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Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Executive Order to Protect Public Health by Mailing Every Registered Voter a VBM Ballot or Application Ahead of the Primary Election

05/15/2020

TRENTON – In an effort to protect all New Jersey voters from the spread of COVID-19, Governor Phil Murphy today signed an executive order to create a modified vote-by-mail election for the July 7th Primary. The order requires that each county's elections officials send vote-by-mail ballots to all registered Democratic and Republican voters and send VBM ballot applications to unaffiliated and inactive voters. All VBM ballots and VBM ballot applications will come with pre-paid postage.

"No one should have to choose between their health and exercising their right to vote," **said Governor Murphy**. "By providing vote-by-mail ballots and applications, New Jersey voters will be able to safely participate in our democracy as the pandemic continues to threaten our public health."

"As a state at the center of the COVID-19 crisis, New Jersey has to modify to our primary to ensure that our voters have access to free, fair, and safe elections," **said Secretary of State Tahesha Way**. "By providing every voter access to a vote by mail ballot, we are protecting our residents and democracy. As our state embarks on the road to recovery, voters will have the opportunity to choose our leaders without risking their health."

The order also requires opening a minimum of at least one polling place in each municipality, and provided that there are enough poll workers, a minimum of 50 percent of polling places in each county to provide New Jersey voters who may need access to in-person voting opportunities. Polling locations will be required to follow public health standards including ensuring six feet of distance, requiring poll workers to wear face coverings and gloves, frequent sanitization of high-touch areas, and providing sanitization materials to all individuals at a polling place.

Copy of Executive Order No. 144 (<https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-144.pdf>)

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