

## MAKE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD . . . VOTE!!!

“While you have the right to sit this election out, the responsibility is so enormous and the consequences so grave that no one can or should sit this one out.” (Source unknown)

The purpose of this document is to provide you with basic information regarding the voting process for the upcoming 2020 General Election. However, you are encouraged to visit the website of your local BOE (Board of Election) to obtain information specific to your county.

As we move closer to the 2020 General Election and we ponder what our future might be, it should cause us to realize we must work intensively and untiringly to bring about a change in our country. It is not enough to talk the talk, but we must walk the walk – thus calling, knocking on doors, registering, and educating our friends, neighbors, and others about what is at stake. As our former First Lady Michelle Obama stated, “our lives depend on it.” It becomes obvious that we have a moral responsibility to become actively involved not only by casting our vote but working to make sure others are educated on the why and how of voting in the 2020 General Election. **“We need to have a plan to vote and “Do IT”.**

“We strongly suggest that as you ponder the answers, the common denominator is YOU. You CAN make a difference. YOU are the key to the outcome of the election. Do not let poll projections sway your vote. Poll projections are mere guesses at the outcome of an election. WE hold the power when we cast our votes to shape our beloved country. The upcoming elections are so important that we ask you to put everything that is not essential on hold and focus your attention on the work of AME V-ALERT. We are sounding an alarm! We must educate, mobilize, and register our communities to VOTE. Our mission is clear. We CAN make a difference! We MUST make a difference! It is OUR TURN; OUR watch and we must ACT! If you have not already created your own action plan, please utilize this toolkit from <http://www.amev-alert.org/>”

In 2016 millions of eligible minority voters did not vote, while whites voted in larger numbers. The turnout among African Americans was lower than in 2008 or 2012 at a time when we still needed to send a message that strong leadership with integrity was needed.

### **Here we are in 2020 - Do You know...?**

- If your voter registration is current, as boards of election have ***been purging the rolls*** – check the online look up at [www.ncbe.gov](http://www.ncbe.gov);
- You can reach out to family, friends, and the community by educating, and registering them through:
  - √ Organizing talking circles via Free Conference Call, Zoom, etc.;
  - √ Sending cards to your family, church members and neighbors providing them with pertinent information regarding voting and encouraging them to vote – you may be able to offer transportation;
  - √ Canvassing your church membership and neighbors – informing the community of activities related to registering to vote, updating voter registration information and the process of early voting for those who are not registered; and,
  - √ “Souls to the Poll” is an organized means to meet family, and friends, at the polls to vote and/or deposit your absentee ballot or at the local Post Office to mail their absentee ballot together – ***Get Creative!!***

### **Others may say, “ I don’t have time to stand in line to Vote.” We say...**

- √ The outcome of this election will impact all of us both personally and collectively – our personal freedom, taxes, healthcare, and education, protection under the law, as well as economically all which some of us tend to take for granted.  
So, it is imperative that you (we) understand the importance of our vote – every vote counts and can make a significant difference in the outcome of the election.

→ **Absentee Voter Deadline:**

- + Last day to request an Application by mail – October 27
- + Last day for Submission by Mail – **must be** postmarked by November 3 and received by the BOE by 5:00 pm on November 6) – **It will require a 55-cent stamp to mail the ballot, provided by the voter, to mail the ballot back**
- + Last day for Submission in Person – November 3 by 5:00 pm

(**Note:** If the ballot is delivered in person you **MUST** take it inside the BOE as there are **NO** drop boxes)

**September 4:** North Carolina, a key battleground, becomes the first state to start mailing requested absentee ballots to voters.

Please know - The BOE **does not** mail out any confirmations after receiving your request. You may call your local office to confirm receipt.

The state BOE is supposed to release a tool to request an absentee ballot and Track the ballot on September 1. It is not clear what functionality that will have. However, currently you can use the state's voter search tool to see if your ballot has been accepted.

However, the state and county boards of election will go through a number of checks to make sure the process is secure and reviewed. Please go to [www.ncbe.gov](http://www.ncbe.gov) to read the "Statement About Absentee Ballot Security in North Carolina."

The absentee ballot request **does not** require a witness. However, once you receive your actual absentee ballot, you **will have to have** "1" (one) witness on the return form. (This exception is valid for the November 3<sup>rd</sup> election only at this time).

**October 9, 2020** is the last day to register to voter prior to the beginning of the early voting cycle.

→ **Early Voting:**

- + Begins - October 1
- + Ends – October 31

(Note: you can register and vote during this period & you should **check your local BOE for times** as some counties have extended hours on Saturday, October 17, and October 24)

If you have not already created your own action plan, please utilize the toolkit from the AME V-Alert ([amev-alert.org](http://amev-alert.org)) website. Partners have resources that can help you. On our site, you can share your events and outcomes with us. Expect the daily countdown 60 days prior to the election & take action to help us achieve 100% voter turnout. Let our voices be the voice of the voiceless.

<http://www.amev-alert.org/>

African Methodist Episcopal Church AME Voter ALERT (V-ALERT) A Movement/Plan to Increase Voter Education, Mobilization, and Registration for the 2020 United States Elections

PARTNERS • African American Ministers Leadership Council – Vessels Vote Initiative ([www.pfaw.org/VESSELS](http://www.pfaw.org/VESSELS)) • NAACP Legal Defense Fund ([www.naacpldf.org](http://www.naacpldf.org)) • NAACP ([www.naacp.org](http://www.naacp.org)) • The Freedom Sunday Coalition (<http://theblackchurchreport.com/votingtoolkit/>) • Component organizations of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

Remember, as you vote, you should vote down the ballot as politics begins at the local level and moves from the state to the national level. Therefore, we need to hold all our representatives accountable.

***Let our voices be the voice of the voiceless. Let us use our talents, our resources, and our time to insure justice for all!***

Resources and excerpts used for this document:

1. [www.amev-alert.org/](http://www.amev-alert.org/)
2. Carolina Public Press
3. NCSBE.gov
4. League of Women Voters

Hopefully, after you read the enclosed information and visited the resources listed in this document, you should know what you need to do. So, now we are saying - Just Do It, remember WE are depending on all of us to get the job done.

Barbara R. Myers 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President/SA Chair

WNCC

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