

For the Record
(the COVID-19 edition)
May 2020

By Corinne M. Lengel, Lincoln County Clerk

Hello from the Clerk's office! The courthouse opened to the public on May 4, and so far, everyone has been very understanding and follows the rules when entering the building. If you're coming in, you must wear a mask or face covering. If you prefer not to risk the courthouse, please call, and we can see what we can do to help you over the phone. Staff worked diligently during the closure to ensure that we kept up with all of our duties.

The Driver's License office is now open by appointment only. With so many out-of-county residents coming to Hugo to renew their driver's licenses or conduct other DL business, we felt it best to open gradually for the time being. This may continue throughout the summer, so please plan accordingly. He is **not** doing drive tests.

Since the next election (June 30 state primary) is rapidly approaching, I wanted to provide an update on how things look due to COVID-19. If you are an active, registered, Democrat, Libertarian, Republican, or Unaffiliated voter, and we have your correct mailing address, you will automatically receive a ballot (or two if you're unaffiliated) in the mail the week of June 8. If you don't know if you're registered, or if you've moved and need to update your address, please visit www.govotecolorado.gov. Active, unaffiliated voters (unless you've chosen a ballot preference) will receive both the Democrat and Republican ballots in one envelope packet. **You must vote only one of those ballots for your vote to count!** Even though there is a Libertarian ballot, unaffiliated voters will not automatically receive that ballot because Libertarian isn't one of the major parties.

Confusing? Feel free to contact our office at (719) 743-2444 if you have questions. Not confusing enough? How about this? We will mail primary election ballots to actively registered 17-year-olds who will turn 18 on or before November 3, which is also a new law, effective this year.

Your ballot instructions now include information regarding using the VSPC (Voter Service and Polling Center) located in the county clerk's office (or preferably avoiding it if at all possible). While we understand and encourage the importance of voting better than anyone, we highly suggest you vote your mail-in ballot—at least this time. Hopefully, most of the pandemic will be behind us in November and we can go back to semi-normalcy. The following suggested language from the Colorado Secretary of State appears on your voter instructions (even though I know you all read them word-for-word☺). *Due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, in-person voting may be limited or unavailable at certain locations. The Lincoln County Clerk & Recorder's Office strongly encourages all voters to return their ballots by mail or to deposit them in the county-controlled 24-hour drop box at the Limon town hall. If you must vote in person, please check our website at www.lincolncountyco.us or call (719) 743-2444 to confirm in-person voting availability.*

If you prefer to drop off your ballot instead of mailing it, there is a 24-hour ballot drop-box located on the east side of the Limon town hall (the police department side). We open the box the same week that ballots go out, usually on Tuesday or Wednesday, and close it at 7:01 p.m. on Election Day. Ballot pickup occurs weekly, as well as the Friday and Monday directly before the election, and twice on Election Day.

We also plan to add a drop-box in the front of the courthouse, but it might not be ready yet for the June primary. If not, we hope to have it operational as soon as possible for other county business, such as property tax payments and motor vehicle renewals, and eventually, ballots.

Please remember that the clerk's office will be open **for election business only** on these dates: June 30 and November 3. **The driver's license office will be closed.** Note that June 30 is the last day of the month, so please don't wait until then to bring in your motor vehicle renewal. We will try and have a drop-box available in case you don't read the papers or hear that we're only open for election business, but please help us out by renewing your vehicles before June 30 if your tags are about to expire. You can always renew your plates online at www.colorado.gov/renewplates.

Regarding COVID-19, here is some information from our website, www.lincolncountyco.us:

- Continue to mail license plate renewals (with valid proof of insurance if required) to PO Box 67, Hugo, CO 80821.
- Renew license plates OR driver's licenses at www.myDMV.Colorado.gov.
- If submitting documents for recording, please use our e-recording services (listed under Recording on this website) or the USPS. Mail to the address above. If you must drop them off in-person, please feel free to do so using the courthouse protocol.
- Since all documents are available online at www.thecountyrecorder.com, we strongly encourage researchers to utilize this site. **We are not allowing researchers in the office at this time.**
- If you need to update your voter registration; such as changing your name, address, or party affiliation, visit www.govotecolorado.gov or contact our office and we'll mail you a form.

While we understand that your needs are important, please be patient. We will help you as best we can under the circumstances. Please be safe and stay healthy.

###