



# COUNTY OF ERIE

## BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Erie County Courthouse  
140 W. Sixth St.,  
Room 114  
Erie, PA 16501

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2024

#### CONTACT:

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*Erie County Chief Clerk and Clerk of Elections  
Department Head of County Council, Conduct of Elections,  
Voter Registration, and the Human Relations Commission*

Members of Erie County Council passed a resolution this evening to extend the deadline to register to vote for Erie County residents, echoing the recommendation from the Erie County Board of Elections earlier in the day. The last day to register to vote before the Primary in Pennsylvania is April 8. However, because of the total solar eclipse making its path of totality through the northwest corner of the state that Monday, officials in Erie County have decided to extend that deadline by one more day.

Erie is expected to be heavily impacted by visitors wishing to view this once in a lifetime event, and the local population see itself double in the days leading up to the eclipse. This spike in population could affect the ability of Erie County citizens and Erie County employees to get to the Courthouse safely on April 8. Also in consideration was the Erie County Sheriff's Office. If the Erie County Courthouse were to remain open to the public, the Sheriff's Office would be at the Courthouse rather than being out in the community, on a day when emergency services will already be strained due to the event. With the extension of the deadline, now the Election and Voter Registration Offices will be closed to the public on April 8.

The decision to extend the deadline was not taken lightly, and agencies such as the Pennsylvania Department of State, the Governor's Office, PEMA, and others were consulted prior to making the decision. Ahead of the meeting tonight, Erie County Council received a Resolution from the Board of Elections as well as a Court Order signed by the Honorable Judge Mead of the Erie County Court of Common Pleas.

Since 2015 when the Department of State introduced online voter registration, there has been a marked decrease in walk in voter registration with an average of 5 -10 people on that last day to register.

This year the Elections Department is asking people to plan ahead by either registering to vote online, or by coming into the Voter Registration Office before April 5, 2024. If anyone does come to the Courthouse on April 8 to register to vote, the Voter Registration office will be closed to the public. Instead, there will be a sign at the front of the Courthouse with directions on how to register:

- A QR Code will be provided for those who wish to register to vote online
- A folder with applications and pens will be located at the front of the courthouse, with an option to drop the application into the secure ballot box
- If any application has an issue or has any missing information, someone from the Voter Registration Office will contact the applicant to resolve those issues
- The Voter Registration Office will reopen to the public on April 9 to receive applications
- Any application received by April 9, 2024 will be considered valid and timely

These measures are being taken in the interest of public safety due to this unprecedented event on April 8, and the associated risks of travel in Erie County on that day.