

Returning Officer's Manual

Volume I *Election Fundamentals*

EC 10470 (03/2025)

elections.ca



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Hours of operation	Between electoral events: 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (EST) During electoral events: Elections Canada will advise prior to each event

Revision record



The *Revision record* lists changes made only to the electronic copy of the version listed below.

Discard any previously printed version of this manual and refer to the most recent one.

Version (Date)	Edition	Comments
EC10470 (03/2025)	13	Update for GE readiness
EC 10470 (11/2024)	12	Update
EC 10470 (03/2024)	11	Update
EC 10470 (04/2023)	10	Update for 2023 by-elections
EC 10470 (11/2022)	9	Update for by-election
EC 10470 (08/2021)	8	Update
EC 10470 (05/2021)	7	Update
EC 10470 (01/2021)	6	Update
EC 10470 (05/2020)	5	Update
EC 10470 (07/2019)	4	Update for 43rd GE readiness
EC 10470 (03/2019)	3	Update
EC 10470 (10/2018)	2	Update
EC 10470 (06/2018)	1	Complete redesign and updates throughout
EC 10470	2015 v2.0	Update
EC 10470	03/2011	Update
EC 10470	9/2010	Initial release

Ce manuel est disponible en français sous le titre
Manuel du directeur du scrutin – Volume I (EC 10470-1)

Summary of changes



- The *Summary of Changes* below lists changes made since the previous edition of the *Returning Officer's Manual – Volume I*.
- Only procedural, technical, policy and content updates are included.
- If there are discrepancies between the printed version of the manual and the online HTML version in ECDocs, the HTML version prevails.

New / update	Section and details
	2.9 Handling accessibility complaints 4.4.3 Bilingual cards Figure 4 RO office IT & telephony equipment (kit) 7.3.6 Applications and software Table 4 Inventory numbers for election materials – usage Table 5 Descriptions of lot numbers 10.3.1 Preliminary budget 10.9 Financial tools and references – added <i>Financial Management tips for ROs</i> (EC 10093) App. A Tasks 14 and 15

Table of contents

Summary of changes.....	v
Styles in this manual	12
Chapter 1 – Overview.....	1
1.1 Structure of the manual	1
1.2 Acronyms and terms in this manual	3
1.3 About this volume	6
1.4 About Elections Canada	7
1.5 Your mandate	7
1.6 Our shared values	7
1.6.1 Elections Canada's priorities.....	7
1.7 Legal context	8
1.7.1 Canada Elections Act	8
1.7.2 The writ.....	9
1.7.3 Notice of Election.....	9
1.7.4 Other legislative requirements	10
1.8 Professional conduct	11
1.9 IT policies	11
1.10 Tools and aids	12
1.11 Health and safety at work	13
1.11.1 Prevention of harassment and violence in the workplace.....	13
1.11.2 Scents in the workplace	14
1.11.3 Non-smoking policy	14
Chapter 2 – Accessibility.....	17
2.1 Legislation related to accessibility	17
2.2 James Peter Hughes v. Elections Canada – a case study	18
2.2.1 Case study questions	18
2.3 Accessibility at electoral facilities	19
2.3.1 Changes to the Polling Place Suitability Checklist.....	19
2.3.2 Mandatory accessibility criteria	20
2.4 Communicating accessibility information to electors	21
2.5 Accessibility mitigations	21
2.6 Modifications to polling places	22
2.6.1 CEO authorizations.....	24
2.7 Collecting accessibility data	24
2.7.1 National database of electoral facilities	24
2.8 Electors requiring assistance to vote.....	25
2.8.1 Assisting an elector with a disability	25

2.8.2	Assisting an elector with a visual impairment	25
2.8.3	Assistance from a friend, spouse, common-law partner or relative	26
2.9	Handling accessibility complaints.....	26
2.10	Duty to accommodate.....	27
2.10.1	Barriers to the electoral process	28
2.10.2	Communicating effectively with persons with disabilities.....	29
Chapter 3 – Confidentiality and security guidelines.....		35
3.1	Elector information.....	35
3.2	Data and systems.....	35
3.3	While serving electors.....	36
3.4	During staff training.....	36
3.5	Disposing of documents containing personal information.....	36
Chapter 4 – Official languages		37
4.1	Elections Canada's commitment.....	37
4.1.1	Active offer	38
4.2	Bilingual capacity requirements	39
4.2.1	Identifying the language needs of an electoral district.....	39
4.2.2	Recruiting qualified bilingual resources.....	39
4.3	Bilingual services in the electoral district.....	40
4.3.1	Telephone service	40
4.3.2	Reception in designated offices	41
4.3.3	During targeted revision.....	41
4.3.4	Polling places	41
4.3.5	Bilingual services tent cards	42
4.3.6	Bilingual documents.....	42
4.4	Elections Canada linguistic support	43
4.4.1	Bilingual support services	43
4.4.2	Dedicated linguistic services line	43
4.4.3	Bilingual cards	43
Chapter 5 – Communications and public affairs.....		45
5.1	Voter Information Campaign	45
5.2	Civic Education program.....	45
5.3	Electoral event website: the focal point for information	46
5.4	Voter Information Card and reminder brochure.....	46
5.5	Social media.....	46
5.6	Media relations	47
5.7	Public enquiries	47

Chapter 6 – Selecting polling places	51
6.1 Polling place search (pre-event assignment)	51
6.2 Voting service enhancements	51
6.2.1 External Service Points	51
6.3 Types of polling places	53
6.3.1 Ordinary and advance polling places	53
6.3.2 Mobile polls	54
6.3.3 Acute Care Voting Program	54
6.3.4 Single building polls	54
6.4 Key considerations for polling places	55
6.4.1 Accessibility	55
6.4.2 Proximity	55
6.4.3 Contact with First Nations, Inuit and Indigenous communities	56
6.4.4 Capacity	56
6.4.5 Directional signage	57
6.4.6 Parking	57
6.4.7 Public transit	57
6.5 Lease agreement form	57
6.5.1 Records of decisions	58
6.6 Polling location management applications	58
Chapter 7 – RO office operations	59
7.1 Message to returning officers	59
7.2 Pre-event assignments	60
7.3 Telephone and hardware installation and service	60
7.3.1 Office telephony/hardware blueprints	60
7.3.2 Wireless kits – smartphones and high-speed modems	62
7.3.3 RO office smartphone deployment	63
7.3.4 Wired telephone installation and timeframes	64
7.3.5 Telephony documentation	64
7.3.6 Applications and software	65
Chapter 8 – Managing election materials	69
8.1 Elections Canada's inventory system	69
8.2 Elections Canada's shipment of election materials	69
8.2.1 Receiving election materials at your residence	71
8.2.2 Supply Management System by intranet	71
8.3 Printing	72
8.3.1 Selecting a printing company	72
8.3.2 Printing materials provided	72
8.3.3 Paying for printing services	73

Chapter 9 – Consultations with political parties	75
9.1 Planning	75
9.2 Pre-writ consultation	75
Chapter 10 – Financial management	77
10.1 Your responsibilities.....	77
10.2 Payroll process – ROs, AROs and AAROs	78
10.2.1 Source deductions	78
10.2.2 Payment procedure	80
10.3 Budgets	80
10.3.1 Preliminary budget.....	80
10.3.2 Official budget.....	81
10.4 Sales tax.....	82
10.5 Elections Canada acquisition card	83
10.5.1 Reconciliation of accounts	83
10.5.2 Monthly statement errors	83
10.6 Accountable advances.....	83
10.6.1 Hospitality	84
10.7 Travel expenses and fees.....	84
10.8 Delegating financial authorities	85
10.9 Financial tools and references	86
Chapter 11 – Additional assistant returning officer.....	87
11.1 Message to AAROs	87
11.1.1 Pre-event equipment	87
11.2 Telephone and hardware installation and service	88
11.2.1 Office telephony/hardware blueprints.....	88
11.2.2 Computer systems.....	89
11.2.3 Office budget	91
11.2.4 Office staff	91
11.2.5 AARO office activities	91
11.2.6 AARO staff cost estimates	92
11.3 Managing election materials for the AARO office	92
11.3.1 Shipping election materials to the AARO before the event.....	92
11.3.2 Initial shipment to the AARO's residence	92
11.3.3 Storing election materials.....	93
11.3.4 Storage fee.....	93

Appendix A – Overview of your tasks before, during and after an electoral event.....	95
Appendix B – Overview of obligations and prohibitions under the CEA	109
Appendix C – Mailing and shipping procedures.....	119
Appendix D – Handling accidents in the workplace	121
Responsibilities for reporting and handling an accident, incident or hazardous occurrence in the workplace for field personnel.....	121
Definitions	121
Reporting obligation	122
Procedure	123
Links	125

Checklists

C1	Communication activities	49
-----------	--------------------------------	-----------

Figures

Figure 1	Polling place accessibility status symbols	21
Figure 2	External Service Point office layout (sample)	52
Figure 3	External Service Point – flex space layout (sample).....	53
Figure 4	RO office IT & telephony equipment (kit).....	61
Figure 5	Additional IT & telephony equipment for large RO office	62
Figure 6	Monotainers	71
Figure 7	AARO office It & telephone equipment (kit)	88

Tables

Table 1	Visual presentation	12
Table 2	Fifteen mandatory accessibility criteria.....	20
Table 3	Acceptable terms to use when referring to people with disabilities	32
Table 4	Inventory numbers for election materials.....	69
Table 5	Lot numbers for election materials	70
Table 6	Election materials shipped to the AARO	93

Styles in this manual

Table 1 Visual presentation

Types of information	Example / context	Typographic convention / symbol
Note	At a minimum, users are to have data entry and certification rights. Further privileges may be granted at the AC's discretion.	
New content	Presents new content since the last edition of this manual	
Updated content	Presents content that has been updated since the last edition of this manual	
Tip	Presents suggestions or techniques to simplify a process	
Warning	WARNING: After three failed login attempts, one hour must elapse before trying to log in again.	
Checklist	Heading titles that start with a C followed by a number represent a checklist	C[#]
Screen / window	Elector Search	Bold text
Cross-references and links to other Elections Canada resources and publications	<u>1.5 Other resources</u>	Italicized underlined text (maroon)
Websites with hyperlinks and email addresses	<u>elections.ca</u>	Bold underlined text (blue)
Keyboard keys	<Ctrl><Alt><Delete>	Enclosed bold text



This manual considers inclusivity in relation to readability and usability. Where the generic masculine appears, it is used without bias and solely to maintain a clear and simple language.

The *Canada Elections Act* mentions *elector*, *administrator*, *candidate*, *member of Parliament*, and other relevant terms as generic terms. We have therefore modelled the text in this manual along the same principles.

Chapter 1 – Overview



Many Elections Canada processes are based on legislative requirements set out in the *Canada Elections Act* (CEA) or in other legislation. We have summarized those requirements in a user-friendly format in this manual. If you have questions about the interpretation of legislative provisions, contact the Field Support Network ([How to reach us](#)). FSN will then contact Elections Canada Legal Services, if necessary, to obtain assistance in responding to your query.

1.1 Structure of the manual

Whether you are a seasoned returning officer (RO) or have recently joined the Elections Canada team, this manual provides the information and tools needed to manage and control an election, by-election or referendum within the electoral district (ED) where you are appointed. For other roles in the RO office, please consult the relevant manuals; these are available in RODS (ECDocs). If you do not have access to RODS, ask your ARO or AARO to download a copy. The information herein is intended for the ROs.

This manual is divided into **four volumes** according to the following themes and checklists:

VOLUME I – Election Fundamentals	
Themes	
• Overview • Accessibility • Confidentiality and security guidelines • Official languages • Communications and public affairs • Selecting polling places • RO office operations • Managing election materials	• Consultations with political parties • Financial management • Additional assistant returning officer • Appendix A – Overview of your tasks before, during and after an electoral event • Appendix B – Overview of obligations and prohibitions under the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> • Appendix C – Mailing and shipping procedures • Appendix D – Handling accidents in the workplace
Checklists	
• C1 Communication activities	
VOLUME II – The Event	
Themes	
• Overview • Financial policies and procedures • Opening and managing the office • Boundaries, polling places and the Voter information card • Political parties and candidates • Electors	• Lists of electors • Revision • Ballots • Planning for the polls • At the polls • Special Voting Rules • Appendix A – By-elections

Checklists	
• C1 Signing leases and confirming polling places • C2 Printing arrangements • C3 Security guard duties • C4 Undelivered VICs Ledger • C5 Solemn declaration by videoconference – Prospective candidates • C6 Nomination of candidates: preliminary verification	• C7 Approving the List of Candidates Verification Report • C8 Materials for confirmed candidates • C9 Approving E-registration transactions in REVISE • C10 Verifying the ballot proof • C11 Ballot booklet quality control • C12 Feedback on Accessibility and Voter Experience process • C13 Handling queries from the public • C14 Reporting potential cases of double vote
VOLUME III – Polling Night, Validation and Post-event	
Themes	
• Overview • Closing the polls and validating results • Return of reports, documents and materials	• Activities at the AARO's office • Closing your office
Checklists	
• C1 Preparing for polling night (RO office) • C2 Validation of the results • C3 Return of the writ and reports	• C4 Lot 101 – Official voting results • C5 Lot 105 – Plastic poll bags from all polling stations • C6 Polling night in the AARO office
VOLUME IV – Human Resources	
Themes	
• Overview • Position descriptions • Recruitment and nomination	• Staffing and planning considerations for the polls • Training • Solemn declarations
Checklists	
• C1 Preparing for your role	• C2 Appointing and training poll workers

This manual is also published on the [Field Personnel Intranet](#) by the ECDocs team. As changes in electoral procedures or amendments to the CEA occur, revisions and updates to the manual will be reflected in both the online and the PDF versions. In the event of a discrepancy between the two formats, the online version will take precedence.

Elections Canada will keep you informed if changes occur during an event. The revised pages must be immediately inserted in the manual and obsolete pages removed.

1.2 Acronyms and terms in this manual

This table lists the acronyms used throughout the four volumes of the *Returning Officer's Manual*.

Acronym	English expansion	Français
AAC	assistant automation coordinator	CAI
AARO	additional assistant returning officer	DASS
AARO–ESP	additional assistant returning officer–External Service Point	DASS-PSE
AC	automation coordinator	CI
ALPHA list	Alphabetical List of Electors	liste ALPHA
ARO	assistant returning officer	DAS
ASP	additional service point	PSA
ASPS	assistant service point supervisor	SAPS
CEA	<i>Canada Elections Act</i>	LEC
CEO	chief electoral officer	DGE
CERA	Centre of Expertise on Rental Agreements	CEEL
CF	Canadian Forces	FC
CMS	Content Management System	SGC
COA	Control of Authorization (approval number)	CDA
CPP	Canada Pension Plan	RPC
CPS	central poll supervisor	SCS
CRO	community relations officer	ARC
DCEO	deputy chief electoral officer	SDGE
DND	Department of National Defence	MDN
DRO	deputy returning officer	—
EC	Elections Canada	EC
ECDocs	Elections Canada's online repository of information and resources for election administrators	ECDocs
ECHQ	Elections Canada Headquarters (Gatineau)	ACEC
ED	electoral district	—
EDD	Event Delivery Dashboard	TBTR
EFR	Electronic Financial Return (of political entities)	RFE
EI	employment insurance	AE
EMC	electoral material coordinator	CME

Acronym	English expansion	Français
EOL	Electors on List	—
E-Reg	Online Voter Registration Service	—
ERP	Electoral Reminder Program	PRE
ERS	Event Results System	SRS
ERTool	Elector Registration Tool	OIE
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada	EDSC
ESP	external service point	PSE
FAMT	Field Assignments Management Tool (formerly ROFAMT)	OGAR
FLE	Final List of Electors	LED
FLO	field liaison officer	ADLL
FO	financial officer	AF
FO-Accounting	financial officer – Accounting	AF-Comptabilité
FO-Pay System	financial officer – Pay System	AF-Système de paie
FPT 	Field Planning Tool – Internet-based EC system used by the RO at home to manage electoral planning activities and delivery, including facility information (polling places, external service points, local offices, etc.), services and outreach for Indigenous communities and mobile poll groupings for long-term care facilities, poll worker staffing and more.	OPR
FRP	field resource person	PRR
FSN	Field Support Network (formerly Elections Canada Support Network)	RSR
GE	general election	EG
GEO List	Geographical List of Electors	Liste GEO
GIS	Geographic Information System	SIRS
GST	Goods and Services Tax	TPS
HLO	hospital liaison officer	ALMH
HSBC	hospital special ballot coordinator	CBVS-H
HST	Harmonized Sales Tax (Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario and Prince Edward Island)	TVH
ICBMS	Voter Feedback and Incident Monitoring System	SSPIV
IEYP	Indigenous Elder and Youth Program	PAJA
IO	information officer	PI

Acronym	English expansion	Français
LAN	local area network (computer)	—
MP	member of Parliament	—
NCR	National Capital Region	RCN
NCR paper	No Carbon Required paper	—
NRoE	National Register of Electors	RNE
OCIU	Operations Complaints and Incidents Unit	UPIO
OEID	Outer Envelope Identifier (generated by REVISE)	IEE
OLE	Official List of Electors	LEO
PAR	Payment Authorization Report	RAP
PEU	Public Enquiries Unit	—
PF	political financing	FP
PLE	Preliminary List of Electors	LEP
POM	poll operations manager	GOS
PPA	Policy and Public Affairs	PAP
PPE	personal protective equipment	ÉPI
PST	Provincial and Territorial Sales Tax	TVP
QPIP	Quebec Parental Insurance Plan	RQAP
QPP	Quebec Pension Plan	RRQ
RecO	recruitment officer	ARec
RecSup	recruitment supervisor	SupRec
REVISE	EC's elector database	RÉVISE
RLE	Revised List of Electors	LER
RMA	regional media advisor	CRRM
RMS	Recruitment Management System	SGR
RO	returning officer	DS
RO office	returning officer's office; also called local EC office	bureau du DS
RODS	Field Personnel Intranet	RODS
RoE	Record of Employment	RE
RoP	Report of Proceedings (RO report)	—
ROPS/SITES	Returning Office Payment System and SITES	SPBDS/SITES
ROTC	Returning Office Technology Centre	CTBDS

Acronym	English expansion	Français
RTPS	Recruit, Train and Pay Services	SRFP
SA	service agent	AS
SCSO	service centre support officer	ASCS
SMSi	Supply Management System by intranet	SGFi
SoC	Statement of Changes	—
SOR	Statement of Ordinary Residence	DRH
SOV	Statement of the Vote	—
SPS	service point supervisor	SPS
SPS-ESP	service point supervisor-External service points	SPS-PSE
SVR	Special Voting Rules	RES
SVRA	Special Voting Rules administrator	ARES
TOPR	Targeted Outreach Program Repository	RPRC
UPS	uninterrupted power supply	UAP
VIC	voter information card	CIE
VIS	voter information sheet	FIE
VRS	Voice Response System	SRV

1.3 About this volume

This volume is divided into the following sections:

[Chapter 1 – Overview](#)

[Chapter 2 – Accessibility](#)

[Chapter 3 – Confidentiality and security guidelines](#)

[Chapter 4 – Official languages](#)

[Chapter 5 – Communications and public affairs](#)

[Chapter 6 – Selecting polling places](#)

[Chapter 7 – RO office operations](#)

[Chapter 8 – Managing election materials](#)

[Chapter 9 – Consultations with political parties](#)

[Chapter 10 – Financial management](#)

[Chapter 11 – Additional assistant returning officer](#)

[Appendix A – Overview of your tasks before, during and after an electoral event](#)

[Appendix B – Overview of obligations and prohibitions under the CEA](#)

[Appendix C – Mailing and shipping procedures](#)

[Appendix D – Handling accidents in the workplace](#)

1.4 About Elections Canada

Headed by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada (CEO), Elections Canada (EC) is an independent, non-partisan agency of Parliament. Its primary task is to be prepared at all times to administer an electoral event.

The Office through which the CEO carries out his mandate normally comprises a group of some 500 employees working in the National Capital Region. During a general election (GE) or referendum, more than 235,000 positions are filled by election workers across the country. The RO in each electoral district administers the election that will choose a Member of Parliament.

Elections Canada's mission

Ensuring that Canadians can exercise their democratic rights to vote and be a candidate.

1.5 Your mandate

Your mandate is to conduct a federal election, a by-election or a referendum in your electoral district in accordance with the CEA and the instructions of the CEO. Your mandate is therefore instrumental to Canadian democracy.

1.6 Our shared values

In your capacity as RO, you are the face of EC in your ED. As EC's "ambassador" among electors and political entities, you are to be guided by the following key values while conducting daily activities and making decisions:

- A knowledgeable and professional workforce
- Transparency in everything you do
- Responsiveness to the needs of Canadians involved in the electoral process
- Cohesiveness and consistency in administering the CEA
- Continuously earning and maintaining the public's trust
- Stewardship and accountability while managing EC's resources

1.6.1 Elections Canada's priorities

At every opportunity, you are to support and advance EC's innovation agenda, and corporate policies and priorities, including increasing youth participation, reducing barriers to participation, introducing technology at the polls, and making voting more convenient and accessible for all Canadians who are eligible to vote.

1.7 Legal context



Many EC processes are based on legislative requirements set out in the CEA or other legislation. We have summarized those requirements in a user-friendly format for your reference in the *Returning Officer's Manual*. If you have questions about the interpretation of legislative provisions, contact the Field Support Network ([How to reach us](#)). FSN will contact Elections Canada Legal Services if necessary to provide assistance in responding to your query.

1.7.1 Canada Elections Act

A number of laws are particularly relevant to Elections Canada's operations. You are also bound by instructions which the CEO issues by way of mandates and otherwise. This manual contains such instructions.

The [Canada Elections Act](#) (CEA) is EC's legislative backbone; it is the law that governs elections.

In this manual, references to the CEA appear after paragraphs for further consultation, if desired. As a general rule, you do not need to consult the CEA. For further clarification or for more information on a subject, you may contact EC.

An election officer who fails to conform to obligations in the CEA or to instructions of the CEO may be removed from his position or may be liable to other penalties.



The CEA sets out offenses in Part 19.

Consult [Appendix B – Overview of obligations and prohibitions under the CEA](#) for a condensed list of some commonly referred to obligations and prohibitions under the CEA.

Investigating offences

The Commissioner of Canada Elections is an official whose office is responsible for investigating alleged non-compliance offenses with the CEA. Anyone, including the CEO, or an RO, may submit a complaint.

If an elector or campaign raises a question of non-compliance with you, or you become aware of something that may be a violation of the CEA, you should alert the Field Support Network (FSN). Information on where to call and how to complete an online complaint form is listed on the [EC webpage](#), *General Complaints* or *Complaints About a Violation of the CEA*. From there, a decision will be made whether to refer the matter to the Commissioner or not. EC or the Commissioner's office may ask you for more information about the matter.

If an elector or candidate wishes to make a complaint directly to the Commissioner, you should inform them that all allegations of non-compliance with the CEA must be submitted in writing and refer them to the Commissioner's website at cef-cce.gc.ca.

1.7.2 The writ

The writ is the legal document that the CEO issues instructing you to hold an election in your appointed ED.

The election period begins when the writs are issued and ends on polling day. The writs are issued in accordance with a proclamation order made by the Governor in Council.

The electoral sequence for a general election is as follows:

- The Governor in Council issues a proclamation for a general election to be held. This is where the electoral process begins.
- The proclamation fixes the date for voting at the election, which date must be no earlier than the 36th day and **no later than the 50th day after the day on which the writ was issued.**
- The CEO sends an email to each RO informing them of the issue of the writ. The email must be sent on the same day that the proclamation is issued.
- You must acknowledge receipt by responding to this email as soon as possible, thus informing the CEO of your availability.
- The CEO then formally issues a paper writ to the RO for each ED to which the proclamation or order applies using Form 1 (*Writ of Election*) of Schedule 1 of the CEA.
- On receipt of the writ, you must:
 - sign, date the **Record of Receipt of Writ** section
 - retain it in a safe place along with the *Special Envelope for the Return of the Writ* ([EC 11510](#)), until the validation of results is complete
 - contact ECHQ to confirm receipt of the writ for your ED.
- Without delay on the 7th day following the completion of the validation of results or, if there is a recount, without delay after receiving the certificate (referred to in section 308 of the CEA), you shall declare elected the candidate who obtained the largest number of votes by completing the return of the writ in the prescribed form on the back of the writ. If there is an equality of votes between the candidates with the largest number of votes, you shall indicate that on the return of the writ.
- You must use the *Special Envelope for the Return of the Writ* ([EC 11510](#)) in order to do so.
- The electoral process formally ends when you return the endorsed writ of election in which the candidate is named.

1.7.3 Notice of Election

Within four days after the issue of the writ, you shall sign and issue a *Notice of Election* to notify the public of important election information.

The *Notice of Election* ([EC 10020](#)) is available in the Field Assignment Management Tool (FAMT) after the writ is issued.

Elements on the Notice

The following must appear on the *Notice of Election* ([EC 10020](#)):

- Deadline for the receipt of nominations (date and hour)
- Date for polling day
- Date, time and place for the validation of results
- Name of your ED and address of your RO office
- The date it is issued
- Your signature



The validation date indicated must be no later than seven days after polling day and must be as soon as possible after the ballot boxes have been sent/transferred.

Insert the above information on the *Notice of Election e-form* in both French and English (available in FAMT under “Forms”). Translation services are available at EC. Send a copy of the English text to EC through FAMT. On receipt, EC will specify a time frame within which the corresponding French text will be returned.

In all provinces except Quebec, the English text must appear on the left side of the page, the French text must be on the right. Conversely, in Quebec, the French text must appear on the left of the page, and the English text must be on the right. The French text must include accents.

Verification and distribution

Before publicly distributing the *Notice of Election* ([EC 10020](#)), upload a copy for EC approval as instructed. Once approved by EC, photocopy the *Notice of Election* on white bond paper 8½" x 11". Upload one signed copy in the forms portal for EC access, post one copy in your office and send one copy to every registered political party. The *Notice of Election* will also be published in the Political Entities Service Centre (PESC) portal.

1.7.4 Other legislative requirements

You are also bound by other federal laws. The following two acts will notably impact your work:

- [Official Languages Act](#) – ensures respect for English and French as the official languages of Canada, in particular when communicating with or providing services to the public
- [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) – protects individuals against discrimination from employers or service providers and states that all individuals should have an equal opportunity with other individuals and to have their needs accommodated

1.8 Professional conduct

You are expected to conduct yourself in accordance with the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector.¹ Furthermore, you shall respect human dignity and the value of every person by:

- Treating every person with respect and fairness
- Valuing diversity and the benefit of combining the unique qualities and strengths inherent in a diverse workforce
- Helping to create and maintain safe and healthy workplaces that are free from harassment and discrimination
- Working together in a spirit of openness, honesty and transparency that encourages engagement, collaboration and respectful communication
- Acting at all times with integrity and in a manner that will bear the closest public scrutiny, an obligation that may not be fully satisfied by simply acting within the law
- Fostering a work environment that promotes teamwork, learning and innovation

All ROs, AROs and AAROs and FLOs are bound by the *Code of Professional Conduct for Election Administrators*, as it addresses compliance with EC's mission and values and its guiding principles. The Code highlights their obligations in the following areas:

- Expected behaviours
- Avoiding real or perceived conflicts of interest
- Ensuring impartiality
- Managing an office
- Appointing election officers and office staff
- Using social media
- Business transactions and contracting

The Code is updated periodically to help you apply EC's core values while at work. For more information on these obligations, consult the *Code of Professional Conduct for Election Administrators* ([EC 10044](#)).

1.9 IT policies

All election administrators are to adhere to EC's policies in the course of their activities, namely:

- [*Election Canada Policy on the Use of Wireless Telecommunications Devices*](#)
- [*Policy on the Acceptable Use of IT Infrastructure \(AUP\)*](#)

¹ [Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector.](#)

1.10 Tools and aids

The following tools and aids are among those that you have access to.

Event+

Event+ is your one-stop shop for the online aide-mémoire and all event-related communications. To reduce the amount of emails you receive during an event, all communications are posted on the Field Personnel Intranet to provide information, instructions or changes/updates to procedures. In all cases, the information contained therein will take precedence over printed versions of EC manuals and guidebooks.

ECDocs

ECDocs is EC's repository for election officials and administrators to find the information and resources they need to perform their duties. It now features a search engine and a more user-friendly interface. ECDocs contains the most up-to-date versions of EC's operational manuals, guides, forms, checklists and other documents, in both official languages, and in PDF printable formats.

Since [ECDocs](#) is part of the Field Personnel Intranet (RODS), you need to log in using an EC device.

Tasks

Your tasks cover a wide range of activities. To help you navigate through these tasks and to outline the expected timelines during an event, consult [Appendix A – Overview of your tasks before, during and after an electoral event](#) in this volume. The *RO Aide-mémoire*, posted online during an event, provides ample detail on the activities during the event.

Checklists

Checklists are provided throughout all volumes and have been placed following their relevant topic.

Templates

To help save time and standardize processes, templates are provided, e.g. form letters, meeting agenda structures, discussions, and follow-ups. Hyperlinks are provided for the templates that have been uploaded on the Field Personnel Intranet.

Figures (samples)

Samples of forms and documents are included in the Manual for illustrative purposes where appropriate and possible.

1.11 Health and safety at work

Elections Canada is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and respectful working environment. You are responsible for ensuring that the workplaces you oversee (i.e., your RO office, and all polls and ESPs when applicable) are safe and healthy, and that employees treat each other and the public with respect.

1.11.1 Prevention of harassment and violence in the workplace

Every person is entitled to a work environment free of harassment and violence. In all interactions in the RO office, the AARO office, at ESPs, in acute care facilities and at the polls, election administrators are expected to treat everyone with respect and dignity.

This promotes a healthy and safe work environment and fosters collaboration, participation and respectful communications.

In its new *Policy on Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention* that took effect March 14, 2022², EC defines workplace harassment and violence as follows:

Any action, conduct or comment, including of a sexual nature, that can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or other physical or psychological injury or illness to an employee, including any prescribed action, conduct or comment.

Your responsibilities

- You are the person in your office who will be responsible for receiving and reporting incidents of harassment and violence; in the AARO office(s), designate the AARO, and at polling places, the central poll supervisor (CPS).
- Ensure that the person designated to receive complaints (if it is not you) has knowledge, training and experience in issues relating to harassment and violence and has knowledge of relevant legislation. Policies are being developed in these areas, and training materials address these issues.
- Inform your staff about who this designated person is if they need to report an occurrence of harassment or violence. Also inform them about the option of contacting the Operational Complaints and Incidents Unit (OCIU), directly or via the Public Enquiries Unit (PEU) if they are more at ease to do so ([How to reach us](#)).
- Inform your staff that EC has a zero-tolerance policy in matters of harassment and violence. Model respectful behaviour for your staff.
- Make readily available to employees (in print and electronic form):
 - a copy of the above definition and related information materials provided by EC
 - *Code of Professional Conduct for Election Administrators*
 - any other information related to health and safety.

² Posted on the [EC Intranet](#).

- The designated person is responsible for setting the example. This person should take measures to prevent and protect against harassment and violence in the workplace, respond promptly to occurrences of harassment and violence in the workplace and offer support to employees affected by such occurrences.
- If there is an occurrence of harassment and/or violence, fill out one of the forms below and send it to OCIU without delay ([How to reach us](#)). OCIU will provide feedback and guidance. If the incident or injury occurred:
 - at the **RO office**, the **AARO office** or at an **ESP**, use the *Annex to the Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Report* ([EC 10014](#))
 - at a **polling place**, use the *Incident Report Form* ([EC 10051](#))

Consult [Appendix D – Handling accidents in the workplace](#) for the procedures.



The person reporting the occurrence of harassment and violence shall not reveal the identity of the person who was involved in such an occurrence, without the person's consent.

1.11.2 Scents in the workplace

Exposure to scented products or certain foods, such as seafood or peanuts, can have an adverse effect on colleagues and clients with certain conditions such as allergies, asthma and environmental sensitivities. Products such as personal or office cleaning solutions, perfumes, air fresheners or aftershaves, or the smell of certain foods can trigger a mild or severe reaction in some people. Exposure to allergenic substances can make it difficult for individuals to function in the workplace. Situations involving external clients or large numbers of people – for example, meetings, training sessions and events – can be particularly problematic. If someone raises a concern, be sure to take quick and appropriate action to address the matter.

You should refrain from wearing fragrances (e.g., perfume and cologne). Ask your office staff and poll workers to do the same. If you are required to source products locally for your office or for the polls, choose fragrance-free products whenever possible.

Promote awareness

Place posters in the common office areas such as meeting rooms, training room and lunch rooms in order to promote awareness to allergies and sensitivities.

1.11.3 Non-smoking policy

Smoking is prohibited in polling places, the office or any area where training is given. It is your responsibility to ensure that staff and visitors adhere to this policy. You should also be aware of any applicable provincial or municipal rules.

At the polls, electors, election officers and candidates should be politely reminded, when necessary, that smoking is prohibited.

E-cigarettes and other electronic smoking products

Elections Canada's current policy states that:

Based on the information currently available regarding the health and safety implications of these devices, **the use of electronic smoking products** within EC workplaces **is not permitted**.

This prohibition extends to returning offices, AARO offices, AARO–ESP offices, polling places and training areas.

Chapter 2 – Accessibility



For more information on accessibility, consult:
Volume II, *Accessibility at the polls* in Chapter 10

2.1 Legislation related to accessibility

The following laws, acts and charters stipulate that equal rights be granted to all Canadians, including people with disabilities, among them:

- The [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) prohibits treating an individual differently based on a prohibited ground of discrimination in providing a service or in employment, including refusing to hire them or terminating their employment because of a prohibited ground.
- The [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom](#):
“Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.”
- The [Accessible Canada Act](#):

5 The purpose of this Act is to benefit all persons, especially persons with disabilities, through the realization, within the purview of matters coming within the legislative authority of Parliament, of a Canada without barriers, on or before January 1, 2040, particularly by the identification and removal of barriers, and the prevention of new barriers, in the following areas:

 - (a) employment;
 - (b) the built environment;
 - (c) information and communication technologies;
 - (c.1) communication, other than information and communication technologies;
 - (d) the procurement of goods, services and facilities;
 - (e) the design and delivery of programs and services [...]

6 This Act is to be carried out in recognition of, and in accordance with, the following principles:

 - (a) all persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities;
 - (b) all persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have regardless of their disabilities;
 - (c) all persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities;

- (d) all persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities;
- (e) laws, policies, programs, services and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by persons; [...]"

2.2 James Peter Hughes v. Elections Canada – a case study

Mr. James Hughes uses a wheelchair or walker. He voted in downtown Toronto, near St. Basil's Church, the polling location used in the 2008 by-election and the 2008 general election.

On both occasions, he found the accessible entrance to the building to be locked. He used another non-accessible entrance with great difficulty, descending stairs "on the seat of his pants". Once in the polling station, he discovered that the placement of the voting tables was too close together and that his path was blocked. While he was assisted in leaving the polling station, he was forced to climb a steep ramp and exit through heavy doors without an automatic door opener. For the general election, the path outside the door was covered in snow and only partially cleared.

Mr. Hughes complained to Elections Canada after his first voting experience at the 2008 by-election, but the issues were not resolved for the general election. Elections Canada was not responsive. Mr. Hughes made a complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal heard Mr. Hughes' complaint and found that Elections Canada had failed both to provide barrier-free access to voting for Mr. Hughes, and to adequately investigate and resolve his complaints. In summary, the Tribunal ordered that Mr. Hughes receive compensation and that Elections Canada take a number of steps to remedy the systemic problems underlying the complaint. Those steps included extensive consultation with the disability community, improved policies and communication, signage, training and a dedicated accessibility complaint process.

The full text of the Tribunal's Reasons for Decision is available here:

<http://canlii.ca/t/28c82>. You are encouraged to read them in full.

2.2.1 Case study questions

In compliance to the above summary from the decision by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, EC has several established procedures to ensure polling places are accessible for ALL electors.

Following the reading of the summary, take a moment to reflect on the following questions:

- What would you have done had you been Mr. Hughes?
- How would you have reacted had you been the election officer providing assistance?
- How could the situation have been handled differently? What steps could have been taken to address the obstacles to accessibility?

- Given the new accessibility procedures that EC has put in place, how would this incident be resolved differently if it were to happen during the next general election?

2.3 Accessibility at electoral facilities

A polling place is considered accessible when it meets all *Fifteen mandatory accessibility criteria*. Locations may be temporarily modified in order to meet these mandatory criteria.

“Accessibility” means that the electoral system must be open and barrier-free to all Canadians, and that all efforts must be made to remove:

- Attitudinal barriers that occur between people (i.e. assuming that a person with a speech impediment has an intellectual disability),
- Intellectual barriers (i.e., not recognizing that disabilities are not easily discernible; this means that some electors will have difficulty understanding some information)
- Physical barriers (i.e., features of buildings or spaces that cause problems for people with physical disabilities)

You are responsible for ensuring accessibility in all facilities used during the election. Every effort should be made to assign polling divisions to accessible polling places.

To assist in evaluating the suitability of polling places, consult the *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)).

In order to implement the order in the Hughes case, EC has established 15 mandatory criteria to determine the accessibility polling locations ([Table 2](#)).

2.3.1 Changes to the *Polling Place Suitability Checklist*

During pre-event activities, all polling places used during past events, along with another 10% to use as alternates, will be visited and evaluated using the *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)).

Formerly known as the *Accessibility Checklist*, it has been redesigned to include new accessibility criteria, as well as technological and security requirements (for EDs participating in ESP initiatives). The new requirements include:

- Cellular phone reception
- Security of voting/office room and equipment
- Access to functioning electrical outlets
- Site proximity to public transportation
- Door thresholds to measure 0.64 cm (1/4 inch) or less
- Elector capacity of a polling place
- Building exterior sketch and voting room/ESP office floor plan

2.3.2 Mandatory accessibility criteria

Before signing a lease, you must ensure that the location meets all the following 15 mandatory accessibility criteria. The non-mandatory accessibility criteria are listed in the *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)).

Table 2 Fifteen mandatory accessibility criteria

Number	Criteria
1	Surface of the pathway is firm and obstacle free.
2	Pathway is at least 920 mm wide (36 inches). Be sure to take a measurement at the narrowest part of the pathway.
3	Building provides a level access to the entrance (no steps).
4	The building has exterior lighting.
5	The building exterior is free of protruding objects.
6	Exterior door has a clear opening width of 810 mm (32 inches). Measure the width of the door.
7	Exterior door threshold meets maximum standard of 6 mm (¼ inch).
8	Weight of the entrance door allows it to be easily opened.
9	Building interior door has a clear opening width of 810 mm (32 inches). Measure the width of the door.
10	Weight of interior doors allows them to be easily opened.
11	Interior door threshold meets maximum standard of 6 mm (¼ inch).
12	Corridors have a minimum width of 920 mm (36 inches). Measure the width of the corridor.
13	Interior of the building is free of any protruding objects.
14	Voting room is on the same level as the entrance.
15	Interior lighting works.

2.4 Communicating accessibility information to electors



The Field Planning Tool (FPT) is a new application designed as a tracking tool to help ROs plan and deliver the GE. Its Facility Management Module is the polling place database used during pre-event. Consult the *Field Planning Tool User's Guide for Returning Officers* ([EC 10079](#)) to explore its features and functionality.

Ensuring the accuracy of the information in the FPT is critical to the integrity of delivering accessibility information to electors about their polling place. During the election, the information from the 15 mandatory accessibility criteria on the *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)) for each polling place will be displayed on the EC website under the [Voter Information Service](#) tab. As well, the *Suitability Checklist* is read by REVISE to populate the accessibility statement on the Voter Information Card (VIC). Use the reports in the FPT to help identify polling places with incomplete accessibility information.

The chart below shows which symbols are displayed to convey a polling place's accessibility status.

Status	iSites	ROPS/SITES	On the VIC / VIS
Accessible (meets all 15 mandatory criteria)			This site meets all 15 accessibility criteria 
Level Access (fails to meet a mandatory criteria, but has level access)			Wheelchair accessible 
Inaccessible (does not have level access)			This site has no wheelchair access. [VIS] See the details now to ensure this site meets your needs or contact your returning officer to discuss your options.

Figure 1 Polling place accessibility status symbols

2.5 Accessibility mitigations

When looking for new polling places, you must remember to select those that are already fully accessible for people with physical disabilities or that can be temporarily modified in order to meet EC's accessibility criteria.

The following are some accessibility mitigation strategies:

1. Some polling places need very few yet indispensable modifications, such as floor mats, wedges, etc. During site visits, take note of these modifications as you may need to purchase general items for mitigation using your EC acquisition card. For further information on using your acquisition card, refer to the section on the [Elections Canada acquisition card](#).
2. Some polling places may not be equipped with automatic door opening devices. As it is not feasible for EC to install such devices, take note of sites that may require additional information officers to assist electors. Their sole purpose would be to guide electors requesting assistance to open the main door of the polling place and all doors on the access path to the voting room. These information officers are to remain at their position for the entire polling day (or whichever shift you may establish).
3. While parking is not a mandatory accessibility criterion, it is preferable that the polling place provide parking if available. At least one parking space must be reserved for electors with a functional limitation. If there is no parking space reserved for electors with a disability, identify a few spaces using the international accessibility signs provided (EC 50167).
4. It may be necessary to temporarily modify a building to make it accessible, for example, building or renting temporary ramps to provide safe access to polling places where there is no ramp or where existing ramps do not meet the accessibility criteria. In this case, submit a *Special Request Form* for additional budget to ECHQ (coming in EC Connex).

In cases where accessibility issues cannot be mitigated, CEO approval is needed to use a location that does not have level access or that has level access but fails a mandatory accessibility criterion. For further information, see [CEO authorizations](#).

2.6 Modifications to polling places

When it is impossible to find an accessible polling place that meets all 15 mandatory and to the extent possible, all non-mandatory criteria, the building may be temporarily modified. Elections Canada must approve all expenditures in writing prior to any temporary modification.

Temporary modifications

Elections Canada strives to make voting accessible to all eligible electors and encourages ROs to discuss with landlords any temporary modifications required to make a polling place accessible. With the landlord's permission, ROs can then hire contractors, and rent or purchase equipment in order to temporarily render the site fully accessible.

Examples of accessibility issues which may require modifications include (but are not limited to):

- Ramps
- Walkways

- Door thresholds
- Outdoor lighting
- Handrails
- Carpets or mats
- Protruding objects

Where a polling place is not accessible but could be rendered accessible through temporary modifications, and with the prior approval of the building owner, obtain an estimate from three suppliers for the construction of a temporary modification. Submit a *Special Request* to ECHQ in EC Connex and wait for approval. Your request should include the cost for installing and dismantling the ramps or other necessary materials.



In remote locations, only one estimate is required.

When a quote/proposal for modifications is accepted, it is necessary for the contractor to discuss with the property owner or representative of the facility the exact modification required. This is necessary to avoid misunderstandings and to ensure that the property owner knows exactly what is being built or modified.

When a polling place requires only minor modifications, such as adding proper signage, ramps for the curb or a small ramp for a threshold, you are not to take any action before the issue of the writ or until you receive instructions to proceed from EC.

When a building that does not meet one or more of the 15 mandatory accessibility criteria must still be used as a polling place, you must request permission from the CEO to use it as a non-accessible location. You must submit a *Special Request* in EC Connex so that the CEO may approve the site. If authorization is granted, you will receive notification from ECHQ. For more information on the use of an inaccessible polling place, consult the *Directive on Accessibility Exemptions when Selecting a Suitable Polling Place* on the [EC website](#).

Permanent modifications

Permanent modifications to the building are not permitted and should not be discussed with the landlord.

For insurance and liability considerations, permanent changes to polling places are not permitted. Any changes made to a polling place must be temporary; the polling place must be returned to the landlord in its original state at the end of the lease, without exceptions.

If a landlord offers to make permanent changes to their property so that it can meet our accessibility standards for future elections, you may provide them with a list of Elections Canada's 15 mandatory criteria outlined on the *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)).

2.6.1 CEO authorizations

While completing your polling place search during pre-event activities, you may come across places that will require special authorization from the CEO. These three situations require such special authorization:

1. Assigning more than 10 polling stations in one polling place

This happens when a polling place becomes unavailable, and you have to reassign the electors who were assigned to the lost location. You may also need to assign more than 10 polling stations to a polling place if you have limited options for polling places.

2. A polling site is not accessible and cannot be made accessible

Using a polling site that does not meet all mandatory accessibility criteria is considered a non-accessible site. This will have a direct impact on the Voter Information Services page on the EC website and on the VIC sent to all electors. In this case, the message will ask electors with disabilities to contact your office to make special arrangements in order to vote. Office staff and poll workers should be made aware that this site does not meet all the mandatory accessibility criteria, and of the alternate service options available to electors who may require them.

Consult the *Directive on Accessibility Exemptions when Selecting a Suitable Polling Place* on the [EC website](#) for more information on what the CEO, using his discretion under the Act, considers when choosing to approve an inaccessible polling place when a suitable accessible polling location is not available.

3. You have to use a location outside of your ED

For the sake of proximity and familiarity with locations, you may have to use a location outside of your ED. This may happen in remote areas where suitable polling places are scarce.

Following polling place visits and evaluations, a request for CEO permission should be submitted to ECHQ if polling places in your ED meet one or more of the above scenarios. Authorization will follow either during the pre-event period or following the issuance of the writ.

2.7 Collecting accessibility data

You collect information for each potential polling place in the FPT application. This information includes accessibility data that reflects the mandatory requirements. The collection of accessibility data allows EC to maintain a database that includes a national inventory of potential offices and polling places and their respective accessibility information.

2.7.1 National database of electoral facilities

The use of this database is not limited to EC and RO offices. EC shares polling places accessibility information with internal and external groups. Community groups are invited to assist at updating the accessibility information, so it is important that the collected information be complete and accurate.

Groups interested in the information are:

- Provincial and municipal election organizations
- Operations and Field Governance, to monitor election readiness and prepare post-election reports
- Public Enquiries, to respond to queries from the public such as "Where do I vote?"
- Members of Parliament and candidates
- Electoral Financing, to conduct analyses on projected electoral event costs
- The Geographic Information System (GIS) team, to integrate the polling places into the geographical database, in order to make a more comprehensive mapping source
- The REVISE application team so they can produce Voter Information Cards

The *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)) must be completed for every place used during an electoral event. The information from the checklist is read by REVISE to populate the accessibility statement on the Voter Information Card and will be displayed for each polling place during the election on the Elections Canada website.

2.8 Electors requiring assistance to vote

The following information pertains to advance/ordinary and mobile polls and voting in RO offices and describes the procedures that the DRO and service agents must follow when assisting electors both in the RO office and at polling places. Some tools are also described.

2.8.1 Assisting an elector with a disability

At the polls

Upon request from an elector who is unable to vote in the manner prescribed by the CEA because of a disability or inability to read, the DRO must assist the elector in the presence of another election officer. Electors may require different levels of assistance. It may take more time for an elector with a disability or elderly person to complete every action.

In your office

The designated election officer shall assist the elector by ensuring that he understands and agrees with the declaration on the outer envelope, writing the elector's name where the elector's signature is to be written, and marking the ballot as directed by the elector in the elector's presence. Also, the officer shall affix a sticker to that effect on the back of the envelope indicating that the elector was assisted.

2.8.2 Assisting an elector with a visual impairment

Elections Canada provides four types of devices to assist an elector with a visual impairment to vote independently and secretly:

- **Voting template** ([EC 50170](#)) – If the elector wishes to use the *Voting Template*, the DRO assists the elector as indicated in the *Deputy Returning Officer Guidebook – Serving Electors* ([EC 50300](#)) and the *Deputy Returning Officer Guidebook – Incarcerated Electors* ([EC 77060](#)), available in [ECDocs](#).
- **List of Candidates in Large Print** ([EC 50174](#)) – You will supply each DRO with three copies of the *List of Candidates in Large Print*.
- **Magnifier with light** ([EC 50285](#)) – EC provides a *Magnifier with light* at all polling places. All the magnifying glasses have a built-in light and a magnification of 4X. The magnifying glasses are to be placed in plain sight; however, do not assume that electors will be able to see them.
- **Braille List of Candidates** ([EC 50173](#)) – On polling day, the CPS will have the *Braille List of Candidates* (in English and in French). On the *Braille List of Candidates*, the candidates' names and their political affiliation are reproduced in the same order as on the printed ballot. The candidates' names have been numbered, and those numbers correspond to the numbers on the voting template. The DRO is to help an elector who wishes to use the *Braille List of Candidates*.

The DRO is to advise the elector that some of these tools are available for use.

A updated list of offerings is available on the [EC website](#) > Accessibility Policy and Service Offering.

2.8.3 Assistance from a friend, spouse, common-law partner or relative

A friend, spouse, common-law partner or relative may help an elector to mark a ballot, but only if requested by the elector. The person assisting the elector does not have to be a qualified elector in the ED but shall first make a solemn declaration in the prescribed form. Some electors may be accompanied by a personal support worker. These support workers may assist the elector as a “friend.”



A friend may assist only one elector to mark their ballot on polling day. This restriction does not apply to a spouse, common-law partner or relative.

2.9 Handling accessibility complaints

Electors, poll workers, candidates, or anyone else may call or visit your office at any time in the election period to report incidents or complaints. In general, you or the ARO directly handles all incidents and complaints. Decide who will be responsible and instruct staff to direct all incidents and complaints to that person.



The CPS must be conscious of obstacles that may impede electors from voting throughout the day. If an elector voices a concern in this regard, the CPS must:

- Invite the elector to explain the situation
- If the issue can be resolved immediately, inform the elector that the necessary steps will be taken to rectify the problem

- If the issue cannot be resolved immediately, inform the elector that the situation will be reported to the RO, who will attempt to resolve the issue on the same day
- If the elector still wishes to submit a written complaint about an **accessibility** issue, provide the *Feedback on Accessibility and Voter Experience Form* ([EC 50119](#))
- If the elector chooses to complete the feedback form and requests assistance, the CPS must ensure that all the relevant sections are completed:
 - the elector may wish to remain anonymous (the elector's name and address are optional)
 - the elector must retain the white copy for his records
 - if the elector wishes, he may take the form to complete later

Reporting accessibility complaints

As detailed in C14 of Volume II of this manual, all complaints related to accessibility at the polls must be logged into the ICBMS.

This system is designed for two purposes:

- Logging and tracking the information recorded on the *Feedback on Accessibility and Voter Experience Form* ([EC 50119](#)), which is completed by an elector who encounters any accessibility or other issues at the polling place, or who wishes to provide voter feedback
- Producing reports that will subsequently be used by various Operations and Field Governance teams to track dispute resolution progress by ROs

For instructions on this system, consult the *ICBMS User's Guide* in the [RO Toolkit](#) (Field Personnel Intranet).

2.10 Duty to accommodate

This section will help guide your work with elections officers, electors and office personnel. The “duty to accommodate” described in the *Canadian Human Rights Act* is the obligation to take measures to remove barriers resulting from a rule, policy or physical environment that may have adverse effects on persons or groups on prohibited grounds.

Prohibited grounds of discrimination are listed in the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#).

The duty to accommodate takes this into account, and includes any of the “grounds of discrimination,” with a focus on the barriers faced by people with disabilities.

People with disabilities face barriers in their everyday lives. They also face barriers when participating in the electoral process. There are three main types of barriers: physical, informational and attitudinal.

2.10.1 Barriers to the electoral process

Physical barriers

Physical barriers are features of buildings or spaces that cause problems for people with disabilities. Examples include:

- A heavy door
- Narrow hallways and doorways
- Tables that are too high
- Poor lighting
- Doorknobs that are difficult to grasp
- Parking spaces that are too narrow

Informational barriers

Informational barriers describe instances where a person cannot easily understand information. Examples include:

- Print that is too small to read
- Websites that do not support screen-reading software
- Signs that are not clear or easily understood
- Text that is not written in plain language

Attitudinal barriers

Attitudinal barriers describe instances where people are discriminated against based on misconceptions about their disabilities. Examples include:

- Thinking that people with disabilities are inferior or cannot do the job
- Assuming that a person with a disability is completely incapable
- Assuming that a person who has a speech impairment cannot understand you
- Not considering the possibility that a person may have a disability that you may not easily recognize

Attitudinal barriers are most often apparent in the words used while communicating with each other. Language based on negative attitudes may be used unintentionally or may be used without wanting to be insensitive. The next section provides tips on communicating effectively with people with disabilities and examples of language to use to shape more positive attitudes. Make sure to apply them daily.

The RO, EC, office staff and election officers are all required to make every reasonable effort to accommodate anyone with a physical, mental or developmental disability, regardless as to whether that person is an elector, a potential or hired election officer or an employee.

If any staff member notices a situation where accommodation might be required, they are to address the issue with you – even more so if the accommodation requires an expense or would potentially place undue hardship on the workflow. If any staff member requires accommodation for himself, he can communicate to you his own accommodation needs.

The idea is to prevent barriers to accessibility in the first place, rather than to remove them retroactively. For example, arrange to have the training room on the ground floor, rather than trying to determine how to help a person in a wheelchair get up and down stairs.

The duty to accommodate has limits. Sometimes accommodation is not possible because it would cause an organization “undue hardship”. Each situation should be viewed as unique and assessed individually. If you have concerns about particular accommodation, contact ECHQ. Do not try to make a determination about “undue hardship” by yourself.



Refusing an accommodation could result in liability for EC or for the ROs if the person requesting accommodation files a human rights complaint.

For more information on overcoming negative attitudes through improper language, consult the Government of Canada's [Accessibility Resource Centre](#).

2.10.2 Communicating effectively with persons with disabilities

The tips in this section are examples of measures to be taken as part of your duty to accommodate. Other tips on the list are reminders on how to more positively interact with people, regardless of their abilities.

General

- Put people first and say: “Person with a disability” to put the focus on the person instead of the disability. [Rather than saying “disabled person”]
- Avoid statements that make it seem like a person with a disability should be pitied such as “victim of,” “suffers with,” or “stricken with” and words such as “burden,” “incompetent” or “defective.” Simply say “person with a disability”.
- Avoid categorizing people with disabilities as super-achievers or tragic figures. Choose words that are nonjudgmental and that convey accurate descriptions.
- Do not assume what people can or cannot do. Just because they have one disability does not mean that they have another.
- If you are not familiar with the disability, wait until people describe their situation instead of making incorrect assumptions.
- If you offer help, wait until you receive permission and then ask for instructions on how you can help.
- Speak normally, clearly and directly to people instead of to a companion or interpreter.
- Do not touch or speak to service animals – they are working and must pay attention at all times.
- Patience, politeness and willingness to find a way to communicate are the best tools.
- It is appropriate to shake hands when introduced to people with a disability. People with limited hand use or who wear an artificial limb can still shake hands.

- Do not be embarrassed if you happen to use accepted, common expressions such as “see you later” or “got to be running along” or “take care”.

Over the phone

- Do not worry about how the person's voice sounds. Concentrate on what is being said.
- Be patient; do not interrupt or finish people's sentences. Give them time to explain themselves.
- Do not try to guess what they are saying. If you do not understand, do not pretend. Just ask again.
- If you are not certain what was said, just repeat or rephrase what you have heard.
- Speak normally and directly to the person, not an interpreter or companion.

People who are deaf or blind

- Do not assume what people can or cannot do. Some people who are deaf or blind have some sight or hearing.
- They are likely to explain how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to best do so.
- Identify yourself to the elector and the interpreter when you approach the person who is deaf or blind.
- Never touch a person who is deaf or blind suddenly or without permission unless it is an emergency.

People who have hearing disabilities

- Always ask how you can help. Do not shout. Just speak in a normal tone of voice.
- Get their attention before speaking. The best way is gently waving your hand.
- Make sure you are in a well-lit area so they can see your face.
- If necessary, ask if another method of communicating would be easier (e.g. a pen and paper).
- Do not put your hands in front of your face when speaking.
- Be clear and precise when giving directions and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure they understand what you say.
- If the person uses a hearing aid, try to speak in an area with few competing sounds.

People who have visual disabilities

- Identify yourself when you approach them.
- Never touch them without asking permission, unless it is an emergency.
- If you are giving directions or verbal information, be precise and clear. For example, if you are approaching a door or an obstacle, say so.

- Do not just assume people cannot see you.
- Do not leave people in the middle of a room. Direct them to a chair or guide them to a comfortable location.
- Do not walk away without saying good-bye.

People who have speech or language impairments

- If you do not understand, ask them to repeat the information.
- If you can, ask questions that can be answered by “yes” or “no.”
- Do not interrupt or finish their sentences. Wait for them to finish.

People who have physical disabilities

- They may have their own way of doing things. They will identify their needs to you.
- Ask before you help and be patient.
- Do not touch assistive devices unnecessarily, including wheelchairs, unless it is an emergency.
- Provide people with information about accessible features of the building (e.g. automatic doors, accessible washrooms).
- Remove obstacles and rearrange furniture to ensure clear passage.
- Place yourself at eye level when speaking with a person in a wheelchair or on crutches.

People who have learning disabilities

- When you know they have a learning disability, ask how you can best help.
- Take the time – people with some kinds of learning disabilities may take a little longer to understand and respond.
- Try to find ways to provide information that works best for them. For example, have a paper and pen handy.
- Be courteous and patient. They will let you know how to best provide service in a way that works for them.

People with intellectual or developmental disabilities

- Use plain language and speak in short sentences.
- Make sure they understand what you say.
- If you cannot understand what is being said, do not pretend. Just ask again.
- Provide one piece of information at a time.

People who have mental health disabilities

- Treat them with respect and consideration.
- Be confident and reassuring. Listen carefully and work with them to meet their needs.
- If they appear to be in a crisis, ask them to tell you the best way to help.

Information in the following table is derived from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, the Ontario Education Services Corporation and Employment and Social Development Canada.³

Table 3 Acceptable terms to use when referring to people with disabilities

Instead of	Use
Birth defect, congenital defect, deformity	Person born with a disability Person who has a congenital disability
Blind (the), visually impaired (the)	Person who is blind Person with a visual impairment
Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair- bound	Person who uses a wheelchair Wheelchair user
Cripple, crippled, lame	Person with a disability Person with a mobility impairment Person who has a spinal cord injury, arthritis, etc.
Hard of hearing (the), hearing impaired	Person who is hard of hearing Note: These individuals are not deaf and may compensate for a hearing loss with an amplification device or system.
Deaf-mute, deaf and dumb	Person who is deaf Note: Culturally-linguistically deaf people (that is, sign language users) are properly identified as “the Deaf” (upper-case “D”). People who do not use sign language are properly referred to as “the deaf” (lower-case “d”) or “persons who are deaf.”
Epileptic (the)	Person who has epilepsy
Fit, attack, spell	Seizure
Handicapped (the)	Person with a disability
Handicapped parking, bathrooms	Accessible parking Accessible bathrooms

³ [Employment and Social Development Canada](#), “A Way with Words and Images”, retrieved on November 2, 2017.

Instead of	Use
Inarticulate, incoherent	Person who has a speech disorder Person who has a speech disability
Insane (unsound mind), lunatic, maniac, mental patient, mentally diseased, mentally ill, neurotic, psychotic	Person with a mental health disability Note: The term “insane” (unsound mind) should only be used in a strictly legal sense. The expression “person with a mental health disability” is broad. If relevant, you can specify the type of disability, for example, “person who has depression” or “person who has schizophrenia.”
Invalid	Person with a disability
Learning disabled, learning disordered, dyslexic (the)	Person with a learning disability
Mentally retarded, defective, feeble minded, idiot, imbecile, moron, retarded, simple, mongoloid	Person with an intellectual disability Note: If relevant, specify the type of disability.
Normal	Person without a disability
Person who has trouble...	Person who needs...
Physically challenged, physically handicapped, physically impaired	Person with a disability
Spastic	Person who has spasms
Suffers from, stricken with, afflicted by	Person with a disability Note: People with disabilities do not necessarily suffer.
Victim of cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.	Person who has cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc. Person with a mobility impairment Person with a disability

Chapter 3 – Confidentiality and security guidelines



For more information on confidentiality, consult:
Volume II, *Use and storage of sensitive information* in Chapter 3

3.1 Elector information

You must be aware of the need to respect and safeguard the privacy of ALL information about electors and staff members at all times. All elector information must be kept out of public view except as required by the CEA. Documents containing elector information are to be secured at the end of each day to prevent anyone from accessing them. Ensure that all scrap paper with elector information is returned to ECHQ for shredding.

Access to REVISE must be restricted to authorized personnel at all times. Authorized personnel must only access lists of electors and other elector information for electoral purposes.

For example, when a poll worker is checking information on lists of electors, he must not disclose any information about the electors listed at that address even if they are listed at the same address.

3.2 Data and systems

The automation coordinator (AC) should have his workstation in a separate office within or near the service centre in order to quickly troubleshoot any technical issues that may arise while service agents are serving electors. This will also ensure that the server can be secured.

You must ensure that the AC:

- Maintains unique user IDs and passwords for each service centre employee (in the event that a service agent or a service centre support officer is terminated)
- Does not leave USB flash drives containing data at a workstation or on a table
- Gives you the server back-up external drive for safe storage off the premises
- Always locks or logs out of his computer when stepping away from his workstation to prevent unauthorized access
- Does not allow unauthorized personnel in the service centre
- Limits access to the filing system where revision documents are stored
- Does not leave printed lists or journal reports containing elector information in public view

At the end of the workday, such lists and reports must be safely stored (in a locked cabinet, if possible). Do not discard or recycle scrap paper containing elector information.

3.3 While serving electors

The service centre should be set up so that when the service agents are using computers to capture elector information, the monitors are not visible to the electors. Service agents are to always make sure they put away all forms containing elector information in a file folder.

In the voting areas, the voting screens should be set up against a wall or office dividers to maintain the secrecy of the vote. They should never be in front of windows or areas with traffic.

3.4 During staff training

During office staff and election officer training, the confidentiality of elector information must be emphasized. Poll workers will come in contact with personal information regarding friends, family, neighbours, colleagues and others; this information must remain private.

Confidentiality guidelines are also provided to all election officers during classroom training sessions to emphasize the importance of protecting personal information.

The *Notice to Employees* ([EC 10125](#)) is to be posted in your office and distributed to all staff as they are hired to ensure they fully understand procedures for handling personal information.

3.5 Disposing of documents containing personal information

ALL confidential elector information is to be returned to ECHQ after the event.
Shredding documents locally is strictly forbidden.

Chapter 4 – Official languages

4.1 Elections Canada's commitment

You have a duty, under the *Official Languages Act*, to ensure that Canadians can communicate with and obtain services from designated offices, in the official language of their choice. In this context, the following are considered designated offices:

- Your office;
- An office within the National Capital Region, for example, polling places, advance polling places, AARO offices, and external service point (ESP) offices;
- An office where there is significant demand for services in either official language, for example, polling places, advance polling places, AARO offices, and ESP offices.

ROs also have a duty to ensure all reasonable efforts are made to provide high-quality communications with and services to the public in both official languages at all offices across the country.

Communications with and services to the public include any contact (written and oral) with the public, such as greeting visitors, at reception, at public events, during voting, on signs and postings, as well as in publications.

To this end, Elections Canada has a series of policies and directives to reinforce its commitment to be compliant with the *Official Languages Act*, and to provide you with useful tools and guidance on the subject:

- *Inventory of Official Languages Actions, Obligations and Resources for Returning Officers* ([EC 14003](#))
- *Policy on Official Languages for Field Personnel* ([EC 14000](#))
- *Directive for Field Personnel on Official Languages for Communications and Services* ([EC 14001](#))
- *Directive for Field Personnel on Official Languages for People Management* ([EC 14002](#))
- *Official Languages: Understanding the Distinction Between Bilingual Regions and Designated Offices* ([EC 14004](#))
- *Official Languages Coordinator: Roles and Responsibilities* ([EC 14005](#))

These resources are posted on the [Field Personnel Intranet](#) (ECDocs).



You are the default official languages coordinator. The associated tasks may be delegated, in whole or in part, to one or several staff members, so as they are in an appropriately senior position.

IMPORTANT

You must prioritize the hiring of bilingual staff and poll workers, and to have at least one designated bilingual person at all times in all designated offices.



You must contact Elections Canada as soon as possible if you are having difficulty recruiting bilingual staff and poll workers or anticipate having difficulties providing bilingual services.

Every effort must be made in all other offices to reach the same objectives, i.e., to prioritize hiring bilingual staff and poll workers, and to have at least one designated bilingual person at all times.

4.1.1 Active offer

Consult the *Inventory of Official Languages Actions, Obligations and Resources for Returning Officers* ([EC 14003](#)) for actions and directives on the subject. A definition of active offer is included in the *Policy on Official Languages for Field Personnel* ([EC 14000](#)).

Active offer starts at the time of initial contact and is a clear verbal and visual indication to members of the public that they can obtain services in both official languages.

You are responsible for ensuring that communications and services of your designated offices are actively offered in English and in French, and in particular that:

- The necessary capacity is in place to communicate with and provide services to members of the public in both official languages;
- There is a backup plan to ensure communication with, and provision of services to, members of the public in both official languages, should your designated bilingual staff member be absent or unavailable;
- The choice between English and French is clearly offered to the member of the public when communication is initiated; and
- The communication continues in the official language chosen by the member of the public.

Providing initial contact as part of the active offer means that ROs, elections officers and office staff use the initial bilingual greeting:

- In Quebec: "Bonjour-Hello"
- Elsewhere in Canada: "Hello-Bonjour"



Bilingual initial contact must be made at every office across Canada.

4.2 Bilingual capacity requirements

4.2.1 Identifying the language needs of an electoral district

Be familiar with the areas in your ED that have significant demand for services in either official language. Significant demand is where 5% or more of a polling division assigned to a specific office reported English or French as their “first official language spoken” in the 2016 census. An office can be a polling place, an advance polling place, an AARO office or an external service point office.



Following the 2021 Statistics Canada census, adjustments to the variables used to measure “significant demand” are expected. Once the readjustment to the EDs is completed (before the 45th GE), these updates will be made available, and this section of the manual will be updated accordingly.

Where there is significant demand, you must ensure the **capacity to communicate and provide services of equal quality in both official languages at all times**.

To identify language needs and to adequately plan the delivery of bilingual services, consult the profile of the polling divisions in your ED, found in GEOExplore on the Field Personnel Intranet ([RO Toolkit](#)).

You can also review data from the latest Statistics Canada decennial census. Its [Languages Reference Guide](#) provides the percentage of the population that reported the “first official language spoken” as being either English or French, and the location.



In collaboration with the recruitment supervisor and the poll operations manager, you **must identify official language needs** as part of the recruitment action plans and activities.

You can leverage your official languages coordinator to assist you in planning and coordinating your official languages procedures.

4.2.2 Recruiting qualified bilingual resources

To facilitate recruiting bilingual staff, election workers and poll workers, communicate with, and seek advice and support from, official language minority organizations in your ED. Generally, these official language minority organizations consist of Francophones residing outside Quebec or Anglophones residing in Quebec.

Information on official language minority organizations at the provincial or territorial level is available in Appendix A of the *Inventory of Official Languages Actions, Obligations and Resources for Returning Officers* ([EC 14003](#)). The Targeted Outreach Program Repository (TOPR), available in the Field Personnel Intranet ([RO Toolkit](#)), provides a list of regional and local official language minority organizations.



If necessary, EC can also assist in conducting phone interviews to assess whether applicants meet bilingual requirements if your office does not have the capacity. Refer to section [4.4.1 Bilingual support services](#).

4.3 Bilingual services in the electoral district



Your official languages coordinator can help you ensure that your official language obligations are fulfilled and can be a valuable resource for official language matters in your office.

4.3.1 Telephone service

Answering a call – Active offer

All staff must use the language of the province or territory's linguistic majority first, and then use the language of its linguistic minority.

Anyone answering the telephones in your office must use the following bilingual greeting:

- In Quebec: "Élections Canada, Bonjour – Elections Canada, Hello!"
- In other provinces or territories: "Elections Canada, Hello – Élections Canada, Bonjour!"

Referring the caller to another person

The caller will respond in the official language of their choice. If the staff member does not speak the caller's chosen language, the caller must be informed that the call will be transferred to someone who does speak it. The staff member should say something to this effect:

- If the caller speaks French: "Un moment s'il vous plaît. Je transmets votre appel à [full name]"
- If the caller speaks English: "One moment, please. I will transfer your call to [full name]"

If the staff member is busy helping other people, he should do one of the following:

- Ask the caller to wait for a few minutes if possible
- Ask the caller to call the designated person at their convenience and provide the contact's name and phone number
- Ask for the caller's name and phone number and have a bilingual EC representative call the client
- Call Elections Canada's Dedicated Linguistic Services Line (consult [*Dedicated linguistic services line*](#))

While the caller is on hold, the staff member should quickly find the designated bilingual person or a bilingual colleague who will assist with the call. **Keep a well-maintained list of bilingual staff readily available.**

Transferring a call

The staff member must then inform the caller that he is transferring him to someone who is bilingual and inform his colleague of the client's language.

After-hours message

All recorded messages must be in both official languages in all EDs.



To help staff members communicate with callers and electors, a brief list of frequently-used expressions in both official languages is available on the Field Personnel Intranet: *Usual Expressions on the Telephone* ([EC 10126](#)).

4.3.2 Reception in designated offices

Reception services in designated offices must be bilingual at all times.

If, as an exception, the receptionist is not bilingual, he should seek assistance from the designated bilingual person or from other bilingual staff on hand. Have a continuity plan to ensure that designated offices can always communicate with and provide services to the public in both official languages; make this plan well known to your staff. **Keep a well-maintained list of bilingual staff readily available.**



Remember that **all RO offices** are considered designated offices.

4.3.3 During targeted revision

Try to ensure that at least one person from each pair of service agents conducting targeted revision can communicate in both official languages. Bilingual service agents must be assigned on a priority basis to polling divisions where there is a significant demand for services in the linguistic minority language. You may also appoint a CRO–Official Languages/Ethnocultural to accompany an SA team who cannot provide services in both official languages.

4.3.4 Polling places

At polling places, when the number of available bilingual workers is low, appoint bilingual workers in priority as central poll supervisors (CPSs), information officers (IOs) and registration officers. These positions are mobile and can be of help to multiple polling stations as well as to the registration desk.

Before the polls open, CPSs must identify the bilingual workers in place to ensure that they have a plan to serve electors in one official language or the other. They must also remind them of the obligation to offer proactively a service in both official languages by greeting electors with “Hello, Bonjour” (outside of Quebec) or “Bonjour, Hello” (in Quebec).

The election officers are also asked to indicate, on their *Election Personnel Identification Card* ([EC 50210](#)), English/Français (outside Quebec) or Français/English (in Quebec) beside their name and title. This will make it easier for electors to identify which employees will be able to serve them in the official language of their choice.



If it is not possible to provide in-person bilingual service at the polling place, the CPS can call a bilingual person at your office, or use the linguistic support tools listed in section [4.4 Elections Canada linguistic support](#).

4.3.5 Bilingual services tent cards

Use *Bilingual Services Tent Cards* ([EC 50151](#)) to indicate that service is available in both official languages. Tent cards must be in clear public view at all times.

4.3.6 Bilingual documents

Ensure that all office staff and all election officers are trained to properly use both official languages in correspondence and documentation. For example:

- Notifications that contain both official languages must be completed in the language of the elector's choice
- Letters must be answered in the official language used by the letter's originator
- Names of political parties on the ballot paper must be bilingual (if the registered name of the political party is bilingual)
- Site information on voter information cards must be bilingual

Official notices

Official notices must be prepared in bilingual format.

Public signs

All public signs and posters must be displayed in both English and French, starting with the official language of the majority of residents in the province or territory. Outside Quebec, the English text must appear to the left or above the French text. In Quebec, the French text must appear to the left or above the English text.

Separate unilingual or double-sided documents must also be displayed in both official languages, either side by side or in a top-down orientation, with French first in Quebec and English first elsewhere in Canada.



Temporary signs must be written correctly in both official languages and must follow the directive for the first official language of the province or territory. Contact Electoral Administration and Procedures at the FSN if you have any concerns or difficulties with the proper writing of temporary signs in both official languages.

4.4 Elections Canada linguistic support

4.4.1 Bilingual support services

Elections Canada provides your office support services so that bilingual services are offered, such as

- Interpretation services: use EC's Dedicated Linguistic Services Line
- Written translation services (provided by exception): send the text that needs to be translated by email to Electoral Administration and Procedures at the FSN

Consult [How to reach us](#) at the beginning of this volume.

4.4.2 Dedicated linguistic services line

If an elector wants to communicate in the minority official language, and no designated bilingual person is available, follow this procedure:

- Respond in the elector's language, ask him to wait one moment and say,
"Un moment s'il vous plaît"
or
"One moment, please"
- Call Elections Canada's Dedicated Linguistic Services Line and request interpretation services.

When the interpreter comes on the line, add the caller to the conference call so that the three of you are on the line. The interpreter will translate the elector's questions and your answers simultaneously.



To access bilingual service using Elections Canada's Dedicated Linguistic Services Line, the telephone must have the conference call option activated.

4.4.3 Bilingual cards

If it is not possible to provide in-person bilingual service, **and as a very last resort**, the following bilingual cards may be used as a support tool to assist a client:



- *Welcome to Your Polling Place* ([EC 50140](#)) – This bilingual card describes the voting process at the polling place and reminds the elector about having identification and their VIC, as this will assist the IO or CPS in determining if the elector is registered or not, and the polling station where the elector is to be directed if they are registered.
- *Bilingual Service Card* ([EC 40109](#)). This card explains that the service agents do not speak the elector's preferred language and refers them to a toll-free number where someone will confirm that they are on the list of electors for the federal election.

Chapter 5 – Communications and public affairs

One of Elections Canada's mandates is to inform Canadians about the electoral process, including registration procedures, and the identification required to vote. This mandate includes conducting education programs for students on the electoral process. To achieve this, EC develops and implements communication campaigns and activities including national outreach and civic education programs. EC also conducts the Voter Information Campaign (formerly called the Elector Reminder Program), a national information campaign to promote and raise awareness during a general election.

5.1 Voter Information Campaign

The Voter Information Campaign's objectives are to ensure that the general population knows when, where, and how to register and vote in a federal election, and to position EC as the authoritative source of information on registration and voting. The Campaign also aims to reach groups of eligible electors who face barriers, or with traditionally lower voter turnout rates, in order to increase their understanding of the electoral process and their participation in the federal election.

Samples of Voter Information Campaign products will be available on the Field Personnel Intranet. You should become familiar with these just in case you receive questions from electors.

All products are available in English and French. EC also provides certain information in a number of heritage and Indigenous languages as well as accessible formats. These resources can be downloaded from the EC website, or by contacting the FSN ([*How to reach us*](#)).

Voter Information Campaign advertising

In addition to communication products, the Voter Information Campaign includes a multi-media advertising campaign that targets different audiences based on age, information needs, geography, and consumption patterns. The campaign outlines the where, when and ways to vote: registration, early voting options, identification requirements, and election day reminders.

You will receive advance notice of dates, subjects and placement of advertisements so you can prepare for related enquiries.

5.2 Civic Education program

As a result of its Civic Education program, EC reaches future electors at the primary and secondary levels, through their teachers, with a goal to preparing them to participate in electoral democracy. EC has developed several free teaching resources that are distributed in Canadian classrooms.

All of these resources have been developed through extensive consultation with educators and tested in classrooms across the country. They connect with curricula in all provinces and territories, covering topics such as media literacy, the history of voting rights, geography and electoral districts, among others.

These resources include teacher's guides, activity cards, videos, and fact sheets. They are available in English, French, and language learner versions. All lessons can be downloaded or ordered from EC's [Elections and Democracy](#) website.

5.3 Electoral event website: the focal point for information

At the issue of the writ, Elections Canada's regular website is replaced with the federal election site with its main focus on voting information. All Voter Information Campaign products and materials, and communications channels direct electors to the EC website.

The website has information for media, potential candidates and candidates, political entities and third parties. The website allows electors to find information on their ED through the Voter Information Service, tells them how to reach EC, and contains feedback forms and other useful downloadable forms. Stakeholders and electors can access tools like infographics, videos and promotional web icons to share information with other Canadians. The Employment section is also featured prominently at the start of the election to facilitate the recruitment of staff.

5.4 Voter Information Card and reminder brochure

Elections Canada sends two printed products directly to electors.

The Voter Information Card (VIC) is sent to all registered electors, with some exceptions, letting them know when, where and how to vote. It is mailed on days 26 to 24.

The reminder brochure provides information on voting dates (advance polls and polling day), other ways to vote, eligibility requirements, acceptable pieces of identification at the poll and registration information. The brochure is also available in braille and audio and is mailed to every household in Canada on days 17 to 14.



Detailed information on the Voter Information Card is outlined in Volume II, Chapter 4.

5.5 Social media

Elections Canada has corporate accounts in both official languages on LinkedIn, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



Bilingual: [Élections Canada | Elections Canada](#)



English: [ElectionsCanadaE](#)

French: [ElectionsCanadaF](#)



English: [ElectionsCanE](#)

French: [ElectionsCanF](#)



English: [electionscan_e](https://electionscan_e.ca)

French: [electionscan_fr](https://electionscan_fr.ca)



English: [@ElectionsCan_E](https://twitter.com/ElectionsCan_E)

French: [@ElectionsCan_F](https://twitter.com/ElectionsCan_F)

Elections Canada responds to public social media enquiries sent only through Twitter and Facebook. For information on social media, consult EC's *Code of Professional Conduct for Election Administrators* ([EC 10044](#)), and the *Guidelines for the Optional use of Social Media by Election Administrators* ([EC 90361](#)) posted on the Field Personnel Intranet.

You are not to represent EC in social media unless you have received written authorization from the CEO in this regard. If there are any complaints related to social media, there are three options:

- Send an email to the Operational Complaints and Incidents Unit with "Social media at the polls" in the subject line
- Call the FSN and select the option Complaints to speak to an agent
- Enter the complaint in the appropriate case management system

5.6 Media relations

Media are asked to contact you before taking photographs or making video recordings at polling places or in your office. Where possible, it is best to work with the media for these types of requests to ensure the best locations to meet their needs. If the field liaison officer (FLO), regional media advisor (RMA) or Media Relations staff at ECHQ receives a media request to shoot photos or video footage at a polling place under your responsibility, they will contact you to make arrangements. Media are allowed to take photographs or make video recordings from the doorways of a polling place, as long as they do not impede electors and do not compromise the secrecy of the vote.

Use the [C1 Communication activities](#) to guide you.

5.7 Public enquiries

During general elections, electors can call the toll-free number, call collect from anywhere in the world, fax, or use a teletypewriter (TTY). All calls are directed to the PEU which provides service seven days a week, from 7:00 am to midnight Eastern Time. Electors are to be encouraged to visit the EC website to find the information they are looking for even though PEU agents are ready to answer all questions.

C1 Communication activities

<i>Before the election</i>	
Become familiar with the timing and themes of the election's communications campaign to prepare for potential related enquiries.	☐
Become familiar with the communications products and initiatives designed for targeted groups of electors.	☐
Become familiar with polling place accessibility criteria and commitments that EC has made to ensure that voting sites are barrier-free.	☐
Become familiar with the community relations officer (CRO) toolkit and its contents and the information products that CROs will disseminate to local organizations and the public in general.	☐
Determine whether the <i>Media in the Polls</i> policy (section 5.6) applies to your ED (if you have a leader of a registered political party in your ED) and become familiar with it.	☐
<i>During the election</i>	
Become familiar with the information on the website and the web services such as the Voter Information Service and E-Registration.	☐
Contact the FLO, or if not available, the RMA (regional media advisor) if you need help with the media.	☐
Report the following immediately to the FLO: any questions received from media representatives, requests for media visits or interviews, or issues that occur throughout the electoral event that may interest media.	☐
Be prepared to assist in public relations initiatives designed to increase awareness of and access to the voting process.	☐
Be prepared to receive requests from members of the community who wish to provide assistance in developing and carrying out voter awareness programs.	☐
If translation of electoral information is required, call or fax requests (How to reach us).	☐
Become familiar with official languages requirements and respect them in all activities. (Refer to Chapter 4 – Official languages .)	☐
Enquiries from the public, candidates, political parties and official agents that are outside your area of responsibility are to be referred to Public Enquiries in Gatineau or to the EC website (elections.ca).	☐
Be prepared to receive calls from electors requesting information on the accessibility of their polling place.	☐
Ensure the distribution of communications tools for assisting the CROs and FLOs in communications activities.	☐
<i>After the election</i>	
Evaluate the success of the Voter Information Campaign initiatives and materials. Performance indicators and guidance will be provided to complete the evaluation.	☐

Chapter 6 – Selecting polling places



For more information on polling places, consult:
Volume II, *Landlords, polling places and polling stations* in Chapter 2

6.1 Polling place search (pre-event assignment)

As part of pre-event assignments (PEAs), the CEO mandates ROs to identify and select suitable polling places for ordinary, advance and mobile polls. ROs must visit, evaluate and assign electors to a variety of polling places. Security factors are also to be considered.

6.2 Voting service enhancements

6.2.1 External Service Points

External service points (ESPs) are AARO offices located on select post-secondary institution campuses across Canada. The ESP program provides students and other electors with the possibility to vote by special ballot on campus during an electoral event.

As part of pre-event activities, ROs must identify and evaluate suitable spaces for setting up ESP offices in participating institutions.

The *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)) lists criteria used to evaluate ESPs.

The ESP office layout is similar to the service centre's layout in your office but with the addition of the AARO–ESP and an information officer (IO). (See figures 2 and 3 below.)

The AARO–ESP's role is similar to yours in your office. They manage and oversee the logistics and day-to-day activities, and ensure that the SPSs, SAs and IOs are performing their tasks properly. The SPSs supervise and schedule the SAs, support them when they have questions, and call ECHQ with unresolved issues. The SAs serve electors and provide in-person revision and special ballot voting services. The IOs ensure that electors line up appropriately, have the proper ID on hand as well as any other information they require to vote such as their list of candidates. This helps to reduce wait times and ensures that electors are processed smoothly.

The SPS in your office has hours allotted for training the AARO–ESP and the SPS–ESP (if applicable). If required, the SPS in your office can help the SPS–ESP train the SAs. Once the office is set up, the SAs' training can take place either in the ESP office or in your office where there is typically a projector available.

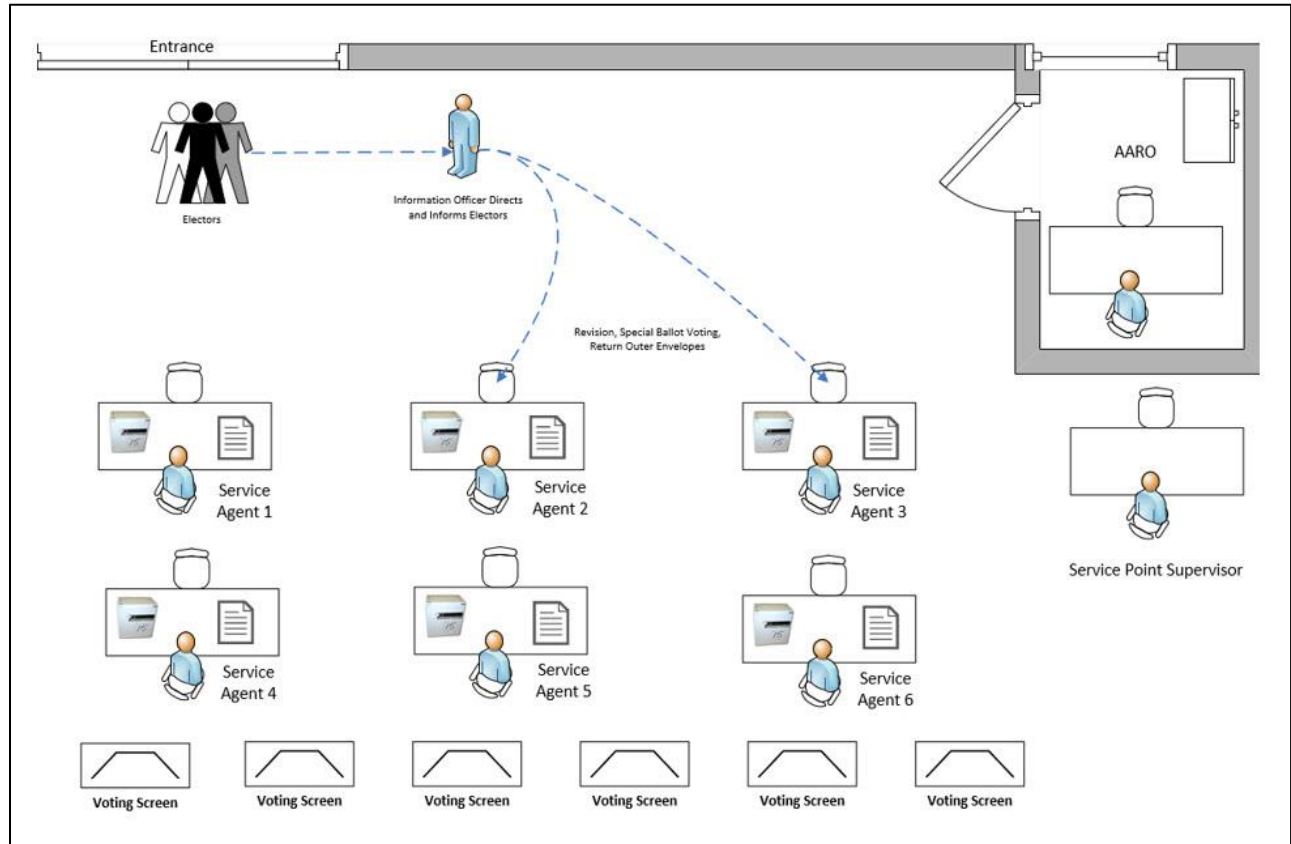


Figure 2 External Service Point office layout (sample)

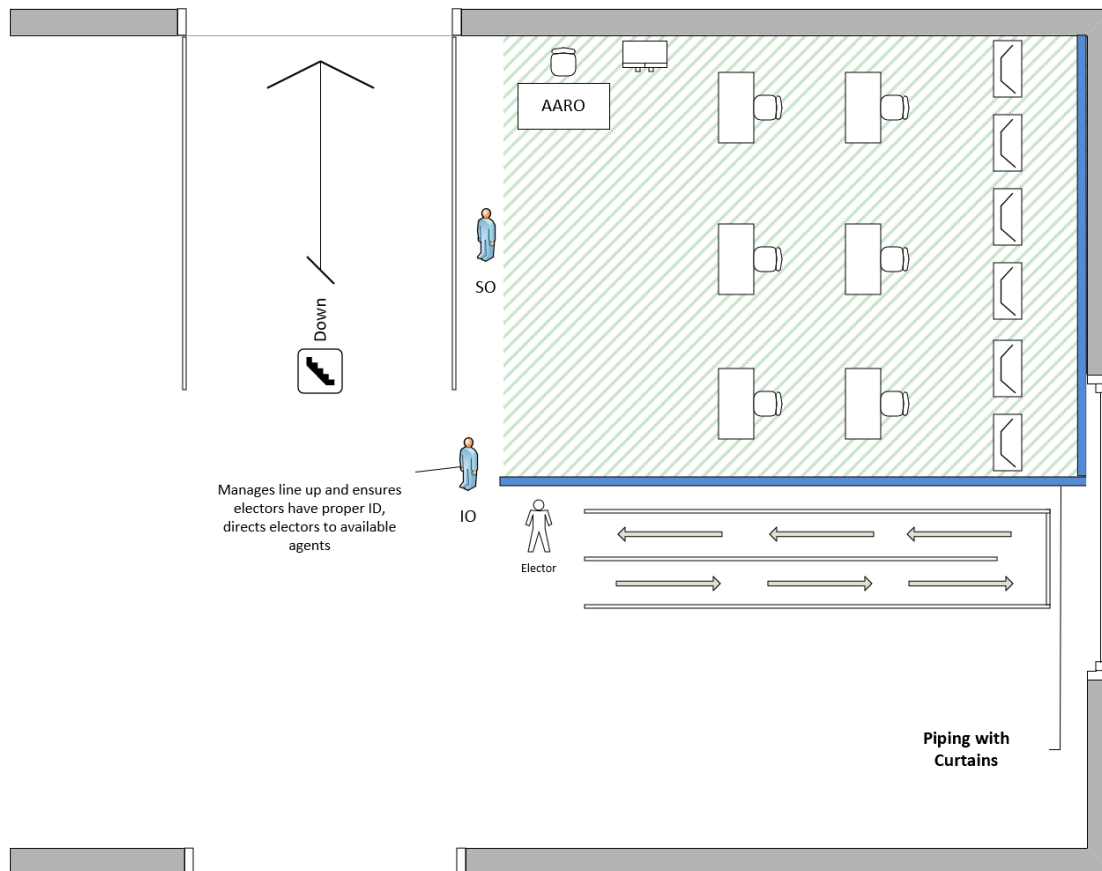


Figure 3 External Service Point – flex space layout (sample)

6.3 Types of polling places

A polling place is the building where electors go to cast their ballot. In law, this is now called the polling station. The polling place has desks that serve the electors for a polling division. Polling places are usually churches, schools, community centres or other public buildings.

There is at least one polling table for every polling place. The ballot box for each polling table displays the corresponding polling division number.

6.3.1 Ordinary and advance polling places

Before an electoral event, you are to visit, evaluate and select the places for ordinary and advance polls and assign polling divisions to them. If possible, polling places should be public buildings that are familiar, convenient and in proximity to electors. As much as possible and if suitable, you should consider the same polling places as the ones used for previous elections, whether at the federal, provincial or municipal level.

6.3.2 Mobile polls

A mobile poll is a poll that is located in two or more institutions where seniors or persons with a physical disability reside; each institution serving between 10–150 electors. A mobile poll allows people who would find it difficult or impossible to vote at ordinary polls to vote where they live. Since electors of mobile polls generally reside in accessible facilities, it is not necessary to conduct a *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)) for these locations; however, the checklist can be completed to ensure accessibility. The institutions should be within reasonable driving distance of one another so that elections officers have enough time to travel between institutions on polling day.

6.3.3 Acute Care Voting Program

While electors who reside in long-term care facilities can typically be served with a mobile poll on polling day (excluding lockdown situations), electors receiving care for short-term stays are not eligible to vote at the mobile poll as they do not reside at the facility.

If the facility is not considered the elector's home and permanent address, they should vote using the Acute Care Voting Program. This service offers special ballot voting via the canvassing model (an HSBC going bed to bed to offer electors special ballot voting), or the on-demand model (where the electors can call the RO office to request a visit from an HSBC to vote). The model is selected by the facility administrator based on the particularities of the facility.

If you encounter a facility with both short term and long-term care beds, make sure to serve each bed type appropriately. In the event of a lockdown, other services can be coordinated to serve electors. These include coordinated special ballot voting (where the facility staff offer special ballot voting services rather than allowing an HSBC to enter) or vote by mail (where an elector can register to vote on the EC website or call the RO office to request that an application be sent to them). **These two options should only be offered if the facility is under lockdown.** Canvassing and on-demand remain the traditional options offered to acute care facilities during a GE. During a by-election, only canvassing is offered.

6.3.4 Single building polls

Single building polls serve the population of a single residential address, like an apartment building. They are a type of ordinary poll and as such, they must remain open for the full voting hours as described in section 128 of the CEA. As best practice, a single building poll should serve between 150–400 electors. During PEAs, the voting area of a single building poll is visited and evaluated using the *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)).

6.4 Key considerations for polling places

The *Directive on Accessibility Exemptions when Selecting a Suitable Polling Place* (on the [EC website](#)) was developed to guide you in meeting your obligations under the Act by selecting accessible and suitable polling places. It includes the steps you must follow before seeking the CEO's approval to use inaccessible polling places for advance or ordinary polling days, and lists information that the CEO may consider when making a decision regarding inaccessible polling places. You are responsible for implementing the Directive and for observing its key principles and factors when justifying your selection of polling places.

6.4.1 Accessibility

Consult [Chapter 2 – Accessibility](#) for detailed information on the subject.

When setting up a polling place, you must take into consideration people who may have difficulties navigating the space. This includes people with:

- Wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistive devices
- Physical limitations due to pain
- Intellectual disabilities
- Visual disabilities

To serve all electors at each polling place, ensure the following:

- Adequate standard directional signage, especially at larger, unconventional locations
- Enough information officers are available to assist and direct electors to the voting room
- Proper temporary accessibility mitigations are in place to resolve any accessibility issues (steep ramps, high door thresholds, manual doors, protruding objects, etc.)
- Adequate space at each polling station to allow a person using an assistive device to easily navigate around the tables and chairs
- Adequate amounts of available accessibility tools (large pencils, braille list of candidates and ballot guides, magnifying glasses, etc.) and that election workers are aware of where to find them and how to use them
- Chairs are available for electors who may be unable to stand for long periods

6.4.2 Proximity

Returning officers assign electors to a polling place nearest to their residence or in an area that electors travel to regularly to access public or private services. The selection of proximate polling places is based on the principle of reasonableness, and this may vary from one community to another.

Once polling places are identified, polling division and advance polling district boundaries are drawn based on the polling place that will be assigned to it. The size of the area is based on both proximity to electors and the capacity of a polling place.

The CEO's approval is required to choose a location that does not meet this principle.

6.4.3 Contact with First Nations, Inuit and Indigenous communities

It is very important to engage with First Nations band administrators and/or other Indigenous community leaders to discuss the opportunity for collaboration in the next GE.

The discussion should centre on the following:

- Cultural or seasonal events that coincide with polling days – this discussion might lead to an alternative voting service model being offered to the community
- The possibility of having an advance and/or ordinary polling place on the reserve and the proximity its location offers to electors
- The service model adopted (e.g., if the community has been classified as remote/isolated as per section 168 of the CEA)
- The option of having an additional service point on reserve
- The option of voting by special ballot
- Identifying community members who can work
 - as a CRO–Indigenous
 - as interpreters for the Indigenous Elder and Youth Program (IEYP) on polling day and on advance polling days

6.4.4 Capacity

The capacity of a polling place is important as it determines the maximum number of electors a polling place can hold at one time. However, the polling place must accommodate much more than just electors. Consider how much space the following will require before choosing a polling place:

- Tables with ballot boxes
- Tables with voting screens
- Registration desks
- Poll workers
- Candidates' representatives
- Electors

Prior approval from the CEO is required to set up more than 10 voting tables in a polling place (see [CEO authorizations](#)).

6.4.5 Directional signage

Directional signage and their placement should be noted while visiting and evaluating polling places. On polling days, all electors must be directed to a single-level access entrance by using the most direct path to the building. In general, the elector should be able to see the next directional sign from any sign on the path.

Sketch the building exterior on the back of the *Polling Place Suitability Checklist* ([EC 12152](#)) to indicate the path that electors must follow to enter the building. Include the positioning of signage to the accessible entrance. Share the sketch with the CPS to assist with polling day set-up.

Electors may enter the polling place through different entrances. Effective directional signage should be placed in highly visible and well-lit locations and indicate all possible turns from the property line to the voting room. Signage should never be confusing or contradictory and should consider electors who are arriving from different directions (e.g., driving, public transit, walking, etc.). The following products are available for use inside and outside the polling place to direct electors to the polling stations:

- *Yellow Lawn Sign* ([EC 50168](#))
- *Arrow – Round Sign* ([EC 50164](#))
- *Yellow Polling Place Pennant* ([EC 50160](#))

This material is included in lots and kits. You may order additional quantities as needed through SMSi (consult section [8.2.2](#)).

6.4.6 Parking

While parking is not a mandatory accessibility criterion, it is preferable that the location provide adequate, well-lit parking if available. If so, at least one parking space must be reserved for electors with a functional limitation. Identify the space using the international accessibility signs or *Level Access Sign* ([EC 10960](#)). Directional signage must be placed to clearly indicate the path leading from the parking lot to the main entrance and the voting room.

6.4.7 Public transit

Where available, the polling place must be in an area serviced by public transportation.

6.5 Lease agreement form

As stated in the *Introduction to Polling Place Leases* training activity, the lease protects the RO's and the CEO's rights as user and tenant of the premises respectively. The *Lease* also protects the property owner by making everyone's responsibilities and obligations clear. The lease includes important information such as the lease rental period, the rental amount to be paid and the method of payment.

During the pre-event period, negotiations with polling place property owners and ESP institution administrators are to begin as early as possible to review the rental rate and lease clauses, as well as to resolve any complications or issues that may arise. Early negotiations will avoid delays in securing facilities during the election calendar. If you are asked to make amendments to the clauses of the lease or to sign an alternate rental agreement, please email these requests as soon as possible to the CERA at CEEL-CERA@elections.ca for their review.

Although a lease is required for ordinary and advance polls as well as for ESP institutions, a lease is not required for mobile polls since poll workers at a mobile poll occupy the space for only a few hours. Given the different requirements for mobile polling places, a written license agreement, or another less formal written agreement, may be helpful for these locations. A written agreement allows you to record the terms that you and the property owner have agreed to.



Leases may not be signed prior to the issue of the writ unless the CEO has given his authorization.

6.5.1 Records of decisions

While EC establishes selection criteria, the responsibility of selecting polling places ultimately rests with you. During the pre-event period, you must complete a *Record of Decision* for each polling place to justify and explain the elements that were considered when selecting a polling place.

For further information, consult the section Record of decision section in Volume II of this manual.

6.6 Polling location management applications

The following applications on the Field Personnel Intranet (under [RO Toolkit](#)), will help fulfill pre-event activities:

- Voter Feedback and Incident Monitoring System (ICBMS)
- Field Planning Tool – consult section [2.4](#)

For assistance with your login credentials, open a case in EC Connex or contact the FSN ([How to reach us](#)).

Chapter 7 – RO office operations



For more information on RO office operations, consult:

- Volume II, Chapter 3 – Opening the office
- Volume III, Chapter 2 – Closing the polls and validating results
- Volume III, Chapter 5 – Closing your office

7.1 Message to returning officers

You are responsible for establishing and managing a returning office in your electoral district (ED) during an electoral event. In some EDs, one or more AARO offices may also be required.

Between GEs, you should keep an eye out for potential office spaces. There are many ways to do this, including: visiting communities, browsing websites and social media, following up on word-of-mouth leads, and contacting previous RO/AARO office landlords and agents.

Your *ED Playbook* is a great resource to maintain information throughout the readiness period. One of the goals of completing the *ED Playbook* is to help you assess the impacts of any changes to your ED, as well as the work required to plan and deliver the GE.

Consult the *Operations Guide for RO and AARO Offices* ([EC 10013](#)) for additional information on office searches and requirements such as:

- Premises
 - Location
 - Size
 - Layout
 - Floor plan
- Accessibility
- Security
 - Alarm system
 - Security guards
- Technology
- Leases and insurance
- Furniture, equipment and office supplies

7.2 Pre-event assignments



No leases or agreements may be signed and dated prior to the issue of the writ, unless specifically authorized by EC.

Before the issue of the writ, you will be mandated to:

- Search for and identify potential offices
- Plan the layout and set-up of the potential offices by drawing up floor plans
- Set up lists for furniture and equipment to rent, and office supplies to purchase
- Search for potential suppliers for furniture and equipment and begin negotiating costs and terms
- Search and identify staff for your office and for AARO offices, if applicable
- Negotiate costs and terms of the lease(s) with your landlord(s).

Expenses

- No furniture and equipment may be rented before the writ is issued, unless specifically authorized by EC. However, during the “Planning RO and AARO Office Operations” PEA, you are required to choose the lowest-cost complying supplier or provide a justification as to why this was not feasible, via the *Field Contracting Consideration Checklist* ([EC 10053](#)), along with other requirements.
- Elections Canada does not pay for any unauthorized expenses.
- Elections Canada may grant special written permission to incur certain expenses.
- Invoices for verbally requested items are not paid.

Contact the FSN ([How to reach us](#)) if you have any questions or concerns about expenses.

7.3 Telephone and hardware installation and service

7.3.1 Office telephony/hardware blueprints

The blueprint is essentially a map showing the location and functions of devices and telephones set up in the RO or AARO office, if applicable. These blueprints are provided to the telephone company technician.

The figures that follow are blueprints for RO offices.



Consult the *Operations Guide for RO and AARO Offices* ([EC 10013](#)) for additional information on technical requirements.

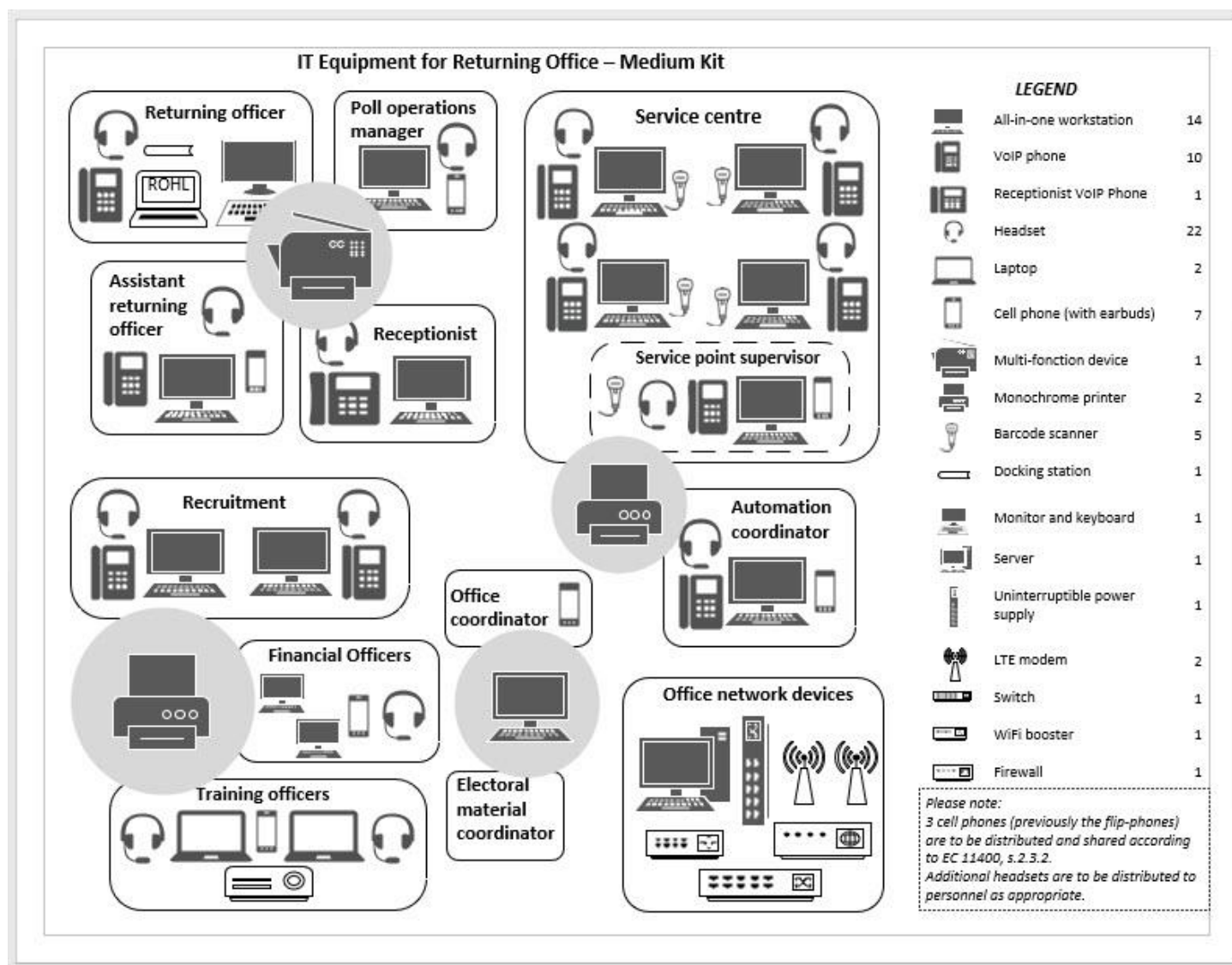


Figure 4 RO office IT & telephony equipment (kit)





Figure 5 | Additional IT & telephony equipment for large RO office



About the additional equipment

- Three mobile phones (previously flip phones) must be distributed and shared according to the standard in *Field Office Telecommunications Provisioning Update*, section 2.3.2 ([EC 11400](#)).
- Additional headsets should be distributed to staff members as needed.
- There are two additional workstations intended for use in the service centre.

7.3.2 Wireless kits – smartphones and high-speed modems

Prior to an electoral event or shortly after the writ is issued, a RO Wireless Kit with EC-supplied equipment will be shipped to your home address. This kit will supply all the wireless devices required for your office for the duration of an electoral event. The above office telephony blueprints ([Figure 4](#) and [Figure 5](#)) identify where each wireless telephone is assigned. In the event your office has associated AARO offices, AARO Wireless Kits will also be shipped to your home address. It is important to note that not all equipment deliveries will arrive on the same day. You will have to arrange for local delivery to the AARO office locations.

In each kit, a Wireless Kit Checklist document is included to help verify that you have received all the designated equipment for your office. If anything is missing, contact the FSN immediately ([How to reach us](#)) to have the replacement equipment shipped to you.

Each RO Wireless Kit will contain the following items:

- Seven Samsung A53 Smartphones – plus AC adapter/charger, headsets, and protective cases. These phones are assigned to the following roles:
 - Receptionist/Financial officers (white label)
 - Recruitment officer/Office coordinator (white label)
 - Service agent/Office spare (white label)
 - Training officer (white label)

- ARO (pink label)
- AC (pink label)
- POM (pink label)
- Two Sierra wireless LTE modems, plus two antennas, a power adapter per modem and two 100' LAN cables

Smartphones

Within the Wireless Kit, each smartphone box will be labelled indicating the ED number, the field role position, the assigned phone number, and the voicemail password. To help you access the features and functionalities of the device, a *Smartphone Accessibility Instructions* are included with the smartphone shipment; these instructions are also included among other instructions in FAMT.

Please be aware that the smartphones in this kit have been *suspended* until the official issuance of the writ. Once the event begins, the EC Telecom Team will have Bell unsuspend all the wireless devices so they are in active mode and can be used for election-related activities.

High-speed modems

As with the smartphones, there will be two Sierra Wireless modems within each kit to provide the RO/AARO offices with high-speed internet services. This service will provide the RO/AARO offices with high-speed connectivity required for the VoIP phones and desktop computers. In the event there is poor wireless coverage in the vicinity of the RO and AARO offices, other arrangements will be made (i.e., a cellular booster, DSL modem or PBX service) to ensure adequate service to the field offices. These arrangements will be determined and planned ahead of an event.

7.3.3 RO office smartphone deployment

It is important to note that before the office desk phones (VoIP phones) are installed and fully operational, the following field role positions will *temporarily* use the smartphones to conduct RO/AARO office business:

- Receptionist
- Recruitment officer
- Service agent

Once the desk phones (VoIP phones) are fully operational, the smartphones are to be reassigned as follows:

- Receptionist smartphone is reassigned to the financial officer
- Recruitment officer smartphone is reassigned to the office coordinator
- Service agent smartphone becomes the office spare



It is crucial that these smartphones remain in the RO office during the event period.

Headsets

Elections Canada provides wired headsets for each of the telephones, both smartphones and VoIP devices. Please ensure that after the event, all headsets are returned to their respective kits. The headsets used with the smartphones must be returned with the Wireless Kits to EC. The wired headsets used with the VoIP phones must also be returned with the original Wireline Kits as part of the return shipment to the telephone company.



It is highly recommended that field offices have sanitizing wipes available for the staff to wipe down the headsets and the VoIP phone at the end of their shift for the workers starting the next shift.

7.3.4 Wired telephone installation and timeframes

At the beginning of the event, once the RO and AARO field office addresses have been confirmed, the smartphones shipped to the RO in the Wireless Kits will be used by the field support personnel to conduct their day-to-day election-related business activities prior to the office phone lines being installed.

At the same time, the EC Telephony Support Group will have placed orders with the telephone companies to have all the phone lines installed within five business days. This time frame may be shorter or longer depending on when IBM completes the LAN installation, and on the work required to install the telephone lines at your locations.

If there are any difficulties with the telephone installation, contact the FSN (*How to reach us*).

Number listed with directory assistance

An EC Public Enquiries toll-free number list will be published by Directory Assistance. Certain calls are transferred to the ROs, depending on the nature of the questions.

7.3.5 Telephony documentation

Elections Canada created a series of quick guides for the new telephone solutions for RO and AARO offices. They are posted on the Field Personnel Intranet > Support Documents > Field Technology > [RO/AARO Office Technology](#).

They include:

GENERAL	
<u>EC 11400</u>	<i>Field Office Telecommunications Provisioning Update (difference between the GE42 and GE43 telephone solution)</i>
<u>EC 10058</u>	<i>RO and AARO Office Close-out: Decommissioning Telecom Equipment</i>
USER GUIDES FOR SMARTPHONES	
<u>EC 11450</u>	<i>Samsung Galaxy: Getting Started</i>
QUICK REFERENCE CARDS FOR DESK PHONES	
<u>EC 11403</u>	<i>Standard Phone for Field Office During Events</i>
<u>EC 11404</u>	<i>Receptionist Phone for Field Office during Events</i>
USER GUIDES FOR FIELD OFFICE DESK PHONES	
<u>EC 11401</u>	<i>VVX311 Telephone (VoIP) User's Guide (Standard phone)</i>
<u>EC 11402</u>	<i>VVX411 Telephone (VoIP) User's Guide (Reception phone)</i>
<u>EC 11409</u>	<i>Field Office Call Flow (for RO and AARO Offices)</i>

7.3.6 Applications and software

The office uses the following computer systems:

- REVISE: Web-based application used to update and produce lists of electors, generate reports, and administer voting by special ballot
- IDRS (Internal Document Review System): An application used to process local vote-by-mail applications that were submitted through the EC website
- Event Results System (ERS): An application used to record voting results on polling night and to transmit them to the EC website and to the media
- ROPS/SITES (Returning Office Payment System): application used to manage polling places, payments to poll workers and election workers and property owners; SITES is used to review and adjust polling place addresses
- **RO Toolkit** (on the Field Personnel Intranet): portal that contains the day-to-day tools required to manage an RO office efficiently; it gives you and the authorized RO office staff access to many resources:
 - ECDocs – EC's repository of the most up-to-date versions of the operational manuals, user guides, calendars, forms and checklists, in both official languages
 - Event+ – a one-stop shop for the online RO aide-mémoire and all event-related communications. To reduce the amount of emails ROs receive during an event, all communications are posted to Event+.
 - Field Assignments Management Tool (FAMT) – publishes pre-event mandates for field assignments for election administrators; allows EAs to track working

hours, advise EC when assignments are completed and submit claims for payment

- GEOExplore – allows viewing of geographic data; also used to print polling division maps
- Accessibility Feedback Monitoring System (ICBMS) – logs and tracks the *Feedback on Accessibility and Voter Experience Form* (EC 50119); facilitates the resolution of issues efficiently (will be replaced in the near future with EC Connex)
- Statistics and Analytics Tool (STAT) – online tool to help ROs and FLOs input information using daily surveys; this information is then used to create reports for senior management to track progress of key activities and milestones during an event
- Field Planning Tool (FPT)
 - Facility Management module – used during pre-event and during events by ROs for managing location information for polling places, RO/AARO offices and ESPs; this application replaces the functionality previously found in iSITES (pre-event). Beginning in the 45th GE, it will also replace ROPS/SITES to manage location information and services available during events.
 - Poll Worker Staffing module – used in pre-event and during an event to plan poll worker staffing for advance, ordinary and mobile polls. During an event, REVISE will capture any splits and merges, which will then be reflected back in the FPT (Poll worker staffing) to assist in ensuring adequate staffing levels at the polls.
 - Long Term Care module – used in pre-event to plan long-term care groupings of two or more addresses to serve as mobile polls. Once the event is called, these groupings will need to be reflected in REVISE as merges so that the *Notice of Mobile Poll* and the voter information cards are properly reflected in FPT, as well as to ensure adequate staffing levels for mobile polls.
- Recruitment Management System (RMS) – helps RO offices with recruitment activities, i.e., triage, screen, select candidates, and assign individuals to polling stations
- Supply Management System by Intranet (SMSi) – used for managing election materials; allows you to preview election materials, place orders for additional materials and track these orders
- Targeted Outreach Program Repository (TOPR) – a Web-based application used for the planning/pre-event and delivery/event of a variety of outreach programs
- Virtual Training Centre – allows EAs to take online training courses and to access various reference materials; includes e-learning modules, videos, reading and reference materials, interactive quizzes and activities



Each workstation in the RO office and in the AARO office also has the following software: Microsoft Office 2016 (Word, Excel); Adobe Acrobat Reader for reading PDF documents; and Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome to access the Internet (i.e., to access EC Webmail and applications, or to perform searches).

Chapter 8 – Managing election materials



For more information on managing election materials, consult:

- Volume II, *Managing election materials* in Chapter 3
- Volume III, *Returning official documents and reporting* in Chapter 1
- Volume III, *Receiving materials at your office and Handling materials coming in from polling stations* in Chapter 2
- Volume III, *Writ and election reports* in Chapter 3

Before the writ is issued or before a possible event, Elections Canada will ship to your residence all the materials needed to open your office and to manage the Special Voting Rules (SVR). Once the office is opened, the remainder of the material will be shipped there.

8.1 Elections Canada's inventory system

To help you identify and retrieve election materials, EC uses a quick reference guide as an inventory system that assigns a number to each item, depending on the period during which the item is used and the people who use it. All election materials sent to your office are identified with inventory numbers, as described in the table below.

Table 4 Inventory numbers for election materials



Series	Usage	Usage period
<u>EC 10000s</u>	ROs (AAROs)	Before, during and after an event
<u>EC 20000s</u>	Candidates	During and after the event
<u>EC 30000s</u>	Register of electors	Before, during and after an event
<u>EC 40000s</u>	Revision	During the revision period
<u>EC 50000s</u>	Polling places	During polling days
<u>EC 60000s</u>	Geography	In relation to Electoral Geography
<u>EC 70000s</u>	Special Voting Rules (SVR)	In relation to SVR
<u>EC 90000s</u>	Communications	Before, during and after an event

8.2 Elections Canada's shipment of election materials

Elections Canada sends election materials in distinct lots. The lot numbers are identified on each parcel and the lots are colour-coded for easy identification (see table below). The lot numbers are also clearly written on the colour labels.

The quantity of election materials for each ED is based on available electoral geographic data or other data that you have provided to EC.

Table 5 Lot numbers for election materials

Lot no.	Description
Lot 1	Material for the RO before and at issue of the writ
Lot 2	Material for the candidates
Lot 3	Material for the service centre
Lot 4	Accessories for the RO office
Lot 5	Materials for the financial officers
Lot 6	Material for the automation coordinator
Lot 7	(unassigned)
Lot 8	Material for targeted revision
Lot 9	Material for training poll officials in correctional facilities
Lot 10	Material for the training officer
Lot 11	Material for external service points (ESPs)
Lot 12	Various forms and poll materials
Lot 13	Material for community relations officers
Lot 14	Signage for polling sites
Lot 15	(unassigned)
Lot 16	Material for registration officers
Lot 17	Material for polling sites – Central poll supervisors
Lot 18	Material for DROs – Advance polls
Lot 19	Material for DROs – Ordinary polls
Lot 20	Material for DROs – Mobile polls
Lot 21	Ballot paper sheets
Lot 22	Voting screens
Lot 23	Ballot boxes
Lot 24	Material for the count of local special ballots
Lot 25	Material for the validation of voting results
Lot 26	Material for Acute Care Voting
Lot 27	Boxes for the return of material and validation of the results
Lot 28	Accessories for the return of material (monotainers)
Lot 29	Election officer guidebooks
Lot 37	Material for personal protective equipment (PPE)
Lot 38	Material and accessories for AARO offices
Lot 39	Material for the service centre (AARO office)

8.2.1 Receiving election materials at your residence

A quantity of election materials (between 20 and 40 parcels) is sent to the ED prior to the issue of the writ. EC has determined that one or two monotainers should be delivered and their contents emptied. Canada Post does not leave the monotainers on site.

Upon receipt of this material, you are to:

- Store election materials in a private location or in a rented commercial space
- Ensure election materials are in a secured and dry location
- Ensure the storage area is heated in the winter
- Negotiate terms for the storage location and have costs authorized by EC, if a commercial space is used

Storage costs incurred for storage at your residence are covered under the monthly stipend paid to ROs, as stipulated in [*RO Stipend Measures and Expectations*](#), posted in ECDocs.

You and your AARO(s), if applicable, will be responsible for transferring these election materials to the RO or AARO office. A PEA may be planned to help coordinate the transportation of these materials.



Figure 6 Monotainers

8.2.2 Supply Management System by intranet

The Supply Management System by intranet (SMSi) is a Web application used between events and during an event. It is available on the [Field Personnel Intranet > RO Toolkit](#). This application allows you to:

- View the complete list and quantities of election materials for your ED
- Search items by description or by EC number
- View pictures of the lots, kits and items
- Order additional materials
- Track your orders
- Download documents related to election materials

- View and complete the PEA
- An SMSi tutorial is available directly in SMSi.

8.3 Printing

During the event, you may produce certain documents such as the *Notice of Election* ([EC 10020](#)), *Notice of Advance Polls* ([EC 10140](#)), *Notice of Grant of a Poll* ([EC 10170](#)) and *Notice of Mobile Poll* ([EC 10160](#)) using the office photocopier. You might also have to print other items locally, such as guidebooks or the Returning Officer's Aide-mémoire.

However, other key Items must be printed or produced by a local printer. It is important to select a local printer who will partner with you to print and produce the following items for the GE:

- Ballots
- Lists of electors
- *List of Candidates in Large Print*

The printing and mailing of the VICs is a centralized process undertaken by ECHQ.



Printing processes are outlined in Volume II – Chapter 4 for VICs; Chapter 8 for Lists of Electors and Chapter 9 for Ballots.

8.3.1 Selecting a printing company

During the **Identifying Local Printers** PEA, you were instructed to contact two printers within your ED, then select a preferred option and one alternate, in the event that your first printer cannot complete the job. This is to ensure that the printing staff understands exactly what is required, and that they have the technical capability and paper stock required to perform the work properly within the compulsory timeframe.

You may select different printers for the ballots and the lists of electors. It is recommended that you use the same printing company for the ballots and the *List of Candidates in Large Print*.

Refer to the *Directive on Certain Field Acquired Goods and Services in Conduct of Electoral Events* ([EC 11780](#)). It outlines the maximum that should be paid for printing.

8.3.2 Printing materials provided

Elections Canada also provides you with materials to assist local printers. These materials include items such as: specimens, written specifications, special printing materials and instructions for the ballots. The specimens generally illustrate the font type, the quality of paper and the format to follow.

Provide the printing company with the following specifications available in electronic format in ECDocs:

- *Instructions for the Ballot Printer* ([EC 10720](#)), which includes printing specifications for the ballots; it has been expanded for the next GE

- Sample materials
- *Affidavit of the Printer of the Ballot Papers* ([EC 10300](#))
- *Printing Specifications for the List of Candidates in Large Print* ([EC 10721](#))
- *Specifications for the Reproduction of the Lists of Electors* ([EC 10750](#))

Also provide the local printer with the following:

- *Specimen Book of Ballots Papers* ([EC 10790](#))
- *Carnet-modèle de bulletins de vote* (French *Specimen Book of Ballots Papers*) ([EC 10790-1](#))

Ensure that the printer understands all of the specifications.

8.3.3 Paying for printing services

If possible, you should ensure that the printing contractor agrees to perform the work for the amount provided in the *Directive*. The ballot printer must indicate whether their quote is at the Directive price or not on the *Ballot Printer Shipping Information and Estimate Form* ([EC 10719](#)). If the price is higher than the maximum recommended in the *Directive*, you must submit a special request during the electoral period to receive ECHQ approval.

Local printers can be paid using either the acquisition card (you will need to reconcile this when the statement arrives) or the printer can give you an invoice which must be sent directly to EC along with the completed *Special Account Form* ([EC 11670](#)).

Chapter 9 – Consultations with political parties



For more information on political parties and candidates, consult:
Volume II, Chapter 5 – Political parties and candidates

During PEAs, EC mandates ROs to hold a consultation with the local representatives of registered political parties.

The goals of the consultation are to provide information, to answer any questions, and to solicit recommendations for improvement in anticipation of the next electoral event.

Elections Canada will contact the national organizations of all registered political parties and provide ROs with a list of their local representatives.

9.1 Planning

In order to streamline information sharing and to reduce associated costs, attempt to hold only one consultation with all representatives to discuss the topics below.

Selecting a location

Elections Canada will provide a budget to rent a suitable space and provide refreshments. Be sure to keep all receipts to reconcile consultation expenses.

To minimize costs, EC encourages the use of public places like a community centre or a classroom.

Invitations

When the time, date and location have been confirmed, send an invitation and detailed agenda to each representative on the list provided by ECHQ.

Use the following MSWord templates:

- *Pre-writ Consultation Invitation* ([EC 22031](#))
- *Pre-writ Consultation Agenda* ([EC 22030](#))

All communications with the local political party representatives must be recorded in writing. Use the *Pre-writ Consultation Follow-up Report* ([EC 22032](#)).



Retain the *Priority Service* shipping receipt and use the EC *Priority Service* Customer Account Number to send the invitations.

9.2 Pre-writ consultation

Take notes during the consultation on the items discussed using the *Pre-writ Consultation Summary* ([EC 22033](#)).

A copy of the summary should be provided to each of the participants and to ECHQ following the meeting.

If a second consultation is required, provide the summary of the first consultation to all attendees in advance of the second consultation.

The following topics should be covered in pre-writ consultation with local political party representatives.

Pre-event work

- Electoral district boundaries
- Targeted revision
- Returning office location

New initiatives

- Overview of new legislation, if applicable
- Details of new initiatives, if applicable

Recruitment of election officers

- Who is entitled to recommend service agents, deputy returning officers (DRO), and registration officers
- How you intend to resolve any lack of resources for these positions (e.g. public advertising, online recruitment)
- How you intend to recruit central poll supervisors, information officers, etc.
- When training will take place and which training method will be used
- Payment of election officers
- Number of officials needed
- Deadline to receive names of DROs and registration officers

Nomination Paper

- Filing deadlines and options
- Making an appointment to file, review nomination process and requirements

Joint meeting of political parties and candidates

- Tentative date and location

Remote polling places

- Discussion of issues, if applicable

Chapter 10 – Financial management



For more information on financial management, consult:

- Volume II, Chapter 2 – Financial policies and procedures
- Volume III, *Financial documents and activities* in Chapter 3

10.1 Your responsibilities

You are accountable for sound financial management of all operations and authorities conferred on you through the CEA, as well as proper records management.

In particular, you must comply with the legislation, regulations, policies and CEO instructions concerning:

- Pay and source deductions
- Management and reconciliation of expenses such as accountable advances and acquisition cards
- Procurement, contracting and engaging with suppliers for goods or services provided in your ED, such as cleaning, security, etc.

Financial process management

You are responsible for managing the following financial processes:

- Renting your office, the AARO's office, and polling places
- Registering and submitting payment claims for all office staff and election officers
- Paying and reconciling all expenses related to your office and AARO office operation, such as supplies, meeting rooms and printing expenses

Verification of financial documentation

You are responsible for verifying that all expenses are necessary, complete, correct, and in accordance with the contractual arrangements.

All requested payments must be:

- Documented, this allows for financial accuracy and completeness
- Verified and signed by you
- Submitted to EC with supporting documents within the required time frame for each process

10.2 Payroll process – ROs, AROs and AAROs

Payroll registration

All ROs and AROs must be registered on the EC payroll system by completing the *Payroll Registration* form ([EC 11810](#)) and submitting it to Field Financial Management and Operations. ROs are registered during the initial training session and AROs are registered during a pre-event project or when attending an EC training session.

Direct deposit payment

The ROs and AROs must register for direct deposit into their bank account by attaching a void cheque to the *Payroll Registration* form ([EC 11810](#)). Otherwise, they may ask the bank for a printout of the banking information requested and submit this document instead.

Pay statements

Pay statements detailing hours worked, rate of pay and deductions are mailed to the ROs' and AROs' home addresses.

10.2.1 Source deductions

Source deductions include federal and provincial income tax deductions, Employment Insurance (EI) premiums, and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) deductions. For ROs and AROs working in Quebec, source deductions include the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) premiums and Quebec Pension Plan (QPP/RRQ) deductions. These amounts are deducted from the RO's and ARO's pay unless they are exempt.

Federal and provincial income tax deductions

Income tax, at the federal and provincial levels, is calculated for all worked hours. All workers must report their earnings on their annual tax returns.

Federal and provincial tax deductions are, by default, automatically calculated based on the basic personal amount, unless the individual is entitled to additional federal or provincial tax credits. In this case, the person must submit the following forms with their job application.

- **Federal:** *Personal Tax Credits Return* (Form TD1), to amend the basic federal tax withheld for the current taxation year – available on the [CRA website](#)
- **Provincial:** *Personal Tax Credits Return* (Form TD-1-provincial acronym, e.g., TD1 AB for Alberta), to amend the basic provincial tax withheld for the current taxation year – available on the [CRA website](#)
- **Provincial (Quebec only):** the *Source Deductions Return* form TP-1015 3-V is available on the [Revenu Québec website](#)



Requests for additional withholding of provincial or federal income tax cannot be accepted.

Canada Pension Plan deductions

Individuals who work more than 35 hours during an election must contribute to the CPP. The contribution period automatically ends the month after the person's 70th birthday. Eligible workers who are at least 65 years of age but less than 70 years of age must provide you with their [CPT30](#) form, as well as proof of receipt of a retirement pension. Eligible ROs and AROs should email their CPT30 form to Field Financial Management and Operations. Election administrators and workers are also responsible for sending the form to the CRA, and should contact the CRA if they have any further questions or concerns.

Quebec Pension Plan deductions

Election administrators and workers in Québec who are at least 18 years of age, who are part of the office staff, or who work at least 35 hours during an electoral event, must contribute to the QPP. Eligible workers who are at least 65 years of age, but less than 73 years of age at the end of the year, must provide you with their completed [RR-50-V](#) form and proof of receipt of a retirement pension. Eligible ROs and AROs should email their RR-50-V form to Field Financial Management and Operations. Election administrators and workers are also responsible for sending their form to Revenu Québec and should contact Revenu Québec if they have any further questions or concerns.

Employment insurance (EI) and Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP)

All individuals, regardless of age, who are office staff, or worked at least 35 hours during an electoral event, must contribute to EI or QPIP. There are no exemptions.

T4, Relevé 1 and Record of Employment

All election workers will receive a T4 slip. It reports the earnings accumulated from January 1 to December 31 of the previous year.

T4 slips are mailed to the worker's address before the deadline imposed on employers, which is the last day of February of the following year.

All election workers who have worked in the province of Quebec during an event will receive a RL-1, which shows the earnings accumulated from January 1 to December 31 of the previous year and is issued on the last day of February of the following year.

ECHQ sends a Record of Employment (ROE) to office staff and workers who have worked at least 35 hours during an event. The Record of Employment is uploaded to Service Canada after the electoral event. Workers must log in to their [My Service Canada Account](#) to view their Record of Employment.

It is important that the first day of work for the current electoral event is accurately reflected in the payroll system, as this affects the ROE issued by ECHQ.

ROEs will be issued to ROs and AROs upon request to Field Financial Management and Operations.

Workers should contact the CRA (or Revenu Québec about the RL-1) if they have additional questions or concerns about these forms.

Declaration of Conditions of Employment

Elections Canada issues a *Declaration of Conditions of Employment* to ROs **upon request** to deduct employment expenses from their income. This declaration is sent by email and by mail to the ROs at their home address.

10.2.2 Payment procedure

Pre-event

The CEO may ask ROs and AROs to work on projects directly related to their ED or to attend training sessions that EC organizes. In the case of ROs, this is in addition to their monthly stipend.

If you receive such a request, you must complete and submit, in FAMT, a claim for hours worked and a *Travel Expense Claim and Time Sheet* ([EC 09680](#)) for travel time and any travel expenses. You must complete claim forms on the behalf of your ARO in FAMT.

Elections Canada makes payments within six to eight weeks after all applicable documents and receipts have been submitted and approved, and in accordance with the *Federal Elections Fees Tariff* in force at the time services are provided.

During an election period

Elections Canada pays ROs and AROs according to the fixed rate set in the *Federal Elections Fees Tariff*. ROs and AROs are paid automatically by ECHQ and do not have to provide additional documentation during an event.

During a 36-day election calendar, ROs and AROs are paid bi-weekly, following each pay period ending on Days 23, 9, and –5. Direct deposits are made on the Friday following the end of the pay period. The lump sum paid to ROs and AROs is divided into three pro-rated payments every two weeks.

Post-event

Election administrators are entitled to additional fees for performing other services at the CEO's request, such as reconciling outstanding election accounts. Post-event payments are processed monthly and paid automatically by ECHQ.

10.3 Budgets

10.3.1 Preliminary budget

Elections Canada usually prepares a preliminary budget for the ED and sends it before an electoral event. Each ED receives a customized budget that is based on specific ED data, such as number of electors and polling stations, population, and number of AARO offices. Fees and allowances are in keeping with the *Federal Elections Fees Tariff* or other CEO-approved fees.

Hourly paid positions

For positions paid on an hourly basis, budgeted hours are based either on the projected workload for the ED (e.g. service agents for targeted revision) or on a predetermined standard amount (e.g. support officer).

Poll officials



For advance poll and polling day positions, budgets are determined according to the information provided in the Field Planning Tool (Poll Worker Staffing module). If the number of polling stations increases during the event (i.e., split polls done in REVISE), you must look at your budget to ensure the funds are available for the additional poll officials. Otherwise, you will need to submit a *Special Request*.

Travel expenses

When you exceed the office travel budget, you must submit a *Special Request* to ECHQ through EC Connex to receive approval for additional budget **before** travelling or allowing any other election officer or staff to travel. Instructions are available in *Quick Steps – How to Create a Special Request* ([EC 11307](#)).

The CEO will exercise discretion in authorizing special requests for the payment of travel time, travel expenses and living expenses that exceed the budget to all election officers and election workers requested to travel as part of their duties. Reasonable justification must be provided, and the costs must be supported.

10.3.2 Official budget

If changes have occurred from the preliminary budget, EC may send a final official budget for the ED when an election is called. This budget is to be used according to the CEA, the *Federal Elections Fees Tariff* ([EC 11790](#)) and the directives of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO). All necessary budget updates since the preparation of the preliminary budget will be detailed in the official budget. If no changes were required, the preliminary budget becomes the official budget, and a note is sent to inform you. You are accountable for managing the public funds in the official budget based on sound judgment, and in keeping with applicable laws, regulations, policies, and EC instructions.



The pay system has the budgeted hours for office staff positions. This application will allow you and your financial officer-Accounting (FO-Accounting) to track these budgets in real time.

For all other items, you and your FO-Accounting are responsible for monitoring the budget by other means. For instance, an Excel worksheet with the Official Budget can be used for such a purpose. It is recommended to have weekly meetings, at a minimum, with your FO-Accounting to ensure the proper budget tracking.

If there's insufficient budget available, you must obtain formal approval from ECHQ for additional budget (COA) prior to spending the funds. You must submit a separate request for each line requiring a supplementary budget to standardize the approval process for different ECHQ stakeholders. See the notes at the bottom of the budget for more details on authorized transfers, and refer to the *Quick Steps – How to Create a Special Request* ([EC 11307](#)).

Budget variance report

After all payments have been issued and all the election accounts are reconciled for all ROs, a budget variance report for each ED is prepared. This report shows:

- The official budget
- The requests for additional funds authorized during the electoral event, including those processed through the COA system and those authorized by the CEO
- The actual expenses incurred
- The resulting budget variance



The budget variance report is one of the tools used to evaluate the ROs' financial performance.

10.4 Sales tax

You must pay the federal Goods and Services Tax (GST) or Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) on all purchases and rentals. Some provinces do not have a fully harmonized sales tax; instead, they charge GST and Provincial Sales Tax (PST) separately. Refer to the *Sales and Consumption Tax Exemption Certificate* form ([EC 11650](#)) for the list of provinces in which EC is exempt from paying PST.

Registration with the GST and HST

The supplier's GST or HST registration number must appear on each invoice. If a supplier does not have a GST or HST number, then do not pay the applicable GST or HST. Suppliers may not have a GST or HST registration number if they are a small supplier, or if they only provide [exempt supplies](#), as defined by the CRA.

PST

In provinces and territories where the PST is charged at a point of sale and is not combined into the HST **and** for which a tax exemption agreement is in place, EC is exempt from paying PST. For proof of tax exemption, provide the supplier with the *Sales and Consumption Taxes Exemption Certificate* form ([EC 11650](#)).



- Since tax exemptions change over time, be sure to use the most recent version of the exemption certificate.
- Smaller suppliers such as convenience stores may not accept the Elections Canada Sales and Consumption Taxes Exemption Certificate when purchasing low-dollar-value items such as stamps. In such cases, pay the supplier the PST at the point of sale and ensure that the tax is properly reflected on the original receipt and on the appropriate reconciliation form.

10.5 Elections Canada acquisition card

The acquisition card is the preferred method of payment because it allows you to obtain goods and services more quickly. It is EC's policy that ROs use acquisition cards for paying for goods and services (excluding travel), where it is acceptable, efficient, economical, and operationally feasible to do so. The privilege of having an acquisition card is associated with the responsibility of knowing its proper use.

Prior to the electoral event, during a pre-event activity, you have the option to request a secondary acquisition card, which can be used during the electoral event. You may choose to give the secondary acquisition card to an AARO, but you remain responsible for its use.

The *Acquisition Card Register* ([EC 11715](#)) is used to record all purchases you made using the acquisition card, so all transactions must be recorded in this Register. All required instructions and forms are available in FAMT.



- The acquisition card limit is **\$1,000** for non-event periods. During an event, the card limit is increased to \$50,000.
- Elections Canada may withhold future payments to ROs until account reconciliations have been received, assessed and processed.

10.5.1 Reconciliation of accounts

The monthly reconciliation of acquisition cards must be completed by the 14th of each month and submitted in FAMT. During the monthly reconciliation, it is important to include all the following documents: the register signed by you in PDF format, the completed register in Excel format, the statement of account, and the receipts associated with the expenses.

During an event, the FO-Accounting is responsible for preparing this reconciliation on your behalf. You should make sure all receipts and statements are forwarded to the FO-Accounting. You must also review and sign the reconciliation before it is submitted to ECHQ.

10.5.2 Monthly statement errors

In the event of suspicious transactions, loss, or compromise of the acquisition card, you must call the credit card company to resolve the issue and immediately notify Comptabiliteregionale-FieldAccounting@elections.ca and Securite-Security@elections.ca.

10.6 Accountable advances

At the start of an event, you may request a petty cash that can be used during the election in your office, as well as in the AARO's office. ECHQ issues an accountable advance (petty cash) to deal with miscellaneous expenses incurred in managing the office during an event. Using petty cash funds presupposes prudent business practices and the observance of rules and regulations governing business transactions at EC, as set forth in the *Code of Professional Conduct for Election Administrators* ([EC 10044](#)).

Petty cash funds are used to facilitate the processing of low-value transactions (less than \$200, rounding to the nearest \$0.05). These accountable advances are issued by cheque or direct deposit to ROs and AAROs, based on their chosen method of payment, and they are responsible for safeguarding and controlling the expenses made with petty cash.

The petty cash reconciliation must be completed no later than Day –10 and is submitted in FAMT. When reconciling, it is important to include all of the following documents: the Petty cash register ([EC 11710](#)) signed by you in PDF format, the completed register in Excel format, and the invoices associated with the expenses. The maximum reconciliation amount must not exceed the amount issued as petty cash. Note that you must also sign the reconciliation for an AARO.

The RO or AARO is responsible for returning unused funds to ECHQ by cheque to the Receiver General for Canada. The exact amount should be confirmed with FFMO beforehand. The mailing address is: Attention to FFMO, 30 Victoria Street, Gatineau, QC J8X 0A8.

During an event, the FO-Accounting is responsible for preparing this reconciliation on your behalf. All petty cash purchases must have a verifiable receipt. You should make sure all receipts and statements are forwarded to the FO-Accounting. You must also review and sign the reconciliation before it is submitted to ECHQ.

10.6.1 Hospitality

Hospitality expenses (minimal refreshments) shall be incurred only for a specific meeting: the candidate election briefing.

When conducting this meeting, a purchase of minimal refreshments is allowed, following [Appendix B](#) of the Treasury Board *Directive on Travel, Hospitality, Conference and Event Expenditures* and the referenced rates described in the National Joint Council's [Travel Directive](#). There are no other exceptions to this rule.

10.7 Travel expenses and fees

Election officer and administrators are entitled to be reimbursed for pre-authorized travel and living expenses such as meals, taxis and hotels while travelling. Consult the *Federal Elections Fees Tariff* ([EC 11790](#)) for the complete list.

All travel expenses and fees must be pre-authorized by ECHQ. During an electoral event, you must pre-authorize all travel expenses and fees for your staff.

ROs, AROs and FLOs

You submit your own claims and your ARO's in FAMT. FLOs submit their own claim in FAMT.

Other election workers

All workers authorized to travel must submit their completed form for your verification and signature. The FOs then processes the claims.

More information about event travel guidelines is provided before a GE.

Reimbursement

As soon as possible after the travel period is over, all claimants must submit a completed *Travel Expense Claim and Time Sheet* form ([EC 09680](#)), along with supporting documentation (receipts, etc.).

For reimbursement of pre-approved kilometre expenses for travel by private vehicle, refer to the *Rates for Travel and Living Expenses* form ([EC 09600](#)). Include a Google map detailing the route, from point A to point B, to support the claim.

10.8 Delegating financial authorities

Your financial authorities cannot be delegated to another person. Only you are authorized to sign for all financial transactions and documentation, including:

- *Special Account Form* ([EC 11670](#))
- *Field Contracting Considerations Checklist* ([EC 10053](#))
- *Payment Authorization Report* produced from the pay system, to pay office staff and polling place workers
- Timesheets
- *Kilometer Log* ([EC 11700](#))
- *Travel Expense Claim* ([EC 09680](#))
- Leases for offices and polling places
- Claims against the Crown
- *Incident Report Form* ([EC 10051](#))
- *Acquisition Card Register* ([EC 11715](#))
- *Register of Reimbursable Expenses from Petty Cash* ([EC 11710](#))
- Other financial documents

For more information, refer to the Policy on the *Financial Management of Field Activities* ([EC 10048](#)).

Specimen signature card

Elections Canada provides the *Specimen Signature* form ([EC 11761](#)) during your initial onboarding process. This card is used to verify that an authorization signature is genuine.

Complete the form as follows:

1. Fill in appropriate sections.
2. Return the original signed card to Field Financial Management and Operations at EC.



The *Specimen Signature* cards are updated following a readjustment exercise, a vacancy and a new hire.

10.9 Financial tools and references

- ROPS/SITES – the Returning Office Payment System and SITES application – facilitates registration of and payment to all election officers, staff, and landlords. It also facilitates managing the electoral facilities database for the ED.
- *ROPS/SITES User's Guide* ([EC 10237](#)) – provides step-by-step procedures for entering or updating information on all staff and landlords, transmitting payment data and producing reports to assist you in managing the electoral event.
- *Financial Officer's Manual* ([EC 10495](#)) – provides financial officers with detailed instructions on all financial processes in your office. Both you and your financial officers must thoroughly review this manual before the start of an electoral event.
-  • *Financial Management Tips for ROs* ([EC 10093](#))
- Virtual Training Centre – Financial Officer Training – provides recorded demonstrations of procedures completed in ROPS/SITES.
- Checklists – assist you and your FOs in managing the various financial processes. Checklists are available in this manual and in the *Financial Officer's Manual*.
- *Aide-Mémoire of Financial Activities* ([EC 11657](#)) – provides the FOs with a list of daily tasks, reminders and key dates related to financial tasks on the election calendar.
- Treasury Board of Canada's [Directive on Payments](#) – provides ROs with guidelines on how to procure and pay for goods and services using an acquisition card.
- [Federal Elections Fees Tariff](#) – the authoritative source for fees, rates and allowances paid to ROs and other persons employed at or in relation to elections. The Governor in Council makes the *Federal Elections Fees Tariff* based on recommendations from the CEO, pursuant to section 542 and subsection 544(1) of the [Canada Elections Act](#).

For the most recent rates, fees, allowances and expenses, consult the *Tariff of Fees – Reference Table* ([EC 11795](#)).

Chapter 11 – Additional assistant returning officer



For more information on AARO matters, consult:

- Volume II, section 3.9 – *Election materials you ship to the AARO after the writ*
- Volume III, Chapter 4 – Activities at the AARO office

11.1 Message to AAROs

The CEA contains provisions concerning the appointment of additional assistant returning officers (AAROs). Under subsections 30(1) to (4) of the CEA, the Chief Electoral Officer may approve your request to appoint one or more AAROs to assist you in administering the electoral process in a designated area of the ED.

To justify the appointment of one or more AAROs during an electoral event or referendum, the following criteria must be considered:

- Geographic size of the ED
- Communication restrictions, including poor roadways or natural obstacles, such as rivers, lakes, and mountains
- Significant concentration of residents on opposite sides of the ED and at a considerable distance from each other
- Residents' tendency to travel to certain population centres rather than to others
- The need to give electors easy access to services connected with revision, voting under the SVR and other special circumstances
- Facilitating and improving the voting process for electors and the electoral process in general, for political entities and the RO for that ED

You must inform the CEO of which polling divisions will be included in the area to be managed by an AARO. In this chapter, this area is called the "designated area."



This section does not apply to AARO-ESPs. External service point layout and voting are covered in section 6.5 of this volume and in Volume II, sections 2.5 and 12.13 respectively.

11.1.1 Pre-event equipment

Before the writ is issued, you will provide the AARO office(s) with a Wireless Kit (2 LTE modems; 2 AC power adapters for LTE modems; 4 LTE modem antennae; 1 smartphone; 1 smartphone case; 1 wired headset for cellular phone; 2 100-foot network cables for modems; and 1 black plastic wireless kit bin) to be used in the AARO office.

11.2 Telephone and hardware installation and service

11.2.1 Office telephony/hardware blueprints

The blueprint is essentially a map showing the location and functions of devices and telephones set up in the RO or AARO office, if applicable. These blueprints are provided to the telephone company technician.

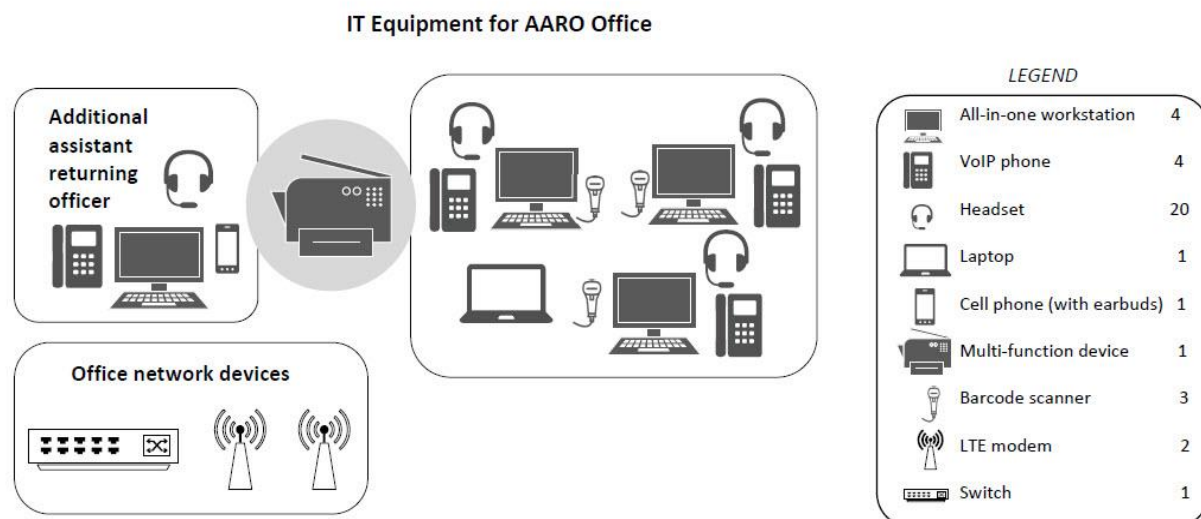


Figure 7 AARO office IT & telephony equipment (kit)

Telephone lines

Elections Canada will arrange for telephone service and telephone and office equipment to be installed in the AARO office and will be billed directly for the costs. The telephone company will install four single-line sets, toll-free service and one fax line, to be distributed as follows:

- A telephone for the AARO
- A telephone for each of the two service agents
- A telephone for the office staff
- One toll-free line for calls from the public (assigned by Elections Canada)
- A line and toll-free service for the fax machine
- An emergency phone attached to a landline

Installation of telephone lines is coordinated centrally by Elections Canada. A technician will contact the AARO to set up a time for installing the lines at the issue of the writ and for decommissioning them at the end of the election period. The AARO must oversee these activities.



It is highly recommended that the field offices have sanitizing wipes available for the staff to wipe down the headsets and the VoIP phone at the end of their shift for the workers starting the next shift.

11.2.2 Computer systems

The new AARO business model includes the delivery, installation, testing, support and decommissioning of all computer equipment. This new model is designed to allow the AARO to focus more time on the business of elections and less on computer-related matters. The AARO office equipment will include three work stations for the office and a laptop for the training officer to use.

As soon as the AARO office address for the event is confirmed and the location is accessible, the IT technician will install the computers. To this end, the AARO must bring the modem that you will have provided before the issue of the writ.

The AARO office will be equipped with new networked computers connected to the Internet, to ECHQ, to REVISE and to other applications as required. The equipment and REVISE functionality will allow for elector information to be entered directly into REVISE in the AARO office. REVISE will be accessible throughout the election calendar.

You will provide the AARO with a copy of the password sheet so that he can access the various applications and/or programs.



The monitors are to be positioned so that elector information cannot be viewed by any electors coming to the office.

Applications available

Using the networked computers, the AARO can access:

- **REVISE** – A Web-based application used to perform all elector revision transactions, including data entry of polling day registration and correction certificates and to administer SVR.
- **Targeted Outreach Program Repository (TOPR)** – A Web-based application used for the planning/pre-event and delivery/event of a variety of outreach programs.
- **Webmail** – Outlook Web Access is the email system used in RO and AARO offices during an event. EC's main communication line is email. The AARO must therefore check regularly for new messages throughout the day and evening, and use Outlook Web Access to send messages to EC.
- **MS Word** – To read or create text documents, such as letters, lists and forms.
- **MS Excel** – To read or create calculation documents, such as spreadsheets, charts, graphs and databases.
- **Adobe Reader** – To view PDF files; a format which EC uses for many manuals and forms.

- **Field Personnel Intranet** – The Field Personnel Intranet (rods.elections.ca) contains the day-to-day tools required to manage an AARO office efficiently.
- **ECDocs** – EC's repository of the most up-to-date versions of the operational manuals, user guides, calendars, forms and checklists in both official languages. ECDocs can be found on the Field Personnel Intranet.

Your AC is qualified to provide extra help using EC systems and applications.

Protecting information

Sensitive information must be protected. The data collected in the AARO office must be used only for the purposes set out in the CEA.

The AARO is responsible for ensuring that sensitive information is kept secure at all times other than when the CEA requires that it be made available. The AARO must follow these steps to secure the office and to ensure that sensitive information in the office is safeguarded:

- Keep all computers and additional office IT infrastructure in a secure location
- Keep the password sheet in a secure location
- Ensure that all lists and completed forms are stored out of public view in a secure location
- Ensure that service centre documents and information are locked in a filing cabinet
- Ensure that all service centre staff maintains the privacy and security of electors' personal information in accordance with the *Privacy Act* and the *Access to Information Act*
- Ensure that only authorized software and tools are installed on the AARO office IT infrastructure

The AARO must resolve and inform you and EC of security breaches, such as:

- Illegal downloading, installation or execution of unauthorized programs or utilities on the office network
- Missing documents containing sensitive information, including incomplete registration forms
- Misuse of election materials or equipment, or unauthorized copying of lists of electors
- Failure to comply with procedures regarding the security of personal information
- Unauthorized travel with EC assets or information



Ensure that AARO office staff follow the same *Confidentiality and security guidelines* as staff working in the RO office.

11.2.3 Office budget

You will receive an official budget for the AARO office costs as applicable, based on your "Planning RO/AARO Office Operations" PEA.

11.2.4 Office staff

In accordance with your instructions, the AARO is responsible for planning work schedules, supervising employees and evaluating employees for future elections. Every two weeks, the AARO must also approve the hours worked by office staff and fax the appropriate report to you for submission to EC.

Additional support staff

If the volume of calls and the workload in the AARO office require hiring support staff, your AARO needs to let you know. If you agree with the AARO's request, you will submit a request to the ECHQ for additional funding to cover the costs of temporary staff.

11.2.5 AARO office activities

Revision and voting by special ballot

AARO offices do not have a service point supervisor (SPS). The AAROs are responsible for overseeing revision and special ballot voting services in their offices. However, the SPS from your office can train both the AARO and the service agents (SAs) on these services.

In the AARO office, two SAs work as a team to serve electors. To facilitate shift work, more than one team of agents is to be trained.

SAs will work primarily in the REVISE application. Each SA must receive a copy of the *Service Agent's Manual* ([EC 40240](#)). In addition to being trained by the SPS, AAROs and SAs will also have access on online training material.

Consult the *Service Point Supervisor Manual* ([EC 40231](#)) for more information.

Targeted revision

Targeted revision is a set of activities conducted by SAs outside of the RO office to improve the quality of the lists of electors, by ensuring that electors are registered at their current home address.

The AARO is to discuss targeted revision plans with you and, if possible, the SPS. Before the writ is issued, you must help the AARO identify areas for targeted revision. While the AARO will supervise staff in his office, targeted revision is mainly the SPS/ASPS's responsibility. The SPS/ASPS oversees the work of SAs for targeted revision and provides the required materials to complete the targeted revision activities.

Service agents carrying out targeted revision use the *Application for Revision or Registration on the List of Electors* forms ([EC 40200](#) and [EC 40030](#)) at the revisal desks. They also, where required, display the *Are you registered to vote? Poster* ([EC 40141](#)) and the *Are you registered to vote? Door hanger* ([EC 40119](#)). Completed elector registration and revision forms are entered into REVISE in the AARO office.

Consult the *Targeted Revision Program Manual* ([EC 40007](#)) for more information.

Outreach

Outreach activities respond to the unique needs and circumstances of your ED, including your designated area. The CROs will finalize your outreach action plans in the AARO's designated area once the writ is issued, you should discuss any requirements for a CRO with the AARO.

CROs are hired to increase awareness of when, where and ways to register and vote among the following target groups of electors:

- Indigenous – any area within an ED that has at least one Métis settlement, First Nations reserve, Inuit hamlet or Friendship Centre
- Official Languages/Ethnocultural – when 5% or more of the population in one or more polling districts speak the minority official language, or when an area within an ED has a significant ethnocultural population
- Youth – when an area within an ED has a significant population of young electors (between 18 and 35 years old), one or more post-secondary educational institution, or at least one external service point (ESP)
- Homeless – when an ED has facilities offering a shelter or services for electors with no fixed address, including community correctional centres (CCCs) and community-based residential facilities (CRFs)
- Seniors – when an ED has one or more long-term care facilities or seniors' residences
- Accessibility – when an ED has organizations or facilities representing or providing services to electors with disabilities

You shall ship outreach materials to the AARO office as soon as possible.

11.2.6 AARO staff cost estimates

As these estimates are adjusted every year, and because of possible variances between AARO offices, a budget will be provided with the numbers and types of positions.

11.3 Managing election materials for the AARO office

11.3.1 Shipping election materials to the AARO before the event

Before an event, EC will ship all the materials the AAROs need to open the office and to manage the Special Voting Rules (SVR). Refer to [Chapter 8 – Managing election materials](#) for information and instructions that may apply to the AARO.

11.3.2 Initial shipment to the AARO's residence

Before the writ is issued, AAROs will receive an initial shipment of supplies and materials at their residence so they can open their office when the election is called.

All the materials that the SAs needs to begin special ballot registration and voting, including the special ballots, will be sent to the AAROs prior to the issue of the writ if possible; or at the latest, at the issue of the writ. It is very important that the staff keep a record of all the special ballots that have been received.

Table 6 Election materials shipped to the AARO

Lot and kit number	Description
Lot 38	Accessories and material for AARO office
K.38-A	Kit for the AARO office
Lot 39	Material for the service centre in the AARO office
K.39-A	Kit for the service centre in the AARO office



The AARO must remember to advise you and Elections Canada of any change to his current address or telephone numbers.



Materials destined for electors in Quebec are identified with a **-1** after the lot, kit or EC number. This designation indicates that information is in French first or in French only.

11.3.3 Storing election materials

The AARO may not rent a commercial storage unit, as they do not receive a monthly stipend for storing election materials. If storage of materials at the AARO's residence is not feasible, arrangements should be made with you.

11.3.4 Storage fee

It is estimated that each AARO will need approximately 25 cubic feet (0.70 cubic metres) of space to store the election materials before the issue of the writ.

The *Federal Elections Fees Tariff* allows for a monthly amount to store election materials at the AARO's residence until the issue of the writ. To be reimbursed for this amount (in March and September), the AARO must submit a special account form to you.



For additional information on AARO office operations, requirements and floor plans, consult the *Operations Guide for RO and AARO Offices* (*EC 10013*).

Appendix A – Overview of your tasks before, during and after an electoral event

Before	During	After
TASK 1: Polling division boundaries		
- Review polling division boundaries in accordance with the CEO's instructions. - Establish advance polling districts. - Establish mobile polls. - Prepare polling division documentation. - Identify new streets. - Identify new developments, high-mobility areas. - Consult the political parties for their comments and suggestions.	- Make last-minute changes. - Advise EC and political entities of the changes.	Take note of the polling divisions whose boundaries must be changed before the next election as a result of data entry in REVISE.
TASK 2: Polling places		
- Contact officials at seniors' residences, chiefs of First Nations band councils, political parties, etc. concerning the location of polling stations. - Identify accessibility criteria shortfalls that can be temporarily modified to comply. - Visit new areas that are potential polling places. - Evaluate the accessibility of potential polling places. - Choose polling places, including central polls. - Assign polling stations to polling places. - Consult the <i>Directive on Accessibility Exemptions when Selecting a Suitable Polling Place</i> (on the EC website).	- Confirm the availability of polling places. - Confirm polling places in ROPS/SITES. - Finalize rental agreements. Sign the leases. - Purchase materials or get cost estimates to make temporary modifications to polling places so that they comply with accessibility criteria. - Inform each candidate and each political party that has endorsed candidates that addresses of polling places in the ED and any changes will be available in the PESC portal. - Review any accessibility feedback received during advance polls for locations to be used again on polling day and address issues wherever possible.	- Make arrangements to remove any materials or temporary construction installed to modify polling places. - Take note of: - locations that should not be used again - advance polling districts that must be revised - polling divisions that must be regrouped or revised - Ensure data entry of all <i>Feedback on Accessibility and Voter Experience Form</i> (EC 50119) in the Voter Feedback and Incident Monitoring System (ICBMS). - Follow up with those electors who have requested it.

Before	During	After
TASK 3: Relations with political parties		
• Discuss the recruitment of election officers. • As soon as possible after the issue of the writ, solicit names of persons suitable to be elections officers from the candidates of registered parties who endorsed candidates in the previous election in the ED, or from the registered associations of those registered parties. However, if the registered party has no registered association in the ED, solicit names from that registered party. • Discuss the recruitment of service agents in particular with respect to targeted revision. • Consult the parties about the polling divisions, the polling places and the road network.	• Inform the parties about the electoral process. • Raise all issues about the smooth conduct of the vote. • Provide information about registration and voting under the Special Voting Rules. • Distribute the schedule of EC's seminars on campaign finances. • Ask parties or candidates for the list of names to fill positions of election officers. • Clearly indicate to the parties: – the positions to be filled – EC's expectations of the parties – the deadlines for submitting lists for various potential election officer positions.	• Make note of suggestions for future events. • Submit all political parties' comments or complaints to EC.

Before	During	After
TASK 4: Relations with candidates		
• Advise prospective candidates or their official agents that: • The Electronic Financial Return (EFR) software application is for use and reference by the official agent when fulfilling reporting requirements under the political financing provisions of the CEA. • EFR can be downloaded by confirmed candidates or their official agent through the Political Entities Service Centre (PESC) portal. • EFR can be used to produce Official Contribution Receipts. • If preferred, and once a candidate is confirmed, hard-copy receipts can be requested by sending an email to: ROFP-ORPF@elections.ca.	• Receive and process the nomination papers and online nomination forms from candidates. • Promote the use of the Political Entities Service Centre (PESC) portal. • Inform each candidate in the ED and each political party that has endorsed a candidate that the addresses of all polling places and of any changes to these from Day 24 to polling day will be available in the PESC portal. • Inform candidates that the following will be available in the PESC portal: – Maps, descriptions of the polling divisions and poll keys – The <i>Preliminary Lists of Electors</i>, the <i>Day 19 Updated Preliminary Lists of Electors</i>, the <i>Revised Lists of Electors</i> and the <i>Official Lists of Electors</i> – The <i>Notice of Advance Poll</i>, the <i>Notice of Mobile Poll</i> and the <i>Notice of a Grant of Poll</i> • Hold the candidate election briefing with all confirmed candidates or their representatives. • Request the list of names of election officers from candidates and political parties. • Ensure that the representatives know that they, or other candidate representatives, can be present for the counting of local special ballots and for the validation of results.	• Advise confirmed candidates or their official agents that: • The candidate's completed election expense return (EFR) must be submitted directly to EC by the reporting deadline (three months after polling day). • If hard-copy official contribution receipts were requested, any unused or voided receipts must be returned to EC within a month after polling day.

Before	During	After
TASK 5: Your office		
• Establish requirements. • Conduct office search. • Ask for verification of telephone equipment. • Request pre-approval of office. • Begin discussing costs and conditions with the landlord. • Submit the information to EC. • Draw up an office floor plan in cooperation with your AC and ARO. • Order a rubber stamp labelled Elections Canada with the name of the ED.	• Finalize rental arrangements. • Sign lease if not already done in accordance with CEO instructions. • Submit lease agreement for payment. • Finalize floor plan. • Supervise the set-up. • Implement security procedures.	• Supervise the closing.
TASK 6: Furniture, equipment and supplies		
• Define requirements for furniture, equipment and office supplies. • Contact suppliers to discuss costs and terms. • Buy office supplies. • Receive first shipment of election materials from EC. • Store EC supplies on site or rent storage space. • Ensure winter heating of storage area. • Draw up an inventory control system.	• Have telephones, multifunction devices and hardware installed. • Order furniture. • Order office equipment. • Buy remaining office supplies. • Organize supply room for efficient storage of supplies. • Receive election materials from EC. • Control and distribute EC supplies. • Implement the inventory control system and distribute the supplies received from EC.	• Supervise return of all furniture, equipment and supplies.

Before	During	After
TASK 7: Office staff		
• Review the financial resources available for recruiting staff. • Identify the positions available for the ED. • Design tentative work plan for allocating resources. • Review job descriptions. • Identify and interview potential office staff. • Identify potential resources, taking into account their command of the two official languages and other languages.	• Hire staff and enter their information in ROPS/SITES. • Have staff submit a solemn declaration. • Plan work schedules. • Supervise the staff. • During the first few days, ensure that they are trained, and review their work. • Evaluate staff performance for future elections. • Approve office staff's hours every two weeks and send report to EC.	• Evaluate staff performance for subsequent consultation. • Conduct the necessary follow-ups to ensure all staff is paid.
TASK 8: Relations with the public		
• Design a communication plan to help staff accurately and efficiently answer inquiries from: – the public – the media (all media inquiries are directed to the FLO) – job seekers • Draw up a plan to meet linguistic needs (official and other languages) in accordance with the <i>Inventory of Official Languages Actions, Obligations and Resources for Returning Officers</i> (EC 14003) and related policies and directives. • Implement the plan.	• Implement the communication plan to answer inquiries from the public: – days, nights and weekends – during peak periods, i.e., during the revision period and on polling day • Implement the plan to meet linguistic needs (official and other languages). • Redirect all media inquiries to the FLO • Regularly monitor the accuracy of information that staff provide to the public. • Post and distribute EC information documents.	• Respond to letters from electors, directly or through EC.

Before	During	After
TASK 9: Producing lists of electors		
- Recruit an automation coordinator (AC), assistant automation coordinator (AAC) and service point supervisor (SPS). - Hire the AC. - Ensure that the AC and the SPS are available for their training session. - Ensure the AC and the SPS fill out all the human resources forms.	- Hire the AAC and ensure that he is trained by the AC. - Supervise the AC. - Inform the candidates that the <i>Preliminary Lists of Electors</i>, the <i>Day 19 Updated Preliminary Lists of Electors</i>, the <i>Revised Lists of Electors</i>, and the <i>Official Lists of Electors</i> will be available in the PESC portal. - Ensure that the AC conducts required ERS election night result simulation on Day 17 and Day 12. - Hire the service centre support officers (SCSO) in collaboration with the SPS and AC. - Approve revision transactions in REVISE. - Give the AC: - the arrival date and time of the computer systems - exclusive access to lists of electors for authorized staff only	- Provide the AC with date and time when movers will pick-up Local Area Network (LAN). - Oversee entry of polling day registrations. - Supervise the dismantling and returning of the LAN to EC.
TASK 10: Accounts, forms and administrative documents		
- Submit accounts for special assignments. - Submit forms for ARO and AC	- Prepare electronic forms to appoint all election officers and office staff. - Prepare the accounts and management reports and send them to EC within the prescribed time frames. - Approve and submit expense accounts for: - rental of RO/AARO offices - furniture and equipment - office supplies - printing - petty cash - office staff - temporary staff - rental of polling places - other reimbursable expenses.	- Submit accountable advance reconciliation within 10 days after polling day. - Submit poll officials and landlords' accounts as well as any outstanding accounts to EC for payment as soon as possible. - Answer staff questions about their pay. - Remain available to receive and respond to assistance or information requests from EC in the 3 months following an event.

Before	During	After
TASK 11: Printing and producing documents		
• Determine where/how materials will be produced. • Meet with printing companies to determine availability and technical capabilities. • Identify a local printing company for: – the ballots – the lists – the <i>List of Candidates in Large Print</i> (EC 50174).	• Determine number of: – paper copies of lists of electors requested by candidates (paper copies provided only upon request) – ballots to print. • Finalize details of the printing orders. • Meet with the printing company. • Provide the selected printing company the <i>Affidavit of the Printer</i> (EC 10300) which they must complete and submit to you with the invoice for ballot printing. • Coordinate arrangements with the printing company. • Coordinate photocopies of notices. • Check the proofs and supervise the printing of the ballots. • Review and approve the VICs in REVISE. • Ensure the security of the ballots and lists of electors. • Obtain the invoice from the printing company and pay it either with the EC acquisition card (if possible) or send the invoice to EC. Consult the Elections Canada acquisition card section.	• Return unused paper to EC
TASK 12: Voting by <i>Transfer Certificates</i>		
	• Issue <i>Transfer Certificates</i> (EC 50052) as needed and record them in the <i>Transfer Certificate Register</i> (EC 50057). • Place the copy of the <i>Certificates</i> in the appropriate ballot boxes. • Coordinate the issue of the <i>Transfer Certificates</i> for any polling station that was moved to a new location after the VICs were sent out.	

Before	During	After
TASK 13: Revision and voting by special ballot		
- Identify all the residential areas in the ED, paying special attention to: - areas of high mobility - new developments - post-secondary institutions and student residences - long-term care facilities - First Nations reserves. - Plan the targeted revision. - Determine the number of SAs needed. Multiple people can be hired to fill 1 full-time position. - Locate acute care facilities, if any. - Determine the necessary resources (HSBCs) for hospitalized electors to vote by special ballot, if any. - Determine the necessary resources (DROs) to conduct the voting in correctional institutions, if any. - Determine the number of DROs and poll clerks required to conduct the verification and count of local special ballots on polling night (1 team per approximately 500 ballots).	- Hire a 2nd SPS. (At least 2 persons should be hired to fill 1 full-time SPS position.) - Have the SPS who was trained by ECHQ train the 2nd SPS. - Ensure that an ASPS and SAs are recruited. - Have the SPSs train the ASPS and the SAs. - If there are any AARO offices in your ED, your SPSs must train the SAs and the AARO on revision and special ballot voting services. - Finalize training timelines and bookings for training space. - Ensure that paper applications for revision and voting by special ballot are available at the issue of the writ, in case electors request those services before REVISE is available. - Once REVISE is available, SAs will provide these services using REVISE. - Supervise the work of the SPS, ASPS and SAs. - Produce and distribute the <i>Revised</i> and <i>Official</i> lists. - Approve transactions in REVISE. - Monitor activities through REVISE management reports. - If any candidates come to observe the voting by special ballot in your office, admit them and provide them with the <i>Guidelines for Candidates' Representatives: Service Centres in Local Elections Canada Offices</i> (EC 78058). - Submit payroll to EC. - If there are any ESP offices on campuses in your ED, your SPSs must train the SAs, SPSs and AARO-ESPs in these offices on revision and special ballot voting services.	Submit accounts and payroll to EC.

Before	During	After
	• Contact acute care facility administrators to discuss and select a voting model. • Contact acute care primary contacts to recommend HSBCs. • Appoint the HSBCs. • Have the SPSs train the HSBCs. • Contact correctional liaison officers. • Appoint and train DROs assigned to correctional institutions, if any. • Appoint DROs and poll clerks to count the local special ballots. • Have the SPS train the DROs ad poll clerks to count the local special ballots. • Annotate the lists of electors who registered to vote by special ballot before the lists are distributed.	
TASK 14: Voting at the advance polls (days 10, 9, 8 and 7)		
• Establish training plan with training officer. • Review advance polling districts. • In the Field Planning Tool (FPT) / Poll Worker Staffing module, develop staffing levels for advance polls  • Develop a contingency plan that includes stand-by election officers to ensure all polling stations open at the time prescribed by the CEA. Consult Volume IV, Chapter 4 <i>Staffing and planning considerations for the polls</i> of this manual. 	• Revalidate election officer staffing levels for the advance polls following any changes to polls assigned to polling places, and compare staffing levels to approved budget to determine if special requests are required  • Issue the <i>Notice of Advance Polls</i>. • Modify the lists of electors to be used in the advance polls. • Ensure poll officials are recruited and registered in the ROPS/SITES application. • In large EDs, finalize training timelines and bookings for training space. • Organize training sessions and ensure they are delivered. • Supervise the training sessions. • Distribute the ballot boxes and election materials.	• Approve and submit payment file for all poll officials.

Before	During	After
	• Supervise advance poll voting. • Notify EC immediately if any advance polling station fails to open on time. • Collect the <i>Office Documents Bag</i> (EC 50390) nightly from advance polls. • Forward the <i>Record of Electors, Registration Certificate</i> and <i>Correction Certificate</i> forms to the SPS for updates to the REVISE database. • Prepare the <i>Vouching Forms Register</i> (EC 50056) from the vouching forms (EC 50055) and review the voting status certificates (EC 50051) for potential instances of double voting. • Inform candidates that copies of the <i>Sequence Number Sheets – Advance Polls</i> (EC 50109) will be available in the PESC portal the next day after each advance polling day.	
TASK 15: Voting at the ordinary polls		
• Establish training plan with the training officer. • Review polling divisions and mobile polls. • Identify potential polling places. • In the FPT / Poll Worker Staffing module, determine staffing levels for advance, ordinary and mobile polls.  • In the FPT / Long Term Care module, establish groupings of two or more addresses to serve as mobile polls.  • Develop a contingency plan that includes stand-by election officers to ensure all polling stations open at the time prescribed by the CEA. Consult Volume IV, Chapter 4 <i>Staffing and planning considerations for the polls</i> of this manual. 	• Revalidate poll worker groupings for long-term care to ensure adequate coverage for voting in seniors' residences and long-term care facilities and perform merges in REVISE.  • Revalidate election officer staffing levels for the ordinary and mobile polls following any changes to polls assigned to polling places once splits have been completed in REVISE and compare staffing levels to approved budget to determine if special requests are required.  • Issue the <i>Notice of Grant of a Poll</i> (EC 10170) and the <i>Notice of Mobile Poll</i> (EC 10160). • Ensure DROs are recruited and registered in the ROPS/SITES application.	• Approve and submit payment file for all poll officials.

Before	During	After
	• If applicable, appoint registration officers, information officers (IO), central poll supervisor (CPS) and a person responsible for maintaining order (security guard) and ensure they are registered in the ROPS/ SITES application. • Finalize the training timelines and bookings for training space. • Organize training sessions for poll officials and ensure they are conducted. • Supervise the training sessions. • Distribute ballot boxes and election materials and amend the lists of electors. • Notify EC immediately if any polling station fails to open on time.	

Before	During	After
TASK 16: Polling day		
• Plan RO office set up. • Schedule additional staff for troubleshooting.	• Order additional materials as required. • Supervise the vote at ordinary polls. • Respond to queries from the public, the media or FLOs. • Supervise local special ballot counting at the returning office. • Prepare the office to receive the results from the polls. • Provide space for media representatives to receive the results. • Ensure site security.	• Monitor the validation of results.
TASK 17: Results of the vote		
	• Count the local special ballots. • Receive the preliminary results from the CPSS and DROs. • Receive the ballots boxes and election materials. • Ensure the data entry of the results of the vote in the Event Results System (ERS). • Transmit results to EC and the media.	• Conduct the validation of results. • Verify the <i>Statement of the Vote</i> against the ERS and send the reports to EC. • Enter polling day registrations and correction certificates. • Enter the information from all sequence number sheets (EC 50111) and send it to ECHQ for distribution to candidates and political parties in the PESC portal. • Coordinate the preparations for a judicial recount, if necessary. • Assist the judge, if necessary. • Print and distribute the <i>Result of Voting (EC 10420)</i> report.

Before	During	After
TASK 18: Complete the return of the writ		
	• Receive and store the writ in a safe location.	• Complete and sign the <i>Return of the Writ</i> (printed on the back of the writ) and send it to the CEO in the <i>Special Envelope for the return of the Writ</i> (EC 11510).
TASK 19: Close the office		
		• Complete decommissioning process in the ROPS/SITES application and ERS (refer to the AC Manual).
TASK 20: Return all materials to EC		
	• Contact Canada Post to arrange for pick up. • Sort and pack all materials according to prescribed procedures.	• Fill out the <i>List of Reusable Office Supplies and Materials</i> (in Volume II). • Confirm pick up with EC. • Supervise pick up.
TASK 21: Complete the RO's <i>Report of Proceedings</i>		
	• Update the online report throughout the election.	• Update and complete the online report at the end of the election.

Appendix B – Overview of obligations and prohibitions under the CEA

Obligation or prohibition
Election officers
Returning Officers and Assistant Returning Officers Obligation to act to enable elections to be held Every returning officer to whom a writ is directed shall, on its receipt, or on notification by the Chief Electoral Officer of its issue, cause to be promptly taken any of the proceedings directed by the Act that are necessary in order that the election may be regularly held.
Prohibitions No person shall: (a) knowingly obstruct an election officer in the exercise of his or her powers or the performance of his or her duties; (b) without authority, use identification simulating that used by an election officer or intended to replace that prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer for that purpose; or (c) having been removed or replaced as an election officer, fail to return any election documents or election materials in his or her possession to the returning officer or to an authorized person.
Candidates
Prohibition Ineligible Candidate No person shall sign a nomination paper consenting to be a candidate knowing that he or she is not eligible to be a candidate.
False statement of withdrawal of candidate No person or entity shall publish a false statement that indicates that a candidate has withdrawn.

Obligation or prohibition
Lists of electors
Use of List of Electors Prohibitions No person shall: (a) wilfully apply to be included in a list of electors in a name that is not his or her own; (b) wilfully apply, except as authorized by this Act, to be included in a list of electors for a polling division if he or she is already included in a list of electors for another polling division, which list was prepared for use at the same election; (c) wilfully apply, except as authorized by this Act, to be included in a list of electors for a polling division in which the person is not ordinarily resident; (d) apply to have included in a list of electors for an electoral district the name of a person, knowing that the person is not qualified as an elector or entitled to vote in the electoral district; (d.1) compel, induce or attempt to compel or induce any other person to make a false or misleading statement relating to that other person's qualification as an elector for the purposes of the inclusion of that other person's name in a list of electors; (e) wilfully apply to have included in a list of electors the name of an animal or thing; or (f) knowingly use personal information that is recorded in a list of electors for a purpose other than: (i) to enable registered parties, eligible parties, members or candidates to communicate with electors, in accordance with section 110, or (ii) for the purposes of the administration and enforcement of this Act or the Referendum Act.

Obligation or prohibition
Voting and ballots
Election Materials Ballot printed (1) The returning officer shall, as soon as possible after 2:00 p.m. on the 19th day before polling day, authorize the printing of a sufficient number of ballots in Form 3 of Schedule 1. (2) Ballots shall have a counterfoil and a stub, with a line of perforations between the ballot and the counterfoil and between the counterfoil and the stub. (3) The ballots shall be numbered on the back of the stub and the counterfoil, and the same number shall be printed on the stub as on the counterfoil. (4) Ballots shall be in books containing an appropriate number of ballots. (5) Each printer shall return all of the ballots and all of the unused paper on which the ballots were to have been printed, to the returning officer. (6) Ballots shall bear the name of the printer who, on delivering them to the returning officer, shall include an affidavit in the prescribed form that sets out a description of the ballots, the number of ballots delivered to the returning officer and the fact that all ballots were provided, and all paper returned, as required by subsection (5).

Obligation or prohibition

Prohibitions

Prohibitions re ballots, etc.

No person shall:

- (a) forge a ballot;
- (b) without authority under this Act, print a ballot or what purports to be or is capable of being used as a ballot at an election;
- (c) being authorized under this Act to print a ballot, knowingly print more ballot papers than the person is authorized to print;
- (d) print a ballot or what purports to be or is capable of being used as a ballot at an election with the intention of causing the reception of a vote that should not have been cast or the non-reception of a vote that should have been cast; or
- (e) manufacture, import into Canada, have in possession, supply to an election officer, or use for the purpose of an election, or cause to be manufactured, imported into Canada, provided to an election officer, or used for the purposes of an election, a ballot box that contains a compartment into which a ballot may be secretly placed or a device by which a ballot may be secretly altered.

Time to Employees for Voting

Consecutive hours for voting

Every employee who is an elector is entitled, during voting hours on polling day, to have three consecutive hours for the purpose of casting his or her vote and, if his or her hours of work do not allow for those three consecutive hours, his or her employer shall allow the time for voting that is necessary to provide those three consecutive hours.

Time to Employees for Voting

No penalty for absence from work to vote

- (1) No employer may make a deduction from the pay of an employee, or impose a penalty, for the time that the employer shall allow for voting under subsection 132(1).
- (2) An employer who pays an employee less than the amount that the employee would have earned on polling day, had the employee continued to work during the time referred to in subsection 132(2) that the employer allowed for voting, is deemed to have made a deduction from the pay of the employee, regardless of the basis on which the employee is paid.

Time to Employees for Voting

Prohibition

No employer shall, by intimidation, undue influence or by any other means, interfere with the granting to an elector in their employ of the three consecutive hours for voting, as provided for in section 132.

Obligation or prohibition

Proceedings at the Poll

Photographs, recordings and communications devices

A candidate's representative

- (a) shall not take any photograph or make any audio or video recording at a polling station; and
- (b) shall not, if he or she uses a communications device at a polling station, impede any elector from exercising their right to vote or violate the secrecy of the vote.

Prohibitions

Prohibition – use of loudspeakers on polling day

No person shall use a loud-speaking device within hearing distance of a polling station on polling day for the purpose of promoting or opposing a political party that is listed on the ballot under the name of a candidate or the election of a candidate.

Prohibitions

Emblems, etc., in polling station

No person shall

- (a) post or display in, or on the exterior surface of, a polling place any campaign literature or other material that could be taken as an indication of support for or opposition to a political party that is listed on the ballot under the name of a candidate or the election of a candidate; and
- (b) while in a polling station, wear any emblem, flag, banner or other thing that indicates that the person supports or opposes any candidate or political party that is listed on the ballot under the name of a candidate, or the political or other opinions entertained, or supposed to be entertained, by the candidate or party.

Exception

- (2) Despite paragraph (1)(b), a representative of a candidate in a polling station may, in the manner authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer, wear a badge identifying his or her function and the name of the political party that is listed on the ballot under the name of the candidate.

Special Voting Rules

Prohibitions in Relating to Voting

No person shall

- (a) vote or attempt to vote at an election knowing that he or she
 - (i) is not a Canadian citizen when he or she votes, or
 - (ii) is not 18 years of age or older — or will not be 18 years of age or older — on polling day; or
- (b) induce or attempt to induce another person to vote at an election knowing that the other person
 - (i) is not a Canadian citizen — or will not be a Canadian citizen — when he or she votes, or
 - (ii) is not 18 years of age or older — or will not be 18 years of age or older — on polling day.

Obligation or prohibition**Secrecy of the vote**

(1) Every person present at a polling station or at the counting of the votes shall maintain the secrecy of the vote.

Attempting to obtain information about elector's vote

(2) Except as provided by this Act, no person shall, in a polling station, attempt to obtain any information as to the candidate for whom any elector is about to vote or has voted.

Secrecy at the poll

(3) Except as provided by this Act, no person shall

(a) on entering the polling station and before receiving a ballot or special ballot, openly declare for whom he or she intends to vote;

(b) while in the polling station, show his or her ballot or special ballot, when marked, so as to allow the name of the candidate for whom he or she has voted to be seen; or

(c) before leaving the polling station, openly declare for whom he or she has voted.

Secrecy — marked ballot

(4) No person who has seen a ballot or special ballot that has been marked by an elector shall disclose information as to how it was marked unless he or she is the elector who marked it or he or she has been authorized to make the disclosure by the elector who marked it.

Secrecy — counting of the votes

(5) No person shall, at the counting of the votes, attempt to obtain information or communicate information obtained at the counting as to the candidate for whom a vote is given in a particular ballot or special ballot.

Obligation or prohibition

Prohibitions re ballots, etc.

- (1) No person shall
- (a) request or apply for a ballot or special ballot in a name that is not his or her own;
 - (b) vote using a forged ballot or forged special ballot;
 - (c) request or apply for a ballot or special ballot to which he or she is not entitled;
 - (d) provide a ballot or special ballot to any person when not authorized under this Act to do so;
 - (e) have a ballot or special ballot in his or her possession when not authorized under this Act to do so;
 - (f) alter, deface or destroy a ballot, the initials of the election officer that are signed on a ballot or the number of the polling division or advance polling district that is marked on a ballot;
 - (g) put or cause to be put into a ballot box a ballot, special ballot or other paper otherwise than as provided by this Act or by instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer;
 - (h) take a ballot out of the polling station or the office of the returning officer otherwise than as provided by this Act or by instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer; or
 - (i) destroy, take, open or otherwise interfere with a ballot box or book or packet of ballots or special ballots otherwise than as provided by this Act or by instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer.

Ballots — election officer

- (2) No election officer shall
- (a) with the intent of causing the reception of a vote that should not have been cast or the non-reception of a vote that should have been cast, put his or her initials on the back of any paper purporting to be or capable of being used as a ballot at an election; or
 - (b) place on a ballot or special ballot any writing, number or mark with intent that the elector to whom the ballot or special ballot is to be given, or has been given, can be identified.

Special ballots — unit election officer

- (3) No unit election officer shall place on a special ballot any writing, number or mark with intent that the elector to whom the special ballot is to be given, or has been given, can be identified.

Vouching for more than one person

- (1) No person shall vouch for more than one person at an election, except in the cases referred to in subsections 143(3.01), 161(2) and 169(2.01).

Voucher not qualified as elector, etc.

- (2) No person shall vouch for another person if
- (a) the person who vouches is not qualified as an elector;
 - (b) the person who vouches does not personally know the other person; or
 - (c) the person who vouches does not reside in a polling division assigned to the same polling station as the polling division in which the other person resides or, in the cases referred to in subsections 143(3.01), 161(2) and 169(2.01), in a polling division in the other person's electoral district or an adjacent electoral district.

Vouchee acting as voucher

- (3) No person who has been vouched for at an election shall vouch for another person at that election.

Obligation or prohibition

Offering bribe

(1) No person shall, during an election period, directly or indirectly, offer a bribe to influence an elector to vote or refrain from voting, or to vote or refrain from voting for a particular candidate or registered party, at the election.

Accepting bribe

(2) No person shall, during an election period, accept or agree to accept a bribe that is offered to them to vote or refrain from voting, or to vote or refrain from voting for a particular candidate or registered party, at the election.

Intimidation, etc.

No person shall

(a) by intimidation or duress, compel or attempt to compel a person to vote or refrain from voting, or to vote or refrain from voting for a particular candidate or registered party, at an election; or

(b) by any pretence or contrivance, including by representing that the ballot or special ballot or the manner of voting at an election is not secret, influence or attempt to influence a person to vote or refrain from voting, or to vote or refrain from voting for a particular candidate or registered party, at an election.

Advance Polls

Counting of votes on polling day

Prohibition

Subject to subsection (4), no person shall make a count of the votes cast at an advance poll before the close of voting hours on polling day.

Exception

The two or more election officers who are specified in accordance with the Chief Electoral Officer's instructions may begin counting the votes cast at an advance poll one hour before the close of voting hours on polling day if

- (a) the returning officer who is responsible for the advance polling station has obtained the Chief Electoral Officer's prior approval for the counting to begin;
- (b) the counting is done in accordance with the Chief Electoral Officer's instructions;
- (c) the counting is done in a manner that ensures the integrity of the vote; and
- (d) the counting is done in the presence of any candidates or their representatives who are present or, if no candidates or representatives are present, at least two electors.

Validation of Results by the Returning Officer

Obligation to comply with summons

Every person to whom a summons is directed under paragraph 296(2)(b) shall obey it.

Obligation or prohibition
Communications
Election Advertising Blackout period No person shall transmit election advertising to the public in an electoral district on polling day before the close of all of the polling stations in the electoral district. Interpretation The transmission to the public of a notice of an event that the leader of a registered party intends to attend or an invitation to meet or hear the leader of a registered party is not election advertising for the purpose of subsection (1). Exceptions Subsection 323(1) does not apply in respect of (a) the transmission of a message that was transmitted to the public on what is commonly known as the Internet before the blackout period described in that subsection and that was not changed during the period; or (b) the distribution during that period of pamphlets or the posting of messages or signs, posters or banners.
Election Advertising Prohibition – prevention or impairment of transmission No person shall prevent or impair the transmission to the public of an election advertising message without the consent of a person with authority to authorize its transmission. Exception Subsection (1) does not apply with respect to (a) the prevention or impairment, by a public authority, of an unlawful transmission if reasonable notice has first been given to the person who authorized the transmission; or (b) the removal by an employee of a public authority of a sign, poster or banner where the posting of it is a hazard to public safety.
Voter contact calling
Provision of Voter Contact Calling Services Obligations These sections list requirements for entering into an agreement with a calling service provider for voter contact calling services and describe the eligibility criteria for entering into that agreement. Once an agreement is made, the provisions or information of that agreement must be registered with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). The registration requirements are administered and enforced by the CRTC, not by EC.
Role of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Scripts and Recordings These sections list obligations on persons or groups that have entered agreements with a calling service provider to keep scripts and recordings of calls that are voter contact calling.

Obligation or prohibition
General
Offences General Provisions Obstruction, etc., of electoral process (1) Every person is guilty of an offence who, with the intention of delaying or obstructing the electoral process, contravenes this Act, otherwise than by committing an offence under subsection (2) or section 480.1, 481, 482 or 482.1 or contravening a provision referred to in any of sections 484 to 499. Public meetings (2) Every person is guilty of an offence who, at any time between the issue of a writ and the day after polling day at the election, acts, incites others to act or conspires to act in a disorderly manner with the intention of preventing the transaction of the business of a public meeting called for the purposes of the election. Impersonation (1) Every person is guilty of an offence who, with intent to mislead, falsely represents themselves to be, or causes anyone to falsely represent themselves to be, (a) the Chief Electoral Officer, a member of the Chief Electoral Officer's staff or a person who is authorized to act on the Chief Electoral Officer's behalf; (b) an election officer or a person who is authorized to act on an election officer's behalf; (c) a person who is authorized to act on behalf of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer; (d) a person who is authorized to act on behalf of a registered party or a registered association; or (e) a candidate or a person who is authorized to act on a candidate's behalf. Notice Prohibition – removal of notices No person shall, without authority, remove, cover up or alter any Notice of Election or other document that is authorized or required by this Act to be posted.

Appendix C – Mailing and shipping procedures

You are to clearly indicate your name, ED name and 5-digit ED code on all correspondence to EC. If correspondence for more than one individual or directorate is included in a larger envelope, label each piece accordingly.

Decide whether to use Canada Post's Lettermail™ or Priority Service™ to ensure a timely delivery of time sensitive items, especially during an electoral event.

Keep a copy of any documents sent to EC.

Lettermail™

Obtain receipts from the post office to submit with the *Special Account Form* ([EC 11670](#)) in order to request a refund.

Priority™ – Electronic Shipping Tools Solutions

E-Waybills

You must complete one e-waybill using the **e-waybill link** accessible in the [RO Toolkit](#) for each item sent by Priority. To send an item, simply use what is already available such as regular or padded envelopes, or boxes.

The steps to complete the e-Waybill are described in *How to prepare an e-Waybill* ([EC 10052](#)). This guide is also available next to the e-Waybill link in the RO Toolkit on the Field Personnel Intranet.

The screenshot shows the Field Personnel Intranet interface. At the top, there is a header with the Elections Canada logo and the text "Field Personnel Intranet". Below this is a navigation bar with links: Communications, RO Toolkit, Information Centre, FLO Program, and Support. The "RO Toolkit" link is highlighted. Below the navigation bar, there is a search bar and a "Search Field Personnel Intranet" button. The main content area is titled "RO Toolkit" and contains a list of applications. The "e-Waybill" link is circled in red, and a large arrow points to it from the text "e-Waybill" in the circled area. The "e-Waybill" link is part of a list of applications, with a "Description and guide" link next to it. The description states: "E-waybills will replace the previous mailing and shipping procedures that used paper waybills. It will ensure the same timely delivery for materials and items you send as part of your regular duties, both during and between events. The online capabilities make tracking, following up and reporting simpler and more efficient." Below the description is a link to the "e-Waybill User's Guide".

Tracking

Tracking a Priority item can be done via the Internet.

1. Use the barcode number on the portion of the e-waybill that you retained.
2. Go to canadapost.ca.
3. In the **Track** field, enter the entire tracking number (e.g. LH 169 838 865 ca).
4. Click **Track**.

This will give the shipping and delivery information.

Appendix D – Handling accidents in the workplace

Responsibilities for reporting and handling an accident, incident or hazardous occurrence in the workplace for field personnel



This procedure for handling accidents in the workplace does not apply to members of the public.

As the RO and the employer, you are legally responsible for ensuring the safety of the workplaces of the field personnel (referred to in this text as “worker”) working in local EC offices and at polling places.

In order to do so, you have an obligation to identify any hazards that create a risk of accident or injury in these workplaces, and then take steps to minimize that risk if possible. Hazards can also include things that create a risk of workplace violence and harassment. If one of your workers is injured in an accident related to their work, you have an obligation to ensure that the workplace accident is handled properly, including reporting it in a timely manner.

Under the *Government Employee Compensation Act* (GECA), workers are eligible for compensation if they are injured in an accident related to their employment, or if they become disabled due to their work.

If one of your workers seeks compensation for an injury or disability related to their work, their claim will be decided by the competent provincial workers' compensation authority in the province where you and they work.⁴ In assessing a claim, this authority determines whether the worker was injured in an accident arising out of and in the course of their employment, or whether they became disabled because of an industrial disease due to the nature of their employment (Subsection 4(1) of the GECA).

Definitions

The following terms are understood by Elections Canada as follows:

- **Accident:** Includes wilful and intentional acts by someone other than the worker, and unexpected and unintentional incidents.
- **Compensation:** Includes medical and hospital expenses and any other benefits, expenses or allowances that are authorized by the law of the province where the worker is usually employed respecting compensation for workers and the dependants of deceased workers.

⁴ Visit the [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](https://www.ccohs.ca/osh/safety/occupational-health-and-safety/) website for the list of provincial boards across Canada.

- **Discrimination:** Negative treatment, or treatment that results in an obstacle or barrier, that is linked to the person's race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability, or pardoned conviction or suspended criminal record. It includes failing to accommodate someone's needs linked to the above-mentioned characteristics.
- **Harassment:** Repeated or serious unwelcome behaviour, including comments, gestures, and physical contact. It includes acts that can reasonably be expected to offend or humiliate a person. It can include general acts not directed at a particular person if they are repetitive and unwelcome enough to create a hostile work environment. It generally involves a pattern of repeated behaviour, but one incident can be sufficient if it is serious enough.
- **Injury:** Damage done to a person in the physical or emotional sense.
A disabling injury is any workplace injury or occupational disease that results in time loss or modified duties. It may be temporary (e.g., a sprained wrist) or permanent (e.g., loss of a limb) depending on whether the field personnel will recover from it or not.
- **Violence:** Includes both use of force and abuse resulting in property damage or physical or psychological injury.

Reporting obligation



You must report all workplace accidents to the OCIU, either:

- by email at [upio-ociu @elections.ca](mailto:upio-ociu@elections.ca) (Subject line: "Workplace accident") or
- by phone via the FSN at 1-888-677-0301.

Field personnel is required to immediately advise you (their employer), verbally or in writing, if any of the following occurs:

1. Any injury to themselves or others that has occurred in the course of their employment
2. Anything else in the workplace which could constitute a risk of injury, a risk to the health or safety of themselves or their co-workers, or a risk factor for workplace violence or harassment
3. An incident of workplace violence or harassment or a "near miss"
4. Discrimination, whether they experienced or observed it

Upon learning of such events, you must immediately look into the situation or delegate this task to a qualified person, then take the necessary steps to prevent future occurrences.

When reporting any of the above situations to OCIU, be sure to provide any documentation the worker may have. The OCIU will support you in handling workplace accidents, complaints and incidents in the office or at the polls and will file the reports to the appropriate health and safety authorities.

Field personnel is required to report all injuries and incidents, regardless of the severity, to you **as soon as the event occurs and before leaving their workplace**. Injuries can evolve into more serious medical issues; if they fail to report the initial injury when it happens, they may have difficulties making their claim for compensation.

Procedure



Advise workers of the locations of the defibrillators in the polling places and/or the RO's or AARO's office, if applicable.

Immediately after an accident occurs, you (or your designated person) must do the following:

1. Secure the scene as deemed necessary by:
 - having barriers installed
 - turning off hazardous machinery (such as shredders)
 - telling onlookers to leave to ensure their safety
 - requesting that the harassing person to leave the premises, if applicable (you must approve this)
 - taking any other measures required to secure the office or workplace
2. Provide first aid or obtain medical treatment if required. Call 911 if needed.
3. Arrange transportation if required (ambulance, taxi, etc.) to a medical facility, and appoint someone to accompany the injured worker. Remind the accompanying worker to ask for a “medical statement” for potential claims.
4. Fill out the *Annex to the Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Report* ([EC 10014](#)) if the incident or injury occurred at the **RO or AARO office**. Fill out an *Incident Report* ([EC 10051](#)) if the incident or injury occurred **at a polling place**. In either case, you must record the following information:
 - Date, time and place of occurrence
 - Name and contact information of the injured individual
 - Detailed description and cause of injury or incident
 - Name and contact information of witnesses, if any

The forms must be filled out regardless of the medical treatment/first aid provided, and a scanned copy must be sent to OCIU by email.

The completed forms are used to document workplace accidents and injuries, and incidents of harassment and discrimination. All findings (see step 6 below) must be included with the reports should there be a disabling injury to the worker, or should the worker experience an incident related to harassment or discrimination.

Within 24 hours of the accident, you (or your designated person) must do the following:

5. Begin gathering the facts. Look into the matters promptly to take the appropriate measures to resolve the issue, and to implement measures to be taken in the future. Fact gathering could include any or all of the following, where possible: speaking to the person who reported the incident; speaking to the person named by the injured worker (separately) to get their version; speaking to witnesses (if any); taking notes of these meetings (and dating/timing them); and gathering copies of any relevant document or messages (if any).

If it is a case of harassment or discrimination, the person implicated must not look into the allegations.

6. Report the case to OCIU ([*How to reach us*](#)).



Should the worker request compensation, a medical certificate must be provided in some cases to file a claim.

If there is a serious accident or injury – within 24 hours:

In the event of a serious or fatal accident, contact OCIU immediately.

A serious or fatal accident includes any of the following:

- The death of a worker (even if death appears to be from natural causes)
- A permanent disabling injury inflicted to a worker or a temporary disabling injury inflicted to two or more workers, arising from the same occurrence
- The permanent impairment of a body function of a worker
- An explosion
- Damage to a boiler or pressure vessel that results in fire or rupture of the boiler or pressure vessel
- Any damage to an elevating device that renders it unserviceable, or a free fall of an elevating device

Within 24 hours of the accident, the following must happen:

7. The employee must consult a physician and be provided with the supporting documentation describing the nature and extent of the injuries (to potentially receive compensation) if the worker:
 - is absent from work the day after the accident
 - had their daily salary reduced
 - is receiving health care treatment (other than first aid)

The “medical statement” must be completed on the form provided by the provincial worker’s compensation authority in the province/territory in which the worker is usually employed. This statement may be requested in certain cases of compensation claims. Contact OCIU for the appropriate form and return it to them once properly completed and **signed**. Do not send it back directly to the provincial worker’s compensation authority.

The board or commission will handle the compensation claim and determine whether the injury or illness is work-related and the amount of benefits to be provided.

Once you complete the initial reporting requirements, you will not be required to defend or otherwise participate in any claim before the provincial worker’s compensation authority. If you have concerns about this process, are asked to participate further, or if you receive a copy of a decision about the claim, please contact the OCIU.

Within 3 days of the accident:

8. Fill out, sign and return by email to OCIU the *Employer’s Report of Injury/Illness* for the province or territory in which the worker normally carries out his duties.

Within 14 days of the accident:

9. Contact the worker regularly to keep informed of their status and progress.
OCIU may contact you or the injured worker to gather further information.



Where the occurrence is an accident involving a motor vehicle on a public road, and this accident is under police investigation, contact the appropriate local authorities to obtain a copy of the accident report.

Links

Elections Canada resources

- Operations Complaints & Incidents Unit (OCIU)
upio-ociu@elections.ca
Telephone: 1-888-677-0301 (FSN General support ⇒ OCIU)

Other

- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#) (CCOHS)
For the list of agencies across Canada that are responsible for worker’s compensation in the federal, provincial and territorial jurisdiction