What's New for the 2020 EAVS

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) is thrilled to begin work on the 2020 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS). This is the ninth iteration of this important project to collect data on election administration activities and voting in U.S. federal general elections.

In the coming months, this EAVS newsletter will keep you up to date on important developments and announcements pertaining to the 2020 project. In addition to receiving it in your inbox, each EAVS newsletter will be posted on the Resources page of the EAVS Portal (https://eavsportal.com/).

The EAC continually seeks to improve the survey experience for its state and local partners. Because of this, you will notice some changes this year, including:

- Data collection for the EAVS will begin on November 4, 2020, the day after the election. On that day, the data collection templates will be released, other documentation and training materials will be posted, and a part-time help desk will begin to provide support. The data due dates will remain the same—the first draft of your state's data is due on February 1, 2021, and your final certified data is due on March 1, 2021.
- The error checks in the data collection templates have been improved based on feedback that we received from many of our state partners. The error checks have been revised to reduce false positive errors and the overall number of errors that are flagged in your data submission. The error checks have also been revised to better ensure internal consistency across your EAVS responses. Additionally, the error checks will incorporate your state's Policy Survey responses to ensure that your EAVS data is consistent with your state's laws and policies. A future edition of the EAVS newsletter will cover these error checks in more detail.
- The online EAVS can be used by jurisdictions through the duration of the data collection process, including during data reviews prior to certification.
- More help desk support will be provided. A part-time help desk will be available during the Policy Survey data collection period. Part-time support for EAVS will be available by phone and email starting the day after the November 2020 General Election, with full-time support starting in January 2021. The help desk can assist with questions about survey instructions or definitions, technical difficulties with the data collection templates, or any other needs your state has related to EAVS.

Changes to the 2020 EAVS Questions

A PDF of the 2020 EAVS questions can be found on the Downloads page of the EAVS Portal. The EAC is mindful of the burden this survey poses to its state and local partners and has kept the questions for the 2020 EAVS largely the same as those used in 2018. The changes to the questions are noted below.

Added Questions

- A2 (the number of same-day voter registrations): Two sub-questions have been added to capture same-day registrations received on Election Day (A2b) and same-day registrations received before Election Day (A2c), with instructions for what to do if your state cannot provide data breakdowns of the total number of same-day registrations.
- B27 (the number of Federal Write-in Absentee Ballots (FWAB) rejected for other reasons, total and by voter type): This question provides a way to report FWABs rejected for other reasons aside from being received after the ballot receipt deadline or because the voter's regular absentee ballot was received and counted. B27a will record the total number of FWABs rejected for other reasons, B27b will record the number of these rejected FWABs that came from Uniformed Services voters, and B27c will record the number of these rejected FWABs that came from non-military/civilian overseas voters.

Deleted Question

Previously Section D included a question about total votes cast. That question was removed, and as a result, the remaining questions in Section D have been renumbered.

Clarified Question Instructions

- A2 (the number of same-day voter registrations): The instructions have been revised to clarify that all same-day registrations received for the 2020 General Election should be reported in this question.
- A4–A7 (the number of registration forms received by source): The instructions have been revised to clarify that online voter registrations (reported in items A4c, A5c, A6c, and A7c) only include registration forms that were completed and submitted through a web-based online registration form system. Additionally, same-day registrations should be categorized according to the mode used to submit the registration application.
- A8 (the number of confirmation of registration notices sent to voters): The instructions have been revised to include a more accurate definition of the term "confirmation notice" and to clarify that notices sent between the close of registration for the November 2018 General Election and the close of registration for the November 2020 General Election should be reported in this question.
- B8 (the number of Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act [UOCAVA] ballots transmitted by "other mode," total and by voter type): The instructions clarify that "other mode" includes fax and online ballot delivery portals.
- C1 (the total number of by-mail ballots transmitted): The instructions clarify that all by-mail ballots transmitted for the November 2020 General Election should be included in this question.
- C2 (the number of by-mail ballots transmitted to permanent absentee voters): The instructions clarify that ballots transmitted in an all-vote-by-mail state or jurisdiction should not be included in this question.
- D5–D7 (questions on poll workers): The instructions clarify the definition of a poll worker and specify how poll workers should be counted. In D6, which records the number of early voting poll workers, each poll worker should be counted once regardless of how many early voting shifts they worked. In D7, which records the ages of poll workers, each poll worker should be counted only once, regardless of how many shifts they worked.
- E1 (the number of provisional ballots submitted): Options E1b–d have been rephrased to clarify that they record the number of ballots submitted. In addition, E1c now includes a definition of provisional ballots counted in part.
- F1 (total participation in the November 2020 General Election): This question now records the number of voters who cast a ballot that was counted, both in total and by mode of voting. F1e (voters

who cast a provisional ballot that was counted) has removed the instruction about provisional voters who were given credit in their vote history.

Excel Crosswalk Available on EAVS Portal

To further document the changes that have been made to the 2020 EAVS questions, the EAC is providing an Excel crosswalk that lists the 2020 EAVS questions, which column in the Excel data collection template correspond to the questions, and which columns were used in the 2018 Excel template. States that use database queries to compile their EAVS data will find this document especially helpful. The crosswalk is available on the [Resources page](#) of the EAVS Portal.

EAC Released a New Document with EAVS Guidance

On August 10, the EAC issued [A Guide to the Election Administration and Voting Survey](#). This updated policy document provides information to election officials who are responsible for completing the 2020 EAVS, including what data are collected, the process and timeline for data submissions, how the EAC reports the results of the data, how updates to the EAVS data sets are released to the public, and how the EAC makes changes to the survey questions. New state points of contact are especially encouraged to read this document.

Reminder: The Policy Survey Closes September 30

This month the EAC launched the 2020 Election Administration Policy Survey, which collects data on the laws, policies, and practices that will govern the November 2020 General Election in your state. You received an email on August 3 with your assigned survey credentials and instructions on how to complete the survey.

Your state's responses to this survey are due by Wednesday, September 30. If you need assistance, please contact the Policy Survey help desk at eavs@forsmarshgroup.com. The help desk is open between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET).