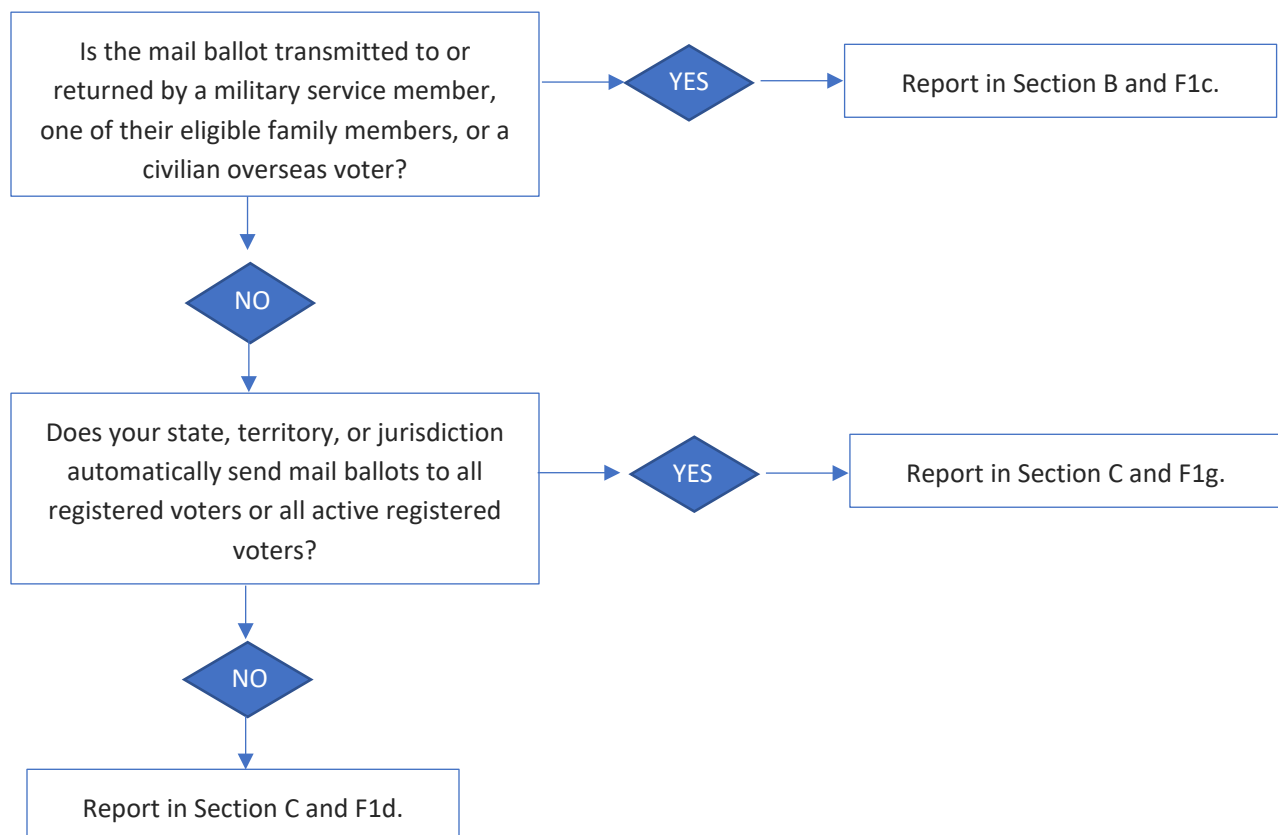




## Reporting Mail Voting in the 2022 EAVS

Many states, territories, and jurisdictions expanded mail voting opportunities for the 2020 general election, and consequently saw large increases in the number of mail ballots that were transmitted, returned, and counted and increases in the percentage of their voters who cast their ballots by mail. To better track data related to mail voting in the 2022 general election, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) added several new questions to Section C of this year's Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS). This newsletter outlines how survey respondents should report their mail voting data in the EAVS and highlights the new survey questions related to mail voting.

The mail voting data you will report in the 2022 EAVS generally falls into three categories: ballots sent to voters covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), ballots sent to domestic civilian registered voters, and ballots in states, territories, and jurisdictions that conduct all-mail elections. Figure 1 outlines the differences between these three types of mail voting.



**Figure 1: Flow chart describing how to report mail ballots in the 2022 EAVS**



## UOCAVA Ballots (Section B and F1c)

Mail ballots sent to voters covered by UOCAVA—which covers military service members and service members' eligible family members, as well as non-military civilians living overseas—will be reported primarily in Section B of EAVS. State, territory, and local officials will report the following information about these ballots:

- The number of UOCAVA ballots that were transmitted to voters, including information on the mode by which they were transmitted and the type of UOCAVA voter they were transmitted to (B5–B8).
- The number of transmitted UOCAVA ballots that were returned by voters, including information on the mode by which they were returned and the type of UOCAVA voter they were transmitted to (B9–B12).
- The number of transmitted UOCAVA ballots that were returned as undeliverable, including information on the mode by which they were transmitted (B13).
- The number of transmitted UOCAVA ballots that were returned by voters and counted, including information on the mode by which they were returned and the type of UOCAVA voter they were returned by (B14–B17).
- The number of transmitted UOCAVA ballots that were returned by voters and rejected, including information on the reason for rejection and the type of UOCAVA voter they were returned by (B18–B22).
- The number of Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWAB) that were returned, counted, and rejected, including information on the reason for rejection and the type of UOCAVA voter they were returned by (B23–B27).
- The total number of UOCAVA voters who cast a ballot via regular absentee ballot or FWAB and whose ballots were counted (F1c).

## Regular Mail Ballots (Section C and F1d)

Mail ballots (which are called absentee ballots in some states and territories) sent to domestic civilian voters will be reported primarily in Section C of EAVS. State, territory, and local officials will report the following information about these ballots:

- The total number of these ballots transmitted to voters as well as their outcome, including the number of ballots returned by voters; the number of ballots returned as undeliverable; the number of ballots that were surrendered, spoiled, or replaced; the number of mail voters who instead voted in person at the polling place with a provisional ballot; the number of unreturned mail ballots; and the number of mail ballots that had another outcome (C1).
- The number of mail ballots sent to permanent mail voters, if your state or territory uses this distinction (C2).
- The number of mail ballots returned via drop box (C6)
- The number of mail ballots returned by voters and counted (C8).
- The number of mail ballots returned by voters and rejected, including the reasons behind those rejections (C9).
- The number of voters who cast a mail ballot and whose ballots were counted (F1d).



## All-Vote-By-Mail States or Jurisdictions (Section C and F1g)

If your state or jurisdiction conducted its general election entirely by mail, then you will report data on those mail ballots in Section C, as outlined above. Instead of reporting the number of voters who cast a ballot by mail that was counted in F1d, you will report this number in F1g. Please note that the subcategories in F1b–F1h are mutually exclusive, and voters who are reported in F1g should not also be reported in F1d.

### What Constitutes an All-Mail Election?

The EAC defines all-mail elections as elections in which every registered voter, or every active registered voter, was automatically sent a mail ballot. Voters who cast a ballot in an all-mail election and whose votes were counted should be reported in F1g. In addition, data on the number of mail ballots transmitted, returned, counted, and rejected should be reported in Section C of EAVS. However, voters in all-vote-by-mail states, territories, or jurisdictions should not be considered permanent mail voters and should not be reported in C2.

If your state, territory, or jurisdiction required voters to request an absentee or mail ballot, then you will report “Does not apply” in F1g, and will instead report mail voters who cast a ballot that was counted in F1d (or, if in-person absentee ballots cannot be distinguished from other ballots cast at in-person voting locations, in F1f). In addition, you will report data on the number of mail ballots transmitted, returned, counted, and rejected in Section C of EAVS. States, territories, and jurisdictions that automatically mailed absentee or mail ballot *applications* to all registered voters (or to all active registered voters) are likewise not considered to have conducted an all-vote-by-mail election and should not report data in F1g.

### Reporting In-Person Absentee Voting

Some states offer in-person absentee voting, which allows voters to receive, fill out, and cast their absentee ballot in person at an election office or a satellite location rather than returning it through the mail (your state may use another term to describe this process). Because these ballots are cast or returned at a physical polling place, the EAC classifies in-person absentee voting as in-person early voting for the purposes of EAVS. If possible, in-person absentee ballots should be reported in question F1f (voters who cast a ballot at an in-person early voting location and whose ballots were counted), election offices or satellite locations where in-person absentee voting took place should be counted in D4 (number of in-person physical polling places used for early voting), and the total number of poll workers who worked in-person early voting in D6 (counting each poll worker only once, regardless of the number of early voting shifts the poll worker worked).

If you cannot distinguish between in-person absentee ballots and other types of mail ballots, then please report your data on mail ballots in Section C and question F1d, and note when your data include these in-person absentee ballots in the question’s comments. You should also complete questions D4 and D6 as described in the previous paragraph.



## New EAVS Questions on Mail Voting

The EAC has added a new series of questions to Section C of EAVS to track additional data on mail voting. These new questions supplement the 2022 Policy Survey questions on drop boxes (Q19–Q19d) and ballot curing (Q20–Q20b).

### Drop Boxes

The EAVS defines “drop box” as follows:

A locked container (located either indoors or outdoors) where voters (or voters’ authorized representatives, if allowed by your state’s law) may deliver their voted mail ballots for collection. Drop boxes are operated or controlled by election officials. Drop boxes are separate from ballot boxes that are located at in-person polling places for voters to place their ballots immediately after voting in person.

Some states may use other terminology for drop boxes, including “place of deposit” or “secure ballot intake station.” These ballot receptacles should be reported as drop boxes in EAVS; if respondents wish, they may add comments explaining the terminology they use.

The following data about drop boxes should be reported in EAVS:

- The total number of drop boxes used for the 2022 general election (C3a). Each drop box should be counted only once in this question, regardless of the number of voting days the drop box was available to voters.
- The number of drop boxes available on Election Day, in total (C4a), located at election offices (C4b), and located at non-election office sites (C4c). The sum of C4b and C4c should match what is reported in C4a.
- The number of drop boxes available during the early voting period before Election Day, in total (C5a), located at election offices (C5b), and located at non-election office sites (C5c). The sum of C5b and C5c should match what is reported in C5a.
  - Please note that because C3a requires each drop box to be counted only once, the sum of what you report in C4a and C5a need not match C3a, and may even exceed C3a.
- The number of mail ballots that were returned via drop box (C6a). This response should include all mail ballots returned via drop box, regardless of whether they were rejected, cured, or counted.

If your state reported in the 2022 Policy Survey that drop boxes were not used for the 2022 general election, then items C3a–C6a will be pre-filled in your data collection templates as “Does not apply.” If your state used drop boxes, then all items in C3a–C6a require a numerical response of zero or greater or a response of “Data not available.”



## Ballot Curing

Question C7a asks for the number of mail ballots that were successfully cured. A successfully cured ballot is a returned mail ballot that was originally rejected for an error or because it was missing required information, but which was ultimately counted because the voter corrected the error or supplied the required information. You do not need to report the number of mail ballots that went through the curing process but were rejected.

If your state reported in the 2022 Policy Survey that voters may not cure errors on their mail ballots, then item C7a will be pre-filled in your data collection templates as “Does not apply.” If your state allowed ballot curing, then C7a requires a numerical response of zero or greater or a response of “Data not available.”

## 2022 EAVS Glossary Now Available

The definitions of drop box and ballot curing that were discussed in this newsletter are covered in the 2022 EAVS Glossary. This glossary includes many other terms that appear in the EAVS and Policy Survey and is an important resource for ensuring that you are interpreting the survey questions correctly. The glossary is available on the [Resources page](#) of the EAVS Portal.