



COMMISSIONERS COURT COMMUNICATION

REFERENCE NUMBER _____

PAGE 1 OF 10

DATE: 09/04/2024

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO TARRANT COUNTY FACILITIES USE POLICY

COMMISSIONERS COURT ACTION REQUESTED

It is requested that Commissioners Court adopt the inclusion of the below language as an amendment to the Tarrant County Facilities Use Policy (Court Order 143472).

The proposed amendment excludes “Voter registration activities by county-certified volunteer deputy registrars” from the definition of a “Non-regular use” and adds the following language as subsection III(G):

“For the purposes of categorization, Tarrant County Commissioners Court recognizes all county-certified volunteer deputy registrars to be providing a service inherently governmental in nature. For this reason, their presence in County facilities shall be considered regular use, so long as this is conducted during normal public access hours. A registrar’s classification as a county-trained and approved volunteer deputy registrar shall be proven by the holding of a current, valid Volunteer Deputy Registrar (“VDR”) badge with an identifying deputy number provided by Tarrant County Elections Administration.

As a defined regular use activity, voter registration conducted by county-certified volunteer deputy registrars shall still be governed by all fire, safety and capacity regulations outlined in Section III(H) of the Tarrant County Facility Use Policy. Adherence to section III(H) of the Tarrant County Facility Use Policy shall be determined by the respective Tarrant County Facilities Department representative who manages the building where the VDR wishes to conduct registrar activity. Tarrant County Facilities representatives shall not require VDR removal from a Tarrant County public access building for any reason other than lack of ability to adhere to Section III(H) of the Tarrant County Facility Use Policy.

Multiple VDRs of the same or different organizations are permitted in a common County public access facility, so long as the general conditions required by Section III(H) in the form of fire, safety, and capacity requirements are met, as determined by the building’s Facilities representative. If fire, safety, and capacity restraints do not allow registrar activity by every VDR individual or group who wishes to conduct registrar activity in a given building, space shall be reserved on a strict first-come-first-served basis, as adjudicated by the building’s Facilities representative.”

If approved, the amendment to the Tarrant County Facilities Use Policy would become effective immediately.

REQUESTED BY:	Commissioner Pct 2	PREPARED BY: APPROVED BY:	
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COMMISSIONERS COURT COMMUNICATION

REFERENCE NUMBER: _____ DATE: 09/04/2024 PAGE 2 OF 10

BACKGROUND

As defined by Texas Secretary of State Nelson, "Volunteer Deputy Registrars (VDRs) are entrusted with the responsibility of officially registering voters in the State of Texas. VDRs are appointed by county voter registrars and charged with helping increase voter registration in the state."

Tarrant County Elections Administration currently recognizes 576 VDRs who have undergone the mandatory training and been issued a volunteer deputy registrar badge. Within the context of Tarrant County, VDRs represent a fiscally responsible force multiplier for the Tarrant County Elections Administration. VDRs have the ability to provide the citizenry of Tarrant County with the same voter registration services which Tarrant County Elections Administration personnel provide, but they do so at no cost to the county taxpayer, and in much greater numbers. Their presence, therefore, increases Tarrant County residents' access to convenient voter registration at highly trafficked locations. This constitutes a clear public interest, obtained at no cost to the county taxpayer.

Because no substantive difference exists in the narrow voter registration services provided to the citizenry of Tarrant County by a county-certified VDR and a member of the Tarrant County Elections Administration, it is entirely appropriate for the Commissioners Court to recognize this activity as governmental in nature, and therefore a regular use activity as defined in the Tarrant County Facility Use Policy.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.