



CORPORATE RISK SERVICES

Situation Alert

U.S. Election Update - Protest Expected

NOV. 6, 2020





The 2020 U.S. General Election process is ongoing. Currently, Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden is projected to have secured 264 electoral votes, and President Donald Trump is projected to have secured 214 (neither having reached the necessary 270 yet). States that have not yet been called are Alaska, Georgia, Nevada, North Carolina and Pennsylvania. The current vote counts in Georgia, Nevada, and Pennsylvania are all currently in Biden's favor, and if any of these states are declared for him, he would reach the necessary 270 votes. There are a number of extremely close races, particularly in Georgia where Biden is leading by just over 1,000 votes with 99% of votes having been counted.*

Both candidates have issued multiple statements, which match their previous stances: Biden emphasized that every vote needs to be counted before either party declares victory, and President Trump alleged that election fraud has taken place, stating "frankly, we did win this election [...] this is a major fraud on our nation." Moreover, Trump added, "we want all voting to stop."

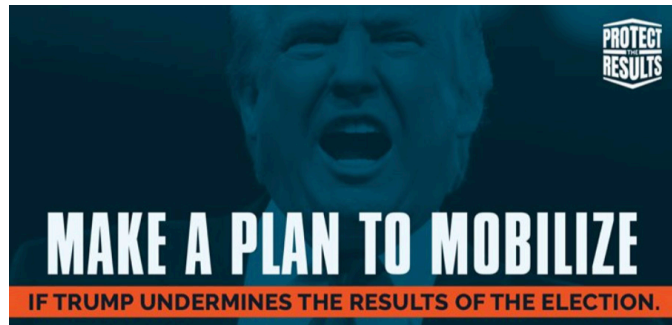
President Trump's campaign has also filed lawsuits in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Georgia, and Nevada. These lawsuits are in addition to already existing Republican legal challenges in Pennsylvania. Furthermore, with several states showing tight margins, it is very likely that recounts will be demanded in one or multiple states (most likely Georgia, Wisconsin, and potentially Pennsylvania.) Recounts are commonly demanded when margins between votes are close.

Protesters have already begun to demonstrate on behalf of both candidates, and a 'Protect the Results' campaign is attempting to coordinate nationwide protests to 'activate.'

Analysis

While protests have occurred in recent days, G4S has identified a significant amount of online discussion regarding protesting during this coming weekend, including this evening of Nov. 6, but particularly on Saturday, Nov. 7.

G4S assesses that it is relatively likely that media outlets will call the election for Democratic candidate Joe Biden today or in the coming days, with Biden needing to secure 6 more projected electoral votes. In this event, G4S further assesses that President Trump would almost certainly continue the aforementioned legal challenges and demand recounts. Should this occur, the protest risk is assessed as increasing, with higher numbers of protests, larger crowds, and an increased risk of violence. Although anti-Trump demonstrations have occurred in recent days, coordinated protest movements – notably the '[Protect the Results](#)' campaign, which seeks to coordinate local protests nationwide – have emphasized calm while votes continue to be counted. If the election is called for Biden and Trump then pursues his challenges, this would likely cause coordinated groups to 'activate'. Additionally, it is very likely that Trump supporters would increase their activity if the election is called for Biden.



There is an increased risk of violence at any protests where counter-protesters are present. While violent unrest can occur anywhere, G4S considers the following cities at higher risk: Washington (D.C.), New York City (NY), Portland (OR), Seattle (WA), Los Angeles (CA) and Philadelphia (PA). Protests are also more likely in counties where local election results are contested and/or there are legal challenges, state capitals and large population centers, and any locations that have seen a high number of protests since May 2020. Within cities, protesters tend to gather in downtown areas and particularly in front of government buildings, public parks and other landmarks. Larger cities tend to have locations that protesters reliably choose to protest at.

*These numbers are based on calls by the Associated Press, Fox News, and others, which have called Arizona for Biden. There is not yet consensus on this call, with news outlets including CNN still stating that Arizona is too close to call. Not including Arizona, Biden would have 253 votes at this time.



In addition to the risk of protests, G4S also warns that there is a risk of isolated acts of violence (for example, vehicular rammings targeting a crowd of supporters for one candidate.) There are also white supremacist discussions online that blame African American voters for Biden's possible victory, including threats of violence. Although it should be noted that threats against African Americans are made relatively frequently in these types of forums, there is nevertheless a risk of white supremacist violence (based on current discussions, and recent precedence.)

In addition to the aforementioned factors (notably the election being called for Joe Biden), further factors that could dramatically increase the protest risk include:

- Progress in any formal investigation into fraud
- Any actions that could impact ballots being counted
- On a local level, any new allegations of police violence (including if police response to a protest is perceived by a local community as having caused a new death/serious injury)
- Any statement by either candidate perceived as condoning people to take action

This last point in particular is assessed as a factor that could dramatically increase the risk of violence. For example, if President Trump posts a statement on Twitter similar to those in April 2020 ("LIBERATE MINNESOTA" and "LIBERATE MICHIGAN"), this would increase the risk that his supporters may take actions and that the scale of counter-protests would increase, regardless of Trump's intent with any such tweets.

Factors that would decrease the risk of protests include:

- Most significantly: President Trump withdrawing his legal challenges (this is considered very unlikely, particularly with voting margins being so close in several states)
- Individuals and organizations that are popular with Republican voters coming out against President Trump's allegations of election fraud;
- Significantly unfavorable weather conditions (although this would most likely only postpone planned protests.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Local businesses should make themselves aware of planned protests. Protests planned as part of the aforementioned 'Count Every Vote' campaign can be found listed at <https://protecttheresults.com/>.

The following security procedures are specific actions that businesses are recommended to take in the short-term:

- Facilities near planned protest sites in **Washington, D.C., Portland (OR), Seattle (WA), New York City (NY), Los Angeles (CA) and Philadelphia (PA) should consider closing these locations** at least two hours before planned protest times, and appraise the security situation prior to re-opening. These locations are highlighted due to either a record of frequent or a record of violent unrest in the past half year.
- Facilities near other planned protest locations should plan for possible delays and possible restricted access, and should monitor the local situation closely.
- Businesses should consider **closing locations after dark** in locations that have active protests in the vicinity.
- Businesses should **ensure that all alarms and smoke detectors are functioning, fire extinguishers are available, and exit doors are clear and working**. Emergency response may be delayed due to road closures near and staffing resources during any large-scale protests.
- **Transportation routes should be reviewed, and contingency plans made** with alternative backup routes, particularly if the primary route comes near planned protest routes. Where possible, G4S recommends rescheduling deliveries and the movement of goods through major cities impacted by protests during business hours.
- Businesses should **review emergency procedures with staff members**.
- **Additional security measures are strongly recommended for locations that have experienced recent or prolonged violent unrest.** Contact G4S for more details.



CORPORATE RISK SERVICES

G4S SECURITY RISK OPERATIONS CENTER

For questions regarding this report or for immediate assistance, please call:

G4S Security Risk Operations Center: (866) 604-1226

Alternate Phone: (866) 943-8892

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