

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice AO-1854

For: State and County Offices

2023 COC Makeup Elections

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



1 COC Makeup Elections

A Background

Makeup election procedure has been established for the 2023 COC elections. A makeup election will allow a County Office to conduct a new 2023 election if errors or uncontrollable circumstances occurred during the regular election period.

A makeup election is a yearly scheduled election following the regular election. The makeup election process differs from the special election process that is in place. Makeup elections may occur anytime a valid election could not be finalized during the regular scheduled COC election. Ballots for the makeup election will be mailed by a vendor. A special election can occur anytime there is a COC vacancy outside of the regular and makeup election schedule and ballots are mailed by the County Office.

B Purpose

This notice provides County Offices with guidance on the 2023 makeup and special election process as well as a schedule for the 2023 makeup election (Exhibit 1). See 15-AO, paragraph 186 and 187 for procedure on the makeup and special election process.

C Makeup Election

Each year, a makeup election is scheduled following the regular election. County Offices that have a vacancy due to uncontrollable circumstances must request a makeup election through the State Office. State Offices must receive approval from DAFO.

After receiving approval for a makeup election, the County Office will follow the election calendar in Exhibit 1. Makeup election process is completed in the COC Election Software, like a regular election, and ballots will be mailed by a printing company. National Office does not mail postcards for a makeup election so County Offices must ensure adequate public notification of the election and election timeline is provided.

Disposal Date	Distribution
June 1, 2024 9-22-23	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

1 COC Makeup Elections (Continued)

C Makeup Election (Continued)

Make Elections with be approved in situations such as:

- loss of a current member by resignation, removal, or death
- candidates name is withdrawn in an election with only one candidate
- circumstance beyond the County Offices control that result in a COC vacancy.

Nominations for makeup elections will be submitted using an FSA-669A-1. Nominations submitted on an FSA-669A are also acceptable.

D Special Election

When a vacancy takes place outside of the regular and makeup election schedule, COC's may operate on a quorum for the remainder of the year, or a special election may be conducted. A county that does not hold a valid makeup or regular election in a given year is required to hold a special election. County Offices must notify their State Office immediately upon discovering the need for a special election.

The special election process is completed outside of the COC Election Software. County Offices will be responsible for preparing the election calendar and completing the ballot printing and mailing locally. Election results must be recorded on an FSA-669B and sent to the State Office. The COC organization structure must be updated as soon as possible following the organizational meeting.

See 15-AO, Exhibit 25 for a sample of the special election calendar.

To complete a special election, County Office employees must use the FSA-73 and FSA-73-E ballot envelopes. The envelopes may be requested through [myFPAC Management Services Division Catalog](#), Space and Facilities-MSD, by attaching an FPAC-MSD-159 to the request. The envelopes are used in conjunction with an FSA-669B Official Ballot.

Note: FSA-73 and FSA-73-E ballot envelopes may also be used if a county is in need of additional provisional ballots.

E Makeup and Special Election Term Lengths

All counties must have at least 1 LAA up for election each year. Candidates of a makeup and special election will hold the same term lengths as those elected through the regular election process unless a makeup or special election is held to fill a vacancy for an incomplete term. In this instance, the newly elected member will only serve to the end of the vacant term in order to keep the COC on a 3-year rotation. Any term less than 1.5 years do not count against a member's term lengths. Members take office the first day of the month following a makeup or special election.

1 COC Makeup Elections (Continued)

F Contact

For questions about this notice or to request a makeup or special election, contact Cherie Moore by either of the following:

- e-mail to **cherie.moore@usda.gov**
- telephone at 202-941-8659.

2023 Makeup Election Calendar

The following table provides the 2023 COC makeup election schedule and deadlines.

Date	Activity
October 2, 2023	After receiving approval for a makeup election from DAFO, publicize the makeup election, the election process, and dates.
October 20, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that FSA-669A-1 or FSA-669A's are available at the County Office. • Make the eligible voters list available to the public. • Final date to submit the plan to the State Office to ensure that all producers are adequately informed of COC nomination and election
December 4, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final date for FSA-669A-1 or FSA-669A's to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accepted, if hand delivered to the County Office • postmarked, if mailed. • Verify that nominees are in the correct LAA and are flagged eligible to vote.
December 11, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review nominations. • Complete FSA-593. • Final date for mailing letter of congratulations to nominees.
December 12 –15, 2023	County Office will enter nominee and ballot data for makeup election in the COC Election website.
January 2, 2024	Printing company will mail makeup election ballots
January 30, 2024	Final date for voters to return completed makeup election ballots or for ballots to be postmarked.
February 12, 2024	Final date for counting makeup election ballots.
January 31 – February 16, 2024	Enter makeup election results in the COC Election website.
March 1, 2024	New members take office. Reporting screens for entering election results closed.
March 15, 2024	Directory Report to be updated by this date.