

Welcome October 2020



It is an honor and privilege to serve the 26th District in the Missouri House of Representatives. I've enjoyed getting to know so many people in our community, and I hope this e-mail newsletter allows me to hear from more of my constituents. Please forward this e-mail to your friends and family in the 26th District who want to know how what happens in the legislature affects all our lives.











ABSENTEE VOTING

2020 FACT SHEET

Voting absentee (either by mail or in person)*, is a safer way to vote during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to delays with USPS, here are our recommendations for voting safely, while guaranteeing your vote gets counted by November 3rd:

IF VOTING ABSENTEE BY MAIL:

1. **Request your absentee ballot NOW**, and, if applicable, choose the 2nd (confinement due to illness) or last option (65+ /at-risk for COVID). All other options require a notary.
2. Once you receive your ballot, fill it out and send in your completed ballot ASAP – **BY October 20th**. (If it's mailed in after this date, there is no guarantee it will be received by Election Day.)
3. If you don't receive your ballot in time, or can't send it by 10/20, fill it out, **hold on to your ballot and walk it into your Local Election Authority by 7pm (poll close) on November 3rd**.

IF VOTING ABSENTEE IN PERSON:

1. The safest way to vote **in person** is to vote **BEFORE November 3rd (bring your ID!)**
2. **In person absentee voting is available at your Local Election Authority from September 22nd-November 2nd (5pm)**.
3. If voting on Election Day November 3rd, please wear a mask & socially distance.

*You can vote absentee if you expect to be: confined due to illness, 65 or older, immunocompromised, absent on election day, or meet another statutory excuse.





Yes!

YOU CAN VOTE

Can I Vote while on Pre-Trial Detention?

Yes! You CAN vote if:

- If you are Not currently on probation and parole
- You have never been convicted of an elections offense, either a felony or misdemeanor

Who do I ask for a voter registration application or absentee ballot?

Your Case Manager

If you have any trouble accessing your right to vote call the ACLU MO hotline at (314) 652-3111. The jail must provide a way for you to vote if you are eligible. This will include an absentee ballot and notarization of that ballot."

What if I requested an absentee ballot while detained but was released before election day?

Some counties will forward your ballot to the current address you provide. Some will require that you pick up your ballot at the jail. This will differ between counties.

Can I vote if I have been convicted of a felony?

Yes! While you may not vote if you are currently imprisoned or are still serving probation or parole, you CAN vote if:

- You have completed your term of incarceration
- You have completed your probation and parole
- You have never been convicted of an elections offense, either a felony or misdemeanor

Racial and socioeconomic disparities in our jail populations means that people of color and low-income are disproportionately affected by lack of information and access about voting to pre-trial detainees.

- General Election will be held on **Tuesday, November 3.**
- You must register to vote by **Wednesday, October 7.**
- If voting absentee or by mail-in, you must request the application by **Wednesday, October 21** and then get that ballot back in immediately!

Visit aclumoelectionhub.org for information on how to register, requesting a ballot, finding a notary, finding your polling location, and creating a voting plan.

More Questions? Call the ACLU MO (314) 652-3111

ACLU
MO



Jackson County has established a Food Program, as part of the CARES Act helping agencies serving the homeless or similar food programs. DEADLINE to apply is October 11, 2020. If you are interested please go to www.jacksongov.org to apply.



COVID-19

FREE TESTING CLINIC

Testing symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals

Walk-ins welcome, appointments preferred



Monday - Friday
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

*Lunch will be held from 11:50 a.m. - 12:40 p.m.,
and there will not be testing during this time.*

**Visit jacohd.org/events to see
dates + locations and to register.**

Testing provided by the Jackson County Health Department

CAPITOL UPDATE

JUDGE ORDERS STATE TO SELL PART OF DISPUTED PARK

An Oregon County judge on Sept. 29 ordered the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to sell 625 acres of the 4,197-acre Eleven Point State Park, ruling the land in question is subject to a restrictive federal easement that prohibits its public use.

DNR acquired the larger parcel for the new state park during Democratic former Gov. Jay Nixon's administration using proceeds from a settlement over lead mining elsewhere in the state. In the years following the purchase, some Republican lawmakers from the region along the Arkansas border have unsuccessfully tried to force the state to sell the entire property.

The plaintiffs in the court case are nearby landowners who contend DNR can't develop a public park on the lands covered by the federal easement, which is intended to preserve the wild nature of the area along the Eleven Point River. The case was filed in 2017 but didn't go to trial until August.

During the trial, the department argued that using the land as a park doesn't conflict with the easement and that in the event a conflict did arise, a modification to the easement could be sought. However, Osage County Circuit Judge Steven Privette, a Republican, disagreed and sided with the plaintiffs.

"As presented to the court at trial, DNR has acquired as a state park lands which cannot under any reasonable interpretation be used by the public as a park," Privette wrote. "As such, its actions are arbitrary and capricious."

Several groups that advocate for the state parks system, including the Missouri Coalition for

the Environment, the Missouri Parks Association, the Conservation Federation of Missouri and the state chapter of the Sierra Club have urged Attorney General Eric Schmitt, a Republican, to appeal Privette's ruling, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported on Sept. 30. The case is *Van McGibney v. Missouri Department of Natural Resources*.

PARSONS RECONSIDERS FESTIVAL DUE TO COVID CONCERNS

After initially planning to still hold their annual public fall festival despite testing positive for COVID-19, Gov. Mike Parson and First Lady Teresa Parson reversed course on Sept. 29 and postponed the event, which was scheduled to take place Oct. 3 at the Governor's Mansion.

The Parsons tested positive on Sept. 23. According to news releases updating their status, the governor has experienced no symptoms, while the first lady initially suffered only mild symptoms but now has none. Teresa Parson returned to the family's home in Bolivar to recover while the governor remained in isolation in Jefferson City.

Two days later, Teresa Parson posted on Twitter that the 3rd Annual Parson Fall Family Festival on the mansion grounds would proceed since both she and the governor were expected to be out of isolation by then. The post said masks would be offered and social distancing encouraged but didn't say that either would be required. Responses to the post were largely critical of the decision.

The governor said in a Sept. 29 news release that the postponing the festival "is the best decision at this time." It is tentatively scheduled to be held Oct. 31 to coincide with Halloween activities at the mansion.

MOSTLY UNELECTED INCUMBENTS RUNNING STATEWIDE

In 2016, not a single incumbent sought re-election to one of the five statewide executive branch offices on the ballot that year, marking the first time that had occurred since 1992. This year, incumbents are running in all five, but only one actually won election to his current post in 2016.

The incumbent at the top of the ticket is Republican Gov. Mike Parson, who is being

challenged by Democratic State Auditor Nicole Galloway. Parson was elected lieutenant governor in 2016 but moved up to the top job when his predecessor resigned in 2018.

Parson later appointed Republican Mike Kehoe to replace him as lieutenant governor. Former Kansas City Councilwoman Alissa Canady is the Democrat seeking the post.

After Republican Josh Hawley won election to the U.S. Senate in November 2018 and vacated the office of attorney general, Parson appointed State Treasurer Eric Schmitt as Hawley's replacement. The Democratic candidate for attorney general is former federal prosecutor Rich Finnegan.

Following Schmitt's job shift, Parson appointed Republican Scott Fitzpatrick as state treasurer. Vicki Englund, a former state representative, is the Democratic candidate running against him.

Among the 2016 statewide winners, only Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft, a Republican, remains in the same post. Attorney and West Point military academy graduate Yinka Faleti is the Democratic nominee.

Missouri's sixth statewide elected executive branch office – state auditor – appears on the ballot in non-gubernatorial years, as has been since the case since 1950 when it was constitutionally separated from the other five for election purposes. If Galloway is elected governor, she would appoint her replacement as state auditor.



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