



What to Do if You See or Encounter Voter Intimidation Occuring at Your Polling Location

Since early voting began on October 19th, the press has reported several incidents of voter intimidation/suppression that include the presence of armed security guards and other forms of intimidation designed to discourage registered voters from exercising their constitutional right to vote.

In light of several cases of potential voter intimidation in Alachua, Broward and Pinellas Counties (to name a few), The Florida Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence has prepared this reference memorandum for voters in case they encounter/see potential voter intimidation tactics unfolding at their polling stations.

The Florida Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence suggests the following **pre-mitigation** practices regarding armed individuals or groups at early vote sites or polling places:

- Voters must educate themselves about Florida's gun laws*
- Encourage any Election Day protests/events to take place away from polling places
- Share polling place rules, electioneering laws, and/or campaign regulations with individuals, media, and on social media

Relevant Florida Gun and Election Laws

- Under Florida law, no individual can openly carry, or carry a concealed weapon, into a polling place (Fl.Stat.§790.06(12)(a)(6).
- The open carrying of a firearm is illegal in Florida (Fl. Statute 790.053(1), except during instances of fishing, camping or lawful hunting (Fl. Statute 790.25 (3)(h).
- No person, political committee, or other group or organization may solicit voters inside the polling place or within 150 feet of the entrance to any polling place, a polling room where the polling place is also a polling room, an early voting site, or an office of the

supervisor where vote-by-mail ballots are requested and printed on demand for the convenience of electors who appear in person to request them. Before the opening of the polling place or early voting site, the clerk or supervisor shall designate the no-solicitation zone and mark the boundaries. (Fl. Statute 102.031, (4) (a).

The Florida Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence suggests the following **rapid response** practices if encountering armed individuals or groups at early vote sites or polling places:

- If someone is seen openly brandishing a firearm, the witness should first call **911**, followed by contacting the Supervisor of Elections*, then the Election Protection hotline at 1-866-OUR-VOTE
- Voters should refrain from any engagement with angry protestors, including any verbal exchange or making eye contact
- Voters who feel harassed or intimidated, or who witness either, should contact their Supervisor of Elections office and call 1-866-OUR-VOTE
- Voters who observe any sort of intimidation outside of an early vote site or polling place, it is important they document the incident by taking photos or videos

Helpful Resources:

***Florida's Supervisors of Elections:**

<https://www.myfloridaelections.com/Contact-your-SOE>

Election Protection Hotlines:

1-866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)
1-888-VE-Y-VOTA (en Español)
1-888-API-VOTE (Asian multilingual assistance)
1-844-YALLA-US (Arabic)

Election Protection website:

<https://866ourvote.org/>

***Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence:**

<https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/states/florida/>

Examples of Media Reports of Voter Intimidation in Florida

Orlando Sentinel: [Report of armed security near voting site spurs voter intimidation fears in Florida](#)

Washington Post: [Armed Trump supporters at Florida polling site were off-duty guards and had not been hired, officials say](#)

Florida Politics: [Civil, voting rights groups caution police presence at Pinellas County polling places](#)

Sun Sentinel: [Voter intimidation looms as a concern. Here's how South Florida will fight it.](#)

News Channel 8 - WFLA: [What's considered voter intimidation in Florida?](#)

About The Florida Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence

The Florida Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence was co-founded by the League of Women Voters of Florida and The Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus to promote evidence based gun safety legislation after the Pulse Nightclub shooting in 2016. It has grown to include more than 100 local, state, and national organizations and includes such diverse groups as the Florida PTA, Equality Florida, the National Council of Jewish Women and the Southern Poverty Law Center.