



Protecting and serving
all of America's voters
on Election Day

Considerations for Protest Management During Elections

Protests, demonstrations, and other related events on and after Election Day may result in the need for a coordinated police response. Agencies should plan and prepare for this possibility. Police departments should take the lead on making the following important considerations for protest management:

Public Communication:

- Be proactive in communicating expectations with the community through a variety of channels
- Communicate how often, and where, agency press conferences should be on Election Day
- Communicate with community members and the media during any potential demonstrations or critical incidents. If needed, update your communication strategy
- Ensure that you have capabilities to message on social media as well as track incidents or developments broadcast over social media

Planning and Preparedness:

- Complete and disseminate an ICS Plan (Incident Action Plan) for Election Day
 - Identify how many polling locations there are and where are they located
 - Identify how many polling locations will be open at once in your specific jurisdiction
 - Have ingress/egress routes and floorplans for each of the buildings and its surrounding areas readily accessible
- Identify the most likely locations for a demonstration related to the election or its results to emerge
 - Locate your closest resources to each of these locations
- Be aware of potential extremist threats currently in, or threatening to come into, your community on Election Day and for the days that follow
 - Request a briefing from authorities who might have such knowledge
- Plan access to/deployment of the resources (staffing, equipment, etc.) you may need during a response to a demonstration

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Command and Control:

- Identify if anyone/who from your agency should be on-site at each polling place
 - Clearly define the authorization they will have to immediately make requests for backup and tactical units
- Determine whether decision-makers should be at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or Unified Command Center, or spread across various locations
 - Identify who will be required and be on-call if you activate the EOC
- Clarify how agencies (e.g., law enforcement, fire, EMS) will communicate with one another during potential incidents
- Include your mutual aid partners in your EOC or Command Center. If they cannot send representation, establish direct lines of communication between EOCs/Command Centers
- Identify, share, and receive important information from your fusion/intelligence/problem-solving centers

Response:

- Provide election officials and the head of each polling location a direct line within your agency
- Decide how officers (i.e., uniformed, plainclothes, and tactical units) will be deployed in general and in response to any evolving demonstrations
- Review policies for mass demonstration events. Make additional plans around unavailable mutual aid partners due to mass demonstrations that are taking place in their own areas
- Consider deploying CIT-trained officers to establish community/protestor dialogue and potentially de-escalate situations
- Coordinate with state-level agencies for the potential response of state resources such as the National Guard or state police
- Incorporate communications center staff incorporated into the response