



## A Message from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC)



(L–R) EAC commissioners Thomas Hicks, Benjamin Hovland, Christy McCormick, and Donald Palmer

The 2020 election cycle has been full of surprises. To prepare for administering the General Election on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, officials across the country worked countless hours to adapt their election processes and ensure the election was accessible, secure, accurate, and safe for voters and poll workers. As EAC Commissioners, we commend you for your hard work and thank you for serving America’s voters.

Although many states are still certifying their election results and conducting runoffs, recounts, and audits, the EAC is formally launching the data collection period for the 2020 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS) today. This will provide you with ample time to prepare your draft data

submission, which is due on February 1, 2021, and your final data submission, which is due on March 1, 2021. When this data and its accompanying report are released publicly next summer, it will help tell the story of the 2020 General Election from the perspective of the election administrators in states, territories, counties, parishes, and towns across the country. We look forward to the 2020 EAVS being the most successful, complete, and accurate in this survey’s history.

## Resources to Assist with the 2020 EAVS

The EAVS project team is pleased to begin the data collection period for the 2020 EAVS. We know the EAVS can be challenging to complete, so this year the project team is providing a variety of resources to assist in the process. These resources should answer most of your questions on how to interpret the survey questions and instructions, enter your data into the EAVS templates, and submit your data.

### Resources Available on the EAVS Portal

The following resources are available on the EAVS Portal (<https://eavsportal.com/>) whenever you need to access them.

- **PDF of the 2020 EAVS Survey Questions** (<https://eavsportal.com/Home/Downloads>): This document lists all the survey questions and instructions in one location. We recommend that you reference this paper version of the survey as you compile your data, and that you carefully read through each section before answering any of the questions.
- **“A Closer Look” Videos** (<https://eavsportal.com/Home/Resources>): These six videos provide a close look at each section of the survey. They walk you through the instructions for each question, how to answer them, and how to interpret key terms.



- **“Overview of the 2020 EAVS” Webinar Video** (<https://eavsportal.com/Home/Resources>): This video features members of the EAVS project team discussing the purpose of the EAVS, changes for the 2020 survey, the EAVS process and resources, and helpful hints. This video will be useful for both state and local officials who complete the EAVS. Two more webinar videos will be released in the coming weeks.
- **Guide to Using the 2020 EAVS Templates** (<https://eavsportal.com/Home/Resources>): This document provides step-by-step instructions for using the two data collection templates that are available for submitting your data: the Excel template and the online template. This guide walks you through the process of opening the templates, navigating through them, entering your data and checking it for errors, and submitting your data.
- **Excel Template** (<https://eavsportal.com/Account/Login>): *State officials will need to log in with their assigned portal credentials to access this page.* This flat-file data template will be used by each state or territory to formally submit its EAVS data to the project team. The blank version of this template can be downloaded from the EAVS Portal. When the template has been filled in and is ready to submit, states and territories may use the “File Upload” function of the EAVS Portal to submit data to the EAVS project team.
- **Jurisdiction Passwords for Online Template** (<https://eavsportal.com/Account/Login>): *State officials will need to log in with their assigned portal credentials to access this page.* For states that wish to use the online template to facilitate EAVS data collection from local jurisdictions, the passwords that have been assigned to each jurisdiction can be found here. Only share these passwords with designated jurisdiction officials; this will prevent unauthorized or mistaken EAVS submissions. We recommend you do not post this document publicly or mass-email the document.
- **Excel Crosswalk** (<https://eavsportal.com/Home/Resources>): This crosswalk documents the changes that have been made to the EAVS questions between 2018 and 2020 and lists the columns that correspond to each question within the Excel data collection template. States and territories that use database queries to compile their EAVS data will find this document especially helpful.
- **EAVS Newsletters** (<https://eavsportal.com/Home/Resources>): These newsletters are periodic updates from the EAVS project team on topics related to the project. In addition to being emailed directly to state EAVS points of contact, all EAVS newsletters will be posted on the EAVS Portal for easy reference and sharing with local jurisdiction officials. If you need to remind yourself of changes that have been made to the 2020 EAVS, or want to learn more about the data validation process, the EAVS templates, or how EAVS data is used and reported, the newsletters are a great place to find that information.

## Technical Assistance

If you need more individualized support, technical assistance is available as well. You can get in touch with a trained EAVS technical support assistant in one of the following ways:

- **Email:** [EAVS@forsmarshgroup.com](mailto:EAVS@forsmarshgroup.com) is accepting inquiries now, and all requests will be answered within one business day. When sending an email, it can be helpful to include screenshots of any errors you are experiencing; this will help the project team provide customized support.
- **Telephone:** Part-time support is being provided from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays) so you can receive immediate responses to your questions. Beginning in January 2021, our phone line will be staffed full time. The phone number for the help desk can be found by logging in to the EAVS Portal with your state’s assigned portal credentials.



Please do not hesitate to reach out to the technical assistance team if you encounter any difficulties in completing the EAVS. We want to hear about challenges you are having, and we will work with you to solve them.

## EAVS Project Timeline

Although data collection is launching earlier than usual this year, the due dates for your data submissions remain the same. Important dates to keep in mind are:

- **February 1, 2021**: The first draft of your state's or territory's data submission is due. Your submission should be substantially complete. Early submissions are encouraged and welcomed!
- **Mid-February, 2021**: The EAVS project team at Fors Marsh Group (FMG) will review your draft data submission and send you a memo within 10 business days of your submission. This memo will summarize the results of the data review and highlight items or jurisdictions that need further review before your final data is submitted. Stay tuned for a future edition of the EAVS Newsletter that will cover this review process in more detail.
- **March 1, 2021**: Final state and territory data submissions and signed certification forms are due.
- **March 30, 2021**: The 2020 EAVS data set will be locked for analysis and no further changes will be accepted.
- **No later than June 30, 2021**: The 2020 EAVS report and data set will be released publicly on the EAC's website.