

# [***Trump promised big plans to flip Black and Latino voters. Many Republicans are waiting to see them***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BWR-SBD1-JC5B-G481-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** MATT BROWN and STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

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**Body**

NEW YORK — Donald Trump says he wants to hold a major campaign event at New York’s Madison Square Garden featuring Black hip-hop artists and athletes. Aides speak of Trump making appearances in Chicago, Detroit and Atlanta with leaders of color and realigning American ***politics*** by flipping Democratic constituencies.

But five months before the first general election votes are cast, the former president’s campaign has [*little apparent organization*](https://apnews.com/article/republican-presidential-election-trump-battleground-community-centers-e2ff949e3dd0d0bd278b9ce4b5bcfc2d) to show for its ambitious plans.

The Trump campaign removed its point person for coalitions and has not announced a replacement. The Republican Party’s minority outreach offices across the country have been shuttered and replaced by businesses that include a check-cashing store, an ice cream shop and a sex-toy store. Campaign officials acknowledge they are weeks away from rolling out any targeted programs.

The presumptive Republican presidential nominee has struggled to navigate [*a messy transition into the general election*](https://apnews.com/article/republican-national-committee-trump-staffing-cuts-46bc8afcc152aecfd471161a59b74005), plagued by staffing issues, his personal legal troubles and the “Make America Great Again” movement’s disdain for “ [*identity* ***politics***](https://apnews.com/article/congress-diversity-inclusion-house-elections-84327035ff2034a7bf2304a53ce1cc20).” There are signs of frustration on the ground, where Republicans believe Trump has a real opportunity to cut into Democratic President Joe Biden’s advantage with voters of color.

“To be quite honest, the Republican Party does not have a cohesive engagement plan for Black communities,” said Darrell Scott, a Black pastor who served as a senior adviser on Trump’s 2016 and 2020 campaigns. “What it has are conservatives in communities of color that have taken it upon themselves to head our own initiatives.”

In Michigan, a pivotal state that flipped from Trump to Biden four years ago, several party officials confirmed that the Republican National Committee, overhauled by Trump allies after he clinched the nomination in March, has yet to set up any community centers for minority outreach. Office spaces to house the centers have been offered up by community members, but staffing has been an issue, said the Oakland County GOP chair, Vance Patrick.

“We’ve got all these carts but we have no horses yet,” Patrick said. “So, it’s all about making sure we have staffing when we open up these offices.”

On-the-ground political organizing has long been a hallmark of successful presidential campaigns, which typically invest tremendous resources into identifying would-be supporters and ensuring they vote. The task may be even more critical this fall given [*how few voters are excited*](https://apnews.com/article/biden-trump-2024-campaign-democrats-republicans-440088966619e68dbf89f745788bb372) about the Biden-Trump rematch.

The Trump campaign hired a national coalitions director last October, almost a year after he started his campaign. But the staffer, Derek Silver, departed in March without explanation, according to two people familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity to share internal discussions. Silver did not return multiple requests for comment.

Trump’s advisers reject criticism they are not doing enough organizing or spending to reach minorities. James Blair, the campaign’s political director, said the campaign would not “broadcast” its spending or staffing levels, “but I assure you, it’s enough to ensure President Trump’s historic surge in support amongst Black and Hispanic voters sticks in November and beyond.”

Lynne Patton, a senior adviser on the campaign overseeing coalitions work who has worked closely with the Trump family for decades, said that Trump’s political team is laying the groundwork for a robust minority outreach program, although largely in private.

“We are speaking with Black leaders, we are speaking with small business owners, we’re speaking with famous athletes, hip-hop artists, some of whom I think you’d be surprised if you knew who was talking with us right now,” Patton said in an interview. “These are people who are expressing openness to supporting President Trump both publicly and privately.”

Polls show that many Black and Hispanic adults are dissatisfied with Biden. According to polls by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, Biden’s approval among Black adults has dropped from 94% when he started his term to 55% in March. Among Hispanic adults, it dropped from 70% to 32% in the same period.

An April poll by the Pew Research Center confirms the problem is especially acute among younger adults: 43% of Black adults under age 50 said they approve of Biden in the poll, compared with 70% of those age 50 and older. Among Hispanics, 29% of younger adults said they approve, slightly less than the 42% who said that among those 50 and older.

Trump's allies argue that increased frustration about crime, inflation and immigration may win over some voters of color who have previously been less receptive to Trump’s record and divisive rhetoric.

Biden has been spending millions of dollars on ads targeting Black and Latino voters in key states. That’s in addition to dozens of new office openings in minority neighborhoods. All the while, Biden’s team has frequently sent out Vice President Kamala Harris, the nation’s first Black female vice president, and other prominent leaders of color.

“Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans proudly admitting that they have no real strategy to reach Black voters because they believe all they need is rap concerts and free chicken is only surprising if you haven’t paid attention to Trump’s fraudulent relationship to Black America for years,” said Jasmine Harris, the Biden campaign’s director of Black media.

In response, Patton said the Trump campaign is "rolling out the largest, most comprehensive and strategic coalitions effort the Republican Party has ever undertaken and have detailed that plan to top surrogates, grassroots allies and even media outlets to great reception.”

Republican strategist Alice Stewart, a veteran of several GOP campaigns, said she’s confident that the Trump campaign will ultimately do what’s necessary.

“But the key is they can’t just talk about minority outreach,” she said. “They have to do it.”

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Brown reported from Washington. AP Director of Public Opinion Research Emily Swanson in Washington and Associated Press writers Joey Cappelletti in Lansing, Michigan; Michael Rubinkam in Allentown, Pennsylvania; Todd Richmond in Madison, Wisconsin; Julie Carr Smyth in Columbus, Ohio; and Sean Murphy in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, contributed to this report.

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