

Principles for Trusted Elections

The American people expect their leaders to play by the rules.

Free, fair, and secure elections are the cornerstone of America's democratic republic. Our government's legitimacy relies upon the "consent of the governed," expressed through elections. We stand at a pivotal moment for our nation, as misinformation, threats of violence, and interference undermine faith in our democratic system and place our national security at risk. Amidst these efforts to sow discord around our elections, even poll workers have become targets of violence and intimidation. **This is not how elections are supposed to work, especially in the nation that invented modern democracy.** While these dynamics have the potential to undermine the very foundation of our government, more and more Americans are standing up for our democracy. They are looking to their leaders to do the same.

The *Principles for Trusted Elections* define five core doctrines of democratic elections



Honest Process

Cooperate with election officials, adhere to rules and regulations, and refrain from knowingly propagating falsehoods about the electoral process.



Civil Campaign

Encourage a peaceful election atmosphere during the pre-election, polling, counting, and post-election periods. Denounce any attempt to intimidate, harass, threaten or incite violence against opponents, their supporters, and election workers.



Secure Voting

Respect voters' freedom to exercise their lawful rights to register and vote, free from interference, obstruction, or intimidation.



Responsible Oversight

Encourage political parties and others to train poll-watchers on the election process and appropriate roles and behaviors, responsibilities, and obligations.



Trusted Outcomes

Make claims of election irregularities in accordance with the law and acknowledge the legitimacy of the outcomes after the results have been certified and all contestations decided.

The Principles for Trusted Elections and The Carter Center

Working in partnership with the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation and Team Democracy, The Carter Center is proud to have promulgated and to promote the

Principles for Trusted Elections. Jason Carter – grandson of Democratic U.S. President Jimmy Carter and Chairman of The Carter Center Board of Trustees – co-chairs the Steering Committee for the Principles for Trusted Elections with Mike Ford – son of Republican U.S. President Gerald Ford.



As members of presidential families, we were raised to believe in civility and integrity – even in the face of disagreement. Former presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford were leaders of different political parties. But they each worked across partisan lines and were role models for fair play, and ultimately became close friends despite having been political rivals. By advancing the Principles, we elevate values our two families have long stood for.

-- Principles Steering Committee Co-Chairs Jason Carter, grandson of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, a Democrat, and Mike Ford, son of former U.S. President Gerald Ford, a Republican