


Post-Election Protection and Participation

Imagine you've made it to the end of Election Day and the final voters on the West Coast have finished submitting their in-person ballots. For many, Election Day marks the end of a months- or years-long process to promote greater voter participation and to prepare for free, safe, and secure elections. However, **the post-election period is an especially vital time** for ensuring (1) every eligible voter's ballot is counted, (2) election outcomes are accurate, (3) the public, election, and elected officials respect election outcomes, and (4) election administrators do their job and follow through with certification processes. It's important to know that delays in reporting results are often part of a secure process, allowing election officials to count every vote accurately, rather than a sign of a problem.

This section shares more information about how young people can actively participate in efforts to support the post-election process. Feel free to use it to accompany other voting or election-focused resources you're sharing with young people, and for individual handouts, group sessions, or presentations.


 **Organizing Insight:** Our [recent research and polling](#) finds that an overwhelming(!) majority of young Americans (**90%**) value free and fair elections. However, **only 30%** of Gen Z respondents feel confident in U.S. elections and trust election outcomes. This confidence gap is pretty alarming. So, how can we begin overcoming Gen Z's widespread election mistrust?

Your group can play an important role in repairing trust in, and leveling up Gen Z's understanding of the election process! Getting an up-close, transparent look at the post-election process can help improve confidence in election outcomes, and the rigorous procedures employed to ensure the accuracy of election results. We recommend:

1. Sharing the information in this section with young people looking to get more involved in the election process AND with young people that are skeptical of how elections work;
2. Understanding what is required of election administrators and elected officials by law. This can help inform any advocacy and outreach activities, or election "myth-busting" conversations you anticipate having.

Getting Involved in the Post-Election Process

- **Informing Yourself of the Post-Election Process:** Step 1: familiarize yourself with the post-election processes for your local and state elections, as well as for national elections. We recommend these resources to help you study up on everything that happens in the period between Election Day and the beginning of newly elected officials' terms:
 - [Election Results, Canvass, and Certification | U.S. Election Assistance Commission](#)
 - [Election Certification | Rock the Vote](#)
- **Track Your Ballot, and Help Others Track Theirs:** Unsure what's happening with your ballot and whether it was successfully counted? For most states, you can check on the status of your ballot [here](#). You get bonus points if you share with others how they can track their ballots!
- **Ballot Curing Outreach:** Sometimes, a ballot may be rejected due to minor voter errors. Ballot curing is the process of correcting these minor errors, which typically come up in mail-in or absentee ballots. Currently, 32 states allow the correcting of minor discrepancies with ballots or signatures. This [tracker from Voting Rights Lab](#) has all kinds of information about ballot curing, including relevant deadlines for states that allow ballot curing.
 - Sometimes nonprofit organizations and state and local election offices look for volunteers to assist with outreach and ballot curing efforts to ensure every vote counts, and to resolve any issues with rejected ballots. **We recommend keeping an eye out for non-partisan ballot curing and voter protection volunteer opportunities** on [Mobilize.us](#) and with [Common Cause](#) or the [1-866-OUR-VOTE hotline website](#).
 - **Note:** past calls for volunteers have also mentioned that fluency in other languages, especially Spanish, is extremely useful when making ballot curing calls to voters that speak languages other than English.

 **Tip:** You can also volunteer during election recounts!

- **Post-Election Observation:** Did you know that [in most states, the public can view various parts of the post-election cycle](#)? If you're interested in observing or playing a more hands on role in ensuring transparency and the accuracy of election results, we recommend you look into the following opportunities:
 - **Attend canvass and certification meetings.** You can contact your [county elections office](#) about a schedule of public canvass meetings.

- **Track post-election audits.** 49 of 50 states perform post-election audits to make sure voting machines correctly count votes. You can learn more information about your state's audit requirements and procedures, [here](#).
- **Become a trained, non-partisan observer.** Organizations like the League of Women Voters offer training and election protection [volunteer opportunities](#) for non-partisan observers from nonprofit groups. Inquire so you can be closer to the ballot processing action!
- **Serve as a poll worker.** That's right — poll workers' duties aren't limited to Election Day. Many poll workers assist with election reconciliation processes in the days immediately following an election. You can sign up for [paid poll worker positions here from Power the Polls](#). The more poll workers, the merrier!

A DEMOCRACY FOR ALL GENERATIONS

Misinformation vs. Disinformation

[Misinformation](#) is false or inaccurate information — getting the facts wrong.

[Disinformation](#) is false information which is deliberately intended to mislead — intentionally misstating the facts.

- **Combatting Election Misinformation and Disinformation:** Trust in election results and in the post-election process is crucial to preserving our democracy's tradition of peacefully transferring power. When the public doubts the validity of election outcomes and is uncertain about the accuracy or nonpartisanship of the election process, they are more susceptible to believing election conspiracy theories, misinformation, and disinformation campaigns. Additionally, government and political leaders may call the integrity of election processes and results into question, peddle conspiracy theories, and spread misinformation. **This is known as [election subversion](#)**; all of these actions sow distrust and can prevent true election winners from taking office.

We all have a responsibility when it comes to combatting misinformation and disinformation. Here are some ways you can do your part to stop the dissemination of false information:

- **Use official and non-partisan sources whenever you're sharing information about the status of elections and their outcomes.** We suggest relying on communications from your county election department's website and state's live election results portal. You can find your state or local election office [here](#).

- **Establish what is fact and what is fiction with digital rapid response.** Gen Z often encounters fast-moving misinformation, including AI-generated content like fake polling updates or deepfake videos. Verify information before sharing to protect your community.
 - **Fact-check rumors quickly:** [FactCheck.org](#), [PolitiFact](#), and [Snopes](#) are helpful websites that debunk rumors and investigate election-related claims.
 - **Track misinformation:** The Brennan Center is working with other pro-democracy partners to track voting and election rumors, check out their work [here](#).

- **Join efforts to fight back against disinformation by reporting disinformation and volunteering for different organizations.**
 - **Report election misinformation online:** If you see content online that could mislead or suppress voters, use this [cheat sheet](#) from Asian Americans Advancing Justice to help you identify and report it across major platforms. The guide includes platform-specific instructions for flagging content and provides clear do's and don'ts for responding to misinformation.
 - **Report local election rumors to your county election department:** Local election offices can issue public corrections if they're made aware of election-related scams and rumors.

- **Support and participate in advocacy initiatives around passing anti-disinformation laws.** Most states have enacted legislation that targets AI-generated media in elections. However, some states like [Massachusetts](#), [Michigan](#), and [New York](#) have introduced stricter legislation that would prohibit the dissemination of election-related disinformation. Encourage state legislators to pass these kinds of laws so that disinformation spreaders can be held accountable for their attempts to mislead voters.