



Texas Secretary of State
ELECTIONS DIVISION



Mastering Election Security

44th Annual
Election Law Seminar
for County Election Officials

August 10–12, 2026



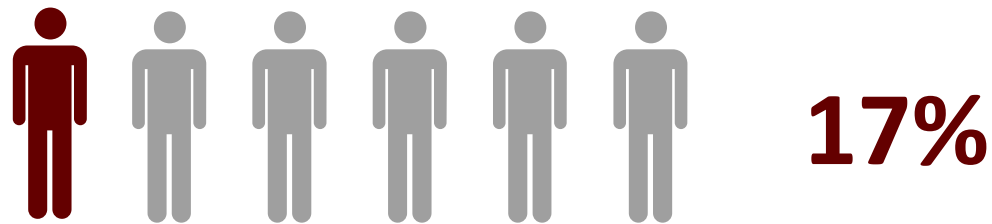
**It's not a matter
of "if" but "when" a
security incident will occur**



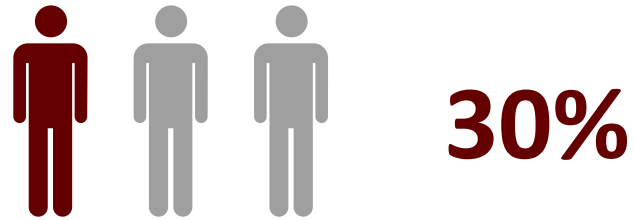
**"The best time to meet your
incident response partner is
not during an active incident."**

John Paras

*Training and Exercise Coordinator,
Arlington County Department of Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management*



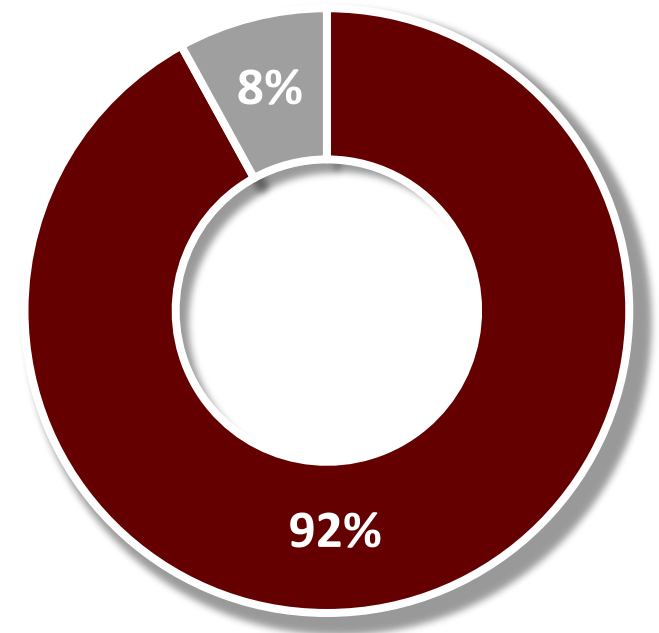
In 2022, **1 in 6** local election officials had experienced threats.



In 2024, **1 in 3** local election officials had experienced threats.



92% of local election officials have taken steps to increase security.





Elections as Critical Infrastructure

- Designated as [Critical Infrastructure](#) under the Government Facilities Sector in 2017

Elections infrastructure includes:

- **Physical Security**
 - Storage Facilities, Polling Locations, Central Counting Stations
 - Election Officials, Poll Workers
 - Election Equipment
 - Supply Chain
- **Information and Communication Technologies**
 - VR Databases, Election Management Systems, Election Night Reporting Systems
 - Processes and Procedures
 - Internal Networks, Communication Channels



Preparing for Election Security





Brainstorm

Prompt:

What possible threats are most likely to impact your local election office?

Paper supply shortage

Phishing attack with successful malicious access to network

Election worker targeted after doxxing event

Misinformation or disinformation campaigns

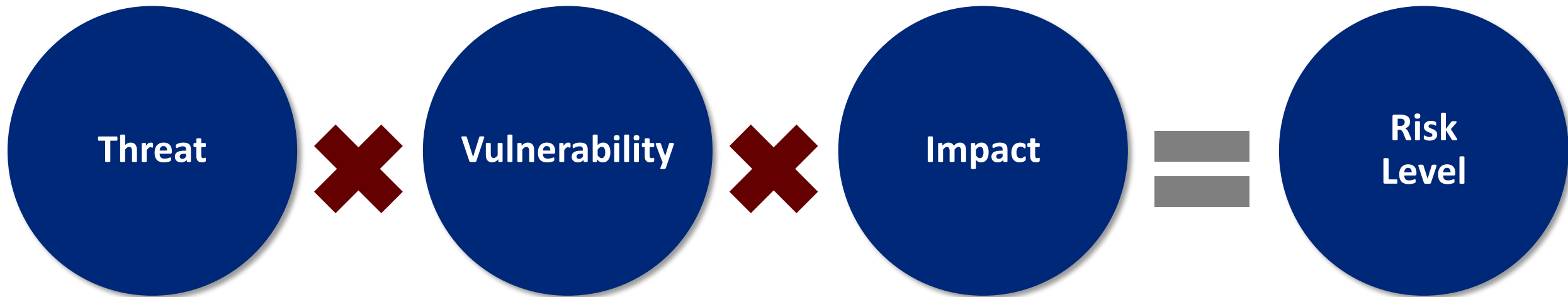
You will have 5 minutes to brainstorm.



Work together with people at your table and the table directly behind you.

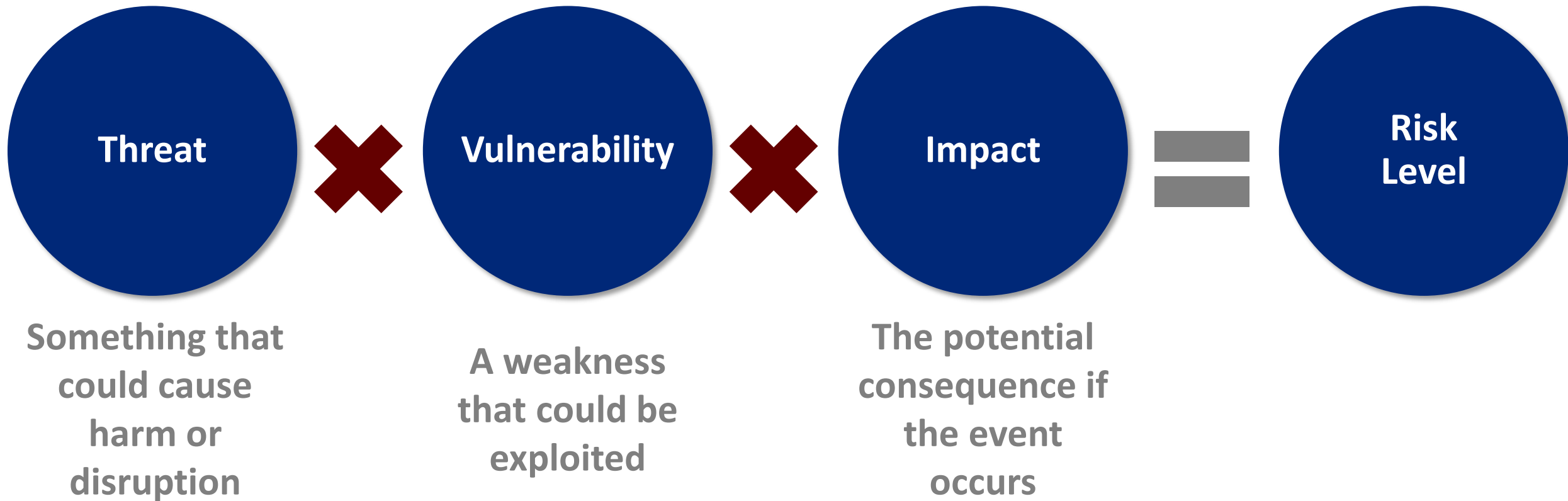


Threat and Risk Assessments





Threat and Risk Assessments





Risk Matrix

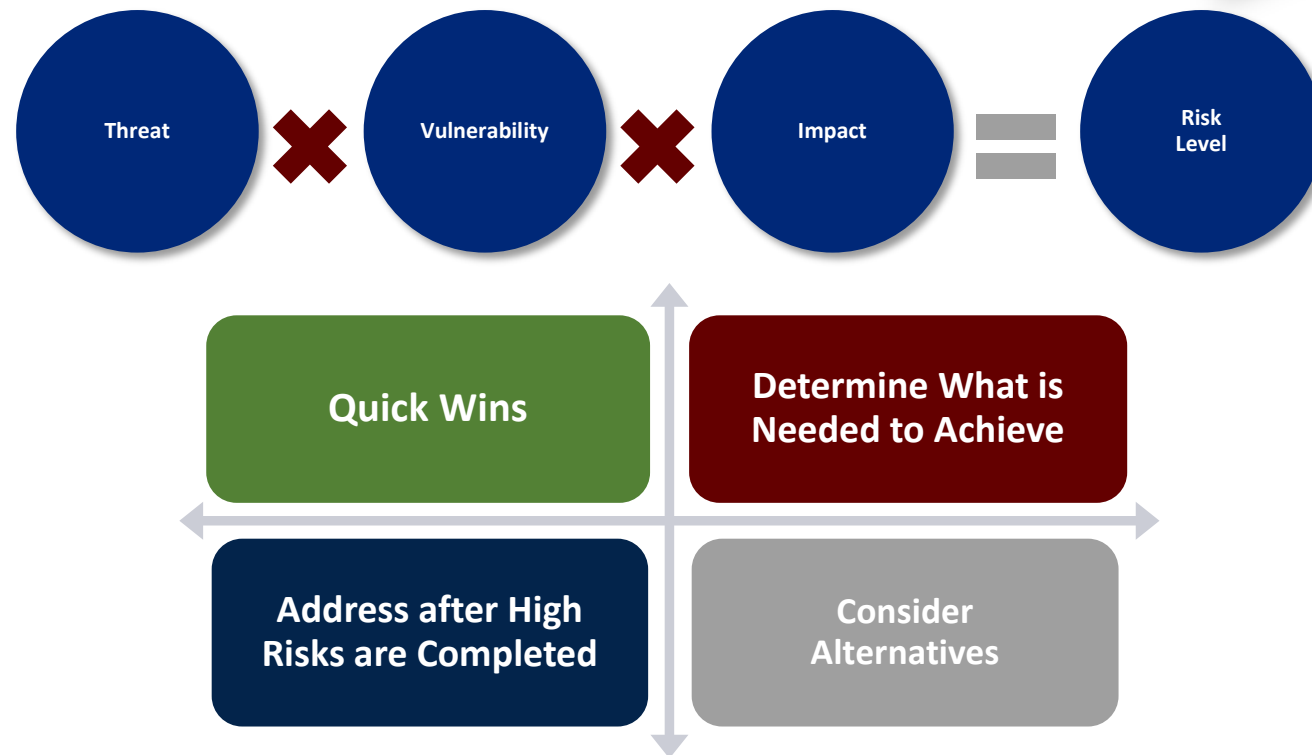




Table Share

Prompt:

Using 1 of the risks you identified during the brainstorm, evaluate its Risk Level, then decide where it should be placed on your local elections office's Risk Matrix.



Work together with people at your table and the table directly behind you.

Ensure that everyone has a turn to share their thoughts, ideas, or perspective.

You will have **3 minutes** to brainstorm.



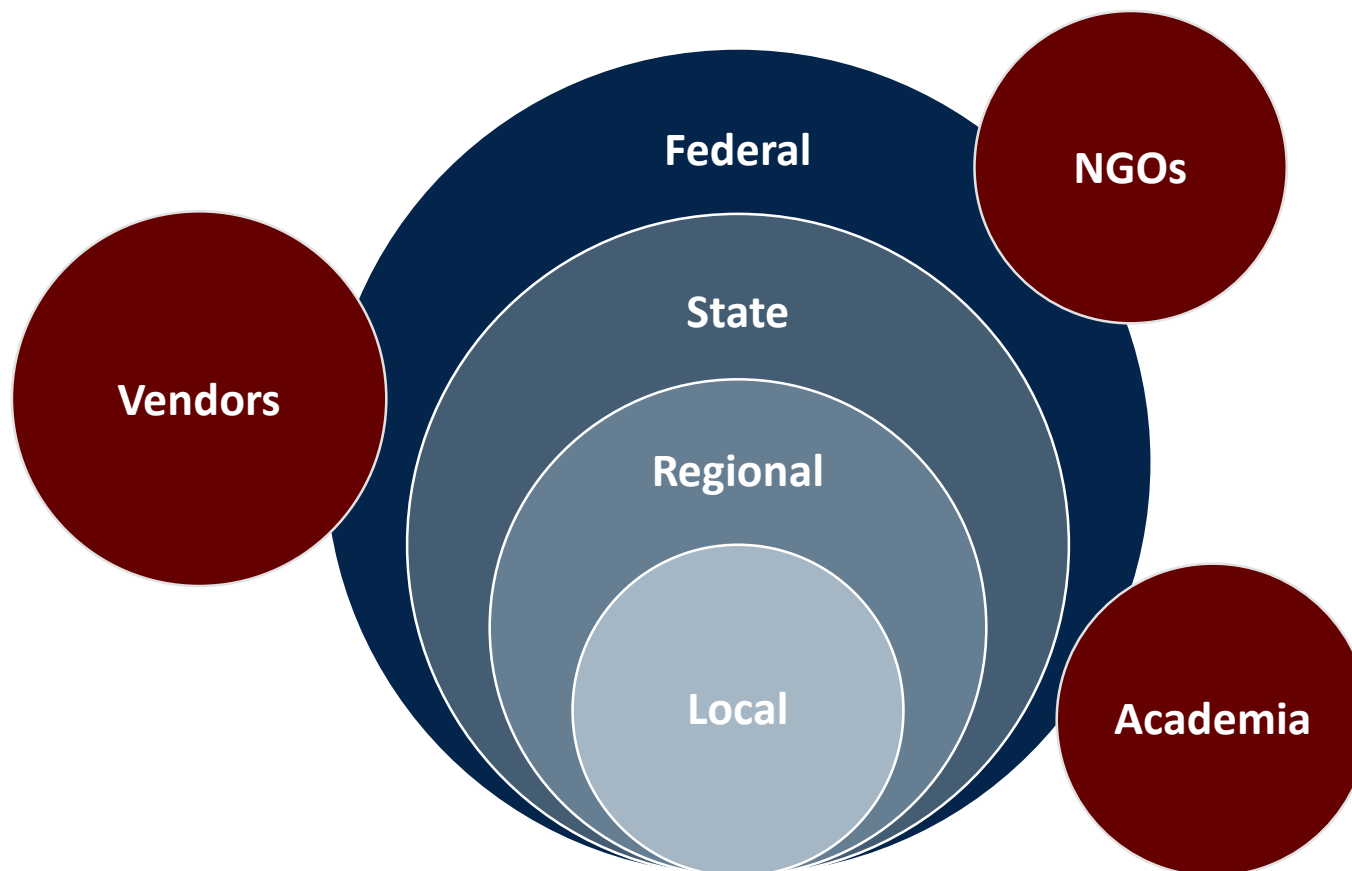
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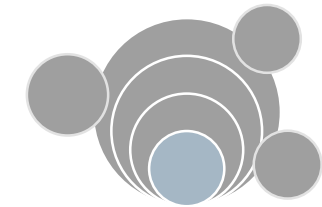


Election Security Partners



Election Security Environment





Local Partners – Internal



Elections Officials and Workers

- Full Time Staff
- Seasonal Staff
- Poll Workers

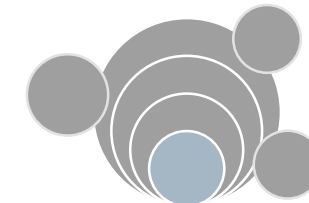


Policies and Procedures



Training





Local Partners – External

Local Law Enforcement

Immediate Incident Response

Physical Security

Sheriff (County)/
Police (Municipality)

Commissioners Court/City Councils

County Judge/Mayor are Incident
Commanders for Local Emergencies

Review and Approve Emergency
Preparedness Plans and Procedures

May Allocate Emergency Resources

Information Security

Immediate and Prolonged
Incident Response

Cybersecurity

Data Protection

Office of Emergency Management

Prolonged Incident Response

Continuity of Operations

Operational Logistics

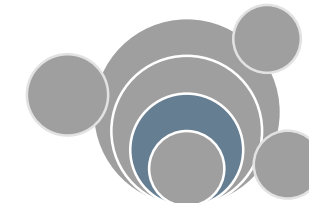
Polling Locations

Immediate and Prolonged
Incident Response

Location-Specific Emergency
Preparedness Plans and
Procedures

Information Technology

Immediate and Prolonged
Incident Response



Regional Partners

THP/DPS and TDEM

THP has 7 Regions

TDEM has 8 Regions

RSOCs

3—UT, ASU, UTRGV

Partnership with Universities

More RSOCs planned

COGs/UAWGs

24 Regional Councils of Government

3 UAWGs

UAWGs oversee UASI grants

Interoperability Agreements

Geographical Commonalities

Vendor/Supply Chain Commonalities

Fusion Centers

24/7 National Network

7 Regional

by State and Local entities



State Partners

TX DPS

THSSP 2026-2030

Texas Homeland Security

TX SOS

Advisories and Guidance

Legislative Feedback

Education

TX CC

Cybersecurity Support

NSOC

Elections-Specific Support

TDEM

Statewide Coordination

Operational Logistics

TX DIR

Security Control Standards

Cybersecurity
Training Standards

Incident Reporting

Fusion Center

24/7 National Network

Primary located in Austin

Info Sharing & Analysis



Federal Partners

DHS

Critical Infrastructure

National Protection and Programs Directorate

NSOC

24/7 NSA "Nerve Center"

SIGINT

Rapid Crisis Response

FBI

Criminal Investigations

4 Texas Field Offices

CIS/CISA

CIS Controls & Benchmarks

CISA – Cybersecurity
and Threat Intelligence

MS-ISAC/EI-ISAC

Info Sharing and
Analysis for SLTT

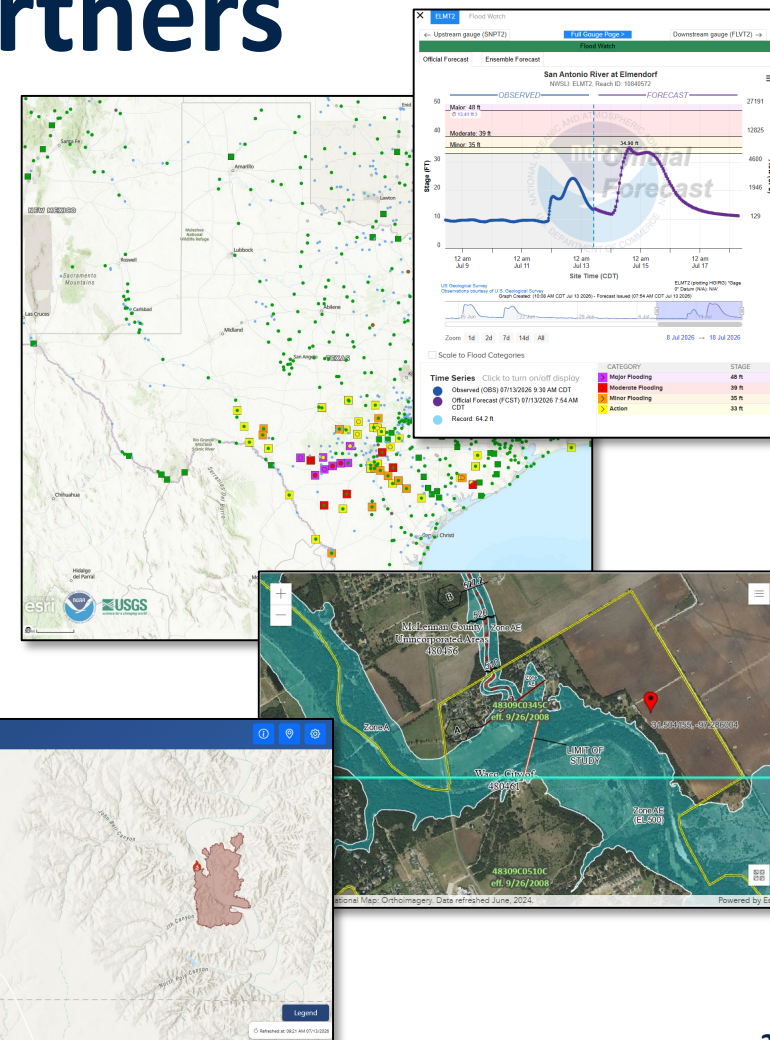
ISAC Annual Meeting

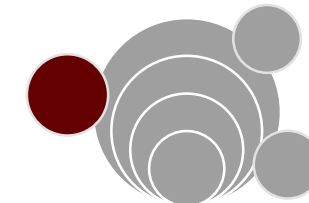
Election Day SitRoom



Local, Regional, and Federal Partners

- There are many indirect risks to elections that every partner cannot be included in one presentation.
- Also consider the following:
 - [NWS](#)—National Weather Service watches, warnings, and outlooks
 - [NOAA](#)—National Weather Prediction Service and Office of Water Prediction
 - Flood gauges
 - [FEMA Flood Maps](#)
 - Online Wildfire Maps—[Fire and Smoke Map](#)
 - TX DPS/municipal road closure notices





Vendor Partners

Physical Security Services

Security Cameras

Security Guards

Voting System Vendors

Voting Systems

ePollbooks

Print Vendors

Telecommunications Vendors

Internet Service

Phone

Email

Cybersecurity Services

Third-Party Security

Dark Web Monitoring

Incident Response Teams

Infrastructure Service Providers

Electricity

Water

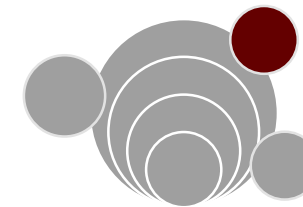
Delivery/Transportation

Voter Registration Database Vendors

TEAM System

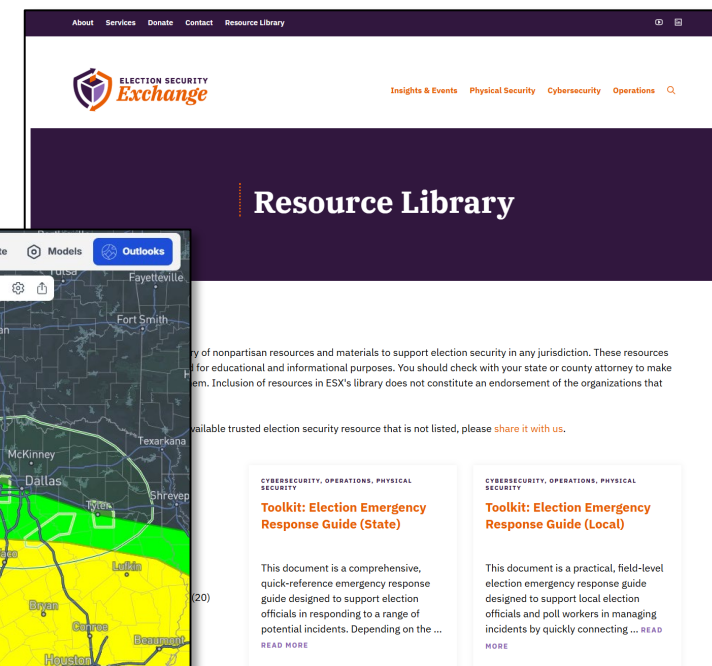
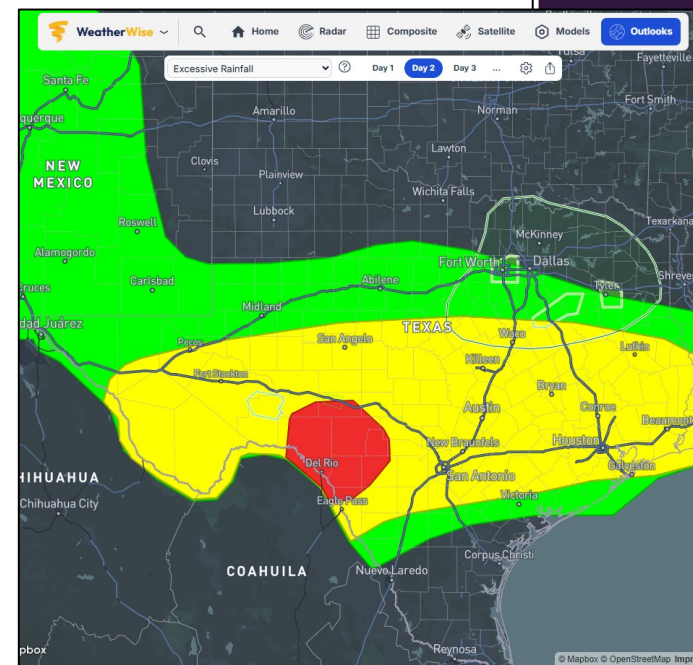
Offline Vendors

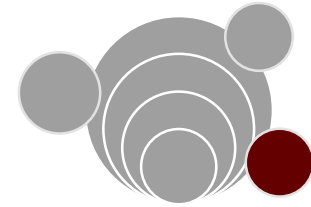
Backup Storage Locations



NGO Partners

- [National Association of Secretaries of State/National Association of State Elections Directors](#)
- [The Bipartisan Policy Center](#)
- [Election Security Exchange](#)
- [The Elections Group](#)
- [Voting Works](#)
- [WeatherWise App](#)
- The list goes on!





Academic Partners

- [Texas Homeland Security Council Research Initiative](#)
- [The University of Texas at San Antonio/89\(R\) HB 150](#)
- [Institute For Homeland Security–Sam Houston State University](#)
- [UT Regional Security Operations Center \(UT-RSOC\) Vendor Risk Assessment & Repository](#)



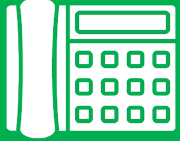
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Designated Points of Contact



P.A.C.E. Communication System

PRIMARY Primary decision maker/stakeholder at the elections office.	
ALTERNATE Backup decision maker/stakeholder in the event the primary decision maker is inaccessible.	
CONTINGENCY Individual in a separate department.	
EMERGENCY This should be the last resort method. Consider an individual not directly involved with elections that can quickly coordinate with elections.	



P.A.C.E. Communication Contact Sheet



Please contact us at elections@sos.texas.gov if you experience issues with this document.



Plan for Inclement Weather and Disasters in Texas Elections



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Elections Division
800-252-VOTE • 512-463-5650
sos.texas.gov • votetexas.gov

Revised
3/16/2026

APPENDIX A: COUNTY PLAN FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER AND DISASTERS

Develop preparedness measures tailored to the county's individual needs. Specific vulnerabilities to polling places, roads, transportation systems, and other election infrastructure may vary based on geographical locations throughout the county. Local meteorological and emergency services agencies will monitor and assess these risks regularly.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS NEEDED FOR RESPONSIVE ACTION

To ensure efficient communication and accountability during emergencies, maintain contact lists of key stakeholders, elections staff, and poll workers in multiple locations and designate a central point of contact to track all personnel. Refer to the COOP template within the *Texas Election Security Toolkit* for an Election Continuity of Operations Contact List and Early Voting and Election Day Worker Contact List. A more comprehensive list is found below.

County Department	Name	Contact Information
County Judge/ Senior Commissioner	Name, County Judge	Cell: Office: Email:
	Name, Senior Commissioner	Cell: Office: Email:
County Emergency Management		Cell: Office: Email:
Sheriff		Cell: Office: Email:
Commissioners Court	Name, Precinct 1	Cell: Office: Email:
	Name, Precinct 2	Cell: Office: Email:

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Customizable Point
of Contact Sheet

County Department	Name	Contact Information
Maintenance Department		Cell: Office: Email:
Amateur Radio Operator (HAM)		Cell: Office: Email:
Add information here		Cell: Office: Email:
Add information here		Cell: Office: Email:
Emergency Services		Cell: Office: Email:
Local Law Enforcement		Cell: Office: Email:
Local Fire Department		Cell: Office: Email:
Local Utility Services		Cell: Office: Email:
Local Emergency Medical Services		Cell: Office: Email:
Priority Telecom Services		Cell: Office: Email:
Add information here		Cell: Office: Email:

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Self-Reflection

Prompt:

Who would you contact in the event this particular incident occurs?

Document your answer if you know it.

Paper supply shortage

Phishing attack with successful malicious access to network

Election worker targeted after doxxing event

Misinformation or disinformation campaigns

NWS has issued a flood warning that impacts several of your polling places



Best Practices and Recommendations

- **Form a Local Election Security Working Group**
- **Maintain current points of contact and contact information**
 - [P.A.C.E. Communication Contact Sheet](#)
 - Our office sent out our own [County Election Security PACE Contact Survey](#) on Apr. 1, 2026
 - Approximately 50% of counties have responded (*it's not too late!*)
- **Develop and routinely review your office's Written Information Security Plan**
 - Follow the Election Security Best Practices
- **Reach out to your contacts now with:**
 - Your name and title
 - Next election and important dates
 - Benchmark meetings (even if you don't have anything new)



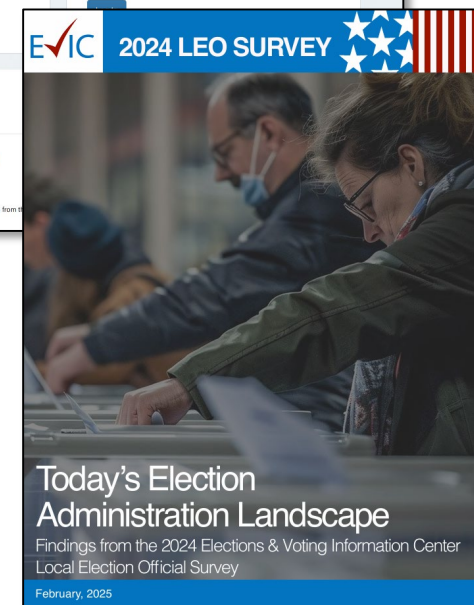
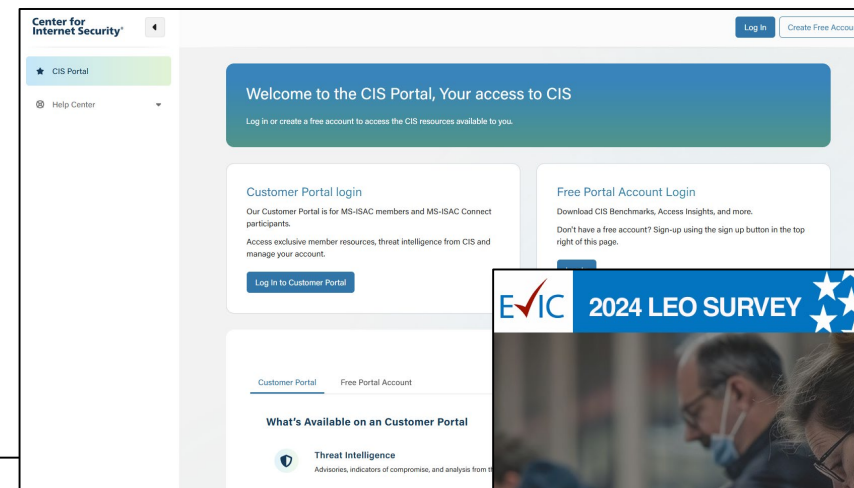
Resources and More Information

- **Tools and Resources**

- [MS-ISAC/EI-ISAC Membership Registration](#)
- [CIS Portal for MS-ISAC Members](#)
- [P.A.C.E. Communication Contact Sheet](#)

- **References**

- [2024 Local Election Official \(LEO\) Survey, Elections & Voting Information Center at Reed College](#)
- [“Here's how election officials have boosted security since 2020s threats of violence”, PBS](#)
- Agency websites linked throughout this presentation





Available Support



WEBINARS



TRAINING



RESOURCES

elections@sos.texas.gov

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