



Voter Intimidation Under Federal Law

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The Department of Justice is committed to ensuring that every qualified voter can exercise their right to vote free of discrimination, intimidation, or criminal activity in the election process. The Department is responsible for ensuring compliance with the criminal and civil provisions of federal statutes that protect the right to vote. This work is often performed in partnership with United States Attorneys' Offices.

There are criminal and civil prohibitions against voter intimidation and voter interference. Federal law prohibits intimidation, threats, and coercion throughout the voting process, including registering to vote, casting a ballot, and even at the stage of counting or tallying votes. Further, several federal laws protect against both actual and attempted intimidation, coercion, and interference. These statutes protect those who facilitate voting or aid voters, including election officials and volunteers. In addition, it is illegal to send out knowingly false information about the time, place, or manner of voting to prevent people from properly casting their ballots.

This guide does not impose legal obligations and is not intended to be comprehensive. The Department's website provides more detailed information, including court filings and press releases, and can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/crt/voting-section>, and <https://www.justice.gov/crt/criminal-section>. The Civil Rights Division has also published other guidance related to this topic, available at <https://www.justice.gov/crt/media/1348586/dl?inline>.

Reports from members of the public are important to enforcement of laws protecting the right to vote. If you witness or experience intimidation, coercion, or any criminal activity in connection with voting, contact local law enforcement immediately. You should also report it to your local or state election officials. If you are in imminent danger, call 911. You may also report suspected criminal activity to the FBI at 1-800-CALL-FBI (1-800-225-5324) or by filing an online complaint at <https://tips.fbi.gov/home>. Finally, you may report possible civil rights violations at <https://civilrights.justice.gov/report/>.