



DoD INSTRUCTION 1000.04

FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (FVAP)

Originating Component:	Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
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Approved by:	James N. Stewart, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Performing Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive (DoDD) 5124.02, this issuance: Establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for the implementation of FVAP in accordance with Executive Order (E.O.) 12642; Chapter 203 of Title 52, United States Code (U.S.C.) (also known and referred to in this issuance as the "Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)"); and Section 1566 of Title 10, U.S.C.

- Establishes policy and assigns responsibilities to implement installation voter assistance (IVA) offices in accordance with Section 1566a of Title 10, U.S.C.
- Establishes policy and assigns responsibilities to implement procedures, jointly with each State, for persons to apply to register to vote at Armed Forces recruitment offices in accordance with Section 20506 of Title 52, U.S.C.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY. This issuance applies to:

a. OSD, the Military Departments (including the Coast Guard at all times, including when it is a Service in the Department of Homeland Security by agreement with that Department), the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the “DoD Components”).

b. The Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service, under agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under agreement with the Department of Commerce.

1.2. POLICY. It is DoD policy that:

a. The right of U.S. citizens to vote is a fundamental right afforded protection by the U.S. Constitution. Every eligible voter will:

(1) Be given an opportunity to register and vote in any election for which he or she is eligible.

(2) Be able to vote in person or by absentee ballot.

b. The rights of eligible voters will be advanced through FVAP. FVAP will, in accordance with UOCAVA, compile, conduct outreach, and provide information about registration and voting procedures.

(1) FVAP will prepare and distribute materials pertaining to scheduled elections for federal office to eligible voters to include election dates for federal offices, constitutional amendments, and proposals on the ballot to the extent practicable.

(2) FVAP will conduct evaluations of overall program effectiveness.

c. All individuals assisting in the voting process will:

(1) To the greatest extent practicable, ensure eligible voters receiving voting assistance at DoD facilities can do so in a private and independent manner.

(2) Protect the privacy of the contents of absentee ballots while they are under DoD control.

(3) Provide non-partisan information.

d. DoD personnel will take steps to prevent discrimination, fraud, intimidation or coercion, and unfair voter registration and assistance procedures. This includes, but is not limited to, preventing actions such as:

(1) Using military authority to influence the vote of members of a uniformed service requiring them to march to any polling place or place of voting as prescribed by Section 609 of Title 18, U.S.C. This issuance does not prohibit free discussion about political issues or candidates for public office.

(2) Interfering with the conduct of an election or preventing a member of the uniformed services from exercising their right to vote as prescribed by Sections 592 and 593 of Title 18, U.S.C.

(3) Depriving any individual of their right to vote in accordance with the procedures in UOCAVA, or knowingly giving an individual false information for establishing eligibility, or pays or offers to pay, or accepts payment for registering or voting, as proscribed by Section 608 of Title 18, U.S.C.

(4) Polling a member of the uniformed services before or after they vote, as proscribed by Section 596 of Title 18, U.S.C.

(5) Participating in those activities prohibited in DoDD 1344.10.

e. DoD personnel assisting with voter registration or the absentee voting process may use personally identifiable information. Such information will be protected under DoD Instruction (DoDI) 5400.11 and DoD 5400.11-R.

f. An installation commander may permit non-partisan voter registration activities on an installation by State and county officials, or groups recognized under Section 501(c)(19) of Title 26, U.S.C., subject to all applicable military installation rules and regulations governing such activities on military installations.

1.3. INFORMATION COLLECTIONS.

a. FVAP statistical analysis, referred to in Paragraph 2.5.b.(12) has been assigned report control symbol DD-P&R(BE)2632 in accordance with the procedures in Volume 1 of DoD Manual 8910.01.

b. Report on voting assistance metrics, referred to in Paragraphs 2.5.b.(14), 3.1.b.(7)(c), and 3.4.g. has been assigned report control symbol DD-P&R(Q)2346 in accordance with the procedures in Volume 1 of DoD Manual 8910.01.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS (USD(P&R)). The USD(P&R):

- a. Executes the responsibilities of the Presidential designee on behalf of the Secretary of Defense pursuant to UOCAVA and in accordance with E.O. 12642 and DoDD 5124.02.
- b. Maintains oversight responsibility over FVAP in accordance with E.O. 12642, UOCAVA, and Sections 20505(c)(2)(A) and 20506(c) of Title 52, U.S.C.
- c. Develops policy and procedures, and coordinates and implements the actions necessary to discharge federal responsibilities assigned in E.O. 12642, DoDD 5124.02, UOCAVA, and Sections 20505(c)(2)(A) and 20506(c) of Title 52, U.S.C., to include reports to the President and Congress.
- d. In accordance with UOCAVA, grants or denies any hardship exemption waiver requests submitted by a State (after consultation with the U.S. Attorney General's designee) and informs the requesting State of the action taken on the request.

2.2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS (ASD(M&RA)). Under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P&R), the ASD(M&RA):

- a. Provides policy guidance, direction, and oversight of FVAP.
- b. Manages and delegates responsibilities, as necessary, to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Integration (DASD(RI)) to oversee and develop policy for FVAP.

2.3. DASD(RI). Under the authority, direction, and control of the ASD(M&RA), and in coordination with the Director, Department of Defense Human Resources Activity, the DASD(RI) oversees the Director, Defense Personnel and Family Support Center (DPFSC) in the development of policy for FVAP to ensure absent members of a uniformed service and their dependents who are eligible voters have ready access to information regarding voter registration requirements and deadlines (including voter registration), absentee ballot application requirements and deadlines, and the availability of voting assistance officers to assist members and dependents in understanding and complying with requirements including procedures under Section 3.

2.4. DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HUMAN RESOURCES ACTIVITY. Under the authority direction, and control of the, USD(P&R), and in addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.8., the Director, Department of Defense Human Resources Activity:

a. Coordinates with the ASD(M&RA) and the DASD(RI), as appropriate, on the responsibilities of the Director, DPFSC.

b. Supports FVAP, including human capital and resources, funding and budget, and logistics.

2.5. DIRECTOR, DPFSC.

a. Policy Support Responsibilities. In support of the development of policy by the USD(P&R) and the ASD(M&RA) regarding the duties of the Secretary of Defense as Presidential designee under UOCAVA, and the implementation of such policies, in support of the DASD(RI), the Director, DPFSC:

(1) Monitors and ensures compliance with this issuance.

(2) Provides subject matter experts for developing policy, and provides oversight for implementation and execution of FVAP.

(3) Serves as DoD's primary point of contact for DoD-wide responses to congressional hearings, reports, and other mandates, as well as other inquiries concerning FVAP.

(4) Coordinates FVAP policy issues with the Military Departments.

(5) Establishes procedures regarding the submission and evaluation of hardship exemption waivers submitted by a State in accordance with Section 20302(g) of Title 52, U.S.C.

(6) Engages in cooperative agreements with non-governmental organizations to conduct research on voting issues and policies with State, and local government entities. This includes voting assistance, elections and an impact analysis of voter registration assistance to assist in formulating recommendations, as appropriate, for improvements in federal and State procedures, forms, and laws.

b. Operational Responsibilities. Under the authority, direction, and control of the Director, Defense Human Resources Activity, the Director, DPFSC:

(1) Informs States of their requirements under Section 20302 of Title 52, U.S.C., and encourages and assists them with adopting the mandatory and recommended provisions therein.

(2) Prescribes the Standard Form (SF) 76, "Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)," for use by the States in accordance with Section 20301(b)(2) of Title 52, U.S.C., makes the form available online, and provides information to the States, Department of State, and uniformed services regarding ordering hardcopy forms from the Administrator of General Services.

(3) Prescribes the SF 186, "Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)," for use by the States under Section 20303(a)(1) of Title 52, U.S.C., makes the form available online, and provides information to the States, Department of State and uniformed services regarding ordering hardcopy forms from the Administrator of General Services.

(4) In coordination with the U.S. Election Assistance Commission and the chief election official of each State, develops standards to report data on the number of absentee ballots transmitted and received during a regularly scheduled general election for federal office, under Section 20302(c) of Title 52, and such other data as deemed appropriate, in accordance with Section 20301(b)(11) of Title 52, U.S.C., and provides a means to store the collected data.

(5) Prescribes the standard oath to be used with any document under Chapter 203 of Title 52, in accordance with Section 20301(b)(7) of Title 52, U.S.C.

(6) In coordination with the U.S. Postal Service and the Military Postal Service Agency, establishes procedures for collecting marked absentee ballots of absent overseas Service member voters in regularly scheduled general elections for federal office and delivering those ballots to the appropriate election officials under Section 20304 of Title 52, U.S.C. and DoDI 4245.09, manages, coordinates, and performs the Presidential designee's responsibilities in accordance with Sections 20301 and 20305 of Title 52, U.S.C.

(7) Develops and maintains a voting assistance program to assist all eligible voters covered under Chapter 203 of Title 52, U.S.C.

(8) Establishes and maintains contact with State election officials, State legislators, and with other State and local government officials to improve the absentee voting process for citizens in accordance with UOCAVA.

(9) Obtains from each State, current voter registration and absentee voting information to include to the extent practicable, facts relating to specific elections, including dates, offices involved, and the text of ballot questions and disseminates it to other federal executive departments, agencies, DoD Components and voters, in accordance with Section 20301 of Title 52, U.S.C.

(10) Establishes and maintains online portals of information to inform absent members of a uniformed service voters regarding voter registration and absentee ballot procedures in accordance with Section 20305 of Title 52, U.S.C.

(11) In consultation with the States, provides an online repository of State contact information under Section 20302 of Title 52, U.S.C.

(12) Gathers and analyzes necessary statistical information and prepares reports for the President and Congress pursuant to Section 20301(b) (6) of Title 52, U.S.C., and conducts corresponding information collections to prepare such reports.

(13) Uses outreach methodologies and advertising to inform Service members of absentee voting information in accordance with Section 20301 of Title 52, U.S.C.

(14) Manages, coordinates, and performs the Presidential designee's responsibilities established in Section 20506 of Title 52, U.S.C. to include:

(a) Prescribing procedures and training for Armed Forces Recruiting Commands to provide voter registration assistance including provision of the DD Form 2645, "Voter Registration Information," and the National Voter Registration Form (NVRF).

(b) Prescribing the format for collection of statistical information and records on voter registration assistance provided by recruitment offices.

(15) May enter into agreements with other executive agencies, including but not limited to the State Department, the Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Services under agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under agreement with the Department of Commerce, in accordance with Section 20301(c) of Title 52, U.S.C.

(16) Prescribes voting program metrics, in coordination with the DoD Components and Military Services, to allow them to better evaluate their individual voting assistance programs, and reports. Establishes and maintains online portals to collect and consolidate voting program metrics.

(17) In consultation with the States, develops implementation and operational procedures for individuals to apply to register to vote at Armed Forces recruitment offices. Assists the Armed Forces recruiting commands with implementation of Chapter 205 of Title 52, U.S.C., as it applies to recruitment offices within the DoD.

2.6. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ACQUISITION AND SUSTAINMENT.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment:

a. Approves and implements agreements regarding election materials between the DoD and the U.S. Postal Service relating to the Military Postal Service in accordance with DoDI 4525.09.

b. Ensures that the Director, Military Postal Service Agency:

(1) Implements measures, in consultation with the Director, DPFSC, that ensure to the maximum extent practicable that a postmark or other proof of mailing date is provided on each absentee ballot collected at any overseas location or vessel at sea, and that voting materials are moved expeditiously by military postal authorities, in accordance with DoDD 5101.11E.

(2) Develops an outreach plan to inform overseas Service members about the ballot collection and delivery service prior to each general election for federal office.

(3) Establishes alternative deadlines for collecting and forwarding absentee ballots from overseas locations pursuant to UOCAVA.

(4) Conducts surveys of overseas locations, vessels at sea, and port facilities to ensure the continued movement of election materials under Section 1566 of Title 10, U.S.C.

(5) Publishes updates to the Military Postal Service Agency Strategic Postal Voting Action Plan before each federal election cycle to provide accountability, safeguarding, and expeditious delivery of balloting materials to and from Military Post Offices.

(6) Provides procedures and guidance for military postal activities ensuring that all U.S. citizens, with or without Military Post Office privileges, are authorized to mail balloting material from any Military Post Office.

2.7. INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. The Inspector General of the Department of Defense:

- a. Submits a report to Congress under Section 1566(c) of Title 10, U.S.C.
- b. Provides FVAP, along with the respective voting representative for each Military Service with copies of supporting data collected during the reviews and analyses conducted under Paragraph 2.7.a. of this issuance, as deemed appropriate.
- c. Seeks assistance from FVAP staff to execute evaluations and assessments of Military Service voting programs.

2.8. DOD COMPONENT HEADS. The DoD Component heads:

- a. Will disseminate voting information and assist eligible voters in their respective organizations, as outlined in Section 3 of this issuance.
- b. Confirm that Service members, including deployed forces and their supporting personnel, have access to federal voting information and assistance, particularly in remote locations.
 - (1) To the maximum extent practicable, provide members under their command access to voting information and assistance via a variety of means, including both print and electronic media.
 - (2) To the maximum extent practicable, provide access to the internet, and other necessary resources, including but not limited to printers and scanners for absentee voting purposes.
- c. Utilize voting assistance technology programs as prescribed by FVAP.
- d. For Service members, civilian employees, and eligible family members reporting to duty stations overseas, establish a designated action officer to work with FVAP to ensure information is disseminated to all eligible families and employees and submit an after action report as prescribed by FVAP.
- e. Develop and maintain written voting-related policies to support active duty Service members and their eligible family members, including those in deployed, dispersed, tenant organizations, Reserve and National Guard Components, and those separating from active duty.

National Guard and Reserve Components must provide voting assistance to personnel not attached to active duty elements who receive orders to activate and deploy outside of their residence.

f. Ensure military postal activities are resourced to accept, maintain accountability, postmark, dispatch, and report the delivery status of absentee ballots.

2.9. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS AND COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD. In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.8., the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the United States Coast Guard:

a. Establish Service-wide voting assistance programs in accordance with Section 3 of this issuance and in direct consultation with FVAP, to include:

(1) Appointing voting assistance officers (VAOs) as outlined in Section 3 of this issuance and in accordance with Section 1566(f) of Title 10, U.S.C.

(2) Ensuring ready access to voting information for Service members and their eligible family members in accordance Section 1566(i) of Title 10, U.S.C.

(3) Publishing information on mailing deadlines requirements in accordance with Section 1566(h) of Title 10, U.S.C.

(4) Designating IVA offices on military installations that meet all the requirements and responsibilities in accordance with Section 1566a of Title 10, U.S.C. and taking appropriate actions to inform absentee Service member voters of the assistance available in such offices in accordance with Section 1566a(d) of Title 10, U.S.C.

(5) Ensuring IVA offices identified in Paragraph 2.9.a.(4) of this issuance may be designated as voter registration agencies and administered in accordance with Section 20506 of Title 52, U.S.C.

(a) The term “installation” will be defined by the Military Service concerned.

(b) An updated list of IVA offices must be maintained and published, in accordance with this issuance.

(6) Developing written voting-related policies to support all Service members, and their eligible family members, and any supporting Department civilian personnel, including those in deployed, dispersed, and tenant organizations to include all small and geographically separated units.

(7) Ensuring command support at all levels for the voting assistance program and execution of activities in support of Armed Forces Voters Week and Absentee Voting Week.

b. Provide support to FVAP in execution of the Service-wide voting programs, including but not limited to:

(1) Coordination of VAO training workshop logistics and participation.

(2) Survey coordination and support.

(3) Submission of after action reports as prescribed by FVAP.

(4) Requiring the Inspectors General of the Military Departments to review their voting assistance programs each fiscal year to ensure compliance and provide a report along with supporting statistical information to the Inspector General of the Department of Defense and FVAP by December 1 of each year in accordance with Section 1566(c) of Title 10, U.S.C., and Paragraph 2.7. of this issuance.

(5) Ensuring all personnel assigned to recruitment offices are informed of the policies in this issuance and are trained to provide voter registration assistance in accordance with Chapter 205 of Title 52, U.S.C.

(6) Appointing a Service voting action officer (SVAO) in accordance with the procedures in Section 3 of this issuance.

(7) Include a compliance assessment of UOCAVA and DoD regulations during any management effectiveness review or inspection at the installation level.

c. Emphasize to Service members the importance of exercising their right to vote in federal, State, and local elections.

d. Emphasize and advertise voting assistance programs for Service members attending initial entry training (e.g., basic training) and command courses.

e. Ensure command support at all levels for FVAP and execution of activities in support of Armed Forces Voters Week and Absentee Voting Week.

f. Establish and maintain direct links from the respective Military Service websites to the Service voting websites, and to FVAP website.

g. Ensure voting information outreach is included in Service-wide and installation public affairs efforts, (e.g., Military Service messages and public service announcements), during even-numbered years.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES

3.1. SVAOs and VAOs.

a. SVAO. The Military Services will designate in writing an SVAO to manage their respective Service voting assistance program. When practicable, the SVAO's term should extend through the next general election cycle. The SVAO should preferably be a civilian employee General Service-12 or higher. If the SVAO is a Service member, he or she should be at or above the grade O-4 for commissioned officers or E-8 for enlisted personnel. The SVAO will:

(1) Ensure a Service-wide means to effectively and expeditiously communicate with and disseminate voting information to commanders, installation voting assistance officers (IVAOs) and U.S. citizens who are members of the uniformed services and their eligible family members, and U.S. citizens overseas, including DoD civilian members of the DoD Component and their eligible family members.

(2) Develop a Service-wide communication plan to increase voter awareness and distribution of voting materials. Advertise Armed Forces Voter's Week and Absentee Voting Week to encourage voter outreach events and voter awareness.

(3) Publicize and distribute information awareness briefs, as prescribed by FVAP, to all VAOs to educate all eligible voters on absentee registration and voting procedures.

(4) Develop a Service-wide plan to deliver the SF 76 FPCA directly to all eligible voters, including eligible family members where practicable, through either in-hand delivery or electronic means by January 15 of each year and by July 15 of even-numbered years.

(5) Ensure Service members receive information on federal voting rights and benefits covered under Chapter 203 of Title 52, U.S.C., and receive voting assistance upon request, and during these key milestones shown in Paragraphs 3.1.a.(5)(a) through (c) of this issuance pursuant to Sections 1566a(b) and (c) of Title 10, U.S.C.

(a) Pre- and post-deployment.

(b) Arrival/departure during permanent change of a duty station.

(c) Detachment from duty station.

(6) The information in Paragraph 3.1.a.(5) of this issuance will inform Service members of the following:

(a) Use of the SF 76 FPCA to register to vote and request an absentee ballot.

(b) Use of the SF 186 FWAB as a backup ballot.

(c) State voter registrations and absentee ballot submission deadlines of elections for federal office.

(d) Duty station absentee ballot return mailing dates provided by the Military Postal Service Agency prior to elections for federal office.

(7) Ensure distribution of materials and informational resources to IVAOs, IVA offices, and VAOs. Establish recognizable voting e-mail addresses to contact all IVA offices within the Military service concerned, (e.g., vote@(installation).(service).mil or similar).

(8) Ensure data submission and consolidation from IVAOs, IVA offices, and VAOs for voting reports.

(9) File an annual report to FVAP, in the format and manner prescribed by FVAP.

(10) Ensure appropriate reporting from Armed Forces recruiting commands in accordance with Chapter 205 of Title 52, U.S.C. and Paragraph 3.5. of this issuance.

b. VAO. The Military Services will appoint a VAO, in writing, at appropriate levels within the chain of command and assign a minimum of one IVAO as described in Paragraph 3.1.a.(1) of this issuance, on each installation, to coordinate the programs conducted by subordinate units and tenant commands. The Military Services will:

(1) Assign a VAO to each unit, as defined by the Military Service concerned and may establish ratios and designate additional VAOs based on operational conditions or determinations made to ensure program effectiveness. Unit level VAOs provide information and assistance to Service members on voting matters pursuant to Section 1566(f) of Title 10, U.S.C.

(2) Afford Service members in geographically separated units opportunities to receive assistance in-person and electronically, to the greatest extent practicable.

(3) Ensure that VAOs are available and equipped to assist voters effectively for all federal elections.

(4) VAOs will be provided the time and resources needed to perform their voting assistance duties.

(5) Require that VAOs at all levels complete voting assistance training, as prescribed by FVAP within 30 days of appointment. In person workshop training is preferred to online training; however, online training will suffice to meet the minimum training requirements. Documentation of VAO training at the installation or base level will be stored within local personnel records.

(6) Ensure that the performance evaluation reports for Service members assigned as VAOs comment on their performance in carrying out this duty in accordance with Section 1566(f) of Title 10, U.S.C.

(7) VAOs will:

(a) Complete training as prescribed by FVAP, no later than 30 days after assumption of duties.

(b) Obtain and distribute the SF 76 FPCA through either in-hand delivery or electronic means to all unit members by both January 15 and July 15 of even-numbered years and January 15 of odd-numbered years.

(c) Maintain and submit voting program metrics as prescribed by FVAP.

(d) Support staffing of IVA office as needed.

(e) Provide adequate resources and assistance to individuals seeking voting assistance during federal elections.

(f) Support Armed Forces Voters Week and Absentee Voting Week events established under FVAP Voting Action Plan.

3.2. INSTALLATION COMMANDER PROCEDURES. Installation commanders will:

a. Ensure voting information and outreach, (e.g. Military Service messages and public service announcements) is included in installation public affairs efforts during even-numbered years.

b. Ensure voting assistance is included in the administrative in-processing, pre- and post-deployment checklists required of reporting and detaching personnel.

c. Ensure supported host and tenant organizations of an installation receive voting assistance and that they have assigned VAOs in accordance with Paragraph 3.1.b. of this issuance.

d. Designate IVAOs in writing, and ensure they report directly to the installation commander.

e. Establish an IVA office within the installation headquarters organization, even if geographically located in another building.

(1) Ensure the IVA office is located in a well-advertised, fixed location, (consistent, as possible throughout the Service concerned), and physically co-located with an existing office that receives extensive visits by eligible voters.

(2) Establish satellite offices under the primary IVA office as warranted.

f. Ensure the IVA office is open during the hours the installation office is open and adequately staffed with trained personnel to provide direct assistance in registration and voting procedures, including the assistance required under Chapter 205 of Title 52, U.S.C.

(1) Ensure access to an answering machine and voicemail, except where 24-hour telephone coverage is available.

(2) Ensure e-mails and voicemails received by the IVA office are returned within 3 business days of receipt, but within 24 hours if less than 45 days prior to a general election.

g. Inform eligible voters of the information and voter registration assistance at offices and the time, location, and manner in which an eligible voter may use assistance.

3.3. IVAO PROCEDURES. IVAOs will:

a. Complete training, as prescribed by FVAP, no later than 30 days after assumption of duties.

b. Establish a VAO network and communications capability to quickly disseminate voting information throughout the installation.

c. Manage the staffing of the IVA office.

d. Utilize installation communications to ensure awareness of availability of voting programs.

e. Notify installation personnel of the date absentee ballots must be mailed to State and local election officials before a general election for federal offices and of general Military Postal Service Agency mail delivery deadlines.

f. Engage, as practicable, appropriate local election official assistance for a voter registration drive or similar event on an installation and refrain from discussing voting policy matters with State and local government officials.

g. Ensure that all Service members (including activated National Guard and Reserve personnel) have access to absentee registration and voting procedures.

h. Coordinate collection of data through FVAP portal from the VAOs and the IVA office for submission to SVAOs on compliance with this issuance.

i. Support Armed Forces Voters Week and Absentee Voting Week events established under the applicable FVAP Voting Action Plan.

3.4. IVA OFFICE PERSONNEL PROCEDURES. IVA office personnel will:

a. Complete training, as prescribed by FVAP, no later than 30 days after assumption of duties as a VAO.

b. Provide voter assistance to Service members, base personnel, their family members, civilian federal employees, and all qualified voters who have access to such installation offices. Provide resources including, but not limited to:

(1) The opportunity to update absentee and voter registration information through the submission of an SF 76 FPCA or completion of an NVRF at locations in the United States.

(2) Where practicable, access to a computer system connected to the internet, a printer, and a scanner for using the SF 76 FPCA online assistant available at the FVAP website, <https://www.fvap.gov>.

c. Provide voting assistance to all eligible voters who experience these key milestones:

(1) Pre- and post-deployment.

(2) Permanent change of station upon arrival and departure of a duty station; in/out processing.

(3) Detachment from duty station

d. Advise a member of a uniformed service who is released from active duty to notify their local election office that they are no longer covered under the provisions of Chapter 203 of Title 52, U.S.C., and provide the Service member concerned with an opportunity to submit a NVRF.

e. Provide applicants with written information on voter registration and absentee ballot procedures (e.g., SF 76 FPCA), the SF 186 FWAB (if applicable), the NVRF, the attached instructions for those forms, and the State-specific instructions from the Voting Assistance Guide.

f. Transmit the completed SF 76 FPCA or NVRF to the appropriate local election office within 5 calendar days of receipt.

g. Maintain and submit voting program metrics as prescribed by FVAP.

3.5. ARMED FORCES RECRUITING COMMAND PROCEDURES. Armed Forces recruiting commands will:

a. Ensure all personnel assigned to recruitment offices are informed of the policies in this issuance and trained to provide voter registration assistance as prescribed by FVAP, in accordance with Section 20506 of Title 52, U.S.C.

b. Ensure the recruitment offices of the Armed Forces:

(1) Provide each eligible prospective enlistee and other eligible citizens with the opportunity to complete the DD Form 2645.

(a) Provide the NVRF and assistance, as required, for those who elect to complete the registration form.

(b) Provide each applicant the same degree of assistance with regard to the completion of the registration application form as is provided by the office with regard to the completion of its own forms, unless the applicant refuses such assistance.

(2) Transmit all completed registration applications to the appropriate State election officials within 5 calendar days.

(3) Maintain statistical information and records on voter registration assistance provided by recruitment offices in the format prescribed by FVAP for a period of 2 years under Chapter 205 of Title 52, U.S.C.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

ASD(M&RA)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
DASD(RI)	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Integration
DoDD	DoD directive
DPFSC	Defense Personnel and Family Support Center
E.O.	Executive order
FPCA	Federal Post Card Application
FVAP	Federal Voting Assistance Program
FWAB	Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot
IVAO	installation voting assistance officer
IVA	installation voter assistance
NVRF	National Voter Registration Form
SF	standard form
SVAO	Service voting action officer
UOCAVA	Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
VAO	voting assistance officer

G.2. DEFINITIONS. Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

Absentee Voting Week. A special day or days designated at each installation of the uniformed services to inform members of the uniformed services and their voting-age dependents of ballot return deadlines preceding general elections for federal offices.

access. For the purposes of accessing an IVA office, refers to the ability of unit personnel to visit an IVA office without being required to exit a security perimeter and enter another security perimeter to access an IVA office, whether or not considered the same installation.

Armed Forces Voters Week. A special day or days designated at each installation of the uniformed services to inform members of the uniformed services and their voting-age dependents of absentee registration and voting procedures and ballot request deadlines preceding general elections for federal offices.

eligible voter. Any of the following:

absent member of a uniformed service voter.

A member of the uniformed services on active duty who, by reason of such active duty, is absent from the place of residence where the member is otherwise qualified to vote.

A member of the merchant marine who, by reason of service in the merchant marine, is absent from the place of residence where the member is otherwise qualified to vote.

eligible family member

A spouse or dependent of an absent member of a uniformed service voter who, by reason of the active duty or service of the member, is absent from the place of residence where the eligible family member is otherwise qualified to vote.

overseas voter.

An absent member of a uniformed service voter who, by reason of active duty or service, is absent from the United States on the date of the election involved;

A person who resides outside of the United States and is qualified to vote in the last place in which the person was domiciled before leaving the United States; or

A person who resides outside of the United States and (but for such residence) would be qualified to vote in the last place in which the person was domiciled before leaving the United States.

federal office. The offices of the President or Vice President; Presidential Elector; or of a Senator or Representative in, or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to, Congress.

FPCA. A form for Service members, their eligible family members, and overseas citizens to both register to vote and request absentee ballots.

FVAP. The DoD program responsible for executing the Secretary of Defense's functions as Presidential designee in accordance with UOCAVA, subject to the authority, direction and control of the USD(P&R).

FWAB. A backup ballot for voters who do not receive their requested state absentee ballot in time to vote and return it.

geographically separated units. Mission elements that are dispersed from a regular-type military installation and do not normally have the same level of support associated with a host-base configuration. Geographically separated units typically rely on additional administrative and operational support from a designated main installation and command component.

IVA office. The office designated by the installation commander to provide voter assistance to members of a uniformed service, voting-age military dependents, government employees,

contractors, and other civilian U.S. citizens with access to the installation. IVA offices also serve as voter registration agencies under Chapter 205 of Title 52, U.S.C.

IVAO. A civilian, or a member of a uniformed service responsible for voting assistance coordination at the installation level.

metrics. A systematic means of measuring essential management information for reporting, control, and process improvement.

online portals of information. A customized website designated by FVAP that immerses information from a wide array of sources in a consistent and uniformed manner.

Presidential designee. Designated head of an executive department to have primary responsibility for federal functions under UOCAVA. E.O. 12642 designates the Secretary of Defense as the Presidential designee for the federal functions under UOCAVA.

recruitment offices of the Armed Forces. Any Armed Forces offices open to the public and engaged in the recruitment of persons for appointment or enlistment in an Active Component of the Armed Forces. This does not include Army National Guard and Air National Guard recruiting offices.

State. Defined in Chapter 203 of Title 52, U.S.C.

State election. Any non-federal election held solely, or in part, for selecting, nominating, or electing any candidate for any state office, such as Governor, Lieutenant Governor, state Attorney General, or state legislator, or on issues of statewide interest.

SVAO. Individual designated for his or her respective component responsible for the implementation of Voting Assistance operations.

uniformed services. The Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, commissioned corps of Public Health Service, and the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as defined in Section 20310(7) of Title 52, U.S.C.

unit. Defined by the DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.

VAO. A member of a uniformed service or civilian appointed to support unit level voting assistance activities and support the broader execution of voting assistance responsibilities at an installation level.

voter registration agency. An office designated under Chapter 205 of Title 52, U.S.C., to perform voter registration activities. A recruitment office of the Armed Services and IVA offices are designated as voter registration agencies under Chapter 205 of Title 52, U.S.C.

REFERENCES

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- DoD Directive 1344.10, “Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces,” February 19, 2008
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- DoD Directive 5124.02, “Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD (P&R)),” June 23, 2008
- DoD Instruction 5400.11, “DoD Privacy and Civil Liberties Programs,” January 29, 2019
- DoD Instruction 4525.09, “Military Postal Service (MPS),” July 10, 2018, as amended
- DoD Manual 8910.01, Volume 1, “DoD Information Collections Manual: Procedures for DoD Internal Information Collections,” June 30, 2014, as amended
- Executive Order 12642, “Designation of the Secretary of Defense as the Presidential designee Under Title I of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act,” June 8, 1988
- Federal Voting Assistance Program, “Voting Assistance Guide (VAG)”¹
- Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” current edition
- United States Code, Title 10
- United States Code, Title 18
- United States Code, Title 26, Section 501(c)(19)
- United States Code, Title 52

¹ Available at <https://www.fvap.gov/guide>