

Hurricane Michael Recovery Election Plan

Hurricane Michael has hit Gulf County very hard. With so many homes damaged or destroyed we have many voters displaced, with questions of if and when they can even return. We also have many polling locations damaged or designated as shelters. Communication in the county is spotty and power outages may last in some areas for weeks if not months. The elections office had surge flood waters come to the door but thankfully no flooding in the office. The office was spared significant damage and our voting equipment and servers were undamaged. The elections office is up and running although it is currently on generator power....we are open. We do have internet and can receive emails at gulfsoe@votegulf.com. Our phone communications are still down as well but will hopefully be restored very soon.

Gulf County voters, in addition to assessing damage to their homes and helping neighbors as we always do in difficult times.....are slowly piecing their lives back together. Some voter's are asking questions on how we are going to be able to have an election in these catastrophic conditions. I want to reach out to every voter and will be doing so by every means available to assure them....the election will go on and every voter will have an opportunity to vote and have their voice heard.

As supervisor of elections, I am putting the following plan into place immediately.

On Oct 27, the first day of early voting, we will have 2 voting super centers in operation. They will be located at the normal early voting sites that gulf county voters are already familiar with.

For the South end of the county it will be right here at the Supervisor of Elections office at 401 Long Ave. PSJ, FL.

For the North end of the county it will be at the Wewahitchka Branch Library at 314 N. 2nd Street, Wewahitchka, FL.

Both of these voting super centers will open Saturday Oct 27 and run through Election Day November 6. Hours of operation will be from 7AM to 7PM Eastern Time every day. Your normal polling locations will not be open on election day. If you normally vote at your designated polling place on election day, for this election you will need to vote at one of these 2 voting centers or vote-by-mail.

Any voter who resides in Gulf County can vote at either of these locations.

I am also enacting the following for vote-by-mail ballots(Absentees)

Beginning immediately any voter that comes by the elections office, can pickup an absentee ballot for themselves, or pick up a absentee ballot for any family member. You also have the option of voting an in-office absentee ballot. You can still also use the online "request an absentee" ballot function on our website www.votegulf.com. When phones are restored you may also call the office at 850-229-6117 and place your request.

UPDATE!!! Due to the executive order from the governor.....we will be unable to email ballots to our displaced voters as originally planned. However the restriction on mailing ballots to a different address other than what we have on file has been waived. If you are a displaced voter, give us the address you will be at and we can and will mail you a vote by mail ballot to that address

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the elections office via email at gulfsoe@votegulf.com or call us at 229-6117 when phones are restored.

Rest assured that we will do everything in our power to ensure every Gulf county voter has an opportunity to cast their ballots in this election.

Our thoughts and prayers are with each of you and for Gulf county as we go through these difficult times. I and my staff are here for you.

John M. Hanlon

Gulf County Supervisor of Elections