VOTER ALERT: DON'T BE FOOLED BY DEEPFAKES

WHAT IS A DEEPFAKE?

Deepfakes are fake or manipulated photos, videos, or audio that appear real, but do not represent actual events. Created using generative AI technologies, they are part of a broader threat of false information designed to mislead and confuse the public. With the presidential election approaching, **deepfakes** may be used to spread false or misleading information about candidates, political parties, the voting process, voting security, or your right to vote.

For example, earlier this year, thousands of New Hampshire voters received underline phone calls of President Joe Biden's deepfaked voice encouraging them not to vote in the primary election—a message he never recorded or endorsed. And last year, underline deepfake photos of former President Donald Trump interspersed with real photos and footage were circulated to damage his reputation.
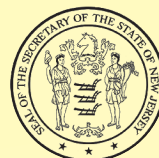
WHERE MIGHT I SEE A DEEPFAKE?

You may see deepfakes appear in social media posts, text messages, emails, calls, or voicemails. Deepfakes may appear to come from candidates or campaigns in attempts to influence or interfere with local, state, or federal elections. You may even receive deepfakes from family or friends, who may share them without realizing they are fake. Deepfakes are often used in conjunction with the following types of false information:

Misinformation, Disinformation, and Malinformation

- **MISINFORMATION:** False information shared without harmful intent—people might share it thinking it's true.

- **DISINFORMATION:** Deliberately false information spread with the intent to deceive or mislead.

- **MALINFORMATION:** Information based on reality, but used maliciously to inflict harm on a person, organization, or country.

These tactics are used alongside deepfake technology to distort the truth, undermine trust, and interfere with the electoral process.

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HOW TO SPOT A DEEPFAKE

Many deepfakes are easily created with artificial intelligence tools to look legitimate, making it difficult to recognize manipulated content just by looking or listening to it. When you see content related to an election, remember to **WATCH** out to avoid being duped by deepfakes:

W — **WAIT BEFORE SHARING.**
If you are not sure, do not share!

A — **ASK QUESTIONS.**
Does the content make sense? Does it seem off?

T — **TRACE THE SOURCE.**
Who sent the content? Where did it originate?

C — **CHECK OFFICIAL**, nonpartisan election sources for trusted information. Research suspicious content by checking credible independent fact-checking sites, such as Politifact or AP Fact Check.

H — **HELP** by reporting possible election misinformation to *nj.elections@sos.nj.gov*.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE NOT SURE

Only use official sources for election information.

- Trusted information about New Jersey voting and elections can be found in the New Jersey Voter Information Portal. **You can also call 1-877-NJ-VOTER (1-877-658-6837)** with any voting questions, or contact your local County Election Officials.

- You can also find official information about the election and voting from the U.S. government's Voting and Elections Page.

You can stop the spread of deepfakes! One way to stem the spread is to not share any election information unless it is from an official source and has been fact-checked.

WHERE CAN I REPORT HARMFUL DEEPFAKES?

Deepfakes that undermine the voting and election process, harm voters, or otherwise impact your vote should be reported. You can report potential election-related deepfakes to *nj.elections@sos.nj.gov*.

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