

EASE 2.0 Questions and Answers

1. Did any States have issues with compliance with the MOVE Act in 2012?

The list of “Cases Raising Claims Under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act” may be accessed on the Department of Justice website: <http://1.usa.gov/nGQ6Q9>

2. Can I apply for a grant from FVAP if I received a grant from FVAP’s first grant program?

Yes, you can apply for a grant from FVAP if you received a grant from FVAP in the past. You may apply for new programs, enhancements and/or expansions to existing programs. Please make sure to submit information regarding “Current and Pending Proposal Submissions” on pages 8 and 9 of the BAA on grants.gov. In the event an award is recommended, the result will be a **new** grant award, not a modification to current FVAP grant.

3. Are the grants interested in delivery of ballots and the potential for online marking with normal return (via post) or the simply the delivery of blank ballots? Or, are the grants focused only on blank ballot delivery only?

A grant may include online marking in addition to blank ballot delivery. However, it is important to note the language on page 3 of the full announcement which states: “...grant awards will not fund the electronic return of a voted ballot. Applicants will certify prior to award that they will not use any grant funds to develop a system for the electronic return of a marked ballot. Further, Applicants will certify that they will not use the system components developed with grant funds after the award ends, for the electronic return of a marked ballot.”

4. The announcement asks for: “An estimation of the reduction of the failure rates for military and overseas voters in each of the various stages of the absentee voting process (such as voter registration, absentee ballot request, blank absentee ballot delivery, absentee ballot marking, absentee ballot tabulation, and absentee ballot return verification) specific to the applicant’s locale. This will serve as the metric for the identification of successes of the proposed product.” What is the FVAP’s estimation of the failure rate by state and stage in the 2010 and in 2012 elections?

FVAP does not have an estimated failure rate by State and stage for the 2010 and 2012 elections. One of the benefits of this research program is the potential for identifying the stage(s) of the election process that are the most challenging for military and overseas voters.

5. What is the weight of the technical and cost criteria?

The Government’s award recommendations will be made to those Applications representing the best value to the Government in accordance with the technical evaluation criteria. The Technical criteria is listed in the BAA by order of significance, with the most significant criterion listed first. Return on investment (ROI) is incorporated in the first, and most significant, criterion: impact. For the ballot delivery research project, the number of UOCAVA voters within the

jurisdiction applying for a grant is of great consideration as compared to the cost of the proposal. In order to determine the number of UOCAVA voters in a specific jurisdiction we will average the number of UOCAVA ballots counted from the two most recent EAC General Election reports. The number of local elections jurisdictions consolidated into a single jurisdiction compared to the cost of the proposal is the most significant factor in the calculation of the ROI for the single point of contact research project.

The proposed Budget (Standard Form (SF) 424A and supporting documentation) is **not** weighted against the technical criterion, and it is **not** “point-scored” or adjectivally rated. The proposed budget is evaluated on the Applicant’s demonstrated ability to relate financial data to the proposed effort. The Applicant’s Consolidated Annual Financial Report (CAFR) will be reviewed, to determine the level of risk to the Government for financial and technical performance purposes.

6. The evaluation criteria references an "Additional Information" section that contains the criteria. This section only highlights the technical criteria, could you please provide more information on the cost criteria?

Please refer to the “Budget Proposal” Section of the BAA. The basis of budget evaluation will be on realism, reasonableness and the Applicant’s statement of return on investment (ROI); the Applicant must also thoroughly demonstrate its ability to relate financial data to the proposed effort.

7. Can jurisdictions having received grants on the previous years from FVAP to introduce electronic ballot delivery apply again to this Grant opportunity?

Yes, you can apply for a grant from FVAP if you received a grant from FVAP in the past. Please make sure to submit information regarding “Current and Pending Project Submissions” on pages 8 and 9 of the BAA on grants.gov. In the event an award is recommended, the result will be a **new** grant award, not a modification to current FVAP grant.

If so, can they apply to both objectives or just to the single point of contact objective?

The Applicant may apply for one or both of the project objectives for new programs, enhancements and/or expansions to existing programs. The Applicant may also submit multiple proposals.

If so, shall those Jurisdictions indicate how the sustainability justification in previous grants gets affected?

The Applicant need only address sustainability for the proposed program.

8. Does the blank ballot delivery include online marking of the ballots, or just the delivery of the ballots to be printed and marked on the paper by the voters?

A grant may include online marking in addition to blank ballot delivery. However, as stated in the BAA: "...grant awards will not fund the electronic return of a voted ballot. Applicants will certify prior to award that they will not use any grant funds to develop a system for the electronic return of a marked ballot. Further, Applicants will certify that they will not use the system components developed with grant funds after the award ends, for the electronic return of a marked ballot." The ballot delivery research project does **not** prohibit the use of a system that enables the voter to mark a ballot online. Grant Recipients **are prohibited** from using the system or portion of the system developed with grant funds for the electronic return of a marked ballot for the life of the component developed with grant funds.

9. Will we be able to use the attributes of the Common Access Card (CAC) to establish the identity of CAC card holders? (The Common Access Card is the DoD-issued smart card. The CAC is a credit card size token with embedded memory and microprocessor integrated circuit chips (ICC). The CAC also contains a linear barcode, two-dimensional barcode, magnetic stripe, color digital photograph, printed text, radio frequency antenna, and biometrics. The CAC is the standard identification card for active duty military personnel, Selected Reserve, DoD civilian employees, and eligible contractor personnel. The CAC is also the principal card used to enable physical access to buildings and controlled spaces and for logical access to the DoD's computer networks and systems. The CAC ICC has a cryptographic co-processor to enable it to serve as a token for the PKI identity, email, encryption, and PIV auth certificates)

General information on the use of the CAC and how it works, including supporting middleware, can be found on this website: www.cac.mil. The Applicant may propose to use the attributes of the CAC for its development and research effort. However, the Government will **not** provide Government-furnished equipment or information other than previously stated, under the grant award(s).

10. Will vendors providing support be required to register in the System for Award Management (SAM)? If multiple states/jurisdictions come together to respond as a consortium are all states/jurisdictions required to be SAM registered?

Recipients must register in SAM. Sub-recipients, contractors, and vendors do not need to register with SAM. Note that contractors and/or vendors must comply with State/Local governmental procurement policies and regulations. In the event that a contractor or vendor is ineligible under SAM (for Federal Government purposes), the same entity **may** be ineligible to be used by a State or Local governmental grant awardee.

11. Can multiple states/jurisdictions respond as a single responding entity? i.e. if 4 states respond together are 4 individual responses required?

One State/jurisdiction can apply on behalf of a formal or informal consortium of multiple and eligible entities (State and/or local governmental entities). The Applicant is responsible for the management of the consortium.

12. BAA has its "focus on statewide solutions in areas that have a great number of voters covered by UOCAVA." Is [STATE], not being a large state, included in this scope?

The significance of a specific jurisdiction's UOCAVA population is contingent upon the number of UOCAVA voters in the other jurisdictions that apply and the amount of funds requested.

13. Research project duration: BAA states that the term of the grant "may vary depending on the research area developed with the technical approach pursued." Are there any guidelines for the intended minimum/maximum duration?

The maximum (and recommended) term of the grant (research project duration) will **not** exceed five years from the date of award.

14. BAA asks that the major portion of the proposal focus on the technical approach, and refers to the "program, tool, or project" that will implement ballot delivery (and/or single POC). Are the available commercial off-the-self tools within the scope of BAA? Or does BAA anticipate that original research is needed to implement the needed tools?

FVAP will consider all applications that are able to meet the research objective(s).

15. Does the BAA anticipate that special-purpose or dedicated devices/equipment will be used at the voter (overseas) location for the purpose of receiving or retrieving ballots?

The grant proposal should be detailed enough to make clear to the reviewers any special purpose or dedicated devices/equipment necessary to carry out the program.

16. [STATE] does now have an online ballot tool where UOCAVA voters can go in and download their ballot and all instructions. We have an issue that some users can not gain access to the site for security reasons their IP address is blocked from overseas. Will this grant enable us to research and provide a security upgrade to enable those voters to gain access to the site?

Yes, this research would be considered under the ballot delivery project.

17. The BAA makes it very clear that funding cannot be applied to any type of electronic voted ballot return transmission. However, there is no mention of pure, real-time, online voting where no ballot is transmitted to or from the voter, rather the voter would login to a system and cast their vote on that system without moving any documents from one computer to another. Is that allowed?

In this context, the Government regards a "ballot" as the act or process of casting a vote, rather than a piece of paper containing one's vote. Therefore an entirely electronic system for recording one's vote and transmitting it to an election official will **not** be funded under the proposed grant award(s).