



Voting Information News

August 2003 ☞ Vol. 13, No. 8

**A roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)
For voters, potential voters and those who assist voters.**

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Voting Assistance Officers

“To Do” This Month:

Remind new arrivals in your area to notify their local election officials of their new mailing address because election materials are generally not forwarded in the mail. Mail delays are a major cause of disenfranchisement of UOCAVA citizens. The FPCA contains a small postage-paid perforated post card that can be used to request a mailing address change with the local election official in your voting residence state.

Have you requested a Voting Training Workshop in your area? If not, please determine if training is needed. If training is needed in your area, please e-mail vote@fvap.ncr.gov as well as your Service Voting Action Officer (contact information on Page 3) to submit your request. A Workshop schedule is now being planned with training to begin this Fall.

2004-05 Voting Assistance Guide Coming Soon!

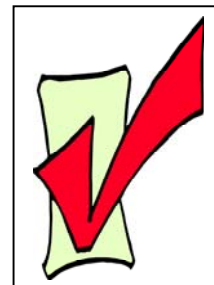
The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) is currently in the process of coordinating the 2004-05 edition of the *Voting Assistance Guide* with the Chief Election Officials in each of the States and territories. The State officials are reviewing their sections and updating it with procedural and address changes which have occurred since the printed 2002-03 edition of the *Guide* that was distributed in 2001. Production and printing of the *Guide* is scheduled to begin in October with distribution to the Services and Service Voting Action Officers in November. We are striving to have the *Guide* distribution complete before the holiday mail rush to allow ample time for Voting Assistance Officers to plan and implement their 2004 voter outreach efforts prior to the early primary elections in 2004.

The *Guide* is the most important source of procedural information available to Voting Assistance Officers and citizens covered by the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*. It is designed in a user-friendly format and contains basic state-by-state procedures and instructions for UOCAVA citizens to request registration and/or an absentee ballot from their state of residence. The new edition of the *Guide* also features sections on the FVAP, instructions for Voting Assistance Officers, a primary and general election calendar for 2004, procedures to follow for use with the Electronic Transmission Service (faxing service), a copy of the UOCAVA (as amended by the *Help America Vote Act of 2002*), and information on state income tax liability.

Production of the *Guide* requires extensive coordination with State and local government officials to ensure the information is both accurate and in an easy-to-follow format. The up-to-date *Guide* will help UOCAVA citizens to better understand and participate in the democratic process. It will be available in book format and on the FVAP's website at www.fvap.gov.

Once the revised *Guide* has been issued, copies of the previous edition of the *Guide* are available and can be used for educational purposes only. Since some of the information in the previous *Guide* edition is outdated, they should not be used to assist UOCAVA voters without consulting the FVAP staff. However, the outdated *Guides* are a great tool for training election officials about the general absentee voting processes.

Once the *Guide* is printed it will be available through normal distribution channels. Check with your Installation Voting Assistance Officer or your Service Voting Action Officer (see Page 3 for contact information) to ensure that you are on the distribution list for the *Guide* and other voting program materials.



**“To Do” This Month
(continued):**

- If you are a new Voting Assistance Officer, review the on-line Training Workshop presentation for VAOs at the FVAP Website www.fvap.gov to obtain a brief orientation of the program. Chapter Two of the *Voting Assistance Guide* also provides an overview of your responsibilities as a VAO..
- Be sure to keep your voting continuity folder up-to-date by keeping all important voting information in the folder. You should place a copy of each *Voting Information News* newsletter in the folder. This will help to ensure your successor receives a quick orientation of his or her voting responsibilities upon your departure.
- Check to be sure all persons you assist (including family members) are aware of upcoming elections and have the necessary knowledge and materials to participate in these elections. Several states will hold elections for State offices this Fall.
- If you currently receive this newsletter by mail and would prefer to receive newsletters via e-mail, please contact us by phone or e-mail the FVAP at vote@fvap.ncr.gov. You may elect to receive the newsletter by mail, electronically, or in both formats. On-line versions of the newsletter and news releases are also available on the FVAP website, www.fvap.gov.

FROM THE DESK OF THE MARINE CORPS SENIOR SERVICE VOTING REPRESENTATIVE

The right to VOTE is one of our most important civil liberties. Moreover, for Americans, voting is an obligation that accompanies and protects the freedoms we enjoy. Since the birth of our nation, Americans have understood their obligation as citizens to VOTE. By exercising their right to vote, and by meeting their obligation to express themselves with the ballot, Americans have preserved our democratic system. Marines, Civilian Marines, and eligible family members of both must be encouraged to continue to exercise their right to VOTE and to be heard as Americans.

The mission of the Marine Corps' Voter Registration Program is to ensure that every Marine, Civilian Marine, their eligible family members, and other personnel who are attached to or serving with Marine Corps units are afforded every opportunity to vote. Past election statistics and recently conducted Inspector General visits have indicated there is room for improvement within our Corps with respect to voter registration. We must do a better job of informing our voters about how to register and vote. To accomplish this vital mission for the 2004 Presidential Election, there are several areas on which Voting Assistance Officers (VAO) must focus their attention in the coming months:

1. Voting Assistance Officers (VAO) must continually work to enhance voter awareness and encourage voter participation. This can be accomplished by VAO's utilizing MCO 1742.1A, the USMC Voting Action Plan, and the USMC voting presentations. Those resources are all located on the Marine Corps voting web page. https://lnweb1.manpower.usmc.mil/manpower/mi/mra_ofct.nsf/mrp/Voting+Home.



2. VAOs should maximize training opportunities and inform Marines of the procedures for registering to vote. Marines, Civilian Marines, and eligible family members are highly encouraged to attend the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) voting workshops to be held at various military installations. These workshops are required training for VAOs but are open to all citizens who want to learn more about absentee voter registration and voting in general. FVAP workshops are open to all branches of the service regardless of which branch of the service is hosting the workshop. The Marine Corps will be hosting six FVAP workshops: Kaneohe Bay, HI; Camp Pendleton, CA; Cherry Point, NC; Camp Lejeune, NC; Quantico, VA; and Okinawa, JA. Once the dates for the workshops are finalized a MARADMIN will be published.

3. VAOs should ensure they have adequate amounts of voting materials in accordance with MCO 1742.1A. (continued on next page)

FROM THE DESK OF THE MARINE CORPS SSVR
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Of particular importance is the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA, SF-76). Enclosure (1) of the MCO details the requirements for delivery of the FPCA and enclosure (3) details information on how to order FPCAs and other voting materials.

VAOs are leaders who have been appointed by their commanders to educate, train, and inform members of the command and their families about voting procedures. Commanders should support and encourage the efforts of VAOs. With the active support of commanders, VAOs can ensure that all Marines, Civilian Marines, and eligible family members will have the information they need to exercise their right to VOTE and preserve this vital part of the freedom they defend!

MajGen Stephen T. Johnson

RECENT STATE VOTING CHANGES

Arizona: UOCAVA voters may submit their FPCA ballot request via fax, may receive their blank ballot via fax, and may return their voted ballot via fax.

Nevada. Nevada now accepts the on-line version of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). This on-line form is found at the FVAP website, www.fvap.gov.

Oklahoma:

- UOCAVA voters may submit their FPCA ballot request via fax, may receive their blank ballot via fax, and may return their voted ballot via fax.
- The primary election has been moved to the last Tuesday in July, and the runoff primary to the fourth Tuesday in August. For the runoff primary, UOCAVA ballots received up to 14 days following the runoff primary election will be counted

Virgin Islands: The Virgin Islands now accept the on-line version of the FPCA.

Think You Can't Make A Difference? Think Again! VOTE

—MS1 (SW) Thaddeus T. Wright, USN, Guam

Voting Action Officers

Department of State: Office of American Citizen Services

Chief VAO: Mr. Jack Markey, tel: (202) 736-4937, fax: (202) 647-6201, E-mail: markeyjd@state.gov
Deputy VAO: Ms. Bonnie Harris, tel: (202) 647-5435, fax: (202) 647-6201, E-mail: harrisbg@state.gov

Service Voting Action Officers

Dept. of the Army: Mr. James Davis tel: (703) 325-4530 DSN: 221-4530; fax: (703) 325-4532
DSN fax: 221-4532; E-mail: davisj@hoffman.army.mil,
<https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/tagd/pssd/psb/voting/votingindex.htm>

Dept. of the Navy: LT Brian Campbell tel: 1-800-368-5056; fax: (901) 874-2689, DSN fax: 882-2689;
E-mail: MILL_navyvote@navy.mil, <https://www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap>

Dept. of the Air Force: Lt. Col. Lee Shick tel: (210) 565-3514, toll free: 1-800-558-1404, DSN: 665-3514 or 2572;
fax: (210) 565-2543, DSN fax: 665-2543; E-mail: Lee.Shick@randolph.af.mil
<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/votefund/>

Marine Corps: GySgt Kenneth B. Warford tel: (703) 784-9511, DSN: 278-9511;
fax: (703) 784-9828, DSN fax: 278-9828; E-mail: warfordkb@manpower.usmc.mil
https://lnweb1.manpower.usmc.mil/manpower/mi/mra_ofct.nsf/mrp/Voting+Home

U.S. Coast Guard: Ensign Steve Rodanhisler tel: (202)-267-2005, fax: (202) 267-4823, attn: Lt. Luna;
E-mail: srodanhisler@comdt.uscg.mil, http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wp/g-wpm/g-wpm-1/VotingAssistance/Voting_Assistance.htm

All of the above can also be reached through the DoD Voting Information Center and the FVAP Website.

Federal Voting Assistance Program

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Washington, DC
20301-1155

PHONE:
(703) 588-1584
DSN 425-1584

FAX:
(703) 588-0108
DSN 425-0108

VOTING INFORMATION
CENTER:
(703) 588-1343
DSN 425-1343

TOLL FREE:
1-800-438-VOTE (8683)

E-MAIL:
vote@fvap.ncr.gov

Website:
www.fvap.gov

Vote!

FVAP Forwards Legislative Initiatives to Congress

In our December 2002 issue of the *Voting Information News*, we discussed ten issues to make the absentee voting process easier for *UOCAVA* citizens. These issues were provided to the Chief Election Official in each State and territory as proposed legislative changes that should be considered by their State legislatures. By enacting these proposals the States would simplify and make the absentee voting process more uniform among the individual States.

The States have considered these legislative initiatives as they apply to that State. Bills have been introduced in State legislatures to change laws that impede absentee voting by *UOCAVA* citizens. FVAP is pleased to report that progress has been made in removing some

requirements that make absentee voting difficult for *UOCAVA* citizens.

State Governors or chief executives have reported the progress made in easing the absentee voting process for *UOCAVA* citizens. FVAP, as required by the *National Defense Authorization Act for FY-2002*, has forwarded these Governors' reports on to Congress. These reports keep the Senators and Representative(s) from the States apprised of the progress being made and allows these elected officials to work with their States in removing the remaining impediments.

FVAP will continue to work with the States to simplify and improve the absentee voting process for *UOCAVAU* citizens.

About Our Organization...

Voting Information News provides information for citizens and Voting Assistance Officers and is published monthly by the FVAP.

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