Elections are the lifeblood of democracy, but political campaigns are often rancorous, controversial and polarizing events. As if the misleading claims and attack ads weren’t challenging enough for the public, bad actors further muddy the waters by pushing disinformation into our social media feeds.

These harmful falsehoods are designed to cause confusion and to undermine people’s faith in American democracy. Election disinformation can be tricky, but the same false narratives and claims tend to get recycled, which can make it easier to spot.

Here are three common types of election disinformation you should watch for during the 2022 midterms.

1. BALLOT MULE ACCUSATIONS

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2. MAIL-IN BALLOT RUMORS

Misinformation about vote-by-mail ballots is common, in part because of genuine misunderstandings. Ballot request applications and sample ballots often arrive as separate mailings, and people who receive a second mailing label or new ballot by mail sometimes incorrectly assume that it indicates a lack of election security. Most people don’t realize that receiving a second voting form is a normal part of the voting process.

3. POLL WORKER RUMORS

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- The Election Integrity Partnership website
- “Trolls and partisan propagandists use social media to push voter suppression messages targeted at specific areas that they think will vote for candidates they don’t like. Don’t let social media posts from non-official sources — about alleged long lines, closed polling locations or convenient new ways to cast your vote — affect your plans to vote.

Remember: Reviewing examples of disinformation from the 2020 election can help you sharpen your disinformation reflexes.