



# Wisconsin Elections Commission

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## State of Wisconsin 2020 HAVA Election Security Grant Program Narrative

On December 20, 2019, President Donald J. Trump signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020 into law. The Act includes \$425 million in new Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds, made available to states to improve the administration of elections for Federal office, including to enhance technology and make election security improvements. On January 17, 2020, the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission (EAC) sent the State of Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) a notice of grant award announcing Wisconsin's portion of the Appropriations Act of 2020 of \$7,818,581 with a state match requirement of \$1,563,716 for a total of \$9,382,297. The WEC has successfully met our required state match for this grant.

In response, the WEC has developed a two-phase plan to utilize the new HAVA funds. The first phase includes spending necessary to address immediate election security needs prior to November 2020. The second phase involves reserving funds to address future security needs after November 2020.

### **Immediate Security Expenditure Needs**

Based on discussions with agency partners and clerk feedback, the Commission determined the most immediate expenditure needs are to assist our local election partners to improve their overall elections security posture as they prepare for the remainder of the 2020 election year and head into future election cycles.

### ***County Subgrant Program***

The Wisconsin Elections Commission has earmarked \$3.9M for the County Subgrant Program. The purpose of this subgrant is to make funds available to Wisconsin counties to help address 2020 election security needs. The intent is to allow counties to apply for subgrant funds on an "individual needs basis" instead of a one-size-fits-all approach. Funds may be used to make payments for activities that enhance election technology and make election security improvements, as authorized under sections 101, 103, and 104 of HAVA and under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116-93), which include personnel, equipment, and training costs associated with cyber vulnerabilities, physical security, voter registration systems and management, election auditing, staff training and communications. Because counties may have different election security needs, this subgrant is designed to allow counties to assess their unique security environment.

*Wisconsin Elections Commissioners*

Ann S. Jacobs, chair | Marge Bostelmann | Julie M. Glancey | Dean Knudson | Robert Spindell | Mark L. Thomsen

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Administrator  
Meagan Wolfe

### ***Renewal of Municipal Election Security Subgrant***

The Wisconsin Elections Commission has earmarked \$1,206,000 for the renewal of the Municipal Election Security Subgrant. The purpose of the local election security subgrant is to help improve overall election security statewide by providing cities, villages, and towns across the State of Wisconsin with federal election security funds to implement baseline security measures based on specific needs of the jurisdiction.

The Wisconsin Elections Commission requires all jurisdictions meet certain baseline security measures to receive subgrant funds which includes:

- 1) computer hardware and/or software to meet minimum security recommendations
- 2) Professional IT support
- 3) Security Training (cyber or physical)

### **Second Phase- Collecting Feedback, Long Term Needs, and Developing Needs**

While the immediate security needs are being implemented utilizing new HAVA funds, the Wisconsin Elections Commission will continue to monitor and evaluate future needs. The COVID-19 crisis demonstrated that unanticipated challenges could arise quickly and produce unexpected and urgent needs. The reserve of approximately \$2.7 million will allow Wisconsin to take advantage of new technologies and react to the unexpected. Having funds in reserve will ensure that the state is able to continue to address evolving security needs before and after the November 2020 Presidential Election.