



Nevada Secretary of State, Francisco Aguilar

2018 -2023 Combined HAVA Election Security Grant Budget Narrative

January 2023

The following project narrative describes how the Office of the Nevada Secretary of State plans to use the \$11,083,287.00 award and to identify the \$1,574,999.00 required matching funds. This narrative includes the timeframe for the use of the funds, as well as the immediate and long-term activities/improvements. It also includes a description of the allocation and expenditure of the required matching funds.

Nevada currently has four full-time employee salaries being paid with HAVA grant funds. These four positions divide their time among all HAVA grant categories. Two of the positions were previously paid out of State general funds, but due to Coronavirus-related budget cuts, these positions' salaries were moved to HAVA grant funds. The Secretary of State's Office will endeavor to shift these positions back to the State's general fund during the 2023 budget, which would go into effect on July 1, 2023.

Voting Equipment

In 2017, all of Nevada's local election officials purchased new voting equipment. There is a plan under discussion to potentially use HAVA grants to purchase a limited number of additional voting equipment in support of Tribal voting locations across Nevada. If the decision is made to do so, it will be reported in future grant program narratives.

Election Auditing

This category will use award funds to expand upon current practices and procedures, as well as utilize industry best practices within the state. In 2018 the Secretary of State used grant funds to hire a full-time position dedicated to improving the administration of federal elections through local election official procedure audits, in conjunction with review and improvement of state guidance of election procedures. A majority of Nevada's local election officials are part-time election administrators, and the development of defined and well-rounded state guidance will improve the integrity and uniformity of administration of elections for federal office at the local level.

More robust post-election auditing will also be undertaken using award funds. Legislation passed in 2019 required Nevada to begin doing post-election, risk limiting audit pilots starting in 2020 and to do them full time starting in 2024. This has included the research and development of audit procedures and the purchase of auditing software. The State conducted 8 pilot audits during 2021 and early 2022 of single jurisdictions. These pilots continued through the 2022 election cycle and with a risk limiting audit conducted at every opportunity. These audits will continue after any special election in 2023 as well as after all three elections (Presidential Preference Primary in February 2024, Primary in June 2024, General in November 2024) of the 2024 cycle.

Voting Registration Systems

The 2018 Election Security funds allowed the creation of a new full-time position, the Statewide Voter Registration List Lead (SVRL Lead). The SVRL Lead's primary responsibility is to focus on improving the security and procedures for data management and maintenance according to federal and state requirements. The SVRL Lead has worked with Nevada's three voter registration database vendors to improve and standardize the transfer of data between the counties to the State and vice versa, as well as the transfer of data with the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles. This has been especially useful as Nevada utilizes a bottom-up system in which local election officials manage and maintain a county voter registration system that feeds batch data into the statewide system to comply with federal requirements.

Election Security funds also allowed the State to hire three contractors through 2022 to help analyze and implement new cyber-security features for the statewide voter registration database, at both the county and state level.

In addition, after consulting with Nevada's local election officials and at the direction of the Secretary of State, the majority of the HAVA grant will be used to research, develop, and implement a top-down voter registration system. Nevada currently uses a bottom-up voter registration model where local election officials manage and maintain a county voter registration system that feeds batch data into the statewide system to comply with federal requirements. This current model has elevated data and cyber-security concerns, relying on multiple entry points across the State and 17 counties, and limits State oversight of list maintenance and voter registration records. A top-down system will greatly reduce these concerns and limitations.

Converting to a top-down system will be a multi-phase project; discovery, solution development and implementation. The discovery phase included hiring a project manager to see the entire process through, as well as bringing on a consultant to help navigate next steps and best practices towards integration. The decision to purchase, develop or hybridize the top-down system was made in 2022. In February 2022, the Secretary of State, with the assistance of a consultant, made the decision to purchase a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) solution. As of this Report, the State is about to begin the contract negotiations with a vendor identified through collaboration with the State Purchasing division.

The implementation phase will likely be the costliest, requiring the purchase of software and/or staffing new technical positions at the office of the Secretary of State to develop and oversee the new system.

Auditing the voter registration list to prevent and discover cases of potential double voting is one of Nevada's highest priorities. Being a member of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) is extremely helpful in this endeavor and such membership fees are budgeted from this grant category. This use of the HAVA grant funds was previously categorized under Election Auditing but fits better with Voter Registration Systems.

Cyber-Security

As previously mentioned, Nevada hired the SVRL Lead and three contractors in 2018. Collectively, these four positions used grant funds to greatly increase the security of Nevada elections and voter registration practices. This team diagramed all county and state access points to the statewide voter registration list and identified necessary changes to increase the security of the voter registration data. Current projects, based on their research, include implementing multifactor authentication at all access point levels and moving all 17 county registration databases to isolated and dedicated hardware.

These projects entail reworking basic login features and security requirements to voter registration database software, creating levels of user capabilities within the database and utilizing multifactor authentication such as biometric scanners and smart cards to access the database. Isolated and dedicated hardware greatly reduce the amount of access points to county data and greatly increase the overall security county data. Most of these funds will continue to be utilized as subgrants to the counties.

This category will also provide for the establishment of procedures for local election official training, with emphasis on cybersecurity.

Communication

The Secretary of State will use a nominal portion of the award funds to increase public awareness regarding local and state resources available to registered voters to access, review, and secure their voter registration record.

Additional voter education will include increased public awareness about the measures taken by local and state election officials to collect, secure, and maintain voter registration and voting systems.

Prior to the 2023 legislative session, a line item was added to the Elections Division budget requesting a substantial amount of state funds to pay for a voter outreach program. If approved, no grant funds will be used going forward for future voter education or outreach campaigns.

Other: Improve Administration of Federal Elections

To help improve the administration of federal elections, the Office of the Secretary of State routinely holds calls and training sessions with the 17 county clerks. These training calls help keep Nevada's independent jurisdictions uniform with voter registration and election practices.

Additional funds have been used to invest in the training of Secretary of State staff by attending Election Center CERA classes. As of this Report, the Secretary's Office has one CERA graduate and four other members who are in the process of completing the requisite coursework.

Additionally, grant funds have also been used to help facilitate programs that enhance voter experience and understanding in Nevada elections. These programs have enriched voting capabilities for UOCAVA voters and Nevada voters with disabilities, as well as allowed all Nevada voters to better utilize the mail ballot process (which was extensively used due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

Other

A nominal portion of funds will be used to support the four full-time HAVA team-members and the three contractor positions with upgraded work items such as laptops and noise-canceling headphones.

Required State Match

Nevada's total required state match is \$1,574,999.00. Of that total, \$200,000 remains. \$213,886 was previously met in 2018 with a cash contribution from the State's general fund, which was used for the purchase of voting equipment. \$1,161,113 was contributed from the State's General Fund to assist with paying for annual voting system license and support fees. With the issuance of the 2023 NGA, the Secretary of State has allocated the remaining \$200,000 to assist with paying for the annual voting system license and support fees. This will allow the full matching requirement to be met by June 2023.

EAC FY23 HAVA GRANT - BUDGET WORKSHEET

OMB#: 3265-0023 Expiration Date: 9/30/2025

GRANTEE NAME: Office of the Nevada Secretary of State
 AWARD TYPE: FORMULA MATCH %: 20%
 PROJECT PERIOD START DATE: 3/23/2018 INDIRECT COST % (IF APPLIED):
 PROJECT PERIOD END DATE: INDIRECT COST TYPE:

SECTION A: GRANT BUDGET	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE	YEAR FOUR	YEAR FIVE	TOTAL:
FEDERAL AMOUNT	\$ 4,277,723.00	\$ 4,805,564.00	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00		\$ 11,083,287.00
NON FEDERAL MATCH	\$ 213,886.00	\$ 961,113.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00		\$ 1,574,999.00
TOTAL:	\$ 4,491,609.00	\$ 5,766,677.00	\$ 1,200,000.00	\$ 1,200,000.00	\$ -	\$ 12,658,286.00

SECTION B: BUDGET CATEGORIES (Federal)	Voting Equipment	Voting Processes	Voter Registration Systems	Election Auditing	Cyber and Physical Security	Voter Education	Accessibility	Other (HAVA Staff Support Phone, email, other operating)	Other (Improve Administration of Fed. Elections)	TOTALS	% Fed Total
PERSONNEL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 576,121.45	\$ 365,276.80	\$ 123,399.81	\$ 25,404.04	\$ -	\$ 85,373.40	\$ 552,198.55	\$ 1,727,774.05	16%
FRINGE RELATED TO SALARY	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 202,421.05	\$ 128,340.50	\$ 43,356.69	\$ 8,925.74	\$ -	\$ 29,996.06	\$ 194,015.71	\$ 607,055.75	5%
EQUIPMENT	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
TRAINING	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,371.04	\$ 4,193.34	\$ 27,586.84	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 132,880.24	\$ 169,031.46	2%
CONTRACTUAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
OTHER (Describe)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
OTHER Travel, Statewide Allocations, Administrative Costs and Voting System Solutions	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,766,044.78	\$ 74,961.92	\$ 646,794.29	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,189.45	\$ 645,545.34	\$ 8,171,535.78	74%
SUBGRANTS	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,272.10	\$ 389,617.86	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 407,889.96	4%
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,548,958.32	\$ 591,044.66	\$ 1,230,755.49	\$ 34,329.78	\$ -	\$ 153,558.91	\$ 1,524,639.84	\$ 11,083,287.00	100%
INDIRECT COSTS (if applied)										\$ -	0%
TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,548,958.32	\$ 591,044.66	\$ 1,230,755.49	\$ 34,329.78	\$ -	\$ 153,558.91	\$ 1,524,639.84	\$ 11,083,287.00	100%
PERCENTAGE BY CATEGORY	0%	0%	68%	5%	11%	0%	0%	1%	14%		

SECTION C: NON FEDERAL MATCH RESOURCES

SOURCE DESCRIPTION	STATE FUNDS	OTHER	TOTAL:
Cash Match	\$ 1,574,999.00		\$ 1,574,999.00
		\$ -	\$ -
		\$ -	\$ -
		\$ -	\$ -
		\$ -	\$ -
		\$ -	\$ -
	\$ 1,574,999.00	\$ -	\$ 1,574,999.00