

Federal Voting Assistance Program

Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act

August 14, 2021

National Association of Secretaries of State



NASS

National Association
of Secretaries of State



FVAP.gov
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Overview

Today We'll cover...

- 2021 “Back to Basics” for LEOs
- 2020 Activities & Lessons Learned
- Challenges of COVID-19
- 2022 Preparation
- State Activities



Back to Basics: FVAP & UOCAVA



FVAP.gov
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

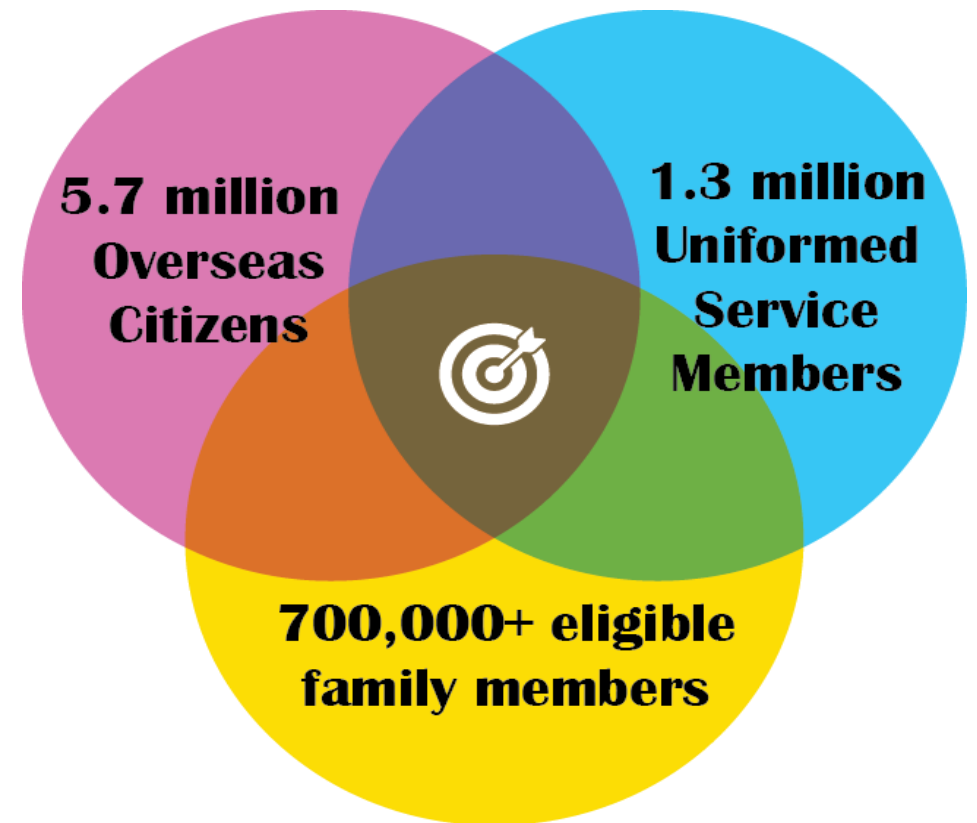


UOCAVA

The *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act* of 1986, or *UOCAVA*, allows certain U.S. citizens to apply to register and vote absentee in elections for federal office.

- **HAVA 2002** required states to notify voters the reasons for rejecting a registration application or absentee ballot request
- **MOVE Act 2009** required states to make voter registration and absentee ballot applications available electronically. Additionally required ballots to be sent out 45 days prior to an election.

FVAP administers UOCAVA on behalf of the Secretary of Defense



FVAP Responsibilities



- Training
 - Installation and Unit Voting Assistance Officers
 - Embassy and Consulate Staff
 - Federal Government Agencies
- Maintain voter resources
 - Forms
 - Voting Assistance Guide
 - FVAP.gov Website
 - Online Assistants for Form Completion
- Reports to Congress
- Code of Federal Regulations Title 32, Part 233
- DOD Instruction 1000.04
- Data Collection
- Waiver Requests
- Ensure State and Local Election Official Awareness

State Responsibilities / Requirements



States and/or Localities Must:

- Transmit requested UOCAVA ballots by the 45th day prior to elections for federal office
- Offer electronic option for transmitting blank ballots
- Provide a free access system for voters to verify receipt of ballot
- Notify voter if, and why, a registration or ballot request is rejected

Reminders:

- UOCAVA voters exempt from ID requirements
- Satisfying residency requirements is left to the states
- Last address in the United States remains the valid address for voting purposes
- Military Spouses have a choice where to align their residency – prior physical presence not required
- All election materials sent to UOCAVA voters are postage free

Military Spouse Residency Relief Act

2018 Amendment gave military spouses greater flexibility to align their residency with active duty sponsor. They may:

1. Retain sponsor's or Service member's residency or domicile
2. Keep their own separate but current and established residency or domicile
3. Take the appropriate steps to establish a new residency or domicile when moving

Complexities involved underscore importance of using FPCA to differentiate this group of voters



50 U.S. Code § 4025 - Guarantee of residency for military personnel and spouses of military personnel (amended December 31, 2018).

(b) Spouses - (2) the spouse of a servicemember may elect to use the same residence as the servicemember regardless of the date on which the marriage of the spouse and the servicemember occurred.

2020 FVAP Activities

Customer Transactions

Web Traffic

Outreach

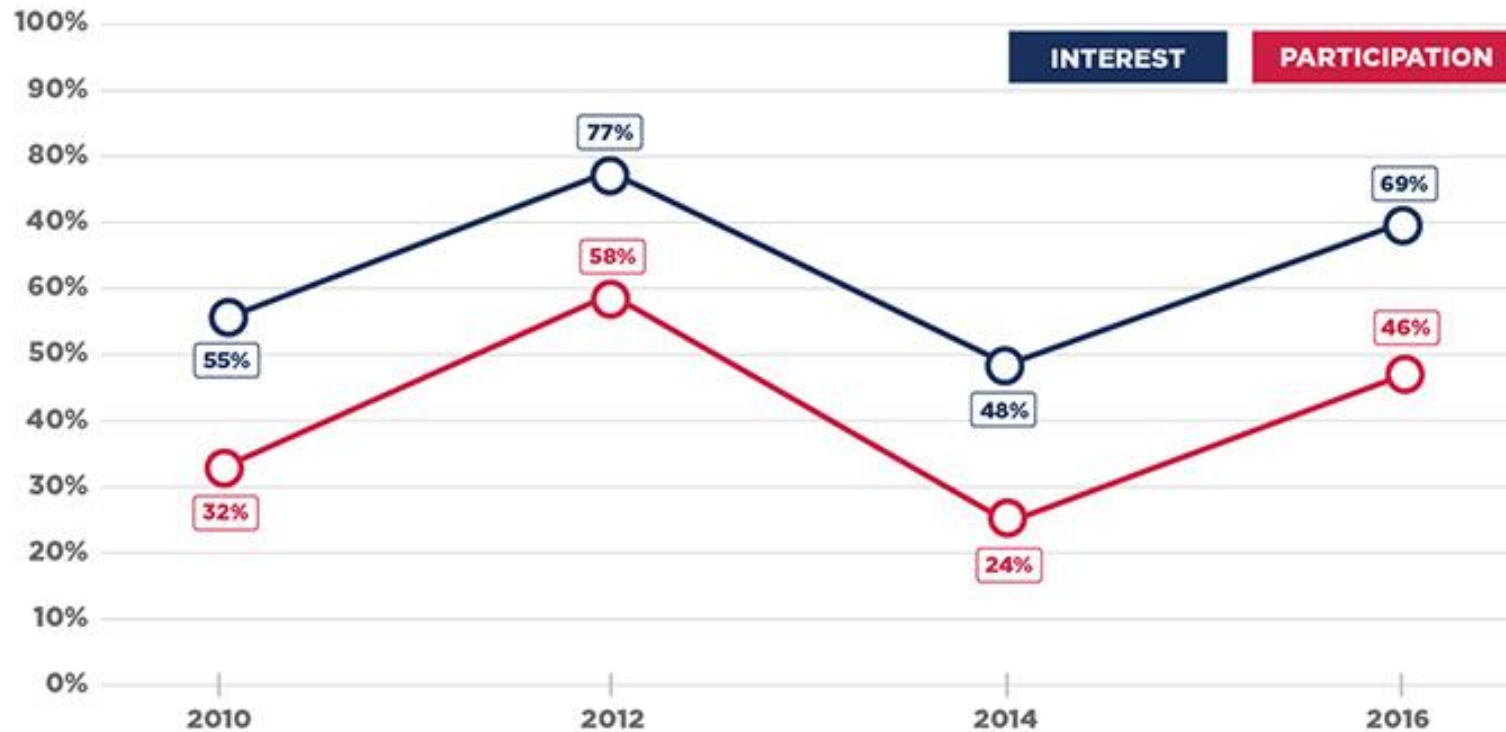
Voting Assistance Ambassadors



FVAP.gov
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Active Duty Military Participation Rates- 2016

SERVICE MEMBERS' INTEREST IN ELECTIONS AND VOTING PARTICIPATION FLUCTUATE ELECTION TO ELECTION



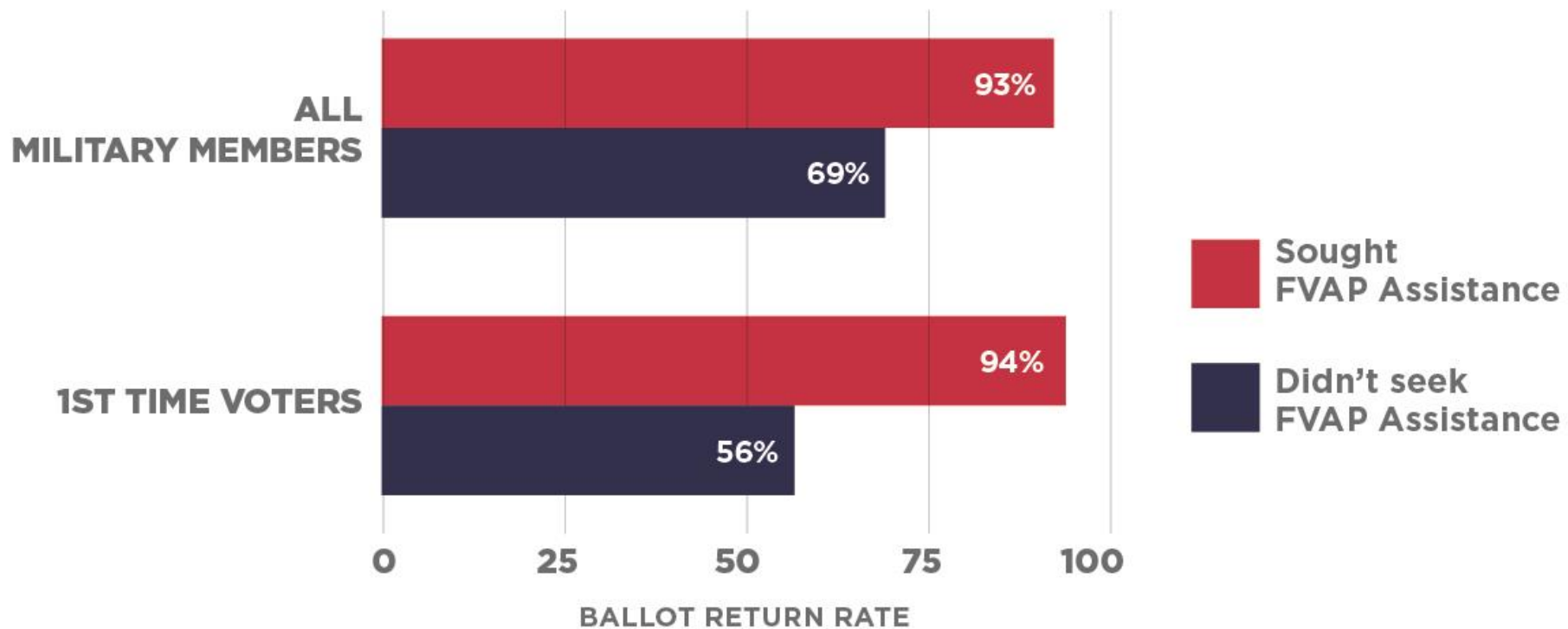
Military members' engagement in the 2016 election decreased compared to 2012, the last presidential election year.

- Percentage who said they were interested in the election in 2016 dropped 8 percentage points from 2012
- Registration was down 13 points
- Participation (submitting a ballot) was down 12 percentage points



DoD Voting Assistance Works - 2016

SERVICE MEMBERS WHO SOUGHT VOTING ASSISTANCE WERE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE LIKELY TO RETURN THEIR BALLOT



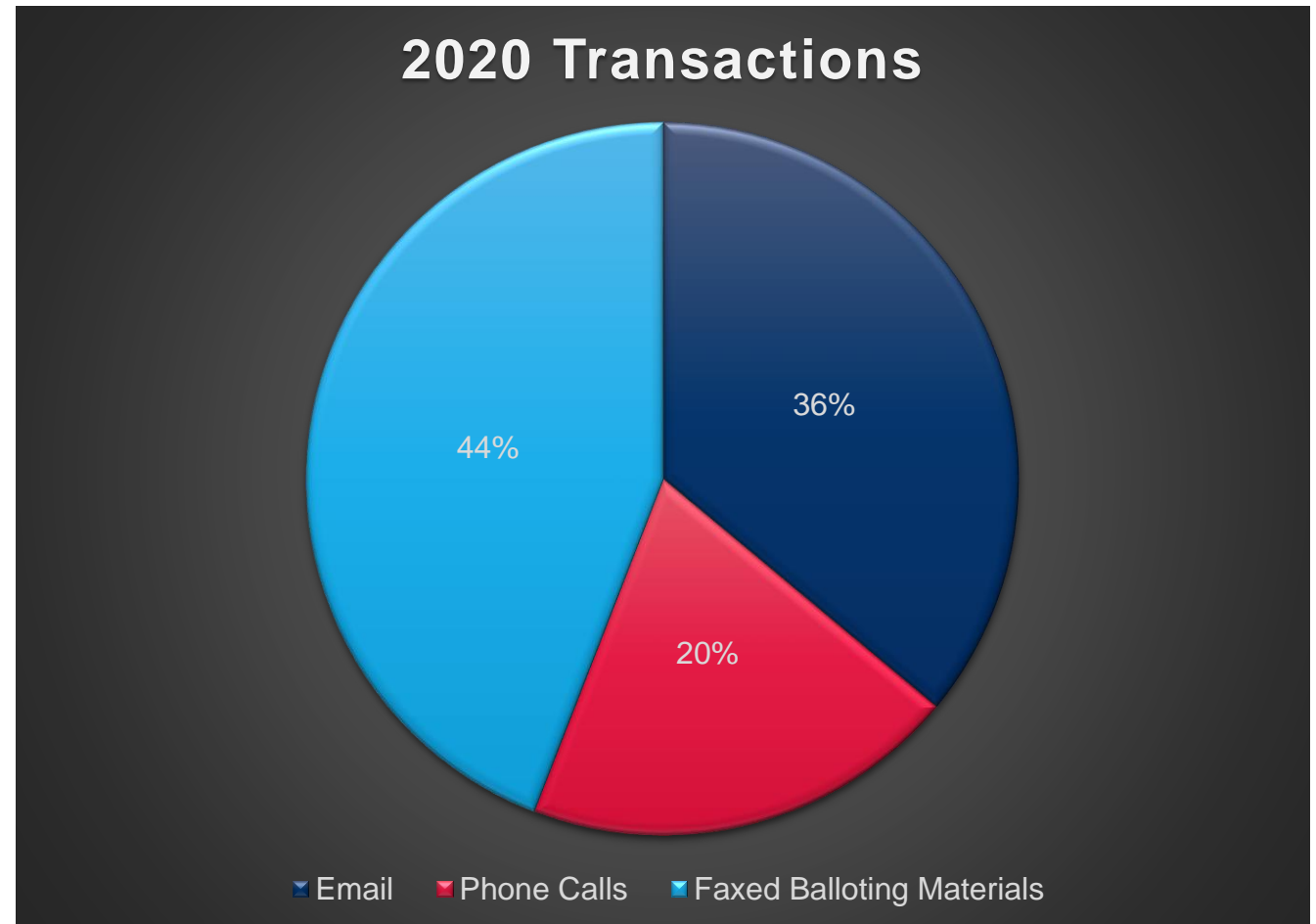
Total Phone Calls and Emails - 2020

January 2020-November 2020

Emails: 17,859

Phone Calls: 9,827

**Faxed Balloting
Materials: 21,849**



Interaction Fax

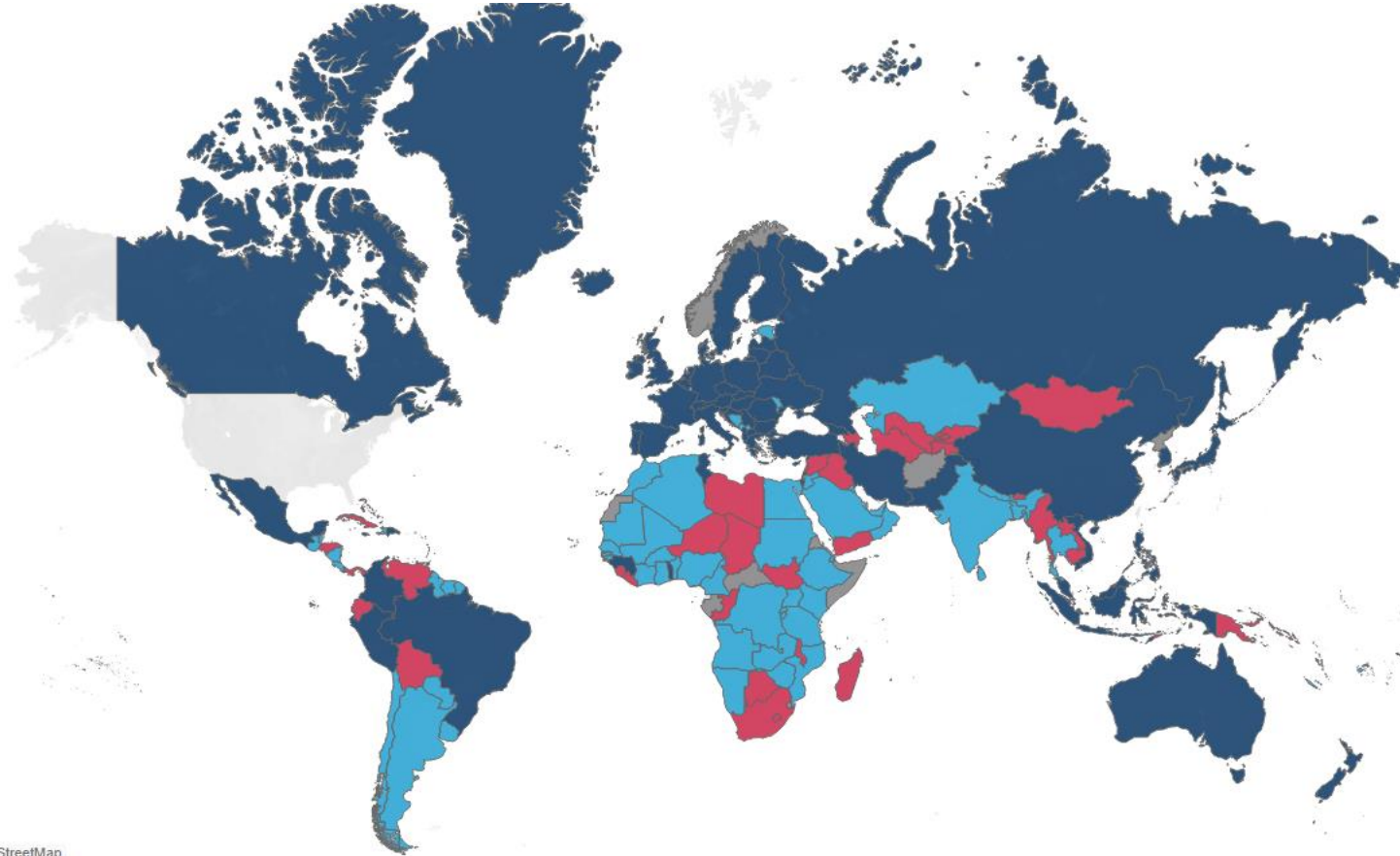


Throughout the duration of the 2020 election cycle, FVAP faxed a total of

21,849

Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs) and Voted Ballots

2020 International Postal Disruptions



© 2021 Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

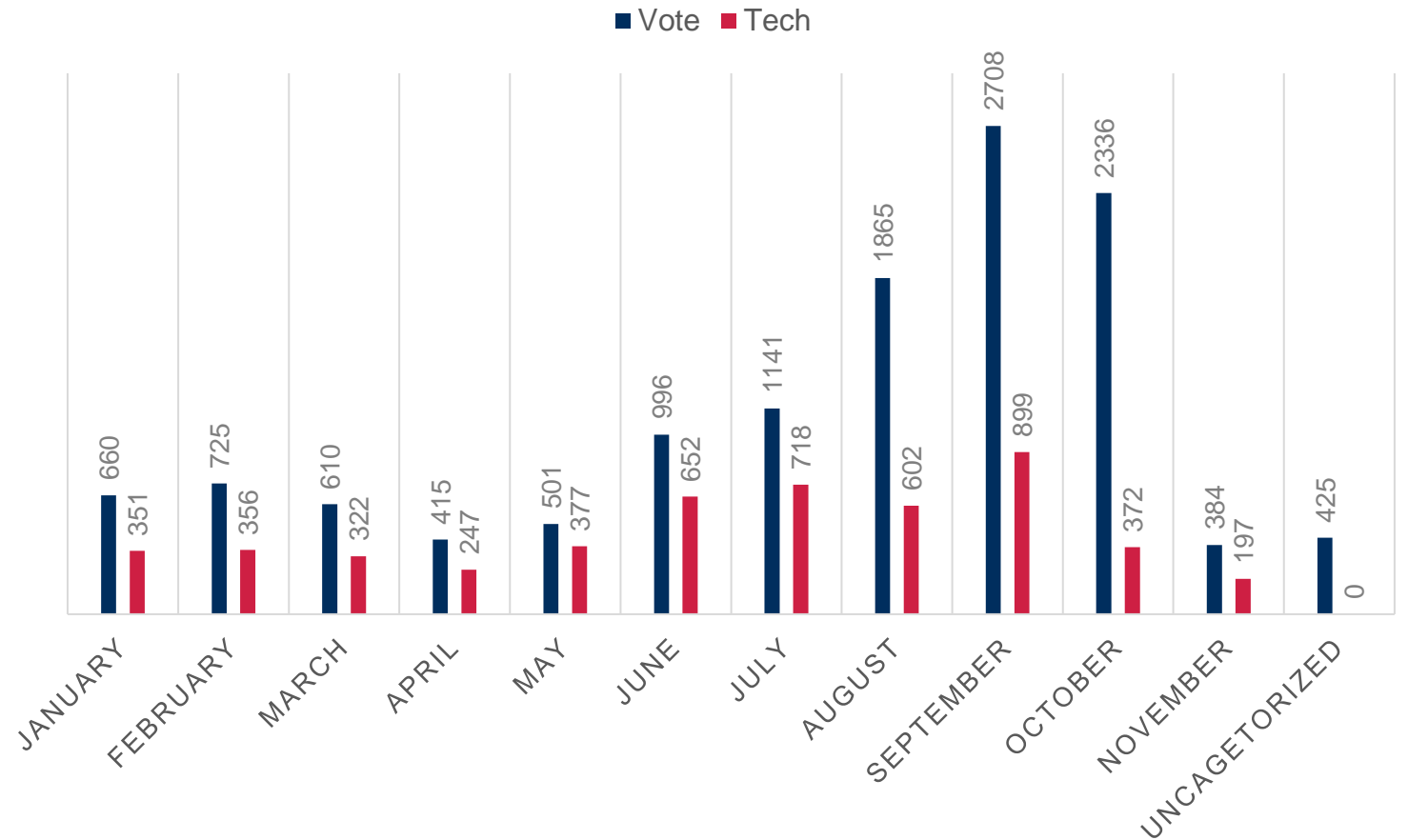
Postal service disruptions approaching the 45 day mark before the 2020 General Election

- Delivery delays
- Postal service resumed after being suspended, with delivery delays still likely
- Postal service suspended or unable to deliver by air and sea
- No Data

Monthly Email Breakdown - 2020

	Vote	Tech	Total
January	660	351	1011
February	725	356	1081
March	610	322	932
April	415	247	662
May	501	377	878
June	996	652	1648
July	1141	718	1859
August	1865	602	2467
September	2708	899	3607
October	2336	372	2708
November	384	197	581
Uncategorized	425	0	425
TOTALS	12766	5093	17859

2020 EMAILS

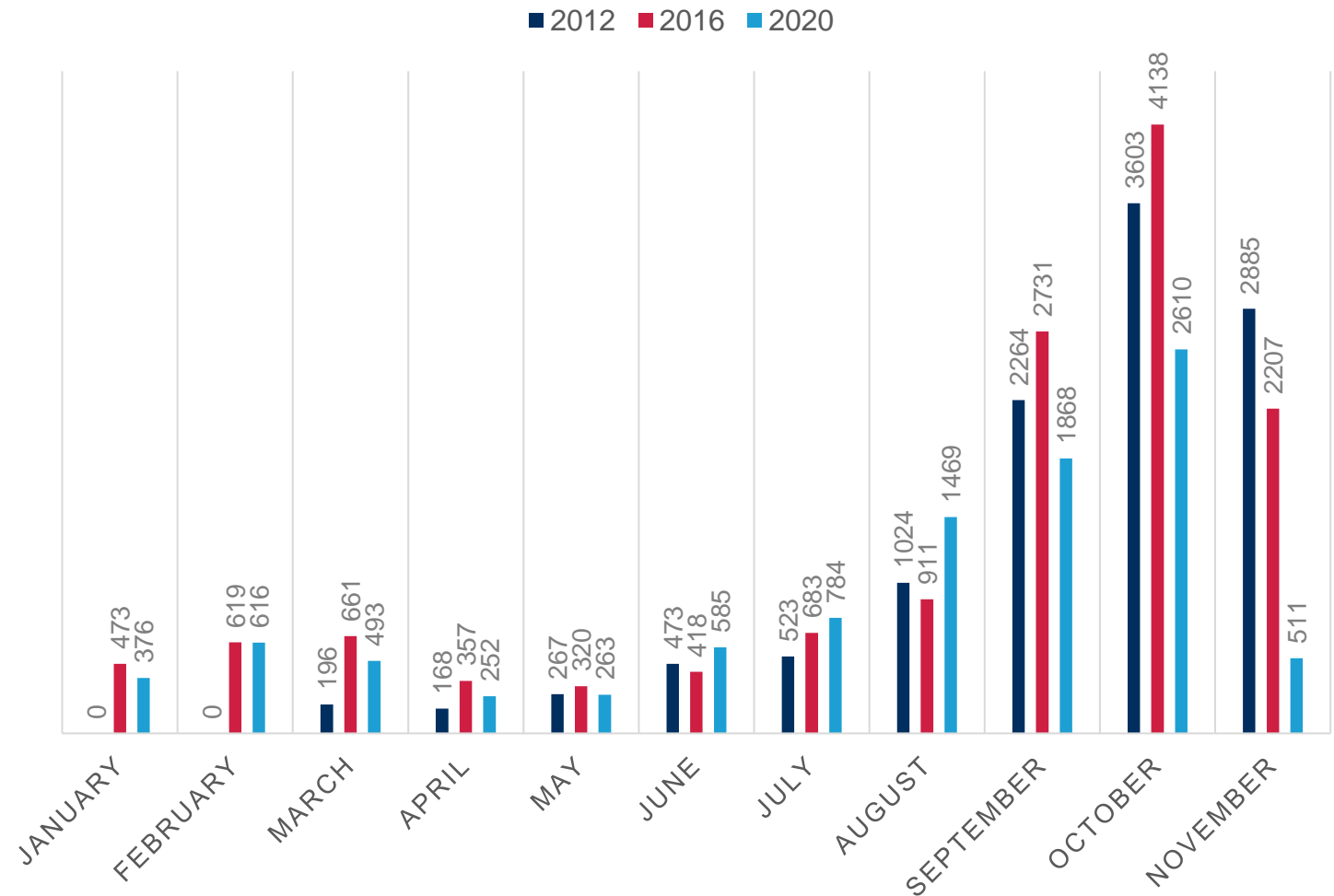


Monthly Phone Call Breakdown - 2020

Monthly Calls and Comparisons to 2016

	2012	2016	2020
January	No Data	473	376
February	No Data	619	616
March	196	661	493
April	168	357	252
May	267	320	263
June	473	418	585
July	523	683	784
August	1024	911	1469
September	2264	2731	1868
October	3603	4138	2610
November	2885	2207	511
TOTAL	11403	13518	9827

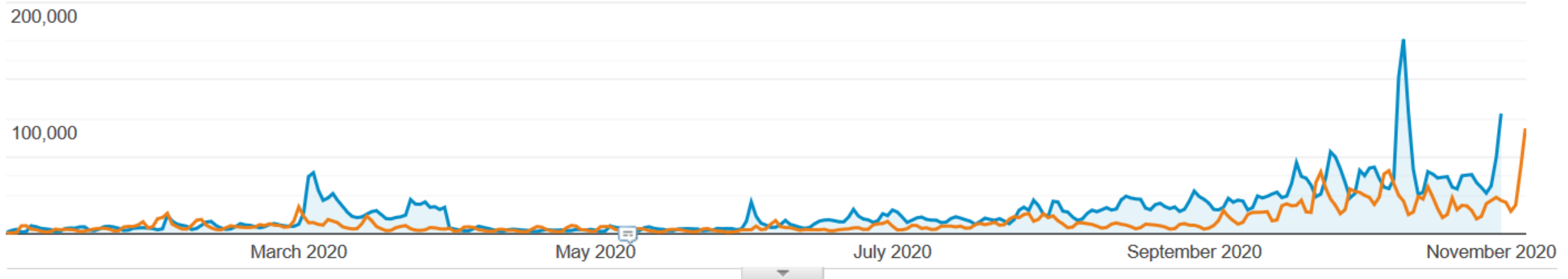
MONTHLY PHONE CALL COMPARISON



Web Traffic

Jan 1, 2020 - Nov 3, 2020: ● Users

Jan 1, 2016 - Nov 8, 2016: ● Users



Metrics for the Election Cycle

Users

77.57%

4,646,122 vs 2,616,438



New Users

76.67%

4,626,536 vs 2,618,690



Sessions

81.87%

6,720,192 vs 3,695,080



Number of Sessions per User

2.42%

1.45 vs 1.41



Pageviews

41.24%

15,187,816 vs 10,753,260



Pages / Session

-22.34%

2.26 vs 2.91



Avg. Session Duration

-29.59%

00:02:46 vs 00:03:56



Bounce Rate

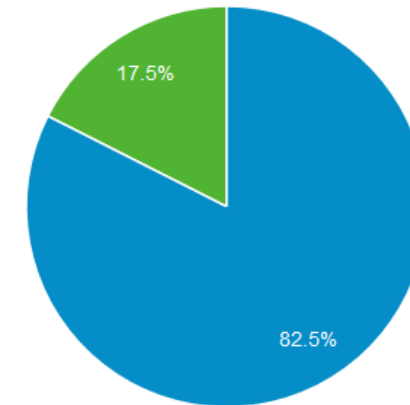
28.37%

55.19% vs 42.99%

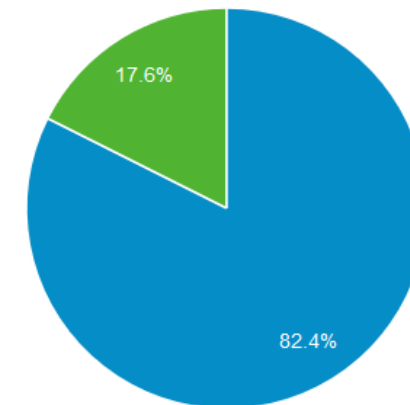


■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor

Jan 1, 2020 - Nov 3, 2020



Jan 1, 2016 - Nov 8, 2016



FPCA and FWAB Downloads from FVAP.gov

2020

- FPCA- 698,533
- Completion Time: 8.6 minutes

- FWAB- 79,444
- Completion Time: 10 minutes

2016

- FPCA- 231,222
- Completion Time: 9 minutes

- FWAB- 61,894
- Completion Time: 10.7 minutes



Customer Satisfaction Data

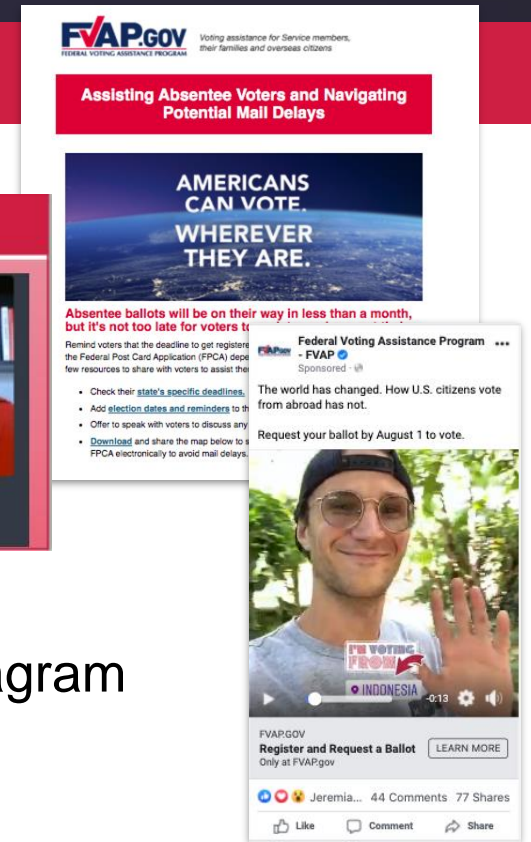
Customer Responses: Kudos!

- “Exceptional professional customer service. Thanks for the support.”
- “Glad to have this service.”
- “I am very grateful that this service exists.”
- “This is a great service for American's living abroad! This is my first time using FVAP and am I extremely pleased with both the ease of use and clear instructions.”
- “I was most impressed with how quickly I received a response. The analyst was extremely well versed and was able to give me the information I needed”
- “Unexpected. I'm impressed.”



Outreach

- Social media posts and campaigns
- Facebook lives and Instagram lives
- VAO in a Box
- Overseas Citizen Training Video
- FVAP Ambassador social media accounts and live sessions
- I voted digital stickers on FVAP.gov and giphy voting themed stickers on Instagram
- Curated email blasts to specific customers on our distro list on govdelivery
- #TrustedInfo campaign
- Partner engagements with State Department, Secure Families Initiative, Military OneSource, and more
- FVAP calendar alerts
- Paid media and ads running on social media channels and other outlets like The Local, The American, Military Spouse, BBC, and several others.



Outreach Results

Jan. 1, 2020 – Nov. 3, 2020

Over
**41 MILLION
MORE**
impressions
than in 2016

126,744,316 IMPRESSIONS

**1.1M more
web sessions
than in 2016**

1,402,006 WEB SESSIONS

**225K more
conversions
than in 2016**

255,202 CONVERSIONS

>30%

of visits to FVAP.gov
resulted in conversion

**IN TOP 10% OF CONVERSION
RATES FOR HIGH-TRAFFIC SITES
AND HIGHER THAN 2016**

Voting Assistance Ambassadors - 2020

- Conducted a pilot program to augment voter assistance in targeted countries with large populations of UOCAVA citizens.
 - Three cities targeted for the Voting Assistance Ambassadors: London, Rome, and Tokyo.
- Due to COVID-19 much of the work became virtual outreach.
- Allowed for voters in those countries to get responses in real-time (Ambassadors were in their same time zones).
- Currently analyzing the prospect to continue for future election cycles.



2022 Preparation



FVAP.gov
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

- ✓ Up for redesign every 2 years
- ✓ Just completed Federal Register for public comment periods
- ✓ Previous editions should still be accepted
- ✓ State requirements referenced

Used for both Registration & Ballot Request

Voter Registration and Absentee Ballot Request Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

This form is for absent Uniformed Service members, their families, and citizens residing outside the United States. It is used to register to vote, request an absentee ballot, and update your contact information. See your state's instructions at FVAP.gov.

Print clearly in blue or black ink, please see back for instructions.

1. Who are you? Pick one.

I request an absentee ballot for all elections in which I am eligible to vote AND:
 I am on active duty in the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine -OR- I am an eligible spouse or dependent.
 I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and I intend to return.
 I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and my intent to return is uncertain.
 I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and I have never lived in the United States.

Last name _____ Suffix (Jr., II) _____ Sex Female
First name _____ Previous names (if applicable) _____
Middle name _____ Birth date (MM/DD/YYYY) / /
Social Security Number _____ Driver's license or State ID # _____

2. What is your address in the U.S. state or territory where you are registering to vote and requesting an absentee ballot?

Your voting materials will not be sent to this address. See instructions on other side of form.

Street address _____ Apt # _____
City, town, village _____ State _____
County _____ ZIP _____

3. Where are you now? You MUST give your CURRENT address to receive your voting materials.

Your mailing address. (Different from above) _____ Your mail forwarding address. (if different from mailing address) _____

4. What is your contact information? This is so election officials can reach you about your request.

Provide the country code and area code with your phone and fax number. Do not use a Defense Switched Network (DSN) number.

Email: _____ Phone: _____
Alternate email: _____ Fax: _____

5. What are your preferences for upcoming elections?

A. How do you want to receive voting materials from your election office? (Select One) Mail Email or online Fax
B. What is your political party for primary elections? _____

6. What additional information must you provide?

Puerto Rico and Vermont require more information, see back for instructions. Additional state instructions may be found at FVAP.gov. You may also use this space to clarify your voter information.

7. You must read and sign this statement.

I swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury, that

- The information on this form is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a material misstatement of fact in completion of this document may constitute grounds for conviction of perjury.
- I am a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age (or will be by the day of the election), eligible to vote in the requested jurisdiction, and
- I am not disqualified to vote due to having been convicted of a felony or other disqualifying offense, nor have I been adjudicated mentally incompetent; or if so, my voting rights have been reinstated; and
- I am not registering, requesting a ballot, or voting in any other jurisdiction in the United States, except the jurisdiction cited in this voting form.

Sign here **X**

Today's date
(MM/DD/YYYY) / /

This information is for official use only. Any unauthorized release may be punishable by law.

Previous editions are obsolete.

Standard Form 76 (Rev.04-2015), OMB No. 0704-0503

Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

- ✓ Up for redesign every 2 years
- ✓ Just completed Federal Register for public comment periods
- ✓ If both state ballot and FWAB are received, only accept the state ballot
- ✓ UOCAVA voters can also use it in advance of an election by noting the election date on envelope and filling in which party they wish to vote for

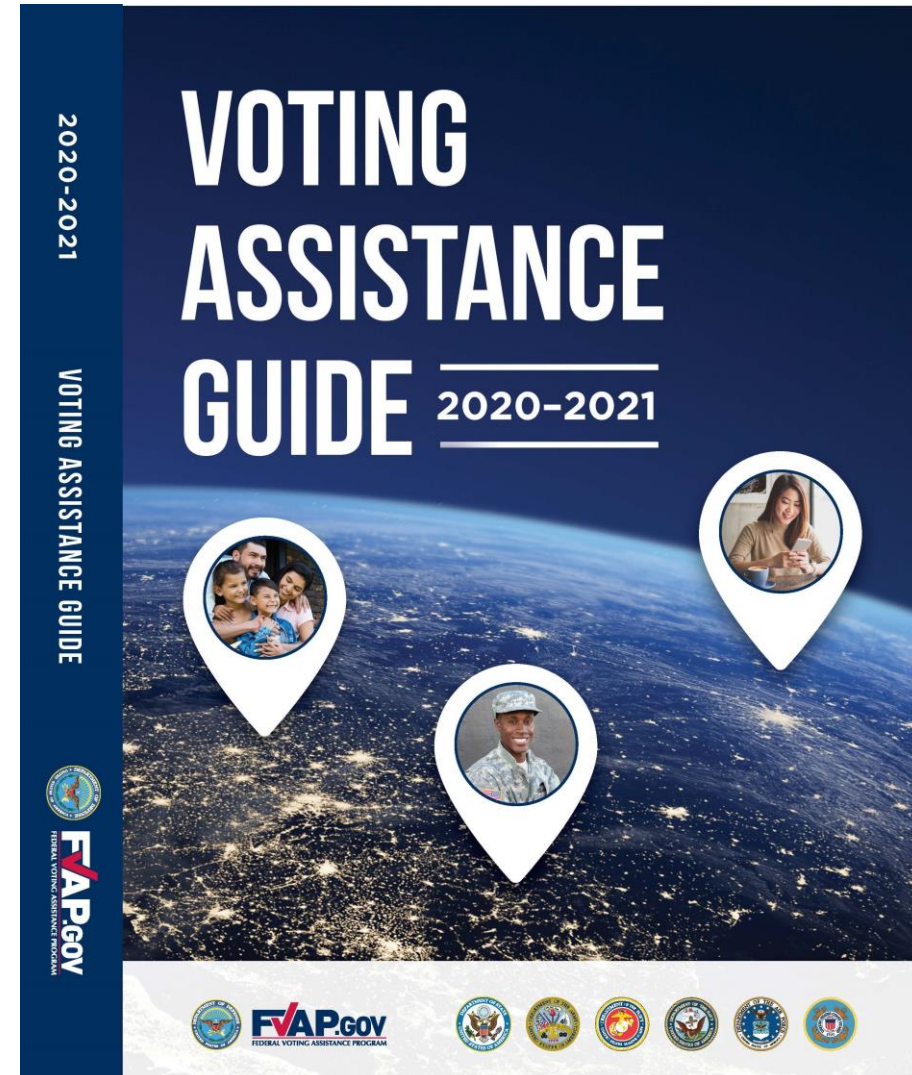
Some states require voters to register and request an absentee ballot before submitting the FWAB

The image displays two overlapping forms for the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB). The top form is the 'Voter Information' section, which includes a header with a red box asking if the voter has already registered and requested an absentee ballot. Below this are several sections: '1. Who are you? Pick one.' with checkboxes for various voter statuses; a personal information section with fields for last, first, middle, and social security numbers, along with birth date and driver's license/state ID; '2. What is your U.S. voting residence address?' with fields for street, city, and county; '3. Where are you now? You MUST give your CURRENT contact information.' with fields for mailing and mail forwarding addresses; '4. What is your contact information? This is so election officials can reach you' with fields for phone, fax, and email; '5. What are your preferences for future elections?' with checkboxes for registration and ballot request preferences; '6. What additional information must you provide?' with a blank space; and '7. You must read and sign this statement.' with a sworn statement and a 'Sign here' box with an 'X'.

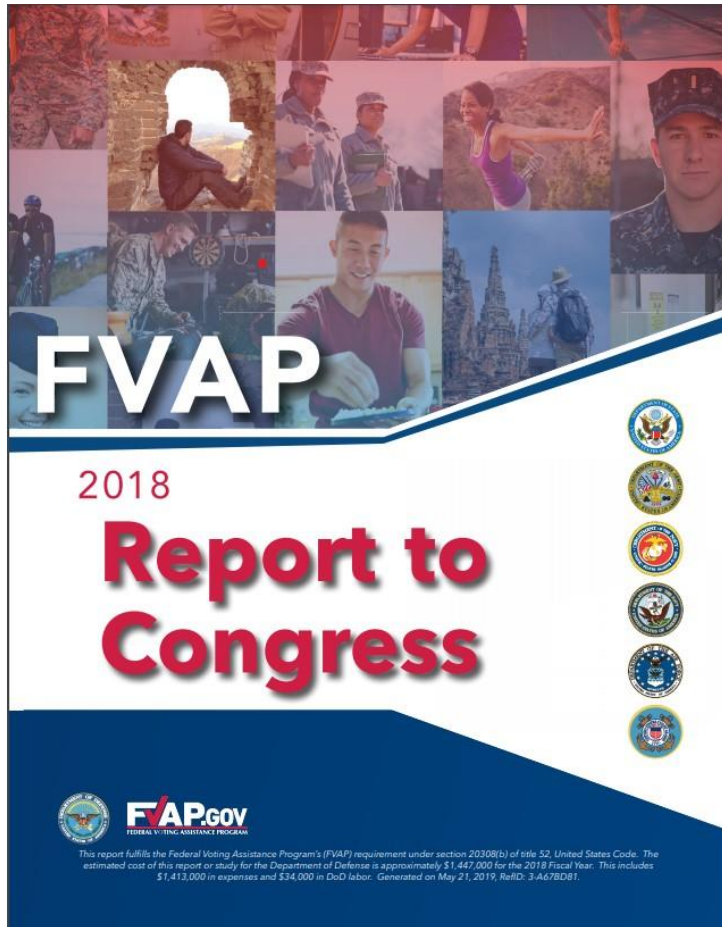
The bottom form is the 'Official Backup Ballot' section, which includes a red box with instructions to vote by writing the name or party of the candidates. It contains 'Instructions' for using the ballot, a section for 'Federal offices' with checkboxes for President and Vice President, U.S. Senator, and U.S. Representative, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner to Congress; a section for 'Non-federal offices' with a table for Office, Candidate name, and Political party; and a section for 'Ballot initiatives or other items' with a large blank space for writing.

Voting Assistance Guide

- ✓ In coordination with all 55 States and territories
- ✓ Distributed to military installations, Consulates, and Embassies worldwide
- ✓ Standardization of the *Voting Assistance Guide* into plain language to better support VAOs in the field and individual voters who visit FVAP.gov: **89% VAOs found it useful.**



Report to Congress



- Report will include a look at the 2020 cycle to plan out future activities.
- Currently in the progress of pulling together data.
- The results of the PEVS-SEO survey will be included and be one part of what drives our recommendations for the upcoming year.
 - Thank you for providing input!

State Activities



FVAP.gov
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



State Actions

Legislative monitoring:

- Shortening windows for return of ballot materials
- Electronic ballot returning using DoD issued electronic mail address, voter portals, etc.
- Pilot studies authorizing ballot return
- FPCA Section 6 requirements
- General impacts to UOCAVA

State Actions to enhance UOCAVA experience:

- Digital Signatures using DoD Common Access Cards
- Military Ballot Tracking Project study



FYI - FVAP 2021 Activities

- State Election Official Post-Election Voting survey
- FVAP availability for briefings to state and local election officials
- Public comment opportunities on proposed changes to FPCA and FWAB
- Updates to materials to include 2022 Voting Assistance Guide
- Continuing refinements to DoD Fax Service
- DoD proposal to remove itself from UOCAVA waiver process
- Release of FVAP EASE Grant Report to Congress
- **Release of FVAP 2020 Report to Congress**
- Release of FVAP 2020 Overseas Citizen Analysis
- Release of FVAP data standardization for Section B of the EAVS Survey
- Release of FVAP report on Military Ballot Tracking Project
- 2022 election cycle dates and deadlines

HOW TO VOTE FROM ANYWHERE IN
2 Simple Steps...
FOR U.S. MILITARY AND OVERSEAS CITIZENS

Did you know U.S. military members, their families and overseas citizens can exercise their right to vote from anywhere in the world?



HERE'S HOW:

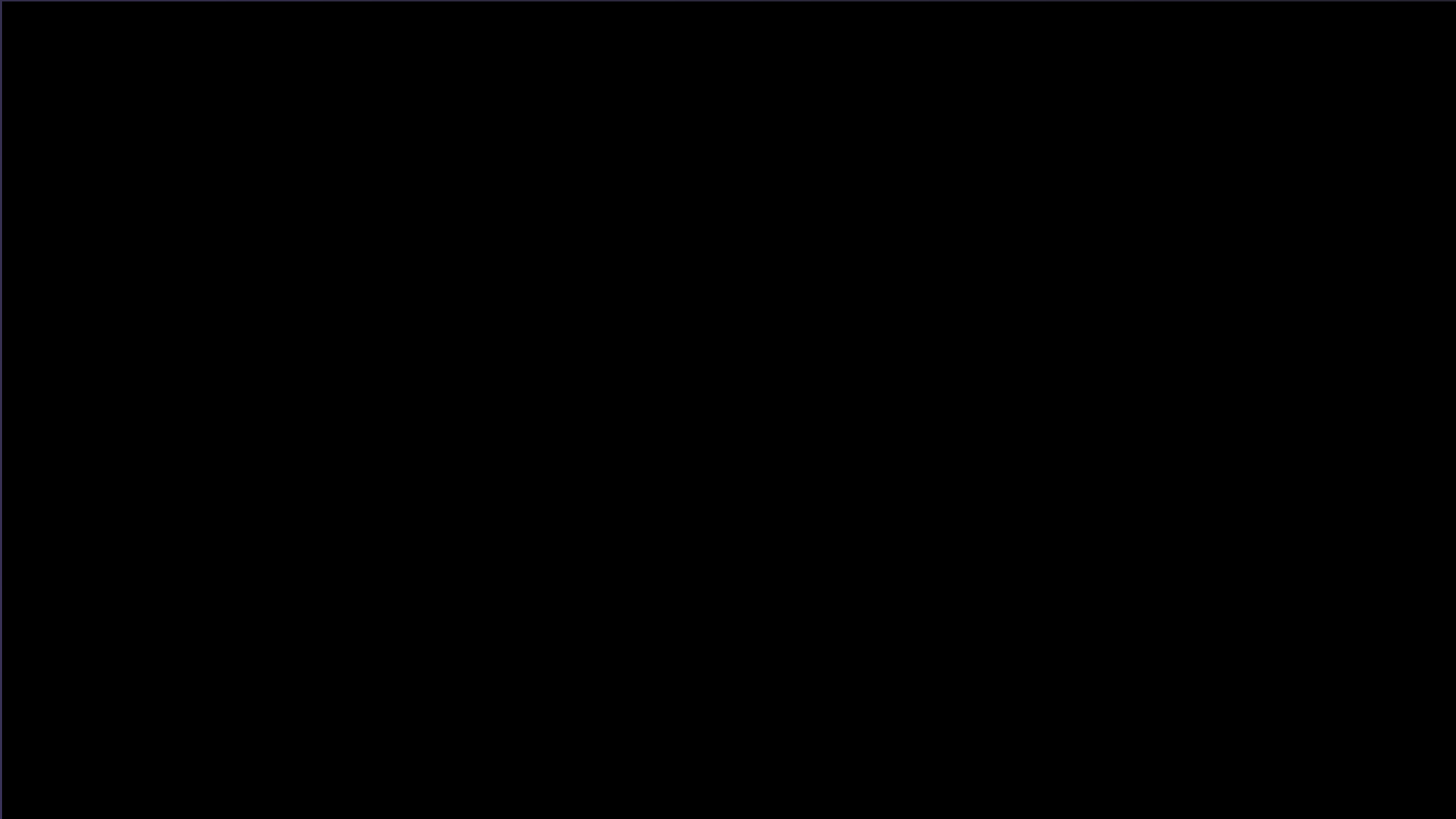
STEP 1
FILL OUT THE FEDERAL POST CARD APPLICATION (FPCA) AT FVAP.GOV TO REGISTER AND REQUEST YOUR BALLOT

WHEN?
Send it to your election office by **August 1*** (or later depending on your state) for the General Election on November 3, 2020.

STEP 2
FILL OUT AND SEND IN YOUR BALLOT WHEN IT ARRIVES

WHEN?
By your recommended deadline:

 October 5, 2020 <i>on a ship at sea</i>	 October 13, 2020 <i>outside the U.S.</i>	 October 27, 2020 <i>stateside</i>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



FVAP.gov
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Thank You!

More information:

[FVAP.gov](https://fvap.gov)

scott.wiedmann@fvap.gov

vote@fvap.gov

Connect with us:

1 (800) 438-VOTE (8683)



[@FVAP](https://twitter.com/FVAP)



[Facebook.com/DoDFVAP](https://www.facebook.com/DoDFVAP)



FVAP.gov
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM