

State of Alaska FY2002 Governor's Operating Budget

Office of the Governor
Elections
BRU/Component

Component: Elections

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Component Mission

To conduct fair, impartial and accurate elections, and to assure that all eligible Alaskans are provided a convenient opportunity to register and/or update their voter registration record. The division must also plan and conduct statewide primary and general elections efficiently and accurately, while encouraging high voter participation.

Component Services Provided

- Oversee the registration of voters, maintenance of the voter registration list, and the planning and conduct of elections across the state.
- Prepare and conduct two statewide elections during even numbered years. A number of regional elections are conducted each year to elect board members in 19 REAA school districts and four Coastal Resource Service Areas. The division also conducts local liquor option elections, incorporation elections, dissolution elections, and recall elections whenever they are called.
- Oversee the initiative petition process and work with the petition sponsors from the time the initiative is proposed until it is either certified for placement on the ballot, or rejected for lack of sufficient signatures.

Component Goals and Strategies

- 1) Increase the efficiency and convenience of the electoral process
 - Review all forms, policies, and procedures and seek ways to streamline and improve the process.
 - Improve voter understanding of election issues through internet and web access to information.
 - Actively network with election officials from other states to review their processes and statutes.
 - Work cooperatively with the city and borough clerks, seeking input and providing technical assistance when needed.
- 2) Improve accuracy of the voter registration list
 - Conduct annual list maintenance project.
 - Work with other states to assure that the division is notified when an Alaskan registration is canceled in another state.
 - Coordinate with other agencies to maintain compliance with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA).
- 3) Plan and prepare for the 2002 Primary and General elections.
 - Recruit, train and prepare election workers for the elections.
 - Work with the media and internet service providers to assure that election results will be available on the internet.
 - Expand the use of precinct tabulators into additional communities.
- 4) Encourage higher voter participation
 - Remain involved in community outreach programs such as Kids Voting
 - Continue to develop voter awareness programs.

Key Component Issues for FY2001 – 2002

- The division is faced with the ongoing difficulty of managing and maintaining our current voter registration system (VREMS) to assure that the 14-year-old system will be able to handle the year 2001 reapportionment of voters, the processing of initiative petition signatures and the increasing voter registration demands. The division will research options for upgrading the VREMS database to a more user and programming friendly system.
- The recruitment of election workers becomes increasingly difficult each year. During the primary and general elections, an estimated 2500 workers will be recruited. The level of compensation, the need to take time off work to be trained and to serve, and the nature of the tasks make voters less willing to serve. The division strives to make the training worthwhile, the materials interesting and easy to read, and the election workers feel

appreciated. In spite of this, there are precincts in which election workers can not be found. When this happens, the division can close the polling place and provide an absentee voting official in the community. Rather than continue this practice, the division will continue to research how other jurisdictions recruit and keep election workers.

- In October, five regional educational attendance area elections were entirely and successfully conducted as By-Mail elections. The division remains interested in conducting all annual regional educational attendance area (REAA) and coastal resource service area (CRSA) elections as By-Mail elections. By-Mail elections are beneficial because all registered voters in the impacted regions are mailed ballots, encouraging higher participation. It is difficult to recruit election boards for the REAA and CRSA elections, and with By-Mail voting, local election boards are not required. The division will continue to seek legislative approval for by-mail elections.

Reapportionment

- The division will be reviewing the impact that the new population numbers gathered from the 2000 census will have on division costs as well as the possible addition of new precincts. The extra work required for reapportionment will be taking place around the same time as the preparation begins for the 2002 primary and general elections.

The division must:

- Recruit additional temporary staff to perform the added functions of reapportionment.
- Designate new precinct boundaries and legal descriptions.
- Reassign voters to the new precincts. This is a huge task using the existing VREMS functions. Each geographical information file must be reassigned to the correct precinct.
- Contact voters who do not have sufficient address information to determine a new precinct boundary.
- Prepare new maps for the precinct boundaries. Software to produce maps, or a contract with another agency, will need to be procured for the division to obtain precinct maps.
- Issue new voter ID cards for all voters transferred from one district/precinct to another.
- Upgrade computers to handle the additional work that will be necessary for reapportionment.
- Address ADA issues with the change of polling places.

Major Component Accomplishments for FY2000

- The division successfully conducted two statewide elections in 2000, the primary in August and the general in November. Within the first hour after the polls closed, election results were received from 245 of 451 precincts. The primary and general elections allowed the division to expand the use of precinct tabulators into four new communities, increasing the total number using that technology to 281.
- Following months of intensive programming effort the division's mainframe-based voter registration system (VREMS) was made more stable and Y2K compliant, and numerous other improvements were made to the system. Although improvements were made, the maintenance of VREMS remains a key issue.
- The division conducted the second thorough voter list maintenance efforts since passage of the NVRA in 1995. As a result of the effort, 10,641 voters were moved to inactive status.
- The division successfully conducted and certified 18 REAA elections, four CRSA elections and one special election.
- The Polling Place Locator, a toll-free Interactive Voice Response system which informs voters of the location of their polling place, received software upgrades prior to the general election. The new upgrades expedited the time for callers to receive the requested information and the Polling Place Locator once again proved to be a successful tool in handling phone inquiries.
- Advances in technology allowed our division to add a new service to our website to help voters check the status of their absentee by mail application. By using this new service, voters could check the mailing address of where their ballot was being sent, receive instructions to contact our office because of an incomplete application, or verify that the division had received their application.
- In cooperation with the Department of Labor, the division assisted with the preparation work needed to incorporate current precincts into the Department of Labor's mapping system. This completed the Phase 2 mapping portion of reapportionment.

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

AS 15 Alaska Election Code, AS 14 REAA School Boards, AS 29 Municipal Code, AS 04 Local Liquor Options, AS 46 Coastal Mgmt PProgram
6 AAC 01- 6 AAC 28 Election Regulations, 6 AAC 101- 6 AAC 140 Precinct Descriptions

Elections
Component Financial Summary

All dollars in thousands

	FY2000 Actuals	FY2001 Authorized	FY2002 Governor
Non-Formula Program:			
Component Expenditures:			
71000 Personal Services	1,281.3	1,641.0	1,401.2
72000 Travel	14.1	65.4	65.4
73000 Contractual	1,035.1	1,888.2	546.4
74000 Supplies	51.5	58.8	43.8
75000 Equipment	49.9	20.0	0.0
76000 Land/Buildings	0.0	0.0	0.0
77000 Grants, Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expenditure Totals	2,431.9	3,673.4	2,056.8
Funding Sources:			
1004 General Fund Receipts	2,396.9	3,673.4	2,056.8
1007 Inter-Agency Receipts	35.0	0.0	0.0
Funding Totals	2,431.9	3,673.4	2,056.8

Estimated Revenue Collections

Description	Master Revenue Account	FY2000 Actuals	FY2001 Authorized	FY2001 Cash Estimate	FY2002 Governor	FY2003 Forecast
Unrestricted Revenues						
Unrestricted Fund	68515	19.4	28.5	28.5	21.0	28.5
Unrestricted Total		19.4	28.5	28.5	21.0	28.5
Restricted Revenues						
Interagency Receipts	51015	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Restricted Total		35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Estimated Revenues		54.4	28.5	28.5	21.0	28.5

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Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2002

No service changes.

**Summary of Component Budget Changes
From FY2001 Authorized to FY2002 Governor**

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2001 Authorized	3,673.4	0.0	0.0	3,673.4
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Delete on-election year funding.	-1,629.0	0.0	0.0	-1,629.0
-Delete ballot initiative funding, Leg. Resolve 48	-1.5	0.0	0.0	-1.5
-Year 2 Labor Costs - Net Change from FY2001	13.9	0.0	0.0	13.9
FY2002 Governor	2,056.8	0.0	0.0	2,056.8

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Personal Services Information

Authorized Positions			Personal Services Costs	
	FY2001 Authorized	FY2002 Governor		
Full-time	22	22	Annual Salaries	1,033,436
Part-time	1	1	COLA	25,345
Nonpermanent	28	13	Premium Pay	17,675
			Annual Benefits	390,996
			<i>Less 4.51% Vacancy Factor</i>	(66,252)
			Lump Sum Premium Pay	0
Totals	51	36	Total Personal Services	1,401,200

Position Classification Summary

Job Class Title	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Juneau	Others	Total
Division Director	0	0	1	0	1
Election Administrative Asst	2	1	3	0	6
Election Administrative Office	0	0	1	0	1
Election Clerk I	0	0	0	1	1
Election Clerk II	6	3	6	1	16
Election Clerk III	1	1	0	1	3
Election Coordinator II	0	0	1	0	1
Election Project Coordinator	0	0	1	0	1
Election Supervisor	1	1	1	1	4
Election Technician	0	0	1	0	1
Elections Program Specialist	0	0	1	0	1
Totals	10	6	16	4	36