Addressing Physical Threats

Sadly, in the last several years, election officials have been subjected to increased threats, harassment, and doxing, causing a significant negative impact on their personal lives as well as interfering with the secure operation of our government processes and election infrastructure.

Officials are used to receiving emails and voicemails that criticize their work. However, attempts to threaten or intimidate are unacceptable, and officials should report any such behavior immediately. Doxing is also unacceptable. This is the publishing of an individual's personal information online which can increase the risk of physical threats and intimidation.

There are resources available to help and support you and your team and to give guidance on proactive steps you can take. Several of these are listed below. **If you feel there is any chance of an immediate risk to you or others, do not wait, call 911.**

Goals

1. Know about doxing and how to protect yourself.
2. Know what to do if you encounter an attempt to threaten or intimidate.
3. Know where to get more support.

Actions

For Addressing Physical Threats, the necessary actions are the same for all maturity levels.

1. If you or anyone in your office receives an attempt to threaten or intimidate:
   - If you feel there is any chance of an **immediate risk to you or others, call 911.**
   - Contact your FBI Elections Crime Coordinator. If you don't know your Election Crimes Coordinator, contact your local FBI field office and ask to speak to the Election Crimes Coordinator.
   - Contact your local CISA Physical Security Advisor (PSA).
2. Learn about doxing and take action to minimize risk through CISA's Insight on Mitigating the Impacts of Doxing on Critical Infrastructure.
3. For additional resources see the Cost Effective Tools section below.

Ensure your entire team is prepared and knows to take these actions if necessary.

Cost-Effective Tools

- CISA's Insight on Mitigating the Impacts of Doxing on Critical Infrastructure.
- U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC): Security Resources for Election Officials and Personal Security for Election Officials.
- The Committee for Safe and Secure Elections, CSSE's Five Steps to Safer Elections, providing guidance and tabletop exercises to help election administrators and law enforcement work together to strengthen our elections.
- CSSE's Law Enforcement Reference Guides, providing state-specific information about laws governing elections.

Learn More

- CISA's Security Resources for the Election Infrastructure Subsector.
- CISA's De-Escalation Series for Critical Infrastructure, offering guidance on how to recognize the warning signs of someone on a path to violence; assess if the situation or person of concern is escalating, or if an emergency response is needed immediately; de-escalate the situation currently taking place; and report the situation.
- Contact elections@cisecurity.org for more information.

Mapping to CIS Controls and Safeguards

- There are no relevant CIS Controls.

Mapping to CIS Handbook Best Practices

- There are no relevant Handbook best practices.

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