**CARES Act Primary Election Narrative**

State of Utah

Office of the Utah Lieutenant Governor

The federal government requires a report after each primary and general election that includes a full accounting of the uses of the CARES Act and an explanation of how the funds were used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. **Please submit this narrative to elections@utah.gov no later than July 16, 2020.**

1. **How did the county use the funds to address the pandemic?**

As reported that we could have upwards of 20% of the active voters vote in-person in the 2020 General Election, Salt Lake County purchased ample PPE for voters and staff; we bought face masks, hand sanitizer, wipes, alcohol pads, and disposable gloves. Single-use pens eliminated the need for voters to reuse supplies. These additional supplies necessitated the purchase of totes for storage & transport, as well as garbage bags to dispose of single-use materials. We obtained floor clings that instructed voters to socially distance themselves. We also acquired new equipment, including surge protectors and poll pads so workers did not have to share equipment, and infrared thermometers to check temperatures in an effort to reduce the risk of spreading COVID 19.

Finally, we revamped the VBM process, including peel & seal envelopes to prevent the need for voters to lick envelopes, and adding an “I VOTED” sticker to dissuade unnecessary traffic at vote centers and encourage only the people who need it to vote in person.

1. **What were some challenges and major issues the county faced in responding to the pandemic?**

Salt Lake County faced numerous challenges while conducting an election during this pandemic. Two main issues were finding locations willing to allow the location to be used and the second was finding poll workers and temp staff that were willing to work this election. Many of our “regulars” were unwilling to work, because of the pandemic. We were forced to hire and train a lot of new individuals to assist with this election.

Another challenge was socially distancing the workers in our Election Management Center (EMC). These folks were opening and tabulating ballots, and the surge of VBM ballots demanded more staff. In order to accommodate the additional staff and not place them shoulder-to-shoulder, we cleared out a large storage area and employees were able to work in there at proper distances. In order to do this, we had to ask our drayage company to store our election equipment an additional two weeks after the election. This gave us more room to finalize the election.

Lastly, drop boxes were heavily utilized in surges of VBM ballots. Additional temporary staff were needed to empty the boxes on a more frequent basis. This ensured the ballot boxes and ballots inside them were safe and secured.