Decide Alaska’s Future.

VOTE

Election Policy Work Group
July 18, 2017
Guiding Principles

✓ Maximize Accessibility
  • Voters with disabilities
  • Language assistance
  • Rural/Urban
  • All Alaskans eligible to vote

✓ Cost Effectiveness

✓ Voter Satisfaction and Confidence
  • Good customer service
  • Good communication with voters

✓ Longevity in the Solution

✓ Coordination
  • DOE, local governments, tribes and stakeholders

✓ Security and Integrity
  • All systems, including tabulation systems

✓ Voter Outreach
  • Education
  • Civic Engagement

The Division of Elections reviewed information about Alaska’s current by mail voting processes, gathered information about other vote by mail states, and assessed the feasibility of adopting a vote by mail system for Alaska.

The following information reflects considerations for implementing a vote by mail program.
## Alternative Ballot Delivery

### Mail Voting in Other States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Implementation Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Colorado** | • Implemented statewide in 2013  
• All active voters receive a ballot in the mail for every election  
• Dropboxes widely available to drop off ballots  
• Multiple vote centers available in every county where the 5-10% of voters who prefer to vote in person can receive and vote a ballot |
| **Oregon**  | • 2000 statewide was adopted for all counties  
• All active voters receive a ballot in the mail for every election  
• Dropboxes widely available to drop off ballots  
• Only in person voting option is on Election Day, at the county election office |
| **Washington** | • 2011 all counties except Pierce County were vote by mail  
• Legislation was passed requiring all counties after 2011  
• All active voters receive a ballot in the mail for every election  
• Dropboxes widely available to drop off ballots  
• Only in person voting option is on Election Day, at the county election office |
Voting in Alaska Today

Precinct Based In Person Voting
- Precinct election boards
- Voting on Election Day at 441 precincts
- Voting equipment
  - 511 touch screen units with 441 used in precincts
  - 361 optical scan units with 304 used in precincts
  - 137 hand count precincts

Early / Absentee In Person Voting
- Available 15 day prior to Election Day
- Absentee voting stations (AVS) with all 40 district ballots – 16 SW locations
- Absentee voting officials (AVO) with one district ballot – 163 locations

Special Needs Voting
- Available 15 days prior to Election Day and at the polls on Election Day
- Voter is assisted by a personal representative

Electronic Transmission Voting (Fax and Online Delivery)
- Available 15 days prior Election Day in Statewide Elections (UOCAVA 45 days)

By Mail Voting
- Voters may apply in January of a calendar year
- Voters in remote areas and those with a disability are sent absentee ballot application to apply
- Division conducts all by mail elections for special local elections (incorporation, dissolution, liquor option and some REAA school board elections)
Exploring Alaska Alternative Ballot Delivery and Return Methods

**Ballot Delivery Method**
- Each active registered voter will be mailed a ballot and voting materials
- Voters may choose to vote in person at an in person location and not vote their by mail ballot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Stations (All 40 House District Ballots Available)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Voters may vote in person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Voters may receive a replacement ballot or get a ballot if they did not receive a ballot in the mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Trained on all aspects of the voting process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Available 15 days prior to Election Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Language assistance materials available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Serve as a location to return voted ballots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Voter assistance in all aspects of the voting process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Disability voting systems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Officials (Community District Ballot(s) Available)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Serve as community outreach person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Voters may vote in person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Voters may receive a replacement ballot or get a ballot if they did not receive a ballot in the mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Trained on all aspects of the voting process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Available 15 days prior to Election Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bi-lingual worker and language assistance materials available in targeted communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Serve as a location to return voted ballots - drop box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Voter assistance in all aspects of the voting process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ballot Return Method**
- Voters may return their ballot by mail
- Voters may return their ballot in person to a Voting Station or Voting Official
- Voters may return their ballot using at a drop box
Exploring Alaska Alternative Ballot Delivery and Return Methods

### 2016 Absentee Voting Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Location Details</th>
<th>Rural Locations</th>
<th>Urban Locations</th>
<th>Total Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Southeast Alaska, Prince William Sound, Kodiak and Kenai Peninsula</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Municipality of Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Borough</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fairbanks, Interior, Eastern Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Valdez</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Northern, Western and Southwest Alaska, Aleutian Chain</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hybrid System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery and Return</td>
<td>Combination of by mail and in person ballot delivery and return methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban and Rural Communities</td>
<td>Urban and rural communities will maintain existing in person voting locations and add additional new locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Official</td>
<td>Target to have a voting official in each rural community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cost Trends in Other Jurisdictions

General Trends for Decrease in Costs because of Vote by Mail
- Decrease in training costs
- Decrease in the number of election day polling places
- Decrease in hiring temporary workers
- Lower administrative costs
- Lower costs for the maintenance of voting equipment
- Decrease rental fees for election day polling places

General Trends for Increase in Costs because of Vote by Mail
- Postal Costs
- Printing of envelopes and materials
- Initial cost of buying equipment for vote by mail
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>COST STUDY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Save approximately $1.05 per voter; spent 1.5 million for voting equipment; Pew estimates the new program could eventually save Colorado $5 million in two year period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>Approximately 1/3 to 1/2 the costs of an in person election; amounts to around $3 million a year in savings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>No concrete numbers; many websites state that costs have decreased for Washington.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Will start in 2018; in 1999 study by Orange County estimated a saving of approximately $200,000 per election.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Yolo County had a cost savings of 43%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>San Diego County first special election for Assembly seat estimated a cost of $8.75 per voter for mailed ballot versus $221.43 for in person voting and the second election, city council seat, was $8.60 per voter versus $110.07 per voter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>A cost estimate was completed in 2011 and it was concluded that vote by mail would save the state approximately $2 million an election cycle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regional Office Considerations

Areas of Potential Redistribution of Current Program Funds

• Questioned, absentee review boards and regional Accu-Vote boards
  – Potential reduction in the number of boards required in the regional office depending on the structure of the vote by mail system
  – Approximately $105,000 spent in 2016

• Equipment
  – Space and storage (reduction in needed storage space)
  – Maintenance and repair (reduction in time spent on maintenance and repair)
  – Shipping and delivery (approximately $228,000 spent in shipping and delivery of voting equipment and supplies in 2016)

• Election worker recruitment and payment
  – Potential savings in substantially reducing the number of election workers needed i.e., precinct workers, telephone workers, ballot loggers, and temporary employees
  – Approximately $746,600 spent on just precinct worker pay and polling place pay in 2016

• Election worker training and travel
  – Reduction in the number of workers who will receive training
  – Estimated $350,000 spent in travel to train election officials in previous election cycles

• Polling place recruitment
  – 441 precincts will no longer need to be recruited
Exploring Alternative Ballot Delivery and Return Methods

**Procedural Changes to Consider**

- Sending out ballot packages
- Return, review and counting ballots
- Regional voting stations
- In person voting officials
- Voter fraud protection
- Post election processes
- Identification of statutory changes
- REAA elections
Exploring Alternative Ballot Delivery and Return Methods

Additional Considerations

- Informed voters
- Longer voting period for voters
- Consistency of increased uniformity of how ballots are processed
- Less administrative burden and cost savings
- Impacts on voter turnout
- Possible voter fraud and coercion
- Tradition of going to the polls
Guiding Principles

✓ **Maximize Accessibility**
  • Voters with disabilities
  • Language assistance
  • Rural/Urban
  • All Alaskans eligible to vote

✓ **Cost Effectiveness**

✓ **Voter Satisfaction and Confidence**
  • Good customer service
  • Good communication with voters

✓ **Longevity in the Solution**

✓ **Coordination**
  • DOE, local governments, tribes and stakeholders

✓ **Security and Integrity**
  • All systems, including tabulation systems

✓ **Voter Outreach**
  • Education
  • Civic Engagement