

2024 EAVS Newsletter

Volume 3: September 30, 2024



New to EAVS? Help is Available!

For many of you, the 2024 election cycle will be your first time encountering the Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS); fortunately, there are lots of resources for you to consult as you begin your state's response. Your best first stop is [this 2022 presentation](#) for new state points of contact (POC) on the EAVS Portal. Even though some of the information in the video is outdated (like dates), the general recommendations still apply for EAVS 2024 and is an excellent starting point.

Advice From Returning POCs and Other Experts

Another great source of information is your fellow election officials and other election experts. We asked them what advice they had for someone new to EAVS—here's what they had to say:

Andrew Buller, Assistant Deputy for Elections, Nebraska Secretary of State's Office

- Start preparing now!
- Take it section by section, piece by piece. There is a lot!
- Review prior working materials used by your predecessor to see how they came up with each response.
- Make sure you understand each question being asked; if you have questions, ask the EAVS team for clarification. *[Reach out via email eavs@forsmarsh.com or by phone at 833-987-7424]*
- Make sure you fully understand how your data is generated and exactly what it includes to make sure it is as responsive to the question as possible.
- Make sure you fully understand how to generate responsive data for each section. Doing this now will save you headaches after the election.
- Don't be afraid to ask others in your office or even other jurisdictions for assistance. For example, if you're at the state level and don't have poll worker information centralized, you may need to contact counties to get poll worker data. If you do not understand how provisional ballots are logged and recorded, then you may need to talk to a local or state subject matter expert for how it works.
- Try tackling the easiest items first to avoid getting overwhelmed. To me, that's Section D (In-Person Polling Operations), then most of Sections B & C (UOCAVA and Mail Voting). You should eventually have an answer for everything or a concrete explanation for why you cannot answer a question. If your end result is "data not available," then see what you can do now to change that before the election so that you have data, or work toward getting it fixed for the next election cycle so that it can be properly answered.
- Take breaks along the way, and don't rush.
- If it's not already documented, then document everything about how you will generate the data, why that's the appropriate data source for responding to each question, nuances about the data if it doesn't fully answer a question, when you will generate the data, if you need assistance from someone else (who that person is, etc.).
- Have someone else double-check your methodologies and work product. In the event that you're unable to do so, use the [rubber duck method](#). *[NOTE: This is a fantastic resource for ALL POCs.]*
- Locally save all of your working materials and final responses.



Shelly Belton, Director of Elections Operations, Michigan Department of State Bureau of Elections

- Your best way to approach the process is starting well in advance of the due date (at least 30 days).
- Go through the questions one time, referencing existing processes, laws, or procedures and label any that need to be double-checked or have no answer as “REVIEW”—then schedule a meeting with leadership to review those answers and to fill in the gaps.
- Once a given year is completed, save it for reference so it can be used to review future years side by side.

Sara Brady, Clearinghouse Director, U.S. Election Assistance Commission (former Election Services Manager, Contra Costa County, CA)

- Begin to compile EAVS-requested data sooner rather than later to allow time to ask clarifying questions in advance of the deadline.
- Voter registration databases may have automated exports of EAVS data. Review the data, verifying that the numbers logically make sense—do not just accept exported data at face value.
- Compare present EAVS data to past EAVS data as part of a logic check.

Your Portal to All Things EAVS

There are also lots of reference resources available to help you on the EAVS Portal (eavsportal.com):

- Your previous years’ EAVS responses.
- The [EAVS Crosswalk](#), which shows exactly what has changed in this year’s EAVS from older versions.
- The [EAVS Glossary](#), which defines nearly 150 words and phrases used in EAVS and can help you understand survey questions and ensure consistent responses.
- The [EAVS Policy Guide](#), which outlines what data are collected, the process and timeline for data submissions, how the EAC reports the results of the data, how updates to EAVS data sets are released to the public, and how the EAC makes changes to the survey questions.

In the near future, the Portal will also feature some new resources, including a series of video webinars, an EAVS data template user guide, and additional newsletters to assist you throughout the EAVS process.

Reminder: The Policy Survey Closes TODAY!

Just a reminder that, if you haven’t already responded, your responses to the Policy Survey are due by Monday, September 30, 2024. Your 2016–2022 Policy Survey responses are available on the EAVS Portal. If you need assistance as you complete this survey, please contact our help desk by email at eavs@forsmarsh.com or by phone at 833-987-7424, Monday through Friday, between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET).