

DOJ Under Trump Seeks Extensive Voter Lists and Election System Access

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The Department of Justice (DOJ), under President Donald Trump's directive, has contacted at least six states to obtain comprehensive voter registration lists and access to voting equipment. This effort, tied to a renewed executive focus on election security, has raised both legal and political questions ahead of the 2026 midterm elections.

In recent weeks, DOJ officials have submitted formal requests to multiple states, seeking detailed information on how voter rolls are maintained, how noncitizen registrations are handled, and how voting machines are monitored and certified. In some cases, such as in Colorado, officials were asked to turn over full statewide voter databases. DOJ personnel also requested permission to inspect election hardware, prompting concern from local officials.

In Colorado, a consultant with ties to the Trump administration reportedly asked county clerks to allow access to voting equipment for independent examination. Republican County Clerk Carly Koppes rejected the outreach, citing legal barriers and security risks. She emphasized that allowing third-party access without proper authorization would be both unlawful and irresponsible.

Thus far, the DOJ has made similar inquiries in at least nine states, including Alaska, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Florida, and Colorado. While a few states have partially complied, most are still evaluating whether the requests are legally valid and constitutionally appropriate. Several Secretaries of state have expressed concern that the scope of the data, potentially including Social Security numbers and driver's license information, raises significant privacy issues.

Critics argue that the DOJ's move represents a dramatic shift from its traditional role of protecting voter access to a more aggressive posture that may undermine public confidence in state-run elections. Legal experts have also noted that the requests come close to federal overreach, potentially encroaching on state sovereignty in the administration of elections.

Supporters of the initiative, however, argue it is a necessary step to ensure the accuracy and integrity of voter rolls, particularly by identifying instances of duplicate or ineligible registrations. They say the effort complies with federal law and supports transparency and accountability in the electoral process.

As legal reviews unfold, a broader battle appears to be emerging between Washington and the states over control of election systems. With the 2026 midterms on the horizon, this conflict may become a defining issue in ongoing debates over voter integrity, states' rights, and the role of the federal government in election oversight.