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Federal Court Rules in Favor of Louisiana Voters Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

Today, a federal court prioritized the health and safety of Louisiana voters by extending the early voting period by three days and providing voters at highest risk of COVID-19 with a mechanism to vote by mail.

The U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana issued the ruling providing immediate relief in response to a motion for preliminary injunction filed by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational and Fund, Inc. (LDF) in *Harding v. Edwards*, a lawsuit challenging Louisiana's failure to ensure all eligible voters can vote safely in the upcoming elections amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In response to the ruling, LDF Senior Counsel Catherine Meza released the following statement:

“We’re glad the court agreed that Louisiana’s election officials are responsible for protecting the rights and safety of Louisiana voters and must act immediately to expand early voting for all Louisiana voters and extend access to vote by mail for the voters at highest risk of COVID-19. Voters most susceptible to the burdens and severe risks imposed by COVID-19 and their caretakers will no longer be forced to vote in person at risk to their health and the health of their loved ones. Now, these voters will have the same vital opportunity to vote by mail as they did in the July and August elections.

“No voter should have to choose between their health and their fundamental right to vote. We look forward to continuing to protect Louisiana voters’ rights, and ensuring the state puts families and communities first.”

Read the court’s ruling [here](#).

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative

hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.

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