**State of Alaska**

**Program and Budget Narrative**
**2020 HAVA Elections Security Grants**

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**State of Alaska**
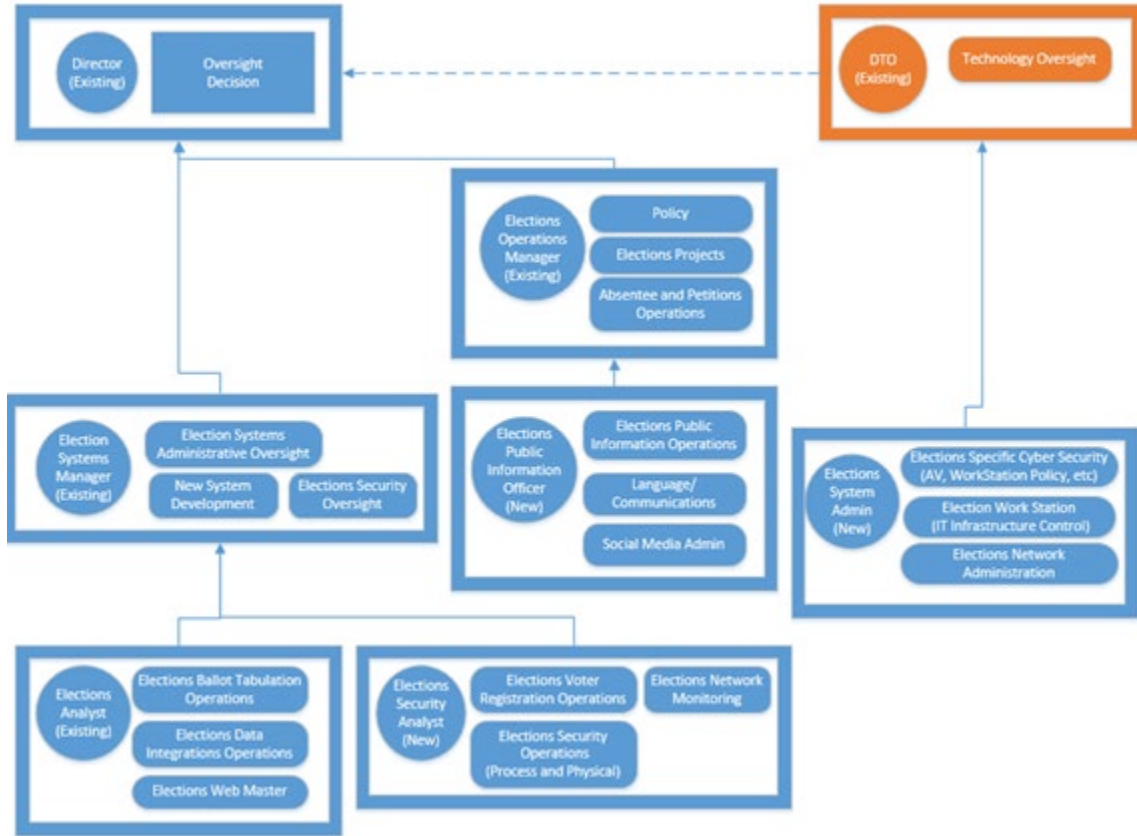**Division of Elections**
**2020 HAVA Elections Security Grant**

**Program Narrative:**

In Alaska, the Lieutenant Governor is the Chief Elections Official and responsible for all Statewide Elections as well as a series of other minor elections. Historically, the Division of Elections (DOE) is the principle agency tasked with the execution and operation of these elections. This is accomplished with assistance provided by the Governor's Office for a narrow set of common Information Technology related services. That support was primarily for the workstations of administrative staff. This has changed as the division has created and deployed more technology. In 2015, DOE launched its first online voter registration system. Since that date incidents including the cyber intrusions of 2016 pushed the realization that threats are increasing and evolving. In response to that realization, the need for DOE to collaborate with many on election security has become paramount. The public's perception of the integrity of elections has also been marred. While the primary sources of this are outside of the DOE's control, DOE recognizes the need to aggressively mitigate risks that could further undermine public confidence. To that end, the Division is launching a program to enhance our security posture, increase our inter-agency coordination and combat election related misinformation/disinformation.

The program envisioned would have two major projects. The first would be to improve the control the Division has over public information. This would include exercises related to both the internal content (which the division provides via its information services) as well as exercises related to the control of social media narratives that pertain to the administration of any given election. The second project would build out tools and staff positions to focus on improving election security and transparency in an iterative way. The first iteration being the analysis of the various forms of data that the division captures. That analysis would be done with a view to establishing baselines for normal behaviors and identifying anomalies. It is the Division's goal to synergize these projects, significantly enhancing the division's responsiveness and awareness.

The projects involved in this new program will include three new FTEs in staffing or consultant support. One position/consultant would assist the Division's Operations Manager with implementing a Social Media monitoring and response regimen. The position would be further leveraged to support the Language and Web content delivery teams. A second position/consultant would serve as a data analyst, building reports and monitoring the various types of data that the division receives. This position would be responsible to build out the various baseline and anomaly detection mechanisms. A third position/consultant would support the IT group specifically related to elections related cyber security tasks. This would include drafting machine-based policies that restrict usage, configuring and monitoring firewall activity and various network administration tasks.

Funds related to this program will also be used for other election related security tasks including: Cyber security evaluations, physical security inspections, election worker training, elections security policy enforcement, public confidence building, and measures to improve election night reporting.

Director (Existing) — Oversight Decision

DTO (Existing) — Technology Oversight

Elections Operations Manager (Existing) — Policy; Elections Projects; Absentee and Petitions Operations

Election Systems Manager (Existing) — Election Systems Administrative Oversight; New System Development; Elections Security Oversight

Elections Public Information Officer (New) — Elections Public Information Operations; Language/Communications; Social Media Admin

Elections System Admin (New) — Elections Specific Cyber Security (AV, WorkStation Policy, etc); Election Work Station (IT Infrastructure Control); Elections Network Administration

Elections Analyst (Existing) — Elections Ballot Tabulation Operations; Elections Data Integrations Operations; Elections Web Master

Elections Security Analyst (New) — Elections Voter Registration Operations; Elections Network Monitoring; Elections Security Operations (Process and Physical)

**Budget Narrative**

This program is expected to last three years encompassing the Election cycles of 2020 and 2022. It is anticipated that the projects will have initial ramping costs and that the majority of contractual related costs will come in the off cycle year (2021).

If the results of the program are deemed beneficial, DOE hopes subsequent funding will be made available by either the State or the Federal Government for on-going operations.

Each of the positions/contracts funded in the budget are for a period of three years (anticipated to begin in July of 2020). The Information Officer would have an anticipated cost not to exceed $115,000 a year (Salary and Benefits). The Data Analyst would have a cost not to exceed 150,000 a year (Salary and Benefits).

It is expected that some hardware will be necessary. This includes the purchase of workstations, software and other miscellaneous items. This will not exceed $20.0 in Information Control and $40.0 in tools for data. We intended to expend funds related to equipment for physical security, including sensors and physical access keys and other items not to exceed$ 60.0.

Contracts will be created for consultancy work for public relations, policy and procedure creation, and IT support work not to exceed $450.0 for the information control operations.   Similar contracts/sub-grants will be created for support and development of network monitoring solutions, data modeling tools and reports not to exceed $900.0.   It is anticipated we will also have contracts related to auditing, security reviews and policy development not to exceed $225.0.

It is anticipated that trainings and certifications will be necessary for various staff.  These will not exceed $40.0 in any of their respective areas.

It is anticipated other costs including travel, conferences fees, supplies and such will exist.  These will not exceed $160.0 (over three years) for information control operations and not exceed $230.0 for data analysis operations.  The enforcement of security policy is the chief expense in this section of the budget as it includes travel for training the Division would provide to local jurisdictions and the auditing of the security practices of local jurisdictions using State systems.

**Focused Activities for the 2020 Election Cycle**

The two major arms of the division's plan will have the following steps completed in 2020:

1.) A public information officer will be brought on board with the Division.

    a. This individual will assist the division (potentially leveraging a PR firm) to extend its capacity and controls around information provided in the social media space.   This will include promoting voter registration, bilingual outreach as well as providing, general election information.

    b. This officer will also coordinate and conduct Election Awareness Campaigns centered on specific election themes.

        i. A campaign will be launched to raise public awareness of Election security preparedness, with the goal of improving Voter Confidence

        ii. A campaign will be launched to focus the public on reliable election information.

2.) A data analyst will be brought on board with the Division.

    a. The individual will develop, procure and learn tools related to cyber incident detection. (In 2020 most of this work will be setting up tools and procedures to monitor various elements of the division cyber posture).

    b. The data analyst will also be developing a comprehensive data model for the division (bringing together and coordinating data from various independent systems).

Both of these individuals we be employing tools and potentially having contractors assist them as the develop the Division's capacity.