



Montana

PO Box 9138
Missoula, MT 59807
406-204-0287
www.aclumontana.org

October 22, 2018

Dear Election Administrator:

As you know, we are approaching an important election this November. All elections matter, but this year we expect abnormally high turnout (for a midterm) with a corresponding surge in enthusiasm. This should come as no surprise to you, and we are writing to ensure that all necessary preparations have been undertaken to ensure that the 2018 election is free and fair.

You have an incredibly important job. Elections administrators are not just logisticians – you are tasked with ensuring the fundamental integrity of our elections. You and your staff are often the first - and at times only - line of communication with voters who seek to make their voices and values heard at the polls.

The ACLU of Montana is dedicated to ensuring that the ballot box is accessible to all qualified electors. In particular, the Satellite Election Offices that serve remote communities in Indian Country are critical access points. As the election nears, I am writing to remind you of your responsibilities in administering these polling locations as outlined in the 2015 Secretary of State directive and Montana Code Annotated.

You and your staff are responsible for:

- Identifying and publicizing the day and times you will be open.
- Remaining open during the times you have publicized. This includes opening and closing on time as well as remaining open between those times.
- Hosting late registration for qualified electors.
- Replacing ballots for voters who may have destroyed, spoiled, lost, or not received their ballot.
- Providing enough ballots for those voters who choose to vote early, those who utilize late registration, and those who request replacement ballots.

You can find relevant excerpts of the election statutes attached, as well as Secretary of State McCulloch's directive.



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Now that early voting is open, we have already received disturbing reports from around the State about voter misinformation and intimidation, lack of access to ballots, and polling places closing early or for an extended period of time over the lunch hour.

Along with partner organizations, the ACLU of Montana will be monitoring the administration of Satellite Election Offices and polling places across the State to ensure that you are meeting the needs to all qualified electors. If you have any questions about your responsibilities I encourage you to reach out to the Montana Secretary of State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Rate", is written over a printed name.

Alex Rate

cc: Secretary of State Corey Stapleton