

**About the Quick Start Guides:** The EAC's Quick Start Guides are intended to familiarize local election officials with various topics they will likely encounter in election administration. The guides are a starting point to identify areas of concern and give officials a broad idea of factors they should consider in approaching a given topic.

### What is required under UOCAVA?

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), Help America Vote Act (HAVA), and Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE Act) protect uniformed service members, their eligible family members, and overseas citizens' right to vote. To do so, the Acts require election officials in all states, territories, and the District of Columbia to:

- **Report** statistics on the number of UOCAVA ballots transmitted and received
- **Accept** ballot requests and send blank ballots electronically
- **Send** blank ballots starting a minimum of 45 days before Election Day (if requested)
- **Provide** a free access system for UOCAVA voters to track receipt of their ballots

Many states have adopted additional procedures and protections for UOCAVA voters. Be sure to review and incorporate your jurisdiction's laws and regulations in developing your plan to serve UOCAVA voters.

### Who are UOCAVA voters?

- Members of the uniformed services (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA] Commissioned Officer Corps)
- Members of the U.S. Merchant Marines
- Eligible family members of the above
- U.S. Citizens residing outside the United States



#### Electronic Ballot Return

Some jurisdictions allow UOCAVA voters to return their voted ballots electronically or via facsimile. However, many UOCAVA voters are required to print and mail their voted ballots.

## Tips for Improving Service to UOCAVA Voters



### • Communicate early and often

- Create an email contact list for UOCAVA voters and periodically update them on upcoming elections and important deadlines.
- Provide notice when you receive the voter's ballot request, the blank ballot is transmitted, the voted ballot is received, and the ballot is counted. Be sure to promptly notify the voter of any issues with their initial request for a ballot or their returned ballot that they may need to cure if permitted by law.
- Document the number of UOCAVA ballots transmitted, received, and rejected, and use the information to improve procedures and communications.



### • Provide a dedicated UOCAVA page on the elections office's website

- Link to the [Federal Voting Assistance Program](#) (FVAP) and the [Federal Post Card Application](#) (FPCA) form to make registration and requesting a ballot simple.
- Include important deadlines and state-specific rules. Many states also have dedicated UOCAVA pages on their websites; if yours does, provide a link.
- Highlight registration look-up and ballot tracking tools.
- Address FAQs with information specific to UOCAVA voters and their rights.



### • Partner with local military establishments

- Connect with the Voting Assistance Officer serving your local military base.

### • Take advantage of the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) resources

- Complete the online training for understanding the UOCAVA voting process at <https://www.fvap.gov/eo/training>
- Utilize FVAP's address service to get updated addresses for active-duty service members. Election officials can email ([vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov)) or fax (571.372.0735 or 571.372.0749) FVAP to request updated address information.

FVAP.gov

