

**2020 Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Election Security Grant Program Narrative**  
**State of Arkansas, Secretary of State**  
**Grant Agreement Number AR20101001**

The State of Arkansas has greatly benefitted from previous Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Election Security Grants which provided significant funding to a majority of Arkansas's counties to assist with purchases of new, voter-verified paper record election equipment.

The Arkansas Secretary of State, as the state's chief election official, proposes to utilize the 2020 HAVA grant allocation of \$5,011,991 under agreement number AR20101001, together with the state match of \$1,002,398, to improve the administration of elections for federal office by enhancing election technology and making election security improvements to the systems, equipment, and processes used in federal elections. General activities identified in this narrative and budget include: purchasing new, voter-verified paper record election machinery; upgrading election system equipment at the Secretary of State's office for election reporting, training, and disaster backup; upgrading software and hardware for election night reporting and voter registration; implementing a fully-integrated online voter registration system; and utilizing various technologies and assessments, such as multi-factor authentication, to address cyber vulnerabilities. Receiving and providing training, particularly in regard to cyber security, will also be a key component of grant funding.

Specifically, our program narrative and budget for the 2020 HAVA Election will be apportioned in six (6) categories, as follows:

- Voting Equipment Replacement and Upgrades
- Voting Registration Systems and Management
- Cyber Vulnerabilities
- Training
- Communication
- Other

Please find below brief descriptions of how grant funding, and state fund match, will be allocated among the above-referenced categories.

Voting Equipment Replacement and Upgrades

The State of Arkansas proposes to expend **\$3,240,195** for various purchases of new voting equipment. Of this amount, \$2,222,602 in federal funds and all of the state's 20 percent (20%) match requirement of \$1,002,398 will be utilized. Specific purchases are as follows:

1. Purchase new, voter-verified paper record election machinery for the remaining nine (9) counties in Arkansas that are currently utilizing antiquated equipment and have yet to receive state or federal funding for such purchases. The anticipated cost under this grant will be **\$690,195** and expenditures will occur prior to the 2020 November general election. This activity will complete purchases of new election equipment for all 75 counties begun with previous HAVA grants and augmented by state appropriations in 2019.
2. Purchase new, supplemental election equipment for counties on a matching basis. Some counties have expressed the need for additional equipment due to registered voter growth and the desire to replace aging equipment in the future. The Secretary of State will develop a



supplemental match program to begin approval of purchase requests from counties in years 2011-2024, or until funds are exhausted. The anticipated cost under this grant will be **\$2,250,000**. The Secretary of State will purchase equipment funded by the federal grant while counties will purchase equipment funded through their local match.

3. Recent severe weather events in Arkansas, in addition to the Covid-19 pandemic, illustrate the potential for election disruptions. Most counties do not have sufficient reserve equipment (nor does the state) to respond to these disasters or to significant equipment failure. The Secretary of State's Office will purchase a pool of election equipment for disaster response that can be deployed, immediately, to assist counties in the event of natural and environment disasters or mechanical failures. The equipment could also be used by training purposes when not needed. The anticipated cost under this grant will be approximately **\$300,000** and expenditures will occur prior to the 2020 November general election. Note: this cost estimate was based on the amount of equipment needed by the median sized Arkansas County based on voter registration.

The Secretary of State will purchase all equipment through its current vendor and maintain proper documentation for audit. Equipment purchased and retained by the state will be maintained and inventoried by the state. Equipment purchased on behalf of counties will be transferred to, maintained, and inventoried by the respective counties.

#### Voting Registration Systems and Management

The State of Arkansas proposes to expend **\$957,980** for various purchases of software, hardware, and internet services to improve voter registration systems in counties and in the Elections Department of the Secretary of State's Office. All expenditures will be made from federal funds. These purchases are as follows:

1. Accessibility of voter registration data is particularly problematic among Arkansas's rural counties due to the lack of secure and reliable internet services. The Secretary of State's Office will contract with an internet service provider to ensure safe and reliable internet connectivity to access voter registration data in all 75 counties. The one-time connection fee is anticipated to cost **\$132,980** and will be incurred prior to the 2020 November general election.
2. Arkansas is one of approximately ten states which does not have a fully-integrated on-line voter registration system. A recent Interim Study Proposal, sponsored by State Representative Justin Boyd, was well received by key state legislators. The anticipated cost under this grant will be **\$400,000** including a one-time design cost and three years of annual licensing and maintenance. Because this initiative will require legislative change, it is anticipated that initialization could not begin until July 1, 2021 with annual fees paid in years 2022-2024.
3. The Secretary of State's Elections Division must upgrade all hardware and software associated with voting registration data because it is near its end-of-life and is overdue for replacement. New software will help ensure that data is safely and securely stored and easily retrievable. The anticipated cost under this grant is **\$375,000** for both hardware replacement (\$200,000) and software upgrades (\$175,000) and expenses are proposed to be incurred before the 2020 November general election.
4. Purchase laptop computers for counties to provide for secured and reliable access to online voter registration records. The anticipated cost under this grant will be **\$50,000** and will likely be incurred after the 2020 November general election.

#### Cyber Vulnerabilities

The State of Arkansas proposes to expend **\$858,214** for various purchases of equipment and services to enhance cyber security measures at the state and county level. These purchases are as follows:



1. Provide multi-factor authentication for all county election officials (approximately 400 tokens) to ensure that all online communication is securely accessed through multi-factor authentication devices. The anticipated cost under this grant will be approximately \$72,254 and expenditures will be incurred prior to the 2020 November general election.
2. Ensure that poll locations and voting equipment storage sites are secure from cyber and environmental threats. Funding would be used to procure new and/or secure existing polling sites and storage areas for voting equipment. Security measures to restrict access to machinery and provide storage free from theft and environmental threats would allow counties to protect election equipment investments throughout the election process and for years to come. The anticipated cost under this grant is \$750,000. It is likely that some costs (perhaps half) could be incurred prior to the 2020 November general election.
3. Purchase and install software, such as Webroot, to provide a cybersecurity umbrella for elections activities. The anticipated cost under this grant to secure services would be approximately \$35,960 for three years of licensure. These costs would likely be incurred after the 2020 November general election.

#### Training (Under Cyber Vulnerabilities Budget Column)

The State of Arkansas proposes to expend \$150,000 for both attending and providing cyber security training to election officials. Approximately half of this amount will be expended by Secretary of State for staff training received from third-party vendors for information gathering and for train-the trainer delivery. The other half would be used to for training to be provided to county election official officials and to cover training costs incurred by Secretary of State staff providing, or contracting for, the training. Approximately one half of these costs would occur before the 2020 November general election with additional training costs expended in 2021-2022.

#### Communication

The State of Arkansas proposes to expend \$8,000 to build an online information web page regarding cybersecurity issues, election notifications, and emergency messaging concerning elections and provide for a web-based notification system to alert election officials regarding pertinent election-related information. These costs would likely occur before the 2020 November general election.

#### Other

There are several activities proposed under this grant, estimated to cost \$800,000, that have been classified as other which will enhance the state's federal election system. These activities include:

1. Replace the existing Election Night Reporting System in the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office to ensure that data uploads are received in a timely and secure manner. The current system is antiquated and requires a considerable amount of data manipulation. A new system would expedite results tabulation, reduce the potential for errors, and ensure that all data delivery is securely encrypted and accessed only by authorized officials. The anticipated cost for this new system is \$400,000. We would like for this activity to be undertaken prior to the 2020 November general election, pending ability to contract for, and receive services in a timely manner.
2. Contract with a third-party consultant to build an in-house system to allow for online UOCAVA voting. The estimated cost for this enhancement is \$400,000 and would likely be incurred in 2021.