What do you need to think about when you see images and videos about elections online?

**Images and videos are often manipulated or altered.**

With technology advancements, it is very easy for people to edit or alter images and video about everything, including elections. Editing can include cropping images to exclude what is happening in the rest of the frame, cutting video so you do not know the whole story, or even creating deepfakes, which is when a video is digitally altered to change the face or body of an individual. This can lead to misunderstandings and the spread of false information.

**Images and videos are often taken out of context or are not current.**

Sometimes election laws and processes can change due to factors like the type of election, legislation, court decisions, or technology upgrades. Always make sure the information you are looking at is from the current election. Also, remember you do not always see what happens before or after an image is taken or a video begins or ends. Context is important, especially when it comes to elections. Election administration is often unfamiliar to the general public and what may look abnormal to you may be part of the safe and secure election process governed by laws and procedures.

**Images and videos of the election process can be difficult to understand.**

Do not make assumptions about the images and videos you see online about elections. Elections are complicated and governed by laws and procedures. You may not know what you are looking at if you have only experienced the election process as a voter. Always contact your state or local election officials to get context and explanation.

**There are easy tools like reverse image search that can help identify the origin of images or video content.**

Utilize simple and free ways to find the original source of the image or video. This is a great way to assess the credibility of visual media about elections and other topics.

**Be aware of how changes in technology affect what we see.**

Technology improvements will continue to make it harder and harder to assess reliability of images and videos about elections. Manipulated images and video will become more and more advanced, especially with the growth of artificial intelligence. It’s important to be informed about technology advancements.

For reliable information about elections where you live, talk to your election officials.

Find your state or territorial election office at www.NASED.org / @NASEDOrg

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This tip sheet is created as part of a partnership between the National Association for Media Literacy Education (@MediaLiteracyEd) and the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED) to provide tools to assess information about elections.