

# AN FVAP UPDATE

DECEMBER 2017



**FVAP.GOV**  
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## HOLIDAY WISHES FROM US TO YOU

As the holiday season swings into full gear we want to take the opportunity to say **Thank You**. We are very thankful to work with such wonderful election officials at the state and local level to support us and our voters. Our relationship with election officials makes us a stronger program and ensures all of our military and overseas voters have the help they need.

Have a safe, warm, and joyous holiday season! We look forward to working with you in the New Year!

## ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION SERVICE (ETS) IS CHANGING

FVAP initiated its Electronic Transmission Service (ETS) in the early 1990s to accommodate active duty personnel serving in Desert Storm/Shield who needed support faxing balloting materials to their respective election offices. Since then, FVAP continued to provide this service to deployed military members -- and all voters covered under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*.

The intent of ETS was to support the return of balloting materials to those jurisdictions that only permit fax transmissions (beyond regular mail). During the 2016 election cycle, FVAP received a large number of email requests from voters for transmission to jurisdictions that permit the return of materials via email. In those situations, the voters could have emailed their materials directly to their election office. There is no benefit or purpose for FVAP to be included in such a transaction, it is best handled between the voter and election office.



Due to the extremely high volume of ETS email requests in 2016, FVAP will strictly limit this service to email-to-fax conversion starting January 1, 2018.

The following changes will be made to ETS at that time:

- Voters whose states accept materials by email will be instructed to send those materials directly to their election officials via email and not use ETS
- FVAP will continue to provide ETS services for voters whose jurisdictions permit fax transmissions only for return of their election materials
- Voters attempting to fax materials will be encouraged to fax directly to their election office

Please be sure to audit your website or balloting materials to ensure these changes are reflected. You can find the revised Fax Cover Sheet for inclusion in any of your balloting materials or blank ballot delivery systems at [www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/TransmissionCoversheet.pdf](http://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/TransmissionCoversheet.pdf).

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact your state analyst, Nate Bacchus (nate.a.bacchus@fvap.gov) or Meghan Kelly (Meghan.kelly@fvap.gov).

## REQUESTING THE NEW FPCA & FWAB FORMS

As you may have heard by now, FVAP has updated the Federal Postcard Application (FPCA) and the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) for Service members, their eligible family members, and overseas citizens to use.

FVAP does not automatically send hard copies of the forms to election officials. Our quantities are extremely limited; however, if your office would like hard copies of these new forms, please let your State Analyst know and we will send them once they are printed. If you need the new forms sooner, you can download them from our website using the following links:

- Download the fillable FPCA at [www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/fpca.pdf](http://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/fpca.pdf)
- Download the fillable FWAB at [www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/fwab.pdf](http://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/fwab.pdf)
- The FPCA and FWAB can also be completed using an online assistant at [www.fvap.gov/military-voter/registration-ballots](http://www.fvap.gov/military-voter/registration-ballots)

Election officials should accept the new forms while also continuing to accept previous editions of the forms. While the forms include the required statement, "Previous editions are obsolete," it is in reference to Federal printing requirements through the General Services Administration (GSA) only and not related to voter use, or election official processing, of the forms. If an older form contains all the appropriate information to meet State requirements, please process the form.

UOCAVA requires FVAP to prescribe both standard forms, which are accepted by all States and territories in elections for federal office. Both forms require review and public comment every three years.

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## NEW RESEARCH: THE UOCAVA GAP

FVAP has released new research exploring the differences in voting behavior between active duty military (ADM) who live in their home voting jurisdiction and those that live either overseas or elsewhere stateside. A research note entitled "Measuring Obstacles to Voting for UOCAVA ADM: Introducing the UOCAVA Gap," expands on previous studies that outlined differences in participation rates between ADM voters and the civilian voting age population (CVAP), but isolates the impact of someone's absentee status to identify relative levels of interest and how it may influence overall participation. Effectively, this new data measure explores the percentage of ADM away from their home jurisdiction who would have voted, but may not have done so due to specific obstacles associated with absentee voting. Initial analysis of these data since 2010 shows that participation rates among UOCAVA ADM has remained stable over time despite fluctuations in non-UOCAVA participation rates.

To view the full research note and executive summary, please visit: [https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Reports/UOCAVAGapResearchNote\\_20171204\\_final.pdf](https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Reports/UOCAVAGapResearchNote_20171204_final.pdf)

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## FVAP CALL CENTER

As we head into the 2018 election cycle, we wanted to remind everyone that we offer customer assistance to both voters and election officials through our call center.

**Our call center is open Monday - Friday, 7:30am-4:00pm Eastern Standard Time.**

**Call us at 1-800-438-VOTE (8683) or email us at [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov).**

We look forward to hearing from you during the election cycle!