Executive Order
Office of the Mayor
City of Atlanta

2020 OCT -5 PM 8:40

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 2020-149
BY THE MAYOR

ORDERING THAT EMPLOYEES SHALL BE ENTITLED TO A LEAVE OF ABSENCE OF NOT MORE THAN 8 HOURS FOR THE PURPOSE OF SERVING AS A POLL WORKER FOR THE 2020 GENERAL ELECTION AND SPECIAL ELECTION, OR THE JANUARY 5, 2021 GENERAL ELECTION RUNOFF FOR FEDERAL OFFICES; ORDERING THAT THE NUMBER OF HOURS CITY EMPLOYEES ARE PERMITTED TO TAKE OFF TO VOTE IN THE NOVEMBER 3, 2020 GENERAL ELECTION AND SPECIAL ELECTION, AND THE JANUARY 5, 2021 GENERAL ELECTION RUNOFF FOR FEDERAL OFFICES, PURSUANT TO SECTION 114-419(A) OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA CODE OF ORDINANCES, SHALL BE INCREASED FROM TWO HOURS TO FOUR HOURS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, like much of the world, the United States, the State of Georgia, and the City of Atlanta are currently responding to an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus named "SARS-CoV-2" and the disease it causes named "coronavirus disease 2019" (abbreviated "COVID-19"); and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020 the President of the United States announced a national emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which included two emergency declarations: one under the National Emergencies Act and one under the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020 Governor Brian Kemp signed a public health state of emergency to address the COVID-19 pandemic through assisting health and emergency management officials across Georgia by deploying all available resources for the mitigation and treatment of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 15, I declared there to be an emergency in existence within the City of Atlanta pursuant to Section 2-181(a) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control ("CDC") has issued guidance on the emerging and rapidly evolving situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, including how to protect oneself from this illness; and

WHEREAS, social distancing is recommended by the CDC to prevent the continued spreading of this illness in the community; and

WHEREAS, the need to maintain social distancing and to avoid large gatherings of people during the COVID-19 pandemic the may make voting in the 2020 General Election and the January 2021 in person on election day more difficult; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic, has disproportionately affected older persons; and

WHEREAS, persons who have volunteered to serve as poll workers for elections throughout the United States have traditionally been retirees and older residents; and

WHEREAS, the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused thousands of experienced poll workers to resign causing a nationwide shortage; and

WHEREAS, poll worker shortages can lead to fewer polling places, longer lines, and, in a pandemic, potential health risks for voters; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 General Election and Special Election, (General Election), scheduled to occur on November 3, 2020 may be the most important election in our lifetimes; and thus, turnout is expected to exceed all previous levels; and

WHEREAS, Advanced In Person (Early) Voting for the November General Election is scheduled to begin on October 12, 2020 and shall run through October 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the General Election Run-off for Federal Offices, (Run-off Election), is scheduled to occur on January 5, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Early Voting for the Run-off Election is scheduled to begin on December 14, 2020 and shall run through December 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, there is a urgent need to ensure that the 2020 election is able to function effectively, there is a need to recruit new poll workers to replace older workers who have resigned due concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, it is my desire to encourage and support City of Atlanta employees who wish to volunteer their time as poll workers; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2-182 of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, the Mayor may issue executive orders which apply to events of short duration and which expire at the next meeting of the Atlanta City Council subsequent thereof unless ratified by a majority vote of the members present and voting; and

WHEREAS, it is my desire that City of Atlanta employees shall be entitled to a leave of absence of not more than eight (8) hours to serve as a poll worker on the dates of the General Election and

the Run-off Election, or on any date during the Early Voting periods scheduled for the General Election and the January 2021 Runoff Election when Early Voting is scheduled to occur, (October 12, 2020 through October 30, 2020, and December 14, 2020 through December 31, 2020, respectively); and

WHEREAS, a leave of absence pursuant to this Section shall be granted in accordance with the procedures applicable to annual leave set forth in Section 114-415 of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, and upon satisfactory evidence that their application to serve as a poll worker has been approved by the elections office of the employee's county of residence; and

WHEREAS, during his lifetime the great Congressman John Lewis reminded us through his words and actions that "the right to vote is precious, almost sacred"; and

WHEREAS, in his parting essay written to us, Congressman John Lewis reminded us that if we fail to exercise our right to vote, we can lose it; and

WHEREAS, it is always my desire to ensure that City of Atlanta employees shall have every opportunity and ability to pass on the gift that John Lewis sacrificed to give us all, to exercise their right to vote; and

WHEREAS, it is my desire to encourage City employees to cast their ballots however they're most comfortable doing so, including voting by mail, voting in person during Georgia's early voting period, and voting in person on Election Day; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 114-419(a) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, City employees are permitted to take any necessary time off to vote in any municipal, county, state or federal election, where such time off shall not exceed two hours, and if the hours of work of such employee commence at least two hours after the opening of the polls or end at least two hours prior to the closing of the polls, the time off for voting need not apply; and

WHEREAS, the employee's supervisor may specify the hours which may be used for voting as provided in Section 114-419(a); and

WHEREAS, to mitigate the effects of the unprecedented number of obstacles to voting in this year's General Election due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the expected increase in turn out, it is my desire to increase the number of hours City employees are permitted to take off with pay to vote in this year's November General Election, and the January 2021 Runoff Election from two hours to four hours; and

WHEREAS, employees shall be permitted to utilize the four hours during which they are permitted to take off to vote on the dates of the General Election and the Run-off Election, or on any date during the Early Voting periods scheduled for the General Election and the January 2021 Runoff Election when Early Voting is scheduled to occur, (October 12, 2020 through October 30, 2020, and December 14, 2020 through December 31, 2020, respectively).

NOW THEREFORE, I, KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS, AS MAYOR OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, NOW HEREBY AUTHORIZE, ORDER AND DIRECT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1.

(a) That City of Atlanta employees shall be entitled to a leave of absence of not more than eight (8) hours to serve as a poll worker for the November 3, 2020 General Election and Special Election.

(b) Employees shall be permitted to utilize the 8 hours allotted by this Section on the date of the General Election, November 3, 2020, or on any one date during the Early Voting period scheduled for the General Election, (October 12, 2020 through October 30, 2020), on which Early Voting is scheduled to occur.

(c) A leave of absence pursuant to this Section shall be granted in accordance with the procedures applicable to annual leave set forth in Section 114-415 of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, and upon satisfactory evidence that their application to serve as a poll worker has been approved by the elections office of the employee's county of residence.

SECTION 2.

(a) That City of Atlanta employees shall be entitled to a leave of absence of not more than eight (8) hours to serve as a poll worker for the January 5, 2021 General Election Run-off for Federal Offices.

(b) Employees shall be permitted to utilize the 8 hours allotted by this Section on the date of the General Election Run-off for Federal Offices, January 5, 2021, or on any one date during the Early Voting period scheduled for the January 5, 2021 General Election Run-off for Federal Offices, (December 14, 2020 through December 31, 2020), on which Early Voting is scheduled to occur.

(c) A leave of absence pursuant to this Section shall be granted in accordance with the procedures applicable to annual leave set forth in Section 114-415 of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, and upon satisfactory evidence that their application to serve as a poll worker has been approved by the elections office of the employee's county of residence.

SECTION 3.

(a) That the number of hours City employees are permitted to take off with pay to vote in the November 3, 2020 General Election and Special Election, pursuant to Section 114-419(a) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, shall be increased from two hours to four hours.

(b) Employees shall be permitted to utilize the four hours allotted by this Section on the date of the General Election, November 3, 2020, or on any date during the Early Voting period scheduled for the General Election, (October 12, 2020 through October 30, 2020), on which Early Voting is scheduled to occur.

(c) The employee's supervisor may specify the hours which may be used for voting as provided in this Order.

SECTION 4.

(a) That the number of hours City employees are permitted to take off with pay to vote in the January 5, 2021 General Election Run-off for Federal Offices, pursuant to Section 114-419(a) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, shall be increased from two hours to four hours.

(b) Employees shall be permitted to utilize the four hours allotted by this Section on the date of the General Election Run-off for Federal Offices, January 5, 2021, or on any date during the Early Voting period scheduled for the January 5, 2021 General Election Run-off for Federal Offices, (December 14, 2020 through December 31, 2020), on which Early Voting is scheduled to occur.

(c) The employee's supervisor may specify the hours which may be used for voting as provided in this Order.

SO ORDERED this 5th day of October 2020.

Keisha Lance Bottoms
Mayor

ATTESTED:

Municipal Clerk

Foris Webb, III
Municipal Clerk