting or fishing license; or

(2) an original or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document; an item exhibited under this paragraph must show the name and current address of the voter.

(b) An election official may waive the identification requirement if the election official knows the identity of the voter. The identification requirement may not be waived for voters who are first-time voters who initially registered by mail or by facsimile or other electronic transmission approved by the director under [AS 15.07.050](#), and did not provide identification as required in [AS 15.07.060](#).

(c) A voter who cannot exhibit a required form of identification shall be allowed to vote a questioned ballot.