

UOCAVA Overview & Data

State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee

Monday, May 4, 2026

Presented by Rebecca C. Power, Legislative Research Analyst



Federal Laws



The Uniformed and Overseas Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) of 1986 requires U.S. states and territories to allow overseas and absent members of the military, military family members, and overseas citizens to register and vote absentee in all federal elections.



The Uniformed and Overseas Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)

Specifically, UOCAVA covers the following groups of United States citizens:

- members of the uniformed services on active duty and the merchant marine who, because of their membership in the service, are absent from their place of residence, and are otherwise qualified to vote;
- the spouses and dependents of these uniformed services voters who are absent due to the member's active duty or service; and
- qualified voters who reside outside of the United States.

Military And Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE Act)

In 2010, the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE) was enacted to amend UOCAVA to establish new voter registration and absentee ballot procedures for all federal elections.



Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE Act)

Specifically, the MOVE Act requires state officials to:

- provide UOCAVA voters with an option to request and receive voter registration and absentee ballot applications electronically;
- transmit absentee ballots to UOCAVA voters no later than 45 days before an election for a federal office, when the request has been received by that date;
- ensure that electronic transmission procedures protect the security of the balloting process and the privacy of the identity and personal data of the UOCAVA voter using the system;
- expand the acceptance of the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) to all elections for federal office beginning December 31, 2010;
- accept otherwise valid voter registration applications, absentee ballot applications, voted ballots, or FWABs without regard to state notarization requirements, or restrictions on paper type, or envelope type; and
- allow UOCAVA voters to track the receipt of their absentee ballots through a free access system.



State Laws



Montana UOCAVA Laws

The Montana Absent Uniformed Services and Overseas Voter Act can be found in Title 13, Chapter 21 of the Montana Code Annotated.

Much of the current state law was added or amended during the 2011 and 2013 legislative sessions in response to the passage of the MOVE Act.



Montana UOCAVA Laws Compared to Other States

STATE-LEVEL DECISION	MONTANA	OTHER STATES
Does this state have different ID or proof of address requirements for military and non-military voters?	No	No
What information does this state require to register as a UOCAVA voter?	Name, DOB, State-Issued ID or Last 4 of SSN	39 other states have the same requirement
Does this state allow National Guardsmen activated on state orders access to UOCAVA privileges?	Yes	39 other states allow; Indiana allows only if they are deployed outside of the State
Can American citizens who have never lived in the U.S. vote in this state?	A U.S. citizen who has never resided in the U.S., and has a parent that was last registered in Montana, is eligible to vote in Montana as long as he or she has not registered or voted in another state.	37 other states have similar provisions; 9 of these states allow these individuals to vote only in federal elections
What is this state's voter registration deadline for UOCAVA voters?	By 8 p.m. on Election Day	40 states have a registration deadline prior to election day, ranging from the day before to 30 days before; in 3 states, no registration is required; in 3 states registration is not required for uniformed service members and their dependents
What are the allowed methods of return for a voted ballot in this state?	Mail, Email, Fax, Online	6 other states allow mail, email, fax, and online methods for ballot return; 24 states allow ballot return only by mail
What is the deadline for the return of a voted ballot for the primary & general elections?	By 8 p.m. on Election Day	20 other states require ballots to be received on or before Election Day; 21 require ballots to be postmarked by Election Day and received within a specific number of days after the election ranging from 2 to 10 days

Montana UOCAVA Data



Data Source: EAVS Report

The biennial Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS) Comprehensive Report is prepared by the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and provide an analysis of state-by-state data that covers various topics related to the administration of federal elections.

The data is compiled by surveying all 50 states, plus D.C., American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

EAVS Definitions

“Uniformed Service”: Members of the uniformed services absent from their voting residence and their eligible family members.

“Non-Military”: U.S. citizens living overseas

2024 MT Active Registered Voters

	2024 Total Active Registered Voters	2024 Total UOCAVA Registered Voters	2024 UOCAVA Voters as Percentage of Total Registered Voters
Cascade County	44,333	490	1.1%
Flathead County	70,920	678	0.9%
Gallatin County	80,396	875	1.1%
Jefferson County	9,235	68	0.7%
Lake County	19,364	131	0.7%
Lewis & Clark County	47,121	379	0.8%
Lincoln County	13,568	93	0.7%
Missoula County	83,235	854	1.0%
Petroleum County	366	0	0.0%
Ravalli County	32,749	269	0.8%
Silver Bow County	21,099	87	0.4%
Yellowstone County	95,575	661	0.7%
State of Montana	691,534	5,678	0.8%

2024 MT UOCAVA Voters

	2024 Total UOCAVA Registered Voters	2024 UOCAVA Uniformed Service Voters	2024 UOCAVA Uniformed Services Voters as % of Total UOCAVA Registered Voters	2024 UOCAVA Non-Military Voters	2024 UOCAVA Non-Military Voters as % of Total UOCAVA Registered Voters
Cascade County	490	361	74%	129	26%
Flathead County	678	188	28%	490	72%
Gallatin County	875	190	22%	685	78%
Jefferson County	68	38	56%	30	44%
Lake County	131	40	31%	91	69%
Lewis & Clark County	379	163	43%	216	57%
Lincoln County	93	26	28%	67	72%
Missoula County	854	171	20%	683	80%
Petroleum County	0	0	0%	0	0%
Ravalli County	269	108	40%	161	60%
Silver Bow County	87	41	47%	46	53%
Yellowstone County	661	279	42%	382	58%
State of Montana	5,678	2,124	37%	3,554	63%

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Transmitted

	2024 Total UOCAVA Ballots Transmitted	2024 UOCAVA Uniformed Service Ballots Transmitted	2024 UOCAVA Non-Military Ballots Transmitted
Cascade County	486	355	131
Flathead County	582	160	422
Gallatin County	968	197	771
Jefferson County	57	32	25
Lake County	108	34	74
Lewis & Clark County	361	141	220
Lincoln County	86	23	63
Missoula County	847	175	672
Petroleum County	0	0	0
Ravalli County	291	114	177
Silver Bow County	78	35	43
Yellowstone County	632	254	378
State of Montana	5,452	1,936	3,516

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Returned

	2024 Total UOCAVA Ballots Returned	2024 Total Return Rate	2024 UOCAVA Uniformed Service Ballots Returned	2024 Uniformed Service Return Rate	2024 UOCAVA Non-Military Ballots Returned	2024 Non-Military Return Rate
Cascade County	328	67%	229	65%	99	76%
Flathead County	513	88%	133	83%	380	90%
Gallatin County	722	75%	159	81%	563	73%
Jefferson County	53	93%	29	91%	24	96%
Lake County	99	92%	30	88%	69	93%
Lewis & Clark County	296	82%	114	81%	182	83%
Lincoln County	73	85%	20	87%	53	84%
Missoula County	754	89%	149	85%	605	90%
Petroleum County	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Ravalli County	231	79%	86	75%	145	82%
Silver Bow County	66	85%	28	80%	38	88%
Yellowstone County	453	72%	180	71%	273	72%
State of Montana	4,239	78%	1,444	75%	2,795	79%

2024 MT UOCAVA Turnout Compared to 2024 MT Turnout

	2024 Total MT Voter Turnout	2024 Total UOCAVA Voter Turnout	2024 UOCAVA Uniformed Service Turnout	2024 UOCAVA Non-Military Turnout
Cascade County	74%	67%	65%	76%
Flathead County	76%	88%	83%	90%
Gallatin County	73%	75%	81%	73%
Jefferson County	83%	93%	91%	96%
Lake County	76%	92%	88%	93%
Lewis & Clark County	80%	82%	81%	83%
Lincoln County	87%	85%	87%	84%
Missoula County	78%	89%	85%	90%
Petroleum County	90%	0%	0%	0%
Ravalli County	82%	79%	75%	82%
Silver Bow County	76%	85%	80%	88%
Yellowstone County	75%	72%	71%	72%
State of Montana	77%	78%	75%	79%

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Returned by Type

	2024 UOCAVA Mail Return Total	2024 UOCAVA Email Return Total	2024 UOCAVA Fax Return Total	2025 UOCAVA Online Return Total
Cascade County	123	5	0	199
Flathead County	494	2	0	0
Gallatin County	720	2	0	0
Jefferson County	36	15	0	0
Lake County	93	2	0	0
Lewis & Clark County	127	160	0	0
Lincoln County	72	0	0	0
Missoula County	95	647	1	0
Petroleum County	0	0	0	0
Ravalli County	26	55	0	149
Silver Bow County	29	0	0	0
Yellowstone County	198	14	1	0
State of Montana	2,352	1,161	2	359

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Returned by Type - Mail

	2024 UOCAVA Mail Return Total	2024 Uniformed Service Mail Return	2024 Non-Military Mail Return
Cascade County	123	107	16
Flathead County	494	130	364
Gallatin County	720	158	562
Jefferson County	36	22	14
Lake County	93	27	66
Lewis & Clark County	127	55	72
Lincoln County	72	20	52
Missoula County	95	43	52
Petroleum County	0	0	0
Ravalli County	26	21	5
Silver Bow County	29	13	16
Yellowstone County	198	106	92
State of Montana	2,352	859	1,493

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Returned by Type - Email

	2024 UOCAVA Email Return Total	2024 Uniformed Service Email Return	2024 Non-Military Email Return
Cascade County	5	2	3
Flathead County	2	2	0
Gallatin County	2	1	1
Jefferson County	15	6	9
Lake County	2	2	0
Lewis & Clark County	160	54	106
Lincoln County	0	0	0
Missoula County	647	104	543
Petroleum County	0	0	0
Ravalli County	55	15	40
Silver Bow County	0	0	0
Yellowstone County	14	5	9
State of Montana	1,161	297	864

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Returned by Type - Fax

	2024 UOCAVA Fax Return Total	2024 Uniformed Service Fax Return	2024 Non- Military Fax Return
Cascade County	0	0	0
Flathead County	0	0	0
Gallatin County	0	0	0
Jefferson County	0	0	0
Lake County	0	0	0
Lewis & Clark County	0	0	0
Lincoln County	0	0	0
Missoula County	1	0	1
Petroleum County	0	0	0
Ravalli County	0	0	0
Silver Bow County	0	0	0
Yellowstone County	1	1	0
State of Montana	2	1	1

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Returned by Type - Online

	2025 UOCAVA Online Return Total	2024 Uniformed Service Online Return	2024 Non-Military Online Return
Cascade County	199	120	79
Flathead County	0	0	0
Gallatin County	0	0	0
Jefferson County	0	0	0
Lake County	0	0	0
Lewis & Clark County	0	0	0
Lincoln County	0	0	0
Missoula County	0	0	0
Petroleum County	0	0	0
Ravalli County	149	50	99
Silver Bow County	0	0	0
Yellowstone County	0	0	0
State of Montana	359	174	185

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Undeliverable

	Total Undeliverable	Postal Mail Undeliverable	Email Undeliverable	Fax Undeliverable	Online Undeliverable
Cascade County	6	6	0	0	0
Flathead County	1	1	0	0	0
Gallatin County	0	0	0	0	0
Jefferson County	2	2	0	0	0
Lake County	0	0	0	0	0
Lewis & Clark County	0	0	0	0	0
Lincoln County	0	0	0	0	0
Missoula County	1	1	0	0	0
Petroleum County	0	0	0	0	0
Ravalli County	0	0	0	0	0
Silver Bow County	0	0	0	0	0
Yellowstone County	32	32	0	0	0
State of Montana	51	51	0	0	0

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Rejected

	2024 Total UOCAVA Ballots Rejected	2024 UOCAVA Deadline Rejected	2024 UOCAVA Signature Rejected	2024 UOCAVA Other Rejected
Cascade County	8	0	1	0
Flathead County	2	0	0	0
Gallatin County	5	1	2	3
Jefferson County	2	0	0	0
Lake County	1	0	0	1
Lewis & Clark County	2	0	0	0
Lincoln County	0	0	0	0
Missoula County	4	1	0	0
Petroleum County	0	0	0	0
Ravalli County	0	0	0	0
Silver Bow County	1	0	0	0
Yellowstone County	32	0	0	1
State of Montana	70	4	3	5

2024 MT UOCAVA Ballots Counted

	2024 Total UOCAVA Ballots Counted	2024 UOCAVA Mail Counted	2024 UOCAVA Email Counted	2024 UOCAVA Fax Counted	2024 UOCAVA Online Counted
Cascade County	320	115	5	0	199
Flathead County	511	492	2	0	0
Gallatin County	717	715	2	0	0
Jefferson County	51	34	15	0	0
Lake County	98	92	2	0	0
Lewis & Clark County	294	125	160	0	0
Lincoln County	73	72	0	0	0
Missoula County	750	92	646	1	0
Petroleum County	0	0	0	0	0
Ravalli County	231	26	55	0	149
Silver Bow County	65	28	0	0	0
Yellowstone County	421	166	14	1	0
State of Montana	4,169	2,283	1,160	2	359

Other States



Montana UOCAVA Voters Compared to Other States

	2024 Total State Active Registered Voters	2024 Total State UOCAVA Voters	2024 State UOCAVA Voters as % of Active Registered Voters	2024 State UOCAVA Uniformed Service	Uniformed Service as % of Total State UOCAVA Voters	2024 State UOCAVA Non-Military	Non-Military as % of Total State UOCAVA Voters
Alaska	565,242	12,630	2.2%	8,395	66.5%	4,235	33.5%
Colorado	4,074,612	62,753	1.5%	21,243	33.9%	41,510	66.1%
Idaho*	1,178,750	5,668	0.5%	2,560	45.2%	2,894	51.1%
Montana	691,534	5,678	0.8%	2,124	37.4%	3,554	62.6%
Oregon	3,060,374	21,939	0.7%	4,499	20.5%	17,440	79.5%
South Dakota	627,248	3,488	0.6%	1,367	39.2%	2,121	60.8%
Utah	1,793,182	7,094	0.4%	898	12.7%	4,844	68.3%
Washington	5,013,112	124,410	2.5%	71,869	57.8%	52,541	42.2%
Wyoming	296,960	1,827	0.6%	816	44.7%	1,011	55.3%

* Idaho lists 214 UOCAVA Voters (3.18%) as “not categorized by voter type”

Montana UOCAVA Laws Compared to Other States

State	Required Information	National Guard Allowed	U.S. Citizens Who Have Never Lived in U.S.	Voter Registration Deadline	Return Methods	Ballot Return Deadline
Alaska	Name, DOB, State-Issued ID or Last 4 of SSN	No	Yes, Federal Elections Only	10 Days Before Election Day for Registered Voters 30 Days for New Voters	Mail, Fax	10th Day after Election Day
Colorado	Name, DOB, State-Issued ID or Last 4 of SSN	Yes	Yes	Postmarked by Election Day	Mail	Postmarked by Election Day and Received by 8th Day after Election Day
Idaho	Name, DOB, State-Issued ID or Last 4 of SSN	Yes	No	30 Days Before Election Day for New UOCAVA Registrations 11 Days for Returning UOCAVA Voters	Mail	By 8 p.m. on Election Day
Montana	Name, DOB, State-Issued ID or Last 4 of SSN	Yes	Yes	By 8 p.m. on Election Day	Mail, Fax, Email, Online	By 8 p.m. on Election Day
Oregon	Name, DOB, State-Issued ID or Last 4 of SSN	Yes	Yes	3 Weeks Prior to Election Day	Mail	Postmarked by Election Day and Received by 7th Day after Election Day
South Dakota	Name, DOB, State-Issued ID or Last 4 of SSN	Yes	Yes	2 Weeks Prior to Election Day	Mail	By 7 p.m. on Election Day
Utah	Name, DOB, State-Issued ID or Last 4 of SSN	Yes	Yes, Federal Elections Only	11 Days Prior to Election Day	Mail, Fax, Email	By 8 p.m. on Election Day
Washington	Name, DOB	No	Yes	By 8 p.m. on Election Day	Mail, Fax, Email, Online	Mail: Postmarked by Election Day Fax/Email/Online: By 8 p.m. on Election Day
Wyoming	Name, DOB, State-Issued ID or Last 4 of SSN	No	No	By the Day Before Election Day	Mail	By 7 p.m. on Election Day

Summary



Summary

- Federal Laws
 - UOCAVA (1986)
 - MOVE Act (2010)
- 2024 Election
 - 5,678 UOCAVA Voters in Montana, or 0.8% of the Total Active Registered Voters
 - 78% turnout rate for UOCAVA Voters, compared to 77% turnout rate overall for Montana
- 4 Return Methods for UOCAVA Voters
 - Mail, Fax, Email, Online
 - Mail is most frequently used
- Other States
 - Montana has a similar percentage of UOCAVA voters to neighboring states



Questions?

