

**HAVA Election Security Grant Amended Program Narrative**  
**State of Nebraska**  
**February 28, 2023**

Nebraska has received \$9,422,268 in HAVA Election Security grant funds. The grant funds will be used to improve the administration of elections for Federal office, including to enhance election technology and make election security improvements in the following areas:

**1. Voting Equipment**

Nebraskans take pride in their paper-based election system. Paper ballots significantly reduce the possibility of election tampering and are the failsafe against malicious actors seeking to change the results of an election. The state's ballot counting equipment and ADA ballot marking devices purchased in 2006 with initial HAVA funds were at the end of their life cycle. The amount of funds Nebraska initially received was not sufficient for replacement of our entire election tabulation system. However, the Secretary of State's Office requested and received state funding for most of the cost of the replacement of ballot counting and ADA compliant ballot marking devices statewide. The replacement project required spending approximately one million dollars in HAVA funds. HAVA funds will also be used to finance the ongoing licensing and maintenance of that new equipment.

This equipment replacement project also included the use of HAVA funds for the purchase of air-gapped computers and printers for each of our counties that use reporting software to tabulate election results. These computers will allow counties to construct the tabulation reports and results on a computer that is not connected to the internet. The new process will allow for a comparison between the report and the results that are ultimately uploaded to the Secretary of State's Election Night Reporting Website. This additional security step will allow for an election results file that cannot be tampered with prior to upload and provides a secure file for reference in case issues arise. Funds will continue to be used to pay for the ongoing licensing of the software on these computers needed to compile election results. Lastly, we anticipate using HAVA funds to upgrade and eventually replace these computers every five years based on their expected life cycle.

**2. Voting Processes**

HAVA Election Security funds will be used for the following voting processes:

**A. Election Night Reporting Upgrades**

The Secretary of State will pursue making significant updates, if not replacement, of the existing Election Night Reporting to ensure the latest security features are being utilized.

**B. Training**

The Election Security Grant Funds will be used for communications and training in three different areas:

**I. Training for Election Division Staff**

Employees will be sent to various conferences and trainings sessions to expand election administration knowledge and stay current on election security issues.

II. Training for County Election Officials

Members of the Elections Division will travel the state to provide training at county and regional meetings of county election officials. Additionally, statewide and regional training conferences will be hosted to ensure that our county election officials are staying up to date on election security. Elections Division staff will also provide one-on-one training with individual counties as necessary. These training sessions will allow new county employees to get proper training of the election systems as well as provide our seasoned officials with refresher training.

III. Training and Implementation Coordinator

A position was created to provide dedicated training during the Implementation of the new voting equipment statewide. After the implementation phase, this position will help to provide training manuals and best practices on Election Administration and provide continual training for current Election Officials as well as training for new election officials. Due to turnover in this position, alternative options such as regional county training coordinators may also be utilized.

C. Federal Special Election

An unprecedented federal special election was held in Nebraska in 2022. County election offices faced considerable expenses beyond their budget authority as they prepared for this special election. Assistance was provided for a portion of the county expenses with HAVA funds to ensure the election was handled safely and securely.

**3. Voter Registration Systems**

The Election Security Funds will be used for the statewide voter registration system in the following areas:

A. Two-Party Authentication

Prior to the 2018 General Election, the Secretary of State implemented a two-party authentication process for the Statewide Voter Registration System. The Secretary of State collaborates with our 93 county election offices on voter registration. This effort ensures that if an individual user's credentials are compromised, the system will remain secure because the tokens institute and require a newly generated code in order to access the system. This has enhanced security of the voter registration system. Funds will be continually used to purchase additional or replacement tokens and for the ongoing license fees.

B. Voter List Maintenance Efforts

One of the more important ways that Nebraska can strengthen its security is improving the accuracy of the voter rolls. Nebraska already matches its list to the National Change of Address list from the U.S. Post Office and routinely checks the list against death and felon records. To further improve these efforts, Nebraska intends to join a collaborative list

maintenance service. Funds will be used to pay membership fees and mailing costs associated with a list maintenance service.

C. Voter Registration System Enhancements

The Secretary of State, as well as our local election officials, have requested enhancements to the Statewide Voter Registration System to provide efficiencies and enhance reporting. Funds will be used to pay for change orders to our vendor for enhancements to the Statewide Voter Registration System. Funds will also be used to develop a new online voter registration system. A combination of state matching funds and federal HAVA funds will be used for these projects.

**4. Cybersecurity**

The Election Security Grant Funds will be used for cybersecurity in the following ways:

A. Albert Monitors

Funds will be used to install and maintain Albert Monitors in critical areas in Nebraska to monitor suspicious activity in real time with the assistance of the Elections Infrastructure – Information Sharing Analysis Center (EI-ISAC). Funds will continue to be used for the monitoring service costs.

B. Information Technology Assistance to Counties

Information technology assistance will be provided to counties to secure networks and other cybersecurity hardware/software needs. Information technology staff may also be utilized to provide this assistance.

C. Information Technology Supplies

Funds could be used for various software, hardware, or supplies that would prevent or detect cyber intrusions.

**5. Voter Education**

Funds may be utilized for a Communications Specialist to combat disinformation related to elections. The employee is also expected to spend time on non-federal activities and will record time on grant and non-grant activity in accordance with federal regulations, with only actual time spent on the grant being paid from the Election Security HAVA funds, as well as a portion of other staffing costs such as rent, office equipment, and miscellaneous supplies.

**6. Accessibility**

The Secretary of State will work with counties to either directly purchase supplies or subaward funds for our local election officials to better accommodate voters with disabilities and offer modifications to polling sites to maintain ADA compliance.

In addition, the Secretary of State will investigate the cost, viability, and proven success in other states for online programs offered by known and established vendors that provide secure early

voting ballot delivery systems that enable voters with disabilities the ability to mark a ballot and return the ballot to their local election office. The office will also investigate each system for compatibility for use with the early ballots of overseas citizens and military personnel.

## **7. Administration**

A new accounting/compliance position was created, with a portion of the employee's time to be spent on properly monitoring and administering the Election Security Grant funds. Should the employee spend time on other HAVA grants, time would be recorded on each grant in accordance with federal regulations. Only actual time spent on the grant would be paid from the Election Security HAVA funds, as well as other staffing costs such as rent, office equipment, and miscellaneous supplies. Additionally, some administration funds may be used to pay for the costs of Federal HAVA Single Audits.

Nebraska's matching requirement for this grant is \$1,359,913. The Nebraska Legislature appropriated state matching funds in the budget effective July 1, 2019, for the prior matching requirement of \$959,913. The Secretary of State's office used those funds for upgrades to the statewide voter registration system, as well as to pay for a portion of the statewide election equipment replacement project completed in 2020. The additional \$400,000 matching requirement will be met through state funds used to pay for a portion of the ongoing licensing and maintenance of the new equipment. Of the remaining match, \$200,000 is expected to be met by June 30, 2023, and \$200,000 by June 30, 2024.

The federal funds are held in an interest-bearing account. All interest on these balances will be reported as program income on the Federal Financial Reports. In addition, these funds will be held in the state's Election Administration Fund and subsequently spent on allowable activities described in Section 101 of HAVA, as described above.

EAC FY23 HAVA GRANT - BUDGET WORKSHEET

OMB#: 3265-0023 Expiration Date: 9/30/2025

GRANTEE NAME: Secretary of State, Nebraska  
 AWARD TYPE: FORMULA MATCH %: 20%  
 PROJECT PERIOD START DATE: 3/23/2018 INDIRECT COST % (IF APPLIED):  
 PROJECT PERIOD END DATE: INDIRECT COST TYPE:

SECTION A: GRANT BUDGET	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE	YEAR FOUR	YEAR FIVE	TOTAL:
FEDERAL AMOUNT	\$ 3,496,936.00	\$ 3,925,332.00	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ -	\$ 9,422,268.00
NON FEDERAL MATCH	\$ 174,847.00	\$ 785,066.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00		\$ 1,359,913.00
TOTAL:	\$ 3,671,783.00	\$ 4,710,398.00	\$ 1,200,000.00	\$ 1,200,000.00	\$ -	\$ 10,782,181.00

SECTION B: BUDGET CATEGORIES (Federal Only)	Voting Equipment	Voting Processes	Voter Registration Systems	Election Auditing	Cyber and Physical Security	Voter Education	Accessibility	Other (Administration)	Other (Provide description in this box)	TOTALS	% Fed Total
PERSONNEL		\$ 590,427.00				\$ 15,000.00		\$ 103,106.00		\$ 708,533.00	8%
FRINGE RELATED TO SALARY		\$ 230,213.00				\$ 6,000.00		\$ 28,294.00		\$ 264,507.00	3%
EQUIPMENT	\$ 1,472,577.00				\$ 50,083.00					\$ 1,522,660.00	16%
TRAINING		\$ 278,777.00								\$ 278,777.00	3%
CONTRACTUAL	\$ 4,319,769.00	\$ 538,018.00	\$ 311,970.00		\$ 482,413.00					\$ 5,652,170.00	60%
OTHER (Goods: Software, Hardware, Supplies)	\$ 34,700.00		\$ 227,355.00		\$ 59,015.00		\$ 87,078.00	\$ 210.00		\$ 408,358.00	4%
OTHER (Services: Travel, Dues, Shipping, Printing)			\$ 149,085.00		\$ 110,026.00		\$ 30,365.00	\$ 14,891.00		\$ 304,367.00	3%
SUBGRANTS					\$ 150,000.00		\$ 132,896.00			\$ 282,896.00	3%
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	\$ 5,827,046.00	\$ 1,637,435.00	\$ 688,410.00	\$ -	\$ 851,537.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 250,339.00	\$ 146,501.00	\$ -	\$ 9,422,268.00	100%
INDIRECT COSTS (if applied)										\$ -	0%
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET</b>	\$ 5,827,046.00	\$ 1,637,435.00	\$ 688,410.00	\$ -	\$ 851,537.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 250,339.00	\$ 146,501.00	\$ -	\$ 9,422,268.00	100%
<b>PERCENTAGE BY CATEGORY</b>	62%	17%	7%	0%	9%	0%	3%	2%	0%		

SECTION C: NON FEDERAL MATCH RESOURCES	STATE FUNDS	OTHER	TOTAL:
SOURCE DESCRIPTION			
Legislature Appropriated	\$ 1,359,913.00		\$ 1,359,913.00
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		\$ -	\$ -
	\$ 1,359,913.00	\$ -	\$ 1,359,913.00