

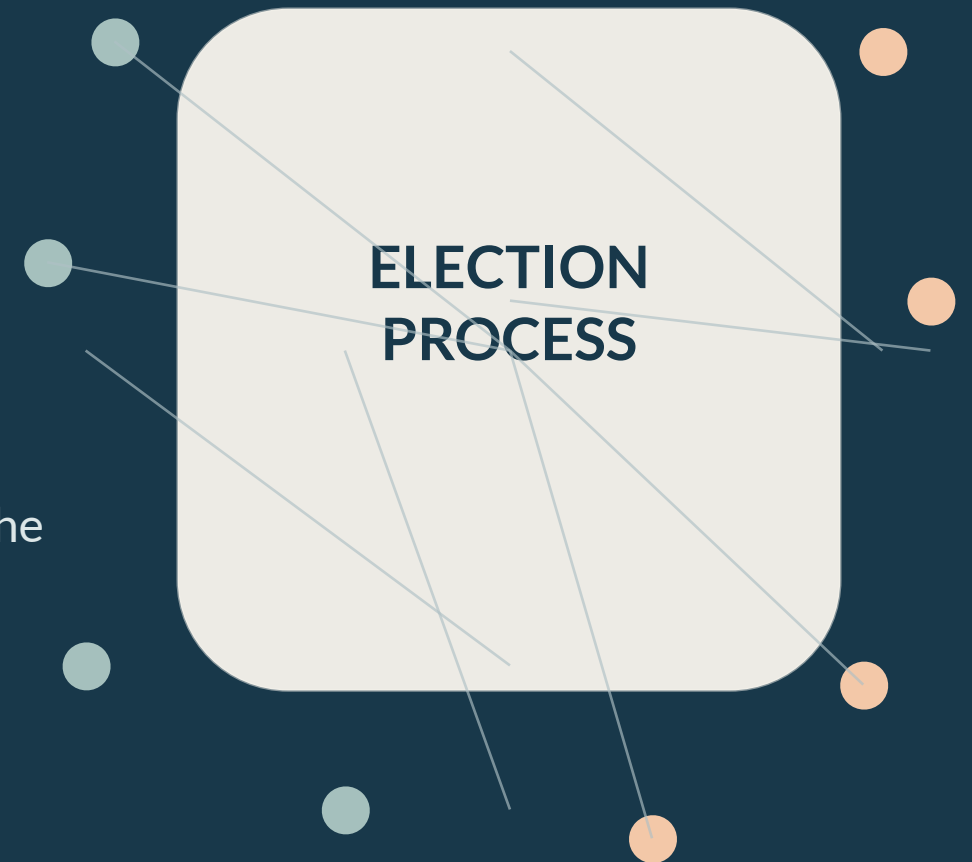
60 DAYS 6 THINGS

What civil society can do now

A nonpartisan briefing for protecting the environment around the election process under pressure



Working briefing v1.4



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Civil society does not run elections.

Our job is to strengthen the environment in which election workers have to succeed.

Election officials & poll workers
run the process



Civil society
supports the conditions around it



The public
can recognize normal complexity without panic

Three ways the six moves help

UNDERSTANDABLE

People know what the process actually looks like.

LESS COMBUSTIBLE

Rumor, outrage and fear find less easy kindling.

MORE JUDGMENT

People can verify, reconsider and act without being driven only by group pressure.

***A hard, compact log burns readily when surrounded by kindling.
Civil society's first obligation is not to become the kindling.***

01 Help people understand how elections actually work

The first task is orientation: help people recognize what normal looks like before they encounter it under pressure.

- Explain what happens from voter check-in through counting and certification.
- Show why procedures differ by state, county and country - and why some results take longer.
- Point people to official election offices and established local reporting before confusion starts.
- Help people recognize routine complexity: provisional ballots, close margins, corrections, recounts and challenges.

Awareness is not “doing nothing.”

Knowing what normal looks like makes genuine irregularities easier to notice - and ordinary procedures harder to turn into conspiracy.

Protects against: normal delays, corrections or procedures being spun into “something shady is going on.”

Make room now for people to reconsider without losing belonging

This is the one move on this list that only civil society can do.

People do not make political judgments on a blank sheet of paper.

Choices are entangled with family, friendship, congregation, workplace and community. When doubts begin, the obstacle may be less “What do I know?” than “What will it cost me to say this out loud?”

“What would make it safer for someone here to tell us what they are actually seeing now?”

- Ask what they are noticing; let uncertainty stand.
- Do not demand an apology for previous choices.
- Do not turn private reconsideration into recruitment or a public declaration.

Protects against: people feeling they must stay with a political position simply to keep their friends, family or place in the group.

Make the process - and the people who hold it - visible before pressure arrives

Visibility plus commitment: make the existing process easier to see, and easier for its responsible officials to stand on.

VISIBILITY

Before Election Day, people should know:

- who administers, counts, observes and certifies;
- who is responsible for order at each polling place;
- what happens with close margins, recounts and challenges;
- which decisions belong to local officials, boards, courts or state authorities.

COMMITMENT

Create occasions for responsible officials to say, before pressure arrives:

**“These are the procedures.
This is my responsibility.
I will follow them.”**

A public commitment gives officials and the public a reference point when pressure arrives.

Protects against: officials being isolated, bullied, or accused of “making it up as they go.”

Prepare to support - not interfere with - the people running the election

Civil society should make election workers' jobs easier, not add another layer of people trying to direct the process.

SUPPORT

- Help recruit into authorized poll-worker or observer roles where officials ask for them.
- Offer practical support - transportation, meals, childcare, accessibility, legal, technical or logistical help - when requested.
- Publicly affirm ordinary election work as legitimate public service.

DON'T ADD CHAOS

- No unofficial security around polling places.
- No untrained volunteers in operational spaces.
- No confrontations with voters, observers or workers.
- When something appears wrong, use established reporting and escalation channels.

A sufficient number of trained, calm people in authorized roles makes disruption harder to exploit because they are less likely to be pulled away from procedure.

Protects against: well-meaning people adding confusion to a situation that already has enough of it.

05 Refuse to become an amplifier - and keep your own record

Information discipline is a civic responsibility.

HOLD YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE

Know what you can stand behind.

CHECK BEFORE YOU CARRY

Verify before repeating or acting.

WATCH THE UNANNOUNCED CHANGES

Notice when instructions, procedures, stories or evidence shift without explanation.

LOG THE ROUTE TO CREDIBILITY

Record where a claim came from, what was checked, and why it was trusted.

LOG, DON'T POST

A private contemporaneous record can help establish what happened. A public feed can amplify uncertainty before facts are known.

Protects against: rumors, outrage and half-checked claims doing the work of disruption for free.

06 Keep civic capacity in reserve for Election Day and the days after

The civic effort should not culminate when polls close. That may be when the hardest period begins.

- Arrange shifts. Identify backup leaders and spokespeople.
- Set alternative communication methods before primary systems fail.
- Know who can accurately explain procedures and who has legal or technical expertise.
- Prepare trusted local voices to speak calmly during uncertainty.
- Plan practical support for election workers through extended counting and certification.

Normalize these distinctions before pressure arrives:

**UNCERTAINTY ≠
ILLEGITIMACY**

DELAY ≠ FAILURE

TAKING TIME ≠ NO PROCESS

Protects against: burning ourselves out before the hardest stretch even begins.

Increase the number of places where democratic behavior is still happening.

MAKE IT UNDERSTANDABLE

More people know how the real process works.

MAKE IT LESS COMBUSTIBLE

Fewer people automatically amplify provocation, rumor or fear.

MAKE JUDGMENT POSSIBLE

More people can reconsider, verify, wait for evidence and stay in relationship while disagreeing.

This work looks less dramatic than confrontation. That is part of its strength.

Use it locally. Test it against experience. Pass it onward.

<https://ngo-academy.com/project/60-days/>

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