FACT SHEET: Election Administration and Voting Survey

Elections generate a tremendous amount of data that can be collected and analyzed to improve voter experience and guide how officials administer elections. All of this data is collected regularly by the thousands of jurisdictions that oversee elections across the country. Since 2004 the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) has captured and analyzed much of this data for all states and territories via our Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS). Every two years, the commission takes a deep dive into this wealth of data that includes information such as voter registration numbers, the number of votes cast for every race on a ballot, as well as where and when people cast their ballots - by mail, at an early voting location, from an overseas military base or at the polls. The end goal is to use this information to improve the way America votes.

What is the Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS)?

The EAVS contains the most comprehensive nationwide data about election administration in the United States. The EAC administers the survey to meet its Help America Vote Act of 2002 obligation to serve as a national clearinghouse and resource for the compilation of information with respect to the administration of federal elections. Additionally, the EAVS fulfills EAC data collection requirements contained in both the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) and the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA).

The data is collected at the local level by the county or county-equivalent. It includes information related to:
- Voter registration
- Military and overseas voters
- Early and absentee voting
- Provisional voting
- Voter participation
- Voting equipment usage
- Poll workers, polling places, and precincts

Who completes the survey and when is it conducted?

Every two years after a November mid-term or Presidential election, the EAC administers the survey to 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The survey includes data for the November general election and the two-year period leading up to it. The final report is sent to Congress and released to the public by June 30 of the year following the mid-term or Presidential election.

How do states respond to the survey?

State election offices submit the survey to the EAC and often work with local election officials to collect the necessary data. Many states rely on centralized voter registration databases and voter history databases that allow state election officials to provide local level responses for each question. Other states work directly with local election offices to collect the data. It is also common for states to use both their state-level databases along with data collection from local jurisdictions. The goal is to submit the most comprehensive data available.

What is the Statutory Overview?

The Election Administration and Voting Survey has included a Statutory Overview section since 2008. In this section, states are asked a series of questions about their state election laws, definitions, and procedures. This information helps the EAC and its stakeholders understand the quantitative data from the EAVS while also providing a clearer picture of the local legal landscape governing U.S. elections.

Where can I find EAVS data?

Along with the report, data from all states and territories is released and available in multiple formats on the EAC website, www.eac.gov. This data can be easily downloaded and is used by many stakeholders to analyze and better understand the elections process.