



**DEFENSE SUPPORT CENTER
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**
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UOCAVA Address Maintenance for Local Election Officials

In preparation for federal elections, it is important to review your address file for voters covered under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*. Taking these steps will often improve the efficiency and speed of ballot processing so materials do not require personal handling to overcome address exceptions. Taking these steps increase opportunities for success.

In partnership with the United States Postal Service (USPS) and the Military Postal Service Agency (MPSA), the Federal Voting Assistance Program recommends the following address maintenance efforts and resources:

Review your APO/FPO/DPO addresses for conformance to Military Postal System specifications:

Election materials to Service members with APO and FPO addresses require extra mailing time and special tags. As an election official, it is important that you review [USPS' Guidelines for APO and FPO Mailing](#) and [Special Procedures for APO/ FPO/DPO Ballots](#).

When addressing your military or diplomatic shipment, make sure to include the unit and box numbers for APO and FPO addresses. To prevent mail from entering foreign mail markets, do not include city or country names.

Example:

**PFC John Doe
PSC 3 Box 4120
APO AE 09021**

Military Postal Addresses will typically follow a 3-line address format:

a. Line 1: Full name and/or job title.

b. Line 2: The delivery line (the second line from the bottom in the address) must show the word "UNIT", "CMR" or "PSC" and number; and box number assigned, when applicable. The Military Postal System does not use PO Boxes. If Ship name is the only known information, list it on line 2:

**ENS John Doe
USS Nimitz
FPO AE 095XX**

c. Line 3: The bottom line must contain the APO or FPO ("city") designation and the appropriate two-letter AA, AE, or AP ("state") abbreviation followed by the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 Code. You can find a list of active APO/FPO/DPOs by visiting <http://about.usps.com/postal-bulletin/2017/pb22473/html/apo.htm>.

Note: Any address format is acceptable within the 093XX zipcode.

FAQs:

“May I include rank and title on an address line?”

Yes.

“Should APO/FPO/DPO addresses include a foreign city and/or country name?”

No, this is because APO/FPO/DPO is the equivalent of a city designation and the classification of AA, AE or AP is the equivalent of a State (AA-Armed Forces Americas; AE--Armed Forces Europe/Atlantic; AP-Armed Forces Pacific). Please note that including the name of a foreign city or country with an APO/FPO address will potentially route mail into a civilian international mail stream leading to delays in handling.

“I received various ballots that were returned to sender, can I verify addresses with you?”

To anticipate ballots that may no longer be active, you can always refer to this list of active APO/FPO zipcodes <https://about.usps.com/postal-bulletin/2016/pb22446/html/apo.htm>. If your zipcode does not appear, there is a very strong likelihood that material will be Returned to Sender. Local Election Officials are encouraged to contact voters listed at potentially “inactive” zipcodes for address confirmation.

“The address for a voter only contains a ship name, is this ok?”

If you have only a ship name and an FPO zipcode, you may send the ballot with the ship name referenced on line 2 and it will be delivered; however, there may be some special handling required to locate the voter.

“The address provided does not conform to your guidance, what do I do?”

Election Officials are required to send ballots and are often limited to what the voter provides on an application. A lot of this information may simply not be necessary. We encourage you to conduct a general quality control check and if you find addresses that may be at risk, then reach out to your voters and seek clarifying information.

“The ballot is being mailed to a voter who indicates they are military, but they do not have an APO/FPO designation, should I be concerned?”

No, the military addressing standard only applies to those members of the military serving outside the United States. Many of our military members have other addresses that may list various military installations or regular addresses for those who are stationed at an installation, but live off-base.

[Review your Overseas Addresses for conformance to USPS and International Standards:](#)

As with military voters, election materials to U.S. citizens living abroad require extra mailing time. For information on proper addressing to overseas citizens, please review [USPS guidance](#).

Tips for Mailing to Overseas Citizens:

- No more than five (5) lines
- Last line should only show country name, written in full
- All capital letters

Example:

MR THOMAS CLARK
117 RUSSELL DRIVE
LONDON W1P 6HQ
GREAT BRITAIN

- a. Line 1: Full name
- b. Line 2: The delivery line in all capital letters.
- c. Line 3: The city destination must appear in capital letters together with the correct post code number or delivery zone number, if any.
- d. Line 4: The last line of the address must show only the country name, written in full (no abbreviations) and in capital letters. If possible, the address should have no more than five lines.

Exception: To Canada, there must be two spaces between the province abbreviation and the postal code, as shown below between "ON" and "K1A 0B1":

Sample for Canada:
MS HELEN SAUNDERS
1010 CLEAR STREET
OTTAWA ON K1A 0B1
CANADA

FVAP Military Address Lookup Service

FVAP can look up active duty Service members' addresses for election officials if you receive mail back as undeliverable, AND, you are unsuccessful at contacting the voter directly. To request this information, email vote@fvap.gov. Make sure to include your name and jurisdiction, as well as the voter's full name, date of birth and the last four digits of their Social Security number. We can only provide available and releasable information.

Please note the following prior to submitting your request:

- We do not have access to information on Service members' eligible family members, former Service members that have since separated from active duty, or overseas citizens.
- To protect personally identifiable information, FVAP cannot assist you in the mass confirming or updating of voter files. An address will be provided only in the case where you have already attempted to mail out election materials and they were returned as undeliverable.
- If a Service member never provided their mailing address to you at all, then we also cannot provide you with their address due to a lack of the Service member's consent.
- We cannot provide telephone numbers or email addresses for Service members.

Military Postal Automated Redirection System (MILPARS)

The Military Postal Service Agency (MPSA) has implemented a system that automates the redirection of first class military mail. This brings the MPSA system in line with the USPS system. Rather than making it all the way to an overseas installation before being redirected, mail is now redirected before leaving the United States. For this process to work, the mailing must be a "flat," or large envelope, no larger than 12" x 15" x 0.75," and the voter must have updated their address in the National Change of Address (NCOA) system. In addition to their out-processing at the military post office, Service members will now be asked to go online at USPS.com and complete an internet or post card change of address every time they change their mailing address. For additional information, please contact your [USPS Election Mail Coordinator](#).

If your mailing envelopes are larger than 12" x 15" x 0.75", then you will not see the benefits of MILPARS; however, you may still reduce your number of undeliverables by running your list of registered UOCAVA voters against the NCOA. We encourage all election officials to make this a part of your regular list maintenance program.