

## Resources to Prevent and Mitigate Political Violence

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1. **Concern about political violence is understandable.** We can all play a part in reducing the threat of violence and de-escalating if violence occurs.
  - For information about how to talk to your community about the threat of violence, start with resources from [Democracy for President](#).
  - Organizations like Over Zero, Bridging Divides Initiative, and Braver Angels promote educational awareness and initiatives that can be implemented on a large or small scale.
2. **State and local officials can play a constructive role** in avoiding and mitigating the threat of violence. Public officials should make plans now to support the election and respond in the case of challenges to the fair election process.
  - **Mayors:** Over Zero has materials specifically for Mayors. Over Zero, Delivery Associates, and other expert organizations are offering pro-bono support to cities. Reach out to [cities@projectoverzero.org](mailto:cities@projectoverzero.org).
  - **Law Enforcement:** [Crime and Justice Institute](#) developed resources specifically for law enforcement.
3. **Voter intimidation is illegal and there are strict laws protecting voters and restricting law enforcement presence at the polls.** Start with the Brennan Center's [Voters Should Not Be Intimidated](#).
4. **There are legal options** to address the threat of violence from private militias and others. Start with the materials produced by Georgetown's [Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection](#), including summaries of laws in all 50 states.
5. **The First Amendment protects the right to free speech**, including the right to peaceful protest and demonstration.
  - There are numerous resources to support non-violent civic resistance. A compilation of trainers is [here](#).
  - To understand the legal landscape that protects the right to protest, start with ICAP's [Protests and Public Safety: A Guide for Cities and Citizens](#).

## SELECT RESOURCES

### Resources for and about Law Enforcement and Military

- Crime and Justice Institute, [A Framework for Public Safety to Prepare for the 2020 Election](#). A framework to assist law enforcement and public safety agencies in planning for the election and post-election periods.
- Center for Strategic and International Studies, [Reinforcing Institutional Integrity in an Election Year: The Role of U.S. Federal Forces](#), October 1, 2020.
- Brennan Center, [Voters Should Not Be Intimidated](#), October 2020. Describes legal limitations on military, law enforcement, militias and others.
- Georgetown University, Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection, [Protest and Public Safety: A Guide for Cities & Citizens](#). Provides legal principles, best practices, and creative solutions upon which local jurisdictions may draw to protect public safety while respecting constitutional rights during rallies, protests, and other public events.
- Center for Civilians in Conflict, [The US National Guard and Public Order Management](#), June 2020. Includes how to report violations and contact information for State Guard offices.
- Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), [The Police Response to Mass Demonstrations: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned](#), 2018.
- [General Milley's memo](#) calling on members of the military to respect, protect, and uphold the Constitution, not partisan political parties or individuals

### Threats from Militias

- Georgetown University, Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection, [State Fact Sheets](#). Personalized for all 50 states, explaining the laws barring unauthorized private militia groups and what to do if groups of armed individuals are near a polling place or voter registration drive.
- Georgetown University, Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection, [Prohibiting Private Armies at Public Rallies](#). Identifies state constitutional provisions and/or statutory prohibitions that target similar private military and paramilitary conduct in each of the 50 states.
- Georgetown University, Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection, [City of Charlottesville v. Pennsylvania Light Foot Militia](#). Successful litigation against unlawful paramilitary activity in Charlottesville, Virginia, August 2017.

## Guides and Toolkits

- Coalition to Stop Gun Violence: [Guns Down at the Polls: How States Can and Should Limit Firearms at Polling Places](#)  
Potential methods in MI, NC, PA, VA, and WI to protect voters from armed intimidation and gun violence at the polls without infringing upon constitutional rights or state laws
- Lawyers' Committee for Civil and Human Rights, [Stop Hate Project](#). Provides resources to individuals and communities combating hate. They also run a hotline to report incidents and get advice: 1-844-NO-HATE.
- Anti-Defamation League, [Brief: Seven things leaders can do right now to counter election-motivated violent extremism in 2020 and beyond](#)
- Anti-Defamation League, [Resource: Countering Election-Motivated Violent Extremism in 2020 and Beyond: ADL's Practical Guide for State and Local Governments](#)
- Vision, Change, Win, [Get in Formation: A Community Change Toolkit](#)  
Practical advice for organizations, including how to set up safety teams.
- Political Research Associates, [Resisting Far-Right and Anti-immigrant Aligned County Sheriffs: Movements, Resources, and Tools for Action](#). Includes resources from PRA and others, including organizations working on the issues, academic research, and tools for action.

## Polling and Data

- Bridging Divides Initiative at Princeton University, [US Crisis Monitor](#), updated weekly. Data on political violence and demonstrations in America produced in partnership with ACLED. Also see this ["How To"](#) for accessing community data.
- Anti-Defamation League's HEAT map. [Interactive and customizable map](#) detailing extremist and anti-Semitic incidents around the nation.
- Political Research Associates, [Mapping Far-Right and Anti-Immigrant Movement Alignment with County Sheriffs](#), September 14, 2020
- Southern Poverty Law Center, [Hate Map](#). Provides updates on active hate groups in states.
- Larry Bartels, Vanderbilt University, [Ethnic Antagonism Erodes Republicans' Commitment to Democracy](#), September 2020
  - "Substantial numbers of Republicans endorse statements contemplating violations of key democratic norms, including respect for the law and for the outcomes of elections and eschewing the use of force in pursuit of political ends."

- 2 in 5 Republican or independent voters agree that “a time will come when patriotic Americans have to take the law into their own hands.”
- Three-fourths agree that “it is hard to trust the results of elections when so many people will vote for anyone who offers a handout.”
- Democracy Fund’s Voter Study Group, [Democracy Maybe: Attitudes on Authoritarianism in America](#), June 2020
  - About one in five self-described Democrats and Republicans says that violence would be at least “a little” justified if the other party won the 2020 presidential election. About one in 10 of each group says there would be “a lot” or a “great deal” of justification for violence if their party lost the 2020 presidential election.

### Messaging and Reporting Guidance

- Election SOS and Over Zero, [Reporting in Contentious Times: Insights on Election Violence](#), October 2020
- [Media Playbook: How to Cover Electoral Conflict](#), by Amanda Ripley and Rachel Kleinfeld, Election SOS
- “[How to Talk to Someone About the Threat of Political Violence](#),” More in Common/Democracy for President

### Addressing Voter Intimidation

- US Department of Justice, [Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses](#): Eighth Edition, December 2017. Reviews a broad range of federal crimes, including voter intimidation.
- Everytown for Gun Safety, Election Protection: [Preventing and Responding to Illegal Armed Voter Intimidation and Election Interference](#), October 6, 2020.
- Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, [Preventing Armed Voter Intimidation: A State-by-State Analysis](#), September 25, 2020.
- Stanford/MIT Healthy Elections Project, [Electoral Violence in 2020: Prevention and Potential Remedies](#), October 8, 2020. Surveys state-level policies for addressing Election Day violence in eleven swing states.
- Stanford/MIT Healthy Elections Project, [Defining Voter Intimidation: Six Battleground States](#), October 8, 2020. Rules and guidance aimed at preventing voter intimidation in six battleground states: Arizona, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

- Witness, [Documenting Voter Intimidation in the United States](#), October 14, 2020. A tip sheet for how to protect voters and others by capturing, preserving, and using evidence of voter suppression

### Select Articles in the Popular Press

- Erica Chenoweth and Jeremy Pressman, [This summer's Black Lives Matter protesters were overwhelmingly peaceful](#), our research finds: Police and counterprotesters sometimes started violence," *The Washington Post*, October 16, 2020.
- Maria Stephan, "[Nonviolent Civic Action May Help Defend the Integrity of the Election](#)," Just Security, October 13, 2020.
- Davey Alba, "[Riled Up: Misinformation Stokes Calls for Violence on Election Day](#)," The New York Times, October 13, 2020.
- Ken Klippenstein, "[As Trump Equivocates on White Supremacy, the FBI Warns of Right-Wing Terror](#)," *The Nation*, September 30, 2020. An intelligence report dated the day of the presidential debate predicts a "violent extremist threat" posed by a far-right militia.
- Mike Giglio, "[A Pro Trump Militant Group Has Recruited Thousands of Police, Soldiers, and Veterans](#)," *The Atlantic*, November 2020.
- Fabiola Cineas, "[Donald Trump is the Accelerant: A Comprehensive Timeline of Trump Encouraging Hate Groups and Political Violence](#)," Vox, October 9, 2020.
- Joshua Partlow, "[Former Special Forces Sought by Business Group to Guard Polling Sites in Minnesota, Company Says](#)," *The Washington Post*, October 9, 2020.
- Alex Hinton, "[Trump's Helter Skelter](#)," Project Syndicate, October 9, 2020.
- Craig Timber and Isaac Stanley Becker, "[Michigan kidnapping plot, like so many other extremist crimes, foreshadowed on social media](#)," Washington Post, October 8, 2020.
- Political Research Associates, [Standing by for Violence: Ahead of November Election, Trump Inflames His Vigilante Base](#), October 1, 2020
- Gregory Schneider, "[Reckoning in a small town: Civil War meets civil rights in the 'Last Capital of the Confederacy'](#)," *The Washington Post*, September 19, 2020.
- Rachel Kleinfeld, "[The U.S. shows all the signs of a country spiraling toward political violence](#)," *The Washington Post*, September 11, 2020

- [Warning Statement on the Potential for Mass Atrocities in the United States](#), July 1, 2020  
From atrocities prevention, human rights, humanitarian, counterterrorism, and democratization professionals.