

**Date:** April 2, 2020

**Subject:** Federal Court Order Affects Spring Election –  
Absentee Ballot Request and Receipt Deadlines Extended; Witness  
Signature Requirement Modified

This afternoon, Judge William Conley of the Western District of Wisconsin federal court has issued an order related to absentee ballots for next week's Spring Election and Presidential Preference Primary. The Court ordered the following:

- 1) The deadline for the receipt of absentee ballots is extended to 4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 13, 2020. The Court specifically did not add a requirement for a postmarked-by deadline as long as the ballot is returned by the new deadline.
- 2) The deadline for receipt of absentee ballot requests by mail, fax or email (and if deemed administratively feasible in the sole discretion of the WEC Administrator, online) is extended to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 3, 2020.
- 3) A witness signature on the absentee ballot certificate envelope is not required if the absentee voter provides a written affirmation or other statement that they were unable to safely obtain a witness certification despite reasonable attempts to do so, provided the ballot is otherwise valid.

Judge Conley's decision was issued in a set of three federal lawsuits which were consolidated and which requested various remedies related to the Spring Election. The decision did not grant other requests such as postponing the election date or suspending and photo ID requirements for mail-in absentee voters. A copy of the decision is attached.

The Elections Commission will meet this evening to discuss specific procedures related to the order. Additional guidance will be provided by tomorrow morning.

A copy of this memorandum and the decision are posted here:

<https://elections.wi.gov/node/6807>