**Guide for Collaborative Discussions on Election Disruption Preparedness**

**Introduction**

Effective collaboration between election officials and law enforcement is essential for creating a resilient relationship where both sides understand and support the other’s mission. Law enforcement must recognize the critical importance of maintaining election operations continuity despite potential disruptions. Concurrently, election officials should understand that law enforcement views election disruptions through the lens of public safety and criminality. By establishing predefined roles and fostering mutual understanding, both parties can efficiently support each other’s core mission objectives and ensure the electoral process's integrity while maintaining public safety.

**Key Areas for Discussion**

**1. Establishing Initial Meetings**

* Goal: Initiate dialogue to set the foundation for ongoing collaboration. Determine who should attend, including law enforcement, fire, and emergency management officials.
* Discussion Prompts:
  + What are the primary concerns for each party regarding election day disruptions?
  + How can we establish regular communication channels for updates and coordination?
  + Who will be the points of contact in each organization for election-related matters? (This is a critical step!)

**2. Formalizing Partnerships**

* Goal: Develop formal agreements outlining collaboration scope and guidelines.
* Discussion Prompts:
  + What should be included in a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to ensure a clear framework for cooperation?
  + How can we outline roles and responsibilities to avoid confusion during disruptions?
  + Are there existing agreements that we can use as a model?

**3. Joint Training and Exercises**

* Goal: Conduct joint training sessions to prepare for various disruption scenarios.
* Discussion Prompts:
  + What types of disruption scenarios should our joint training exercises focus on?
  + How frequently should we schedule these joint exercises to ensure readiness?
  + What resources or support can each party provide for these training sessions?

**4. Information Sharing**

* Goal: Ensure timely and accurate sharing of critical information.
* Discussion Prompts:
  + What information does each party need for the best outcomes given different types of election disruption scenarios?
  + How will we ensure the security and confidentiality of shared information?
  + What protocols can we put in place to facilitate effective information sharing during a crisis?

**5. Communication Protocols**

* Goal: Establish clear communication protocols for swift responses.
* Discussion Prompts:
  + What secure communication channels will we use during an emergency?
  + How can we maintain an up-to-date contact list for all relevant personnel?
  + What are the procedures for updating each other during a crisis?
  + Who has responsibilities in notifying the public during a crisis?

**6. Community Engagement**

* Goal: Build trust and cooperation between election officials, law enforcement, and the public.
* Discussion Prompts:
  + How can we engage the community to enhance overall preparedness?
  + What outreach efforts can we make to educate the public on the importance of election security?
  + How can we use media outlets effectively to provide timely and accurate information during a disruption?

**7. Understanding Laws and Regulations**

* Goal: Educate both parties on relevant laws and regulations pertaining to election-related activities.
* Discussion Prompts:
  + What are the specific state laws and regulations governing law enforcement and election activities in our jurisdiction?
  + How can we ensure that all parties are knowledgeable about these laws and their implications?
  + What resources or training can be provided to enhance understanding and compliance with these laws?

**Conclusion**

By proactively addressing potential threats and disruptions, election offices and law enforcement can mitigate risks, manage crises efficiently, and ensure elections proceed with minimal interruptions. Regular review and training of procedures are crucial for maintaining readiness and resilience. Ensure contact information for all points of contact is readily available and known during a crisis. This guide serves as a starting point for discussions and should be tailored to your jurisdiction's specific needs, ensuring adherence to all state and local laws.