2024 GENERAL ELECTION: CROSS-SECTOR CHECKLIST TO SUPPORT ELECTIONS

Elections are held in every state and territory across the United States, and in each of these locations, the administration of elections relies on infrastructure owned and operated by other critical infrastructure sectors. Election administration timelines are rigid, often with deadlines and requirements laid out in state and federal law, and do not allow for much space for significant disruptions. Scheduled or unexpected outages in other critical infrastructure sectors could have significant cascading effects on the administration of an election. By partnering with election officials, critical infrastructure owners and operators can help prevent disruptions to the democratic process while increasing the security and resilience of election infrastructure. This starts with understanding the basics of election administration and how other sectors play a critical role in election operations. Ensuring the security and integrity of the American democratic process is a shared responsibility; everyone has a role.

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO SUPPORT ELECTIONS

YES / NO   **Do you know who runs elections in the state(s) or localities your organization serves?**

- Reach out to your jurisdiction's election offices, which may include state, territorial, and local election offices, as applicable, to introduce yourself and get to know the election officials within your state or jurisdiction. This will also let them know who to reach out to within your organization.
- **NOTE:** It is important to reach out directly to the state election office rather than the governor's office or another state agency. In most states, election administration is not under the jurisdiction of the state governor. Direct coordination with the office of the state's Chief Election Official is ideal.

YES / NO   **Have you designated someone to serve as a point of contact for election officials?**

- This should be a senior representative or leader who can make decisions on behalf of your organization.
- Proactively share this person's information so election officials know who to contact within your organization.

YES / NO   **Do you know where election facilities and voting locations in your service areas are?**

- Election infrastructure is a combination of permanent, publicly accessible election offices and non-public storage facilities, as well as temporary locations for voting and pre- and post-election processes.

YES / NO   **Do you know critical election dates and deadlines, and are election offices identified for priority restorations?**

- Maintain a calendar of key election dates and deadlines to help inform scheduling for planned maintenance and better prioritize elections for incident response and service restoration.

YES / NO   **Have you communicated your incident response plans and timelines to election officials?**

- Proactively communicate with election officials about what to expect in the event of unplanned service outages, including when they should expect service to be restored and how you prioritize service restoration.
- Elections should be considered a higher priority for incident response and service restoration during critical election timeframes. Partnering with election officials to understand which timeframes and locations are most essential can prevent disruptions to election operations.

YES / NO   **Do you have a plan to discuss planned service downtime with election officials?**

- Avoid scheduling planned maintenance or downtime during critical election periods—remember elections happen year-round and go beyond just federal elections.
- Share the timing and scope of your planned maintenance so election offices can tell you if it might impact election operations. Some services may be more important than others at certain points in the election process. Election officials can help you understand these timelines.
- Understand that election officials are bound by state and local laws that limit their ability to change dates, times, or locations of certain election operations.

YES / NO   **Do you have a plan to notify election officials in the event of unplanned service disruptions?**

- Provide details about the expected duration and scope of the outage as soon as possible.
- Inform election officials of any available alternate service options.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Elections are executed through a series of robust processes designed to ensure their reliability and security. These processes extend beyond a single election day or location. By understanding the scope and scale of elections, infrastructure owners and operators can better support the infrastructure and administrative functions that underpin elections.

Election Administration. Elections are administered at the state and local level, and each state and territory has a unique election administration governance structure. In most cases, state and local election officials are not under the jurisdiction of the state governor and, in some jurisdictions, are independently elected officers. This requires other sectors to establish partnerships within state election offices to collaborate effectively with election officials—not just in the governor's office or other state agencies.

Timing of Election Activities. Elections occur multiple times every year and include federal, state, and local elections. There are multiple critical dates and deadlines that occur in the weeks or months leading up to and following Election Day, such as candidate filing deadlines, voter registration deadlines, in-person voting dates and times, mail ballot return deadlines, and results certification deadlines. However, most election activities, such as voter registration, planning for voting locations, ballot design, and voting system procurement and testing, occur throughout the year.

Election Facilities. Elections rely on different kinds of facilities for different purposes and during different times. These include permanent, publicly accessible election offices and non-public storage facilities, as well as temporary locations for voting and post-election processes. Within each jurisdiction, in-person voting takes place in an array of government and commercial facilities across a wide geographic area to ensure equal access for all voters.

EXAMPLES OF CROSS-SECTOR DEPENDENCIES

Commercial Facilities may be used as voting locations.

Communications technology is essential for election office operations and providing information to voters.

Emergency Services help maintain safety at voting locations and respond to natural disasters.

Energy provides power for nearly all election operations.

Transportation facilitates voter access and delivery of election equipment and materials.

RESOURCES

#Protect2024 | CISA
cisa.gov/topics/election-security/protect2024

National Association of Secretaries of State
nass.org

National Association of State Election Directors
nased.org

Election Center
electioncenter.org