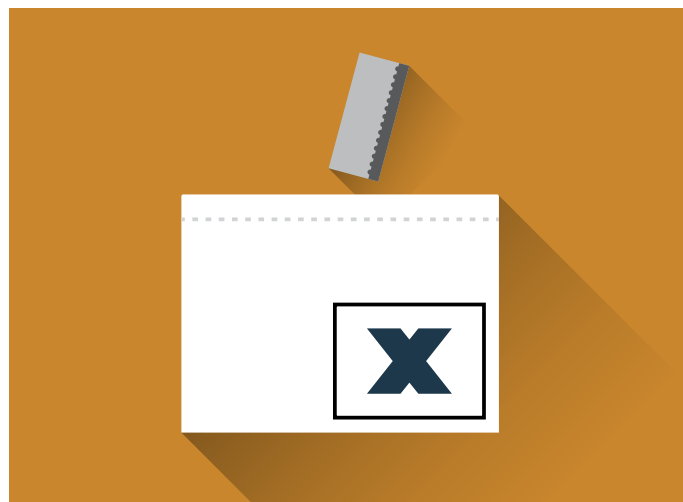


# Community Leader Handbook

---

New electors



Visit [elections.ca](https://elections.ca) for the official information you need to vote  
1-800-463-6868 / [elections.ca](https://elections.ca) / 📞 TTY 1-800-361-8935

# About this guide



This handbook contains all the basic information on when, where and the ways to register and vote in a federal election. It also has specific information for new electors.

## Other information products

There are many products you can use to spread the word about a federal election. Examples include:

- *Guide to the federal election*\*
- List of accepted ID to register and vote\*
- Infographics, flyers and videos

\*Available in multiple languages and in braille, large print and DAISY.

Visit **[elections.ca](http://elections.ca)** to download resources or call **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)** to request printed copies.

# Table of contents

About federal elections.....	4
Registering to vote.....	5
Ways to register .....	6
Ways to vote .....	7
Voting at a polling station .....	9
Voting early at an Elections Canada office .....	10
ID to vote .....	11
Accessibility .....	13
Voting assistance tools and services .....	14
Feedback is important to us .....	15

# About federal elections



In a federal election, Canadians vote to elect a member of Parliament (MP) to represent them in the House of Commons. MPs debate and pass laws on Canadians' behalf.

One MP represents the people of one riding. There are currently 338 ridings in Canada.

Candidates can represent a political party, or they can be independent, meaning they have no association with a political party. After all the votes are counted for each riding, the political party with the most MPs in the House of Commons usually forms the government. The leader of that party becomes the prime minister of Canada.

## **To register and vote in a federal election, a person must:**

- be a Canadian citizen
- be at least 18 years old on election day
- prove their identity and address

**Note:** Refugees and permanent residents are not allowed to vote in federal elections.

# Registering to vote



To vote in a federal election, electors must be registered. Most Canadians who are eligible to vote are already registered, but they may not be if they've recently moved, become a Canadian citizen, or never voted before.

All registered electors will get a voter information card in the mail about two weeks before election day. It tells them where and when they can vote, as well as the accessibility of their assigned polling station.

Sometimes, non-eligible Canadians, such as permanent residents, are mistakenly added to the list of electors and receive a voter information card in the mail. This does not mean they can vote. Only Canadian citizens can vote in federal elections.



# Ways to register



## Online

To register or update their address information online, electors can use the **Online Voter Registration Service** at **elections.ca**. If they register online, they may be asked for the number from:

- their driver's licence
- their provincial or territorial ID card (Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan or Yukon)



## In person

To register in person, electors will need to bring accepted ID with them. After an election is called, they can register and vote in person at:

- any Elections Canada office across the country by the Tuesday before election day, 6 p.m.
- their assigned polling station on election day or advance polling days

To find the addresses for these locations or view the list of accepted ID, visit **elections.ca**.



# Ways to vote

## **Electors can vote almost any time during the election period.**

They may choose the voting option that works best for them.



### **Vote on election day at their assigned polling station**

Electors' assigned polling stations will be open for 12 hours (hours vary by time zone).



### **Vote on advance polling days at their assigned polling station**

Electors' assigned advance polling stations will be open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on the Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday the week before election day.



### **Vote early at any Elections Canada office across the country**

Electors can go to any Elections Canada office by the Tuesday before election day, 6 p.m. They will vote using the special ballot process. After the election is called, electors may visit **elections.ca** or call us to find the office nearest them.

For information about the accessibility of any Elections Canada office, call us at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**.





## Vote by mail

After the election has been called, electors living in Canada may apply to vote by mail. Deadlines apply. Electors can apply to vote by mail online or by contacting any Elections Canada office. Once their application is accepted, Elections Canada will send them a special ballot voting kit in the mail. The deadline to apply to vote by mail is the Tuesday before election day, 6 p.m.

Electors should apply as soon as possible to allow enough time for their special ballot voting kit to reach them and for them to return their marked ballot to Elections Canada by election day, or it cannot be counted.

**Once electors apply to vote by mail, they can't change their mind and vote at advance polls or on election day.**

### Electors can apply to vote by mail:

- online at **elections.ca**
- at any Elections Canada office across the country
- by calling us at **1-800-463-6868** to request an application form



## Questions about the voting process

If electors have any questions about the voting process, they can call us at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**, or reach out to their local Elections Canada office.

### Heritage and Indigenous language interpretation

To answer questions from electors who do not speak English or French, Elections Canada works closely with CanTalk, a real-time language interpretation service available in over 220 heritage and Indigenous languages.

When an elector who does not speak English or French calls Elections Canada, we connect with CanTalk to request simultaneous interpretation services. Visit **cantalk.com/our-languages** to see the list of available languages.

If an interpreter is not available at the time of the call, CanTalk will suggest a time for a callback. Interpretation services are subject to availability.





# Voting at a polling station

**Here's what happens when an elector votes at their assigned polling station on election day or advance polling days.**

- 1 An election worker greets the elector and shows them to the right table.
- 2 The elector shows their proof of identity and address to an election worker.
- 3 An election worker checks their name on the list of electors and gives them a folded ballot.
- 4 The elector goes behind the voting screen, marks their ballot in the circle beside the name of their chosen candidate, and refolds the ballot to keep it secret.
- 5 The elector returns their ballot to the election worker, who removes the tab so that the elector's ballot can't be traced back to them.
- 6 The elector puts their ballot in the ballot box.

Election workers are there to help. If an elector needs anything to make their voting experience easier, they can speak to an election worker when they go to vote. For example, they can:

- Let an election worker know if they requested language or sign language interpretation ahead of time.
- Request one of the many voting assistance tools and services available.
- Let an election worker know if they've brought someone with them, or if they need someone to help them mark their ballot, or if they've brought a personal mobile device to read the ballot behind the voting screen.



# Voting early at an Elections Canada office

**Voting at an Elections Canada office is different than voting on election day or advance polling days. Here, electors will vote using the special ballot process.**

- 1** An election worker greets the elector at the counter and asks for proof of identity and address.
- 2** The election worker adds, updates or confirms the elector's information and asks them to verify it on the computer screen.
- 3** The elector is given a ballot and instructions. They may ask for the list of candidates for their riding if they need it.
- 4** The elector goes behind the voting screen, marks their ballot and returns to the election worker.
- 5** The election worker gives them two envelopes. First, the elector puts their ballot in the unmarked inner envelope and seals it. Then, the elector puts that envelope in the outer envelope and seals it.
- 6** The elector reads the declaration on this outer envelope and signs it.
- 7** The elector puts their envelope in the ballot box.

## **Keeping votes secret, when counting special ballots**

When it's time to count the ballots, the election worker will remove all the unmarked inner envelopes from their signed outer envelopes. The election worker will then return **only** the unmarked inner envelopes to the ballot box and mix them up. This way, no ballot can be traced back to the person who cast it and their vote remains secret.

Most accessible tools and services are offered at Elections Canada offices. However, the list of candidates in braille is available only on election day. See the Accessibility tab for the complete list of tools and services.

# ID to vote

**Electors have three options to prove their identity and address when they go to vote.**

## Option 1



**Show one ID card issued by a Canadian government** (federal, provincial/territorial or local) with their photo, name and current address. For example: their driver's licence.

## Option 2



+



**Show two pieces of ID.** Both must have their name, and at least one must have their current address.

### Examples:

- Certificate of Canadian citizenship and credit card statement
- Residential lease and public transportation card
- Library card and e-bill
- Social insurance number card/confirmation letter and a bank statement

### **An elector doesn't have these? No problem!**

There are other pieces of accepted ID. Check out the full list, available in multiple languages, at [elections.ca](http://elections.ca). For other formats, such as large print, braille and DAISY, call us at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**.

Electors can also use their voter information card as a proof of address if their name and address are spelled correctly on the card. They will still need to bring one other piece of ID with their name.



## Option 3



+



**If an elector doesn't have ID documents, they can still vote** if they declare their identity and address in writing and have someone who knows them and who is assigned to their polling station (likely living in the same neighbourhood) vouch for them.

The voucher must be able to prove their identity and address. A person can vouch for only one person (except in long-term care facilities).

**We accept ID cards and documents issued in their original formats.** We do not accept photocopies or scanned versions of documents that were not issued electronically. For documents issued electronically (such as e-statements or e-invoices), we accept printouts, or electors may show them on a mobile device.

We accept expired pieces of ID to prove identity. We also accept different pieces of ID from the same source if the documents serve different purposes. For example, we accept an invoice and a transcript from the same school.

For a piece of ID to be accepted, it must be issued with the elector's name and/or current address. They can't be added by hand unless they are added by the issuer of the document, like a residence administrator. For example, a current or expired Canadian passport may be used as a proof of identity (i.e. name) but not as a proof of address. This is because the passport holder writes their address by hand in the passport.

### **Letter of confirmation of residence**

Some electors may have difficulty proving their address. If they are living or receiving services at any of the following places, one option is to ask for a letter of confirmation of residence:

- First Nations band or reserve or an Inuit local authority
- Community-based residential facility
- Student residence
- Seniors' residence
- Long-term care facilities
- Shelter or soup kitchen

If an elector needs to use a letter of confirmation of residence, they should:

- Contact the establishment as soon as possible after the election is called. They may issue a letter of confirmation on their official letterhead or use the Elections Canada template *Letter of Confirmation of Residence*, available at [elections.ca](https://elections.ca).

The elector will still need to show a second piece of ID with their name.



# Accessibility



All electors are assigned to a polling station for election day and advance polling days. Once the election is called, electors can make sure their assigned polling station meets their accessibility needs by:

- checking their voter information card
- visiting **elections.ca** and entering their postal code into the Voter Information Service box
- calling us at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**

Elections Canada also welcomes Video Relay Service (VRS) calls. Visit [srvcanadavrs.ca](http://srvcanadavrs.ca) to know more.

If an elector's assigned polling station doesn't meet their accessibility needs, they should call their local Elections Canada office. We will help them find an alternate polling station or discuss other ways they may be able to vote.

For a full list of the accessibility criteria we use when we select polling stations, visit **elections.ca**.



**To request voting assistance in advance, including language and sign language interpretation**, electors are encouraged to call the Elections Canada office in their riding by the Tuesday before election day, 6 p.m. The number can be found:

- on their voter information card
- by visiting **elections.ca** and entering their postal code into the Voter Information Service box
- by calling us at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**

Electors can also bring an interpreter to help them vote. Interpreters need to make a solemn declaration, may assist more than one elector, and do not have to be an eligible elector.

For all the official information on voting, electors may visit **elections.ca**. The website is fully accessible and has voting information in multiple languages, including American Sign Language and Quebec Sign Language. Electors can also order products in other formats, including large print, braille and DAISY.



# Voting assistance tools and services

We offer many tools and services to make voting in the federal election easier. If an elector needs help during the voting process, they can call Elections Canada, visit any Elections Canada office across the country, or speak to an election worker when they go to vote.

## Voting assistance tools and services available on election day:



**Ballot** with candidate names in **large print**



**Large-print** and **braille** lists of candidates



**Tactile and braille voting template**



**Magnifiers**



**Language and sign language interpretation** and other assistance  
(upon request in advance)



**Assistance marking the ballot**  
(electors can bring someone they know or ask an election worker)



**Large-grip pencil** (limited quantity)  
(electors can also bring their own pen or pencil)



**Signature guide**

**Note:** Braille lists of candidates are available only on election day. Large print is available on advance polling days and on election day.

Electors are also welcome to bring help when they vote. This could include bringing their service animal or using an assistive device, such as a mobile device or smartphone.



# Feedback is important to us



We welcome electors' feedback on their voting experience, including on accessible tools and services. To let us know how we're doing, electors can:

- Complete the *Feedback on Accessibility and Voter Experience* form at **elections.ca** or when they go to vote
- Speak with an election worker or call us at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**

## Working at the election



Over 200,000 Canadians across the country are hired during an election. Jobs are paid and training is provided.

### **To work in an election, a person must:**

- be a Canadian citizen
- be at least 16 years old on election day
- remain non-partisan

Learn more and apply online at **elections.ca**.