



FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT
of **STATE**

CARES Act Funds Q&A

ONLINE SESSION

JULY 6, 2020



(Last updated July 9, 2020, to reflect Q&As during webinar and post session)

CARES Funds

- Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act
- Public Law 116-136
- 2020 Federal Elections Only

2020 HAVA CARES Act Grant			
Notice of Grant Award		U.S. Election Assistance Commission	
Grantee: Florida Office of the Secretary of State		1335 East West Highway – Suite 4300 Silver Spring, MD 20910	
Address: 500 S. Bronough, Suite 100 Tallahassee, FL 32399			
Obligation Information			
Agreement Number: FL20101 CARES	Project Period: 3/28/2020 – 3/27/2022		
CFDA Number: 90.404	Budget Period(s): 3/28/2020 – 12/31/2020 for Federal expenditures		
Funds Description			
This obligation of funds constitutes the Grantee's share of \$400 million (52 U.S.C. §§ 20901, 20903-20905) authorized by the U.S. Congress under the <i>Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act (Public Law 116-136)</i> .			
Funding Information			
Description	Current Award	Prior Awards	Cumulative Funding
Federal Share	\$20,152,160	N/A	\$20,152,160
State Match Share	\$4,030,432	N/A	\$4,030,432
Purpose			
As authorized under Section 101 of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-253) and provided for in the CARES Act, 2020 (Public Law 116-136), the purpose of this award is to "prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, for the 2020 Federal election cycle."			
State Election Fund			
All Federal funds and state cash matching funds may be used for the purposes described in Section 104 (d) of HAVA. Expenditures under state budget authority shall be subject to the same documentation as federal funds under 2 C.F.R. § 200. Interest earned on the award shall be retained in the election fund and used for allowable activities.			
Grant Administration			
Award recipients and sub-recipients shall comply with the federal requirements including Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance: Title 2 C.F.R. Part 101-11.6, Title 2 C.F.R. Part 101-11.7, Title 2 C.F.R. Part 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 C.F.R. § 200).			
Reporting Requirements			
1. Per the CARES Act within 20 days of each election in the 2020 federal election cycle states will send a report accounting of the State's uses of funds. States will follow a format EAC will provide.			
2. A Federal Financial Report and progress report for the period ending 12/31/2020 will be due February 28, 2021.			
3. Subsequent Federal Financial Reports and progress reports for periods ending June 30 and December 31 of each year will be due August 15 and February 15 respectively.			
Award Contingencies			
This award is contingent upon the completion of the following activities:			
1. Provide a match of 20% of the federal funds by the end of the project period to be documented on the SF-425.			
2. Submit the required letter described in the attached CARES Award Instructions.			
3. Implement or have implemented the Drug-Free Workplace Requirements of 2 C.F.R. § 182.200 and comply with sub part C of 2 C.F.R. Part 180- Debarment & Suspension & include in lower-tier covered transactions.			
Acknowledgement			
By drawing down funds under this grant and submitting the Disbursement Request Letter, the state agrees to comply with all terms and conditions in this Notice.			
U.S. Election Assistance Commission		Funding Source: EAC1651DB2020DR-2020-61000001-410001-EAC1908000000	
<i>Mona Harrison</i>		Amount: \$20,152,160	

Notice of Award

Amount

State Share

\$20,253,853

Total grant award
for Supervisors of
Elections

State Match Share (20%)

\$4,050,771

Supervisor of
Elections
responsible to
meet match

Allowable Expense and Match Period

2020

calendar2020i.com

January							February							March							April						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4						1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	26	27	28	29	30							

May							June							July							August						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4							1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			

September							October							November							December						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30	27	28	29	30	27	28	29	30							

Pre-award Period Eligible for State Match Expense*

Match and Expense Period

Match and Expense Period

Deadline to make match: March 27, 2022 but Match expense period ends December 21, 2020

Note: Pre-award period may also be eligible for federal expenditures

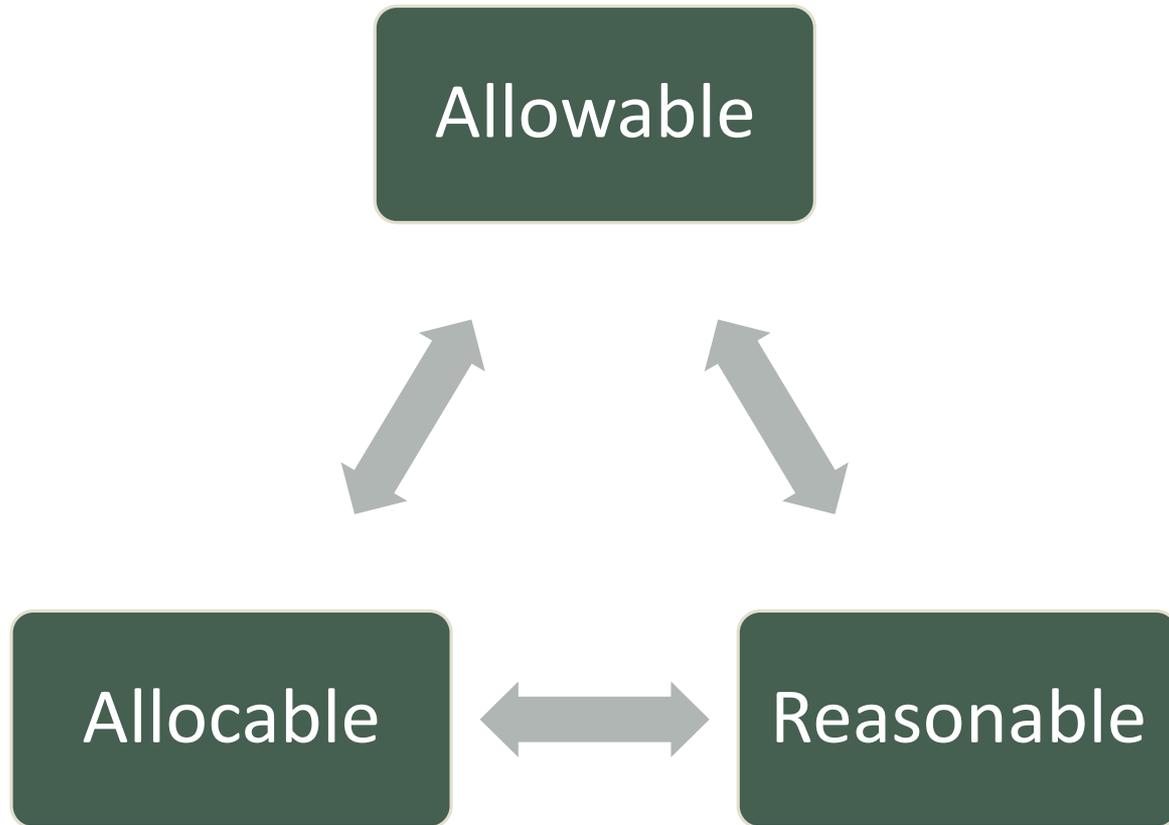
CARES Fund Purpose

ONLY:

- To prevent
- To prepare for
- To respond to
- **CORONA VIRUS**
- Domestically or
- Internationally,
- For the 2020 Federal election cycle.

*Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act;
Public Law 116-136*

CARES Fund – Other Expense Requirements for Federal Funds



CARES Fund – Grant Award Package

- 2020 CARES Grant Memorandum of Agreement
- Attachment A – Election CARES Allocation by County
- Attachment B – Elections CARES Plan
- Attachment C – Debarment and Suspension
- Attachment D – Final Expenditure Report
- Attachment E – Audit Requirements

Q&A

Question: How is the total grant award allocated to a county for advancement, reimbursement and/or both?

Answer: The total amount includes:

- Base amount: \$50,000 for each county [PLUS]
- The remainder of the total state award divided by the total number of registered voters in Florida as of PPP book closing
- The amount per registered voter is multiplied by the number of registered voters in the respective county to reach that total and then added to the \$50,000.

Q&A

Question: What expenses are allowable?

Answer: Refer to Attachment B in grant award package entitled “Elections CARES Plan”. Includes a preliminary list of services, products, and activities that the U.S. EAC has already considered to be allowable expenses

Non-exhaustive list

County (insert name): _____

Attachment B #MOA 2020-001-_____ : CARES Act (2020) Grants Request/Plan

*Prepopulated allowable expenses are based primarily on U.S. EAC.gov guidance to date (<https://www.eac.gov/election-officials/guidance-use-have-funds-expenses-related-covid-19>). The list is not exhaustive and may include other expense categories, subject to approval.

	Advance	Reimbursement	Match	Total
Vote-by-Mail				
Additional ballots and envelope printing				
Upgrades to systems for requests/change of address				
Additional drop boxes - installation/security				
Mailing and postage costs, meters meters				
Ballot tracking software				
Equipment - high speed or central count tabulators				
Equipment- hardware/ signature comparison/verification software and other similar software				
Additional ballot trays and other supplies to process increased activity				
Equipment - automated letter opener, inserter, sorter, etc.				
Staffing - In-office/poll workers				
Poll worker training - cleaning and other sanitization procedures and ballot and ID handling, appropriate disinfecting process for voting associated equipment (voting machines, ballot booths, laptops, tablets, poll books, and other surfaces) consistent with vendor instructions and internal procedures, and other CDC guidelines/protocols for social distancing				
Overtime salary and benefit costs -elections staff and poll workers				
More in-person training sessions to accommodate smaller classes				
Hiring /retention				
Registration list maintenance activities				
Activities to improve the accuracy and currency of registrant addresses				
Polling sites/Offices - equipment, supplies				
Additional laptops and mobile IT equipment, workstation, office expansions for vote-by-mail activity				
Ballot-on-demand printers, supplies (paper, ink, cleaning supplies), transport carts, storage bags or lockers				
Signage, tents, tables, supplies for social distancing (hand sanitizer, markers, etc.) and/or portal set-up				
Back-up power supplies				
Vehicle rental - mobile				
Polling sites/offices - cleaning				
Deep cleaning supplies				
Disposable pens for voters				
Protective gear (masks, gloves, face shields, etc.), hand-washing stations, hand sanitizers for staff and poll workers and/or voters				
Plexiglass covers, install for stations and/or equipment				
Polling sites - additional leasing space/backup				
Additional leasing as replacement for loss of existing sites, back-up and flow-over				
Communications - public outreach campaign/media				
on voting changes, ballot request options, or voting procedures as implicated by CoVID 19				
Communications - targeted voter mailings				
Targeted voter mailings - educational changes or procedures of CoVID 19 as impacting voting methods & locations (VBM, EV, ED)				
Other				
TOTAL				
Signature _____				
Printed name _____				
Date _____				

Attachment B

Q&A

Question: What is a county's match responsibility under the grant award?

Answer: At this juncture, you will need to act as if you will be responsible for making up to the 20% match corresponding to the maximum amount of the allocated funds you request.

That being said, the State continues to look for ways for state in-kind contributions to offset the 20% match at the local level.

Q&A

Question: When will counties learn how much of the 20% of the match they will be responsible for if the state is working towards finding sources to offset match?

Answer: See slide 8. The counties are responsible for meeting the match respective to the amount they request and use. That being said, the state is working towards identifying sources that could lesson the match load for the county. The State would inform the counties as soon as possible how much of the match the state could meet up to the 20%.

Q&A

Question: Can CARES funds provided through our local governing board for reimbursement count towards the 20% match?

Answer: No. You cannot use federal funds from the same or other federal grant to satisfy a match requirement under CARES.

Q&A

Question: If we ask for an advance on the CARES Grant funds and then are not able to use all the money, will we be responsible for matching 20% only on the money that we were able to spend?

Answer: Yes. You are responsible providing the match percentage corresponding up to the amount of the grant award you spent.

Q&A

Question: Does the county have to match upfront (if all the grant funds are requested at the front end) or up to 20% based on what the county ends up spending by December 31, 2020?

Answer: The match requirement must be met no later than March 27, 2022 but the match must be based on expenses during the allowable match period January 20, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

Q&A

Question: If the local governing board has provided our (elections office) with personal protection equipment purchased with CARES funds they received, would the amount of that purchase be eligible to meet the local match requirement under my grant award?

Answer: No. CARES Act funds or any federal funds no matter who received them and used them to help purchase equipment for their office or for another government office can be used as a match for the same or other federal grant.

Q&A

Question: Is it necessary to have the local governing body sign off on the matching funds?

Answer: No, but you will need to be able to ensure that however, you intend to meet your match that you have a commitment if it will be an in-kind contribution or fiscal contribution from the county.

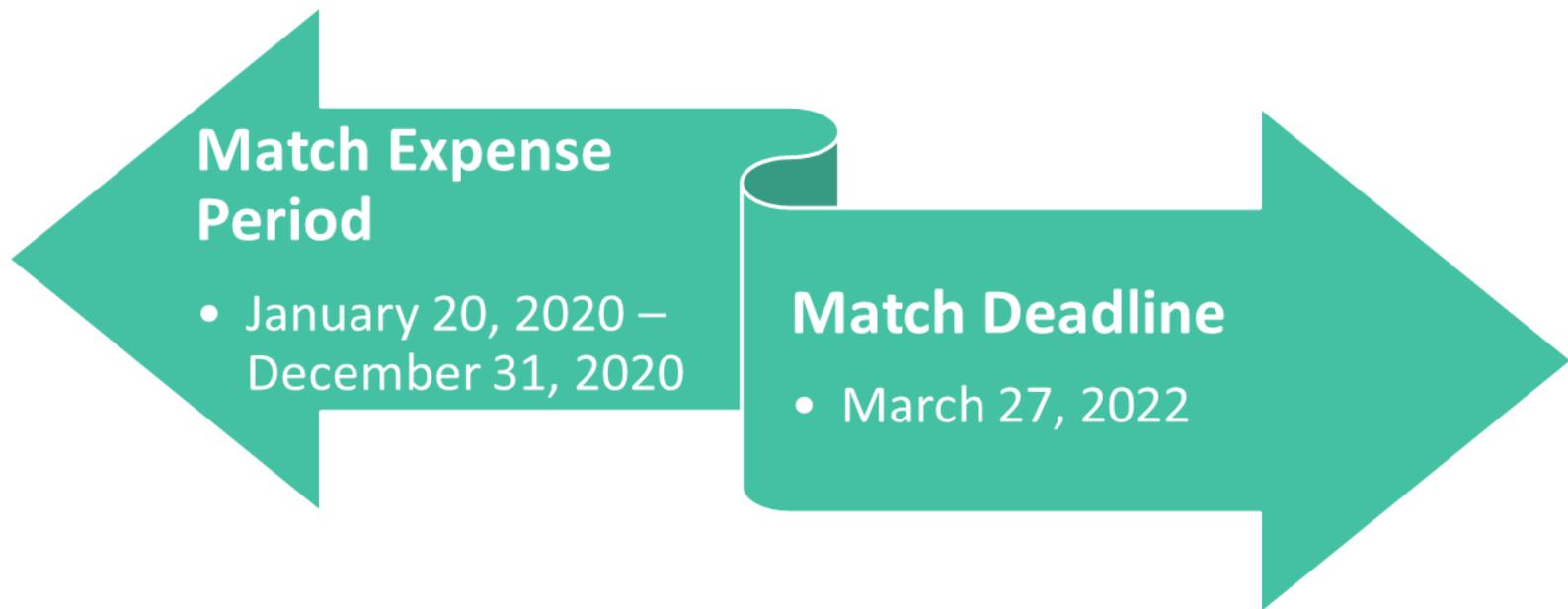
Q&A

Question: Does a county have to request CARES funds if the county is providing sufficient CARES funds to meet the needs of our election office for equipment to address pandemic needs such as increased vote-by-mail demands?

Answer: There is no requirement to have to request these grant funds from the Department of State. The important thing is that your elections needs are being met. The funds provided by counties is coming from the same big universal pot of CARES funds that have been made available to various sectors of state/local governments.

Q&A

Question: What is deadline to meet match?



Q&A

Question: In the event that we draw down advance funds, are we allowed to expend the interest that is generated while the advance funds are in our possession?

Answer: Yes. However, in the event you have unused funds, you will still have to return any unused funds plus the interest earned. If such spending is allowable, you must make sure to clearly indicate this expenditure in your budget.

Q&A

Question: What are the various ways that a request can be made?

Answer:

- A request can be for reimbursement, advancement or a blend of the two.
- Multiple requests throughout the allowable period up to the maximum amount allocated for the county is allowed.
- Be cognizant of maintaining good financial records to justify expense and use of funds.

Q&A

Question: Can we amend our original submitted plan if our needs change through the election cycle? Are we locked into the specific categories or can we fluctuate the funds between categories from the original submitted plan?

Answer: Yes, you can submit amended plans during the award period, provided you include the requisite documentation and it is otherwise an allowable, necessary, reasonable, or allocable expense. Be sure to keep good fiscal records in the event of an audit.

Q&A

Question: Can we submit more than one request during the grant award period to accommodate our local budget fiscal year?

Answer: Yes, you can submit your request and plans as you incur or need the funds during the grant award period, provided you include the requisite documentation and it is otherwise an allowable, necessary, reasonable, or allocable expense. Be sure to keep good fiscal records in the event of an audit.

Q&A

Question: When is the latest a county can request funds?

Answer: A request (i.e., memorandum of agreement and plan) has to be submitted no later than December 31, 2020. Please submit the MOA, the plan and if reimbursement request, supporting documentation at the same time when you are ready to request funds.

***Point 1:** You can amend your plan one or more times throughout the allowable expense period. Ensure records can be reconciled for your final expenditure report. **Point 2:** Allow time for us to approve your request once submitted. For example, if you submit a MOA and last plan on December 31, 2020, the only realistic option available to you at that point is a reimbursement request which must be accompanied by supporting documentation.*

Q&A

Question: What is the timeframe to receive the funds once grant application is submitted?

Answer: Once the reimbursement request (completed package with supporting documentation – receipts, invoices, etc.) and/or advancement request is made, it averages 1 week to get requests processed.

Q&A

Question: When entering the purchase date on the expense report, which date do we enter (e.g., order date, receipt date, or paid date)?

Answer: All dates are actually relevant and needed for different reasons. For purposes of ensuring that the expense falls within the allowable period, the date is important to show that the cost was incurred and/or encumbered during the allowable period. The receipt and paid dates are going to be relevant in order to know that you got the services/products and that you used the funds to pay for those costs incurred or encumbered.

Q&A

Question: Are capital improvements to a facility an allowable expense?

Answer: Yes, provided the improvements were made or are being made to prepare for or respond to the pandemic such following CDC guidelines for the pandemic and were not required absent the pandemic.

If not made exclusively in response, only the percentage of the costs associated with the pandemic can be claimed.

Q&A

Question: Are costs associated with securing needed additional space, facility or building to store or place CARES supplies.

Answer: Yes, provided purchasing/leasing the additional space, facility or building were made or are being made due to the pandemic such following CDC guidelines for the pandemic and were not required absent the pandemic.

If not made exclusively in response, only the percentage of the costs associated with the pandemic part can be claimed.

Q&A

Question: Can an item that was ordered/purchased and received in anticipation of the pandemic prior to January 20, 2020 but paid after that date be considered an allowable reimbursable expense under the CARES grant?

Answer: No. The allowable cost for a grant expense or match expense must have been incurred or encumbered between:

- January 20, 2020 (the date the Public Health Emergency was declared and before March 28, 2020 (the date the federal grant existed).
- March 28, 2020 – December 31, 2020

Q&A

Question Does the DOE's June 29, recent assessment survey request to Supervisors regarding estimates for personal protective equipment mean that we do not have to ask the local EOC for similar supplies?

Answer: No. The survey request was for the purpose of assessing needs in the event we are able to secure a private vendor to meet those needs. State is working to identify all potential sources of state level in-kind contributions. We do not have a commitment or confirmation yet.

Continue to work with your local EOC and/or keep your requests in the local EOC queue.

Q&A

Question: Are sample ballots allowable expenses under CARES if inserted with COVID-19 information/precautions consistent with CDC guidelines/requirements.

Answer: Yes, to the extent that there is an additional cost associated with the production and insert. Ask yourself – are these additional steps you are taking that are resulting in additional cost as a result of or due to the pandemic? For example: Are you including inserts to provide voter confidence that it is safe to go to the polls because they are in accordance with CDC guidelines? If yes, then the additional cost to do this, is allowable.

Q&A

Question: Can the CARES funds be used to purchase voting equipment, accessible equipment or related equipment peripheral?

Answer: If the purpose for which you are purchasing the additional equipment is to meet a need to *prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, for the 2020 Federal election cycle* such as providing more equipment for voters at the polling locations because you providing more polling locations or you are consolidating locations due to attrition, then yes, expense is arguably allowable.

Q&A

Question: Is the purchase of upgraded EVIDs necessary to function with ballot-on-demand printers purchased or to be purchased for the purpose under the CARES Act an allowable cost?

Answer: Yes if the purpose of the ballot-on-demand printers is a result of the pandemic and you have to prepare or respond accordingly.

Remember that the CARES Act is very specific as to purpose whereas the Elections Security Funds grant is broader with a focus on election security and other improvements to federal election administration activities. So you may want to consider using ESF or other HAVA funds for such activities instead.

Q&A

Question: Does the CARES grant cover inbound and outbound vote-by-mail postage

Answer: Yes, CARES grant covers inbound and outbound mail postage. It would also include things like printing costs associated with increased demand for vote-by-mail ballots and other peripherals needed to process to prepare for or respond to the pandemic.

Q&A

Question: How do we properly account for and show proof of the postage we placed in our mail meter. For example if I place \$10,000 in my meter, can I claim that for the CARES grant or do you need a report from VR systems that shows how many ballots we mailed out?

Answer: You can claim the \$10,000 meter but then you would need a report to substantiate the amount that was used from that meter account was due to respond for or prepare for the pandemic. Proof would include paid invoice, cancelled check, etc.

Q&A

Question: What kind of staff expenses are allowable?

Answer: Consider the underlying CARES purpose. For example, allowable expenses would be:

- Overtime for full-time staff who were, are or are going to work on COVID-19 related projects
- Hours for seasonal staff who were, are or are going to work on COVID-19 related projects
- Administrative leave or sick leave for seasonal staff who were unable to work(provided it is not federal sick leave)

Importance of Supporting Documentation

Invoices – paid invoices

Canceled checks

Bank /other account statements

Timesheets –Regular/Overtime

Payrolls

Time and attendance records

Payment schedules/vouchers

Purchase order (when procured or paid)

Vendor contracts /lease agreements (vendor/sub vendor)

Ledgers

Paid bills

Time and attendance records

Any other records detailing costs and provision of services or products

Guide: Keep record in accordance with sound accounting principles and satisfactory for an audit

Key Dates

Grant expense and match expense period	January 20, 2020 through December 31, 2020
Deadline to submit signed agreement and request	December 31, 2020
Deadline to incur, encumber and/or expend funds	December 31, 2020
Final expenditure report	February 1, 2021
Deadline to return unused funds including interest	February 1, 2021
Deadline to meet match for expenses in allowable period	March 27, 2022

Additional resources for Q&A

U.S. Election Assistance Commission

FAQS - <https://www.eac.gov/payments-and-grants/2020-cares-act-grant-faqs>

General Information

<https://www.eac.gov/payments-and-grants/2020-cares-act-grants>

Guidance on Use of CARES funds

<https://www.eac.gov/election-officials/guidance-use-hava-funds-expenses-related-covid-19>

Division of Elections



FLORIDA **DEPARTMENT** *of* **STATE**

For more information, visit us online at:
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