



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Press Release on Local Reapportionment Process due to recent Federal Court Ruling

JACKSONVILLE – Earlier this year a lawsuit was filed in Federal Court challenging the validity of the Jacksonville City Council's redistricting map. On Monday 12/19/22 at approximately 5PM the Judge ruled and upheld the Plaintiff's challenge and required my office to abandon the redistricting map provided by the City Council and accept and implement the redistricting map created by the Plaintiffs. On Tuesday morning we immediately started populating the new map. This work is very tedious and exacting and it impacts nearly every procedure and process of the Elections office. It is also a very expensive process.

The Geographical Information System (GIS), or "mapping system" drives our process for Redistricting. Two members of my staff are placing each street segment and each voter (660,000) into the appropriate City Council and School Board districts within Duval County.

After updating the street segments, each City Council District is divided into precincts. By experience we know we will have to relocate or add new precincts. This will require my Precinct Coordinator to search for new precinct sites; enter into contract with the owners of those new sites; and legislative approval by the City Council. At this point in time we don't know how many precincts we will need. We try not to create a precinct that crosses any major roadways. We strive for the goldilocks-sized precincts - not too large and not too small. Sometimes precincts are much smaller or larger than we would like, this happens when a suitable polling location is not available in that precinct. In addition, whenever we make changes to polling locations, we must evaluate the appropriate staffing level that precinct will need to effectively handle voter turnout on Election Day.



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After all street segments are updated, the voter registration system and vote tabulation system are updated. Updating the voter registration system places all voters into their correct representative district. Updating the vote tabulation system assigns the correct ballots to all voters come election time.

NOTE: Our office is very particular about ensuring we have a backup plan in place. If the City appeals the Order and is successful with their appeal we have saved all the data created by the City's original redistricting map.

Florida Statutes require our office to mail a new voter information card to all voters who have been affected by district and or precinct changes. This means we will need to mail hundreds of thousands of new voter information cards to our voters prior to the March 2023 Election. (We just sent out 600,000 plus new voter information cards in July of this year)

If any voting precincts are added or removed, the appropriate signage must be added or removed as necessary. Likewise, the signage at any polling locations that have changed precinct numbers must also be updated as necessary.

Our work is governed by Federal, State and City laws and especially the calendar, as certain deadlines must be met - the Qualifying of candidates will be Jan 9th to Jan 13th. - mail ballots must be sent out 40 days before the Election Day - Early Voting is March 6th thru March 19th - Election Day is March 21st. In addition to implementing the new district lines my staff will have to:

- train 1,500 to 1,800 poll workers for the March Election
- On or about December 30 we will send a notice to almost 100,000 voters that typically vote by mail alerting them to update their request for a mail ballot. They can call, go online, or mail their request.

There are some pressing issues regarding the candidates who have filed to run in this election. The most important issue for some of the candidates is, are they still in the District they filed to run in? The new lines may have carved them out of their district.



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Many have already spent hundreds of hours and dollars to get ready for the race. Some have obtained enough petition signatures to qualify by petition. Will those petitions be honored if they have to run in a different district? What about the residency laws which require a candidate to have resided in the district office they are seeking for at least 180 days. I believe the candidates issues will all be favorably accommodated.

Although the task is large, complicated and compressed by time constraints, we believe we will be able to meet all deadlines and conduct a successful Election.



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