

**EMERGENCY**

**PLAN**

**2025**

## IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

### Fire or Weather Related:

Try to remain as calm as possible, but move swiftly.

1. Make sure voters are in a safe place. Call our office to determine whether or not to vacate the polling location (if flooding).
2. **Immediately vacate the polling place if there is a fire!**
3. Move election workers and voters to safety away from danger.
4. In any of the incidents listed above, if time permits, grab the poll book and ballots (only if time permits).
5. If time permits, grab the Express Vote (only if time permits). Do not worry about the case or headphones.
6. Delegate duties to election workers: In the case of a flood or fire, immediately unplug any electrical units and extension cords from the wall outlet.

**Get to safety and call 911 immediately if you are in imminent danger. Then call our office to notify us about the incident!**

### Inclement Weather before driving to work:

1. Ensure all supplies, equipment, and signs are inside the vehicle and not on the back of a truck.
2. When unloading or loading, move as swiftly and safely as possible to ensure the safety and protection of supplies and equipment.

### Unsafe to Travel: Ice, sleet, snow

1. Call the office for an update on whether travel is safe.
- In any case, the Judge or alternate makes decisions to keep everyone safe, but never abandon the ship without all involved! Hopefully, the enclosed information is viable for everyone's safety.

## Tornado

If a tornado is reported or seen in the immediate area

- Seek shelter in a designated area.

If time does not allow you to evacuate to a safe location

- Find shelter under a heavy object, such as a table, and protect your head.
- Do not stop for personal belongings, ballots, or election equipment.
- Take accountability and note any missing people.
- If a tornado strikes the building, remain in the polling place until it is safe to evacuate.
- Stay away from sources of power, power lines, phone lines, gas lines, and windows.
- When clear of the area, only re-enter the building if authorized by emergency personnel.
- Report missing people to emergency personnel.
- When regular business resumes, election workers will start voting if possible or practicable.

## ACTIVE SHOOTER

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and may evolve quickly. As a result, these situations may be over even before law enforcement arrives on the scene.

Individuals must be mentally and physically prepared to react to an active shooter.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security recommends these best practices when coping with an active shooter situation:

- Be aware of the environment and any possible dangers.
- Take note of the two nearest exits in the polling place facility.
- In a different room away from the shooter, stay there and secure the door.
- In a hallway, get into a room and secure the door.
- As a last resort, attempt to take the active shooter down. When the shooter is in close range and cannot flee, the chance of survival is much greater; try to incapacitate him/her.
- Dial 9-1-1 when it is safe to do so!

## **Electrical Outage**

1. Voting equipment contains battery backups that allow it to continue operating for approximately 3–4 hours when power is disrupted.
2. If battery supplies are near depletion, turn off the voting equipment and ensure voters deposit their ballot in the ballot box slot.
3. Note the time of the power outage from the poll book and contact the Elections department immediately.
4. If flashlights and/or emergency lighting are not already available at the polling location, contact the Elections Department,
5. When power is restored, turn the voting equipment back on.
6. If power is not restored before the end of election day, secure all ballots and equipment, along with all election supplies, to return to the Elections Department.
7. If early voting, secure all ballots, equipment, and election supplies in the Annex.

**A long-term power outage may require a change in polling location. In addition to the instructions listed above:**

- a. Try to remain calm.
  - b. Assist voters and staff in the immediate area.
  - c. If emergency lighting is available, proceed cautiously to an area with lighting, including natural light.
  - d. Turn off voting equipment. All cast ballots are to remain sealed and secured in the ballot box.
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## Change of Polling Location

The Elections Office, in consultation with Emergency Management personnel, determines that a polling location needs to move to respond to a disaster or emergency effectively, following this guidance:

- a. Election workers will assist in packing up all voting equipment, ballots, poll books, registration materials, and all election forms and information that need to be relocated (e.g., signs, notices, etc.).
- b. The Elections Office will assist with transporting supplies and equipment to facilitate the move to another location.
- c. Election workers and the Election Office will move all election supplies and equipment.
- d. The voting equipment and ballot box must remain locked and secured.**
- e. A police officer will maintain a positive sightline of the voting equipment and ballot box and escort them to the contingency location. The polling place will be established per standard procedure at the contingency location.
- f. During the change of location, all unvoted ballots should remain in the presence of the presiding judge, alternate judge,
- g. Post a sign designating the new polling place on the front entry doors of the original polling location (if the building is safe) or at a place as close to the entry doors as possible.
- h. The Elections Office will post a notice on the county website and distribute it to local radio and the Elections website, directing voters to the new location.
- i. If a change of location warrants an extension of voting hours, the Elections Department will consult with the Secretary of State and an appropriate court.

## See Contacts for Emergency Numbers

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IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS – WASHINGTON COUNTY

Election Department - (979) 277-6264

Emergency - 911

Police Department – (979) 337-7337

Sheriff Department – (979) 277- 6251

Carol Jackson – Cell: 979-251-1632