Numbered Memo 2019-08

TO: County Boards of Elections
FROM: Karen Brinson Bell, Executive Director
RE: Photo ID Implementation Preparations
DATE: November 8, 2019

As we continue implementation of Photo ID for the 2020 elections, many additional steps and phases will take place. This memo identifies the schedule for household mailings, training, forms, and enhancements. Additionally, it outlines several procedures and requirements to be administered or implemented by the State Board office and/or county boards of elections. It incorporates changes made by Session Law 2019-239 (SB683), which became law on November 6, 2019.

This memo does not seek to summarize Session Law 2019-239. A detailed summary of the bill can be found in the email sent by General Counsel Katelyn Love on November 7, 2019.

Mailings
Section 1.5.(a)(9) of Session Law 2019-144 requires two mailings to all North Carolina households during this calendar year and two additional mailings next year. An additional required mailing to registered voters who might not have a DMV-issued form of identification was mailed in September to approximately 700,000 voters using criteria to broadly reach as many voters as possible who might be affected by this change in voting procedure.

Household mailings are scheduled for distribution as follows:

- On or around November 15, 2019 (extra-large postcard format)
- On or around December 13, 2019 (booklet format, like previous judicial voter guides)
- On or around February 7, 2020 (format TBD, large folded mailer anticipated)
- In conjunction with absentee-by-mail and one-stop early voting for General Election 2020.

These schedules are subject to change as they are dependent on purchasing requirements and vendor capacity.

Counties may experience increased call volume as households receive these mailings, so we will notify you when each mailing goes out. A direct phone line to the State Board office is published on each mailing. Additionally, the State Board phone system has a dedicated option for callers to select to learn more about Photo ID or to speak with someone about the voting requirement.

Real ID
Because of the coincidental timing in 2020 of implementing Photo ID in North Carolina and the effective date of Real ID, there have been questions from voters about whether or not a Real ID is required for voting. Real ID is not required for voting purposes; any DMV-issued NC driver’s license or special ID card is acceptable. We recognize this message must be made clear for voters. Future materials published for Photo ID education and information will clarify this point and any non-printed materials will be updated, such as the SBE website. New posters for display at polling locations will be updated and sent to each county by early January for use in 2020.

**Rule Making**

Changes in the administration of absentee-by-mail adopted in [Session Law 2019-239](https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/LastSession/Laws/SessionLaws/2019/SL239/) require amendments to certain previously adopted temporary rules pertaining to Photo ID. The State Board will consider whether to publish the proposed amendments and open a public comment period at its November 26, 2019 meeting. A public hearing on both the amended temporary rules and certain permanent rules is slated for December 12, 2019.

**Additional Outreach Efforts**

In addition to the two Photo ID educational seminars held in each county in May through August 2019, the Photo ID law provides for additional educational outreach seminars. County Boards are encouraged to lead these sessions if a seminar is requested. The Training & Outreach Team is ready to assist in your preparations and may assist in-person or by webinar (subject to availability). The Training & Outreach Team is also contacting organizations and accepting requests about conducting seminars. If a seminar is scheduled by SBE staff, the CBE will be notified and welcomed to participate.

The photo ID seminar and some printed materials will be available in Spanish. Please contact the Training & Outreach Team for more information about Spanish materials.

Additional Photo ID outreach materials have already been or are being developed for populations such as students, individuals requiring Multipartisan Assistance Team (MAT) services, or others who have special considerations when voting. These materials will be available via the SBE website in a printable format.

Press kits are also being developed through the Communications Team. These will be shared with our media contacts and available to CBEs to share with your local media outlets.

The SBE website is a primary source for information. Updates to the website are ongoing. A video created for the SBE’s booth at the State Fair and slide presentations are a few of the recent tools available about Photo ID through the website.

**Form Changes**

The Photo ID law, and recently enacted [Session Law 2019-239](https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/LastSession/Laws/SessionLaws/2019/SL239/), requires voters to include a copy of an acceptable ID or an alternative affidavit with the return of their civilian absentee-by-mail ballot. A new absentee-by-mail ballot return envelope has been designed and will be shared with CBEs, likely by next week. In a survey a few weeks ago, the majority of responding CBEs indicated they preferred that funds allocated in the Photo ID bill go to assist counties with any
additional costs for these new envelopes. Information about the grant process for these funds will be outlined with the release of the new envelope.

Additional form changes with modifications pertaining to Photo ID to be provided by the end of November are:

- Absentee-by-mail request form
- Absentee-by-mail instructions
- Provisional ballot materials
- Supplemental help desk referral.

**SEIMS Enhancements**
The Photo ID law, including changes made by [Session Law 2019-239](#), require enhancements to the SEIMS system. These will be part of the year-end/first-of-the-year release and primarily affect:

- Provisional ballot processing for reason of reasonable impediment
- Processing of absentee-by-mail applications.

Our Project Management and IT Teams are moving these enhancements through the project management phases now including requirements, development, and testing before the release and training phases take place.

**Training Webinars and Other Training**
A series of training sessions will be delivered over the next few months to prepare CBEs for Photo ID implementation. Because of the need for CBE personnel to be in the office during candidate filing (December 2 to 20, 2019) and the initial mailing of absentee-by-mail ballots scheduled to begin on January 13, 2020, we plan to conduct these training sessions via webinar. Some sessions may be held by district or region to allow for greater attendee participation. A recording of each training topic will be made available for reference or for use during poll worker training. The first of these sessions will be an overview of the Photo ID law and rules and will be held later this month.

Other training and training tools will include:

- Videos or slide presentations for use during poll worker training. These will be available by mid-December.
- Tabletop exercises during the State Conference to be held February 3-4, 2020.
- New formatting of the Station Guide, including designs that will allow CBEs to add the Station Guide information to CBE training/poll worker manuals, a separate notebook, or continue with the “standup notebook” format.

**Approved Photo ID guides**
Due to the large number of acceptable Photo IDs, it is not possible to include written and visual examples of all IDs on a single poster. Instead, a searchable and indexed PDF guide has been designed to allow voters to view the approved IDs on the SBE website. CBEs may provide this link on county websites once the document is finalized and published. This guide will be converted into both printable and electronic formats. A printed or electronic format must be available at each polling place. Printed versions may be available as a notebook. The electronic format will be a
PDF file that can be added to a laptop for viewing. The guide will be finalized the first week of December and distributed shortly thereafter. The final IDs to be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director are due by November 15, 2019 and will be approved by December 1, 2019.

Multipartisan Assistance Teams
An absentee request form is now valid only if returned by the voter, the voter’s near relative or verifiable legal guardian, or a multipartisan assistance team. This change in the law may increase the need for MAT services. Please consider organizing these teams now. Training materials are being updated and will be available mid-December. If you have difficulty organizing these teams, several organizations have reached out to the SBE about assisting. Please contact Ted Fitzgerald, SBE Chief Learning Officer, for more information about these organizations.

Ongoing communication will be provided about these Photo ID implementation preparations. Ted Fitzgerald is serving as the Photo ID project coordinator. If you need additional information about implementation preparations, please contact Ted Fitzgerald. If you need additional information about a legal matter concerning Photo ID, please contact the SBE Legal Team.