

- Election
- Infrastructure
- Initiative

## Hosting a Tour of your Elections Office: A nonpartisan guide for Elections Officials

One way to help build public trust, establish relationships, and educate policymakers on election administration in their district is by inviting them for a tour. A 30-minute tour can give policymakers a firsthand look at the people, security measures, and bipartisan checks and balances behind local elections. This document contains nonpartisan best practices about hosting office tours that you can learn from to help with scheduling and hosting in your jurisdiction.

### Who should I invite to tour my office?

- Anyone that plays a part in your office's budget process or has a role in making policy governing election administration is a great place to start. That can include:
  - County or local fiscal officers
  - Supervisors or Commissioners
  - State legislators
  - Members the United States House or Senate

### How should I invite them to tour my office?

#### Step 1: Send an Invitation

Find the official's district office or scheduling contact on their official government website. Email the scheduler or call the office and ask who handles local visit requests.

For US Senate or House Members:

- We recommend calling their district office, and asking to speak to the scheduler. To find your representative(s) contact info, you can check out the following links
  - [Senate website](#)
  - [House website](#)
- Aim for times of year when Congress is in recess. August is often a long working break.

**Keep your request simple. Here is some sample language that you can (and should) adapt for your jurisdiction:**

We'd like to invite [Official] and their staff for a 30-minute tour of our election office. We'll provide a firsthand look at how elections are administered locally, including the security measures and bipartisan checks and balances that protect the process. We're happy to work around the official's schedule.

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Don't forget to include your name, title, jurisdiction, contact information, office address, and a few possible dates. If you don't hear back, follow up in about a week via email, or give the office a call.

## Step 2: Host your Tour

As you prepare to host your office tour, here are some suggested things to identify:

- ☐ 1-2 local facts that put your work in perspective
- ☐ 2-3 security safeguards to show
- ☐ 2-3 bipartisan/multipartisan checks and balances to highlight
- ☐ Spaces, equipment, or processes that make those safeguards tangible
- ☐ Areas of your office that would benefit from election infrastructure funding
- ☐ Any materials from your office you would like the policymaker to leave with

After thinking those through, construct an agenda to fit your tour into 30 minutes. Every office is different, so you can tailor the visit around what you most want policymakers to understand. Before the tour, be sure to brief staff on the agenda and key messages you want to convey to the policymaker. Here is a sample agenda that you can use as a starting point as you develop your own:

- **Welcome, Introductions, and providing local context (5 minutes)**
  - ◆ Introduce your team and share 1-2 statistics or facts that put your work in perspective: voters served, ballots processed, polling places, cost per voter, or election workers.
- **Walkthrough of Security Safeguards (10 minutes)**
  - ◆ Demonstrate 2–3 safeguards such as physical security, equipment testing, chain of custody, ballot reconciliation, cybersecurity, or audits.
  - ◆ **Example message:** *Election security is layered. Multiple safeguards protect the process from beginning to end. Additional state/federal/local investments will improve [security or efficiency] in [this] way.*
- **Bipartisanship + Checks and Balances (8 minutes)**
  - ◆ Show how your jurisdiction uses bipartisan/multipartisan teams, two-person procedures, observers, documentation, public testing, canvassing, audits, or other verification processes.
  - ◆ **Example message:** *Elections rely on verification and checks and balances—not trust in any one person or system.*
- **Questions, Connecting, Next Steps (7 minutes)**
  - ◆ Leave time for questions and ask:
    - “What would be helpful for you or your staff to better understand how elections are administered locally?”
  - ◆ Give the official and staff a direct contact for future questions.

## Key Tips

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- ☐ **Be visual.** Show real processes, spaces, and equipment.
- ☐ **Be nonpartisan.** Focus on administration, not politics.
- ☐ **Be concise.** A few memorable examples beat a long presentation.
- ☐ **Keep the door open.** Become a trusted resource for accurate, firsthand information about local election administration.

### Step 3: Be sure to Follow Up

- Send a thank you email to the policymaker. You can also use this as an opportunity to include any information not provided during your meeting, resources mentioned, or information requested.
- You can also send out a press release to inform the public of the visit. This is a great way to build public trust, and show the cooperation between election officials and policymakers. You can find a [sample press release to get you started here](#).
- Continue the relationship over time! Sending updates or relevant information to the policymaker is a great way to keep up a connection.