

EAC CARES Progress Narrative Report

Response ID:67 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.

South Carolina

2. Grant Number:

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

SC20101CARES

3. Report:

20 days after primary

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

South Carolina Elections Commission

Street Address

1122 Lady Street, Suite 500

City

Columbia

State

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.

As the state's chief election agency, the State Election Commission (SEC) is charged by law with supervising the conduct of voter registration and elections throughout the State. This includes ensuring county boards of voter registration and elections comply with federal law, state law, and SEC policies and procedures with regards to voter registration and elections. The SEC also maintains the statewide voter registration system, approves and supports the statewide voting system, conducts a training and certification program for local election officials, conducts candidate filing, and provides a candidate tracking system.

In early March 2020 as COVID-19 began to spread across South Carolina and the country, we became concerned about the safe conduct of the June Primaries, November General Election and all other elections scheduled for 2020. The main issue was that our elections, as prescribed by law, require large numbers of people to congregate in one place – something that everyone was being asked not to do by public safety and health officials. Compounding the issue was the fact that a large percentage of the state's poll managers fall into high risk categories, which we anticipated would lead to a deficit in the number of managers needed to staff polling places. We also anticipated county election officials would likely experience issues with the availability of polling places as well as securing alternative polling places. We found it likely that some facilities (schools, churches, etc.) would decline to continue to be used as polling places. Furthermore, we expected that voters' concerns over visiting polling places amid the pandemic would lead to a significant increase in absentee voting by mail.

No provision of state law provided the SEC with emergency powers with regards to the conduct of elections. The SEC would have to work with the current rules unless ordered to do otherwise by some competent legal authority. In March, the SEC raised these issues with the Governor of South Carolina and the South Carolina General Assembly. On May 13, just 27 days prior to the June 9 Statewide Primaries, Governor McMaster signed into law legislation passed by the General Assembly authorizing all South Carolina voters to vote absentee in all elections through June 30. On May 25, just 15 days prior to the June 9 Primaries, a U.S. District Court judge issued an order suspending the witness signature requirement for absentee by mail ballots. The expansion of the reasons to vote absentee and the relaxing of the witness signature requirement added to the high volume of absentee by mail voting we were seeing before the changes. All this led to more than three times more absentee voters in the Statewide Primary than the previous record for a statewide primary.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the SEC's goal has been to make polling places as safe as possible for voters, poll managers and county election officials; help county election officials recruit poll managers and secure polling places; provide county election officials with the resources to efficiently and timely process the increased number of absentee by mail ballots; and to educate voters on their options for voting in elections during the pandemic. To those ends, the SEC made the following expenditures of HAVA CARES funding.

- COVID Signs to post at polling locations.
- Additional Absentee Envelopes due to increase in absentee voting.
- Business Reply Account set up to allow the no postage due return of ballots by the voter
- Blue Ballot Tote Bins for additional absentee locations
- Curbside Carts to provide for social distancing for curbside voting
- DS 200 Scanners to help process absentee ballots
- Ballot-Marking Devices (BMD) to meet increased demand for in-person absentee voting
- Thumb drives for additional scanners and BMDs

- Personal Protective Equipment and supplies to include Masks, Face Shields, Hand Sanitizer, Q-tips, Alcohol Wipes and Sneeze Guards
- String and Painters Tape to maintain Social Distancing
- Additional Pens

Unliquidated Reimbursable Obligations (Estimated Amounts)

- \$15.00 additional pay for COVID training. This expense will be reimbursed to the counties based on number of persons attending the training. Estimated Cost \$ 98,790.00
- \$15.00 additional pay per worker to work at the polls on Election Day will be based on the reimbursement requests from the County election offices. Estimated Cost \$376,920.00
- Costs to clean polling facilities after Election \$ 5000.00
- Surge protectors/Extension cords to maintain Social Distancing \$ 500.00
- Additional PPE Supplies \$5,000.00

FINAL PROGRESS NARRATIVE REPORT

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	\$1,313,744.30	\$328,435.80
Staffing: Additional poll workers, election office staff diverted to pandemic response, temporary staff		
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		
Communications: Notifying public of changes in registration, ballot request options, precautions or voting procedures)	\$51,042.17	\$12,760.54
Supplies: Additional laptops, mobile IT equipment, cleaning supplies, masks	\$119,683.10	\$704,598.89

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

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 3265-0020

4. Certification

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

First Name

Viola

Last Name

Robinson Faust

Title

Director of Administration and Finance

Phone Number

803 734-9069

Email Address

vfaust@elections.sc.gov

2. Signature of Certifying Official:

Viola Robinson Faust

Signature of: Viola Robinson Faust

5. Report Submitted to EAC



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

CARES Funding Progress Narrative Submission

Jun 29, 2020 13:04:15 Success: Email Sent to: vfaust@elections.sc.gov