

# **2018 Voting Assistance Officer (VAO) “One Stop Shopping”**

1. **If you are a new VAO, welcome!** Voting Assistance Officer is an important collateral duty that can be very rewarding. It is very manageable and won't take much time at all. There are Recruiters, Unit VAOs and Installation VAOs. Every Recruiter must be trained as a VAO and offer assistance to every voting age customer that visits their office. Unit VAOs (UVAOs) are in every Navy command of 25 or more people; Installation VAOs (IVAOs) are specifically appointed by Installation COs and man the IVA Office. The Navy Voting Assistance Program Manager, located in Washington DC, can be reached for answers to questions by emailing [vote@navy.mil](mailto:vote@navy.mil)
  - a. **UVAOs:** Bullets 1-16 apply
  - b. **IVAOs:** Bullets 1-17 apply
  - c. **Recruiters:** Bullets 6-8 and 18 apply
2. **The VAO's primary responsibility** is to be an expert on all-things voting for the command, including voter registration and the absentee voting process. VAOs assist absentee voters within the command. Keep reading to learn how!
3. **The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)** is the overall Department of Defense organization responsible for implementing legislation to help service members, family members, and civilians living overseas vote absentee. Think of FVAP as the parent company that maintains oversight over all of the services' voting activities.
4. **What are your other major responsibilities?**
  - a. SUBMISSION OF QUARTERLY METRICS ON THE FVAP PORTAL (see bullets 6 & 7)
  - b. Email out the FPCA by January 15<sup>th</sup> of every year and by July 15<sup>th</sup> of every even year.
  - c. Print and read the program instructions (see bullet 8)
  - d. BE PRESENT IN YOUR COMMAND (and give yearly training, see bullet 11)
  - e. Pass your command IG inspections by maintaining a continuity binder, containing:
    - (1) DoDI 1000.04
    - (2) OPNAVINST 1742.1C
    - (3) A copy of this “one stop shopping” memo
    - (4) The Navy Voting Action Plan
    - (5) Letter of designation (see bullet 9)
    - (6) Training certificate (see bullet 10)
    - (7) Records of command training (see bullet 11)
    - (8) Any emails that you send to your command, relating to voting
    - (9) PDF printouts of the metrics submitted in the FVAP portal (see bullet 7)
5. **What can you do to get your program started or refreshed?**
  - a. Complete your training, get designated, and get familiar with the FVAP website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). This is the primary resource where you can find all necessary information, guidance, training, and voting related resources, to include posters and other downloadable items for your command. At the left center side of the FVAP homepage, you will see a link (button) for VAOs.
6. **Register for an account on [www.FVAP.gov](http://www.FVAP.gov) and report your metrics!** All VAOs across the military are required to maintain an account in the FVAP portal and submit a quarterly report. Don't worry, it only takes a few minutes every 90 days. *The Navy and FVAP have the ability to track who does and who does not submit metric. Even if you have zero assistance provided in a quarter you must still log in and submit “0”.* Please register for an

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account – here’s how:

- a. From the website home screen at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) , scroll down and locate “Admin Portal” on the very bottom right hand corner of the screen.
- b. Accept the privacy terms to get to the sign in page. From here, select “Register for an Account.”
- c. **UVAOs and IVAOs select “Installation Voting Assistance Officer”**. The portal was designed based on the Army, where every unit reports to the Installation CO. By selecting IVAO you will be able to see and monitor your subordinate’s accounts. **Recruiters select “Recruiter”**.
- d. Fill out the rest of the information. In the “Service Unit” block, start typing your unit’s name – as you do, the block will auto-fill with possible matches. Select your unit from the list of matches. If it doesn’t come up try your UIC. If you cannot locate your unit, simply type it in as you wish it to appear, and proceed with registration. The SVAO will have to approve your account and may ask for further information.

7. **Quarterly Reporting on the FVAP portal.** Once you’ve established an account, you’ll be required to log on and submit a quarterly report (every 90 days, calendar year, as explained below.) Submitting your report is easy. **Just log in to your account, click on the METRICS tab towards the top of the page, fill in the blocks, and click SAVE. Your report will be automatically submitted to FVAP when you hit SAVE.** The portal allows for rolling submissions, so you may choose to update your report whenever you provide voting assistance throughout the quarter. Otherwise, a few days before the quarter ends, submit your numbers. Please be as accurate as possible, but educated guesses are better than no information at all. *Please email [vote@navy.mil](mailto:vote@navy.mil) if you have questions.* Deadlines follow:

- a. **Quarter 1 – Submit before 31 March**
- b. **Quarter 2 – Submit before 30 June**
- c. **Quarter 3 – Submit before 30 September**
- d. **Quarter 4 – Submit before 31 December**

**What counts as Metrics?** Count all “active assistance”. This means emails, phone calls, in-person assistance. If you email your command of 200 military the FPCA and the annual training, you would put 200 in “Forms Distributed- Electronic FPCA” and 200 in “General Voting Information” in the military column. Passive forms that can’t be measured such as a poster or a Plan of the week posted on your command’s sharepoint don’t count.

***IVAOs must log metrics under both the “Unit Metrics” tab AND the “Office Metrics” tab.*** Unit metrics is everything you did for your actual unit, while office metrics account for everything you did for individuals outside your unit that visited/emailed/called your office.

**TIP:** *Accounts expire every 45 days even though the requirement is to submit metrics Quarterly.*

Create a monthly calendar reminder in your Outlook to log into the FVAP portal. This will keep your account active. Go in and update metrics each time, even if all you do is press “submit” again. This will ensure you absolutely have metrics logged for the quarter.

8. **Program instructions.** The Navy's Voting Assistance Program instruction is OPNAVINST 1742.1C and it is based upon the overarching DoD Instruction 1000.04. Be sure to read through these instructions and keep a copy on hand for your voting program binder. All instructions can be found at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).
9. **Designation letter.** You are required to be designated in writing by your CO/OIC. A sample letter can be found

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in the Navy Voting Action Plan and the Navy Voting Toolkit. Please keep this letter in your program binder.

10. **VAO training.** You are required to complete training before being officially assigned, otherwise you won't be prepared to assist voters. You may complete training online: <http://www.fvap.gov/vao/training>. Be sure to keep a copy of your training certificate in your program binder, which should be maintained at the command and passed down from VAO to VAO. IVAOs and Recruiters have specific training listed in that link.
11. **Command Training.** You are required to administer annual, GMT style voting training and keep attendance records in your program binder. The method of training is up to you, but you can find slide decks and training materials online at: <http://www.fvap.gov/vao/training/voter-training>

**TIP:** Create outlook reminders to send an email out before January 15<sup>th</sup> and before July 15<sup>th</sup> that has both the FPCA and the military voter training PowerPoint or pdf attached. Save a copy of the sent email in both your outlook and a printed copy with the emails it was sent to in your continuity folder. This will satisfy both the FPCA requirement and the annual training requirement and ensure that you have records of both. Keep copies of these emails for 2 years.
12. **Voting alerts.** You can sign up for them on FVAP's website at <http://www.fvap.gov/vao/alerts>. FVAP will send you pertinent information about elections, workshop schedules, events, etc.
13. **Navy Voting Facebook Page.** You can find it at [www.facebook.com/navyvoting](http://www.facebook.com/navyvoting). Updates and other information will be posted. Please be sure to click the 'like' button on the page to help spread the word. There is also a Navy VAO Facebook group to help one another with lessons learned: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1699117943698409/> It is not mandatory to join but is a resource.
14. **Navy Voting Smartphone App.** Every installation has an MWR smartphone app that is available in standard app stores. The local IVAO information for every installation is listed on these apps and each has a link to fvap.gov resources such as the Guide, the online wizard and downloadable pdf versions of the forms.
15. **PER FEDERAL LAW.** Voting Assistance Officers are required to have their performance commented on in an official military evaluation report. For Navy VAOs, listing that you are a VAO in the collateral duty block of your EVAL or FITREP will satisfy this requirement. Please do so.
16. **VAO of the Quarter.** If you think you are or one of your subordinates is doing a particularly great job as a VAO, regardless of the size of the command/installation. Submit an application for VAO of the Quarter to the SVAO at the end of the Quarter. The template can be found in the Navy Voting Action Plan. The SVAO will decide on Navy VAO of the Quarter and submit that package to FVAP to be judged against the other services for FVAP VAO of the Quarter. All winners will be considered for the Navy/ FVAP VAO of the Year.
17. **Installation VAOs.** If you are a IVAO you have a few more requirements than the average VAO:
  - a. **IVA Office:** The biggest difference between normal VAOs and IVAOs is that you must maintain a “functionally separate” office. This means that the space can't be used for anything other than voting assistance. However, it does not need to be as elaborate as an actual office. It can be a separate desk within your work space that is only used for voting assistance. It has to have access to a computer, printer, phone and scanner. These don't have to be assets used only for voting assistance. For example, if you are your command's Admin officer, a small desk within the

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Admin office with voting forms, etc. is the actual “IVA Office” but it has access to the assets within the Admin office (possibly your work computer and the office printer/scanner).

- b. **IVAO Email:** IVAOs are required to establish/maintain a distro for their office that can be publicized on FVAP and other resources that includes at a minimum the IVAO and [vote@navy.mil](mailto:vote@navy.mil). Most installations already have one established. Contact the SVAO with questions.
  - c. **NVRF Form:** Because IVA Offices are Voter Registration Agencies, anyone can technically request assistance registering to vote there even if they aren’t Absentee Voters. To do this they must complete a National Voter Registration Form. It is very rare that anyone ever asks for this, but you are required to have at least 1 printed copy on hand. <https://www.eac.gov/voters/national-mail-voter-registration-form/>
  - d. **Outreach Weeks:** There are two outreach weeks per even year. The Armed Forces Voters Week at the end of June and the Absentee Voters Week in September. You are expected to do increased outreach during or around these weeks at your installation. See the Navy Voting Toolkit for ideas.
- 18. Recruiters.** By law (the National Voter Registration Act) every Recruiter must be trained as a VAO and offer assistance to every voting age customer that enters their office.
- a. **Forms.** Each customer who is a U.S. citizen and will be 18 years old or older by the date of the election must be offered the Voter Registration Information Form (DD 2645). While you can’t force them to, every customer should indicate on the DD 2645 whether or not they would like assistance and sign. These forms must be kept for 2 years and can be completed digitally. If they indicate they would like assistance and are a civilian, give them the National Mail Voter Registration Form. Once they complete it, mail it in for them
    - i. **DD 2645:** <https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/dd2645.pdf>
    - ii. **National Voter Mail Registration Form:**  
[https://www.eac.gov/assets/1/6/Federal\\_Voter\\_Registration\\_6-25-14\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.eac.gov/assets/1/6/Federal_Voter_Registration_6-25-14_ENG.pdf)

**TIP:** Keep the DD 2645 digital if you can to reduce the burden of storing paper forms or scanning printed ones into the computer. Also keep only 1 printed copy for the National Voter Mail Registration Form on hand. Print new ones out as they get used. The form is long and there is no requirement to have multiple printed copies on hand.

- b. **Metrics.** See bullet 6 and 7 on how to register for a FVAP portal account and how to keep your account active. Your metrics will look different than other VAOs and is listed by state. It is up to your region if they want you to put in your own metrics or for you to send them up to the region to be compiled and submitted. Use the Recruiter Registration Summary (<https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/recruiter-registration-summary.pdf>) to keep track of assistance you provide.
- c. **Further Info.** See <https://www.fvap.gov/vao/recruiter> for specific guidance.