

# The Star-Ledger

## **N.J. will sue U.S. Postal Service to protect vote-by-mail, attorney general says**

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New Jersey will sue the U.S. Postal Service, the state attorney general announced Tuesday, over concerns President Donald Trump's administration is purposely crippling the agency ahead of a nationwide surge in mail-in ballots because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"I've made it my mission to hold accountable those who try to corrupt our political process," Gurbir Grewal Tweeted. "Voting by mail is safe, secure, and reliable. We intend to keep it that way."

Grewal was joined by attorneys general around the country, including Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.

At the same time, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy announced he would stop many of the policies linked to recent delays, such as the removal of collection boxes and processing equipment.

"To avoid even the appearance of any impact on election mail, I am suspending these initiatives until after the election is concluded," DeJoy said in a statement, and the agency is "ready today to handle whatever volume of election mail it receives this fall."

When asked if DeJoy's statement affected the planned lawsuit, Grewal said he and other law enforcement officials would "remain vigilant."

"We welcome the Postmaster General's retreat, but we remain concerned about the effects of changes that have already been implemented," Grewal said in a statement sent by a spokesman. "We will continue to work with other State AGs to protect the election."

More details about the complaint, including the legal basis for the challenge and what specifically Grewal will be suing to stop, were not immediately available.

Union officials who represent New Jersey postal workers have reported delivery delays and dramatic changes to operations, including reductions in overtime and mail machines being taken offline, and the postal service recently warned the state it couldn't guarantee all mail-in ballots would be delivered in time to be counted.

However, the agency was partially concerned residents would wait too long to request absentee ballots, which is no longer necessary since Gov. Phil Murphy announced all 6.2 million registered voters will be mailed ballots.

The postal service also said it might need more than two days to deliver completed ballots, which is also less of a concern in New Jersey. Ballots postmarked by Election Day can arrive at election boards a week later (8 p.m. on Nov. 10) and still count.

Trump and some state Republicans have repeatedly insisted mail-in voting has a high risk of fraud, despite evidence to the contrary.

“While mail ballots are more susceptible to fraud than in-person voting, it is still more likely for an American to be struck by lightning than to commit mail voting fraud,” researchers at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University recently wrote.

Democrats have called for investigations into whether the president is purposely trying to undermine an election he might lose, and New Jersey Rep. Bill Pascrell Jr. last week asked Grewal to convene a grand jury to investigate Trump and the postmaster.