

**American Political Science Association's
Task Force on Election Assistance and
The National conference of Black Political Scientists (NCOBPS)
Statement on voter harassment and intimidation.¹**

We are committed to free and fair elections in which every citizen has an equal right to cast an unrestricted vote.

Is voter intimidation illegal?

Yes. The right of each voter to cast their ballot free from intimidation or coercion is a foundational principle of a free and democratic society. Federal law prohibits voter intimidation.

Examples of voter intimidation?

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, voter intimidation is conduct that is intended to compel prospective voters to vote against their preferences, or to not vote at all, through activity that is reasonably calculated to instill fear. Some actions that ordinarily would be legal may be unlawful if they are intended to intimidate voters.

Examples of conduct near polling sites that likely would constitute illegal voter intimidation, although other conduct could also qualify:

- Violent behavior inside or outside the polling site
- Verbal threats of violence
- Confronting voters while wearing military-style or official-looking uniforms
- Spreading false information about voter fraud, voting requirements, or related criminal penalties
- Brandishing firearms or the intimidating display of firearms
- Aggressively approaching voters' vehicles or writing down voters' license plate numbers
- Disrupting voting lines or blocking the entrance to the polling place
- Harassing voters, aggressively questioning them about their qualifications to vote
- Following voters to, from, or within the polling place

What should I do if I see or experience voter intimidation?

- ✓ Notify your **local election official** at your polling place.
- ✓ **Document** what you saw or experienced: what happened, where, and when, and whether any voters were deterred from voting.
- ✓ Call **Election Protection at 866-OUR-VOTE** (866-687-8683).
- ✓ If you fear imminent violence, call **9-1-1**.

¹ <https://www.law.georgetown.edu/icap/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2020/10/Voter-Intimidation-Fact-Sheet.pdf>