Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for the 2024 EAVS

Happy New Year! The start of a new calendar year means the data submission deadline for the 2024 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS) is drawing closer. Many election officials are already well on their way to having their submissions ready, and the EAVS help desk has received a number of questions about the 2024 EAVS project so far. This newsletter covers some of the most common questions that state, territory, and local EAVS points of contact (POC) have about the project.

If you need further assistance with the EAVS, we invite you to contact the help desk at eavs@forsmarsh.com. As of this week, the help desk is operating from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (federal holidays excluded). All inquiries will receive a response within 1 business day. If you prefer to discuss your inquiry over the phone, please include your phone number in your email and one of our help desk agents will give you a call.

How Do I Access my EAVS Template?

The EAVS Excel template is available for state POCs to download from the EAVS Portal. To access it, the state POC will need to log in to the EAVS Portal with their credentials (eavsportal.com/Account/Login) and select "State Files" from the navigation bar. On that page, they should select the file named "2024_EAVS_Excel_Template_XX.xlsm" (where "XX" denotes the state's postal abbreviation). The template will start downloading automatically.

The PDF file containing jurisdiction passwords for accessing the EAVS online template can also be found on the State Files page. To download it, select the file titled "2024_EAVS_Online_Passwords_XX.pdf" (where "XX" denotes the state's postal abbreviation).

When is my EAVS Data Submission Due?

State and territory EAVS POCs should submit their draft data no later than Monday, February 3, 2025. Data should be entered into the Excel template, checked for errors, and uploaded to the State Files page of the EAVS Portal (https://eavsportal.com/Account/Login; state and territory POCs will be required to log in with their EAVS Portal credentials to access this page) or emailed to the EAVS project team at eavs@forsmarsh.com. State POCs may request that local election officials submit their jurisdiction's data earlier than February 3 so that the state can review jurisdiction data before submitting to the EAVS project team.

Certified final data submissions from states and territories are due no later than Monday, March 3, 2025. Like draft submissions, final submissions should be entered into the Excel template, checked for errors, and uploaded to the State Files page of the EAVS Portal or emailed to the EAVS project team. No additional submissions or updated data will be accepted after Monday, March 31, 2025.

Where Do Jurisdictions Go to Complete the Online Template?

The online template can be accessed at https://survey.eavsportal.com. This site is also listed on the Links page of the EAVS Portal.

Local election officials who are completing the EAVS at the request of their state POC will need a password to access the online template. Local election officials do not need to log in to the EAVS Portal to complete the online template; instead, they should navigate to https://survey.eavsportal.com and use their assigned password provided by their state POC.

State and territory POCs can access a list of their jurisdictions' online template passwords on the State Files page of the EAVS Portal. The EAVS Portal also has tools to help state POCs track their jurisdictions' progress through the online template; see EAVS Newsletter Vol. 8 and the "Transferring Data Between Templates" section of the EAVS Data Collection Template User Guide for more information.

How Do State POCs Customize the Online Template?

Contact the EAVS project team at eavs@forsmarsh.com to customize the online template for jurisdictions within your state. If you wish to pre-fill data, you will need to provide a copy of the Excel template containing that data. The EAVS project team can also hide survey sections within the online template that jurisdiction officials do not need to complete; however, individual questions cannot be hidden.

Customization requests will take between 5 and 7 business days to complete. If you plan to customize the online template for your state, please send requests no later than Friday, January 10, 2025, to allow sufficient time to complete your data collection by the data submission deadline. Jurisdictions should not begin entering data into the online template until the customization has been completed, as data entered by jurisdictions may be lost or overwritten during the customization process.

How Do I Save Data in the Online Template? Can I Close the Online Template and Return to it Later?

Click the "Save & Continue" button at the bottom of each survey page to ensure that all the data you have entered on the page is saved. If you need to close the survey and come back to it later, click "Save & Continue" and then close your browser tab or window. The next time you open the survey using your password, you will be directed to the main menu to choose the EAVS section you want to work on next, and your previous progress will have been saved.

Once you click the "Submit" button in the online template, your survey will be locked, and you will no longer be able to view or change your data. You should only submit your survey data when you are confident that all data have been entered and all internal data review processes are complete. If

you submit your online survey too soon, you will need to contact the EAVS help desk to reopen your survey.

Why am I Seeing a Data Entry Error Message in the Online Template?

The online template performs hundreds of data checks to ensure your data are as complete and accurate as possible. These data quality checks ensure that all required EAVS items have a response and that your data are free from math errors, conflicts with your state's election policies (as represented in your state's responses to the 2024 Policy Survey), and conflicts with other items you have entered in EAVS.

If you are seeing an error message but are not sure why, or if your data are correct and you are seeing a message that your entries do not add up correctly, please take a screenshot of the error message and the data to which the error message applies and send it to the EAVS project team at eavs@forsmarsh.com so someone can assist you in troubleshooting the error.

How Do I Enable Macros in the Excel Template?

Due to a change in Microsoft Excel, most POCs will need to take some extra steps to save the 2024 Excel template in a trusted folder and enable the error-checking macros so that they can assist in the data collection process. See the section titled "Enabling Macros in Microsoft Excel 2010 and 2013 and Office 365" in the EAVS Data Collection Template User Guide for instructions. If you still cannot enable macros after following those instructions, contact the EAVS help desk at eavs@forsmarsh.com and include a screenshot of how the Excel template appears for you. This will aid in troubleshooting the error you are experiencing.

How Do I Interpret a Run-Time Error in the Excel Template?

Like the online template, the Excel template is programmed with hundreds of validations that will examine your data and assist you in submitting accurate, quality data. If the Excel template displays a run-time error while performing error checks, please either take a screenshot of the error message or note which error number is displayed (e.g., "Run-time error '1004'") and send the information to the EAVS help desk at eavs@forsmarsh.com so someone can assist you in troubleshooting.

The error checks in the Excel template can take several minutes to complete. Please do not interrupt the error checks or close Excel while they are running. While the error checks are running, it may briefly appear as though Excel has frozen or stopped working; this is normal and should resolve itself in a few moments without user intervention.

How Do I Update the EAVS POC for my State or Territory?

If possible, POC update requests should come from the currently designated POC or your state or territory's chief election official. Contact the EAVS help desk at eavs@forsmarsh.com to provide contact information for a new POC or request that the help desk remove a current POC from the contact list. The EAVS project team will deactivate EAVS Portal credentials for any former POCs and

create an account for any newly appointed POCs. A state or territory may have multiple designated POCs, if desired.

What Data Should I Report in A1d?

A1d is a new sub-item in question A1 that collects data on other types of voters aside from those classified as active and inactive. If those are the only two categories of voters tracked in your state or jurisdiction, you may respond "Does not apply" to A1d.

Note that question A1 collects data on voters who are registered and eligible; thus, any voters who were not registered and eligible to vote in the 2024 general election should not be reported in A1d.

How Should I Report Registration Updates in A3?

Before 2024, question A3 had two sub-items to report updates to an existing voter registration record, depending on whether the update put the voter in a new election jurisdiction. Starting with the 2024 EAVS, this question now only has one sub-item for all types of voter registration record updates.

Will All Registration Transactions Reported in A3 be Reported Again in A4–A7?

Registration transactions reported in A3 will be reported again in questions A4–A9 according to the type of registration transaction processed:

- The total number of registration transactions received in A3a will be reported again in A4a–A4n. The total of A4a–A4n should match A3a.
- New valid registration transactions in A3b and A3c will be reported again in A5a–A5n. The total of A5a–A5n should match the sum of A3b and A3c.
- Duplicate registration transactions in A3d will be reported again in A6a–A6n. The total of A6a–A6n should match A3d.
- Transactions that update existing valid registrations in A3e will be reported again in A7a–A7n. The total of A7a–A7n should match A3e.
- Transactions that are invalid or rejected in A3f will be reported again in A8a–A8n. The total of A8a–A8n should match A3f.
- Other types of registration transactions in A3g, A3h, and A3i will be reported again in A9a–A9n. The total of A9a–A9n should match the sum of A3g, A3h, and A3i.

The unit to report in this set of questions is the number of registration transactions, not the number of registration forms.

Respondents are encouraged to use the comments boxes in A3 and A4–A9 to provide context for their answers.

How Should the Number of Reported Registration Transactions in A3–A9 Be Calculated?

With the changes that have been made to Section A of the 2024 EAVS, questions A3 and A4–A9 now ask respondents to report the number of *registration transactions* received between the close of registration for the 2022 general election and the close of registration for the 2024 general election. The 2024 EAVS Glossary provides the following definition of registration transactions:

> A unit of work performed to a voter registration record within a voter registration database. Transactions may involve adding a new registration record, updating the record of an existing registered voter (such as updating the voter's name, contact information, or address), or removing a record if the individual is no longer an eligible voter in your jurisdiction. Multiple transactions may be performed on one voter registration record during the period between the close of registration for the 2022 general election and the close of registration for the 2024 general election. In addition, when a voter moves between jurisdictions, it may trigger registration transactions in the jurisdiction the voter was previously registered as well as in the jurisdiction that the voter is newly registered.

If several updates are made to a registration record at the same time, that should be reported in the EAVS as one transaction. If the same voter submits another update later during the two-year registration cycle, this should be reported as an additional transaction.

How Do I Report Automatic Voter Registrations in A4–A9?

Beginning with the 2024 EAVS, there is a sub-item to report automatic registrations separately from other registration sources, such as motor vehicles agencies, public assistance agencies, or other government agencies.

How Do I Report Voter Registration Records Merged or Linked in A13?

Question A13, which covers the number of registration records merged or linked, is new for the 2024 EAVS. For this question, election officials should report the total number of registration records that were merged or linked with other records because they were duplicates—not records that were moved to inactive status or removed from the voter registration database.

For this question, respondents should also count the records that were merged, but not the records that were kept in the system. For example, if two duplicate records were merged or linked together, this should be counted as one merged record. If three duplicate records were merged into one record, or linked together, this should be counted as two merged or linked records.

How Do I Submit My State or Territory's Data to the EAVS Project Team?

Data submissions from states and territories should be provided in the Excel template. You may either email this file directly to the EAVS help desk at eavs@forsmarsh.com or upload the file to the State Files page of the EAVS Portal and notify the EAVS project team via email that the file is available to review.