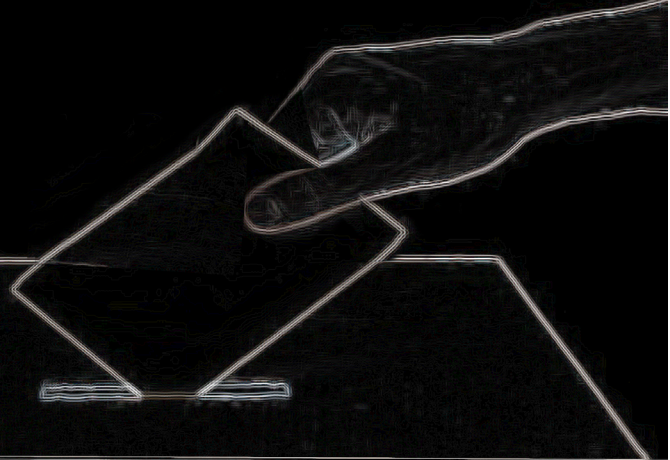




DOCUMENTING VOTER INTIMIDATION in the UNITED STATES



Under U.S. federal law, it is prohibited to intimidate, threaten or harrass voters. It is also illegal to spread false information about voter requirements or polling stations. States have different laws about showing identification and allowing guns in polling places. It's unlikely that you can film inside a polling station, but you should be able to record outside.

Know your rights and learn about the laws in your state before you go.



PREPARE

Always respect voter privacy and assess risks to yourself, interviewees and communities before you film. Develop a security plan to protect your safety as well as the safety of those you are filming, have an emergency contact number on hand. Make sure your equipment is charged and in working order.

Use our digital security tips:
bit.ly/DigiSecPrimer

VERIFY

Your media is easier to verify if you document the date, time and location of your footage. If possible, turn on automatic date, time and GPS location capturing features. Alternately, film newspapers, street signs or landmarks. Document who is filming by saying your name into the camera or keeping a written record.



FILMING TIPS

Hold shots for at least 10 seconds.
Keep the camera steady and move it slowly when changing positions.
Record continuously.
Avoid zooming in- this will blur your focus.
Capture various shots to show the size of the crowd or the length of the voting queue.
If possible, work with a team to capture different angles and have someone be on the lookout for developing situations or security threats.



Film incidents of voters being intimidated, harassed, arrested, or attacked, such as people being aggressively asked about their citizenship or people using hateful speech.

Show if the voters are acting peacefully and if the aggressors are wearing uniforms or carrying weapons, and whether or not perpetrators are members of an organized group.



If safe, get shots of police vehicles, uniforms, badge numbers, indications of police rank and methods of communication.

Capture visual records such as long lines, people disrupting the line or blocking the entrance, misleading flyers, flags, stickers.

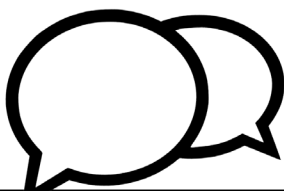
Check out these fact sheets for all 50 states on laws around private militias and what to document if you see them: wit.to/Militia-FactSheets

**WHAT
TO FILM**

TELL THE STORY

Do no harm.
Get permission from
people before you film.

Ask consenting individuals to describe the events taking place or relay their personal experience. You may be able to expose irregularities during polling day, the persecution of activists or civil society groups, stories of sexual or gender based violence, or incidents of voter intimidation at polling queues or non-inclusion of the disabled community.



Always keep your original media files in a secure location. When sharing your video online, include the date, time and location in the video's title and tags. Add details and contextualizing links in the description of the video. Do not make edits to the original file- always do so from a copy.

**PRESERVE
YOUR MEDIA**

If filming interviews, ensure those you film are aware of how and where the video will be used. Discuss potential safety risks if the video is to be shared publicly, online, or with the authorities.

If anonymity is needed:

- A) Film interviewees' hands while they speak.
- B) Adjust the focus to blur the image.
- C) Have the interviewee cover their face.

**PROTECT
IDENTITIES**

REPORT INTIMIDATION TO:

Local and state officials, including poll workers; your county clerk, elections commissioner, elections supervisor; or state board of elections

The Election Protection Hotline:

English: 1-866-OUR-VOTE / 1-866-687-8683

Spanish: 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA / 1-888-839-8682

Arabic: 1-844-YALLA-US / 1-844-925-5287

For Bengali, Cantonese, Hindi, Urdu, Korean, Mandarin, Tagalog, or Vietnamese
1-888-274-8683

SEE IT. FILM IT. CHANGE IT.

For more resources visit library.witness.org

Documenting Voter Intimidation - U.S. v1.2

WITNESS
SEE IT FILM IT
CHANGE IT