

EAC CARES Progress Narrative Report

Response ID:220 Data

1. EAC-CARES Progress Narrative Report Login

Please enter your userword and password to begin the CARES Funding Progress Narrative. If you require assistance or have any questions, please contact CARESFunding@eac.gov.

2. Not a Bot Verification

reCAPTCHA answered

3. EAC CARES Progress Narrative Report

1. State:

Enter the name of the state or territory that received the grant and is submitting this report.

Alaska

2. Grant Number:

Enter the grant agreement number from the notice of grant award.

AK20101CARES

3. Report:

November 23 after general election

4. DUNS/UEI:

Enter the recipient organization's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number or System for Award Management (SAM) extended DUNS Number or the Unique Entity Identifier.

5. EIN:

Enter the recipient organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) provided by the Internal Revenue Services.

6. Recipient Organization:

Enter the name of the recipient organization and address, including zip code.

Organization Name

Office Of The Lieutenant Governor Of Alaska

Street Address

Po Box 110015

City

Juneau

State

AK

Zip

99811

7. Progress Narrative:

Progress During Reporting Period

The CARES Act requires states to submit a report after each primary and general election that includes a “full accounting of the State’s uses of the payment and an explanation of how such uses allowed the State to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.” Please provide a narrative report that describes how you used the funds to address the pandemic, the challenges you faced in responding to it and how you are meeting the state match requirement. Describe the major issues you faced in dealing with the pandemic in the election cycle and how you made funds available to local jurisdictions. Complete the cost table below describing your major expenditures under the grant. Add additional cost areas as needed that do not fit into the other categories.

The State of Alaska, Division of Elections (division) is pleased to submit this narrative report to document Alaska's use of CARES Act funds for the 20-day General Election report.

The state's use of the CARES/Title I funds was consistent with the requirements to use the funds for preventing, preparing for, and responding to the coronavirus domestically or internationally. The state is currently providing match funds using FY20-21 Primary and General election unrestricted general funds. Full costs are still being reconciled as election expenditures are being settled. However, as of this point in the CARES Grant reporting period, funds were expended for the following activities:

VOTING PROCESSES

During this reporting period, CARES funds were expended to further build up inventory of absentee voting envelopes, ballots for absentee voting and pay for additional mailing costs. For the General Election, there were 135,723 absentee applications submitted. In comparison to the last General Election in the 2016 Presidential election, this represents a three-fold increase in demand. To fulfill the huge increase in by-mail requests, funds were expended to cover the cost of a mailing service to aid in the distribution of by-mail packets.

The increased demand for absentee voting added a significant cost to the administration of the election while still trying to maintain required in-person voting locations. As traditional polling place locations closed their doors due to the risk of COVID-19, funds were expended to change and notify the public of new temporary locations for in-person voting during the pandemic.

The two temporary absentee offices opened prior to the Primary Election were expanded to handle the influx of inquiries and absentee voting requests for the General Election. CARES funds were expended to pay the additional lease costs of these locations as well as install equipment to allow the offices to function. Additional space at regional elections offices were also procured with grant funds to allow for proper distancing during the review of materials for election certification.

PERSONNEL/STAFF

During this reporting period, CARES funds continued to pay the salary of Public Relations Manager who communicates with the public and media about safe elections practices during the pandemic. The Public Relations Manager designs communication content for print, digital and broadcasting that promotes and encourages safe voting options as well as precautions the Division is taking to keep the public safe.

CARES funds continued to pay for additional staffing for two expanded Absentee Voting Offices. Due to the pandemic, absentee voting for the General Election increased over three-fold in comparison to the last General Election in the 2016 Presidential election. The Absentee Office persevered to staff the office during challenging conditions with approximately 17 temporary personnel to process absentee voting documents.

Grant funds were expended to cover the cost of additional temporary regional office staff and state review board workers to review, process, and scan the additional load of absentee voting materials. The additional staff was also vital in helping respond to amplified levels of voter inquires about new voting processes and preparing outgoing absentee materials as well as PPE supplies.

Due to concerns of the pandemic, the division continued to fall short of in its recruitment of polling place workers for the General Election. The division's emergency pay increase enacted prior to the Primary Election, was maintained for the General Election. The pay increase will be covered with CARES funds. The report contains a small portion of the election worker pay and the final cost is still being collected.

The division also partnered with the Alaska National Guard to help with successful election day voting. For the Primary Election, National Guard was deployed in plain clothes to serve as regular poll workers. For the General Election, National Guard personnel was on stand-by to deploy to Alaska towns to set up voting stations if the town was in lockdown status and could not setup a polling place themselves.

SECURITY AND TRAINING

During this reporting period, CARES funds were expended to secure and alarm temporary space that the division procured to review election certification materials while following proper social distancing guidelines.

Regional Offices continued to utilize the virtual training program established before the Primary Election to train workers for the General Election. Due to travel restrictions and safety concerns surrounding COVID-19, the virtual training program was created to provide a safe training environment for election workers throughout the state.

COMMUNICATIONS

After to the Primary Election, the "Vote Safe 907" advertising campaign was continued to encourage safe voting options and deadlines for applying for by-mail voting for the General Election. The division partnered with Alaska Health and Social Services to coordinate consistent messaging and reiterate guidelines voters should follow to avoid the risk of contracting COVID-19. A specific challenge was communicating mask requirements at polling places because in addition to the division's recommendations, each town and building had their own requirements that differed from ours.

Grant funds also continued to pay for airtime on broadcast companies in the state running ads highlighting the safety of voting by-mail, early voting, and using PPE if voting in person during the pandemic.

SUPPLIES

Needless to say, it has been challenging to find and equip polling places and temporary office spaces in such a fundamentally different way. Grant funds continued to pay for supplies for the expanded absentee voting office as well as significant quantities of PPE supplies such as face shields, protective face masks, non-latex gloves, sneeze guards and other PPE for staff, poll workers and voters in all voting locations. Cleaning supplies were purchased to sanitize equipment and precinct locations in between elections and after voting.

CARES funds were also expended to purchase supplies and materials to assist with organizing and processing the influx of returned by-mail ballots returning to the regional offices.

The amounts in the reporting table are cumulative.

Total cumulative estimated federal expenditures to date = \$1,489,469.42

Total cumulative estimated state match expenditures to date = \$310,387.25

PROGRESS DURING REPORTING PERIOD

The CARES Act requires states to submit a report after each primary and general election that includes a “full accounting of the State’s uses of the payment and an explanation of how such uses allowed the State to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.” Please provide a narrative report that describes how you used the funds to address the pandemic, the challenges you faced in responding to it and how you are meeting the state match requirement. Describe the major issues you faced in dealing with the pandemic in the election cycle and how you made funds available to local jurisdictions. Complete the cost table below describing your major expenditures under the grant. Add additional cost areas as needed that do not fit into the other categories.

The final report is your opportunity to share the significant features of your activities and present information about the results you achieved. The document should be written as if the reader has no previous knowledge of your activities. EAC would like to share the final reports with all states. The report should cover the entire period of performance. Review and highlight all activities that occurred during the period of the grant. Include the table of expenditures with cumulative expenditures for the entire project period.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summarize your entire project and the lessons learned during its implementation. Include a review of your successes and an assessment of how your activities addressed the pandemic. What did you learn about dealing with and preparing for a major crisis during an election year that can be helpful to other states? Did you make permanent changes to your processes? Were there unexpected benefits? Shortfalls?

8. 2020 HAVA CARES GRANTS

Current Period Amount Expended and Unliquidated Obligations

PANDEMIC GRANT COST CATEGORIES

	Federal	Match
Voting Processes, including additional costs for printing and mailing ballots, ballot tracking software, high speed scanners and letter opening equipment, mail drop boxes, hardware and software associated with signature comparison of returned ballots	\$604,463.52	\$154,200.23
Staffing: Additional poll workers, election office staff diverted to pandemic response, temporary staff	\$268,263.97	\$67,218.35
Security and Training: Security for additional absentee or mail drop-boxes, pre- and post-election cleaning of polling places, staff and poll worker training on prevention processes	\$18,876.00	\$4,719.00
Communications: Notifying public of changes in registration, ballot request options, precautions or voting procedures)	\$21,768.00	\$5,442.00
Supplies: Additional laptops, mobile IT equipment, cleaning supplies, masks	\$576,097.93	\$78,807.67

If you need additional rows for the summary table, please upload an Excel document with the same layout.

4. Certification

Name and Contact of the authorized certifying official of the recipient.

First Name

Sharon

Last Name

Forrest

Title

Alaska Elections Administrative Officer

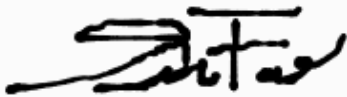
Phone Number

907-465-3049

Email Address

sharon.forrest@alaska.gov

2. Signature of Certifying Official:



Signature of: Sharon Forrest

5. Report Submitted to EAC

CARES Funding Progress Narrative Submission

Nov 20, 2020 18:43:26 Success: Email Sent to: sharon.forrest@alaska.gov