
State of Alaska

**HAVA State Plan
2008 Updated**

As required by Public Law 107-252,
Help America Vote Act 2002, Section 253 (b)

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“Although Alaska initially had few changes to make to our election laws, our voter registration system, and election equipment to comply with HAVA, Alaska has improved, and will continue to improve. Our election processes will comply with both state and federal legal requirements in order to maintain public trust and confidence in the election process and ensure that democracy is upheld through the ballot box.”

Lieutenant Governor Sean Parnell, State of Alaska

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ALASKA STATE PLAN INTRODUCTION

The Lieutenant Governor of Alaska is responsible for the overall direction of the Division of Elections. The Lieutenant Governor appoints a director and under the Director of Elections, the Division is responsible for planning, implementing and conducting all statewide and federal elections as well as all voter registration activities and maintenance of Alaska's voter registration database.

The Division is divided into four geographically-based election regions managed by Election Supervisors. The Election Supervisors are responsible for voter registration and election management activities for all elections within their region, as designated by the Director. In addition to the four regional offices located in Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks and Nome, the Division has opened a satellite office of the Region II Elections Office in the fastest growing municipality in Alaska, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The Division also opened an Absentee and Petition Office in Anchorage to facilitate and improve absentee voting by mail and by fax. The Region II satellite office in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Absentee office were both opened in the spring of 2006 and continue to provide improved access to voter registration and voting.

Alaska Statute Title 15 and Alaska Administrative Code Title 6 govern the federal and state election process. Alaska falls under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 which requires U.S. Department of Justice preclearance for any substantive change in the election process that directly affects the voter.

The Division of Elections maintains a statewide electronic voter registration mainframe database, implemented in 1985, referred to as the Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS). Each election office has real-time access to VREMS for viewing and updating voter information. The Division processes all voter registration applications in VREMS and assigns each applicant a unique voter registration number. Immediately upon entering information in the system, any state election office can view the information processed. Because the old mainframe system is antiquated, the Division began working on the development and implementation of a new pc-based, statewide voter registration database in 2005. Although the new system is not completed, the Division has prepared the technical requirements of a new system and will continue our work on the development of a new system.

Alaska has nearly 470,000 registered voters. According to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the estimated voting age population in 2005 was 454,226. Alaska attributes its inflated registration rolls to the fact that Alaska Statute Title 15 allows a person who is temporarily out of state to remain registered in Alaska if that person has the “intent” to return. Because of Alaska’s Permanent Fund Dividend program benefits, many Alaskans choose to maintain their Alaska residency even if they currently live outside the state.

Voter registration is available in each state election office and other numerous locations throughout the State of Alaska. The Director of Elections has appointed as voter registration agencies all Division of Motor Vehicles offices, Public Assistance offices, Armed Forces Recruitment offices, Municipal Clerks' offices, and various offices that provide services to persons with disabilities. In addition to the registration agencies, voter registration is available in most libraries throughout the State, village council offices, schools, the University of Alaska, and through individually appointed voter registrars. Voter registration applications are also available on the Division’s website www.elections.alaska.gov for easy access.

Individuals may register to vote in person, by mail, by fax machine or by scanning a completed voter registration application and sending via email. Voters must be registered to vote at least 30 days before an election. If a voter’s registration application is incomplete, the Division notifies the voter in writing and provides the voter an opportunity to complete a new voter registration application. The only exception to the registration deadline is during Presidential elections. A voter may register and have their vote count for President and Vice President on Election Day.

Alaska has 40 State House districts and 20 State Senate districts. Within these districts, there are 439 precincts, each with a designated polling place. Following is a breakdown of voter turnout during the past several general elections:

1996 = 59.1%

1998 = 50.1%

2000 = 60.8%

2002 = 50.5%

2004 = 66.6%

2006 = 51.1%

Alaska has 151 rural communities with precincts that are isolated from connecting road systems; the only way to access these communities is by airplane or boat. Of the 439 precincts in Alaska, 34 have 100 or fewer registered voters.

In 1998, the Division of Elections replaced all punch card voting systems used in statewide and federal elections with an Optical Scan voting system. Since that time, Alaska has and continues to expand the use of the Optical Scan voting system throughout the State. There are 149 hand count precincts and 290 Optical Scan precincts, all of which use a uniform paper ballot regardless of how the ballots are tallied. All absentee, questioned, and special needs ballots voted in Alaska's primary and general elections are counted using the Optical Scan ballot tabulators.

In addition to hand count and Optical Scan units, Alaska makes available a touch screen voting unit in every precinct during an election in which a federal race appears on the ballot to comply with the requirements of HAVA. The touch screen voting units, which were first introduced during the 2006 Primary election, allow voters with disabilities the ability to cast a private and independent ballot. In accordance with Alaska Statute, each touch screen voting unit is equipped with a voter-verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT). The VVPAT is considered the "official ballot" during recounts. With the implementation of touch screen voting, the Division has and continues to develop a variety of forms, brochures and instructions in an effort to train election officials and educate the public about touch screen voting.

In 2003, the Division of Elections updated many sections of the election law to comply with HAVA, namely HB 266, signed into law by the Governor on June 16, 2003. This bill addressed improving the questioned ballots (Alaska's form of provisional voting), the definition of a questioned voter, voter registration, training of election officials, preparation of election materials, forms, and supplies for polling places, voter identification, absentee voting, and counting ballots. In 2005, HB 94 passed additional amendments also affecting voting. These bills updated several forms to conform with HAVA standards, specifically:

- a) a new voter acknowledgement card;
- b) a revised by-mail ballot return envelope;

- c) a revised by-mail ballot return envelope used by military and overseas voters;
- d) a revised voted ballot envelope used by voters who must submit proof of identification when voting by mail;
- e) a revised poster instructing voters how to complete the ballot and providing information regarding questioned voting used during primary and general elections;
- f) a revised poster displaying specific election information, and how to report fraud;
- g) a revised poster which details the types of identification which voters may present when voting in-person;
- h) an informational flier regarding questioned voting used during primary and general elections; and
- i) a new voter registration application, questioned and absentee-in person voted ballot envelope.

There are several alternative voting methods available to Alaska voters who are unable to vote at their assigned polling place. For many voters in remote areas of Alaska the only voting method available is by mail absentee ballot.

Absentee By Mail – Any qualified voter in Alaska may apply to receive an absentee ballot by mail. Alaska Statute 15.20.081 was amended in 2003 to improve accommodation for absentee uniformed services and overseas voters to allow a single absentee by mail ballot application to be valid through the next two general elections. In addition, this statute was further amended in both 2005 and 2006, to reduce the number of witness signatures required on an absentee by mail ballot from two witnesses to a single witness and to change the deadline for when an absentee by mail ballot application must be received by the Division. The deadline changed from seven days prior to an election to ten days prior to an election.

Early and Absentee In Person Voting – Beginning 15 days prior to Election Day, any qualified voter may vote early in the office of the Election Supervisor overseeing the jurisdiction where the voter is registered. In addition to early voting, any qualified voter may vote an absentee in person ballot through an absentee voting official. Alaska has numerous absentee voting locations available throughout the State, and all locations are published on the Division's website at least 45 days prior to an election. The dates and hours of the absentee voting locations are advertised in local papers, and all absentee voting locations are listed in the Official Election Pamphlet that is mailed to every household where there is a registered voter. An absentee voting location may have ballots available to voters for a single, multiple, or all 40 house districts.

Absentee By Fax Voting – Beginning 15 days prior to Election Day, any qualified voter may apply for a faxed ballot. Absentee by fax applications are available on the Division’s website, from any elections office, and in the Division’s election pamphlets that are mailed to all voters. When a voter chooses to vote via fax, the voter is faxed a ballot to the fax number specified, and the voter may return the voted ballot either by fax or by mail. Alaska Statute 15.20.066 was amended in 2005 to require only one witness signature to sign and attest to the date on which the voter signs the certificate.

Special Needs Voting – If a voter is unable to vote at his or her assigned polling place due to age, illness, or disability, the voter may assign a personal representative to pick up and deliver the ballot and other voting material to the voter. After the voter votes the ballot, the representative returns the voted ballot to the election official. Special Needs voting is available at the polls on Election Day or through any absentee voting official.

Questioned Voting – Questioned, or Provisional, voting is available for any voter who does not have identification and is not personally known by the election official, or whose name does not appear on the precinct register at the polling place where the voter is attempting to vote. Following an election, questioned ballots are delivered to the appropriate regional election office for verification in the statewide voter registration database of eligibility before being counted.

Each absentee, questioned, and special needs ballot cast is placed inside a secrecy sleeve and then sealed inside an envelope. The outside of the envelope contains voter information: name, address, identifier, and signature. A bipartisan review board located in each regional office reviews the voter’s ballot envelope, the data is entered into the voter registration database, and the envelope is assigned a sequence number. At the time the ballot envelope is reviewed, the registration database searches for other voting activity by that voter for the same election and reports if the voter has voted more than once.

In addition to conducting all statewide and federal elections, the Division of Elections is also responsible for conducting elections in areas of the State that are not incorporated into municipal governments. These elections include rural school board, coastal resource area, liquor option, incorporation, dissolution and consolidation elections. In 2004, the Division conducted a by mail election for Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute as well. Although the Division is not responsible for

conducting local municipal elections such as those for borough assembly or city council, it provides voter registration lists, precinct registers and voter history for municipal elections. The Division also assists municipalities by providing for the use of the Division's polling place equipment and in some areas, ballot counting equipment.

Since the 2005 State Plan, the State has become compliant with more Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requirements such as:

- An accessible touch screen voting unit, equipped with a voter verifiable paper trail, is available in every precinct during elections where a federal race appears on the ballot.
- The requirements for a new statewide voter registration database have been developed to replace the antiquated, existing voter registration database, and the Division continues to work on implementation of this new database.
- With new office locations in Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the Division is even more accessible to voters.
- The Division has expanded its HAVA section to include a HAVA Election Systems Manager position responsible for the overall supervision and administration of the Division's HAVA program and a new HAVA Program Assistant position responsible for improving polling place accessibility and outreach to the disability community statewide.
- Other projects, such as the development of the Division's media plan, will increase voter participation and outreach.

The Alaska State Plan is organized as specified in HAVA, Section 254, providing a description of current election procedures used in Alaska and outlining how Alaska will meet the requirements mandated by HAVA.

Section 1. Title III Requirements and Other Activities

How the State of Alaska will use the requirements payment to meet the requirements of Title III, and, if applicable under section 251 (a)(2), to carry out other activities to improve the administration of elections.

1. A Section 301(a), Voting Systems Standards Requirements

The State of Alaska transitioned from a punch card voting system to an Optical Scan voting system in 1998. Prior to 2006, the State used a hybrid of two types of voting systems in its 439 established polling locations: 149 precincts use a hand count paper ballot system, and 290 precincts use an Optical Scan (Accu-Vote OS 2000) paper ballot system. Since the 2005 State Plan, the State has transitioned an additional 2 communities from hand count to Optical Scan and has implemented the use of one touch screen voting unit in each polling place and each early voting location. The State will continue to expand the use of the electronic voting system in hand count precincts to improve the overall administration of elections. Absentee and questioned ballot counting is also conducted using the Optical Scan voting system.

In 2002, the State enacted legislation requiring that the new voting systems purchased allow voters with disabilities or visual impairments to use the systems privately and independently. With the passage of HAVA, the State was required to purchase DRE units for each established polling location. The Division requested and received a capital appropriation for FY04 to purchase 55 Accu-Vote touch screen voting units. The Division used HAVA funds to purchase an additional 45 units, bringing the statewide total to 100 touch screen units. In July, 2006, the Division purchased an additional 405 units, bringing the statewide total to 505 touch screen voting units. Every unit is equipped with a voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT), which allows the voter to confirm their selections before casting their ballot. The touch screen voting units were first used statewide during the 2006 Primary election, and were used again during the 2006 General election. The touch screen voting units will be used during Primary and General elections for state and federal offices.

The touch screen voting units provide a variety of accessible features for blind and visually impaired voters, including: alternative language capability, headsets offering audio ballots, as well as keypad

and stylus options for voters with dexterity difficulties. The Division will also work to add an audio translation of Alaska's unwritten native languages to the touch screen voting units.

The State purchased transport cases for the touch screen voting units in May 2006 and used them during the 2006 election year. The transport cases were intended to provide a stable platform and secure container in which to ship the touch screen voting units through the United States Postal Service to Alaska's remote and often frigid polling locations. The transport cases were sent on small aircraft and upon arriving in many communities were transported to the polling place by ATV. Many cases returned damaged due to the transportation methods available in rural Alaska. The Division is currently looking into whether the damaged cases should be repaired, or if an entirely new case should be designed to better handle the shipping stress to and from remote polling locations.

Transporting the touch screen units and training election officials to use the new technology in rural Alaska is a significant expense to the Division for each election the voting units are used. The Division provided extensive training programs for election staff in preparation for the 2006 election cycle and will continue to improve upon our training programs. The manufacturer of the touch screen units, as part of the contract, will continue training division staff in the proper use of the new equipment.

During the summer of 2006, the Division hosted public demonstrations in Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks to familiarize the public with the units, and educate voters on the accessible features of the touch screen units. The Division advertised the demonstrations using local newspapers, media releases, public service announcements, the Division's website and through personal invitation. Representatives from local disability agencies were contacted, and invited to attend the demonstration. During the event, people were invited to try out the machines and cast a sample ballot. Brochures, instructions and forms were available for the public to learn more about the touch screen units. Feedback received during the demonstrations helped prepare better instructions on how to train election workers on the touch screen unit. Separate demonstrations were also held for state legislators and media members to report accurately to Alaska's constituency on the use of the new voting equipment.

Due to the increased public scrutiny of electronic voting systems, Alaska has continuously had to defend the testing, security and auditing processes used in Alaska to ensure safe and accurate elections. With recent studies that have identified vulnerabilities in the voting system used in Alaska and

elsewhere, the Division will begin working with the University of Alaska to review the testing and security procedures used in Alaska and make recommendations for improvements. The Division intends to implement the findings and recommendations provided by the University of Alaska in anticipation of the 2008 Primary and General elections.

Maintenance

To accommodate and house the 505 touch screen voting units, the State acquired additional storage space. Heated and accessible storage space was needed for the elections offices as well as some of the communities that have multiple units stored at their locations. In some cases, the Division relocated regional offices to ensure access to the new voting equipment.

The Division has developed procedures for the shipping and storage of the touch screen voting units to the polling locations. Election workers in these rural locations are responsible for setting up and operating the units; training and familiarity is very important. The touch screen voting units are shipped by small bush plane and then may be transported to the polling place by four-wheeler, snow machine, dog sled or by foot on dirt paths to the polling locations. Based on the 2006 election cycle, the Division found that the cost to ship the touch screen voting units one way to rural locations was \$55 per unit.

In 2006, the Division created procedures to contract with rural election workers to store the touch screen voting units in the community between the Primary and General elections in order to avoid significant damage and costs associated with the transport of the voting units. Based on the contract, the election worker agrees to:

1. Provide heated storage of the touch screen voting unit and printer in a secure, locked location;
2. Charge the touch screen voting unit battery, and conduct an election readiness check on the voting unit and printer for use in the General Election as directed by the regional supervisor;
3. Deliver the touch screen voting unit and printer to polling place for the General Election;

4. Deliver the touch screen voting unit and printer to the US Postal Service for return shipment after Election Day, or as directed by the regional supervisor.

In return, the State of Alaska pays the election worker a storage fee of \$75.00 after the election, provided that the election worker complies with the terms of the agreement.

The State budgets for increased costs associated with shipping election materials to polling locations. Currently the State mails election materials (ballots, supplies, etc.) to its remote polling locations. In addition to these election materials, each precinct receives a touch screen unit.

Due to transportation issues, limited space and lack of resources available in the Division's Nome office, the Division developed a program to utilize the Matanuska-Susitna Borough satellite office for storage, maintenance and shipping of the touch screen units used in the polling places assigned to the Nome region.

The Division has begun design of an inventory and equipment maintenance program to ensure that all election equipment is maintained and repaired in a timely manner. In addition, the Division will need to develop a program and procedures for modification to the voting system based on EAC certification. In preparation for the 2008 election year, staff in the regional offices and the satellite and absentee offices are tasked with conducting routine maintenance inspections and identifying potential problems on the units before breakdowns occur. The inventory system will increase user accountability and allow for better equipment tracking.

1. B Section 302, Provisional Voting and Voting Information Requirements

The State currently has a provisional voting process established, known as "Questioned Voting."

State law requires that any voter who votes at a polling location where his or her name does not appear on the precinct register, or if the voter does not have identification and is not personally known by the election official, to vote a questioned ballot.

In 2004, the Division established a toll-free access system to provide voter information. This system allows the voter to determine if his or her questioned ballot was counted and, if not counted, why the vote or a portion of the vote did not count.

The Division has two toll free-access systems, as outlined below:

- a. The Division currently uses an interactive toll-free telephone system that allows voters to determine their assigned polling place based on their current voter registration record. Additionally, voters can determine their party affiliation for determining ballot type eligibility during the Primary Election. At this time, the Division has not expanded the current polling place locator system to include ballot count automation. The Division plans to implement this system in the future with the new voter registration system.
- b. The Division provides a toll-free telephone number that allows voters to determine whether their questioned ballot was counted. When a voter casts a questioned ballot, the election official provides them with written instructions on how to access the system to determine whether their ballot was counted, partially counted, or rejected.

In addition, the Division anticipates that in 2008 voters will have the opportunity to check the status of their absentee ballot application and verify their vote count by using an absentee ballot locator portal on the Division's website.

In accordance with Alaska Statute, the Division sends a letter to each absentee and questioned voter whose vote was not counted or was only partially counted. The Division will continue this practice in addition to the systems outlined above.

Voting Information

The Division of Election, under current State law, is required to mail an *Official Election Pamphlet (OEP)* to each registered voter's household prior to the General election. In addition, the Division

distributes to each registered voter's household a *Primary Voter Pamphlet* if a ballot measure appears on the Primary ballot.

State law requires full public notice of an election (AS 15.15.070). This public notice is achieved through newspaper advertisements and posting notices in communities that do not have newspapers of general circulation. Advertisements include information regarding the date and time of the election, the offices up for election or retention, absentee voting, any questions or propositions that appear on the ballot and information on polling place changes. Other methods of informing voters include radio advertisements, media releases and conferences, public service announcements, direct mailings, and information posted on the Division of Elections website. In addition, there are sample ballots, posters, informational flyers and instructions posted in polling locations as well as at all elections offices.

The Division modified registration, questioned and absentee voting forms as well as other election materials to meet HAVA requirements. In 2003, the Division submitted the forms to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Division and received preclearance. The Division will continue to make modifications to election materials based on "best practices" produced by the EAC.

1. C Section 303, Computerized Statewide Voter Registration List Requirements and Requirements for Voters Who Register By Mail

Alaska has a statewide voter registration and election management system (VREMS) in use; however, it is not a fully interactive system. VREMS is an antiquated system, maintained in the Natural programming language and is on a mainframe. As technology has advanced, it has become difficult for the Division to find programmers knowledgeable in Natural programming.

In 2005, the Division prepared and released a request for proposal for vendors to develop and implement a new statewide voter registration system. Since that time, the Division has worked with a vendor on the development of a new registration system that will meet updated technology requirements and allow for better management of the State's voter registration and election processes. Although the system was not fully implemented by the anticipated date of December, 2007, the importance of upgrading the voter registration system is not diminished and the Division will continue to assign resources to the development of the system.

The State of Alaska is in full compliance with the requirement to verify voter registration information as required in Section 303(a)(5). A Memorandum of Agreement dated August 2003 between the Division of Elections and the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) allows the Division of Elections to match identifying information provided by a first-time, by mail registrant on his or her registration application to information maintained in the DMV database. The Alaska DMV has completed the process of verifying the last four digits of the social security number information with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). The verification program is currently used by the Division staff processing voter registration applications received by mail or by fax to verify the identity of voters.

Section 2. Alaska's Distribution of Requirements Payment

How the State will distribute and monitor the distribution of the requirements payment to units of local government or other entities in the State for carrying out the activities described in paragraph (1), including a description of --

(A) The criteria to be used to determine the eligibility of such units or entities for receiving the payment; and

(B) The methods to be used by the State to monitor the performance of the units or entities to whom the payment is distributed, consistent with the performance goals and measures adopted under paragraph (8).

(A) The State of Alaska, Division of Elections conducts all Federal elections. Therefore, there will be no distribution of requirement payments to local governments or entities.

The Division serves Alaskans through four regional offices located in Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Nome in addition to the Matanuska-Susitna satellite office and the Absentee & Petition Office in Anchorage. The Division of Elections manages funds necessary for improving the elections' system, voter registration, voter access and education, outreach, and to ensure the regional needs are met and that the State remains in compliance with the Act.

The criteria will be measured in terms of achieving compliance while maximizing improvements to all aspects of the election process, as well as the responsible use of available funds. The Division will use standard financial reporting and accounting practices to track expenditure of authorized funds.

(B) The Division monitors the funds in accordance with the statewide performance measures adopted under section 254 (a)(8). The Division centrally manages the distribution of all funds appropriated to the Election Fund, including but not limited to the requirements payments. Alaska incorporates priorities and timelines into the budgeting process to ensure it implements mandates and improvements in a wise and timely manner.

The Division of Legislative Audit annually audits the State of Alaska. The Statewide Single Audit is conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America;

Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and compliance with the Federal Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and the related Circular A-133 issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The State of Alaska Division of Elections monitors the duties and hours of staff and HAVA funded offices by requiring a bi-monthly justification to be completed and used to exhibit accountability. Additionally, the Division of Elections conducts quarterly meetings to ensure the focus and scope of responsibilities is in alignment with improving federal elections within the State of Alaska. The first quarterly meeting was held on September 10, 2007.

Section 3. Voter Education, Election Official Education and Training, and Poll Worker Training

How the State of Alaska will provide for programs for voter education, election official education and training, and poll worker training which will assist the State in meeting the requirements of Title III.

Voter Education and Outreach

Voter education and outreach efforts in Alaska vary depending on the type of election and level of changes affecting voters. The Director's Office coordinates all outreach efforts for statewide and federal elections. These outreach efforts include numerous public notices, newspaper and radio advertising, public service announcements, direct mail, other publications (such as brochures and pamphlets), speeches and presentations, and continuous direct contact with the statewide media. As an ongoing effort to provide voter education and outreach to Alaska's minority language groups, the Division will continue to make improvements to the language assistance plan.

When a ballot measure appears during a Primary election, the Division distributes a *Primary Voter Pamphlet (PVP)* to every registered voter household in Alaska. The *PVP* contains detailed information regarding the ballot measure(s) and general information regarding the election. Before every General election, each registered voter household in Alaska is mailed an *Official Election Pamphlet (OEP)*. The Division of Elections produces a specific guide for each of the four election regions. The *OEP* contains information about candidates appearing on the ballot (including photographs), information about the retention of judges (including photographs), information about ballot measures (including statements of support and opposition), sample ballots, polling place information, absentee and alternate voting information, voter assistance information, and election district maps. The election pamphlets are translated onto an audio tape which is made available at the State Library and the regional offices so the election information contained in the books is in an accessible format for disabled voters. The Division also prepares and distributes a Filipino (Tagalog) version of every pamphlet to voter's registered in House District 36, in compliance with Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 1973c.

In addition to printed materials, the Division's website provides a vast array of information on voter registration, election issues, election results, historical information and electronic versions of all election pamphlets. In 2005, the Division launched a new, streamlined website to increase public

access and usability. New additions to the website include information on the touch screen voting unit, expanded explanations of voting methods, and increased information on ballot measures and the initiative process. The Division will continue to expand the website, and plans to add additional polling place accessibility and language assistance information to the website's offerings.

The Division provides an interactive toll-free telephone system for voters to obtain their polling place location, and determine their party affiliation. An additional, separate toll-free system allows voters to determine whether their questioned ballot was counted.

As new voting systems and election laws are implemented, Alaska continues its voter outreach efforts. With the implementation of the new touch screen voting units in 2006, demonstrations were held in locations around the state to educate voters on the accessible features and security measures of the units. The Division targeted the demonstrations specifically at assisting the disability community. Local disability agencies were contacted, and invited to attend the demonstrations. Furthermore, the Division prepared supplemental brochures for election officials which review proper etiquette for voters with special needs. The Division's HAVA Program Assistant will continue to prepare and conduct outreach demonstrations during future elections.

Before implementing a new, complex Primary Election system in 2002, Alaska instituted a well-funded, comprehensive outreach plan aimed at educating voters specifically about primary ballot choices. Division staff continues to provide voters with information on what ballots are available during each Primary election, and who is eligible to vote each ballot.

The Division strives to enhance its educational efforts through positive relationships with the media. The Division is currently working to develop a Media Plan, which will detail the Division's outreach programs. The Division continues to participate in radio and television interviews and responds to questions from the print media regularly, beginning several months before a statewide election.

The Division recognizes the need to enhance its outreach and communications program to continue educating the voting public. The Division currently offers a variety of methods to communicate with and educate the public, including:

- Launching a redesigned website for increased accessibility and usability.
- Providing two toll-free access systems for voters to obtain voter registration and election information as well as determine whether their ballot was counted.
- Publishing the Division's election security and testing procedures.
- Coordinating public outreach/training with organizations assisting the disability community on use of the new touch screen voting units.
- Developing the Youth Vote Ambassador Program, where students have the opportunity to serve as election poll workers on Election Day.
- Creating two new Division offices in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and Anchorage to better serve voters.
- Improving Election Day signage, including signs that help voters identify the accessible features available at the polling place.
- Increasing public outreach through advertisements, public service announcements and media releases and taking steps to provide copies of all outreach in required minority languages.

In addition to the efforts described above, the Division continues to strive to:

- Implement an interactive statewide database.
- Coordinate voter education and awareness efforts with Alaska Native organizations and community groups, including groups providing services to individuals with disabilities.
- Target voter education efforts to address the needs of the disability community and individuals with alternative language needs.
- Develop a college student voter education program.
- Provide awareness training for all Division employees and election officials to recognize the special needs of voters with disabilities.

Election Official Training

Election officials are essential to achieve an efficient, secure, and reliable election process. In Alaska, the four regional election supervisors are responsible for providing a comprehensive training program to election officials in their respective regions prior to statewide and federal elections. Training needs are determined by the election supervisors and are community-based and targeted towards the following election officials:

- Precinct election boards
- Absentee voting officials
- Accu-Vote coordinators
- Accu-Vote field workers
- Absentee ballot review boards
- Questioned ballot review boards
- Regional Accu-Vote boards
- State Review Board

With the implementation of touch screen voting, Alaska recognized the need to re-shape its precinct election boards to improve the election process. Prior to 2006, Alaska used a precinct election board consisting of an election chairperson and election judges. The chairperson is responsible for supervising the overall election activities in the polling place. In 2006, an additional worker was added to each precinct election board as the “co-chairperson”. The co-chairperson was the election worker responsible for the touch screen voting unit in that polling place.

Improving and implementing statewide training resources and procedures is an ongoing process improved upon each election year. Working as a team, the HAVA section and the four election supervisors develop uniform training materials that are coordinated with election official handbooks and distributed with Election Day ballots and supplies. All training materials and handbooks are created for the type of ballot counting utilized at each precinct: hand count or Optical Scan. In addition, every precinct receives training on and instructional materials for the touch screen voting

unit. Among the materials developed for use with the touch screen units are: the *Touch Screen Voting Unit Handbook*, the *Touch Screen Voting Unit Brochure*, *Touch Screen Voting Procedures Poster* and the *Touch Screen Opening and Closing Instructions*. In 2006, the regional offices conducted hands-on training sessions in two modules; election procedures and equipment procedures. The equipment procedures module provided an opportunity for election workers to experience the operation of the touch screen voting equipment and practice setting it up, voting, printing election results and taking the unit down. This module added an additional 2-3 hours to each training session.

Alaska faces many unique challenges when providing election official training, especially for precinct election boards in the field on Election Day. Due to the State's vast size and the large number of precincts not connected by a road system, our training programs are categorized into two groups: urban and rural.

Prior to 2004, in order to train precinct polling place officials in rural Alaska, Election Supervisors and their assistants spent several months prior to an election traveling in small bush planes, ferries and boats to Alaskan communities to conduct training. Due to limited flights scheduled to these remote communities, chartered flights were often required and the election training official could train only one community per day. With 439 precincts throughout the state, the challenge to provide training is formidable. Because traveling for training was so time intensive, election workers were trained so far in advance of the election that training materials were not always finalized. In addition, election workers may not have been appointed or agreed to serve in all precincts, and those who did receive training may not retain the procedures at the time of the election.

During the 2004 and 2006 election year, the Division used "hub training" for the training of its election workers in rural areas of Alaska. The purpose of this training method is for the Division to more effectively train election workers closer to Election Day. When utilizing "hub training", the Division sends the chairperson and co-chairperson from each selected rural precinct to one larger, more "central" community where all the workers are trained simultaneously. The chairperson and co-chairperson then return home and train the election judges at their precinct. "Hub training" has enabled the Division to train rural election workers closer to Election Day, and has provided an improvement to the conduct of elections in rural areas of Alaska.

Urban-based training is generally conducted closer to the Election Day. However, travel is required to some urban communities and these officials may be trained 30 – 45 days before the election. Election boards in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau and Nome are trained one-two weeks prior to the election. In urban areas, training sessions for precinct election boards are usually conducted with multiple election boards present. In some areas, training is presented using a PowerPoint presentation.

With the many challenges the Division faces to properly train election workers, handbooks for the various types of officials are critical to their ability to conduct their duties correctly. The Division continues to develop the handbooks in such a way that if an election official has not received in person training, the official will still be able to clearly understand and implement proper procedures on Election Day by receiving telephone instructions and looking at the handbooks.

In an effort to ensure all election officials have the training and resources available to conduct successful elections, the Division started to implement a systematic approach to training that includes:

- Development of a new regional and community-needs comprehensive statewide training plan. This includes improved training methods and the hiring of regional training coordinators, bringing the rural-based training closer to Election Day.
- Improvement of training and Election Day materials and handbooks that are more flexible, accommodating updates and changes. New materials include information on the touch screen voting units and awareness training materials for assisting voters with disabilities.
- Continued research for implementation of better election officials training options, including DVD and VHS videos, interactive web-based training, and conference style training.
- Recognizing the differences between urban and rural training and coordinating training needs, methods, and approaches with various Alaska Native organizations to obtain input and guidance on delivering training to individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Incorporating recommendations provided by the EAC for successful practices for poll worker recruitment and training.

Office Expansion

Using HAVA funds appropriated in 2002, the Division of Elections created three new elections offices across the State. Opened in the spring of 2006, the offices provide additional ways for voters to access the Division, and allow for more staff to focus on improving HAVA compliance. The three new office locations – the Absentee & Petition Office in Anchorage and the two satellite offices in Kenai and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough – employ a total of 6 full time employees. In 2006, the satellite offices prepared for the Primary and General elections by doing tasks such as voter registration and outreach.

In 2007, it was determined that the Kenai satellite office had not been utilized by the public as had been initially projected, and was closed in October, 2007. The Matanuska-Susitna satellite office and the Absentee & Petition Office remain funded by HAVA due to their heavy usage by voters. The staff and resources in the offices are utilized entirely for the preparation of the 2008 election year and for improving the election process. During the 2007 year, projects for the offices included: developing a statewide media plan, testing and repairing voting equipment and assisting with polling place accessibility surveys in preparation for the 2008 election cycle. Between June 2007 and January 2008, the Division performed monthly tracking and submitted to the Election Administration Commission quarterly reports justifying the use of HAVA monies to fund the offices. In addition, the reports identified what progress was made on each project. In preparation for 2008 Presidential election, the Absentee and Petition Office will be contacting all military and overseas voters to verify the ballot mailing address on file is still accurate.

Accessibility

The Division continues to improve accessibility in polling places across the State. In August 2007, the Division created a HAVA Program Assistant position using Health and Human Services accessibility grant funds. The HAVA Program Assistant's responsibility is to focus on the improvement of voter accessibility, including: creating and maintaining the statewide accessibility information database, conducting polling place accessibility surveys, updating the Division's website, and the purchasing and administration of all polling place equipment.

Prior to the 2008 election cycle, the HAVA Program Assistant will work with other election officials to survey newly established polling places as well as older locations to find areas where accessibility

equipment can enhance the polling location. With the help of the State ADA Coordinator, the Division will identify equipment needs for each location, and make arrangements for the purchase and installation of accessibility equipment prior to the 2008 Primary election. The HAVA Program Assistant will also work with the Alaska Disability Law Center to survey Alaskans with disabilities on their satisfaction with the voting process.

If significant accessibility improvements are made to polling places statewide, the Division may chose to include a summary of polling place improvements in the Official Election Pamphlet (OEP) to educate voters on the enhancements. A summary of changes may also be incorporated on the Division's website.

Section 4. Voting System Guidelines and Processes

How the State of Alaska will adopt voting system guidelines and processes which are consistent with the requirements of Section 301.

In 2005, the Alaska Legislature enacted Alaska Statute 15.20.910, which provides for “Standards for voting machines and vote tally systems.” Under this law, the Division Director may approve voting systems or vote tally systems depending on relevant factors, including whether the Federal Election Commission (FEC) has certified the system to be in compliance with the voting system standards approved by the FEC. According to State law, the voting system or vote tally system must be equipped with a voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT).

The Division meets all of the voting system requirements required under HAVA as outlined in the attached matrix. The State’s touch screen voting units are equipped with a VVPAT that can be used during any recount or election contest. The VVPAT also allows for compliance with Alaska Statute 15.15.430(a)(3) which now requires that, “unless a ballot for an election district contains nothing but uncontested offices, a hand count of ballots from one randomly selected precinct in each election district that accounts for at least five percent of the ballots cast in that district.” According to Alaska Statute, if there is a difference of over one percent between the results of the hand count and the results certified by the election board, the entire house district must be recounted. The hand count procedure was first used in the 2006 Primary election, and again during the 2006 General election. During the 2006 election cycle, the hand count results did not differ significantly from the results certified by the election board, and a district-wide recount was not necessary for any race.

To maintain compliance with the Act and Alaska Statute, Alaska will continue providing one touch screen voting unit in every polling location during elections where a federal race appears on the ballot.

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
<p>Section 301. VOTING SYSTEM STANDARDS</p> <p>REQUIREMENTS - Each voting system used in an election for federal office shall meet the following requirements:</p> <p>(1) IN GENERAL</p> <p>(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the voting system (including any lever voting system, optical-scanning voting system, or direct recording electronic system) shall--</p> <p>(i) permit the voter to verify (in a private and independent manner) the votes selected by the voter on the ballot before ballot is cast and counted;</p> <p>(ii) provide the voter with the opportunity (in a private and independent manner) to change the ballot or correct error before the ballot is cast and counted (including the opportunity to correct the error through the issuance of a replacement ballot if the voter was otherwise unable to change the ballot or correct any error); and</p>		
	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
<p>(iii) if the voter selects votes for more than one candidate for a single office - (I) notify the voter that the voter has selected more than one candidate for a single office on the ballot; (II) notify the voter before the ballot is cast and counted of the effect of casting multiple votes for the office; and (III) provide the voter with the opportunity to correct the ballot before the ballot is cast and counted.</p>	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
<p>(B) A State or jurisdiction that uses a paper ballot voting system, a punch-card voting system, or a central count voting system (including mail-in absentee ballots and mail-in ballots) may meet the requirements of subparagraph (A)(iii) by--</p>		

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
(i) establishing a voter education program specific to that voting system that notifies each voter of the effect of casting multiple votes for an office; and	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(ii) providing the voter with instructions on how to correct the ballot before it is cast and counted (including instructions on how to correct the error through the issuance of a replacement ballot if the voter was otherwise unable to change the ballot or correct any error.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(C) The voting system shall ensure that any notification required under this paragraph preserves the privacy of the voter and the confidentiality of the ballot.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(2) AUDIT CAPACITY -		
(A) IN GENERAL - The voting system shall produce a record with an audit capacity for such system.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(B) MANUAL AUDIT CAPACITY -		

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
(i) The voting system shall produce a permanent paper record with a manual audit capacity for such system.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(ii) The voting system shall provide the voter with an opportunity to change the ballot or correct any error before the permanent paper record is produced.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(iii) The paper record produced under subparagraph (A) shall be available as an official record for any recount conducted with respect to any election in which the system is used.	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(3) ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES – The voting system shall--		
(A) be accessible for individuals with disabilities, including non-visual accessibility for the blind and visually impaired, in a manner that provides the same opportunity for access and participation (including privacy and independence) as for other voters;	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.
(B) satisfy the requirement of subparagraph (A) through the use of at least one direct recording electronic voting system or other	Meets requirements.	No action necessary.

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
<p>voting system equipped for individuals with disabilities at each polling place; and</p>		
<p>(C) if purchased with funds made available under Title II on or after January 1, 2007, meet the voting system standards for disability access (as outlined in this paragraph).</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	
<p>(4) ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY - The voting system shall provide alternative language accessibility pursuant to the requirements of Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973aa-1a).</p>	<p>Meets requirements.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>
<p>(5) ERROR RATES - The error rate of the voting system in counting ballots (determined by taking into account only those errors which are attributable to the voting system and not attributable to an act of the voter) shall comply with the error rate standards established under section 3.2.1 of the voting systems standards issued by the Federal Election Commission which are in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.</p>	<p>Meets requirements.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>

Requirements	Status of Alaska's Current Voting Systems (Meets, partially meets or does not meet)	Planned Action
<p>(6) UNIFORM DEFINITION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES A VOTE - Each State shall adopt uniform and nondiscriminatory standards that define what constitutes a vote and what will be counted as a vote for each category of voting systems used in the State.</p>	<p>Meets requirements.</p>	<p>No action necessary.</p>

Section 5. Alaska's HAVA Election Fund

How the State has established an election fund described in subsection (b) for purposes of administering the State's activities under this part, including information on fund management.

In accordance with State law and in coordination with the Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Finance and the Department of Revenue, Division of Treasury, the Division of Elections established an election fund within the State's treasury whose appropriations are accounted for separately within the State accounting system. The General Fund and Other Non-Segregated Investments (GeFONSI) fund contain both federal and general funds. Accounting structures are in place to ensure that federal fund receipts and expenditures are tracked separately from the general funds portion relating to the 5% state match required under HAVA. The Election Fund consists of the following amounts:

- a. Amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by the State for carrying out the activities for which the requirements payment is made to the State under this part.
- b. The requirements payment made to the State under this part.
- c. Such other amounts as may be appropriated under law.
- d. Interest earned on deposits of the fund.

The Governor's Finance Officer and the Division of Elections' Administrative Supervisor works with the Department of Administration, Division of Finance to ensure compliance with all mandated fiscal controls and policies.

Section 6. Alaska's Budget for Implementing HAVA

The State's proposed budget for activities under this part (HAVA Section 254 (a)(1)), based on the State's best estimates of the costs of such activities and the amount of funds to be made available, including specific information on-

- (A) the costs of the activities required to be carried out to meet the requirements of Title III;*
- (B) the portion of the requirements payment which will be used to carry out activities to meet such requirements; and*
- (C) the portion of the requirements payment which will be used to carry out other activities.*

Title I-Early payments:

HAVA authorized \$650 million in one-time payments to states: \$325 million for making improvements to the administration of elections and \$325 million for the replacement of punch card and lever voting machines. States are not required to provide matching funds for Title I monies.

Title I mandated that each eligible state receives a minimum of \$5,000,000. Alaska's portion was determined by the small state minimum and received \$5,000,000 in April 2003 for making improvements to elections. Alaska was not eligible to receive funds under Section 102 since Alaska replaced its punch card voting system before 2000. However, Alaska did receive a one-time reimbursement payment made to states that replaced such equipment prior to 2000. (See "reimbursement payment" on Page 36-37.)

All Title I money has been distributed to the states.

Title II- Requirements payments:

Title II authorizes \$3 billion in additional payments to states over a three year period, annually for meeting the requirements of Title III and for activities to improve the administration of elections if all Title III requirements have been satisfied.

Congress appropriated \$830 million for FY 2003 and just under \$1.5 billion for FY 2004 requirements payments to states. While the FY 2003 funding fell short of the \$1.4 billion authorized in HAVA, FY 2004 funding exceeded the \$1.0 billion authorized. Distribution of these funds began in June 2004.

Payments under Title II are formula based and require a 5% State match for all funds spent in each fiscal year. However, the State may draw down funds each fiscal year without providing the match if the State's Election Plan accounts for the 5% funds in future use. To determine the 5% State match based on the federal requirements payment, multiply Alaska's requirement's payment portion by .0526 (5 divided by 95). See Table 6.1 for Alaska's requirements payment amounts and State match funds.

Accessibility Grants:

Title II also authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to distribute payments to states to assure access for individuals with disabilities. Alaska has applied for and received \$400,000 in accessibility grants for FY 2003, FY 2004, FY 2005 and FY 2006. To date, the Division has not spent these funds; however, using these funds, the Division has created a new HAVA Assistant position, which is responsible for statewide accessibility. In 2007, the Division submitted an application for another accessibility grant for Election Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities (EAID). All accessibility grant funds will be expended in accordance with the requirements of Title II Section 261.

Reimbursement Payment:

The Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, Public Law 108-7, signed February 20, 2003, provided \$15,000,000 in Federal appropriated funds to the General Services Administration

(GSA), for Election Reform Reimbursements. This one-time reimbursement was for states that purchased electronic voting equipment to replace punch card and lever voting machines prior to 2000 making them ineligible to receive funds under Title I Section 102 of HAVA. Alaska qualified for and received a one-time reimbursement of \$1.1 million deposited back into the State's General Fund for electronic voting machines purchased in 1998 to replace all punch card voting equipment.

Table 6.1 outlines the portion of funds available according to GSA Estimates Requirements Payments to States FY02-FY04.

Table 6.1

Federal Fiscal Year	Federal Funds	Alaska's Payment Portion	5% State Match Requirement
(§ 101) 2002 Title I Section 101	\$650,000.0	\$5,000.0	None
(§ 252, 257) 2003 Title II Section 251	\$830,000.0	\$4,150.0	\$298.6
(§ 252, 257) 2004 Title II Section 251	\$1,500,000.0 (\$ rounded up)	\$7,446.8	\$469.2
Total	\$3,580,000.0	\$19,596.8	\$768.0

Alaska's budget in Table 6.2 is based on the levels of funding as shown in Table 6.1 and represents the cost of implementing requirements of Title III and "other" activities as specified in Title I of HAVA through calendar year 2006. Costs associated with the maintenance and operations of implementing these requirements are also reflected in the budget. It is important to note that the maintenance and operation costs associated with these requirements will have an impact on the State's budget in future years when federal funding is no longer available.

Table 6.2

Description	Collocation	Inception to Date Actuals	Encumbrances	Total Obligated
AR 2217 HAVA Title II First Requirement Pmt				
Voter Registration System	1222701	\$413,452	\$158,629	\$572,081
Voter Verifiable	1222702	\$757	\$0	\$757
Voter Education	1222703	\$0	\$0	\$0
Accessibility for Voters	1222704	\$1,275,656	\$9,990	\$1,285,646
Language Accessibility	1222705	\$30,363	\$0	\$30,363
Provisional Voting	1222706	\$0	\$0	\$0
Voting Info Requirements	1222707	\$0	\$0	\$0
Computerized List Maintenance	1222708	\$0	\$0	\$0
Technological Security	1222709	\$0	\$0	\$0
DMV Requirements	1222710	\$21,957	\$28,043	\$50,000
SSN Requirements	1222711	\$0	\$0	\$0
By Mail Requirements	1222712	\$0	\$0	\$0
Military & Overseas	1222713	\$0	\$0	\$0
Polling Place Requirements/Improvements	1222714	\$2,971	\$0	\$2,971
AR 2217 Totals		\$1,745,156	\$196,662	\$1,941,818

AR 2218 HAVA Title I - Meeting Requirements				
Meeting Requirements w/ Title I	1992218	\$256,911	\$0	\$256,911
Accessible Voting Equipment	1221801	\$491,547	\$22,884	\$514,431
Voter Registration System	1221802	\$206,029	\$0	\$206,029
Military & Overseas	1221803	\$0	\$0	\$0
Polling Place Accessibility Improvements	1221804	\$42,319	\$0	\$42,319
Provisional Voting	1221805	\$0	\$0	\$0
Voter Education	1221806	\$75	\$0	\$75
Admin Complaint Procedures	1221807	\$0	\$0	\$0
Management of State Plan	1221808	\$495	\$0	\$495
Language Accessibility	1221809	\$5,585	\$1,150	\$6,735
Free Access	1221810	\$2,103	\$0	\$2,103
DMV Requirements	1221811	\$3,734	\$0	\$3,734
Forms	1221812	\$34,179	\$0	\$34,179
AR 2218 Totals		\$1,042,977	\$24,034	\$1,067,011

AR 2219 Title I Improve Election Administration				
Absentee Office	1922125	\$484,368	\$0	\$484,368
Wasilla Satellite Office	1922190	\$439,302	\$0	\$439,302
Kenai Satellite Office (closed 10/15/07)	1922200	\$565,514	\$0	\$565,514
Primary CC Early HAVA	1992219	\$374,906	\$0	\$374,906
AR 2219 Totals		\$1,864,090	\$0	\$1,864,090

AR 2208 VREMS Replacement to DIMS				

Replace VREMS to DIMS (EN# 0166374)	1992208	\$2,651,173	\$0	\$2,651,173
Grand Totals		\$7,303,396	\$220,696	\$7,524,092

Additional Notes for Title III requirements:

(1) *Voting System* - Alaska purchased Optical Scan units in 1998 to replace its punch card voting system. Alaska has 439 voting precincts. Sixty-six percent of the precincts are equipped with Optical Scan and 34 percent are hand-count precincts. The estimated \$5.5 million will be used to implement a HAVA-compliant DRE voting system and to purchase additional Optical Scan units for a portion of Alaska's precincts. In addition, the Division plans to purchase more memory cards for the Accu-Vote Optical Scan voting machines. Installation, training and maintenance costs are included in this figure.

Since Alaska purchased its computerized statewide voting system, replacing punch card voting equipment, prior to November of 2000, Alaska is not eligible to seek reimbursement under Title I, Sec 102 for these expenditures. However, outside of HAVA, PL 108-7 included \$15 million in funds to states who purchased Optical Scan systems prior to the 2000 election. So far, only five states, which include Alaska, were eligible for compensation from the \$15 million appropriation. Alaska received a \$1.1 million reimbursement that was deposited into the State's general fund and is not included in the State's budget for implementing requirements of HAVA.

(2) *Provisional Voting* - Provisional voting, known as *Questioned* voting in Alaska, has been available to voters in Alaska since the early 1980s. There were minimal changes needed to meet the provisional voting requirements of HAVA.

(3) *Computerized Statewide Voter Registration System* - Alaska is working on replacing the antiquated Voter Registration Election Management System (VREMS) with a new pc-based database system.

The estimated costs associated with implementing the requirements in HAVA are based on the funding information available at the time that the plan was updated. The budget will be revised

appropriately to reflect the most current information available on federal funding and according to changes that may be made in the implementation schedule.

Section 7. Maintenance of Effort

How the State, in using the requirements payment, will maintain the expenditures of the State for activities funded by the payment at a level that is not less than the level of such expenditures maintained by the State for the fiscal year ending prior to November 2000.

In accordance with HAVA section 254 (a)(7), Alaska will maintain the same level of expenditures on similar activities funded by the requirements payment that was spent in the fiscal year ending prior to November 2000. Alaska's expenditures for these activities totaled \$537,500.

The Division of Elections administers all state and federal elections. These elections occur in even calendar years. The Division receives an increment to the annual operating budget in an odd fiscal year beginning July 1 in order to conduct primary and general elections. This increment provides for the expenditures associated with election officials, polling place recruitment, temporary employees, ballot printing and distribution, election supplies, Election Day support, and other costs associated with conducting an election.

Other expenditures in an even-numbered calendar year are spent in preparation of election activities that occur after July 1. These activities include election official training, voter education, advertising, production of election pamphlets, information technology support, and the purchasing of equipment and supplies. The maintenance of effort for the State's FY00 budget represents a portion of the total operating budget that is appropriated to carry out election administrative activities in an even fiscal year.

Section 8. HAVA Performance Goals and Measures

How the State will adopt performance goals and measures that will be used by the State to determine its success and the success of units of local government in the State in carrying out the plan, including timetables for meeting each of the elements of the plan, descriptions of the criteria the State will use to measure performance and the process used to develop such criteria, and a description of which official is to be held responsible for ensuring that each performance goal is met.

The Division of Elections will establish performance goals in conjunction with the Alaska State Legislature during the deliberation of the annual operating budget. The “Missions and Measures” process undertaken by the Legislature in concurrence with the consideration of the annual operating budget has been established as a respected means for developing performance measures that accurately quantify program success.

The Director of the Division of Elections, as the “Chief State Election Official” under section 253(e), is responsible for coordination of the State’s responsibilities under this Act. Therefore, the Director is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Division meets each performance goal. In addition, the Legislature will be monitoring the Division’s efforts through the annual preparation of the State’s operating budget.

Plan Elements	Official	Time frame
Voting Systems §301	Director of Elections	Completed
Provisional Voting §302	Director of Elections	Completed
Voter Registration §303(a) §303(b)	Director of Elections	§303(a) Implemented §303(b) Implemented
Other Activities §101 (b)(1), §251 (b)(2)		

Technical Infrastructure	Election Admin. Supervisor	Continuous
Free-Access System	Admin Asst. Supervisor HAVA Coordinator	Implemented
Education and Training §254(a)(3)	Regional Supervisors Election Special Assistant HAVA Section	Continuous
Budget and Fiscal Controls §254(a)(2) §254(a)(6) §254(a)(7) §254(a)(10)	Admin. Asst. Supervisor Election Administrative Supervisor Director	Continuous State monitors HAVA account each month
Complaint Procedures §254(a)(9) §402	Director of Elections	Completed

Section 9. State-based Administrative Complaint Procedure

A description of the uniform, nondiscriminatory State-based administrative complaint procedure in effect under section 402.

The State of Alaska, Division of Elections has developed administrative regulations to establish the required complaint procedure. These regulations constitute a new article 6 AAC 25.400 – 490 that is now a part of the Division’s administrative regulations set out at Title 6, Chapter 25 of the Alaska Administrative Code.

These regulations satisfy the requirements of HAVA section 402 by providing a uniform and nondiscriminatory complaint procedure. Under these procedures, any person who believes there has been a violation of HAVA Title III may file a complaint. The complaint must in writing, sworn, and notarized. At the complainant’s request, there will be a hearing on the record. If the State finds a violation, it shall provide an appropriate remedy. If there is no violation, the State will dismiss the complaint and publish the results. The Division will make a final determination on a complaint within 90 days. If the Division cannot meet this deadline, the complaint will proceed under alternative dispute resolution procedures.

The Division adopted these administrative regulations on August 29, 2003.

Additionally, the Division developed an Administrative Complaint form that can be found at any Division of Elections office and on the Division’s web site.

Section 10. Effect of Title I Payments

If the State received any payment under Title I, a description of how such payment will affect the activities proposed to be carried out under the plan, including the amount of funds available for such activities.

Under Section 103, Guaranteed Minimum Payment, Alaska received the minimum payment of \$5 million and established an Election Fund.

Current activities carried out under the plan have improved the administration of elections for federal office and the election process as a whole.

Upon receipt of Title I monies, the Division of Elections is using the funds for one or more of the following:

- **Developing the State plan for requirements payments to be submitted under Part 1 of Subtitle D of Title II.**

The State plan is created and updated by the HAVA Project Coordinator, and costs for plan maintenance are tracked by that position.

- **Educating voters concerning voting procedures, voting rights, and voting technology.**

Implementation and development of the Division's website, the maintenance of the free-access systems, and preparation of training materials used by voters have been completed to comply with the Act. In addition, the Division provides touch screen voting unit demonstrations to the public and specifically targets members and groups of the disabled community.

- **Training election officials, poll workers, and election volunteers.**

The Division has improved training systems with the goal of training more election workers closer to an election. The challenge continues to be training citizens with diverse physical, social and cultural differences across a vast geographical area in a short time period. In order to bring election worker training closer to Election Day, the Division has created a new training assistant position for each region. In some regions of the state, the Division trained election workers one month before the election.

- **Improving, acquiring, leasing, modifying and/or replacing voting systems and technology and methods for casting and counting votes.**

The Division is continuing the process of implementing a new statewide voter database to replace the antiquated VREMS system.

In addition, the Division has developed methods to improve how the touch screen voting units are shipped, and has created procedures that result in less transportation costs and damage to the units.

- **Improving the accessibility and quantity of polling places, including providing physical access for individuals with disabilities, providing non-visual access for individuals with visual impairments, and providing assistance to Native Americans, Alaska Indigenous Native citizens, and to individuals with limited proficiency in the English language.**

The Division has developed a polling place survey and worked in coordination with the State ADA coordinator on the assessment of polling places within Alaska. In 2007, the Division plans to evaluate newly established polling places in preparation for the 2008 election year. Improvements to polling places for 2008 will be made using the Health and Human Services accessibility grant funds.

Using Health and Human Services accessibility grant funds, the Division is obtaining a new HAVA Program Assistant position, which will be solely responsible for surveying polling

places statewide, assisting with training of staff, and developing methods to inform the public about the improvements made to locations.

In addition, the Division is working on developing an updated statewide language assistance program that specifies what type of assistance is available to minority language voters across the state.

- **Establishing free-access telephone systems for voters to report possible voting fraud and voting rights violations, to obtain general election information, and to access detailed automated information on their own voter registration status, specific polling place locations, and other relevant information.**

The Division currently uses an interactive toll-free telephone system for voters to verify their polling location and party affiliation. Additionally, voters may contact another toll-free number to determine the count of their ballot or file an administrative complaint. With the development and implementation of the new DIMS registration system, the Division hopes to make the information provided by those telephone systems also available on the Division's website.

Voters also have the option of checking the status of their absentee ballot by using the Division's absentee ballot locator. Using this web-based tool, voters can log on with an identifier such as a social security number and see if their application has been processed, a ballot has been sent, and if a voted ballot was received back.

Section 11. Alaska's HAVA State Plan Management

How the State will conduct ongoing management of the plan, except that the State may not make any material change in the administration of the plan unless the change—

- (A) is developed and published in the Federal Register in accordance with section 255 in the same manner as the State plan;*
- (B) is subject to public notice and comment in accordance with section 256 in the same manner as the State plan; and*
- (C) takes effect only after the expiration of the 30-day period that begins on the date the change is published in the Federal Register in accordance with subparagraph (A).*

The Lieutenant Governor, as the “Chief State Election Official” under Section 253(e), is responsible for coordination of the State’s responsibilities under this Act. The Division Director, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, oversees the day-to-day operations of the Division. Therefore, the Lieutenant Governor is ultimately responsible for continuous management and implementation of the State Plan. These responsibilities include tracking resource requirements, managing HAVA funds, and ensuring that additional implementation projects are in compliance and on schedule.

The Division employs both a HAVA Project Coordinator and a HAVA Election Systems Manager to oversee the implementation of HAVA-related projects and activities. Under the purview of the Director, the HAVA Project Coordinator and HAVA Election Systems Manager strive to continually improve polling place accessibility and language assistance programs, increase voter outreach efforts, and manage the implementation and use of all voting equipment and the voter registration database. In addition, the HAVA Project Coordinator is responsible for updating the HAVA State Plan.

The updated HAVA State Plan is an essential component in the Division’s continuing efforts to improve accessibility and accountability in the election process. Alaska has already implemented many aspects of HAVA, and the Division sees the ongoing management of the

State Plan as a continuation of the State's commitment to election reform. Each element is being managed closely to achieve compliance, maximize improvements to all aspects of the election process, and continue responsible use of available funds.

The State understands and agrees to comply with HAVA requirements related to ongoing management of the State Plan. More specifically, the State agrees that it may not make any material change in the administration of the State Plan unless the change:

- (A) is developed and published in the Federal Register in accordance with HAVA Section 255 in the same manner as the State Plan;
- (B) is subject to public notice and comment in accordance with HAVA Section 256 in the same manner as the State Plan; and
- (C) takes effect only after the expiration of the 30-day period that begins on the date the change is published in the Federal Register.

Section 12. Changes to State Plan from Previous Fiscal Year

In the case of a State with a State Plan in effect under this subtitle during the previous fiscal year, a description of how the plan reflects changes from the State Plan for the previous fiscal year and of how the State succeeded in carrying out the State Plan for such previous fiscal year.

The State of Alaska's 2008 HAVA Updated State Plan remains consistent, with steady progress towards the goals established in the initial 2003 and the updated 2005 State Plan. The State of Alaska passed legislation to bring the state into compliance with HAVA requirements; developed new staff positions to manage HAVA; updated forms and training materials; and continues to design improved voter outreach programs.

Since the 2005 State Plan, the Division has launched a new, improved website, developed additional educational brochures for voters and election workers, and created two new offices to increase the Division's accessibility to voters around the state. The Division now also distributes to every registered voter household an election pamphlet during all Primary elections where a ballot measure appears on the ballot.

Since the 2005 State Plan, the Division purchased 405 touch screen units using HAVA Funds, and, during the 2006 election year, fully implemented the touch screen voting units in compliance with Sec. 301. Each unit was retrofitted with a VVPAT to allow the voter to confirm their selections before casting their ballot and for use during the hand count verification process or a recount. Shipping containers for the units were designed and procured to safely ship the touch screens to and from the polling place locations. The Division developed and distributed informational brochures and training manuals for voters and election workers, highlighting the accessible features of the units and how to use them. The Division also held public demonstrations across the State to educate the public on the new voting units.

The Division established procedures for conducting a hand count verification procedure following every election in accordance with Alaska Statute. The Division is required to hand

count ballots from one randomly selected precinct in each election district that accounts for at least five percent of the ballots cast in that house district. These procedures were utilized in the 2006 Primary and General Elections.

The Division commissioned the University of Alaska, Anchorage to conduct a study to examine the security and accuracy of the State's voting system and to make recommendations for improvements.

The State of Alaska is in full compliance with the requirement to verify voter registration information as required in Section 303(a)(5). A Memorandum of Agreement dated August 2003 between the Division of Election and the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) allows the Division of Elections to match identifying information provided by a first-time, by-mail registrant on his or her registration application to information maintained in the DMV database. The Alaska DMV has completed the process of verifying the last four digits of the social security number information with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). The verification program is now fully operational.

The Division continues to make progress with the implementation of the new voter registration system which will replace the outdated mainframe system. The Division continues to commit resources to development and technical requirements of the new system.

In 2005, the Alaska Legislature enacted A.S. 15.20.910, which defines "Standards for voting machines and vote tally systems".

Section 13. State Plan Development and Committee

A description of the committee that participated in the development of the State Plan in accordance with section 255 and the procedures followed by the committee under such section and section 256.

The draft of Alaska's State Plan was created by the Division of Elections with the legal guidance of the State's Attorney General's Office. The Division continues to seek consultation from the State Attorney General's office in our implementation of HAVA.

No public meetings are planned for this year. The Division will provide the State Plan Committee with a copy of the updated 2008 HAVA State Plan for review and comment. Additionally, the 2008 State Plan will be posted on the State's online public notice system and on the Division of Elections' website.

In 2007, Lieutenant Governor Sean Parnell updated the membership of the State Plan Committee. The State Plan Committee members continue to reflect a cross section of election stakeholders throughout the State, in accordance with Section 255 of the Act.

The Lieutenant Governor named the following Alaskans to serve on the State Plan Committee:

Whitney Brewster, former Director of the Division of Elections, Chair of the Committee

Alyce Houston, Region I Election Supervisor, Juneau

Carol Thompson, Absentee & Petition Manager, Anchorage

Michelle Speegle, Region III Election Supervisor, Fairbanks

Edna Baker, Region IV Election Supervisor, Nome

Jim Beck, Executive Director, Access Alaska

Lynne Koral, First Vice-President, Alaska Independent Blind

Jason Burke, State of Alaska ADA Coordinator

Sarah Felix, Assistant Attorney General, State of Alaska