

FEDERAL FINANCIAL REPORT

(Follow form instructions)

1. Federal Agency and Organizational Element to Which Report is Submitted Election Assistance Commission				2. Federal Grant or Other Identifying Number Assigned by Federal Agency (To report multiple grants, use FFR Attachment) MN20101CARES			
3. Recipient Organization (Name and complete address including Zip code) Secretary Of State, Minnesota 100 Rev Martin Luther King Jr, Saint Paul, MN 551550001							
4a. DUNS Number	4b. EIN	5. Recipient Account Number or Identifying Number (To report multiple grants, use FFR Attachment)		6. Report Type	7. Basis of Accounting		
				<input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Annual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Final	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accrual		
8. Project/Grant Period (Month, Day, Year) From: March 28, 2020				9. Reporting Period End Date (Month, Day, Year) December 31, 2020			
To: December 31, 2020							
10. Transactions					Cumulative		
<i>(Use lines a-c for single or combined multiple grant reporting)</i>							
Federal Cash (To report multiple grants separately, also use FFR Attachment):							
a. Cash Receipts					\$6,958,233.00		
b. Cash Disbursements					\$5,835,588.06		
c. Cash on Hand (line a minus b)					\$1,122,644.94		
<i>(Use lines d-o for single grant reporting)</i>							
Federal Expenditures and Unobligated Balance:							
d. Total Federal funds authorized					\$6,958,233.00		
e. Federal share of expenditures					\$5,835,588.06		
f. Federal share of unliquidated obligations					\$0.00		
g. Total Federal share (sum of lines e and f)					\$5,835,588.06		
h. Unobligated balance of Federal funds (line d minus g)					\$1,122,644.94		
Recipient Share:							
i. Total recipient share required					\$1,393,965.78		
j. Recipient share of expenditures					\$1,295,286.97		
k. Remaining recipient share to be provided (line i minus j)					\$98,678.81		
Program Income:							
l. Total Federal share of program income earned					\$22,137.44		
m. Program income expended in accordance with the deduction alternative					\$0.00		
n. Program income expended in accordance with the addition alternative					\$0.00		
o. Unexpended program income (line l minus line m and line n)					\$22,137.44		
11. Indirect Expense	a. Type	b. Rate	c. Period From	Period To	d. Base	e. Amount Charged	f. Federal Share
g. Totals:					\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
12. Remarks: Attach any explanations deemed necessary or information required by Federal sponsoring agency in compliance with governing legislation: State Interest Earned: \$2318.78							
13. Certification: By signing this report, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the report is true, complete, and accurate, and the expenditures, disbursements and cash receipts are for the purposes and intent set forth in the award documents. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001)							
a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Authorized Certifying Official				c. Telephone (Area code, number, and extension)			
Black, Bert (Bibi)							
General Counsel				d. Email Address			
b. Signature of Authorized Certifying Official				e. Date Report Submitted (Month, Day, Year)			
Black, Bert (Bibi)				February 27, 2021			

Standard Form 425
OMB Approval Number: 4040-0014
Expiration Date: 02/28/2022

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 4040-0014. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: US Department of Health & Human Services, OS/OCIO/PRA, 200 Independence Ave, SW, Suite 336-E, Washington DC 20201. Attention: PRA Reports Clearance Officer

FEDERAL FINANCIAL REPORT

(Additional Page)

Federal Agency & Organization : Election Assistance Commission

Federal Grant ID : MN20101CARES

Recipient Organization : Secretary Of State, Minnesota
100 Rev Martin Luther King Jr, Saint Paul, MN 551550001

DUNS Number :

EIN :

Reporting Period End Date : December 31, 2020

Status : Report Certified/Pending Agency Approval

Remarks : State Interest Earned: \$2318.78
State Interest Expended: \$0
Program Income Earned: \$0
Program Income Earned Breakdown : Not Applicable
Program Income Expended: Not Applicable

Federal Agency Review

Reviewer Name :

Phone # :

Email :

Review Date :

Review Comments :

EAC Progress Report

Response ID:225 Data

1. Login

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

2. Verification

3. EAC Progress Report

1. State or Territory:

Minnesota

2. Grant Number:

MN20101CARES

3. Report:

CARES (Off-cycle report only due February 28, 2021)

4. Grant:

Please select only one.

CARES

5. Reporting Period Start Date

03/28/2020

6. Reporting Period End Date

12/31/2020

7. DUNS/UEI:

8. EIN:

9. Recipient Organization:

Organization Name

Office Of The Secretary Of State

Street Address

180 State Office Building

City

Saint Paul

State

MP

Zip

55155

4. Progress and Narrative

10. CARES Grant Specific:

Describe how you used the funds to address the pandemic.

Please see the detailed descriptions of the use of the funds throughout this progress report.

11. Describe the major issues you faced in dealing with the pandemic in the election cycle.

Please see the response to the question below on issues.

12. Describe in detail what happened during this reporting period and explain how you implemented the approved grant activities.

CARES Act Funds were provided for use only in addressing issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the 2020 federal elections. Minnesota held its presidential primary on March 3, 2021, before the pandemic emergency was declared and well before the CARES Act was enacted. Thus, the funds were only for use in the federal elections of August 10, 2020, the state primary, which included federal offices on the ballot, and the November 3, 2020 general election at which federal offices were on the ballot.

A total of \$6,930,610 was initially requested from the EAC, on April 14, 2020 (later increased to \$6,958,233 as additional funds were identified later in 2020). Those funds were transmitted to the Minnesota HAVA Account on April 20th and receipted in the state accounting system on April 21st. Minnesota state law requires legislative authorization to spend federal HAVA-related funds, including the CARES Act elections funds. Approval and authorization of this initial \$6,930,610 was provided as part of Laws 2020, chapter 77, effective May 13, 2020. In that same bill, the Legislature appropriated the then - complete state match of \$1,386,122. The additional CARES Act funds of \$27,623 that were identified and requested were never approved, authorized, or appropriated by the Legislature and will be returned.

In the time available to the state from May 13, 2020 through the November 3, 2020 general election, these funds were used in several major projects:

- A public campaign to inform voters of absentee balloting options, which would help limit the number of voters in polling places where a concentration of persons could spread the coronavirus and lead to spikes in infections after each of these elections and limit the risks to polling place workers.
- All voters who had not already requested absentee ballots were mailed absentee ballot applications in an effort to reduce the number of persons voting in person at the polls.
- The Office created a grant program for county, city, and municipal election administrators to assist in providing safe polling

places, process absentee ballots, and other election administration duties, including but not limited to: voter outreach materials, the cost of envelopes and postage for additional absentee ballot, staff overtime, additional temporary staff and election judge salaries, technology resources for additional temporary staff, voting tabulation equipment, and disinfecting/sanitizing supplies and materials.

- The purchase and distribution of PPE supplies and materials for use in polling places and in-person absentee balloting, such as disposable masks, face shields, hand sanitizer and stands for these items so that transmission was not increased by hand to hand sharing of the containers.
- Supplementing central office personnel responding to telephonic inquiries from voters about responses to COVID during the election, including absentee balloting options.

Through December 31, 2020, there had been reported expenses of a total of \$7,130,775.03, of which \$5,835,588.06 was Federal money and the remaining \$1,295,186.97 was expended from the state match. This number is lower than previously reported due to the return of funds not expended by local jurisdictions, after the November 23, 2020 report.

13. Provide a timeline and description of project activities funded to meet HAVA requirements. Provide an analysis of how such activities conform to the submitted State Plan or Program Narrative as applicable.

After the Minnesota Legislature authorized the expenditures and match funds for the CARES Act funds effective May 13, 2020, the Office of the Secretary of State (OSS) proceeded on several tracks.

A large portion of the grant and state match, 60%, was set aside for local spending. A working group devised a formula for the grants, and counties commenced requesting the grants on July 5, 2020. Grants continued to be requested through the election period. The grant expenditures were made for:

- o A. Increases in Voting Process Expenses and Items Related to the Pandemic
 1. Printing and Mailing Ballots
 2. High Speed Scanners and Letter Opening Equipment
 3. Hardware and Software Associated with Absentee Ballot Administration
- o B. Increased Staffing Needs
 1. Additional Poll Workers
 2. Election Office Staff Diverted to Pandemic Response
 3. Temporary Staff
- o C. Security and Training
 1. Security for Additional Absentee Materials
 2. Pre- and Post-Election Cleaning of Polling Places
 3. Staff and Poll Worker Training on COVID-19 Prevention Processes
- o D. Communications
 1. Notifying Public of Changes in Registration, Ballot Request Options, Precautions, or Voting Procedures
- o E. Supplies
 1. Additional Supplies Required in the Polling Place, Absentee Voting Locations, Cleaning Supplies, Masks, or Other Election-Related and Pandemic Related Supplies

On a parallel track, PPE was purchased by the state with a portion of the remaining 40% of the funds. A communications plan was devised and was implemented for the general election. The agreement with the communications agency was entered into on September 15, 2020 and a mailing of absentee ballot applications as well as announcements on voting during the pandemic went out to the public via broadcast and social media, through Election Day. OSS added call center staff to address questions from voters on how and where to vote safely.

Major areas of OSS expenditures included:

Staffing: Additional OSS temporary call center staff to answer voter questions, rental of equipment to support these workers, and necessary overtime payments:

- \$26,335.92 expended

Communications: Communication efforts included the following:

- Media communication efforts to voters to help facilitate the increase in absentee voting as well as general communication efforts on options for safely voting in a pandemic;
- Polling place materials to support social distancing and COVID-19 safety in the polling place;
- Outreach materials to help voters understand their options for safely voting during a pandemic including a mailing to voters to facilitate the increase in absentee voting;
- \$2,155,800.20 expended

Polling Place Supplies: Procurement at the state level of hard-to acquire supplies for polling place safety. The OSS, working with the Department of Administration, procured and distributed for polling places:

- 53,700 KN95 masks
- 360,000 surgical-style disposable masks
- 15,900 face shields
- 9,200 packs of alcohol wipes (nearly a half a million individual wipes)
- 9,200 bottles of disinfectant
- 8,500 gallons of hand sanitizer
- 6,220 sanitization stations
- \$444,053.61 expended

Translation Work: Cost to translate educational and communication materials:

- \$3,074.00 expended.

14. Describe any significant changes to your program during the course of the project, or if the project was implemented differently than described in your original State Plan or Program Narrative.

Otherwise enter - no significant changes during this period.

The purposes listed in the original request as well as those defined by the Legislature were, substantially, the purposes for which the expenditures were made, and there were no significant changes or differences.

15. Describe any favorable developments which enabled meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

Otherwise enter N/A.

Additional resources were received from private interests, and the use of those resources was approved by Minnesota Management and Budget, pursuant to state statute, for elections purposes. These resources supplemented the CARES Act funds and were used primarily in the areas of communications and PPE. Also, there were purchases made at lower cost using volume purchasing through the State Emergency Operations Center, a unit of Minnesota's Department of Public Safety.

16. Report on the number and type of articles of voting equipment obtained with the funds. Include the amount expended on the expenditure table.

Otherwise enter - No articles of voting equipment purchased during this period.

While OSS did not expend CARES Act funds for voting equipment, local units of government receiving these funds did purchase voting equipment as follows:

- Douglas County: 1 DS450 ES&S tabulating machine, \$ 60,005.00

- Houston County Electronic Roster equipment, \$ 12,895.00
- Kandiyohi County, Electronic Roster equipment, \$ 101,054.04
- Lac Qui Parle County, Electronic Roster equipment, \$ 9,047.50
- Meeker County, 1 DS 200 ES&S tabulating machine, \$ 5,260.00
- Rice County, 1 DS 450 and Electronic Roster equipment, \$ 57,909.00
- Sibley County, Electronic Roster equipment, \$ 8,960.00

Total \$255,130.54

17. Provide a description of any security training conducted and the number of participants.

Otherwise enter - no security training conducted during this period.

No security training conducted using these funds during this period.

18. Subgrants (if applicable):

Describe how you made funds available to local jurisdictions.

Provide a description of the major categories of subgrant activities local voting districts will accomplish with the funds.

Otherwise enter N/A.

Minnesota Elections CARES Act funds were made available to all 87 counties and their local jurisdictions through a grant application process. A work group including members of the OSS staff, county representatives, and city representatives was tasked with determining a fair, equitable, and efficient way to allocate these funds to local governments through a grant-making process.

The work group focused on allocation with these goals in mind:

- Getting funds to counties/cities/towns directly to help with costs
- Minimizing the complexity of the disbursement/reimbursement process
- Sending out funds with direction on how to use and how to report back on use (and 20% match), avoiding a "reimbursement" process
- Ensuring the state, counties, cities, and towns benefits equitably

The work group recommended, and the OSS adopted, a grant-making structure that provided a block-grant to counties, with the instruction that counties work with their municipalities to determine a fair, equitable, and mutually agreeable method for allocating the funds within the county and between municipalities. However, if a county and its encompassed municipalities cannot come to a mutual agreement, a default allocation mechanism is provided. Both the distribution of funds to counties, and the default municipality distribution, are based on a formula using various election-related factors.

Of the \$4.99 million allocated to the counties (and cities and townships), the distribution to counties, cities, and townships was based on the following per-unit rates:

- 2.5% is based on base allocation equally divided to each county = \$1,433.9193
- 25.0% based on 2018 voter (Primary and General) count = \$0.35 per voter
- 20.0% based on 2018 General Absentee Voter count = \$1.7793 per voter
- 20.0% is based on May 1 registered voter counts = \$0.2942 per voter
- 20.0% is based on number of polling places = \$347.6168 per polling place
- 2.5% is based on 2018 population = \$0.0222 per person
- Precinct-based allocations equate to \$166.2221 per polling place precinct and \$27.3321 per mail ballot precinct
- o 10.0% is based on number of total precincts = \$121.4121 per precinct
- o 2.5% is based on number of polling place precincts = \$44.8100 additional per polling place precinct
- o 2.5% is based on number of mail ballot precincts = reduction of \$94.08 per mail ballot polling place

This formula resulted in a range of county block grants of \$5,266.62 to \$1,116,803.11, with the median at \$24,831.29 and average at \$57,356.77.

Applications were processed as they were received in an effort to respond quickly and efficiently to the emergency needs of election administrators during a pandemic.

Counties and local governments expended their grants on:

o A. Increases in Voting Process Expenses and Items Related to the Pandemic

1. Printing and Mailing Ballots
2. High Speed Scanners and Letter Opening Equipment
3. Hardware and Software Associated with Absentee Ballot Administration

o B. Increased Staffing Needs

1. Additional Poll Workers
2. Election Office Staff Diverted to Pandemic Response
3. Temporary Staff

o C. Security and Training

1. Security for Additional Absentee Materials
2. Pre- and Post-Election Cleaning of Polling Places
3. Staff and Poll Worker Training on COVID-19 Prevention Processes

o D. Communications

1. Notifying Public of Changes in Registration, Ballot Request Options, Precautions, or Voting Procedures

o E. Supplies

1. Additional Supplies Required in the Polling Place, Absentee Voting Locations, Cleaning Supplies, Masks, or Other Election-Related and Pandemic Related Supplies.

19. Match (if applicable):

Describe how you are meeting the matching requirement.

Otherwise enter - match not required.

The complete state match for the initially requested CARES Act funds was provided by the Minnesota Legislature in Laws 2000, Chapter 77, section 4, subd. 2 in the amount of \$1,386,122, which is the entire match amount required. The additional \$27,623 in funds identified later in 2020 were requested but the Legislature did not approve, authorize, or appropriate them, nor the additional state match for them, and those federal funds will be returned.

20. Issues Encountered:

Describe all major issues that arose during the implementation of the project and the reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate. Address each issue separately in its own section, and describe whether and how the issues were resolved. Also, briefly discuss the implications of any unresolved issues or concerns.

Otherwise enter - no issues encountered.

There were logistical issues with a significant portion of the OSS staff working remotely. Communication and coordination of work were at times, challenging. In addition, OSS staff needed to coordinate with other entities that the OSS has not traditionally had a relationship with (the MN Department of Health being one example). The OSS had to develop guidance based on working with these other entities in areas the OSS had never previously had to address (what to do if a voter refuses to wear a mask; best practices for socially distancing in a polling location). At various times during the election cycle election

officials either came down with COVID-19 or were exposed and had to quarantine.

The usual paradigm of the majority of voters voting at a polling place rather than by mail shifted and this meant a shift in the workload at the local level and with the OSS in making sure the materials and guides were updated and that the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) was able to handle the strain. The volume of phone calls and emails from the public (and from counties) increased significantly and at times became overwhelming. Much of this was due to the changes necessary to address the pandemic.

Other implementation issues included the changing recommendations and legal landscape around COVID-19 mitigation/safety measures. Also, there were issues with the supply chain early on that made procurement of certain PPE items such as hand sanitizer, hard surface cleaner, and other items difficult. Negotiating the purchasing infrastructure at the state level was also somewhat challenging. The OSS had to reach agreement with local government on the amount of the grants to local units. Crafting effective message to the public was also a difficult task. The OSS worked with the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to address these procurement issues.

Ultimately, these challenges were overcome and Minnesota effectively used these funds as shown by the exceptional, modern-day record turnout of voters. Minnesota led the nation in voter turnout with nearly 80% of the Voting Eligible Population participating in the 2020 general election. Of those voters, 58% voted by absentee ballot, and only 42% voted at the polls. With about 3000 voting locations statewide, that means the number of in-person election day voters decreased from just over 1000 voter per location over the course of a 13-hour voting day (7 AM to 8 PM) to just over 400 in-person voters. This was a major victory in keeping those who did show up in person safer from COVID-19 spread.

21. Upcoming Activities:

Provide a timeline and description of upcoming activities.

CARES Act funds were available only for addressing COVID-19 issues through the 2020 federal election cycle, and so there are no future activities except for the winding up of the grant, return of refunded postage from USPS and future earned interest.

5. Expenditures

22. Current Period Amount Expended and Unliquidated Obligations

CARES COST CATEGORIES

	Federal	Match
Voting Processes:	\$906,793.75	\$207,668.22
Staffing:	\$26,335.92	
Security and Training:		
Communications:	\$151.51	\$815,660.58
Supplies:	\$364,876.72	\$68,645.29
Total	\$5,835,588.06	\$1,295,186.97
Others (describe) Grants to local units of government conducting elections	\$4,299,540.05	\$203,212.88
Others (describe) Other services	\$3,754.40	
Others (describe) Network services	\$841.48	
Others (describe) Printing	\$233,294.23	

6. Certification

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

First Name

Bert

Last Name

Black

Title

General Counsel

Phone Number

Email Address

Signature of Certifying Official:



Signature of: Bert (Bibi) Black

7. Report Submitted to EAC



Thank you, your progress report has been submitted to EAC. Please keep the PDF download of your submission as grant record.