



Wisconsin Elections Commission

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DATE: June 12, 2023

TO: Wisconsin Municipal Clerks
Wisconsin County Clerks
City of Milwaukee Election Commission
Milwaukee County Election Commission

FROM: Wisconsin Elections Commission

SUBJECT: 2023 Absentee Ballot Envelope Subgrant Reimbursement Program

1. **SUMMARY.** On March 3, 2023, the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) approved the allocation of federal funds for an absentee ballot envelope subgrant program. This subgrant is provided to partially offset the costs jurisdictions incur purchasing the redesigned absentee ballot envelopes (EL-120 and EL-122) planned for approval on August 4, 2023.

2. **BACKGROUND.**

The bipartisan Commission unanimously directed the creation of new absentee ballot envelope designs in order to ensure compliance with the law. The old envelope designs do not conform with guidance from recent court orders and do not fully comply with all statutory requirements. Furthermore, the old envelope designs do not incorporate design features (adopted in other states) that make them easily identifiable to the U.S. Postal Service. For these reasons, the Commission, on April 28 and again on June 1, unanimously determined that the current EL-120 and EL-122 shall not be used in 2024.

To partially offset the cost of adopting new envelope designs, the WEC will disburse up to \$600,000 of Federal funds through the approved 2023 Absentee Ballot Envelope Subgrant Program. Each jurisdiction may receive an award calculated proportionally based on their estimated January 1, 2022, voting age population as determined by the Department of Administration Demographic Services Center.¹ The minimum award is \$20.00. A list of award amounts is attached as Appendix A.

3. **AUTHORIZED USES.** All funds received must be expended to purchase the redesigned absentee envelopes which includes both the EL-120 and EL-122.

4. **HOW DO JURISDICTIONS APPLY?** An authorized representative of each jurisdiction must complete and return a 2023 Absentee Ballot Envelope Subgrant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

¹ https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/Population_Estimates.aspx

to the WEC at elections.finance@wi.gov. This subgrant is available to municipalities, or to counties purchasing envelopes on behalf of a municipality, but only one award will be granted per municipality.

5. **QUESTIONS?** Call the WEC Help Desk at 608-261-2028 or e-mail elections.finance@wi.gov.