

Chapter 7

(House Bill 204)

AN ACT concerning

Montgomery County – Elections – Early Voting Centers

MC 14–16

FOR the purpose of requiring Montgomery County to have a certain number of early voting centers; providing for the application and interpretation of this Act; providing for the termination of this Act; making this Act an emergency measure; and generally relating to early voting centers in Montgomery County.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Election Law
Section 10–301.1
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2010 Replacement Volume and 2015 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Election Law

10–301.1.

(a) Except as provided under Title 9, Subtitle 3 of this article, during any regularly scheduled primary or general election a voter may vote:

(1) in the voter’s assigned precinct on election day; or

(2) at an early voting center in the voter’s county of residence on any early voting day in accordance with this section.

(b) (1) Each county shall have at least one early voting center established in the county as prescribed in this subsection.

(2) A county with fewer than 125,000 registered voters shall have one early voting center established in the county.

(3) A county with more than 125,000 registered voters but fewer than 300,000 registered voters shall have three early voting centers established in the county.

(4) A county with more than 300,000 registered voters but fewer than 450,000 registered voters shall have five early voting centers established in the county.

(5) **[A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (7) OF THIS SUBSECTION,** A county with more than 450,000 registered voters shall have eight early voting centers.

(6) In addition to the early voting centers required in this subsection, each county may establish one additional early voting center if the State Board, in collaboration with the local board, and the governing body of the county agree to establish an additional early voting center.

(7) MONTGOMERY COUNTY SHALL HAVE 10 EARLY VOTING CENTERS.

(c) No later than 6 months before a primary election, the State Board, in collaboration with the local board in each county, shall designate each early voting center in that county.

(d) Each early voting center shall be open for voting as follows:

(1) beginning the second Thursday before a primary or general election through the Thursday before the election; and

(2) during the following hours:

(i) in a presidential general election, during the hours between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. each early voting day; and

(ii) in all other elections, during the hours between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. each early voting day.

(e) Each early voting center shall satisfy the requirements of § 10–101 of this title.

(f) Beginning 30 days prior to each early voting period the State Board and each local board shall undertake steps to inform the public about early voting and the location of early voting centers in each county, including:

(1) a series of public service media announcements;

(2) mailings to all registered voters in each county; and

(3) other measures as appropriate.

(g) Except as expressly provided in this section, any provision of this article that applies to voting on election day also applies to early voting.

(h) The State Board shall adopt regulations and guidelines in accordance with the requirements of this section for the conduct of early voting.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, notwithstanding the deadline established in § 10-301.1(c) of the Election Law Article, this Act shall be applied to and interpreted to require that Montgomery County have 10 early voting centers for the 2016 election cycle and that the tenth early voting center be located at the Potomac Community Recreation Center, if available, or, if not, at another facility that serves the Potomac area community.

SECTION ~~2~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is enacted. It shall remain effective through December 31, 2016, and, at the end of December 31, 2016, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, March 14, 2016.