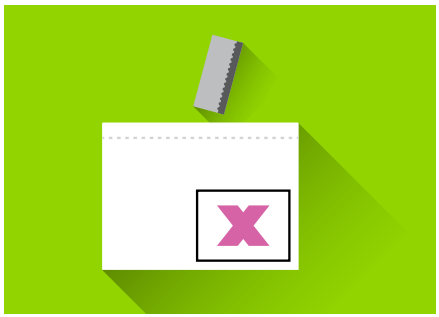
Community Leader Handbook

Indigenous electors



It's Our Vote

Visit elections.ca for the official information on voting and the health and safety measures in place

1-800-463-6868 / **elections.ca** / TTY 1-800-361-8935

Elections Canada

EC 90344 (05/2021)

About this guide

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

Other information products

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

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

*Available in braille, large print and audio formats (English and French only), as well as in multiple Indigenous languages: Atikamekw, Blackfoot, Denesuline, Gwich'in, Innu (Montagnais), Inuktitut, Michif, Mi'kmaq, Mohawk, Moose Cree, Nisga'a, Ojibway, Oji-Cree, Plains Cree, Saulteaux and Stoney.

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

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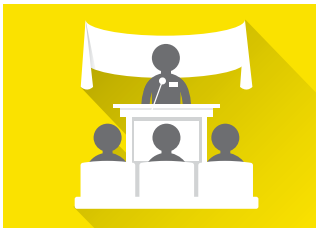
About federal elections



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 the federal election, a person must:

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

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Your health and safety is our priority

At the polling station, poll workers will be wearing masks. There will also be:

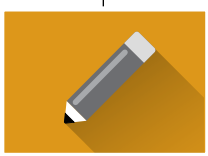
Hand sanitizer stations

Clear physical distancing markers

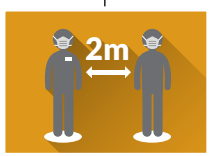
Only one poll worker per desk behind a plexiglass barrier

When an elector goes to vote:

They should wear a mask



They will be provided with a single-use pencil to mark their ballot, or they can bring their own pen or pencil



They should practice physical distancing by staying at least two metres away from voters and poll workers

If an elector has tested positive for or has symptoms of COVID-19 or has been in contact with someone who has the virus, they should visit **elections.ca** to apply to vote by mail.

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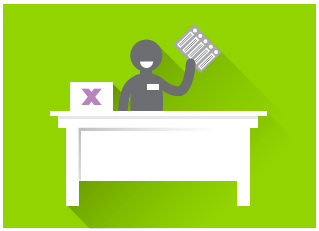
Registering to vote



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, recently 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.

Confirm place of residence

An elector's **place of residence** or **home address** is where they ordinarily live, where they think of as home or have adopted as home. Once they have confirmed their place of residence, they must make sure they're registered at that address.

Temporary absence

If electors leave home temporarily (for school, work or any other reason) but intend to return to it, it can remain their **place of residence**.

Once they've decided on their place of residence, they must bring ID with that address when they go to register and vote.

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Ways to register

Online

To register or update their address 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 (any province or territory except Quebec)
- their provincial or territorial ID card (Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan or Yukon)

Or, they could be offered the option to use the Online Document Submission feature of the Voter Registration Service.

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 Canada by the Tuesday before election day, 6:00 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**.

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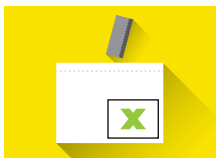
Ways to vote

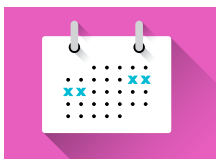
Electors can vote almost any time during the election period.

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



On election day

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



On advance polling days

Electors' assigned advance polling stations will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday the week before election day.

By mail

After the election has been called, electors living in Canada may apply to vote by mail. Deadlines apply. They can apply to vote by mail online or by contacting their local 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, 6:00 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.

Electors can apply to vote by mail:

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

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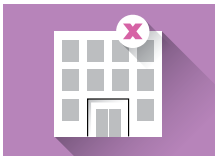

At any Elections Canada office across Canada

Electors can go to any Elections Canada office by the Tuesday before election day, 6:00 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)**.

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.

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 multiple Indigenous languages.

When an elector who does not speak English or French calls Elections Canada, we connect with CanTalk to request simultaneous interpretation services.

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.

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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.
- Let an election worker know if they need them to remove their mask so they can lip read; the election worker will remove it at a safe distance or behind a plexiglass barrier.

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Voting 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, they put that envelope in the outer envelope and seal 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 envelope can be traced back to the voter and votes remain 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.

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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:**

- Indian status card/band membership card/Métis card/card issued by an Inuit local authority
- Student card
- Utility bill (including telephone, cable or satellite)
- Licence or card issued for fishing, trapping or hunting
- Correspondence issued by a school, college or university

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**. For other formats, such as large print, braille and audio, call us at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)** to find out more.

Electors can now 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.

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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 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 institutions).

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 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 current 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

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**.

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

Note: In Nunavut, documents in Inuktitut are also accepted.

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Accessibility

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

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

Elections Canada also welcomes Video Relay Service (VRS) calls. Visit VRS Canada to know more.

If an elector's assigned polling station doesn't meet their accessibility needs, they should call the Elections Canada office in their riding. 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, 6:00 p.m. The number can be found:

- on their voter information card
- by entering their postal code into the Voter Information Service box at **elections.ca**
- 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 and the health and safety measures in place, 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. They can also order products in other formats, including large print, braille and audio.

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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 Canada, or speak to an election worker when they go to vote.

Voting assistance tools and services available on election day:

Bigger 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 your 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 only available 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.

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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)**

Work at the election

Over 200,000 Canadians across the country are hired during an election. Jobs and training are paid, weekend hours are available and applicants can choose to work in the riding that is most convenient for them. Health and safety measures will be in place to keep election workers safe.

To work in an election, you need to:

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

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

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