



Department of Defense Federal Voting Assistance Program

11/14/2012



PSA on Armed Forces Network

Preparing for the 2012 Election

Voting is everyone's right. In close partnership with the Services and the States, **the Department has worked to ensure that Service members, their families, and overseas citizens are aware of their right to vote and have the tools and resources to receive, cast, and return an absentee ballot — from anywhere in the world.**

We have been proactive in providing a myriad of tools to ensure that voter assistance is available around the world.

Voting "Traffic"

- Our information-rich website has had over **21M visits** since November 2011, with 10.8M in September and October alone.
- As of September 30, Installation Voter Assistance Offices and unit voting assistance officers have helped more than **1.2M Service members** and more than **44,000 family members**.
- As of November 11, there have been more than **883,000 downloads** of voting registration and absentee ballot request materials from the FVAP website.
- We have sent nine email reminders to all Service members with a ".mil" address informing them of their right to vote and providing information on how to vote. **That's more than 18M emails sent.**
- Our Call Center, which operates 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., EST, Monday through Friday, providing phone, email, fax, and live chat assistance, experienced a **93% increase** in September, assisting more than 10,000 voters.
- FVAP staff and the FVAP Call Center handled a total of **54,201 requests** for assistance this year.

Media engagements include: Pentagon Press Conferences, Military Times Group, Stars and Stripes, Politico, NPR, WTOP, Federal News Radio, Fox News, CNN, MSNBC, CNBC, Examiner, International Herald Tribune, Washington Times, Military.com, and more!

We've conducted: Twitter Townhall, spouse blogger roundtable, media roundtable, and placed print and targeted online advertising to reach our target audiences.

PSAs on Armed Forces Network:

- Four times per day on six channels
- Twice a day on movie channel
- Voting spot airing approximately every 30 minutes on six channels

Weekly emails to all Service members with a ".mil" address. More than 18M sent!

Daily social media outreach on Facebook and Twitter



"Sticker" for sharing on Facebook and Twitter



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Installation Voter Assistance (IVA) Offices

The Services have designated 219 **Installation Voter Assistance (IVA) Offices** in well-advertised, fixed locations, collocated with existing offices in high traffic areas.

IVA Offices are also included in the administrative in-processing and out-processing activities of reporting, deploying, and detaching personnel.

To assist the Services with these requirements, **FVAP provides classroom and webinar training** and self-paced courses with handbooks and document templates. In 2012, FVAP staff conducted in-person training and assistance visits at 43 installations.

FVAP hosts monthly conference calls and semi-annual face-to-face meetings with the Service Voting

Action Officers to discuss IVA Office operations.

The Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General (DoDIG) reported they were not able to contact IVA Offices about 50% of the time. Since the report was released, FVAP, in coordination with the Services, has contacted and updated information for all IVA Offices.

In fact, **FVAP conducts weekly calls to all IVA Offices** to ensure accurate contact information.

In addition to IVA Offices, there are more than **13,000 Unit Voting Assistance Officers (VAOs)**. These peer-based VAOs are available to every unit, in every service, all over the world — even to those deployed in Afghanistan or on board ships.

DON'T MISS THE VOTE

DoD's Special Report Voting Page

Be absent but accounted for.

Choose your state below to register, request and access your absentee ballot.

Select State ▼ Start Now

FVAP.gov

Blogger Widget

Voting Assistance Efforts

In addition to facilitating implementation of the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act and working with the States, FVAP, the Services, and the Department of State have regularly informed Service members and overseas citizens of their voting rights and the absentee voting process throughout the 2012 election cycle.

These efforts include:

- Using Public Service Announcements, social media, and print media to inform voters.
- Producing and distributing voting awareness banners to military installations around the world.
- Engaging Flag and General Officers and Senior Enlisted Advisors to encourage senior leaders to increase awareness of Service members' rights to vote and motivate participation in the election.
- Using the Voting Assistance Officers network to increase awareness and encourage voting participation.
- Publishing voting notifications on Service members' Leave and Earnings Statements.
- Sponsoring voter registration drives at embassies and consulates, and installation exchanges, commissaries, and events.
- Providing voting awareness training to recruits.

Voting Emphasis Messages from Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey





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Steps the Department has taken to implement the MOVE Act include:

- Improved direct-to-the-voter communication and services; e.g., enhanced FVAP.gov with online wizards.
- Designated Installation Voter Assistance (IVA) Offices.
- Established and implemented procedures for collecting marked absentee ballots.
- Developed standards for data collection and reporting.
- Provided assistance and training to State and local election officials on the requirements of the MOVE Act; e.g., implementing the 45-day ballot delivery requirement.



Guided Training for Voting Assistance Officers and Local Election Officials

States that have enacted the Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act (UMOVA):

- California
- Colorado
- Hawaii
- Nevada
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Oklahoma
- Pennsylvania
- Utah
- Virginia
- District of Columbia

Federal and State Cooperation

The ability of a member of the Uniformed Services or overseas citizen to successfully cast a ballot is largely determined by State law. FVAP assists States and localities so they can better serve their military and overseas voters.

We provide State and local election officials with the information and tools needed to assist voters covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA).

FVAP Partners with States to:

- Provide expertise and best practice recommendations on policies and procedures that affect military and overseas voters.
- Consult on State legislative changes to absentee voting laws.
- Serve as an advocate for military and overseas voters to Chief Election Officials.
- Obtain accurate and up-to-date information on absentee voting rules, procedures, and deadlines.

Working with the Department of Justice (DOJ)

DOJ enforces UOCAVA. In 2012, DOJ has taken action against seven States and territories for failing to comply with the 45-day deadline. FVAP works with DOJ and the States to inform affected voters of legal remedies such as changes to ballot receipt deadlines and procedures.

- AL: Sent email to voters informing them of deadline extension and updated procedures.
- WI: Sent email to voters informing them of deadline extension.
- CA: Sent email to voters informing them of deadline extension and options for prepaid express return of voted ballots.
- GA: Sent email to voters informing them of deadline extension and procedures.
- MI: Sent email to voters informing them of deadline extension.
- U.S. Virgin Islands: Sent email to voters informing them of deadline extension.
- VT: Worked closely with the State Elections Division to ensure that all affected voters were contacted and informed of deadline extension.

(FVAP sent emails to Service members with a ".mil" address who have a home of record or residence in each respective State.)

The Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act (UMOVA)

FVAP, in coordination with the Uniform Law Commission (ULC), an independent group of legal experts from each State, encourages States to adopt a model uniform law on military and overseas voting. Adoption of UMOVA standardizes treatment of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB), and would extend MOVE Act protections to State and local elections. Universal adoption of UMOVA, therefore, would standardize and simplify the military and overseas voting process.

Expanded Training

FVAP provides a series of educational and reference materials for Service and Department of State Voting Assistance Officers and State and local election officials interested in learning more about the UOCAVA absentee voting process.

In Spring and early Summer 2012, FVAP rolled out interactive online training tools for both Voting Assistance Officers and State and local election officials.

These training resources represent a

significant expansion of previous FVAP training efforts.

Online training provides an effective means to connect with more voters and election officials while maximizing limited staff resources.

After a Federal judge ordered California to provide better training and procedures for local election officials, State officials agreed to make FVAP training materials mandatory for their local election officials to fulfill that judgment.