## 2026 EO Comms Tracker - Month in Review: September 2026

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### OVERVIEW

September is the heart of fall-election preparation: National Voter Registration Day falls mid-month, mail ballots begin going out in many states, and voter-registration deadlines for the November general election start to close. In this brief, we report top-level insights from state and local election officials' communications across the platforms we track, and identify notable gaps between platform sharing and public engagement.

The analysis draws on the Election Officials Communications Tracker (EO Comms Tracker), a longitudinal dataset of 120,000+ social media posts from 1,700+ state and local election offices. For this brief, we pulled every post from tracked accounts for September 1–30, 2026, across eight platforms (Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, Threads, YouTube, LinkedIn, Bluesky, and TikTok), using the Civic Lens platform from our partner, the National Conference on Citizenship. ***Explore our data here***.

### TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ Local election offices lead in post activity, mostly concentrated on Facebook: 11,905 of 15,512 posts (76.7%) came from local/county accounts, versus 3,607 (23.3%) from state-level election authorities
- ➔ Posting volume for both state and local offices peaked around September 15 (National Voter Registration Day), the single highest-volume day of the month.
- ➔ Engagement was driven by a small number of high-performing posts on YouTube, which drew more combined engagement than the NVRD posting spike itself.
- ➔ Posts shared on Bluesky and Instagram also posted engagement spikes around NVRD and again in the final week of the month, suggesting those platforms carried a small number of posts that substantially outperformed the account's typical reach.
- ➔ Message content clustered around eight recurring voter-centric themes — registration deadlines, mail-ballot instructions, and status checks — with a smaller but consistent thread of posts on accessibility, transparency, and multilingual outreach.

## POSTING VOLUME: STATE VS. LOCAL

State and local election offices posted on very different scales this month. Local offices posted as many as ~585 times in a single day (September 15) across all tracked platforms combined, more than six times the state-level peak of ~94 posts on the same day.

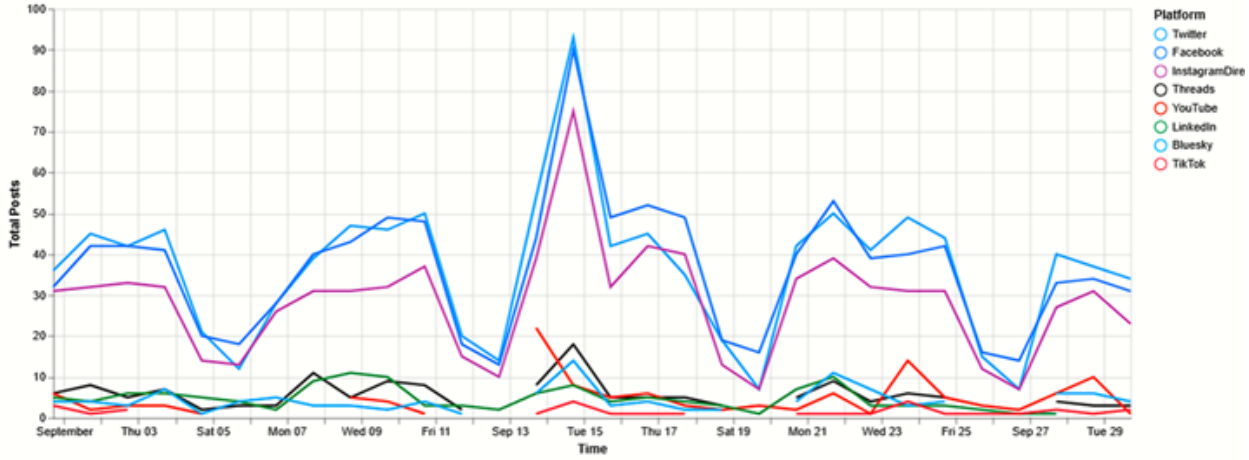


*Figure 1. State election officials' daily posting volume by platform, September 2026 (N = 3,607).*

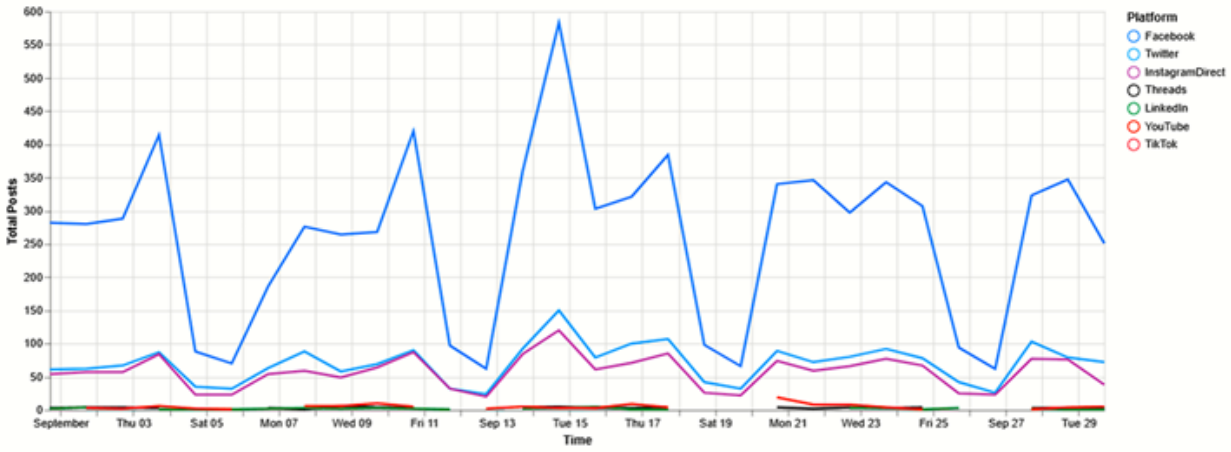


*Figure 2. Local election officials' daily posting volume by platform, September 2026 (N = 11,905).*

Both figures follow the same patterns: a mid-month peak around National Voter Registration Day (Sept. 15) followed by a smaller surge in the final week of September. Facebook and Twitter/X carried the large majority of volume at both office levels, consistent with prior Tracker findings; Instagram carried a meaningful secondary share, while Threads, YouTube, LinkedIn, Bluesky, and TikTok each contributed a smaller, steadier stream.

## WHAT DROVE ENGAGEMENT

Engagement did not track posting volume, which is consistent with what we have seen from previous cycles. The NVRD posting surge (Sept. 15) shows up as a real but secondary peak in the engagement series, overshadowed by two much larger YouTube spikes earlier in the month (Sept. 1–2 and Sept. 4) and a third YouTube spike later (around Sept. 23), each exceeding the engagement generated on NVRD itself.

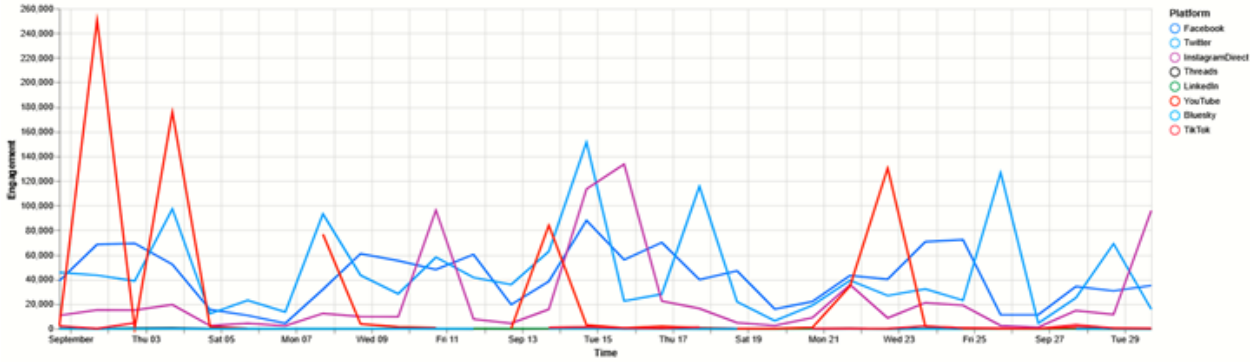


*Figure 3. Combined engagement (likes + shares + comments + views, platform-dependent) by platform, September 2026. Bright red line = YouTube.*

Short-form video appears to be the format driving these outlier days. The Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters' YouTube Shorts channel (@sccvote) — which posts brief voter-education and “make your vote count” clips — is a representative example of the kind of account-level content behind this pattern; several of its shorts fall within the tracked window.

***Why this matters for election offices***: a single well-produced short-form video can out-perform an entire week of routine text-and-link posts, which is worth testing deliberately rather than treating as incidental.

## WHAT OFFICIALS SAID: RECURRING THEMES

- ★ Across the month's voter-registration and mail-voting content, eight themes recur. Unlike the NVRD-specific brief, these were identified qualitatively from the month's posts rather than coded at scale, so no percentage breakdown is given here — each is illustrated with a representative example.
- ★ Voter registration deadlines — urgency tied to the approaching cutoff. Alachua County, FL Supervisor of Elections highlighted its October 5 deadline; South Carolina Votes (SC Election Commission) flagged two remaining deadlines.
- ★ Mail voting information — ballot-request deadlines and process instructions. Palm Beach County, FL Supervisor of Elections confirmed ballots had gone out and set an October 22 request deadline; Montgomery County, MD Elections

Board reminded voters that ballots are mailed only to those on the permanent mail-voting list.

- ★ Accessibility features — Merced County, CA Registrar explained accessibility features built into ballot return envelopes, aimed at sight-impaired voters.
- ★ Community engagement and events — in-person registration assistance at public gatherings. Columbia County, GA Elections Board invited residents to a registration festival; Prince William County, VA Office of Elections held a community expo for voting questions.
- ★ Encouragement to check registration status — a direct, low-friction call to action. Loudoun County, VA Elections asked followers to check their status with a direct link.
- ★ Voting process transparency — inviting public observation of election administration. Weber County, UT Elections invited the public to view parts of the election process firsthand.
- ★ Multilingual information — Spanish-language content alongside English. Montgomery County, MD Elections Board posted bilingual outreach.
- ★ General election awareness — broader reminders to prepare as Election Day approaches; West Virginia Secretary of State emphasized making a voting plan.

## DATA & METHOD

| Step | Method | Output |
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| 1 | All posts from tracked state and local election-authority accounts, Sept 1–30, 2026, pulled and tallied by day and platform | 15,512 posts, 8 platforms, daily volume by office level |
| 2 | Engagement (likes + shares + comments + views, platform-dependent) summed by day and platform across all tracked accounts | Daily engagement-by-platform series |
| 3 | Qualitative review of the month's posts to identify recurring message themes in voter-registration and mail-voting content, illustrated with representative examples | 8 recurring themes with illustrative posts |

*Table 1. Data pulled and analysis steps. N = 15,512 posts | Sept 1–30, 2026 | Source: EO Communications Tracker.*

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| **15,512** Posts from tracked election-authority accounts, Sept 1–30 | **11,905** From local election offices (76.7%) | **3,607** From state election authorities (23.3%) | **8** Platforms carrying EO content this month |

*AI Disclosure: Claude was used for formatting; all information is reviewed by humans.*