



Election Assistance Commission Plans for Use of CARES Act Report to the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided \$400 million to the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to allocate to states, the District of Columbia and U.S. Territories “to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, for the 2020 Federal election cycle.” Section 15011 of the Act requires federal agencies to provide their plans for using the funds to the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee. This document provides that information.

The CARES Act provided the funds to EAC under Section 101 of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) which authorizes EAC to provide funds to states to “improve the administration of federal elections.” Therefore, EAC followed the requirements of Section 101 to allocate the funds to the states to address issues arising from the pandemic during the remaining primaries and the general election in November 2020. (See Appendix A for the State Allocation Chart). EAC issued Notices of Grant Award and guidance to the states on April 6, meeting the requirement in the CARES Act to obligate the funds within 30 days of passage of the Act. States were required to describe their anticipated usage of the funds in their Funding Request Letters (See Appendix B for anticipated state usage of the funds.)

In the guidance to the states, EAC provided the following list of allowable activities:

- Printing of additional ballots and envelopes for potential higher levels of absentee or vote by mail processes
- Voter Registration List actions to improve the accuracy and currency of registrant addresses
- Upgrades to statewide or local databases to allow for online absentee or mail ballot requests or change of address
- Additional mailing and postage costs, including ballot tracking software
- Acquisition of additional voting equipment, including high speed or central count tabulators and hardware and software associated with signature comparison of returned absentee or mail ballots
- Installation and security for absentee or mail drop-boxes
- Temporary elections office staffing
- Cleaning supplies and protective masks and equipment for staff and poll workers in early voting, vote center, or election day polling places
- Overtime salary and benefit costs for elections staff and poll workers
- Training of poll workers on sanitization procedures for in-person voting
- Public communication of changes in registration, ballot request options, or voting procedures, including information on coronavirus precautions being implemented during the voting process.
- Mailings to inform the public on changes or determination of procedures of coronavirus precautions, options in voting, and other voting information.
- Pre- and post-election deep cleaning of polling places
- Leasing of new polling places when existing sites must be closed
- Additional laptops and mobile IT equipment
- Additional automated letter opening equipment

States could also propose additional activities, but any such activities had to be directly in response to the pandemic. Most states will provide the funds to local election jurisdictions, which will identify the specific needs resulting from the pandemic. To date, the needs identified generally result from much higher levels of voting by mail than anticipated. Over 70% of the states specifically mentioned using the funds to cover higher costs to print, mail, and process mail-in ballots. About 75% will also use the funds to provide personal protective equipment to poll workers and to staff who will process mail-in ballots. States that already have high percentages of mail-in ballots anticipate spending the funds on additional office space for processing mail-in ballots to ensure staff and others can maintain physical distance during processing and for personal protective gear.

The funds can only be used for costs associated with the pandemic during this election season. There are Presidential and Congressional primaries that took place or will take place in advance of the general election on which states may expend funds in response to the pandemic. States must report to EAC on how they used the funds within 20 days of each primary and after the general election. EAC established an on-line process for submitting the reports and is posting them on the EAC website when states submit them.

To date, we have received 20 day reports from the following states:

District of Columbia, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland (2), New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Idaho, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, Wisconsin (2). All required reports were on time and turned around to Congress three days after the states' due date.

Finally, states cannot spend the federal funds for any costs incurred outside of the 2020 federal election cycle. Any funds remaining unexpended after December 31, 2020 must be returned to the U.S. Treasury. States will submit a Federal Financial Report by February 28, 2021 that EAC will use to determine the unexpended amount that will be returned. States are required to match twenty percent of the amount awarded and incur costs to meet that amount by March 27, 2022. Expenditures being claimed as match must be for costs resulting from the effect of the pandemic on federal elections. American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands are exempt from the match requirement.

EAC maintains a webpage for its CARES Act grants at: <https://www.eac.gov/payments-and-grants/2020-cares-act-grants>. State request letters, reports and guidance related to the grant are posted there.

State Allocation Chart CARES Act Funds

State	Federal Share	State Share	Total
Alabama	\$6,498,674	\$1,299,735	\$7,798,409
Alaska	\$3,000,000	\$600,000	\$3,600,000
American Samoa	\$600,000	N/A	\$600,000
Arizona	\$7,874,848	\$1,574,970	\$9,449,817
Arkansas	\$4,719,034	\$943,807	\$5,662,841
California	\$36,485,465	\$7,297,093	\$43,782,557
Colorado	\$6,691,472	\$1,338,294	\$8,029,766
Connecticut	\$5,400,677	\$1,080,135	\$6,480,813
District of Columbia	\$3,000,000	\$600,000	\$3,600,000
Delaware	\$3,000,000	\$600,000	\$3,600,000
Florida	\$20,253,853	\$4,050,771	\$24,304,624
Georgia	\$10,875,912	\$2,175,182	\$13,051,095
Guam	\$600,000	N/A	\$600,000
Hawaii	\$3,303,102	\$660,620	\$3,963,722
Idaho	\$3,404,276	\$680,855	\$4,085,132
Illinois	\$13,966,097	\$2,793,219	\$16,759,317
Indiana	\$8,013,610	\$1,602,722	\$9,616,332
Iowa	\$4,859,545	\$971,909	\$5,831,455
Kansas	\$4,622,500	\$924,500	\$5,547,001
Kentucky	\$6,090,061	\$1,218,012	\$7,308,073
Louisiana	\$6,212,616	\$1,242,523	\$7,455,139
Maine	\$3,299,827	\$659,965	\$3,959,792
Maryland	\$7,452,501	\$1,490,500	\$8,943,002
Massachusetts	\$8,325,918	\$1,665,184	\$9,991,102
Michigan	\$11,299,561	\$2,259,912	\$13,559,473
Minnesota	\$6,958,233	\$1,391,647	\$8,349,879
Mississippi	\$4,728,037	\$945,607	\$5,673,644
Missouri	\$7,628,763	\$1,525,753	\$9,154,515
Montana	\$3,000,000	\$600,000	\$3,600,000
Nebraska	\$3,686,252	\$737,250	\$4,423,502
Nevada	\$4,510,707	\$902,141	\$5,412,848
New Hampshire	\$3,269,494	\$653,899	\$3,923,393
New Jersey	\$10,296,913	\$2,059,383	\$12,356,295
New Mexico	\$3,900,113	\$780,023	\$4,680,136
New York	\$20,567,088	\$4,113,418	\$24,680,506
North Carolina	\$10,947,139	\$2,189,428	\$13,136,567
North Dakota	\$3,000,000	\$600,000	\$3,600,000
Northern Mariana Islands	\$600,000	N/A	\$600,000

Ohio	\$12,861,311	\$2,572,262	\$15,433,573
Oklahoma	\$5,480,361	\$1,096,072	\$6,576,433
Oregon	\$5,656,663	\$1,131,333	\$6,787,996
Pennsylvania	\$14,223,603	\$2,844,721	\$17,068,323
Puerto Rico	\$3,881,359	\$776,272	\$4,657,630
Rhode Island	\$3,022,037	\$604,407	\$3,626,444
South Carolina	\$6,372,386	\$1,274,477	\$7,646,863
South Dakota	\$3,000,000	\$600,000	\$3,600,000
Tennessee	\$7,982,281	\$1,596,456	\$9,578,737
Texas	\$24,546,841	\$4,909,368	\$29,456,209
Utah	\$4,334,715	\$866,943	\$5,201,657
Vermont	\$3,000,000	\$600,000	\$3,600,000
Virgin Islands	\$600,000	N/A	\$600,000
Virginia	\$9,582,344	\$1,916,469	\$11,498,813
Washington	\$8,343,778	\$1,668,756	\$10,012,534
West Virginia	\$3,807,691	\$761,538	\$4,569,229
Wisconsin	\$7,362,345	\$1,472,469	\$8,834,814
Wyoming	\$3,000,000	\$600,000	\$3,600,000
Totals	\$400,000,000	\$79,520,000	\$479,520,000

Planned State Usage of CARES Act Funds As Reported in State Funding Request Letters

State	CARES Request Letter Anticipated Usage
Alabama	Alabama is preparing for increased election costs because of absentee voting, and will require perpetual sanitization of polling places, and pay poll workers more for the hazard that they incur.
Alaska	Alaska will use the funds to prepare for the coronavirus by purchasing sanitizing supplies and working to expand opportunities for safe and secure voting.
American Samoa	American Samoa will implement greater virus protection with hand sanitizer, face masks, cleaning work environments and polling places, public awareness, and provide workers with best available up-to-date information regarding COVID-19.
Arizona	Arizona is addressing the effects of COVID on the election by identifying internal priorities for expenditure of grant funds to address their immediate election needs, giving subgrants to local counties for printing mailing and postage for ballots and funding for protection masks, soliciting input from stakeholders on ways to ensure voters of safety, and directing public education initiatives to keep voters well-informed of precautionary measures the state has implemented.
Arkansas	Arkansas plans to print more absentee ballots and envelopes, postage, additional machinery for ballot processing, cleaning supplies and protective equipment for poll workers, compensation for any additional local election officials, costs associated with the relocation or addition of polling places, and communication to notify Arkansans of changes due to COVID-19.
California	California will use the funds to expand vote-by-mail, expand early opportunities to vote, maximize curbside access, increase the number of ballot drop boxes, encourage voters to register on the website, expand the vote by mail tracking tool, and provide social distancing guidance when assisting voters.
Colorado	Colorado is planning to hire a greater number of election judges, increase the size of polling places to ensure compliance with social distancing, and purchase sanitizing supplies and various PPE to ensure the safety of voters and polling place workers
Connecticut	Connecticut will use the funds to print more absentee ballots and envelopes, buy postage, buy additional machinery for ballot processing, buy cleaning supplies and protective equipment for poll workers, compensate additional local election officials, relocate or add polling places and communicate with voters of any changes in the election process.
Delaware	Delaware will purchase cleaning materials, personal protective equipment for election officers, and additional absentee voting supplies.

District of Columbia	The District of Columbia will use the funds to print a greater number of absentee ballots, increase the staffers to handle the mailing receiving and processing of the vote by mail applications and ballots, maintain the registration list to facilitate greater vote by mail, acquire additional voting equipment to expand early vote centers with Ballot on Demand Printers, install security for absentee and mail drop-boxes, acquire additional voting equipment and hardware that sorts mail and signature comparison of returned absentee and mail ballots for processing, acquire laptops and other IT equipment needed to expand the BOE's telework component to support employee safety, and engage in a public relations campaign relating to COVID response with the election
Florida	Florida will use the funds to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of both election officials and voters, and provide for an accessible election
Georgia	Georgia will use the funds to procure additional cleaning supplies, protective masks, and other related equipment, hire additional staff for election day, clean the polling places constantly, produce publish and air a voter outreach campaign on measures being taken to ensure safety, purchase additional absentee voting materials, and lease new polling places more conducive to the new sanitization procedures for in-person voting.
Guam	Guam will use the funds to procure cleaning supplies, protective masks, and other related equipment for staff, poll workers, and for use at polling sites on election day; hire additional staff for election day for new sanitization procedures for in-person voting; conduct pre- and post-election day deep cleaning of polling places; produce/publish/air Voter Outreach/Educational Campaign to explain changes to the voting process as a response to the coronavirus and what precautions GEC is taking to ensure safety of the public; to provide assurance to voters that health and safety is top priority; purchase additional absentee voting materials and postage in anticipation of higher volume of absentee ballot requests; and, leasing of new polling places more conducive for new sanitization procedures for in-person voting.
Hawaii	Hawaii will use the funds for a public communications campaign to educate voters about changes in the voting process as a result of the pandemic ; facility expansion (e.g., larger and/or additional facilities for voter service centers, counting centers, places of deposit, and other activities associated with elections, including temporary and/or fixed structures with corresponding increased equipment, furniture, and staffing to address additional workload, social distancing, and cleaning); and cleaning, disinfecting, and associated health and safety measures (e.g., cleaning supplies, air filtration system, safety and security shields, machinery, personal protective equipment, and staff).
Idaho	Idaho plans to use the funds for online and traditional advertising campaigns related to COVID-19, higher costs with postage, increasing absentee ballot capacity, and timely processing.
Illinois	Illinois will make the funds available to local election officials. This will entail additional tabulating equipment to handle increase in vote by mail, increased staffing to handle the sending out and receiving of the applications and ballots, a greater number of supplies such as applications, ballots, envelopes, and increased postage costs.

Indiana	Indiana will use the funds to minimize direct contact among Hoosier voters and election staff, educating poll workers on sanitation best practices, and ensuring polling locations are supplied with the necessary personal protective equipment, all while maintaining the highest standard of election security. Funding will cover costs related to an increase in absentee ballots, including the cost of ballot printing and additional envelopes and postage, additional staff to support these absentee ballot mailing and counting functions, additional poll worker education that covers correct sanitization practices and training on election equipment disinfecting, supply staff with the necessary personal protective equipment (hand sanitizer, refillable dispenser bottles, disposable gloves, ear loop facemasks for staff, microfiber disinfectant cloths and spray bottles for voting machine sanitation). These materials will be distributed to counties. Indiana will incur media costs to advertise new election dates and voting guidelines.
Iowa	Iowa plans to use the funds to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus for the 2020 election cycle. They will purchase personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies and bolster absentee voting capacity.
Kansas	Kansas will spend the funds to procure personal protective equipment, buy postage to inform voters of options to cast ballots prior to election day, update procedures on polling place set-up with social distancing, and any other issues that arise.
Kentucky	Kentucky will use the funds to purchase additional supplies related to absentee voting; increase postage supplies; purchase additional equipment to handle an influx in absentee voting; increase personnel; and add sanitizing equipment and cleaning equipment to every polling place.
Louisiana	Louisiana will use the funds to increase absentee ballots, commissioner pay for additional early voting hours, purchase scanners, printers, software, and other equipment needed for the adjudication process, and communicate the notification of any change in polling locations. LA will also purchase PPE for all polling places.
Maine	Maine will use the funds to procure additional cleaning supplies, protective masks, and other related equipment, hire additional staff for election day, clean the polling places constantly, produce publish and air a voter outreach campaign on measures being taken to ensure safety, purchase additional absentee voting materials, and lease new polling places more conducive to the new sanitization procedures for in-person voting.
Maryland	Maryland is planning to use the funds to purchase PPE and cleaning supplies for staff and poll workers, and provide a greater degree of public communication for the changes. The election staff must telework, so the necessary technology will be purchased with the funds, and they will bolster their absentee ballot capacity substantially.
Massachusetts	Massachusetts will use the funds to expand vote by mail, printing more ballots and envelopes and postage. Municipalities will receive support with additional scanners and systems support. There will also be funds devoted towards communicating any changes in the voting system that take place.

Michigan	Michigan will use the funds to bolster vote by mail including absentee voting counting board tabulators.
Minnesota	Minnesota will use the funds for training auditors, election judges, and contracting vendors with a special eye towards the influx in absentee voting, as well as increasing the PPE at polling places
Mississippi	Mississippi is using the funds to ensure polling places are safe by providing PPE, but will give sub-grants to the local counties and precincts with funding for them to use as necessary in that locality.
Missouri	Missouri plans to spend the funds to provide the local election authorities with items that will help mitigate the spread of COVID such as absentee ballot boxes, gloves, masks, and other protective equipment for the poll workers, hand sanitizer and disinfectants and mandate social distancing. Additionally, they will provide grants to localities that will be specific to their individual needs
Montana	Montana will use the funds to print additional ballots, install security for absentee drop-boxes, staff temporary elections offices, purchase cleaning supplies and protective masks, provide overtime salaries, train poll workers, and add IT equipment and an automated letter opening device.
Nebraska	Nebraska will use the funds to print absentee ballots, increase the number of ballot drop boxes, increase cleaning supplies and equipment, increase compensation to local election officials, relocate polling places, and communicate all of the changes to voters.
Nevada	Nevada will use the funds to purchase additional supplies related to absentee voting, increase postage supplies, purchase additional equipment to handle an influx in absentee voting, and increase the amount of voting equipment.
New Hampshire	New Hampshire will use the funds to support local jurisdictions to send and process additional absentee ballots, to purchase personal protective equipment, and to get prepared for the state primary and general election.
New Jersey	New Jersey will use the funds to keep in-person voting as safe as possible with PPE, but will also increase its vote by mail capacity, which will require additional envelopes, ballots, and other related expenses.
New Mexico	New Mexico will use the funds to reach out to voters about the changes, protect the voters, poll workers and general public during the elections with PPE, and resolve all of the increased costs with an influx in absentee voting such as postage, additional staff, and new tabulating equipment.
New York	New York will use the funds to print more absentee ballots and envelopes, buy postage, buy additional machinery for ballot processing, buy cleaning supplies and protective equipment for poll workers, compensate additional local election officials, relocate or add polling places and communicate with voters of any changes in the election process.
North Carolina	North Carolina will use the funds for printing absentee ballots and envelopes, postage, additional machinery and software for ballot processing, costs associated with relocation of polling places, deep cleaning of polling places, cleaning supplies and protective equipment for precinct officials, voters and voting equipment, communication to notify voters of changes in the election process due to the pandemic, computer equipment to facilitate teleworking by elections staff, and compensation for additional election personnel to handle

	the increase in ballots returned by mail. These items will be distributed to counties based on documented needs resulting directly for the pandemic.
North Dakota	North Dakota will use the funds to reduce reliance on poll workers, purchase additional high speed ballot scanners, acquire on-site support from the state's election vendor, and enhance the development of incident planning and response capabilities.
Ohio	Ohio will use the funds to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID by assisting with costs incurred at the state and county levels related to changes to the 2020 Primary Election, as well as prepare for the 2020 General Election.
Oklahoma	Oklahoma plans to use the funds for the purchase of PPE for the workers, additional disinfectant and other related cleaning supplies, additional supplies and equipment both for the processing of absentee requests and voter absentee ballots
Oregon	Oregon already uses vote by mail, but will provide funding to county partners to purchase PPE, as well as additional laptops and mobile IT equipment, and automated letter opening equipment to reduce the number of election personnel needed so social distancing can be better observed.
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania will make the funds available to local election officials. This will entail additional tabulating equipment to handle increases in vote by mail, increased staffing to handle the sending out and receiving of the applications and ballots, a greater number of supplies such as applications, ballots, envelopes, and increased postage costs.
Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico will use the funds to assemble the necessary framework without risking further contagion. They will hire more employees, clean and disinfect more often with greater supplies, and purchase equipment necessary to implement the election.
Rhode Island	Rhode Island will purchase the equipment necessary for a greater amount of vote by mail, purchase PPE, and hire additional personnel because of high mail volume.
South Carolina	South Carolina will provide PPE as well as work with the Governor to ensure there is sufficient early voting and vote by mail capacity.
South Dakota	South Dakota is working to encourage the absentee vote-by-mail option, and increase outreach to update voters on changes.
Tennessee	Tennessee will use the funds to print more absentee ballots and envelopes, buy postage, buy additional machinery for ballot processing, buy cleaning supplies and protective equipment for poll workers, compensate additional local election officials, relocate or add polling places and communicate with voters of any changes in the election process.
Texas	Texas will use the funds to provide sub-grants to counties to expend on activities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, for the 2020 Federal election cycle.
U.S. Virgin Islands	The Virgin Islands plans to have a plan of expenditure by June 1 st .

Utah	Utah will use the funds to expand vote-by-mail, expand early opportunities to vote, maximize curbside access, increase the number of ballot drop boxes, encourage voters to register on the website, expand the vote by mail tracking tool, and provide social distancing guidance when assisting voters.
Vermont	Vermont will make funds available to local election officials. This will entail additional tabulating equipment to handle increase in vote by mail, increased staffing to handle the sending out and receiving of the applications and ballots, a greater number of supplies such as applications, ballots, envelopes, and increased postage costs.
Virginia	Virginia will use the funds to accommodate an increase in vote by mail, increase the PPE, and increase staffing.
Washington	Washington will use the funding for additional staffing, facility rental, equipment needs, and PPE supplies.
West Virginia	West Virginia will train poll workers at a safe distance which will require additional educational events with smaller audiences. They will also engage in a broad communications strategy to update the voters on any changes
Wisconsin	Wisconsin will use the funds to support local and state federal election efforts to prepare and respond to coronavirus concerns, including procuring and distributing sanitation supplies to Wisconsin's 1850 municipalities and providing absentee ballot envelopes. Preparations will also include development of the statewide voter registration system and online absentee ballot request portal to incorporate intelligent barcodes and increase system capacities. And to account for additional costs to local election officials for printing absentee envelopes and ballots as well as postage costs.
Wyoming	Wyoming will use the funds for educational materials, absentee requests, voter registration forms, absentee ballots, absentee ballot envelopes, materials needed for appropriate social distancing, and hand sanitizer and other CDC recommendations