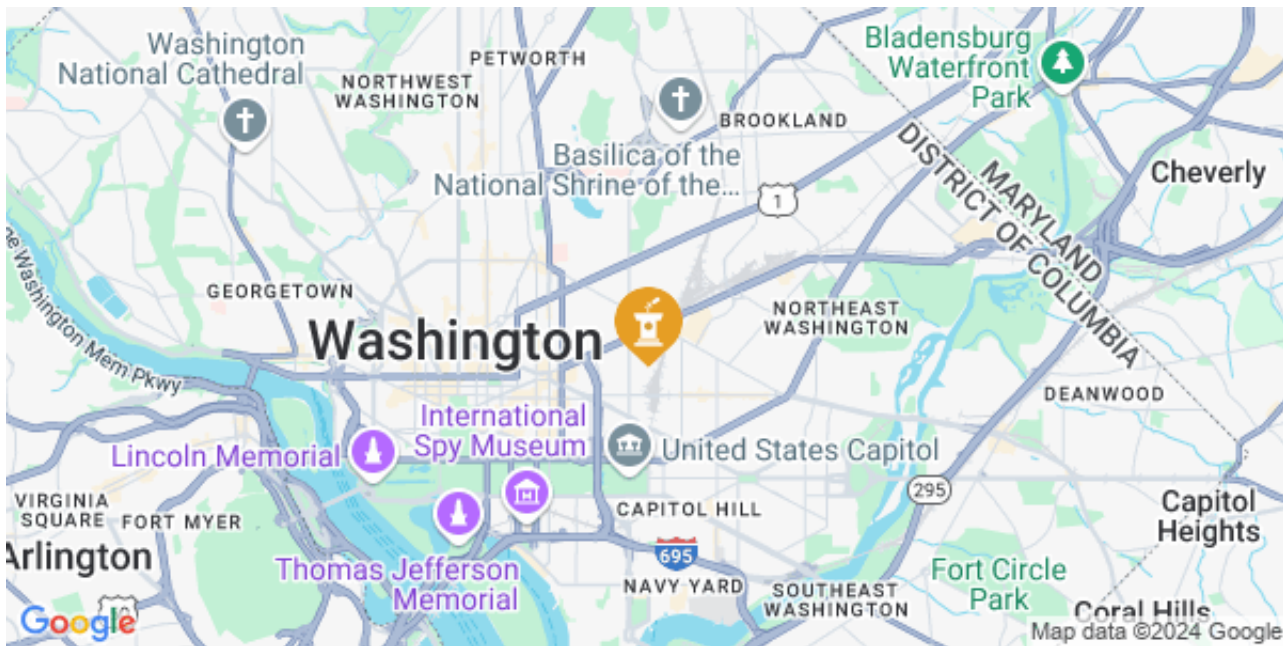




Politics



05

NOV
5:50 UTC

USA Tactical: Presidential, congressional elections scheduled to be held nationwide from 06:00-21:00 (local time) on November 5; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation

- Presidential elections to determine the next President and Vice President will be held nationwide between 06:00 (local time) and 21:00 on November 5. Nominees for President and Vice President are Donald Trump and James David Vance from the Republican Party and current Vice President Kamala Harris and Tim Walz for the Democratic Party, respectively. Other presidential candidates include Chase Oliver of the Libertarian Party, Jill Stein of the Green Party, and independent candidate Cornel West. The 435 representatives of the House of Representatives and 34 of the 100 seats in the Senate will also be voted.
- October 24 reports indicate that approximately 94,000 polling stations will be established. In addition, reports indicate that over 75 million voters have already cast their ballots in early voting processes, either in person or by mail, as of November 3.
- According to October 30 statements, the Major County Sheriffs' Association of America (MCSA), the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) and the Major Cities Chiefs' Association (MCCA) have strengthened security measures and law enforcement preparedness across the country to ensure optimal response to any incidents during the election day. Per local reports, this comes on the heels of embedded efforts by local intelligence agencies to establish platforms to share real-time information on any significant tactics or trends that constitute a credible risk on November 5.
- Besides, the Department of Justice announced on November 1 that it will monitor election law

compliance in 86 jurisdictions in 27 states on Election Day. Some of these states include Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. More details are available [here](#).

Source: [Federal Election Commission \(FEC\)](#)

Assessments & Forecast

1. The elections have been highly contested, with the electoral period marked by intense polarization between the Republican and Democratic candidates amid heightened sentiments by the public over multiple issues, including the Israel-Gaza conflict, climate crisis, immigration, LGBTQ+ rights, and reproductive rights among others. This divide has been highlighted by a surge in protests by various organizations across the country, including major cities such as New York City, Seattle, Chicago, and Washington, DC among others, in recent months. Simultaneously, there has been a rise in misinformation and disinformation tactics by both domestic actors as well as foreign actors, particularly China, Iran, and Russia, via AI-generated deep fakes and doctored photos on social media over said controversial issues, voting procedures and electoral processes, and misleading narratives regarding Trump and Harris to undermine trust in the democratic process.
2. **FORECAST:** Considering recent protest and social media trends, elevated sentiments of the public, and an increase in misinformation and disinformation tactics, the overall protest activity in support of and to denounce presidential candidates, Harris and Trump, is expected to remain heightened on November 5 and over the following days. These protests also have the potential to intersect over related issues, such as immigration policy linked to Trump or the Israel-Gaza conflict in relation to Harris. On November 5, these protests will likely remain small-to-medium in scale and occur near main squares, government buildings, and polling stations in major cities such as Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, Seattle, Portland, and Washington, DC. While protests have generally transpired peacefully in recent months, there is a potential for demonstrations on election day to escalate into small-scale unrest in the form of attempts to vandalize poll booths or intimidate voters or supporters of opposing candidates as well as altercations between protesters and law enforcement officers. This risk will be particularly higher during demonstrations organized by far-right extremist groups such as Proud Boys or Oath Keepers or far-left extreme groups such as Antifa.
3. **FORECAST:** Furthermore, on Election Day, a substantial increase in social media posts denouncing fraud or hacking of voting booths can be expected, with similar tactics used during the midterm elections. For instance, during the mid-term elections in 2022, social media posts wrongly linked a pre-election testing glitch in Arizona to election fraud. These are liable to prompt small-scale sit-in protests and temporary sloganeering near voting centers where such allegations have been made.
4. **FORECAST:** In addition, as witnessed in the 2022 mid-term elections and 2020 presidential elections, and as reiterated by authorities, the possibility of poll watchers and election observers with ties to extremist groups resorting to intimidatory tactics on election day. These tactics are likely to include physical and verbal harassment of voters and election officials and even attempts to tamper with voting machines. This is especially likely in swing states such as Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin where tensions remain elevated among voters and extremist groups regarding the viability of the electoral processes.
5. **FORECAST:** With authorities expected to be heavily bolstered and establish security cordons and barriers, police are expected to immediately stop any escalation in protests. Should protests escalate, police will use crowd control measures, such as water cannons and tear gas, and carry out mass arrests. Regardless of protests, disruptions to vehicular and pedestrian traffic are expected in the vicinity of the polling stations in major cities nationwide on November 5. Further, congestion on public transportation is anticipated in urban areas.
6. **FORECAST:** With ballot-counting starting on November 5 itself, demonstrations and rallies can be expected near watch parties or state capitols nationwide including Washington DC during the night hours on November 5 and throughout November 6 and the coming days. Considering the online propaganda of “stolen elections”, a Harris win is likely to prompt protests by Trump supporters

and far-right groups. Moreover, delays in ballot counting in swing states such as in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, which are hotly contested by Trump and Harris, are also likely to prompt small-scale protests by said groups. The longer it takes for the results to be made public, the more allegations of fraud and conspiracy hypotheses are likely to spread. Meanwhile, a Trump win is likely to prompt protests by human rights organizations, Democrats, and supporters of Harris over the coming days. Regardless, these protests are likely to be small-to-medium scale and have a moderate potential to escalate into unrest in the form of vandalism of government buildings and scuffles between protestors and police. However, large-scale unrest as seen by far-right extremist groups following the 2020 elections is unlikely considering the overall decline in activity by these groups.

Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing, in the USA on November 5 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance near political establishments, gatherings, and voting centers during and immediately after elections as a general precaution due to the latent potential for unrest between opposing groups, police, or security incidents driven by different factors.
2. Allot for traffic disruptions in the vicinity of the polling stations and potential protests.
3. If alerted to suspicious activity inform authorities immediately.
4. If a potential shooting or similar incident manifests, it is advised to leave the area immediately, if possible, or take shelter at a secure location.
5. Businesses, especially those in critical sectors such as health, telecommunications, energy, transport, and technology, are advised to consider enhanced cyber-threat management tools due to the latent threat of cyberattacks linked to foreign influence campaigns.