



## **Misinformation and Disinformation in 2024 Election Process: Learning How to Identify and Best Practices for Responding**

About 1 in 4 Americans has disabilities, yet until recently candidates have not included disability as a part of their policy platforms, prioritized accessibility, or plain-language/easy-read content. There is hope though. In recent election cycles, awareness of disability issues has become more common thanks to the work of leaders within the disability rights movement, coalitions like Disability Vote California, along with Voting and Language Access Committees, and other disability focused organizations have been a part of a collaborative effort to make the voting process more accessible.

Talking about politics can be confusing, stressful, and frustrating at times. With the limited amount of information available in plain language and easy-read formats, it can be challenging to fact check political parties and candidates who make statements and claims meant to get emotional responses like fear and mistrust out of voters. Add in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to create images and text that are manipulated, along with misinformation campaigns designed to mislead or influence voters can make it hard to make an informed choice or talk about how the choices we make when we vote will impact everyday lives. It can be difficult to know what election information is credible and what information is created to generate emotional response (usually anger and/or fear). Disability Vote California would like to share a few tips and resources to help you in your decision making process. We recognize that this is not a complete list of tips and resources, just a starting point.



## **Definitions**

Misinformation: incorrect or misleading information

Disinformation: false information deliberately (meant to) and often covertly spread (as by the planting of rumors) in order to influence public opinion or obscure (hide) the truth

Reliable Source: A place that provides non-partisan, up-to-date information about the electoral process and voting options. Some examples would be county elections websites, government agencies (like the Secretary of State), Disability Vote California, Disability Rights California, etc.

Trusted Messenger: A person who a community/identity group finds to be credible and reliable for information.



## **Tips**

**Tip 1:** Attend candidate forums, and informational sessions organized by nonprofits that you trust. Prepare any questions you have before the event and ask them if there is time.

**Tip 2:** If something sounds hard to believe or questionable, do your own research on the issue, topic, proposition, or candidate that you are voting on. Check with nonprofit/nonpartisan news sources, local county elections offices, the California Secretary of State, organizations that you are connected with (like unions), or Disability Rights California (or other trusted messenger/source).

**Tip 3:** Take a deep breath when you notice something is causing you to have a strong reaction, whether it is sadness, happiness, anger or fear. Think about why you are feeling that way before responding or taking action.

**Tip 4:** Have conversations with your friends, family, and/or social groups, about the choices that are on the ballot.



## **Resources and Fact Sheets**

[Propublica How to Spot and Fight Election Misinformation in 2020](#)

[The News Literacy Project Misinfo Infographic 2022](#)

[Common Cause: The Harms of Election Disinformation Report](#)

[NPR: June 2024 How Misinformation is Targeted at Latinos](#)

[Brennan Center For Justice: Detect and Guard Against AI Election Information](#)

[Colby College Misinformation and AI in the Election Cycle](#)

[Carter Center and McCain Institute May 2024 Disinformation Economy Report](#)

[Disability Rights California Myths on Mental Health and Gun Violence](#)