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**Early Voting for July 20 Primary**

Fulton County voters can cast their ballots for the July 20, 2010 Primary Election at several sites between now and July 16.

Voters in Georgia do not have to provide a reason to vote prior to Election Day either by mail or in person. Early voting is available Monday, June 7 - Friday, July 16, 2010 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the following locations:

-Fulton County Government Center, 141 Pryor Street, Suite 4064, Atlanta, GA 30303  
 -Sandy Springs Regional Library, 395 Mount Vernon Hwy. NE, Atlanta, GA 30328  
 -South Service Center, 5600 Stonewall Tell Road, Room 108, College Park, GA 30349

Three additional voting locations will be available beginning Tuesday, July 6, 2010 through Friday, July 16, 2010 from 8:30

**State Representative Elly Dobbs***GEORGIA LEGISLATIVE REPORT*

July 8, 2010

**Greetings!**

I hope that you are enjoying your summer and that you and your family had a safe and enjoyable Independence Day weekend.

A number of new laws that were passed during the 2010 legislative session and signed into law by Governor Perdue took effect on July 1. An excellent summary of the newly enacted laws, written by Walter Jones of the Morris News Service, appears below. One law of particular interest is the law prohibiting texting or emailing while driving. Please pass on this information to your family and friends so that they will be aware of the change in Georgia's law.



Early voting for the July 20 primary election is continuing through July 16. You may also request an absentee ballot if you are unable to vote on July 20, election day. See more information and voting locations in the left column. Please remember to vote and encourage all your friends and family members to go to the polls as well.

Feel free to circulate this email to friends and neighbors by clicking the "Forward E-mail" link below. You can subscribe to our newsletter by emailing [newsletters@wordexpress.info](mailto:newsletters@wordexpress.info) or visiting my web site at <http://www.ellydobbs.com>. I also welcome any submissions for news stories or community events and information that would be interesting to those in our District. Please forward them to my email address at [elly.dobbs@house.ga.gov](mailto:elly.dobbs@house.ga.gov).

As always, please do not forget to [contact me](#) with your views on any issue that needs to be addressed or whenever I can be of service to you.

**Elly Dobbs****New Georgia laws in effect as of July 1**

**By Walter Jones**  
*Morris News Service*

From texting while driving to caring for an ill relative, many aspects of daily life will be governed by new laws in Georgia taking effect Thursday (July 1), the start of the state's fiscal year.

While some pieces of legislation became law the moment Gov. Sonny Perdue signed them and others will kick in Jan. 1, the most common effective date is when the government's new year begins July 1. Thursday is also when a new, leaner budget takes effect with a new tax on hospitals.

Legislation that increased in hundreds of fees for state services, from birth certificates to filing court documents took effect May 12 when Perdue signed the controversial bill that has become an issue in many legislative campaigns this year.

Here's a rundown of some of the most significant legal changes coming on the



a.m. - 5:00 p.m.:

-Roswell Regional Library, 115 Norcross Street, Roswell, GA 30076  
-Ocee Library Branch, 5990 Abbots Bridge Road, Johns Creek, GA 30005  
-Adamsville Natatorium, 3201 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Atlanta, GA 30311

Absentee by Mail: Voters can request an absentee ballot as early as 180 days before an election or primary. Absentee ballots are mailed out to voters 45 days before the election. The application for an absentee ballot is available on the Fulton County Department of Registration and Elections website and the Georgia Secretary of State's website. Voters can also obtain an application in person at the Fulton County Department of Registration and Elections office at the Fulton County Government Center (141 Pryor St. S.W., Atlanta, GA 30303 Suite 4075).

All absentee ballots must be received in the Registration & Elections Office by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. For additional information, please call the Department of Registration & Elections at 404-730-7072.

first:

### **Driving -**

No texting or reading e-mails while behind the wheel, even at stop lights. Rookie drivers under age 18 can't use cell phones either. The fine is \$150 and 1 point against the driver's record.

- No driving all-terrain vehicles in a stream bed, except to cross it. Environmentalists joined with property owners frustrated by the damage ATV enthusiasts have caused zipping up and down dry stream beds. The law will allow deputy sheriffs and nature rangers authority to police it.

- A disabled parent or guardian who has had a driver's license can accompany a student driver. And, a judge can grant limited permission to drive to someone under age 18 whose license was suspended due to speeding.

- State Patrol cars no longer have to have two-tone paint, a savings to taxpayers of \$8,000 per vehicle. However, the new law does prohibit the patrol from using so-called slick-top cars without a light and siren mounted on top which are harder to spot from a distance or in the mirror before the lights are activated.

- The parents, children, brothers and sisters of anyone killed in action while serving in the military can now put a Gold Star license plate on their cars and trucks.

- A new law spells out the proper way for a driver to make a turn to the right and to the left.

The law fixes a loophole created by a Supreme Court case in which the state high court invalidated the prior left-hand turn law for being unclear when the justices sided with a man fighting a drunk-driving conviction.

- If you get your eyes fixed, you don't get a ticket for driving without glasses. The law change is for people whose license requires them to wear glasses but who have had an operation to correct their vision.

### **Government -**

State employees must wait more than two months before they return to work -- even as an independent contractor -- or their retirement application will be nullified. If the worker reached normal retirement age, he or she won't have to wait to work for a state contractor as long as it's not for essentially the job just retired from.

- Voters overseas, including members of the military, can cast a write-in absentee ballot or request an official absentee ballot by e-mail.

- Governors and former governors can now perform marriage ceremonies, just like judges, as long as the marriage license is processed with a probate court.

- Lake Oconee property owners who build seawalls and bulkheads no longer have to have a 25-foot buffer from the water as is required in other parts of the state.

### **Crime and punishment -**

Victims will be able to address juvenile court and state court to describe the impact of the crime. Victims will also be notified of the proceedings, may attend hearings and be allowed to file written objections in a parole hearing. Victims have had these rights in superior court where most major crimes are tried.

- Juvenile judges now have more options for what they can require of delinquents under what's known as probation management. Through written or verbal orders, the requirements can include added restrictions, increased reporting, community service, counseling, weekend programs, electronic monitoring and home confinement.

- Threatening to punish someone for reporting gang-related activity becomes a crime, including threats to inflict damage on property.

### Join Crime Stoppers Atlanta

Help solve crime in our community - join Crime Stoppers Atlanta today! Serving all of Metro Atlanta, call 404-586-0180. If you witness a crime, call 404-557-TIPS (8477).

### More information...

- Residential mortgage fraud is now subject to investigations by Georgia law-enforcement agencies, specifically the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. Perdue pushed the law change in response to Georgia's standing as one of the states most hurt by the mortgage crisis and a rash of frauds of various types.

### Education -

Local school boards can now use state funds to refurbish school buses rather than having to replace them. Until now, the state would only contribute toward new vehicles, but since the recession, many local districts haven't had their share of the purchase price and wanted to patch up their existing buses instead.

- Local school boards that impose furloughs on teachers or other staff can't turn around and give pay raises to their superintendent or other administrators in the same school year.

- Textbooks can now be electronic, either software or hardware, and still qualify under the formal definition.

### Health -

Families won't have to hire nurses to give routine shots and perform other minor, common medical procedures to care for a disabled loved one. The "proxy caregiver" will have to be trained and supervised by an advanced-practice nurse, physician or physician assistant and follow written orders. Advocates say the law will allow more disabled people and the seriously ill to live at home rather than having to be hospitalized.

- If you want to get paid for massage therapy, you'll need a license now, as will any business that advertises massages combined with escort services or adult entertainment.

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## Elly's Legislation

[Click here](#) to review 2009-10 legislation sponsored or co-sponsored by Rep. Elly Dobbs.

### Quick Links

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- [Register to Vote](#)
- [Georgia Crisis & Access Line 800-715-4225](#)

### Representative Elly Dobbs

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