



**CONDUCTING THE SENATE
AND REFERENDUM VOTE
AS A STAND-ALONE EVENT**

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Introduction to the Senate and Referendum Vote

The Government of Alberta has indicated that both a senate and referendum election will take place on October 18, 2021, in parallel with the 2021 Alberta Municipal Election. However, for some parts of the province (e.g., summer villages, improvement districts, Lloydminster), this creates a challenge in that the local authority must provide an opportunity for Albertans to cast their senate and referendum ballot outside of their usual election cycle.

This handbook aims to provide guidance on how to conduct the senate and referendum vote as a stand-alone event, when the local election would normally not take place on October 18, 2021, or would not be required due to acclamations.

The information provided here supplements the requirements found in the *Local Authorities Election Act*, the *Alberta Senate Election Act*, the *Referendum Act*, and any associated regulations relating to these three pieces of legislation. Please always refer to the relevant legislation to determine the scope of your responsibility. If any discrepancy occurs between this handbook and the current legislation, the legislation supersedes the guidelines noted in this document.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

Local Authorities Election Act

This Act provides prescriptive direction on how to conduct a local election. In parallel with the *Alberta Senate Election Act* and *Referendum Act*, which supersede some *Local Authorities Election Act* clauses, this is the primary piece of legislation that should be followed.

The forms regulation provides corresponding forms relating to this Act.

Alberta Senate Election Act

This Act outlines the requirements for the conduct of a senate election. Parts I and III of the Act apply to the conduct of the senate election during a local election.

There are three senate regulations:

- The *Senate Nominee Regulation* provides the requirements for selected senate candidates.
- The *Senate Election Grants Regulation* provides payment information for the senate election.
- The *Referendum, Senate Election, and Local Authorities Election Forms Regulation* provides modified forms to be used for the senate election.

Referendum Act

This Act outlines the requirements for the conduct of a referendum vote.

There are three referendum regulations:

- The *Referendum (General) Regulation* provides the requirements for how to conduct a referendum vote.
- The *Referendum Payments Regulation* provides payment information for the referendum vote.
- The *Referendum, Senate Election, and Local Authorities Election Forms Regulation* provides modified forms to be used for the referendum.

Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act

The *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* outlines the requirements for senate candidate registration, contribution rules, expense limits, and financial reporting. Requirements for third-party advertisers, for both senate election and referendum advertising, are also outlined in this Act.

Jurisdictional Roles and Responsibilities

The delivery of the senate and referendum election is the shared responsibility of Elections Alberta, Alberta Municipal Affairs, and each municipality in Alberta.

Elections Alberta

Elections Alberta is responsible for the provincial management of the senate and referendum vote, including:

- The Election Proclamation
 - Following the issuance of the Order in Council by the Lieutenant Governor and the Writ of Election by the Chief Electoral Officer, each municipality was provided with their copy of the Election Proclamation for public display (available in the Elections Database).
- Senate Candidates Management
 - All prospective senate candidates will be provided with the forms and process to begin collecting their signatures and will later be subject to having their forms reviewed for completeness before their nomination can be accepted and their deposit collected.
- Third-Party Advertisers
 - Any eligible senate election and referendum third-party advertisers will be registered and will be required to make public financial disclosures.
- Ballots
 - Sufficient senate election and referendum ballots will be printed and provided to each municipality, in the prescribed form, to conduct the vote, unless the municipality has passed a bylaw to use alternative voting equipment.
- Official Tabulation
 - Receiving the results of the senate election and referendum vote, from each municipality and completing an official tabulation of the aggregated results on the 8th day following Election Day (October 26, 2021).
- Announcement of Results
 - Following official tabulation, the names of successful senate candidates will be announced with the results of the referendum vote. The results will also be published in the Alberta Gazette.
- Financial
 - Eligible senate candidates will submit their financial reporting for audit and disclosure.
- Compliance
 - Conducting investigations into any apparent instances of non-compliance with the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act*.

Municipal Affairs

Municipal Affairs provides advice and support on conducting an election under the *Local Authorities Election Act*. They are also responsible for payments for conducting the vote. In municipalities where a local election would not otherwise be held on October 18, 2021, the grant amount is:

- For senate, the municipality shall be paid a grant of \$2.00 per capita or \$2,000, whichever is greater.
- For referendum, the municipality shall be paid a grant of \$2.00 per capita or \$2,000, whichever is greater.

Note: Payments for municipalities that are conducting a local election can be found in the regulations.

Municipalities

Municipalities are responsible for conducting the senate and referendum vote, including:

- Providing Information
 - Supplying returning officer contact information, polling place information, alternative voting opportunities (if being offered), estimated elector counts, supply requirements (number of ballots, posters, accessible voting tools, etc.), election results, and records management information (for the 90-day post-event retention period).
- Notice of Election / Direction to Electors
 - Completing the *Notice of Election*, per section 35(2) of the *Local Authorities Election Act*, to inform local electors of the senate and referendum vote taking place, using forms 6RSE or 7RSE.
 - Posting the Election Proclamation in the returning office, the Notice of Secrecy and Directions for Guidance of Electors Poster at each voting station, and any Notice of Withdrawal or Notice of Death at each voting station, as applicable¹.
- Records Management
 - Maintaining a record of the number of senate and referendum ballots provided to each election officer issuing ballots, using the consecutive numbers printed on the stub.
- Running the Election
 - Conducting the senate election and referendum vote on October 18, 2021, following the prescribed process in the *Local Authorities Election Act*.

¹ Unless a candidate withdraws or a death of a candidate occurs, these postings will not be generated.

- Alternative Voting Opportunities
 - Providing any additional voting opportunities for the senate election and referendum vote, including advance or special ballot polls (*absentee, home-bound, and institutionalized voting*), where directed by a resolution of Council.

- Results
 - Tallying the result of the vote from each voting opportunity provided and sharing the result of the vote with Elections Alberta within seven days of the election having taken place (*by October 25, 2021*). This is completed in the Elections Database.

 - A Statement of Official Results, in the prescribed form, must be completed. This is generated following results entry in the Elections Database.

- Appeal/ Judicial Recount
 - If an application for appeal or judicial recount is received by the Court of Queen’s Bench, municipalities must provide Elections Alberta with the necessary materials to support the recount or appeal process. Elections Alberta will make all arrangements to pick up the materials from you, should this occur.

- Records Retention
 - Retaining the ballot boxes from the senate and referendum vote for 90-days post-election, or in the case of a recount or appeal, 90-days after the result is determined.

- Complaints
 - Referring all complaints relating to the senate or referendum vote, for investigation or enforcement.

Additional Information Online:

- Senate and Referendum Forms, Instructions, and Training Videos
<https://www.elections.ab.ca/elections/senate-referendum/information-for-municipalities/>
- Local Election Manuals, Checklists, and Supply Lists
<https://www.alberta.ca/municipal-elections-overview.aspx>
- Local Election Forms
<https://www.alberta.ca/municipal-election-forms.aspx>
- Legislation and Regulations
<https://www.qp.alberta.ca>

For more information, please contact:

- Elections Alberta (*For Senate/Referendum*)
ops@elections.ab.ca | (780) 427-7191
- Municipal Affairs (*For Local Elections*)
lgsmail@gov.ab.ca | (780) 427-2225
- To contact either number toll-free, call 310-0000 before dialling the phone number shown above.

Authorization to Commence the Election

An Order in Council of the Lieutenant Governor is required to commence a senate election and/or a referendum vote.

Senate

The Order in Council for the senate election was issued on June 23, 2021.

The order indicated that electors may select up to three (3) persons on their ballot, with Election Day set for October 18, 2021. Candidate nominations were also outlined in the order, fixing the close of nominations on September 20, 2021, at 2:00 pm.

Referendum

The Orders in Council for the referendum vote were issued on August 9, 2021.

Order 241/2021 reads:

- “Should section 36(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982 – Parliament and the government of Canada’s commitment to the principle of making equalization payments – be removed from the constitution?”

Order 242/2021 reads:

- “Do you want Alberta to adopt year-round Daylight Saving Time, which is summer hours, eliminating the need to change our clocks twice a year?”

Both orders define that the questions may be responded to using a “YES” or “NO” response. The results of both questions are binding.

Election Proclamation

The election proclamation needs to be posted in a public location, preferably in the returning office. However, if the returning office has not yet been established, the proclamation may be posted in the administration office or any public building / public area. It includes both senate and referendum information together in one form.

Timeline / Key Dates

- | | |
|---|--|
| June 23, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Senate Order in Council Issued• Writ Issued, Election Proclamation Issued
<i>(As Returning Officers are Appointed)</i> |
| August 9, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referendum Orders in Council Issued• Updated Election Proclamation Issued |
| Summer/Fall 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine Voting Opportunities and Supply Requirements• Review Posting and Publishing Requirements• Prepare Materials in Advance of Election Day |
| September 20, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nomination Day (Senate)• Ballots Sent to Print (if receiving from Elections Alberta) |
| September 20 – 30, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Required Advance Vote Advertising Completed (<i>LAEA, s. 74</i>)² |
| September 22, 2021 –
October 4, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribution of ballots and election supplies (posters, blind elector template) from Elections Alberta. |
| October 4 – 17, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete Required Advertising (Two Week Span) |
| October 18, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Senate and Referendum Election Day• Unofficial Count of Ballots (after polls close) |
| October 19 – 25, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm Results and Complete Official Statement of Results in the Elections Database |
| October 26, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Official Announcement of Results by Elections Alberta |
| October 26, 2021 –
November 3, 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Judicial Recount Application Period |
| January 18, 2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Record Retention Period Ends |

If any support is needed in completing a task or a form, please contact us at ops@elections.ab.ca.

² If applicable.

General Planning of the Election

Voting Opportunities

The municipality, through resolutions of council, must determine which additional voting opportunities they will provide in their municipality, including the associated dates and times.

Required: Election Day - Monday, October 18, 2021, from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm.

A calendar for October 2021. The days of the week are labeled at the top: SUN, MON, TUE, WED, THU, FRI, SAT. The dates are arranged in a grid. The date 18 (Monday) is highlighted with a red box and labeled 'ELECTION DAY'. Four red arrows point towards the 18th from the dates 26, 4, 5, and 19.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 ELECTION DAY	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Dependent

on Population: Advance Voting (*Local Authorities Election Act, s. 73*)

Advance votes are collected sometime in advance of Election Day. Municipalities with a population greater than 5000 must provide an Advance Vote, per legislation. Municipalities with populations of less than 5000 may choose to provide an Advance Vote if they wish. Where provided, the date of the advance poll is determined by the municipality. The only criterion in the legislation is that no advance vote may be held within twenty-four (24) hours of Election Day.

Optional: Mobile / At Home Voting (*Local Authorities Election Act, s. 79*)

A vote is taken at the home of an elector who, because of physical disability, is unable to attend a voting station or an advance voting station to vote. This type of vote requires a resolution from a municipal council that includes dates and times when it is to operate. It is recommended that the at-home vote be completed at the same time as the advance vote.

Optional: Institutional Vote (*Local Authorities Election Act, s. 80*)

A vote is provided to residents of a treatment facility or supportive living facility.

Note: Only residents of the facility may vote. Staff or visitors must vote elsewhere.

Optional: Special Ballot (*Local Authorities Election Act, s. 77.1*)

A vote is conducted by mail for electors that are unable to vote at an advance vote or on election day due to physical disability, absence from the local jurisdiction, or for being a returning officer, deputy returning officer, or substitute returning officer.

Note: This type of vote requires a resolution from council.

Advertising Requirements

The *Notice of Election* is required in all municipalities as it provides details for when voting occurs on advance voting days and Election Day. Prescribed forms are provided for the *Notice of Election*. The Returning Officer should select which form is applicable to use, as only one (1) form should be used.

- Form 6RSE: Notice of Election (standard form)
- Form 7RSE: Notice of Election and Requirements for Voter Identification
(where a bylaw has been passed for additional voter identification)

“Section A” of the 6RSE or 7RSE should be marked as “N/A” before posting the *Notice of Election*.

The *Notice of Election* can be published in a newspaper or other publication that circulates in the local area, or the *Notice of Election* can be mailed to each residence. This should be completed at least one week before Election Day.

Advertising for Advance and other Alternative Voting Opportunities (Local Authorities Election Act, s. 74, s. 82)

When an advance voting opportunity is provided, the *Notice of Election* should be issued at least one week before the date set for the advance vote. The same forms noted above can be used, as required. If an at-home voting opportunity is also being offered, it should also be included in the Advance Vote advertisement.

If offering an institutional vote, the returning office shall post a copy of the *Notice of Election* in at least one conspicuous place in the institution, not fewer than 2 days before the day on which the vote is to be taken there.

Requirements for Voting Stations

- The Returning Officer shall designate the location of the voting station (s).
- The Returning Officer shall ensure that each voting station is suitable in size and location for electors in the municipality.
- The voting station should be large enough to locate tables, chairs and voting compartments to ensure the privacy of the vote and prevent any interference or interruption of the voting process.

Staffing

The *Local Authorities Election Act* outlines the four (4) main positions:

- Returning Office
 - Returning Officer (RO)
 - Substitute Returning Officer (SRO)

- Voting Station
 - Presiding Deputy Returning Officer (PDRO)
 - Deputy Returning Officer (DRO)

The Returning Officer and Substitute must be appointed by the municipal council.

In the Returning Office

The Returning Officer, before performing the duties of that office, must take and subscribe to the official oath in the prescribed form. See form 1RSE. The Substitute, before performing their duties, must also take and subscribe to the official oath in the prescribed form. See form 2RSE.

At the Voting Station

The Returning Officer must hire sufficient workers to conduct the senate and referendum vote in the municipality, across all provided voting opportunities. The Returning Officer must also designate at least two (2) Deputy Returning Officers to work at each voting station, one of whom shall be designated as the Presiding Deputy, who oversees operations. The Returning Officer or the Substitute may also act as the designated Presiding Deputy.

Each Deputy Returning Officer and Presiding Deputy, before performing their duties, must subscribe to the official oath in the prescribed form. See form 2RSE.

Supplies

The Returning Officer must provide enough supplies to each voting station to ensure that it may operate without issue. The list below outlines the supplies that are available for order from Elections Alberta. To order supplies from Elections Alberta, Returning Officers should complete the *Municipality Details Form* before August 31, 2021, or as soon as possible after their appointment. All other materials should be provided by the municipality or Returning Officer, as needed.

Ballots

The form of the senate and referendum ballot are prescribed under legislation. Elections Alberta will provide ballots to the returning office in alignment with these regulations unless tabulator ballots are being used.

- Number of Ballots Required
 - The Returning Officer should consider the number of ballots required for both Election Day and any other voting opportunities to be offered: advance, absentee, etc., based on the total number of electors they will need to serve.
 - Elections Alberta will supply the same number of ballots for both the senate and the referendum vote based on the number of electors and ballots calculated for the above.
 - It is recommended that the Returning Officer consider ordering up to 25% more ballots than will be needed, to account for any spoilage or damage.

- Ballot Books
 - All ballots will be bound into books of twenty-five (25). Each ballot book is sequentially numbered, with the number printed on the stub of the ballot book.
 - Each ballot will be also perforated to allow it to be torn away from the ballot book stub.
 - Returning officers should use the sequential numbers to account for all ballots issued.


- Shipment of Ballots
 - Ballot printing will commence after the close of nominations on September 20, 2021.
 - It is estimated that the shipment of ballots will commence by September 22, 2021, with shipments prioritized based on need. (*E.g.: those in need of Special Ballots, or those with early advance voting dates, will have their ballots shipped out first*).

- Format
 - Two ballots will be provided: one for senate and one for referendum.
 - The senate ballot will be printed on yellow ballot paper.
 - The referendum ballot will be printed on grey ballot paper.
 - The size of the ballot will be determined by the number of candidates nominated and the number of referendum questions asked.

Sample Senate Ballot:

2021 Alberta Senate Election	
You can vote for up to 3 senate candidates. Mark your choices with an X.	
CANDIDATE'S NAME ALPHA FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE'S NAME BETA FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE'S NAME GAMMA FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE'S NAME DELTA FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE'S NAME EPSILON FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE'S NAME ZETA FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE'S NAME ETA FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE'S NAME THETA FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE'S NAME IOTA FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE'S NAME KAPPA FEDERAL AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT	<input type="radio"/>

Sample Referendum Ballot:

2021 Referendum Vote		
To vote, mark one circle per question to indicate your choice. Mark your choices with an X.		
QUESTION 1 - EQUALIZATION		
Should section 36(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982 - Parliament and the government of Canada's commitment to the principle of making equalization payments - be removed from the constitution?	YES	<input type="radio"/>
	NO	<input type="radio"/>
QUESTION 2 - DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME		
Do you want Alberta to adopt year-round Daylight Saving Time, which is summer hours, eliminating the need to change our clocks twice a year?	YES	<input type="radio"/>
	NO	<input type="radio"/>

Blind Voter Template


A Blind Voter Template will be available from Elections Alberta for each of the senate and referendum ballot styles. These templates can be used to enable electors who live with vision loss to mark their ballots independently.

Each template is specific to the corresponding ballot. Each template will also be coloured to match the applicable ballot. The template will include instructions, printed directly on the tool, to direct voting station staff

Voting Instructions and Secrecy of Voting

Each voting station must have posted a *Voting Instructions and Secrecy of Voting* poster on display. This poster will be provided in wall size (36 x 48 inches) and voting screen size (letter-sized).

Sample Poster:



Voting Instructions Senate and Referendum


Please mark your ballot with an “X” or by filling in the circle completely.

For senate, select up to **3** choices on the ballot.

For referendum, select only **1** response per question.

**MAXIMUM THREE (3)
CHOICES PER BALLOT**

SENATE BALLOT VOTE FOR UP TO THREE (3)	
Candidate Name Party Affiliation	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate Name Party Affiliation	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate Name Party Affiliation	<input type="radio"/>



OR

**MAXIMUM ONE (1)
CHOICE PER QUESTION**


REFERENDUM BALLOT VOTE FOR ONE (1) PER	
Question 1 Equalization	YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input type="radio"/>
Question 2 Daylight Saving	YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input type="radio"/>

Any ballot marked in error may be exchanged for another.

Secrecy of Voting

Protect the Secrecy of the Vote:

- Do not interfere with the voting process or collection of ballots,
- Do not ask anyone how they plan to vote or have voted,
- Do not attempt to view someone else's ballot,
- Do not take pictures of the ballot, and
- Do not take selfies with the ballot.



Translated Voting Instructions

Instructions regarding how to mark both the senate and referendum ballot have been translated from English into eighteen (18) additional languages and are available for order. These instruction sheets are useful for electors who may need additional assistance beyond either official language. They are letter-sized handouts, designed for ease of use, and follow the 2016 Census of Canada regarding additional languages in the province. Languages include:

- Official
 - English and French
- Indigenous
 - Cree and Blackfoot
- Additional
 - Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, Farsi (Persian), German, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Polish, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.

Forms for the Count of Ballots

Once nominations close, Elections Alberta will populate the required forms for the count with candidate names/referendum questions. These forms will be available on the Elections Alberta website for download.

- Form 18RSE: Note of Objection to a Ballot
- Form 19RSE: Senate Election Ballot Account and Result of Vote Form
- Form 19RSE: Referendum Ballot Account and Result of Vote Form
- Tally Sheets

Election Day Procedures

The Election Day procedures noted in the *Local Authorities Election Act* apply to the conduct of the senate election and referendum vote.

Before Opening the Voting Station

Setup the Voting Station for the best flow of electors given the size and shape of the voting station. If possible, have electors enter one door and exit a different door.

Set up adequate tables and chairs for elections workers and electors.

Provide the Deputy Returning Officers, who will be issuing ballots, with the List of Acceptable Identification, as well as a supply of:

- Senate ballots (yellow),
- Referendum ballots (grey),
- Form 13RSE - Voting Register,
- Translated Voting Instructions (if applicable),
- Additional supplies (pens, rulers, etc.),
- Form 14 - Statement of Voucher, and
- Form 17 - Statement of Interpreter, Elector who is Unable to Vote in the Usual Manner, Friend or Relative of Elector who is Unable to Vote in the Usual Manner.

Ensure voting screens are placed at each voting compartment and that the screens are not visible by any other elector or person in the voting station. Ensure the *Voting Instructions and Secrecy of Voting Poster* is posted in conspicuous locations throughout the voting station and on the voting screens.

The Presiding Deputy table should have the following:

- Extra supply of all supplies provided to the Deputy Returning Officer
- Blind Elector Templates (if applicable)
- Forms 15, 18RSE, 19RSE (Senate), and 19RSE (Referendum)

Opening the Voting Station

The Returning Officer and Presiding Deputies are responsible for ensuring all voting stations for the municipality are open during Election Day, and open continuously between the hours of 10:00 am and 8:00 pm. Other voting opportunities will open and close as per the hours set for them to occur. After opening the voting station, finish sealing the ballot boxes, welcome electors and conduct the vote.

Note: Please ensure you open and close the voting station at the exact time noted in the Notice of Election.

Elector Eligibility

Under the *Local Authorities Elections Act*, s. 47(1), a person is eligible to vote if the person:

- a) is at least 18 years old,
- b) is a Canadian citizen, and
- c) resides in Alberta and the person's place of residence is in the local jurisdiction on Election Day.

What determines residency?

Residency is governed by the *Local Authorities Elections Act*, s. 48(1), generally defined as:

- A person may be a resident of only one place at a time for the purposes of voting.
- If a person has more than one residence in Alberta, they must designate one place of residence as their permanent residence.
- A residence is defined as the place where the person lives and sleeps and where they intend to return following an absence.
- A person does not lose the person's residence by leaving the person's home for a temporary purpose. A student who attends an educational institution within or outside of Alberta, temporarily rents accommodation for the purpose of attending an educational institution, and has family members who are resident in Alberta and the student resides with them when not attending an educational institution, are deemed to reside with those family members. A person will lose their place of residence if they leave without the intention of returning to their residence within the area.

To help to determine a person's place of residence, the following can be used in order of priority:

- the address shown on the person's driver's license issued on behalf of the Government of Alberta or an identification card issued on behalf of the Government of Alberta,
- the address to which the person's income tax correspondence is addressed and delivered, or
- the address to which the person's mail is addressed and delivered.

Residency in a summer village

Permanent residents of the summer village may designate the summer village as their place of residence for the purposes of voting in the senate election and referendum vote. Permanent residents of the summer village do not need to be named on the certificate of title as the person who owns property within a summer village to be eligible.

Identification Requirements

Electors may prove their eligibility to vote by:

- 1) Confirming their name and address is listed on the List of Electors, by stating their name and address aloud (if the municipality is using a List of Electors),
- 2) Providing identification, as per Municipal Affairs “Voter Identification Requirements”, or
- 3) By being vouched for by another elector who has identification and is eligible to vote.

Voter Identification Requirements

Voter Identification and Eligibility for Municipal Elections



Proof of identity and current residence is required to be able to vote in municipal elections.

Any of the following documents that has the voter's name and address on it will be accepted as valid proof:

- Identification issued by a Canadian government, whether federal, provincial or local, or an agency of that government, that contains a photograph of the elector and their name and current address.
- Bank or credit card statement or personal cheque.
- Government cheque or cheque stub.
- Income or property tax assessment notice.
- Insurance policy or coverage card.
- Letter from a public curator, public guardian or public trustee.
- Pension plan statement of benefits, contributions or participation.
- Residential lease or mortgage statement.
- Statement of government benefits (for example, employment insurance, old-age security, social assistance, disability support or child tax benefit).
- Utility bill (for example, telephone, public utilities commission, television, hydro, gas or water).
- Vehicle ownership, registration or insurance certificate.

A letter or form (attestation) confirming that the person lives at the stated address will also be accepted as valid proof. The letter can be signed prior to the vote by any of the following:

- authorized representative of a commercial property management company;
- authorized representative of a correctional institution;
- authorized representative of a First Nations band or reserve;
- authorized representative of a post-secondary institution;
- authorized representative of a facility that provides services to the homeless; or
- authorized representative of a supportive living facility or treatment centre.

If a voter's identification shows a post office box number as the address instead of a residential or legal address, it can be accepted as verification of current address if it is in reasonable distance to the voting jurisdiction. The address does not have to be in the voting division or ward.

An elected authority could, by bylaw, require additional verification or a combination of verification to establish the person's specific current address.

Contact

Alberta Municipal Affairs
Municipal Services Division
Phone: 780-427-2225 Fax: 780-420-1016
Email: lgsmail@gov.ab.ca

Vouching

If an elector does not have acceptable identification but is accompanied by another elector who is entitled to vote at the same voting place and has appropriate identification to prove their eligibility, the elector can be vouched for by completing *Form 14 – Statement of Voucher*.

The statement sets out that:

- the elector knows the person,
- the elector knows the person resides at the address indicated in the person’s statement, and
- the elector has not also been vouched for.

An elector with acceptable identification may only vouch for more than one person if every person the elector vouches for shares the same place of residence. Scrutineers are prohibited from vouching.

Number of Votes

An elector may only vote once in the senate and referendum vote.

For electors with more than one residence in Alberta, they must choose one place of residence for voting and cannot vote in the other jurisdiction in which they hold residence. E.g.: if an elector has a home in Bon Accord and voted there, they can not receive another set of ballots at a voting station in Edmonton, where they own a rental property.


Scrutineers - Senate

Senate candidates may appoint scrutineers to observe the voting process during the Advance Vote and again on Election Day. The senate candidate must use the municipality’s process for appointing a scrutineer and must abide by the requirements and process outlined in the *Local Authorities Election Act s. 69(1), Form 16RSE – Statement of Scrutineer or Official Agent*. The Presiding Deputy should administer this form, have the scrutineer complete this form, and have the scrutineer sit in a location that allows them to observe but not interfere with the voting process.

Issuing Ballots

Before issuing any ballots to an elector, the elector must either be on the municipality's List of Electors or must complete *Form 13RSE – Elector Register*:

- If the elector's name is on the List of Electors, the Deputy Returning Officer shall find their name and strike it from the list, or
- If Form 13RSE is being administered, the Deputy Returning Officer shall mark only that the senate election and referendum ballot was issued. The elector is required to sign this form.

Statement of Elector Eligibility		
I, <u>Juan A. Vote</u>	of	<u>Municipality, Alberta</u>
Name of Elector		Complete Address and Postal Code
am eligible to vote at the above mentioned election because:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not voted before in this election; • I am 18 years of age or older; • I am a Canadian Citizen; • My place of residence is in the Voting Subdivision on Election Day; • I have provided the required proof of eligibility as required by Section 53 of the <i>Local Authorities Election Act</i> or I have been vouched for as to my eligibility by an elector; and • I am eligible to vote for: 		
Where applicable: (Select One)	<input type="radio"/> A Public School Trustee	<input type="radio"/> A Separate School Trustee
	 _____ Signature of Elector	
IT IS AN OFFENCE TO SIGN A FALSE STATEMENT		
Deputy Returning Officer		
Deputy's Initials: _____		
Voter Number: _____		
<input type="radio"/> Identification Shown <input type="radio"/> Elector Vouched For		
Ballots Issued to Elector (Check [✓])		
<input type="checkbox"/> Chief Elected Official	<input type="checkbox"/> Bylaw or Question	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senate Nominee
<input type="checkbox"/> Councillors	<input type="checkbox"/> Separate School Trustee	
<input type="checkbox"/> Public School Trustee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referendum Question(s)	

The Deputy Returning Officer should initial both ballots (senate and referendum), issue both ballots to the elector, and should ensure that both ballots are folded in a manner so that the Deputy Returning Officer's initials are visible without opening the ballot.

The Deputy Returning Officer shall explain the proper method of voting as per the instructions provided for each ballot. These instructions will be noted on the *Voting Instructions and Secrecy of Voting Poster* provided to each voting place.

Objection

If a candidate, official agent, or scrutineer has an objection to a person completing the *Form 13RSE – Elector Register*, the Deputy Returning Officer shall note the reason for the objection and the name of the person objecting to the elector, on the form in the space shown below. The Deputy Returning Officer shall initial the objection.

Objection to Person Voting	Name of Candidate/Official Agent/R.O./Scrutineer Making Objection:
	Reason for Objection:

Note: A candidate, official agent, or scrutineer may only object at the time the person makes the statement on Form 13RSE. The most common ground for objection is that the elector does not meet the eligibility requirements, such as if they are under 18 years of age.

If the Returning Officer, on reasonable and probable grounds, believes that a person is not eligible to be an elector, they also may object to an elector’s eligibility.

Elector Assistance

At the request of an elector who is unable to vote in the usual manner, the Deputy Returning Officer may act as a friend of the elector, going to the voting booth with the elector, and helping to mark the elector’s ballot in the manner they direct. The Deputy Returning Officer must then immediately accompany the voter back to the ballot box table and deposit the ballot in the ballot box.

The Deputy Returning Officer must ensure that before marking the elector’s ballot, the elector has completed the prescribed statement *Form 17 – Statement of Interpreter, Elector who is Unable to Vote in the Usual Manner, Friend or Relative of elector who is unable to Vote in the Usual Manner*.

If the elector is accompanied by a friend or relative who is at least 18 years of age, the Deputy Returning Officer may also permit that friend or relative to make the prescribed statement instead. The friend or relative can then accompany the elector into the voting compartment and assist with marking the elector’s ballot; ensuring, upon marking the ballot, that the ballot is delivered back to the Deputy Returning Officer responsible for the ballot box, for deposit.

If an elector is blind and is not accompanied by a friend or relative, the elector may request the Blind Elector Template. The Deputy Returning Officer shall follow the instructions on the template to support the elector.

If an elector is unable to physically enter the voting compartment, the Deputy Returning Officer may set up a temporary voting compartment for the elector in a space where the elector is able to attend.

Key Statements

Senate

The elector shall mark the ballot by placing an “X” in the designated area on the right-hand side of the name(s) of the candidate(s) of the elector’s choice. The Order in Council for the senate election outlines that a person may only vote for up to three (3) candidates.

Referendum

The elector shall mark the ballot by placing an “X” indicating the elector’s choice in the designated area (“Yes” or “No”) on the right-hand side of the ballot page opposite each question.

Depositing Ballots into the Ballot Box

After the elector has completed marking their various ballots, they must immediately present their re-folded ballots, showing only the Deputy Returning Officer’s initials, for confirmation that it is a ballot that the Deputy Returning Officer has issued. Then, on seeing their initials, the Deputy Returning Officer shall allow for the elector to deposit their ballots into the correct, corresponding ballot box: senate ballot into the senate ballot box (yellow into yellow) and referendum ballot in the referendum ballot box (grey into grey). After the elector’s ballots are deposited in the ballot box, the elector shall leave the voting station.

Note: Either the Deputy Returning Officer or the elector may deposit the ballots into the ballot box.

Spoiled or Declined Ballots

An elector may receive a replacement senate or referendum ballot if they have made an error in marking it, or if the ballot is damaged and cannot be used. When counting spoiled ballots at the close of a voting station, spoiled senate election and referendum ballots will need to be counted separately and should be recorded on the applicable *Form 19RSE - Ballot Account and Result of Vote*.

If an elector returns a ballot and states that the elector is declining to vote, the elector is no longer entitled to another senate election or referendum ballot. The Deputy Returning Officer supervising the ballot box must deposit the declined ballot into the ballot box for that contest. Before depositing the ballot into the ballot box, please inform the elector that they will not receive another ballot – this is their one vote.

Closing the Voting Station

Promptly at the close of the voting station, the Returning Officer or Presiding Deputy must verbally declare the voting station closed. If there are electors in line at the voting station, at the time of closing, they are allowed to vote; however, no other person arriving at the voting station after close is allowed to vote.

After Election Day

All voted ballots from all voting opportunities shall only be counted after the close of the polls on Monday, October 18, 2021.

Counting the Vote

The Returning Officer or Presiding Deputy, immediately after the close of the voting station, and in the presence of at least one additional election officer, or in the presence of any candidates, official agents, or scrutineers, must ensure that each ballot box is opened, and the votes contained are counted.

A Deputy Returning Officer must not permit more than the candidate, official agent, or scrutineer to be present at the same time in a voting station during the counting of the votes.

Two Deputy Returning Officers must complete the count following the procedures outlined in the *Local Authorities Elections Act*:

- Deputy Returning Officer (#1) will be responsible for looking at each ballot and deciding of the vote(s) on the ballot. They will also decide if a ballot is valid or rejected.
- Deputy Returning Officer (#2) keeps track of the individual senate candidate vote or referendum results on a tally sheet.

Valid ballots have a clear indication of the elector's intention and will be marked with an "X".

- For the senate election ballot, electors may choose up to three (3) candidates on the ballot. This means that any ballot with 1, 2, or 3 selections is a valid ballot.
- For the referendum ballot, electors may respond to each question with a single selection. Each question is counted individually, so one ballot may include some questions that are valid and others that are rejected or blank.

Rejected Ballots, such as void or blank ballots, must not be counted. The Deputy Returning Officer shall examine the ballots and reject any ballot:

- that does not bear the initials of the Deputy Returning Officer,
- on which more votes are cast than an elector is entitled to cast,
- on which anything is written or marked by which an elector can be identified,
- that has been torn, defaced, or otherwise dealt with by an elector so that the elector can be identified,
- that is not marked by an "X"³, or
- on which no vote has been cast by an elector.

It is recommended that all Returning Officers review the process for counting ballots, at the link below:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rMgQpHDmhEA>.

³ A ballot with a mark that shows a clear indication of the voter's intention should not be rejected if it does not have an "X" mark. For example, if the elector has marked the ballot with a checkmark instead.

The Process to Reject a Ballot:

On the back of a rejected ballot, the Deputy Returning Officer (#1) shall:

- first print the word “rejected”, and
- if an objection is made, print “objected” and the consecutive number of the objection.

The Deputy Returning Officer shall also initial each endorsement if it is made.

Notice of Objection to a Ballot:

In the instance where a candidate, official agent, or scrutineer has objected to a ballot, the Deputy Returning Officer (#1) shall make a note of the objection in the prescribed form (*Form 18RSE – Notice of Objection*).

Note: Once all ballots are counted, candidates, official agents, or scrutineers may leave the voting station. If they wish to remain until after *Form 19RSE – Ballot Account and Result of Vote* is complete, that is also fine. However, anyone who leaves after the count is not entitled to return.

Returning Election-Related Materials

The Presiding Deputy and Deputy Returning Officers will complete all required paperwork and put together the required packets to be placed into the ballot box(es) for return and safekeeping.

Completion of Form 15 - Certificate of Voting Register

Every Presiding Deputy, at the close of the voting station, must certify, in words, the number of persons who registered to vote at the voting station on *Form 15 – Presiding Deputy’s Certification and Statement on Completion of Ballot Count*. The Used Voting Registers (Form 13RSE), and Form 15 must be kept together.

Completion of Form 19RSE - Senate

Upon completion of the count of ballots, and to complete Form 19RSE, two Deputy Returning Officers must perform the following tasks:

- Deputy Returning Officer (#1) will read out the number of votes that each candidate received from the tally sheet,
- Deputy Returning Officer (#2) in the presence of the Presiding Deputy, will transcribe that number onto the Form 19RSE.

Completion of Form 19RSE - Referendum

Upon completion of the count of ballots, and to complete Form 19RSE (Referendum Vote), two Deputy Returning Officers must perform the following tasks:

- Deputy Returning Officer (#1) will read out the number of “yes” votes, “no” votes, blank ballots, and rejected ballots, per question, as captured on the tally sheet,
- Deputy Returning Officer (#2) in the presence of the Presiding Deputy, will transcribe those numbers onto the Form 19RSE.

For Both 19RSE Forms

At the completion of the ballot accounts, two deputy returning officers, involved in the count, must sign the ballot account form. In addition, the ballot account may be signed by the candidates or their official agents or scrutineers who are present and who wish to sign it.

Packing Up

After the count, the Presiding Deputy must ensure that the ballots are separated into different packets and sealed into a ballot box. The packets are defined as follows:

1. valid ballots,
2. valid ballots objected to together with the notes of objection form,
3. rejected ballots, including those with no vote cast by an elector,
4. spoiled ballots,
5. unused ballots,
6. voting registers and completed Form 15s, and
7. All Lists of Residents (if applicable).

Each of the packets of ballots must then be sealed and labelled:

1. The contents of the packet,
2. The name or number of the voting station,
3. The date of the election,
4. The name of the Deputy Returning Officer, and
5. The municipality’s name.

These packets should then be sealed inside the correct, corresponding ballot box. The used voting registers can be placed in any ballot box.

Note: Please ensure that the ballot box with packets inside is labelled on the outside of the ballot box.

Securing Election Materials

The ballot box must be closed and sealed, by the Deputy Returning Officer, in a way that it cannot be opened without again breaking the seal once more.

Delivering Election Documents to the Returning Officer

The sealed ballot boxes, the ballot accounts 19RSE (Senate and Referendum), and the envelope of objected to electors must be delivered to the returning officer as soon as possible.

Reporting Results

After the Count on Election Night

Municipalities may publish results of the senate election and referendum vote as soon as they are received from each voting station. However, they are not required to do so.

Within 7-Days Following Election Night

After receiving the ballot account from each voting station, the Returning Officer shall add together all the ballot accounts prepared by the presiding deputies. The consolidated totals must then be reported to Elections Alberta within the 7-days following the Election, October 25, 2021, as Elections Alberta is required to complete the official tabulation on the 8th day, post-election. The Elections Database is used to report vote totals. This step must be completed by the returning officer, as the confirmation of the results produces the Statement of Official Results for the municipality.

Retention of Records

Municipalities are required to retain the ballot boxes from the senate and referendum votes for three full months post-election day, or in the case of a recount or appeal, three months after the result of the recount or appeal is determined. This includes all records contained within the ballot boxes.

Judicial Recount or Appeal

Elections Alberta is responsible to appear in court and provide all documentation required for an appeal or recount. If an application for appeal or recount is received, municipalities must provide Elections Alberta with the necessary materials to support the recount or appeal process.

Elections Alberta will coordinate the pick-up of all required materials from affected municipalities.

Relevant Municipal Forms

Form Number	Title of Form	When to Use Form
1RSE	Oath of Returning Officer	Planning
2RSE	Statement of Deputy, Substitute, Enumerator, and Constable	Planning
6RSE	Notice of Election	Planning
7RSE	Notice of Election and Requirements for Elector Identification	Planning
13RSE	Elector Register	Voting Opportunity
14	Statement of Voucher	Voting Opportunity
15	Presiding Deputy's Certification	Post-Vote
16RSE	Statement of Scrutineer or Official Agent	Voting Opportunity
17	Statement of Interpreter, Elector who is unable to vote in the Usual Manner, Friend or Relative of Elector who is unable to Vote in the Usual Manner	Voting Opportunity
18RSE	Note of Objection to a Ballot	Post-Vote

Downloadable forms and instructions for completion of the forms can be found at Alberta Municipal Affairs website, at <https://www.alberta.ca/municipal-election-forms.aspx>.

Relevant Forms from Elections Alberta

Title of Form	When to Use this Form
Municipality Details Form	Planning
Voting Instructions and Secrecy of Voting Poster	Voting Opportunities
Translated Voting Instructions	Voting Opportunities
Ballot Account and Result of Vote - Senate	Post Vote
Ballot Account and Result of Vote - Referendum	Post Vote
Tally Sheet	Post Vote
Statement of Official Results	Post Vote

For more information or to download digital versions of these forms, please visit <https://www.elections.ab.ca/senate-and-referendum/information-for-municipalities/forms/>.



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