



Federal Voting Assistance Program

Electronic Transmission Service

This document describes the procedures for preparing election materials for electronic transmission (fax/email).

Questions or comments concerning any aspect of these instructions may be directed to:

Director
Federal Voting Assistance Program
Department of Defense
1155 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1155

Telephone: 1-800-438-VOTE (8683)
Fax: (703) 588-0108
Email: vote@fvap.ncr.gov
Web: www.fvap.gov

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Chapter 1: Overview

A. THE FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM'S ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION SERVICE

The Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP's) Electronic Transmission Service (ETS) enables local election officials to transmit and receive election materials via fax or email to/from Uniformed Services members and overseas citizens. As a local election official, you may use the service at no cost.

The ETS can forward the documents as either a fax or email, whichever the local election official decides will best serve the voter.

B. WHEN TO USE THIS DELIVERY ALTERNATIVE

Local election officials and U.S citizens should use the ETS any time he/she believes the regular absentee ballot cannot be received, voted, and returned by mail in time to be counted, provided these methods are permitted by state legislative or regulatory authority. Refer to your State election laws and procedures.

Using the following fax or email options, the ETS enables you to:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Receive: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A general information request• Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)/registration and ballot request• Registration materials• A voted ballot |
| Send: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request for additional information to enable voting registration or ballot request (i.e., follow-up to an incomplete FPCA)• Responses to a voter's request for information• Un-voted Ballot to the voter• Un-voted Ballot to be stored by FVAP's ETS• Other election materials necessary for the voting process (e.g., ballot instructions) |

C. HOW IT WORKS

Election officials transmit election materials to Uniformed Services members and overseas citizens via fax through the ETS toll-free number or via email as an attached Portable Document Format (PDF) document. The ETS delivers materials as a read-only file just as they are received regardless of completion, legibility, or accuracy.

Chapter 2:

How to Transmit Election Materials

When transmitting election materials by fax or email through the ETS, you should use the Electronic Transmission Sheet provided in **Appendix C**. This sheet serves as the cover sheet and is always the first item in a packet. It should be reproduced as needed for transmission.

The Electronic Transmission Sheet must be completed as follows:

1. Type or print all information in dark ink so that it is fully legible and easy to read.
2. Complete the “To and “From” sections legibly.
3. In the “To” section, indicate the voter’s fax number or email address, mailing address and Social Security Number.
4. Be sure to include the number of pages being transmitted so that the recipient will know when the transmission is complete.

After completing the Electronic Transmission Sheet, as indicated above, attach your request to the transmission sheet. Fax or email it to either of the following:

Fax: 1-800-368-8683 or (703) 693-5527

Email: ets@fvap.ncr.gov

For **technical support**, call 1-800-966-8683 between 6:00a.m. and 10:00p.m. Eastern Time Monday – Friday. The ETS can receive faxes or emails 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The use of the specific fax numbers and email address provides an audit trail for all documents. If a transmission is interrupted before completion, please resend the entire package.

OPTION 1 - TRANSMITTING A DOCUMENT DIRECTLY TO A CITIZEN

A ballot or other voting materials can be forwarded immediately to the citizen via fax or email. When transmitting a document to a citizen, complete the Electronic Transmission Sheet to include the voter's fax number or email address and indicate whether the recipient should be sent a fax or email. Ballots should include voting and returning instructions and oath requirements. All documents should be formatted on 8 ½" by 11" paper.

Fax to one of the following numbers: 1-800-368-8683 or (703) 693-5527

Email to the following address: ets@fvap.ncr.gov

Should you experience any technical difficulty, or do not receive the number of pages indicated on the cover sheet, please contact the ETS at 1-800-966-8683 between 6:00a.m. and 10:00p.m. Eastern Time Monday – Friday. The ETS can receive faxes or emails 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The use of the specific fax numbers and email address provides an audit trail for all documents. If a transmission is interrupted before completion, please resend the entire package.

Local election officials will be notified if any irregularities occur during the transmission.

OPTION 2 - STORED BALLOT PROCESS

Storing ballots is an additional service provided by the Federal Voting Assistance Program. FVAP can store your ballots (one of each ballot style) and instructions at the ETS. Later, you can have the ETS transmit ballots to voters after you complete and transmit an Electronic Transmission Sheet. This process saves you time that you would normally use to individually prepare and fax ballots to voters, and is especially recommended when the ballot is several pages in length or if large quantities of ballots will be sent to voters by fax.

Step 1: Transmitting PDF Ballot Files to the ETS for storage

To have your ballots electronically stored, they may be emailed as a PDF to ets@fvap.ncr.gov, or mailed in PDF on a CD ROM to:

Federal Voting Assistance Program

c/o Omega Technologies, Inc.
555 E. Braddock Road Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22314-2162

The electronic package received by the ETS should contain:

- a. The ballot with voter instructions. Number or name each ballot PDF file. The file name **must not** contain any spaces.
- b. A contact person from your location including a mailing address, email address, phone and fax number.
- c. If not the same as the contact person, the name(s) and title(s) of the person(s) on your staff authorized to approve transmission of stored ballots.

Step 2: Forwarding Ballots to Citizens

- a. Complete an Electronic Transmission Sheet for each citizen and transmit to ETS, designating the ballot type and indicate whether the recipient should receive a fax or email.
- b. Upon receipt of the Electronic Transmission Sheet, the ETS will attach the proper instructions with the corresponding ballot, log the transaction and transmit the entire packet of materials to the voter using the fax number or email address for the citizen provided by the local election official.

Note: Stored un-voted ballots and instructions will be retained for **30 days following the election** and then deleted from the system, unless otherwise specified in writing by the jurisdiction.

Fax to one of the following numbers: 1-800-368-8683 or (703) 693-5527

Email to the following address: ets@fvap.ncr.gov

Should you experience any technical difficulty, or do not receive the number of pages indicated on the cover sheet, please contact the ETS at 1-800-966-8683 between 6:00a.m. and 10:00p.m. Eastern Time Monday – Friday. The ETS can receive faxes or emails 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The use of the specific fax numbers and email address provides an audit trail for all documents. If a transmission is interrupted before completion, please resend the entire package.

Local election officials will be notified if any irregularities occur during the transmission.

Chapter 3

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Do I have to transmit a separate fax transmission or email for each ballot?

ANSWER: Yes. The transmission that you send cannot be altered for security and audit purposes. This means that several ballots sent in one transmission cannot be separated to be routed to different voters. This is why it is very important that each transmission be made up of the Electronic Transmission Sheet for the voter, the instructions, and the document or ballot and oath (if required by State law) in that order.

QUESTION: I have a special oath on the envelope. What should I do?

ANSWER: If there is any information, such as a special oath on the envelope, the oath should be copied and included in the transmission. The instructions should explain how this oath is to be signed and returned.

QUESTION: If I have the voter's fax number, why shouldn't I just fax it myself?

ANSWER: The ETS can fax to any number worldwide at no cost to you. Also, some Uniformed Services members may provide you with a Defense Switched Network (DSN) number. The ETS can route faxes to these numbers. Additionally, the ETS provides an audit trail of all transmissions.

QUESTION: When can I fax and email?

ANSWER: The ETS accepts faxes and emails 24-hours a day 7 days a week. Technical assistance is available between 6:00a.m. and 10:00p.m. Eastern Time Monday – Friday with extended hours as needed at 1-800-966-8683.

Appendices

A Glossary of Terms

B Absentee Ballot Transmittal Log

C Electronic Transmission Sheet

Appendix A:

Glossary of Terms

APO/FPO - Essentially a military “zip-code,” this portion of the address must be included on the transmission sheet to ensure delivery to the proper location.

Ballot ID Number or Name - Used when storing ballots, the number or letters used by local election officials to identify a ballot and its instructions that have been stored at the FVAP Electronic Transmission Service.

Ballot Pages - The 8½" by 11" format in which the ballot is electronically transmitted.

Federal Post Card Application (FPCA, SF 76) - Form used by Uniformed Services member and overseas citizens to register to vote and request a ballot. State laws differ in the extent of use for the FPCA.

Electronic Transmission Service - The processing and customer service center where transmissions are routed between absentee voters and state and local government officials.

Read-Only - Documents that may be seen on a computer display but not altered in any way. All transmission routed through the FVAP Electronic Transmission Service are handled in this manner.

Secrecy Waiver - Statement that must be signed by a voter who returns a voted ballot electronically.

Simple Numbering System - A simple scheme used to identify stored election materials. For example, a ballot might be identified as DEM-001 for a primary election, or 001 for a general election.

Stored Ballot - A ballot (or set of ballots) that is (are) marked with ID numbers or letters and sent to the Electronic Transmission Service prior to an election so that the absentee ballot does not have to be transmitted with each transmission cover sheet.

Electronic Transmission Sheet - Cover sheet that must be used as the first page of any transmission sent to the voter.

Other Election Materials - Materials to be transmitted to voters other than ballots, such as voter information, or requests for additional information when an application is incomplete.

Voter Instructions - Instructions provided by the local election official that explains how to vote and return the ballot.

Appendix C: Electronic Transmission Sheet

Copies should be made of the transmission sheet for actual use.

Always be sure to have a few blank copies on hand, and do not write on the original.

Official Election Materials — Electronic Transmission Sheet

Transmittal (Cover) Sheet from Election Official to Absentee Voter

From:

City/County Board of Elections		State
Telephone Number		
Fax Number		
Street Address		
City	State	Zip Code

To:

Last Name		
First Name	Middle Name	
Telephone Number		
Fax Number		
Social Security Number (###-##-####)	Date of Birth (MM/DD/YY)	Please forward the attached document by: <input type="checkbox"/> FAX <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail
Mailing Address		
City	State or Country	
Unit/Ship	Postal Code/APO/FPO	
Email Address		

Circle One: Army Navy Air Force Marine Corps Coast Guard Other _____

Contents of Transmission (Check Those Applicable): _____ Ballot _____ Stored Ballot (Number _____)
Other Election Materials (Specify) _____

Authorizing Signature (if required) _____ Date _____

Number of pages being transmitted, including this sheet _____

Fax to one of these numbers: 703-693-5527 or 1-800-368-8683

or Email to: ets@fvap.ncr.gov

Federal Voting Assistance Program Use Only — DO NOT Complete this Section

Date Received _____ Time Received _____

Date Sent _____ Time Sent _____

Transaction Number _____ Processed By _____