

ELECTION OFFICIAL NEWS

Military and Overseas Voting

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Letter to State Chief Election Officials

Key leaders in the Department of Justice and the Department of Defense have sent a letter to the Chief Election Official of each state, territory, and the District of Columbia seeking continued cooperation in ensuring Uniformed Services members, their families, and U.S. citizens residing overseas have the opportunity to vote in the upcoming general election.

Officials in both Departments have been working closely to eliminate barriers to absentee voting and remedy ballot transit problems and delays. The FVAP and the Department of Justice support and encourage state-sponsored initiatives to enhance voting opportunities for absent military and overseas voters.

Remember: It is particularly important to allow at least 45 days ballot transit time for overseas ballots since many of our Uniformed Services personnel are deployed to combat areas or are serving in remote regions.

Major Points of Interest:

◆ Under *UOCAVA*, citizens who submitted a valid Federal Post Card Application ballot request should receive ballots for all elections for Federal office for two general election cycles. Local election officials should review all Voter Registration/Ballot Request Forms (Federal Post Card Application, FPCA, SF 76) received since November 3, 2004, to ensure that all eligible military and overseas

citizens receive ballots for the upcoming general election.

◆ States are urged to monitor and track the ballot mailing schedule to ensure that ballots are sent to military and overseas voters in enough time for voters to receive and return their ballot by the state deadline. Local election officials should track ballot mailings for military in the U.S., military overseas, and overseas citizens.

◆ Local election officials are encouraged to use expedited postal or courier methods to deliver absentee ballots to military and overseas voters, especially those in remote areas.

◆ FVAP has enhanced our Electronic Transmission Service (ETS). If a state currently does not allow emailing of voting materials but does allow faxing, local election officials may, with state approval, be able to send voting materials to ETS by fax and have them forwarded as email attachments to the voter. Voted ballots emailed to ETS can also be forwarded to the local election office as a fax to comply with state law. ETS' toll-free fax number is 800-368-8683 and its' email address is ets@fvap.ncr.gov. A guide for election officials covering the use of ETS' services may be found on the FVAP website in the Local Election Officials' section.

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Remember to check out the new, improved fvap.gov!

Go to <http://fvap.gov/for-election-officials/index.html> for election official resources!

Armed Forces Voters Week

The November 4, 2008 General Election is right around the corner! That means military Voting Assistance Officers (VAOs) around the world will be making their last push to get out absentee voting information to Uniformed Service members and their families before the election. These VAOs will be taking advantage of the 2008 Armed Forces Voters Week (AFVW), August 31—September 7, as the perfect opportunity to remind their soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines to vote absentee in the upcoming election.

AFVW is a great time for Uniformed Service members and their families to send in the Voter Registration/ Ballot Request Form to register to vote and request an absentee ballot for the General Election. During AFVW, VAOs will participate in many activities, including:

- ◆ Running registration and absentee ballot request drives to reach out to Service members and their voting-age dependents.
- ◆ Conducting workshops to train and assist fellow Service members in completing Registration/ Request Forms and to answer questions about voting absentee. VAOs will emphasize the importance of requesting an absentee ballot **early!**
- ◆ Placing posters in communal areas around base to remind voters of the upcoming election.
- ◆ Initiating voter outreach campaigns through installation newspapers and other internal media, such as closed-circuit television and Armed Forces Radio and Television Service stations.

Local Election Officials: Get ready for an increased volume of ballot requests from military voters during Armed Forces Voters Week!

FVAP Contact Information

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