



OKLAHOMA STATE ELECTION BOARD

2020 HAVA ELECTION SECURITY GRANT STATE OF OKLAHOMA NARRATIVE

This is the narrative of the Oklahoma State Election Board's plan to expend the 2020 Help America Vote Act Election Security Grant award funds. The Notice of Grant Award from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission is dated January 17, 2020, and the funding information is as follows: Federal Share - \$5,840,818 and State Match Share (20%) - \$1,168,164. The State Election Board was appropriated \$1,164,069 in FY2021 for the State Match Share and has identified \$4,095 in our state revolving fund account for the remaining match funds. We can begin spending state match funds on July 1, 2020.

The State Election Board does not intend to use any part of the federal grant funds to pay personnel expenses.

Our plan for expending the 2020 HAVA security funds will include but is not limited to the projected expenditures within the following categories:

Security

The State Election Board is working closely with our state cybersecurity experts at the Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES) – Information Services Division and with state and federal Department of Homeland Security personnel to ensure that we have a robust plan in place for cybersecurity and physical security. With input from our many partners, we will continue to identify areas to enhance our security profile at both the state and county level.

Expenditures to enhance physical and cybersecurity may include:

- Upgrades and/or modernization of hardware and/or software to enhance the security of election management system, voting system, voter registration system, websites, or voter services platforms.
- Physical security and/or cybersecurity assessments.
- Hardware, software, or services for security monitoring, detection, or scanning.
- Hardware, software, or services to monitor and/or combat misinformation.
- Hardware, software, or services for conducting election results audits.
- Hardware, software, or services for complying with federal and/or state security mandates.
- Enhancements to physical security at the State Election Board, County Election Boards, and in-person voting sites.
- Implementing election results audit procedures.
- Transition hosting from AWS to AWS GovCloud.
- Complying with federal and state security mandates.

Equipment

Oklahoma will follow state competitive bid requirements to purchase any equipment with federal funds.

Oklahoma implemented a new statewide election system in January 2012. At the end of the 2020 election cycle, we believe our system will be at more than the halfway mark of its lifespan and that it may require hardware and/or software updates. We also anticipate that federal funds could be put toward a replacement HAVA compliant voting system in the future.

Electronic Poll Books can increase efficiency at the polling place by providing the ability to scan voters' identifications and list ballot(s) the voter is eligible to receive. Electronic poll books can also reduce errors in recording voter credit and can protect our voting system against voter fraud. Many electronic poll book systems have built-in integrity checks to detect and flag records that have been added via potential intrusions.

Voter Registration, Election Management and Voter Services Systems

Our current voter registration and election management system - Modern Election Support Application (MESA) - is a custom system and is used by the State Election Board and all 77 County Election Boards in Oklahoma. We intend to replace the PowerBuilder user interface with a web-hosted user interface hosted in a secure, redundant data center. Some of the security advantages to this approach are:

- Utilizes the latest secure technologies, such as .NET, SSL, etc.
- Removes the requirement of a Windows executable file installed on client PCs.
- Browser-based access would allow the use of more secure operating systems (Mac OS, Linux) for clients and isolates MESA-hosted application from potential virus status of local machines in most cases.
- Consolidation of application onto a few web servers restricts the number of potential attack vectors and allows for centralized security and control.
- Provides better options for redundancy of database and application with automated failover across multiple regions.
- Moving database access from client to web server adds an additional layer of isolation in the application architecture between the end user, their machine, and the actual data – thereby greatly increasing the security posture.

In 2015, the Oklahoma legislature passed Senate Bill 313 which authorized online voter registration. The bill requires such a system to link with the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety (DPS) driver license database to verify information submitted and retrieve a signature. DPS is upgrading its computer system and will be able to accommodate online voter registration when the new system is in place later this year. The State Election Board is hopeful that full online voter registration can be implemented in 2021 and that the additional HAVA funds may be used for some of the system implementation or maintenance.

Other planned enhancements include:

- Development of online candidate filing application.
- Development of secure online data warehouse.
- Enhancements to our Election Management System.
- Development of iOS and Android application.

Training

The State Election Board will develop and implement ongoing training for all State Election Board and County Election Board staff on new hardware and software or purchases made with grant funds.

The State Election Board also intends to enhance and improve existing security training for our State Election Board employees as well as the staff at local County Election Boards. We plan to work with our many partners and vendors to develop curriculum and plan to explore and utilize various ways to deliver the training such as webinars, video conferences and in-person training. The use of Tabletop Exercises (TTX) has been implemented and used to train Oklahoma election officials. We will continue to utilize this method of security training.

COVID-19

The State Election Board may utilize the 2020 HAVA Election Security Grant funds to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus during the 2020 Federal election cycle. Possible expenditures for this purpose were detailed in our CARES Grant Disbursement Request letter.

Calendar Year 2020 Anticipated Expenditures

- COVID-19 expenditures - up to 2 million
- Security Enhancements - up to 1 million
- Training – up to \$250,000
- Equipment – up to \$500,000
- Voter Registration – up to 1 million