

---

## **AGENDA ITEM BRIEFING**

### **Commissioners Court – September 8, 2020**

**AI Number: 77199**

**Project Number: 2020-485**

**Project Name: Ballot Application – Voting by Mail**

**Description of AI: Application for Voting by Mail – 65 + age - Mailout**

**Funding Source: CARES Act Relief Fund**

**Requested by: Yvonne Ramon**

**Department: Elections**

**Prepared by: Heidi Garcia Ortiz**

**Department: Purchasing Dept.**

---

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

On March 17, 2020, pursuant to the authority under Texas Government Code Section 418.108, Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency due to the imminent threat arising from the Coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 22, 2020, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 418.408(b), the Commissioners' Court of Hidalgo County issued an Order of Continuance of Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency that affirmed the activation of the Hidalgo County Emergency Management Plan and extends the Declaration of Local Disaster.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic public health emergency, the Hidalgo County Commissioners' Court has approved sending applications for voting by mail to registered voters who are 65 years of age and older. This action will prevent the exposure of possible contamination of the virus to the most vulnerable demographic voters in our community and will also adhere to the social distancing guidelines set forth by the CDC for all polling locations.

---

#### **COMPLIANCE**

In compliance with the national preparedness goal under the Presidential Policy Directive (PPD-8), the Homeland Security Presidential Directives 5 (HSPD-5) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Capability 12 and pursuant to the Order of Continuance of Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency that affirmed the activation of the Hidalgo County Emergency Management Plan and

extends the Declaration of Local Disaster, requests the Court's approval for the necessary services to address the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic public health emergency.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

Approval of this item is consistent with Hidalgo County's intended purpose to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and continue to provide necessary services to Hidalgo County residents in a safe, clean, hygienic environment.

## **AGENDA ITEM CAPTION**

- A. "Discussion, consideration, and action to approve a necessary CARES Act Relief Fund expenditure to cover cost not accounted for in the current budget and cannot be lawfully funded by line item, allotment or allocation, for Hidalgo County in order to assist with County functions and compliance with public health measures related to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. The Court having reviewed the Agenda Item Briefing herein find that such expenditure is reasonable and necessary for the intended use.";
- B. Requesting exemption from competitive bidding/procurement requirements under Texas Local Government Code, 262.024 (a)(1) and (2) attached herein;
- C. Approval of Contract No. 2020-485-09-08 with Upper Valley Mailing Services for "Ballot Applications for Voting by Mail for Registered Voters who are 65 Years of Age and Older".

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Approval of the item will allow Hidalgo County to proceed with the current public health directive emphasizing the importance of preventing and mitigating the spread of COVID-19. Expenditures will be charged to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and/or other assistance available to address the COVID-19 public health emergency.