EXHIBIT B

The State of Texas

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ELECTION ADVISORY

N0. 2020-14

TO: Election Officials

FROM: Keith Ingram, Director of Elections

DATE: April 2, 2020

RE: COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Voting and Election Procedures

The purpose of this advisory is to assist election officials in facilitating voting for individuals that may be affected by COVID-19, and in preparing for the conduct of elections in the context of this public health issue.

Voter Registration Procedures

Stay-at-home orders and office closures in your jurisdiction may impact voters seeking to obtain voter registration applications. There are several existing options that you should encourage voters to utilize:

- **In-County Updates via Texas Online:** If a voter has moved within the same county, the voter may update their address online at www.Texas.gov. Voters that are active or in suspense can update their name and/or residence address through this secure website.
- **Printed Voter Registration Applications:** If a voter has access to a printer, the voter can use the SOS Informal Online Application to complete a voter registration application. This application can be printed and mailed to the applicable county voter registrar. When the voter selects their county of residence, it will preprint the county voter registrar's address on the form so that when the voter mails it, they send it directly to their county voter registrar.
- **Postage-Paid Voter Registration Applications**: If a voter does not have access to a printer, the voter can request that a blank postage-paid voter registration application be mailed directly to the voter. The voter can fill out the request form on the SOS website. Counties can also mail blank applications to voters upon request.
- **Revisions to Voter Registration Certificate**: If a voter has their current voter registration certificate, they may make any necessary corrections or updates to the certificate, sign it and return it to the voter registrar.

- **Register2Vote.org**: This is a third-party website that provides a remote printing option for voters. Voters can complete a form online and have a pre-filled application sent to them for completion. The voter must complete the form, sign it, and mail it in the included postage-paid envelope. This form is sent directly to the county voter registrar.

Voting Procedures Authorized under the Texas Election Code

Below we have described some of the procedures that are authorized under Texas law that may be of assistance to voters that are affected by a recent sickness or a physical disability.

Voting by Mail

In Texas, in order to vote by mail, a voter must have a qualifying reason. A voter may vote early by mail if they:

- will be away from their county on Election Day and during early voting;
- are sick or disabled;
- are 65 years of age or older on Election Day; or
- are confined in jail, but eligible to vote.

One of the grounds for voting by mail is disability. The Election Code defines "disability" to include "a sickness or physical condition that prevents the voter from appearing at the polling place on election day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or of injuring the voter's health." (Sec. 82.002). Voters who meet this definition and wish to vote a ballot by mail must submit an application for ballot by mail.

- Application for a Ballot by Mail.

Chapter 102, Late Voting Due to Recent Sickness or Physical Disability

The Election Code authorizes late voting if a voter becomes sick or disabled on or after the day before the last day for submitting an application for a ballot to be voted by mail, and is unable to go to the polling place on Election Day. The voter must designate a representative to submit an application on the voter's behalf in person to the early voting clerk. To be eligible to serve as a voter's representative, a person: 1) must be at least 18 years of age; 2) must not be employed by or related within the third degree by consanguinity or affinity, as determined under Chapter 573, Government Code, to a candidate whose name appears on the ballot; and 3) must not have served in the election as the representative for another applicant. The application must be received before 5:00 p.m. on Election Day. The application is reviewed and the early voting clerk verifies the applicant's registration status in the same manner as early voting by mail. The early voting clerk must provide the same balloting materials that are used for early voting by mail to the representative who will deliver them to the voter. The voter should mark and seal the ballot in the same manner as voting by mail **including signing** the back flap of the carrier envelope. The ballot must be returned in its carrier envelope to the early voting clerk before 7:00 p.m. on Election Day **by the same representative** who delivered the ballot to the voter.

- Application for Emergency Early Voting Ballot Due to Sickness or Physical Disability
- Instructions for Voter to include with Balloting Materials

Chapter 104, Voting at Main Early Voting Location

The Election Code authorizes voters who are sick or disabled to vote on Election Day at the main early voting place, so long as voting machines of some type are used in the voter's precinct and the voter's sickness or disability prevents the voter from voting in the regular manner without personal assistance or likelihood of injury. For this procedure, the voter must complete and submit the applicable affidavit to be provided with the balloting materials used for early voting by mail. The voter must mark and seal the ballot in the same manner as in early voting by mail, except that the certificate on the carrier envelope need not be completed. After sealing the carrier envelope, the voter must give it to the clerk at the main early voting polling place between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. The Early Voting Clerk must note on the envelope that the ballot was voted under Chapter 104.

- Affidavit for Voting at Early Voting Place on Election Day

Curbside Voting

If a voter is physically unable to enter the polling place without assistance or likelihood of injury to his or her health, the voter is eligible for entrance or curbside voting. (Sec. 64.009). This option **must** be made available at all polling locations. To provide for voting curbside, the voter must be qualified by the election officer before the voter can receive the ballot. An election officer may deliver a ballot or a DRE voting machine to the voter at the entrance or curb of the polling place. Poll watchers and inspectors must be allowed to accompany the election officer. Once the voter has marked his or her ballot, the election officer deposits the ballot for the voter. On the voter's request, a person accompanying the voter to the polling place must be permitted to select the voter's ballot and to deposit the ballot in the ballot box after the voter has voted. If the voter is not only physically unable to enter the polling place, but is also eligible for voter assistance in marking his or her ballot, they may receive assistance in marking and completing their ballot in accordance with Chapter 64, Subchapter B of the Election Code. Either two election officers may assist the voter or the voter may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer, an agent of that employer or an officer or agent of the voter's labor union. For voters that are voting at the curbside, **instruct polling place workers to allow the curbside voter the same privacy as a voter in the voting booth**. We anticipate providing further guidance regarding curbside voting in the coming weeks.

Potential Court Order to Address Quarantined Voters

Voting in-person during early voting or on Election Day may not be an available option for all voters, including those affected by quarantines. Political subdivisions may need to act quickly to address the rapidly changing public health situation. In monitoring your situations locally, it is important to note that you may have a need to modify certain voting procedures. In these circumstances, you may want to consider seeking a court order to authorize exceptions to the voting procedures outlined in certain chapters of the Texas Election Code for these voters. The following are possible considerations:

1. **Expanding Eligibility Requirements Under Chapter 102 (Late Voting for Sickness or Physical Disability):** A court order could provide for a temporary expansion of the eligibility requirements for Chapter 102 voting to allow voters in quarantine to vote in this fashion. This option would also require the court, in some instances, to temporarily waive or modify the

requirement for a physician's signature on the application for this type of late ballot for purposes of any election(s) impacted by COVID-19.

2. **Other Modifications to Voting Procedures:** A court order could provide for modifications to other voting procedures as necessary to address the impact of COVID-19 within the jurisdiction. For example, in 2014, Dallas County obtained a court order authorizing modified voting procedures for individuals affected by the Ebola quarantine, modeled on the procedures outlined in Section 105.004 of the Texas Election Code for certain military voters in hostile fire pay zones.

If your county obtains a court order allowing modifications to voting procedures to address COVID-19, please send a copy of the court order to the Secretary of State's Office.

Other Considerations Related to COVID-19 or Other Illnesses

If your political subdivision is affected by a stay-at-home order, quarantine or outbreak of COVID-19 or any other type of illness, the conduct of your elections could be impacted. In order to protect the health and safety of election workers, below are some considerations:

- **Cleaning and Sanitizing Voting System Equipment**:
  - **Voting System and e-Pollbook Equipment**: Please check with your vendor about the specific procedures you should follow to clean and sanitize any equipment that is handled by voters or polling place workers. We received specific information from the following vendors about proper techniques for cleaning equipment:
    - **Hart Intercivic Voting System Equipment**: Users may wipe Hart equipment with 50% or higher clear, fragrance-free, isopropyl alcohol solution and a lint-free wipe. Do not use ammonia or detergent-based solutions as these may be harmful to the screen or the plastics surrounding the display. To avoid spotting, make certain that equipment screens are wiped dry (do not leave puddles).
    - **ES&S Voting System Equipment:** You can use a soft, line free cloth and isopropyl alcohol to clean the touchscreen of the voting machine. Do not spray directly on the touch screen. Only lightly dampen the cloth, do not soak it. Do not use any harsh cleaning products on the screen as this may damage the touch screen. Do not allow any liquid cleaner to come in contact with ballot stock.

- **Cleaning and Sanitizing Polling Places:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued recommendations for preventing the spread of coronavirus specifically in election polling locations. Here are a few of their specific suggestions:
  - **Encourage workers to wash hands frequently**: wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - **Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces with household cleaning spray or wipe:** including tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.

- **Disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated with germs after cleaning:** A list of products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims is available on the EPA's website. Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against the virus that causes COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, use of personal protective equipment).

- **Arrangement of Polling Places**: It is imperative that you review your procedures related to setting up your polling place. Voting stations should be set up in a way that adheres to the suggested social and physical distance guidelines and allow for at least 6 feet between voters. Additionally, you should review your check-in stations to ensure you are providing adequate space between voters. This may include providing your workers with tape to mark off spacing guidelines on the floor of the polling place.

- **Election Judges and Clerks**:
  - **Training and Recruiting of Election Workers**:
    - **Recruitment of Election Workers**: We recommend that you make efforts to recruit and train additional workers beyond what you project to need for a given election. This will ensure that you have adequate back up workers to assist in the event that you have election workers that are unavailable at the last minute.
      - **Recruiting from Current Workers:** With regard to recruiting workers, you may want to ask your current appointed judges to provide recommendations of other individuals that can serve. Additionally, you may have different judges and clerks depending on the type of election you hold. We suggest you reach out to your entire pool of potential workers to determine availability for 2020 election dates.
      - **Student Election Clerks**: You may also want to consider enlisting student election clerks in your pool of available workers. For elections occurring outside of the school year, the student clerks would not need to obtain permission from their high school principal provided they obtained permission from their parent or legal guardian.
    - **Training of Election Workers**: In order to train a larger pool of workers, you may want to consider allowing your election workers to utilize the Secretary of State's online Poll Worker Training. This training is focused on the legal procedures related to acceptance of voters and the voting process. Any procedures that are specific to your county would need to be provided through additional training or supplemental materials.

  - **Unavailability of Judge**s: If both the presiding judge and alternate judge are unavailable to serve and this is discovered after the 20th day before election day, the presiding officer of the appointing authority, or if the presiding officer is unavailable, the authority responsible for distributing supplies for the election, shall appoint a replacement judge. (Sec. 32.007). Additionally, if the authority is

unable to find an election judge who is a qualified voter of the specific precinct needing a judge, the authority may appoint individuals that meet the eligibility requirements of an election clerk which encompasses a broader territory. (Sec 32.051(b)).

Type of Election	Presiding Officer of Appointing Authority	Authority responsible for Delivering Supplies
Primary Election	County Chair of Political Party	County Chair of Political Party
Joint Primary	County Election Officer	County Election Officer
General Election for State and County Officers or County Ordered Election	County Judge	County Election Officer
Cities	Mayor	City Secretary
Other Political Subdivision Elections	Presiding Officer of Governing Body of Political Subdivision	Secretary of Governing Body; if no secretary, the presiding officer of governing body

- **Polling Locations:**
  - **Review List of Locations:** We recommend reviewing your list of current polling locations to determine if you should consider proactively relocating them. For example, if you are currently using assisted living facilities or residential care facilities that have residents that would be in one of the higher-risk categories, relocating the polling place may be in the best interest of the individuals at that location. Please be advised that if you choose to relocate a polling place in a facility like this, we **strongly recommend** that you provide information to the residents about voting by mail to ensure that they are still able to vote in upcoming elections without the difficulty of leaving the facility to travel to a different polling place. Additionally, you should be monitoring your current polling places to determine if any of those locations have been closed as a result of business or government building closures.
  - **Unavailable Locations:** If polling locations become unavailable, you may need to relocate your polling location or combine and consolidate that location with another polling place in close proximity to it. To the extent possible, any changes to polling locations must be made in accordance with Chapters 42 and 43 of the Texas Election Code. If you are in a situation where you will have difficulty complying with these chapters, please contact the Secretary of State's office to discuss other available options.

        - **Notice of Changes to Polling Locations:** Please be advised that if you have a polling location change, you must post notice of that change at the location that is no longer being used. Any websites that contain polling locations should be updated. For certain county-run elections, polling place information must also be updated with the Secretary of State's office, if applicable.
    - **Website Notices:** At this time, you may want to consider posting a notice on your website instructing voters to check your website for updates and changes to polling locations prior to early voting and election day. This will help ensure that voters are always getting updated and accurate information.
- **Voting by Mail Considerations**: At this time, the CDC has not provided any special recommendations or precautions for the storage of ballots. However, it is recommended that workers handling mail ballots practice hand hygiene frequently. Please continue to stay updated on the CDC's website as they provide additional recommendations regarding the handling of mail and other topics.
    - **Additional Ballot by Mail Supplies**: Because there may be a higher volume of ballot by mail requests in 2020, we strongly recommend that you review your current supply of applications, balloting materials, and ballot stock for future elections. It is important you have the necessary supply on hand to meet increased requests you may receive.
- **Election Office Hours**: Election officials are required to maintain certain office hours related to their election duties for a prescribed number of days before and after an election. If your office is closed for public health reasons or you are unable to be at your office during the mandatory office hour time frame, we advise that entities post information on how to get in contact with the applicable officials for election related information. This may include posting phone numbers, an email address that can receive public inquiries, or even a mailing address that can receive written requests for information. We recommend that you assign someone to periodically check for voicemails, emails, or mail related to your election.
- **Voter Registration Office Hours**: Section 12.004(c) requires the voter registrar's office to be open while the polls are open on the date of any election held in the county on a uniform election date. If you have entities that will be holding an election on May 2, 2020, you must satisfy this requirement. However, we believe that as long as you can provide answers to voter registration questions remotely and you notify your entities about how to reach you, you do not need to be physically in the office. You must also be able to provide all of the same voter registration services you would otherwise provide to your local political subdivisions if you were in the office.
- **Volunteer Deputy Registrars (VDR)**: You still have a legal obligation to process volunteer deputy registrar applications. If you must suspend volunteer deputy registrar classes, we strongly advise that you adopt the SOS online Volunteer Deputy Registrar training and in-person examination option. This would allow you to schedule the examinations based on need or desire by VDRs and would allow you to temporarily reduce or cancel in-person training as dictated by your county's circumstances. For more information about adopting the online training and examination, please see Advisory 2019-04. Additionally, you still have an obligation to receive voter registration

applications from VDRs. To eliminate person-to-person contact, you could provide drop boxes for voter registration applications. These drop boxes should be located in close proximity to your main office or connected to it. They should be secured and checked regularly.

- **Cybersecurity Impacts**: If your political subdivision is affected by a widespread quarantine or outbreak of COVID-19 or any other type of illness, your office staff might be mandated to work remotely. In addition, the volume of voters that will start to utilize your internet-based resources will increase. During a crisis situation, bad actors may try to capitalize on the circumstances to take actions that could compromise the security of your elections office. Please remain vigilant about following best practices related to cybersecurity and election security.
    - **Service Interruption:** Networks are normally built to sustain high volume traffic, but the magnitude of the COVID-19 crisis presents an increased risk that systems may become compromised. An abnormal increase in network traffic could be misinterpreted as a DOS (Denial of Service) attack which could shut down networks depending on the type of security implementation.
    - **Ransomware:** Cybercriminals can infect the computers of government agencies before demanding that they pay a ransom for an encryption key that will free their locked files and records. Ransomware can lock up databases preventing polling places from verifying eligibility and confirming that voters are in the right districts/precincts.
    - **Election Systems and e-Pollbook Equipment:** As mentioned above, databases are susceptible because they must have a constant network connectivity. When relocating polling places, it is very important to ensure that the systems are connected to a secure and reliable network.
    - **Voter Registration Scams:** Voter registration procedures are not conducted over the phone or the internet other than the previously mentioned authorized channels. Be aware of scams that are targeted to steal personally identifiable information from voters and/or election workers. It is especially important not to provide personal information of voters or election workers over the phone if your office is solicited in this manner.
- **Communications Plan:** You should develop a plan for communicating to voters and election workers when any changes occur that may impact them. The communications plan should involve updating your official website with specific details. Any use of social media should direct people back to your official website to ensure that only official, accurate, and authorized information is being disseminated to the public. We suggest you develop a plan for working with local media to keep the public informed. Finally, any major changes that affect the election process in your county should be communicated to the Secretary of State's office.

Additional Resources

Here are a list of additional resources that may be helpful to you.

- Election Assistance Commission - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – Recommendations for Election Polling Locations
- Texas Department of State Health Services – Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

If you have any questions regarding this advisory, please contact the Elections Division at 1-800-252-2216.

KI:CA