



Protect the Results Event Host Toolkit

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Overview

"Get rid of the ballots and we'll have a very peaceful — there won't be a transfer, frankly. There will be a continuation." - Donald Trump

Throughout American history, when a president has lost re-election, he has always willingly stepped down. Accepting the will of the people and allowing a peaceful transition of power is a hallmark of American democracy.

But today, **there is no line Donald Trump won't cross to hold on to power.** In 2016, he threatened not to accept the election results. Now, while election officials work to make sure everyone can safely cast their ballots, Trump is sowing discord, confusion, and doubt about the November election.

Experts are increasingly convinced that if he loses, Trump will try to throw our country into a constitutional crisis. **That's why we can't just mobilize to win big — we have to be ready to Protect the Results.** We're coming together now so we're prepared on November 4th to demand that every vote is counted and that Joe Biden is inaugurated on January 20, 2021.

Why do we have to Protect the Results?

In June 2020, a group called the Transition Integrity Project (TIP) gathered a bipartisan group of experts to explore scenarios that could play out between election day and inauguration day. Their [conclusions](#) serve as a stark reminder of **why we need to prepare now to mobilize on November 4th and beyond:**

"We assess with a high degree of likelihood that November's elections will be marked by a chaotic legal and political landscape. We also assess that... President Trump is likely to contest the result by both legal and extra-legal means in an attempt to hold onto power."

A few other TIP findings are especially relevant to our work to protect the results:

- 1. There's no more 'election night' and it's dangerous to act like there is.**
Most likely, we will not know the winner of the election on election night. In fact, counts may initially lean Trump and then swing for Biden as mail-in ballots are counted. Even though it may take a week or weeks to count every ballot, it's likely that Trump will quickly declare himself the winner and



right-wing media will reinforce his false claim to victory. The shift away from clear 'election night' results gives Trump significant time to solidify false narratives with his base and cast doubt on the eventual outcome.

2. Trump could contest the election into January.

We should assume that Trump will use viral disinformation campaigns, polarizing media, and disputes around voter fraud and ballot counting as excuses to refuse to concede, even if a Biden victory is clear. His accusations of voter fraud are already setting the stage to denounce a Biden victory as illegitimate. And it's not just tweets and spin. Trump has the power of the federal government behind him to disrupt ballot counting, pressure Republican governors and state legislatures to go against their state's popular vote counts, and otherwise tip the election's outcome in his favor.

3. Winning the narrative matters — and it will happen partly in the streets.

Trump will be trying to claim victory, or challenge the legitimacy of the results, or both. Quickly establishing a counter narrative premised on the need to count every vote and have a peaceful transition of power will be essential to shape how the public and key powerholders view the "facts" and how powerholders weigh the consequences and risks of action or inaction. Shaping the narrative can't just happen through mainstream media outlets and Democratic influencers, actions and a show of numbers in the streets may be decisive factors in shaping powerholders' actions and determining what the public perceives as a just and legitimate outcome.

Hold the Line: a guide to defending democracy has articulated three scenarios that emerge from these risks:

1. Election Day results are unclear, and Trump declares victory anyway.
2. Election results show significant irregularities and/or signs of tampering, and Trump declares victory.
3. Trump loses the election but refuses to leave office.

If Trump crosses these lines, he'll be undermining the will of voters and our democracy — the imperfect one we have now and the possibility for the inclusive, multiracial one we're all building together. We must stand together because clear and decisive action — especially millions of people coming together to hold local officials, election boards, state representatives, and members of Congress accountable — is what is going to make a difference.



How are we going to Protect the Results?

With every tweet and refusal to commit to accepting the legitimate results of the 2020 election, Trump seeks to stoke chaos and fear. But we will be ready.

If Trump declares victory before all the votes are counted, makes unfounded claims that the election was “stolen,” tries to stop votes from being counted, or otherwise threatens the integrity of the election or the peaceful transition of power, Protect the Results will activate nationwide mobilizations. **We think the likelihood of activation is high and ask that groups plan their events for 5pm local time on Wednesday, November 4.**

We will be in touch with event hosts in the lead up to, on, and after Election Day to let folks know when the decision to mobilize has been made or whether and how hosts should adjust their plans based on developments.

Here’s what we think it will take to win:

Commitment to a strategy of nonviolent action: We commit to a nonviolent strategy for several reasons. First, we want to prioritize keeping people safe, especially those most at risk from rising threats of right-wing violence. Second, we want to win. Rigorous study of social movements has shown that [nonviolent civil resistance is more effective than violence at resisting oppression and making change](#). We expect all participants to act lawfully at all times and to seek to de-escalate any potential confrontation with those who disagree with our values.

Our commitment to a strategy of nonviolent action is a strategic choice connected to what we believe is most effective in defending and preserving democracy and implies no moral judgment about people who feel they have a right to be violent in certain circumstances.

We expect all participants to act lawfully at all times and to seek to de-escalate any potential confrontation with those who disagree with our values. We expect all participants to respect one another and seek to heal and look out for one another. We seek to reduce the potential for people to get hurt, be unwell, and during a global pandemic, to fall ill.

Immediate and widespread mobilization: An immediate show of support for counting every vote and an immediate rejection of Trump’s false claims of victory or



fraud is key to setting a high bar for Democratic elected officials and checking Republican overreach.

We need to be everywhere — in big cities, small towns, and everything in between, especially in states where state officials have not committed to counting every vote before certifying the results, where the vote is especially close or where governors and state legislatures are aligned with Trump.

Sustained mobilization: Our analysis is that the first week following the election is extremely critical. During this time, it is crucial that we keep the pressure on and keep showing up. Sustained protests will look different in different places. For example, your group could:

- Show up at the same place at the same time every evening in your town.
- Rotate places, times, and tactics. Host a rally one day, followed by a march, then a visit to a strategic location or a honk and wave in a public place.
- Alternate in person actions with phonebanking to voters in target states to take action.

Creative and joyful mobilization: Our power comes from the joy we find in community, from our commitment to building a strong, vibrant multi-racial democracy together and from the creativity we bring to moments of connection and moments of struggle. That joy and creativity should ground our mobilizations. It will not only nurture us as we defend our democracy but inspire others to join us and stay in the fight.

Increasing pressure: If this crisis lasts longer than that first critical week post-election, we will need to be ready to ramp up our pressure. With weeks of vote counting, a range of possible legal challenges and potential partisan splits between governors and legislatures, this is a possibility. The strategy will depend significantly on the scenario and reality on the ground but we should be prepared for mass noncooperation.

Accounting for heightened risk: We must be clear-eyed in our acknowledgement that the stakes of the election, Trump's incentives to try to create chaos and his encouragement of state-sponsored and right-wing violence, combined with polarizing media, misinformation and accusations of fraud mean that the risk of post-election violence is high.

We believe that committing to a strategy of nonviolent action is one way to mitigate these risks. Hosts will also be supported to learn deescalation strategies; to conduct a thorough assessment at the local level of the risks in their communities; to



determine whether tactics should shift to something that's a less likely target for repression — like a daytime action.

Organizing broad support and amplifying action in the streets: We know that not everyone can be out in the streets. There will be many other ways to help Protect the Results.

Important dates after Election Day

[\(See this explainer\)](#)

ASAP, no later than December 14, 2020: Governors' Ascertainment of Results. The executive of each state is required to certify his/her ascertainment of the state's election results to the Archivist of the United States "as soon as practicable," but no later than the date the Electoral College meets. Date set by federal law. See 3 U.S.C. § 6.

December 8: State "Safe Harbor" Deadline. This is the deadline for states to resolve disputes concerning the appointment of electors (pursuant to laws enacted before Election Day) in order to have those appointments treated as "conclusive" by Congress. Date set by federal law. See 3 U.S.C. § 5.

December 14: Meeting of Electoral College. Electors meet in their respective states on the same day to cast their votes. Date set by federal law (but required by the Constitution to be the same for all states). See 3 U.S.C. § 7; U.S. Const. art. II, § 1, cl. 4. *Receipt of Certificates of Electoral Votes* This is the last day for certificates of electoral votes to be received by the Senate and Archivist. Date set by federal law. See 3 U.S.C. §§ 12-13.

January 3: New Congress Sworn In. This is the day on which all newly elected Members of Congress are sworn in to office. Date set by Constitution. See U.S. Const. amend. XX, § 1.

January 6: Joint Session of Congress. Congress opens electoral certificates from the states, considers any objections and resolves them under federal law, and counts electoral votes. Date set by federal law. See 3 U.S.C. § 15.

January 20: End of Current Presidential Term. The current presidential term ends at noon on January 20th. Date set by Constitution. See U.S. Const. amend XX, § 1.



Key Powerholders

Local and state elections officials

These officials have to manage COVID-19 precautions, a surge in mail-in ballots, and the risks from possible voter intimidation or disinformation campaigns. Those committed to counting every ballot may need our support to ensure they have the time they need. Those who are not yet committed will need our pressure. All of them will need to know that there are constituents who will have their backs when they uphold democracy and the will of voters.

State officials and legislators

Governors, Secretaries of State, and Attorneys General should feel pressure to communicate and reinforce laws and norms. Governors may try to use state power to curb peaceful protest. Governors or state legislators who might feel inclined to cave to pressure from Trump to overrule their state's popular vote will need to know that constituents are watching.

Members of Congress

If there are competing results from states or unresolved irregularities in states' vote counts, Congress could potentially have to adjudicate the results, requiring us to take action to ensure members of Congress are respecting the election results. Even before Congress' official involvement, lawmakers will be helping to set the terms of the debate, exerting influence on their respective parties and tracking their constituents' to determine their own courses of action.

Organizing to Protect the Results

Building a Coalition

A response of this size will require mass coordination across the progressive movement. The Protect the Results coalition has over 100 partner organizations, and if the time comes, we will need every single one of them. Work with your top leaders to make a list of coalitions, organizations, or groups that your group has worked with over the last four years. Whose events do you go to? Who comes to your events?

Then, powermap the list. This means going through your list and determining who from your group has the strongest relationship with a leader from each group or organization. Split up the list based on relationship and capacity.



Now you are ready to make the ask. Start with asking the group to help plan your Protect the Results event and sustained protests. However, election season is a busy time and not every organization will be able to take on that level of responsibility. Good organizers always have another ask in their back pockets. Could this organization take on a designated role at the event, like providing water or safety marshalls? Or can they promote the event to their members and help with recruitment? The possibilities are endless.

Planning the Protect the Results event and sustained actions

As we race toward Election Day, the time to start planning is now. That said, our best case scenario is that Biden wins in a landslide and we never have to activate this network, so this planning should not take the place of your crucial election work. With democracy at stake, we have to do both.

We think the likelihood of activation is high and ask that groups plan their events for 5pm local time on Wednesday, November 4. Start building your planning group with people you can count on to help generate ideas and do the work of putting a plan into action in a short time frame!

The most important thing to decide on is the venue. Look for a big public space — and ideally one that doesn't require a permit. You are looking for somewhere central where folks can congregate quickly while remaining socially distanced if at all possible, with space to grow if breaking news is drawing more people in and with the possibility of returning for sustained protests for several days. We think the time for actions at symbolic locations (where we might be putting more direct pressure on elected officials, or demanding that corporations pick a side, or showing election workers that we have their backs as they continue to make sure every vote counts) is likely to be later in the first week of mobilization or even beyond the first week as it gets more clear how the fight is unfolding locally, in each state and at the national level.

We recommend having at least two planning meetings — one to plan the initial Protect the Results event and a second to plan your sustained protests. We also recommend a short check-in call on November 1 or 2 to make sure that you have all of the pieces in place. We made it easy for you though! Here are sample agendas to plan your [Protect the Results event](#), [sustained actions](#), and [your check-in call](#), as well as [sample roles](#) to split up the work.

After years of resisting, many folks are total pros at planning events. That said, if Trump is throwing the country into crisis, we expect there to be a ton of new energy.



So think big. What do you need that you might not normally? Extra water bottles? A bullhorn or a sound system? Reflective gear for safety marshalls?

Coordinating a strong recruitment plan

If Trump is trying to steal the election, we need to mobilize quickly and peacefully in unprecedented numbers to save our democracy. Even though we expect there to be a ton of new energy, we can't skimp on recruitment. As an event host, you are a major part of that effort.

Think through your recruitment strategy in two phases. The first phase is from now (right now!) to Election Day. Start getting the word out by posting on social and activating your email list, and ask your coalition partners and leaders to do the same. Then hit the phones. Identify a few folks who can call through each member of your local group and your coalition groups, and personally invite them to join you in this action. The personal touch can make all the difference. People will be more invested in coming when they know that you are invested in them showing up. And don't forget to ask them to bring a friend or two!

Next, map your networks. Ask your leaders to list out 3-5 people who aren't currently involved in Protect the Results or your local groups and organization but who they think would enjoy the event. Think about members of your book club, your neighbors, or that coworker who is always posting memes about resisting Trump on Facebook. Then commit to making a personal ask to each of these people.

This will ensure that if and when Trump crosses a line, your network is ready to hit the streets. When you get the bat signal (text, email, emergency alert), you are ready to reach out to all your RSVPs to make sure they have the crucial details, kick-off your text tree, and confirm your leads.

The Protect the Results coalition of over 100 organizations will be recruiting in the case we activate. But that should be an addition to, not a replacement for, the relationships and organizations you have built personally!

Training for activists and hosts

We are hosting an initial training on October 8 with an overview of Protect the Results. [Register here](#) to learn what steps you need to take to be ready to Protect the Results.



After that, we have a three-part series specifically for event hosts that will cover organizing a large scale event, de-escalation and heightened risk, and sustaining pressure over that first critical week. Check out details on the full series [here](#).

Stay plugged in and connected

We are working with about 100 different scenarios and a president who sets policy through his Twitter account. We are trying to stop the GOP from stealing a Supreme Court seat while simultaneously working to build the biggest, bluest electoral wave ever. With our democracy at stake, it is more important than ever that we stay connected.

We have set up three crucial information streams for event hosts.

1. You are automatically signed up for our email list. If and when the Protect the Results coalition activates the mobilizations, we will email this list first. We will also use it for the most urgent and important updates in the planning period.
2. As an event host, you will be automatically added to our weekly Protect the Results email list. This email will catch you up on the latest Protect the Results news, upcoming trainings, and frequently asked questions.
3. Got a burning question? Please reach out to supportteam@indivisible.org. We have our expert organizers staffing the inbox for all your planning needs.



Resource Materials

[Getting your Protect the Results event on the map! \(plus some other tips for hosts using the Mobilize platform\)](#)

[Planning your Protect the Results event: Sample meeting agenda](#)

[Planning sustained actions: Sample meeting agenda](#)

[Check-in call: Sample agenda](#)

[Roles](#)

[Making a Media Outreach Plan](#)

[Talking points and sample answers to hard questions](#)

[What to do when the events are activated](#)

[COVID-19 Precautions for In-Person Events](#)

[Training Support for Hosts and Activists](#)

[De-escalation Strategies](#)

[Know your rights: Protestors' rights](#)



Getting your Protect the Results event on the map! (*plus some other tips for hosts using the Mobilize platform*)

Thank you for hosting a Protect the Results event! We are using **mobilize.us** to host these events. If you're unfamiliar with the platform, here are tips to get you started:

Creating and Editing Your Event

When you create your event, there are a bunch of fields you will need to update:

- Visibility:
 - Select "Public" if you would like the event to appear on the map. You will be able to make the location private in the location section later in the process
- Event Title:
 - Please use the default title and update [Your City]
- Event Image:
 - This cannot be changed.
- Description:
 - Please use the default description, but add to it as needed!
 - **Important note:** These events are tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, November 4th at 5 p.m. local time because we believe that the likelihood of Trump trying to undermine the election is high and will happen close to election day. We will notify hosts if events are pushed back.
- Location:
 - Choose your event type:
 - **In-person events** are the priority for this event campaign. Only our overwhelming majority can stop Trump from destroying democracy as we know it. However, you also have the option of hosting **a virtual event** if, for accessibility or health reasons, an in-person event is not an option for you.
 - You choose a location for an in-person event to make sure people in your community are able to gather. You're looking for something with room for a big group of people, where they do their best to maintain social distance. Ideally somewhere you can gather without a permit.
 - The "only attendees can see this location" box: If only attendees can see this location, this means your location will be imprecise on the map and only people who have signed up to attend can see your location.
 - You can always update this setting later!



- When you add in the specific address, note this can be a specific address, an intersection, or just a city, state and zipcode.
 - **Important note:** Make sure your event location, date and time are specific when we activate this network and let your attendees know when these details are confirmed.
- [Please see this document](#) for more detailed information on how to use the location field.
- Date and Time
 - Choose your date, start and end time
 - If you want to host recurring events, select “add another time”
 - You should not add add a max capacity to your event unless you absolutely have to given your venue. If you hit the max capacity, your event will no longer be visible on the map and no one else will be able to sign up.
- Event Logistics and Accessibility
 - Add your phone number. This is not public but is available to people who sign up to attend the event.
 - Add additional information for attendees about the accessibility of the event, e.g. stairs, seating, ramps, parking, restrooms, will there be an ASL interpreter, is parking available at the site, etc.
- Event Visibility
 - **Please mark your event as public.** Only public events will show up on the map, be promoted by partners, be a part of our media outreach, and have a public sign-up form for members of your community. Only mark private if you are hosting an invitation-only event.
- Group Chat
 - If you enable group chat, attendees of your event will be able to message each other and you 48 hours before the event.
 - This setting can be changed later.
- Event Host
 - **Important note:** We recommend updating this to only include the first initial of your last name to maintain some privacy.
- Add a co-host
 - **To add a co-host,** email supportteam@indivisible.org and send us the co-host’s first name, last initial, and email address, and a link to your event and/or the city where your event is.

The Most Important Part: Accessing Your Event + Messaging Attendees



After you create an event, you will receive an email with the subject-line “Your event is live” from noreply@mobilize.us. Click the link to your “Protect the Results dashboard”. Save this link. This is how you will update your event details and message your attendees.

When We Activate

- **Update your event date, time, and location:** We will let you know in the “activation” emails when these events will be.
- **Message your guests**
- **Promote your event**
- **If your event is virtual:** Include the video call information in the “schedule” section and NOT in the public description so it’s harder for trolls to find.

Message your guests

- Go to your event dashboard
- Click the “email attendees” blue button on the top-right
 - Click “email attendees” from your event page
 - Choose the audience of your message
 - Choose the subject
 - Choose the message
 - Click “send email to XX attendees”
 - Monitor your email inbox (the reply-to host email address in your event settings) for replies from attendees

Promote the event

- Go to your event dashboard
- Click on the link to your event
- Scroll down to the “share” options on the left-hand side menu



Planning your Protect the Results event: Sample meeting agenda

- **Goals:** Build relationships within a core team and develop a clear plan for the first mobilization.
- **Introduction and Icebreakers:** We recommend grounding the meeting in why you are all here, and sharing how you are feeling at this moment.
- **Review the toolkit:** Go over the scenarios, timeline, and key powerholders with your team. It is important that everyone knows what we are facing and our various levers for public pressure.
- **Choose a space:** The ideal space for a “Protect the Results” event is big, public, and doesn’t require a permit. We think the likelihood of activation is high and ask that groups plan their events for 5pm local time on Wednesday, November 4. Look for a central space where a lot of people can congregate and spread out safely (and maintain social distance!). Since we’re suggesting 5 pm local time, remember that you’re planning for an after-dark event. This may impact how you choose your location as well as the materials/equipment you make sure your team and attendees bring.
- **Brainstorm visuals:** It is totally fine to keep it simple with chants and signs, but if you have creative folks itching for visuals consider dropping a banner over a local bridge or overpass, or projecting a message onto a local building or the state capitol. Since we’re suggesting 5 pm local time, remember that you’re planning visually and logistically for an after-dark event. Do you want to plan for [any light-up signs](#)? Do you want to provide or encourage people to bring candles?
- **Register your event:** Once you have the place, upload the event to our [map](#). The map helps us coordinate our national voice and recruit new activists for your events.
- **Make a recruitment plan:** We are expecting a lot of organic energy for these events but it is still crucial to have a plan to get the word out. The best recruitment plans include two phases:
 1. *Pre-Election Day recruitment.* Whom do you want to invite?
 - **Hit the phones.** Identify a few folks who can call through each member of your local group, and personally invite them to join you in this action. The personal touch can make all the difference. People will be more invested in coming when they know that you are invested in them showing up. And don’t forget to ask them to bring a friend or two!
 - **Map your networks.** Ask your leaders to list out (on paper) 3-5 people who aren’t currently involved in Protect the Results but



who they think would enjoy the event. Think about members of your book club, your neighbors, or that coworker who is always posting memes about resisting Trump on Facebook. Then commit to making a personal ask to each of these people.

2. *Day-of recruitment.* What levers will you pull when it's time to mobilize?
 - **Get the word out.** Blast your event as broadly as possible. Post on social media and ask your friends to share the event, email all your contacts, hire a skywriter.
 - **Activate your network.** Reach out to all your RSVPs to make sure they have the crucial details, kick-off your text tree, and confirm your leads.
- **Assign roles:** Once you have your plan, it is important to split up the work to develop new leaders and build the most effective event.
- **Prepare for heightened risk:** We don't want to sugarcoat this — these events may carry heightened risk. The right has used violence as a fear tactic in the past, and they will be doing everything they can to cling to power. We will host trainings to support hosts to plan for deescalation and to use best practices to make their events as safe as possible.
- **Set up communications norms:** How will you get in touch with each other when the mobilization is activated? We recommend a text chain.
- **Next Steps and Follow-up:** Before you break for the night, make sure that all your activists are clear on their next steps. You made a lot of decisions at this meeting so make sure there is a clear plan to get all the work done.



Planning sustained actions: Sample meeting agenda

- **Goals:** Continue to build relationships within the core team and develop a plan for sustained actions with specific focus on the first week.
- **Introductions and Icebreakers:** We recommend grounding the meeting in why you are all here, and sharing how you are feeling at this moment.
- **Updates:** Any new information or changes to an event plan since last meeting? New learnings from de-escalation and safety trainings?
- **Sustained protests:** Brainstorm and decide on schedule and tactics for sustained protests. We recommend focusing on the first week of protests. You could:
 - Show up at the same place at the same time every evening in your town.
 - Rotate places, times and tactics. Host a rally one day, followed by a march, then a sit-in or a honk and wave in a public place. As the situation unfolds, can add targets (including corporate or other non-political targets)
 - Alternate in person actions with phonebanking to voters in target states to take action.
- Brainstorm **visuals** to keep it interesting.
- **Decision making:** Determine process for making decisions about sustained actions after the initial day of action.
 - How will your team analyze and assess the national and local fights that are unfolding?
 - How will your team make decisions about next actions, especially about modifying plans based on new information?
 - How will your team try to work with others who may be organizing protests?
- **Recruitment plan:** Will you need to do anything differently to recruit for sustained protests?
- **Assign roles:** What are the right roles for sustained protest? How should you incorporate different levels of capacity?
- **Next Steps and Follow-up:** Before you break for the night, make sure that all your activists are clear on their next steps. You made a lot of decisions at this meeting so make sure there is a clear plan to get all the work done.



Check-in call: Sample agenda

- **Intro and Icebreakers:** Keep it quick, but still worth making sure everyone can share their names and something that's bringing them to the work right now.
- **Calling for mobilizations:** Make sure everyone understands the process the Protect the Results coalition will use to activate the mobilizations.
- **Roles:** Review each person's role and ask for updates/readiness
- **Recruitment:** Review recruitment plan and ensure that everyone understands their role
- **Preparation for heightened risk:** Review safety plan in context of latest news/threat assessment
- **Final next steps:** Before you break for the night, make sure that all your activists are clear on their next steps.



Roles

These are sample roles for each event with an emphasis on the first Protect the Results events. Reminder, you can have folks play the same role for each event or create smaller groups so folks can trade off events and take time to rest.

- **Coordinator:** Keeps track of all action items, follows up with team members to make sure tasks are being done, schedules meetings and facilitates them as needed.
- **Recruitment Captain:** Takes the lead on getting people committed to the initial action and subsequent sustained action and doing the follow-up to make sure they turn out.
- **Media liaison:** Takes the lead on alerting local media when the event is announced, responding to inquiries from media promptly, and liaising with media who make it during actions. This person does not have to be the primary person giving interviews themselves. Their priority is coordinating. It's best that this person does not have other major roles during actions. See [Resources for media liaisons](#) for more info.
- **Photographer/videographer:** One person takes photos and one person takes video. It's very helpful for these people to think ahead of time of what shots they want to capture. They should also make a plan for how they'll share the photos/video in real time and after the event is over.
- **Social media coordinator:** At least one person (could also be the photographer) should be tweeting out photos of the event in real time! Remember to always tag @IndivisibleGuide so we can uplift your work! Hashtags we're using are: #ProtectTheResults #CountEveryVote #CountOnUs
- **Art director:** Person in charge of supplies and crafts for posters, signs, and materials!
- **Logistics Captain:** This person takes the lead on accessibility as well as human needs (food, water, masks, distancing). Because we're suggesting after-dark events (5 pm local time), this person should also think about needs for reflective equipment for organizers and other needs for light.
- **Safety Captain:** This person builds a team that can assess risk, deescalate and modify plans to keep people as safe as possible, especially those most at risk from state or right-wing violence. Because we're suggesting after-dark events (5 pm local time), this person should also think about how to make sure the safety team is visible and additional safety needs related to the timing of the event.



What to do when the events are activated

- **Leaders:** Activate the communication chain with your key action leaders. They should all be ready to move on the pieces that are theirs.
- **Activate:** Reach out to the people who have RSVPed for your event (sample email below), and activate the rest of your recruitment plan. We will email everyone who RSVPed through the map but it's good for them to get a personal touch as well.
- **Press:** Update your media advisory and make sure your media liaison is plugged in with the latest talking points.
- **Get going!** Grab your supplies and head out to your event!

Sample activation email

Dear friend,

Despite X, Donald Trump just Y.

It's time to mobilize to Protect the Results.

We knew this could happen, and it's why we got prepared in advance to protect not only the will of the voters, but our democracy. We'll see you tomorrow/tonight/DATE at TIME, LOCATION.

Bring signs and your masks. We'll update you by text with any new information.

Best,
HOST NAME



Managing Media

The work doesn't stop after the election. If Trump declares victory before all the votes are counted, makes unfounded claims that the election was "stolen," or further acts to intimidate or prevent the legitimate counting of votes, we will mobilize to demand that every vote be counted, even if it takes days or weeks to get an accurate count from critical states.

We put together [this resource for media liaisons](#) to use to get recognition for the work you're doing to protect the results of our elections.

- **Confirm who will be leading on media and taking other roles.** If your group already has someone who's the long-term media lead, great! If not, have someone step in as the lead media liaison for this project. Consider assembling a team of folks available to support that person, especially in the event of sustained actions.
- **Touch base with any coalition partners about their media plans.** Ask any partner groups you're collaborating with what they typically do to reach out to media and talk through how you can share the work.
- **As you plan your action, have your media liaison weigh in with an eye to what will make it media-friendly.** What would a TV camera see at your event? What can you do to make it visually interesting and grabby? What's a easy spot for a reporter to meet someone to record an interview?
- **Prepare your media advisory.** A media advisory is like a press release that you send out inviting media to an event. We are including a [template media advisory](#) in this kit but feel free to make it your own. When the Protect the Results coalition activates the mobilizations, we will update the template with all the details.
- **Make a plan for handling incoming inquiries from media by email and phone.** The contact info is the most important thing in your media advisory, and it will be shared from reporter to reporter. It's good to think through in advance how you'd handle lots of incoming media inquiries - just in case.
 - **Email:** Consider creating a shared email account, just for media, which multiple people have access to. Make sure it is clear who's responsible for checking it, or set it to forward to another inbox so nothing's missed.
 - **Phone:** This can be your media liaison's number. Ensure your media liaison can be available to respond to calls and texts during most of the period of action. (Safety note: Putting a phone number in your advisory makes it easier for reporters to cover your event, but it *can* end up getting shared with the public. If that raises safety concerns for you, trust your gut. It's OK to only share it with reporters after they RSVP.)



- **Identify who will be giving interviews.** Ask your event coordinator or other leaders: are they comfortable talking to media as spokespeople? Also identify a couple other attendees who could speak to media about why they feel moved to be there that day. Tips on preparing to give interviews are [here](#).
- **Get your media list ready.** If you have a media list, add some names: this will be a big event and any local media who cover national news may be interested. If you don't have one, ask other partner organizations if they have one they can share. Reach out to supportteam@indivisible.org to be connected with some additional help.
 - To build a media list from scratch: make a spreadsheet with each of the TV stations, NPR/radio station, and big and small newspapers you know in your area. Call the main numbers of the TV stations and ask where to email a press release; collect those emails. Google each of the radio stations and newspapers and search for recent stories about Trump, or the key powerholders in your state. Click the "bylines" of reporters who wrote those stories, and find their emails as best you can; collect those.
 - Your list doesn't have to be perfect, but make sure you have at least one person at every news outlet. This is a big event, and your advisory will be passed around. Check out more tips for finding new reporters using Twitter [here](#).
- **Include Spanish-language and other multi-lingual media.** They may want to attend, whether or not you have a person they could interview who is fluent — but especially if you do. Ask your potential interviewees if there are any fluent speakers who would be comfortable doing an interview. (Do approach this thoughtfully, without pressure, and don't make assumptions. Even for fluent speakers, interviews can be challenging! Non-fluent folks and high-school-level speakers, we recommend sitting this one out.) If you have an interviewee they could speak to, add a note to your media advisory. Your advisory is still OK to send in English.
- **Once the events are activated:**
 - **[Send out your media advisory.](#)** Paste it into the body of an email and "BCC" it to your media list. If you have time to do some follow-up check out: [How to Get Press to Cover Your Event](#) for detailed tips.
 - **Check in with your spokespeople/interviewees.** Send everyone the updated talking points. Make sure they're comfortable with them. Confirm their availability and the best way to reach them if a reporter would like to speak to them. Offer to help them practice if they'd like.
- **During the event: help media get what they need.** Greet any media that attend and coordinate interviews so they get what they need. Ensure you have their contact info. Reporters will appreciate feeling like their needs are taken care of.



- **After the event:**
 - **Send out a press release and photos.** Share a [press release](#) with reporters who made it and those who didn't. The idea is to give newspapers everything they might need to write up a news story even if they didn't make it. Make sure your release includes a quote or two from attendees, and attach photos.
 - **Follow up with reporters you spoke to.** Ask if they have questions, and add them to your media list to give them future updates.
- **If a single action becomes sustained actions:**
 - Send out updated media advisories with your plans.
 - For the first week: once a day or even more is not too much.
 - Beyond a week: Send one updated advisory at the beginning of the week, and one before the weekend, and anytime plans change. Assume media interest may ebb and flow with the national news, but keep sending updates.
 - Pace yourself! Keep in touch with teammates to share the work.
 - Set up "vacation responders" on your media email account to help ensure reporters get updated info even when you can't watch it every moment.
- **If your city becomes the focus of the national news: Get ready!**
 - Take a deep breath! If you've followed the steps above, you should be in great shape.
 - Contact supportteam@indivisible.org for extra support.
 - Prepare to receive lots of inquiries at once. Don't be surprised if you hear from national, even international reporters very suddenly.
 - Don't neglect local media. What key powerholders in your state read in their local paper, coming from local constituents, will still be critical.
 - Do pace yourself. Our goal is to get our message out widely, but you're not obligated to set up an interview with every single person who contacts you.



Talking Points for Hosts

You're almost there! We're sharing these talking points as a link because they're going to get regularly updated as events unfold and we want to make sure hosts and attendees always have access to the latest version.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qXEVZrUPdx_G9e2rveT4seBfm73JMQ51zlx6RiYlarM/edit



COVID-19 Precautions for In-Person Events

- (1) Wear a mask! And make it a requirement that all attendees wear masks! A best practice is to bring extra masks you can give to participants who may forget to bring one.
- (2) Strive to stay at least six (6) feet apart — really, keep a safe distance from one another.
- (3) Keep in mind that folks have different circumstances and risk factors, so make sure there are different ways for group members to participate.
- (4) Ask participants not to join in person if they feel sick or have any concerns about recent exposure to COVID-19. Consider asking participants to confirm the following screening questions:
 - I am not showing any COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. fever, dry cough, sore throat, fatigue)
 - I have not had contact with others with a confirmed positive test of COVID-19 in the last 14 days
 - I have not traveled to restricted countries in the last 14 days
 - I will wear a mask for the duration of the event.



Training Support for Hosts and Activists

This document will be updated with registration links and new info if/as plans develop!

Training Schedule:

Initial Training: Register [here!](#)

Overview of Protect the Results: Oct. 8 at 8p ET

Session Description: Throughout American history, when a president has lost re-election, he has always stepped down willingly. But today, Trump routinely ignores democratic norms and continues to chip away at democratic institutions. Join the coalition of voters ready to mobilize if Donald Trump refuses to accept the results of the 2020 presidential election. During this training, we will share the most up to date information about the Protect the Results campaign. Come learn what steps you need to take to be ready to Protect the Results if Trump declares victory before all the votes are counted, makes unfounded claims that the election was “stolen,” or further acts to intimidate or prevent the legitimate counting of votes.

Three-Part Training Series for Hosts: Register [here!](#)

Planning a Large-Scale Protest: Oct. 14 at 7p ET

Calling all Protect the Results activists! You know what’s at stake for our democracy if Donald Trump refuses to leave office in the case that he loses election. This training is for potential hosts who have committed to take part in the Protect the Results campaign and plan a large-scale protest. This will be an active training where hosts will be given a chance to begin the work of planning your events. If you’ve never planned a large-scale event, come learn from fellow activists with years of experience! If you’ve done this many times before and need time to wrap your head around this escalating work, we invite you to spend an hour with us to get the ball rolling. This is Session 1 in a three-part series.

De-escalation and Safety Tactics: Oct. 21 at 7p ET

Join us for Session 2 of a three-part series for Protect the Results hosts. We know that our best way to win in a Protect the Results scenario is to plan large, non-violent mobilizations. And we also know that bad actors on the right are likely to try and



insight violence across many of our communities. Whether you're in a rural or urban area, only we can protect us.

Sustained Pressure: October 28 7p ET

Join us for Session 3, the last in our three-part series for Protect the Results hosts. We know that if Trump declares victory before all the votes are counted, makes unfounded claims that the election was “stolen,” or further acts to intimidate or prevent the legitimate counting of votes, the work of fighting for our democracy won't be easy and won't be concluded after one day of protest. Come learn how to keep momentum and motivation up for your event and how to ensure we have the longevity to see this work through to a win.

Post-Election Rapid Response Training: Training reruns or new trainings tentatively provided in the days/week following the election as needed based on state of affairs.

Partner Trainings: There are other great trainings happening in different spaces including via Fight Back Table, The Frontline, George Lakey, and more. There's a list [here](#) — and we'd encourage you to attend!

Our friends at the Hold the Line Guide are holding two rounds of their 2-session workshop “Hold The Line: A Training to Defend Democracy” on [Oct. 15+22](#) and [Oct. 20+27](#). They will draw from their [Hold the Line: A Guide to Defending Democracy](#). All workshop participants will be asked to review the guide and/or watch a short video presentation about the guide in advance of the training. Leaders of local grassroots groups and activists working in swing states are especially encouraged to apply.



Conflict Deescalation Strategies



We must be clear-eyed in our acknowledgement that the stakes of the election, Trump's incentives to try to create chaos and his encouragement of state-sponsored and right-wing violence, combined with polarizing media, misinformation and accusations of fraud mean that the risk of post-election violence is escalated.

Protect the Results partner, Greenpeace offered the following strategies to host events in atmospheres with heightened risk. These behaviors can help defuse hostile confrontations by modeling understanding and win-win problem solving. **Not all tips below are effective in all situations, be sure to consider your situation carefully and choose strategies that you feel are appropriate.**

Remain calm

- Reduce physiological stress through some form of relaxation or meditation
- Think before you act, consider your options. It will let you see different alternatives, and minimizes the risk of unwise or violent acts.
- Take action to ensure physical safety, this might mean leaving the scene.
- Assess the meaning and nature of angry behavior

Use body language to reassure the other person

- Allow adequate personal space
- Use a supportive stance (Have a supportive attitude. Adopt a non-aggressive body position, keeping your hands open and visible. Alternate looking to the other's eyes and to the ground so as to minimise tension.)
- Make sure that the other person does not feel 'outnumbered'. Try to bring them away from the crowd, if possible

Encourage discourse

- Introduce yourself, offer a handshake, and use the individual's name
- Use attentive body language
- Practice active listening; often, people just need to vent
- Be prepared to strike a balance between chatting about non-action related things to help build bonds with workers/police/counter protestors and defuse stress, maybe you both have kids or like the same sports team.

Show understanding and empathy

- Respond sympathetically reframe statements
- Invite problem-solving
- Match their volume and then lower to reduce intensity



- Be prepared to repeat yourself if necessary

Commit to resolving the issue

- Emphasize willingness to resolve the issue
- Acknowledge the importance of resolving the issue

Help the other person save face

- Reassure the hostile person
- Offer the option to pursue the issue later
- Refrain from openly judging their behavior.

Confront the issue at hand

Effective confrontation focuses on problem behaviors, not on individuals: hard on the problem, soft on the person.

- Acknowledge...the other's issues, feelings
- Commit Involvement...show interest in solving the problem.
- Describe...the other's behaviour using specific and objective words.
- Express...your reaction to the behaviour(s).
- Specify....name desirable behaviour changes.
- Consequence...explain how the outcome will be of mutual benefit

Examples:

- Acknowledge feelings --"I can see.."
- Commitment--"I want to solve..."
- Describe behavior*--"When you..."
- Express your feeling--"I get..."
- Specify--"I want..."
- Consequence--"So that we can..."

* Describe behaviours objectively, in a non-judgmental language. Attempt to make consequences positive and mutual, or at least neutral.

Body Language

- Validate their point of view, nod
- Make good eye contact, try to shake hands
- Don't wear sunglasses
- Calm tone, open body language, hands at sides, don't cross arms
- Slow movements
- Allow adequate personal space



- Don't run unless absolutely necessary
- Supportive stance: adopt a non-aggressive body position, keep hands open and visible, arms at side
- Alternate looking at the ground and other person's eyes because some people don't like too much eye contact (can be perceived as aggressive)

Verbal Communication

- Introduce yourself
- Show your honesty, passion, explain your purpose, and don't get defensive
- Keep the issue in mind, but don't argue the details – remember why you're there
- "I'm not here to get in anyone's way or argue, I'm here to protect our democracy."
- Don't get into a debate
- Listen, show active understanding and respond sympathetically
- Do not interrupt unless you absolutely must
- Match voice level and then lower your own
- Don't take it personally, not about you, it's about the issue
- Leave people with a good feeling after talking to you
- Ask questions, acknowledge what they say, repeat it or re-word to clarify
- Negotiate, invite problem solving, stall when possible
- Emphasize willingness to resolve the issue

Emotional Wellbeing

- Remind yourself why you are there and be totally committed to that
- Repeat your mission and purpose to yourself
- Stay calm
- Breathe
- Ground yourself
- Know your 'triggers'
- Use what works for you...meditation, thinking about what you're going to eat, imagining a bath, whatever. Just try to calm yourself down

The facts about private militias

Our friends at the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection have created [fact sheets for all 50 states](#) explaining the laws barring unauthorized private militia groups and what to do if groups of armed individuals are near a polling place or voter registration drive.



Know Your Rights: Protestors Rights

[From our friends at the ACLU](#), in 4 sections:

1. I'm organizing a protest
2. I'm attending a protest
3. I want to take pictures or shoot video at a protest
4. I was stopped by the police while protesting

1. I'm organizing a protest

Your rights

- Your rights are strongest in what are known as “traditional public forums,” such as streets, sidewalks, and parks. You also likely have the right to speak out on other public property, like plazas in front of government buildings, as long as you are not blocking access to the government building or interfering with other purposes the property was designed for.
- Private property owners can set rules for speech on their property. The government may not restrict your speech if it is taking place on your own property or with the consent of the property owner.
- Counterprotesters also have free speech rights. Police must treat protesters and counterprotesters equally. Police are permitted to keep antagonistic groups separated but should allow them to be within sight and sound of one another.
- When you are lawfully present in any public space, you have the right to photograph anything in plain view, including federal buildings and the police. On private property, the owner may set rules related to photography or video.

Do I need a permit?

- You don't need a permit to march in the streets or on sidewalks, as long as marchers don't obstruct car or pedestrian traffic. If you don't have a permit, police officers can ask you to move to the side of a street or sidewalk to let others pass or for safety reasons.



- Certain types of events may require permits. These include a march or parade that requires blocking traffic or street closure; a large rally requiring the use of sound amplifying devices; or a rally over a certain size at most parks or plazas.
- While certain permit procedures require submitting an application well in advance of the planned event, police can't use those procedures to prevent a protest in response to breaking news events.
- Restrictions on the route of a march or sound equipment might violate the First Amendment if they are unnecessary for traffic control or public safety, or if they interfere significantly with effective communication to the intended audience.
- A permit cannot be denied because the event is controversial or will express unpopular views.
- If the permit regulations that apply to your protest require a fee for a permit, they should allow a waiver for those who cannot afford the charge.

What to do if you believe your rights have been violated

- When you can, write down everything you remember, including the officers' badge and patrol car numbers and the agency they work for.
- Get contact information for witnesses.
- Take photographs of any injuries.
- Once you have all of this information, you can file a written complaint with the agency's internal affairs division or civilian complaint board.

2. I'm attending a protest

Your rights

- Your rights are strongest in what are known as "traditional public forums," such as streets, sidewalks, and parks. You also likely have the right to speak out on other public property, like plazas in front of government buildings, as long as you are not blocking access to the government building or interfering with other purposes the property was designed for.
- Private property owners can set rules for speech on their property. The government may not restrict your speech if it is taking place on your own property or with the consent of the property owner.
- Counterprotesters also have free speech rights. Police must treat protesters and counterprotesters equally. Police are permitted to keep antagonistic groups separated but should allow them to be within sight and sound of one another.



- When you are lawfully present in any public space, you have the right to photograph anything in plain view, including federal buildings and the police. On private property, the owner may set rules related to photography or video.
- You don't need a permit to march in the streets or on sidewalks, as long as marchers don't obstruct car or pedestrian traffic. If you don't have a permit, police officers can ask you to move to the side of a street or sidewalk to let others pass or for safety reasons.

What to do if you believe your rights have been violated

- When you can, write down everything you remember, including the officers' badge and patrol car numbers and the agency they work for.
- Get contact information for witnesses.
- Take photographs of any injuries.
- Once you have all of this information, you can file a written complaint with the agency's internal affairs division or civilian complaint board.

What happens if the police issues an order to disperse the protest?

- Shutting down a protest through a dispersal order must be law enforcement's last resort. Police may not break up a gathering unless there is a clear and present danger of riot, disorder, interference with traffic, or other immediate threat to public safety.
- If officers issue a dispersal order, they must provide a reasonable opportunity to comply, including sufficient time and a clear, unobstructed exit path.
- Individuals must receive clear and detailed notice of a dispersal order, including how much time they have to disperse, the consequences of failing to disperse, and what clear exit route they can follow, before they may be arrested or charged with any crime.

3. I want to take pictures or shoot video at a protest

Your rights

- When you are lawfully present in any public space, you have the right to photograph anything in plain view, including federal buildings and the police. (On private property, the owner may set rules about photography or video.)
- Police officers may not confiscate or demand to view your photographs or video without a warrant, nor may they delete data under any circumstances.



However, they may order citizens to cease activities that are truly interfering with legitimate law enforcement operations.

- If you are videotaping, be aware that there is an important legal distinction between a visual photographic record (fully protected) and the audio portion of a videotape, which some states have tried to regulate under state wiretapping laws.

What to do if you are stopped or detained for taking photographs

- Always remain calm and never physically resist a police officer.
- Police cannot detain you without reasonable suspicion that you have or are about to commit a crime or are in the process of doing so.
- If you are stopped, ask the officer if you are free to leave. If the answer is yes, calmly walk away.
- If you are detained, ask the officer what crime you are suspected of committing, and remind the officer that taking photographs is your right under the First Amendment and does not constitute reasonable suspicion of criminal activity.

What to do if you believe your rights have been violated

- When you can, write down everything you remember, including the officers' badge and patrol car numbers and the agency they work for.
- Get contact information for witnesses.
- Take photographs of any injuries.
- Once you have all of this information, you can file a written complaint with the agency's internal affairs division or civilian complaint board.

4. I was stopped by the police while protesting

Your rights

- Stay calm. Make sure to keep your hands visible. Don't argue, resist, or obstruct the police, even if you believe they are violating your rights. Point out that you are not disrupting anyone else's activity and that the First Amendment protects your actions.
- Ask if you are free to leave. If the officer says yes, calmly walk away.



- If you are under arrest, you have a right to ask why. Otherwise, say you wish to remain silent and ask for a lawyer immediately. Don't say anything or sign anything without a lawyer.
- You have the right to make a local phone call, and if you're calling your lawyer, police are not allowed to listen.
- You never have to consent to a search of yourself or your belongings. If you do explicitly consent, it can affect you later in court.
- Police may "pat down" your clothing if they suspect you have a weapon and may search you after an arrest.
- Police officers may not confiscate or demand to view your photographs or video without a warrant, nor may they delete data under any circumstances. However, they may order citizens to cease activities that are truly interfering with legitimate law enforcement operations.

What to do if you believe your rights have been violated

- When you can, write down everything you remember, including the officers' badge and patrol car numbers and the agency they work for.
- Get contact information for witnesses.
- Take photographs of any injuries.
- Once you have all of this information, you can file a written complaint with the agency's internal affairs division or civilian complaint board.