



**ELECTIONS BC**

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

# GUIDE FOR CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES

2024 PROVINCIAL GENERAL ELECTION

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# INTRODUCTION

This guide provides political parties and candidates with an overview of what to expect in British Columbia's 43rd Provincial General Election, scheduled for October 19, 2024. This will be the first provincial general election administered under British Columbia's modernized *Election Act* (the Act).

## Scope of this guide

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This guide describes roles and responsibilities for candidates and political parties in a provincial election. It also includes rules for campaign activities and information about accessing voters lists and participation information.

It does **not** include rules for provincial financing, procedures for voting and counting, or information about roles and responsibilities for candidate representatives or financial agents.

For information about topics not covered in this guide, see [Provincial Guides](#) on the Elections BC website.

## References to legislation

This guide references applicable sections of the *Election Act* and CEO regulations. References appear as a number between square brackets. All refer to the *Election Act* unless otherwise noted. For example:

"Candidates do not have to be a resident in the electoral district in which they are seeking election." [s. 52 & *Constitution Act* s. 28 and 32]<sup>1</sup>

The Act and its regulations are the exclusive authority on the conduct of provincial elections in British Columbia. If there is a conflict between the legislation and this guide, the Act and its regulations take precedence.

See [Appendix 1](#) for links to relevant legislation.

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1. The example above refers to section 52 of the *Election Act* and sections 28 and 32 of the *Constitution Act*, which provide additional information about who is eligible to be a candidate in a provincial election.

## Dates

Dates used in this guide are based on the next provincial election being called as scheduled on September 21, 2024 (with Final Voting Day on October 19, 2024). If the next provincial election is called prior to the scheduled date, the dates in this guide will be updated and a revised version of the guide will be published on the Elections BC website.

## Background

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In the next provincial general election, candidates and political parties will observe voting and counting processes that have changed substantially from previous general elections. These changes, introduced through the *Election Amendment Act, 2019*, represent the most significant update to B.C.'s electoral legislation in over 25 years. They allow Elections BC to use technology to make voting faster and easier. This includes electronic voting books to look up voters and cross them off the voters list and electronic tabulators to count voter-marked paper ballots. The changes also allow Elections BC to count more ballots on election night, including ballots cast by voters outside their electoral district.

Key benefits for voters and political participants include:

- Better service:
  - First-come, first-served model at voting places to reduce line-ups
  - Streamlined requirements for absentee voting
  - Timely distribution of participation data for parties and candidates to support get-out-the-vote efforts
- Faster results:
  - Almost all ballots counted on election night
  - Preliminary results reported shortly after voting closes on election night
  - Some absentee ballots (in certification envelopes) counted on election night in Victoria
  - Final count of vote-by-mail and absentee ballots will happen sooner than in previous elections
- Retention of key aspects of the previous model, including:
  - Vote anywhere (voters can vote at any voting place in any electoral district)
  - Voter-marked paper ballots (retained in case of a recount)

- Opportunities for candidates and their representatives to observe voting and counting processes

Further amendments to the Act were introduced in the *Election Amendment Act, 2023*, which received Royal Assent on May 11, 2023. The amendments addressed recommendations for legislative change made by the Chief Electoral Officer in 2020 and 2022. Many of these amendments were implemented in the two most-recent provincial by-elections, including:

- a write-in ballot specific to vote by mail ballots issued by headquarters, with
  - a requirement for voters to provide their birthdate as a shared secret on their vote-by-mail certification envelope, instead of a witness signature,
- an option for voters to drop their vote-by-mail packages off at voting places,
- the ability of residents of site-based voting areas (SVAs) to satisfy the identification requirements for registration and voting with one piece of identification that establishes their identity,
- a new authority for the CEO to delegate to an election official to oversee final count and recounts at a central location, and
- an option for voters to write the name of a party leader on their write-in ballot.

## The election calendar — important dates

The table below shows key activities in the election calendar by date. The election calendar in B.C. has a 29-day campaign period, with the writs of election issued on Day 0 and Final Voting Day on Day 28.

Timings of legislated milestones are adjusted if they fall on a holiday or a Sunday. District electoral offices and voting places will be closed on Monday, September 30, 2024 (National Day of Truth and Reconciliation) and Monday, October 14, 2024 (Thanksgiving).

Category	Scheduled date	Milestone
Standing nominations	N/A	Candidates can file standing nominations with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) any time before 4:30 p.m. (Pacific time) on September 20, 2024.  See How to file a candidate nomination application on p. 8 for details.

Category	Scheduled date	Milestone
Last day of standing nominations	Friday, September 20	Last day for candidates to file standing nomination documents with the CEO.
Election is called (Writ Day)	Saturday, September 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Writs of election are issued by the CEO and Lieutenant Governor for all 93 electoral districts.</li> <li>▪ First day for candidates to file ordinary nomination documents with their district electoral officer.</li> </ul>
Where to Vote app goes live	Saturday, September 21	Where to Vote app goes live – <a href="http://wheretovote.elections.bc.ca">wheretovote.elections.bc.ca</a>
Nomination Day	Saturday, September 28	Close of ordinary nominations at 1 p.m. (Pacific time).
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	Monday, September 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ District electoral offices closed.</li> <li>▪ No voting or package request in district electoral offices.</li> </ul>
Logic and accuracy testing of tabulators	Thursday, October 3 to Saturday, October 5	Logic and accuracy testing of tabulators. District electoral officers and Elections BC headquarters to confirm dates and times with campaigns.
Where to Vote cards	Monday, October 7 to Tuesday, October 8	Delivery of Where to Vote (WTV) cards.
Participation data	Monday, October 7 to Wednesday, October 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participation file available for download daily with data as of 3 p.m. (Pacific time).</li> <li>▪ File includes participation from voting in the district electoral office and returned vote-by-mail packages).</li> </ul>
Voters list	Tuesday, October 8	Voters list closes at midnight; voter registration continues to be available in conjunction with voting.
Voters list	Thursday, October 10	Voters list reflecting registration up to midnight on Tuesday, October 8, is available to download.

Category	Scheduled date	Milestone
Participation data	Thursday, October 10 to Sunday, October 13	Participation files available for download daily during advance voting, with data as of 1 p.m. and 8 p.m. (Pacific time)
Thanksgiving	Monday, October 14	District electoral offices and advance voting places closed.
Participation data	Tuesday, October 15 to Wednesday, October 16	Participation files available for download daily during advance voting, with data as of 1 p.m. and 8 p.m. (Pacific time)
Participation data	Thursday, October 17 to Friday, October 18	Participation files available for download daily with data as of 3 p.m. (Pacific time)
Final Voting Day	Saturday, October 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Final Voting Day; voting from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Pacific time).</li> <li>▪ Participation files available for download with data as of 8:30 a.m. with updates at 30-minute intervals until 8 p.m. (Pacific time)</li> <li>▪ Preliminary results published on the Elections BC website as they are reported from the field and Elections BC headquarters.</li> </ul>
Logic and accuracy testing of tabulators	Monday, October 21	<p>Post-election tabulator quality assurance and pre-final count logic and accuracy testing of tabulators at district electoral offices and at Elections BC headquarters.</p> <p>District electoral officers and Elections BC headquarters to confirm dates and times with campaigns.</p>
Results	TBD	<p>Final results published on Elections BC website as they are reported from the field and Elections BC headquarters.</p> <p>The timing of final results depends on the volume of vote-by-mail ballots cast in the election.</p>



<b>Category</b>	<b>Scheduled date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
Judicial recount – deadline to request	TBD	Deadline to request a judicial recount is within six days after the conclusion of final count and the declaration of official results.
Return Day	Saturday, November 2	Date by which writs of election must be returned. Writs may be returned earlier if final count is completed earlier, or later if there is a judicial recount.

# CANDIDATES

## Who can be a candidate

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You can be a candidate in a provincial election if you are:

- a Canadian citizen,
- 18 years of age or older on Final Voting Day for the election, and
- a resident of British Columbia for at least six months.

Candidates cannot run in two electoral districts at once. They also cannot be:

- a sitting judge of the Supreme Court or Court of Appeal
- a Member of the House of Commons (MP) or
- disqualified by law

Municipal councillors and school board trustees can run in provincial elections.

Candidates do not need to live in the district they run in.

[s. 52 & Constitution Act s.28 and 32]

## What to file to become a candidate

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To become a candidate in a provincial election, you must file a candidate nomination application. The application must include:

- a completed Provincial Candidate Nomination Application ([form 320](#)), including signatures from 75 nominators
- an Appointment of Auditor form ([form 321](#))
- an Appointment of Financial Agent form ([form 325](#))
- a \$250 deposit (cash, credit card, certified cheque, money order or traveller's cheque payable to the Minister of Finance) <sup>2</sup>

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2. Elections BC will return the deposit to your financial agent if they file the required election financing report within 90 days after Final Voting Day. See the [Guide for Financial Agents](#) on the Elections BC website.

- A Statement of Disclosure [form](#)

Seventy-five nominators must sign the application. Nominators must reside in the electoral district the candidate is running in. Nominators do not need to be registered to vote, but they must meet the eligibility requirements for voters. Nominators can only nominate one candidate in an election.

Nominators must provide their residential address when they sign the application. Failure to provide a full residential address that can be verified as within the electoral district may result in the application not being accepted.

Candidates are encouraged to collect more than 75 nominations and choose registered voters as nominators. This will help ensure legislated requirements are met and prevent the candidate's application from being rejected.

Nominations must be provided in writing. They do not need to be on the same form or a "wet ink" signature. Where in-person nominations are not practical, the nominator can complete the nomination form and email, mail or courier it to the candidate.

Candidates can also complete the following forms as part of their nomination package. These forms are not mandatory.

- an Appointment of Deputy Financial Agent ([form 326](#))
- an Appointment of Official Agent ([form 327](#))
- a Privacy Policy Template for Candidates and Former Candidates ([form 00154](#))

[s. 53, 54]

## How to file a candidate nomination application

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There are two ways to file a candidate nomination application for a provincial election.

### 1. Standing nominations

Candidates can file a standing nomination with the Chief Electoral Officer online, by mail or in person any time before 4:30 p.m. (Pacific time) on Friday, September 20, 2024.

When the election is called, candidates who filed standing nominations will receive their certificate of candidacy from Elections BC and be added to the list of candidates for their electoral district.

## 2. Ordinary nominations

Candidates can file an ordinary nomination with the district electoral office online, by mail or in person from 9 a.m. (Pacific time) on September 21, 2024, until 1 p.m. (Pacific time) on Saturday, September 28.

**Note:** If a nomination application is incomplete at the close of nominations, it will be rejected. Documents will not be returned and the \$250 nomination deposit is forfeited.

For more information about how to file a nomination application, please contact [EBcnominations@elections.bc.ca](mailto:EBcnominations@elections.bc.ca).

[s. 56, 57]

## Candidate Nomination Application System

The [Candidate Nomination Application System](#) (CNAS) allows candidates to complete and submit forms online, pay the nomination deposit using a credit card and view the status of their application. Candidates can file online using CNAS any time before 1 p.m. (Pacific time) on Saturday, September 28, 2024.

## Changes to nomination documents after filing

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The District Electoral Officer or Chief Electoral Officer may amend nomination documents if the candidate advises them of factual changes in writing.

Candidates must file a new candidate nomination application if changes include:

- the electoral district the candidate is running in, or
- their affiliation with a political party or changing to an independent candidate.

[s. 58]

## Public inspection of nomination documents

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Candidate nomination documents are available for public inspection for one year after an election. This includes nominator information. If nominators do not want their residential address to be publicly available, they must indicate this on the form.

[s. 59]

## Certificate of candidacy and candidate kit

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A nominee officially becomes a candidate once Elections BC accepts their nomination application and issues them their certificate of candidacy. Because candidacy is specific to an election, certificates of candidacy cannot be issued until an election is called.

Candidates who file standing nominations will receive their certificate of candidacy from Elections BC on Writ Day (September 21, 2024).

Candidates who file ordinary nominations will receive their certificate of candidacy from the district electoral office once their application has been received and accepted.

The certificate of candidacy includes the candidate's name, the certificate's issue date and the candidate's identity number. This identity number must be included on all income tax receipts issued by the candidate.

Candidates may only issue income tax receipts for eligible contributions of money received from when their certificate of candidacy was issued until the writ for the election is returned. Contributions received outside of this period are not eligible for income tax receipts.

See the [Guide for Financial Agents](#) on the Elections BC website for more information about political contributions and income tax receipts.

[s. 56, 57, 63, 192]

## Withdrawal of a candidate

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At any time up until 48 hours before the start of advance voting, a candidate may withdraw from the election by delivering a signed withdrawal to the District Electoral Officer.

At least one other individual must sign the candidate's withdrawal as a witness.

If only one candidate remains after a withdrawal, the District Electoral Officer must declare the candidate elected by acclamation. As soon as possible after that declaration, the District Electoral Officer must return the writ of election to the Chief Electoral Officer certifying the name of the individual elected.

[s. 64]

## Death of a candidate

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If a candidate dies before the end of the nomination period, the nomination period ends on whichever is later:

- the end of the nomination period under section 56, or
- 1 p.m. on the 6th day after the date of death.

If a candidate dies between the end of the nomination period and the close of final voting, then:

- the original election proceedings under the writ for the election are cancelled and election proceedings must be started again as if the writ for the election were issued on the day on which the Chief Electoral Officer receives proof of the death, and
- no new nomination documents and deposit are required for a candidate in the original election proceedings and the individual is deemed to be a candidate in the continued election unless the individual withdraws.

[s. 65]

## Nomination contests

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A nomination contestant is an individual who seeks to be nominated as a candidate representing a registered political party. An individual is a nomination contestant whether or not any other individual seeks that nomination, including individuals who are acclaimed or directly appointed by a political party.

Political parties are required to provide information to Elections BC about each nomination contest they hold, including:

- the date the nomination contest started,
- the date the nomination contest ended,
- the name, mailing address and telephone number of each nomination contestant, including those that may have withdrawn from the contest after the start date,
- the name of the financial agent appointed by each nomination contestant, and
- the name of the individual the political party has selected to endorse as its candidate.

This information must be provided to Elections BC within 14 days of the end of a contest by submitting the [Nomination Contest Information form \(NCI\)](#). The end date of the contest is

either the date a nomination contestant is selected, or the date that the party announces who will be selected, whichever is earlier.

If a nomination contestant is directly appointed as the endorsed candidate, a nomination contest has still occurred.

All nomination contestants (including those that are acclaimed, appointed or who withdraw) are required to file a nomination contestant financing report within 90 days after the end of the contest.

If the nomination contest ends within 30 days before the campaign period begins (on September 21, 2024) or during the campaign period, the filing deadline is extended to 90 days after Final Voting Day (October 19, 2024).

[s. 59.01, 211.01]

## Political party endorsement of candidates

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Candidates endorsed by political parties can have their party affiliation listed on the ballot. Candidates must indicate in their nomination papers the name of the registered political party they represent, and the party must file an endorsement ([form 324A](#)) of the candidate signed by at least two principal officers of the party.<sup>3</sup>

A political party can only endorse one candidate for each electoral district.

Political party endorsements can be updated until the close of ordinary nominations at 1:00 p.m. (Pacific time) on September 28, 2024. If an amended endorsement is filed, the new filing supersedes the previous filing and any previous endorsements for the electoral district are cancelled.

Political Parties can monitor the nomination applications for their candidates and file their endorsement using the [Candidate Nomination Application System](#).

The endorsement of candidates by a political party must be delivered to either the Chief Electoral Officer or the District Electoral Officer before the close of ordinary nominations.

**Note:** Elections BC cannot accept endorsements, or changes to endorsements, filed after the close of ordinary nominations. Political parties are encouraged to submit endorsements early to ensure they can be accepted prior to the deadline. Late or incomplete endorsements will not be accepted and may result in the party not appearing on the ballot.

[s. 60]

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3. The party's principal officers who sign the endorsement must be on file with Elections BC

# POLITICAL PARTIES

The *Election Act* defines a political party as an organization with the primary purpose of fielding candidates in provincial elections.

Under the Act, the term “organization” includes both incorporated and unincorporated organizations. Although some political parties choose to register as societies under the *Societies Act*, it is not required to register as a political party under the *Election Act*.

Forming a political party and registering a political party are two different things.

There is no legislation regulating the creation of provincial political parties. The *Election Act* only regulates the registration of political parties.

[s. 155]

## Registration

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Registration as a political party brings significant benefits. Registered political parties may:

- issue income tax receipts for eligible political contributions of money
- incur election expenses
- be identified on a ballot
- transfer money, goods and services to its registered constituency associations, candidates, leadership contestants and nomination contestants

Unregistered political parties are prohibited from doing any of these things.

[s. 154]

## How to register

To register as a political party, an organization must submit a registration package. See the [Guide to Political Party Registration](#) on the Elections BC website for details. Political party registration forms are available on the [Provincial Forms](#) page.

For the 2024 Provincial General Election, applications to register a political party, or update the party's registered name, must be approved before Writ Day (September 21, 2024).



**Note:** Political parties cannot register under a name that may be confused with a political party that is [currently registered](#), a party that was [registered or appeared on a ballot in the past 10 years](#) or one that has a pending application for registration with Elections BC.

[s. 158]

## Major political parties

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A major political party is a party that is eligible to sit on the [Election Advisory Committee](#).

This means that the party must be represented in the Legislative Assembly or must have run candidates in at least half of the province's electoral districts in the last general election.

[s. 1, 14]

## Election advisory committee

The Election Advisory Committee advises the Chief Electoral Officer on the functioning of the *Election Act*, particularly on the financing of the political process.

Committee members include the Chief Electoral Officer, two representatives for each registered political party represented in the Legislative Assembly and one representative for each registered political party that ran candidates in at least half of the electoral districts in the most recent provincial general election.

The committee meets at least once per year and the minutes of these meetings are open to the public. To view the meeting minutes, see [Election Advisory Committee](#) on the Elections BC website.

[s. 14]

## Leadership contests

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A leadership contestant is an individual seeking the leadership of a registered political party. A political party must approve a leadership contestant for the rules of the Election Act to apply to the contestant's campaign. Leadership contestants must appoint an individual to act as their financial agent, or act as their own financial agent, and file a financing report with Elections BC after a leadership contest.

There are no expense limits for leadership contestants under the *Election Act*. However, parties may establish limits on their own. Elections BC is not responsible for administering these limits.

## **Requirements for leadership contestants**

All leadership contestants, including any who withdraw from the contest, must submit a leadership contestant financing report to Elections BC within 90 days after the leader is selected.

Leadership contestants must appoint an individual to act as their financial agent or act as their own financial agent. The financial agent may also appoint deputy financial agents to help with accepting political contributions.

All financial transactions related to the leadership contest must go through a separate contest account. If you have issues opening an account, Elections BC provides a [letter](#) that you can take to your savings institution about contest accounts.

Leadership contestants may also be required to submit the Appointment of Auditor form if the value of political contributions received, or contestant expenses incurred, are more than \$10,000.

See the leadership contestant forms on our [Provincial Forms](#) page for more information.

# CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

## Election advertising

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For candidates and registered political parties, election advertising is any public advertising during the campaign period that promotes or opposes, directly or indirectly:

- a registered political party, or
- the election of a candidate.

Campaign period election advertising for candidates and parties includes advertising that takes a position on an issue with which a registered political party or candidate is associated. It also includes canvassing voters on a commercial basis to attempt to influence how they vote.

[s. 1]

## Activities that can be election advertising

The definition of election advertising is broad. In some cases, it can be difficult to determine if an item or activity is election advertising. Examples of election advertising include but are not limited to:

- television, radio, newspaper or magazine advertisements
- signs, billboards, posters, mailing inserts, bumper stickers, branded clothing, branded objects, displays, exhibitions and public address announcements
- telephone calls, text messages and voicemail messages sent using an automated system (e.g. robocalls)
- newsletters, brochures or other advertising media that are sent to the public
- internet pay-per-click ads, banner ads, display ads, pop-up or pop-under ads, pre-roll video ads, search engine optimization, etc.
- canvassing voters in person, by telephone or other means of communication if done on a commercial basis

Social media posts can be election advertising if:

- posts are paid, sponsored or promoted to reach a wider audience

- money has been spent to create the post’s content, even if the post is not sponsored or promoted
- an individual or organization has been paid to create or publish the post, even if the post is not sponsored or promoted.

## Activities that are not election advertising

Election advertising does not include:

- messages transmitted on the internet on a non-commercial basis (e.g., individual posts on social media platforms) if no cost has been paid to prepare, transmit, or increase the reach of the message)
- the publication without charge of news, an editorial, an interview, a column, a letter, a debate, a speech or a commentary in a bona fide periodical publication or a radio or television program
- the distribution of a book, or the promotion of the sale of a book, for no less than its commercial value, if the book was planned to be made available to the public regardless of whether there was to be an election
- the transmission of a document directly by a person or a group to their members, employees or shareholders
- the transmission by an individual, on a non-commercial basis on the Internet, or by telephone or text messaging, of the individual's personal political views

[s. 1]

## Canvassing voters

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The *Election Act* has rules for canvassing voters during provincial elections. Canvassing is the act of attempting to influence how voters vote through activities like talking to voters in the community or by making phone calls. Canvassers are the individuals that perform these activities.

### When the rules apply

Rules for canvassing under the *Election Act* apply during the campaign period, which starts the day the election is called and ends at the close of voting on Final Voting Day (October 19, 2024).

## Authorized canvassers

Authorized canvassers are individuals that candidates have authorized in writing to canvass voters and distribute campaign materials on their behalf in multiple-residence buildings.

A sample [canvasser authorization form](#) is available on the Elections BC website. An authorization form must be completed by the candidate and provided to the canvasser so that it can be presented while canvassing in multiple-residence buildings. This form does not need to be submitted to Elections BC, unless specifically requested.

[s. 228.01 (1)]

## Identification of canvassers

Housing cooperatives, landlords, strata and individuals acting on their behalf must not unreasonably restrict access to a residential property by a candidate or authorized canvasser who is entering the premise for the purpose of canvassing voters and distributing candidate information in their electoral district.

[s. 228.01 (2)]

At the request of a resident or individual acting on behalf of a multiple-residence building, a canvasser entering a residential property must produce:

- government issued photo identification, and
- proof of candidacy or the candidate's written authorization (e.g. canvasser authorization form).

[s. 228.01 (3)]

Individuals and organizations are not permitted to distribute materials that identify candidates or political parties within 100 metres of:

- a district electoral office, or
- a building where advance voting or final voting is being conducted.

For more information, see Restrictions on campaigning near election offices and voting places on p. 19.

[s. 234]

## Canvassing multiple-residence buildings

Candidates and authorized canvassers are only entitled to access multiple-residence buildings between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. from the day the election is called until the close of voting on Final Voting Day.

[s. 228.01 (3), 228.01 (4)]

Access for canvassers outside of a campaign period or outside of the hours specified above are not governed by the *Election Act*.

Anyone who wishes to canvass a multiple-residence building outside of the campaign period, or during the campaign period but outside of the hours specified in the Act, should contact the owner, landlord or superintendent of the building to request permission.

Residents who object to canvassers being granted access to their building outside of the campaign period, or during the campaign period but outside of the hours specified in the Act, should contact their building management.

If an owner of a multiple-residence building refuses access to a candidate or their representatives during the campaign period, the owner may be given a notice explaining the law and requiring that access be granted.

If a candidate or their representatives have gained access without permission, residents may contact the candidate or party.

## Restrictions on campaigning near district electoral offices and voting places

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### District electoral offices

During a campaign period, the 100 metres surrounding the building where a District Electoral Office is located is a restricted area where individuals and organizations must not post, display or disseminate:

- any campaign period election advertising, or
- any material that identifies a candidate, registered political party or registered constituency association, unless authorized by the District Electoral Officer

**Example:** Displaying a poster in the restricted area which lists the names of registered political parties or candidates seeking election would require the permission of the District Electoral Officer before posting, even if the ad is neutral (e.g., a notice of an all candidates meeting).

## Voting places

While advance or final voting is being conducted, the 100 metres surrounding each voting place is a restricted area. Individuals and organizations must not do any of the following in these restricted areas:

- post, display or disseminate:
  - any campaign period election advertising, or
  - any material that identifies a candidate, registered political party or registered constituency association, unless authorized by the District Electoral Officer
- canvass or solicit votes or otherwise attempt to influence how a voter votes
- carry, wear or supply a flag, badge or other item indicating that the individual using it is a supporter of a particular candidate or registered political party
- post, display, disseminate or openly leave a representation of a ballot marked for a particular candidate or registered political party

Individuals and organizations are also prohibited from transmitting campaign period election advertising using a loudspeaker or public address system within hearing distance of a voting place while advance or final voting is being conducted.

If these rules are contravened, the District Electoral Officer or another election official has the authority to enter the property where the materials are located to remove or obscure these materials.

[s. 234]

## Election advertising restrictions on Final Voting Day

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Individuals and organizations must not sponsor, publish, broadcast or transmit campaign period election advertising on Final Voting Day. This prohibition ends when polls close at 8 p.m. (Pacific time) on Final Voting Day.

There are some exceptions to the ban on election advertising on Final Voting Day:

- a notice of an event that the leader of a registered political party intends to attend
- an invitation to meet or hear the leader of a registered political party
- an Internet message that was posted before Final Voting Day and that is not changed until after the close of voting

- the distribution of pamphlets or the posting of messages on signs, posters or banners
- an Internet message that is for the sole purpose of encouraging voters to vote in the election

[s. 233]

## Prohibitions against false statements and misrepresentation

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To protect election integrity, the *Election Act* prohibits individuals and organizations from deliberately transmitting specific types of disinformation that are objectively false. These prohibitions apply during regulated periods and fall into the following categories:

- False statements to affect election results
- False statements about election officials and voting administration tools
- False election information
- Unauthorized material or information
- Misrepresentation

### False statements to affect election results

During the pre-campaign and campaign periods, individuals and organizations must not transmit by any means a false statement that a candidate, nomination contestant, leader of a registered political party, public figure associated with a candidate, or a public figure associated with a registered political party has:

- committed or been charged with an offence, or
- been required to pay an administrative monetary penalty under an Act of Parliament, a regulation made under an Act of Parliament, or an enactment of British Columbia or another province.

During the pre-campaign or campaign periods, individuals and organizations must not transmit by any means a false statement that relates to the citizenship, place of birth, education, professional qualifications, membership in a group, or membership in an association of a candidate, nomination contestant, leader of a registered political party, or public figure associated with a political party.

For these prohibitions to apply, the individual or organization transmitting the false statement must know the statement is false, or have a reckless disregard as to whether it is



false. They must also transmit the statement with the intention of affecting the results of an election.

[234.1]

### **False statements about election officials and voting administration tools**

During the pre-campaign period or election period, an individual or organization must not transmit by any means a statement that:

- an election official has committed an offence
- an election official has been charged with an offence
- an election official has been required to pay an administrative monetary penalty under an Act of Parliament, a regulation made under an Act of Parliament, or an enactment of British Columbia or another province
- relates to an election official's citizenship, place of birth, education, professional qualifications, membership in a group, or membership in an association
- relates to an individual or organization that provides voting administration tools or services to Elections BC.

For these prohibitions to apply, the individual or organization transmitting the false statement must know the statement is false or have a reckless disregard as to whether it is false. They must also transmit the statement with the intention of undermining public confidence in the result of an election or the administration of an election.

[s. 234.2]

### **False election information**

During a pre-campaign or campaign period, an individual or organization must not transmit by any means any material or information, regardless of its form, that provides false or misleading information about voter eligibility, voter registration procedures, election proceedings, voting options or voting opportunities.

For these provisions to apply, the individual or organization must transmit the material or information with the intention of affecting the results of an election.

[s. 234.3]

## Unauthorized material or information

During a pre-campaign period or election period, an individual or organization must not transmit by any means any material or information, regardless of its form, that purports to be transmitted by or under the authority of the Chief Electoral Officer, an election official, a candidate, a nomination contestant, a registered political party or a registered constituency association if:

- the individual or organization is not authorized to do so by the subject of the transmission, and
- the individual or organization intends to mislead the public that the material or information was transmitted by the subject of the transmission or with their permission.

These rules do not apply to material or information transmitted for the purpose of parody or satire.

[s. 234.4]

## Misrepresentation

In relation to an election, an individual or organization must not falsely purport to be:

- a candidate or individual authorized to act on behalf of a candidate,
- an individual authorized to act on behalf of a registered political party or a registered constituency association, or
- a registered political party or a registered constituency association.

These rules do not apply to representations made for the purpose of parody or satire.

[s. 234.5]

## Notice to stop transmitting

The *Election Act* gives the Chief Electoral Officer the power to order individuals or organizations to stop transmitting non-compliant election advertising or other communications. This includes communications that violate the Act's prohibitions against specific forms of disinformation.

The Chief Electoral Officer must provide notice to stop transmitting in writing. If the individual or organization does not comply within 24 hours, they are subject to a monetary penalty of up to \$50,000 a day for every day they fail to comply.

Individuals and organizations can apply to the Supreme Court of British Columbia for relief from penalties issued for failure to comply with a notice to stop transmitting.

[s. 231.03]

## **Penalties for false statements and misrepresentation**

The *Election Act* gives the Chief Electoral Officer the power to issue administrative monetary penalties of up to \$20,000 for violating its prohibitions against false statements and misrepresentation. Within seven days of making a determination of non-compliance with any of the sections above, the Chief Electoral Officer must notify the individual or organization of the non-compliance and the related penalty.

Individuals and organizations can apply to the Supreme Court of British Columbia for relief from penalties issued related to false statements and misrepresentation.

[s. 234.6]

## **Collusion and working with organized third parties**

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The *Election Act* establishes registration and other requirements for third party sponsors. Third party sponsors are defined in section 1(1) of the Act to mean an individual or organization that sponsors election advertising, other than a candidate, registered political party or registered constituency association.

This means that third party sponsors conduct election advertising separately from candidates and political parties. They include individuals and organizations who advertise to promote or oppose a candidate or a party. They also include individuals and organizations who advertise to take a position on an issue associated with a candidate or party.

The Act requires third party sponsors to register with Elections BC before conducting election advertising. Third party sponsors must:

- be independent from registered political parties, constituency associations, and candidates, including their principal officers, official agents and financial agents;
- not sponsor election advertising on behalf of or together with any of these entities; and
- not share information or act in collusion with a candidate, registered political party or constituency association.

These provisions ensure that individuals and organizations are not circumventing the provisions of the Act.

## Independence

Elections BC assess third party sponsor applications for independence. If the applicant is an individual, factors considered include determining if the individual is:

- a candidate;
- an individual who resides with a candidate, and is a spouse, parent, child, or a relative of the candidate or the candidate's spouse;
- a canvasser authorized by candidate under s. 228.01 of the *Election Act* to canvass voters and distribute candidate information on the candidate's behalf;
- an official agent, financial agent or deputy financial agent of a candidate, registered political party or constituency association;
- an individual who was an official agent, financial agent or deputy financial agent of a candidate, registered political party or constituency association during the 60 days immediately before the start of the campaign period (July 23 to September 20, 2024);
- a principal officer, principal member or employee of a registered political party or constituency association; or
- an individual who was a principal officer, principal member or employee of a registered political party or constituency association during the 60 days immediately before the start of the campaign period.

Factors that may be considered if the applicant is an organization include determining if one or more principal officers or members are:

- appointed as principal officers for a registered political party or constituency association;
- employees, financial agents, deputy financial agents or official agents of a candidate, registered political party or constituency association; or
- individuals who were employees, financial agents, deputy financial agents or official agents of a candidate, registered political party or constituency association during the 60 days immediately before the start of the campaign period (July 23 to September 20, 2024).

Elections BC may request additional information or evidence to determine if an individual or organization applying to register as a third-party sponsor is independent.

If it is determined that an individual or organization is not independent, they may not register as a third party or conduct election advertising.

## Collusion

Campaign collusion involves two or more independent political entities knowingly working together to gain an advantage during an election that would not otherwise be available to them if they were operating alone. Collusion also includes working together to circumvent legislated provisions that require independence.

Potential collusion between a third party sponsor and a candidate, registered political party or constituency association may take a number of different forms. For certainty, the Act specifically prohibits sharing information or acting under the direction of a candidate, registered political party or constituency association when sponsoring election advertising.

Elections BC considers a number of factors when assessing potential cases of collusion. These include the level of communication, coordination, cooperation and collaboration between a third party sponsor and candidate, registered political party or constituency association.

On their own, the following activities are not prohibited:

- endorsing a candidate, political party, constituency association or nomination contestant,
- receiving publicly available information,
- attending the same public event, or
- using the same vendor to provide a service.

Some activities that may suggest a third-party sponsor has colluded with a registered political party, constituency association or candidate include:

- requesting or receiving directions from a candidate, registered political party or constituency association with respect to election advertising;
- being materially involved in decisions regarding the content, audience, dissemination or distribution of election advertising;
- holding joint formal or informal planning meetings to discuss or plan campaigning strategies;
- developing complementary election campaigns to optimize the reach or effectiveness of an advertising campaign;
- sending out communications that are so similar a reasonable person would have difficulty distinguishing if they were created by the third-party sponsor or a political party or candidate (e.g., common formatting or branding);
- arranging for the payment of an expense that would otherwise be an election expense if it was incurred by a candidate or party;

- sharing, formally or informally, information or other materials to assist with an election campaign (e.g. providing access to mailing or volunteer list); or
- distributing each other's election materials.

This is not an exhaustive list; Elections BC assesses potential instances of collusion on a case-by-case basis. Determinations are made based on the facts of a specific situation.

If a third-party sponsor has colluded with a candidate, registered political party or constituency association regarding the election advertising they conducted, the third-party sponsor may be subject to penalties, as determined by the Chief Electoral Officer.

# VOTERS LISTS AND PARTICIPATION INFORMATION

## Voters lists

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Candidates and registered political parties are entitled to receive a copy of the voters list to help them get-out-the-vote. They must submit a request and privacy policy to Elections BC. For candidates, the request form and privacy policy template are included in the candidate nomination application package.

The voters list and participation information may only be used for the purposes defined in the Electoral Purposes for Access to and Use of Personal Information Regulation, which is linked in [Appendix 1](#).

The preliminary voters list will capture registered voters in each electoral district as of the end of Writ Day (September 21, 2024). The voters list will remain open following the release of the preliminary list until the end of the day on October 7, 2024. A revised voters list will then be released reflecting all registered voters in each electoral district as of 11:59 p.m. on October 7, 2024. Keeping the voters list open to registrations for a period of time after the writs have been issued gives voters more time to get ready for the election and increases the chances that they will receive a Where to Vote card and have a current voter record when they vote.

Registered political parties will receive a preliminary and revised voters list containing information for each electoral district. Candidates will receive a preliminary and revised voters list specific to their electoral district.

Following the provincial election, candidates and political parties will also have access to the final voters lists as of the close of voting when all post-event processing is complete. These lists will include the final participation records for each electoral district.

## Key message for voters about registration

The easiest and most efficient way to register or update is via the Online Voter Registration system available at [elections.bc.ca/ovr](https://elections.bc.ca/ovr). Voters can use the online system to make sure their voter registration information is up to date until October 7, 2024. After October 7, eligible voters can register or update when they vote.

[s. 51, 275]

## Availability of electronic participation information

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Candidates and registered political parties with current privacy policies<sup>4</sup> are entitled to receive files containing participation information during voting. The purpose of the participation files is to inform campaigns about which voters have already voted to assist in get-out-the-vote efforts. Elections BC minimizes the transmission of personal information wherever possible. Information such as a voter's name or address is only included in the participation files when the voter updates or registers in conjunction with voting. If the voter's information did not change, only the unique identifier, electoral district and voting area are included in the participation files.

During an election, the voters list is updated in close to real-time as voters vote. When a voter votes, election officials strike them off the voters list using an electronic voting book (laptop) at the voting place. This strike-off information is shared with a central server. Participation files are produced from the central server and posted for eligible registered political parties and candidates to download on a set schedule.<sup>5</sup>

Electronic participation files will be available for download starting three days before the start of advance voting (October 7, 2024). The first participation file will include participation from all voting opportunities up to the time of file production on October 7, including voters who have voted at the district electoral office, voters who have returned their vote-by-mail package, and if applicable, voters who voted at special voting opportunities.

All subsequent electronic files are cumulative reports that include all participation that has occurred between Day 0 and the date and time of production.

Participation files will be posted for download as soon as possible after they are produced and a notification will be sent by email when the files are ready. The only participation information that will not be available in electronic format for download on Final Voting Day is participation from any partial-tech and non-tech final voting places.<sup>6</sup>

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4. Current privacy policies are those that have been received and accepted by Elections BC.
  5. Voters who vote by mail are included in participation files when their certification envelopes have been returned to Elections BC, removed from the return envelope and logged as received in the electronic voting book. There may be a two-to-three day delay between when a return envelope is received by Elections BC and the participation showing in files available for download.
  6. Participation reports can be picked up from partial-tech and non-tech voting places by candidate representatives throughout Final Voting Day. Participation from partial-tech final voting places is synchronized with the central server on Final Voting Day after 8 p.m. when the electronic voting books are returned to the district electoral offices. Participation from non-tech voting is data captured during preparations for final count and shared with political parties and candidates after the election.



### Schedule for creation of electronic participation files

Date	Time of file production	Frequency
October 7 - 9, 2024	3 p.m.	Once daily
October 10 - 13, 15 - 16, 2024	1 p.m. and 8 p.m.	Twice daily
October 17 - 18, 2024	3 p.m.	Once daily
October 19, 2024	8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. <sup>7</sup>	Every 30 minutes

### Format and scope of electronic participation files

For the 2024 Provincial General Election, electronic participation files will be issued in a format that preserves as much of the format from previous general elections as possible. This format has been used in provincial by-elections since April 2022. See [Appendix 2](#) for a detailed breakdown of the file structure.

Each participation file is cumulative and includes information for all voting that has occurred between Writ Day and the time of file extraction.

### Access to the voters list and electronic participation files

The encrypted voters list and participation data files will be accessed through Elections BC’s Secure Data Download Service (SDDS). Political parties will continue to use their credentials with a new encryption password to access the individual files for each electoral district.

Candidates will receive their SDDS credentials with their certificate of candidacy.

All files will be made available for download as soon as possible after they are produced. An email notification will be provided when the voters lists and participation files are available for download. Questions about voters lists and participation files should be directed to [voterservices@elections.bc.ca](mailto:voterservices@elections.bc.ca) or 250-356-9325.

7. Electronic participation files will be available for download until approximately 30 minutes after the final participation file is uploaded on Final Voting Day. Subsequently, participation information will only be available via the final voters list produced following the return of the writs for the election.

## **Paper participation reports in voting places**

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Candidate representatives may visit advance or final voting places to pick up reports of participation, which will be printed on request at full-tech and partial-tech voting places.

At non-tech voting places, “bingo” sheets showing the sequence numbers of voters who have voted will be available for pick up at 10 a.m., 1 p.m., 4 p.m., 7 p.m. and 8 p.m (Pacific time). The forms will show the sequence numbers of voters who voted between updates. For instance, the 7 p.m. update will show voters who voted between 4 p.m. and 6:59 p.m.

Candidate representatives have the option to photograph the participation reports at the supervisor’s desk to email to their campaigns.

Note that most of the participation in the provincial election will be reported through the download service, but paper participation reports will be the only source of participation information on Final Voting Day for partial- and non-tech voting places.

# RESOURCES

## Maps

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There are new electoral districts for the 2024 Provincial General Election. To see your new electoral district, enter your address in the [My District app](#).

You can also view and download printable [PDF maps of electoral districts](#) on the Elections BC website.

## Election integrity

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### What is election integrity

Election integrity means safeguarding democratic standards and principles of accessibility, fairness, independence, reliability and security in the administration of elections.

At Elections BC, this includes activities like outreach and education, developing accessible and secure election processes, enforcing election rules and legislation, and working with partners to proactively respond to threats to election integrity.

To learn more, see [Election Integrity](#) on the Elections BC website.

# APPENDIX 1: LINKS TO RELEVANT LEGISLATION

## **Legislation**

- [Election Act](#)

## **Regulations**

- [Voting Opportunities Regulation](#)
- [Voting Options Regulation](#)
- [Vote Counting Regulation](#)
- [Ballot Form Regulation](#)
- [Electoral Purposes for Access to and Use of Personal Information Regulation](#)

# APPENDIX 2: VOTER PARTICIPATION ELECTRONIC FILE FORMAT

## Scenario 1:

- The voter is on the voters list and does not update their voter record.

### Field Names

- A. electoral district code
- B. voting area code
- C. card number

**Note:** Columns D. through V. are blank.

## Scenario 2:

- The voter is a new registrant;
- They are updating their registration within an electoral district (e.g. LJF); or
- They are updating their registration and moving to this electoral district (e.g. VTB » LJF)<sup>8</sup>

### Field Names

- A. electoral district code (voter's electoral district)
- B. voting area code (voter's voting area)
- C. card number (will be blank if new registration)
- D. name (surname)
- E. blank
- F. names (given)
- G. street name

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8. A voter that moves from another electoral district to a new electoral district will only appear in the participation report for their new electoral district.

- H. blank
- I. street indicator
- J. direction indicator
- K. building number (numeric)
- L. building number (alpha)
- M. apartment number
- N. blank
- O. blank
- P. city of residence
- Q. blank
- R. blank
- S. blank
- T. blank
- U. blank
- V. initials (given names)

# APPENDIX 3: HOURS OF OPERATION AND KEY CONTACTS

## **District electoral offices**

District electoral offices will be open as soon as possible following issuance of the writ.

<b>District electoral office hours, Day 0 to Day 28)</b>	
Monday to Friday	9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (local time)
Saturday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (local time)
Sunday	Closed, except during advance voting
Advance voting days	8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (local time)
Final Voting Day	8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Pacific time) for voting and package issuing 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Pacific time) for package drop-off

**Note:** District electoral offices will be closed to the public on Monday, September 30 (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation) and Monday, October 14, 2024 (Thanksgiving).

## **Elections BC headquarters**

**Address:** 100—1112 Fort Street, Victoria B.C., V8W 9J6

**Toll-free number:** 1-800-661-8683

<b>Toll-free line hours (Pacific time)</b>	
Monday to Friday	8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (extended hours during advance voting)
Saturday	9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Advance voting days	8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Final Voting Day	8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

## **Contact for political parties:**

Aidan Brand - 778-974-3285 - [correspondence@elections.bc.ca](mailto:correspondence@elections.bc.ca)

Election webpage: [elections.bc.ca/2024-provincial-election](https://elections.bc.ca/2024-provincial-election)

## QUESTIONS?

For more information:

Phone toll-free	1-800-661-8683
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Or contact Elections BC at:

Mailing address	PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9J6
Phone	250-387-5305
Fax	250-387-3578
Toll-free fax	1-866-466-0665
Email	<a href="mailto:electionsbc@elections.bc.ca">electionsbc@elections.bc.ca</a>
Website	<a href="http://elections.bc.ca">elections.bc.ca</a>