

# Keeping your Elections Secure

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Annual Election Law Seminar  
Cities, Schools and Other Political Subdivisions  
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## About Me...

- 19+ years of experience in Information Technology
- US Army Combat Veteran
- Bachelor's of Computer Science in Cybersecurity
- Office of Secretary of State for 8 years
  - Lead Systems Support Tech
  - Election Security Trainer
  - Voting Systems Certification Coordinator
  - DHS Tabletop the Vote Moderator for Texas
  - Cybersecurity Training for TEAM users



## Election Security Team

- Provide Annual Cybersecurity Training for TEAM Access
- Assist with Elections Forms Creation and Implementation
- Provide Election Security Training
- Facilitate Resources
- Assist counties with conduct of election related events  
(Early Voting, Election Day, Recounts, L&A Testing, Risk Limiting Audits)
- Written Information Security Program



## Your Role as an Election Official

- Develop effective security policies and procedures
- Enforce training
- Become knowledgeable of law changes
- Procure the right resources
- Promote a culture of security awareness, best practices and accountability



## How to Secure your Elections?

- Secure elections means taking no shortcuts
- Training, Training, Training
- Provide Election Security Training
- Stay on top of documentation
- Develop a Written Information Security Program





ELECTION SECURITY BEST PRACTICES  
GUIDE & DATA CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM



Election Information Security Policy Template	Election Security Incident Response Plan Template	Continuity of Operations Plan Template	Vendor Risk Management Policy Template	Election System Security Plan Template
WRITTEN INFORMATION SECURITY PROGRAM (WISP) TEMPLATES				



<https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/document-share/docshare.aspx>



## Written Information Security Program (WISP)

- Election Security Best Practices Guide
- Election Information Security Policy
- Election Incident Response Plan
- Continuity of Operations Plan
- Vendor Risk Management Policy
- Election Systems Security Plan



## Elections Security Best Practices Guide

- Defines how to classify, store and secure elections related data
- Provides standards on how to create, establish and execute procedures related to election operations
- Provides flexibility to apply measures customized to your entity
- Detailed checklist format for user-friendliness and compliance





## Election Information Security Policy

- Establishes the rules your entity must follow to secure your election operations
- Based on the 5 stages of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework
  - Identify
  - Protect
  - Detect
  - Respond
  - Recover
- Must be tailored to reinforce the needs of **Your Entity**



## Elections Incident Response Plan

- Defines the procedures, information and resources necessary to handle an unprecedented event.
- Defines the actions you will take as soon as an incident is **detected and confirmed**
- Must be relevant to **Your Entity** staff, election systems, operational environment and voting facilities



## Continuity of Operations Plan

- Defines the procedures, information and resources necessary to prevent disruption of operations
- Designed to address more common events
  - Personnel Succession Plan (Contact Lists for Election Workers, Judges, Vendors, Custodians, etc.)
  - Alternative Technology (Voting Systems, Office Environments, Managed Services)
  - Responsibility Succession Plan and Tasks Guide
  - Logistics (Alternate Facilities, Utilities, Custodians, Essential Items Checklist)



## Vendor Risk Management Policy

- Designed to assess vendors supporting election operations in your area
- Defines the cybersecurity practices and processes that third-party service and equipment vendors are expected to follow
- Surveys vendors' practices and procedures to safeguard your data, devices and overall operations



## Election Systems Security Plan

- Establishes policies and procedures related to election systems
  - TEAM
  - VR
  - ePollbooks, Voter Check-In/Qualification
  - Ballot Creation and Distribution
  - Vote Casting and Capturing Systems
  - Vote Tabulation
  - ENR Systems
- Discusses asset management, access control, data flow and network architecture



Time is NOT on your side...

- Find out if you need to conduct an election
- Begin planning as early as possible
- Assess any supply chain challenges
- Consider possibility of contracting with your county



## Electronic Voting Systems

- Ensure you are conducting hash validation
- Train your election workers every chance available
- Maintain proper documentation of voting systems, storage devices, ballot stock and test materials
- Develop an effective asset management policy



## Misinformation, Disinformation, and Malinformation

- Communicate information only through official channels
- Do not engage directly with posts on social media
- Have a good communication plan
- <https://www.cisa.gov/mdm>  
<https://www.cisa.gov/rumorcontrol>





## National and State Resources

- CISA – Endpoint Detection and Response, Cyber-Hygiene Services  
<https://www.cisa.gov/election-security>
- EI-ISAC/MS-ISAC – Bulletins, Vulnerability Scans  
<https://www.cisecurity.org/ei-isac/>
- Texas ISAO – Bulletins, Focus Groups, Resource Hub  
<https://dir.texas.gov/information-security/txisao>



The Pillars of Election Integrity



AVAILABLE SUPPORT



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ELECTION SECURITY TRAINERS  
[ElectionSecurity@sos.texas.gov](mailto:ElectionSecurity@sos.texas.gov)





Q&A

