



**ELECTIONS BC**

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

# GUIDE FOR CANDIDATE AND POLITICAL PARTY REPRESENTATIVES

2024 PROVINCIAL GENERAL ELECTION

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# WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR

This guide is intended for candidate representatives and political party representatives who will be observing election processes during the 2024 Provincial General Election, scheduled for October 19, 2024. This will be the first provincial general election administered under the modernized voting and counting provisions of the *Election Act* (the Act).

**Candidate representatives** observe voting, registration in conjunction with voting and counting proceedings, and are appointed by candidates or a candidate's official agent. They are often referred to as scrutineers. [s. 70]

**Political party representatives** observe counting proceedings at Elections BC headquarters in Victoria. They are appointed by a registered political party that has endorsed one or more candidates in the provincial general election. [s. 119]

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.

## Legislative framework

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The *Election Act* and regulations of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO regulations) prescribe voting and counting procedures and the role and responsibilities of candidate and political party representatives for provincial elections. CEO regulations include the Voting Opportunities Regulation, the Voting Options Regulation, the Vote Counting Regulation and the Ballot Form Regulation. [Appendix 1](#) provides links to the relevant legislation.

## Using this guide

This guide references applicable sections of the *Election Act* and CEO regulations. References appear as a number between square brackets. All such references are 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 & B.C. *Constitution Act* s. 28 and 32]<sup>1</sup>

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

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.

## Background

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In the next provincial general election, candidate and party representatives will observe voting and counting procedures 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 electronic 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 procedures

## Candidate and political party representatives

### What is a candidate representative?

The term candidate representative encompasses three distinct roles to which a candidate can appoint individuals.

- **Official agent:** An individual who can act in the candidate's place throughout the election process and whose duties are defined by the candidate. For example, the official agent can act on the candidate's behalf to appoint other candidate representatives and can accept notices on the candidate's behalf. The official agent may be cross-appointed as the candidate's financial agent. Candidates can have one official agent at a time and the person appointed as official agent is often the candidate's campaign manager. [s. 69]
- **Financial agent:** An individual appointed by the candidate or official agent to administer the electoral financing requirements of the *Election Act*. This includes incurring expenses, accepting political contributions, recording financial transactions and filing the required financial reports with Elections BC. It also includes authorizing election advertising conducted on behalf of candidates and political parties. [ss. 175, 176, 177, 231]
- **Scrutineers:** Individuals appointed by the candidate or official agent to represent the candidate by observing voting, registration in conjunction with voting and counting proceedings for the election. A candidate can be represented by many scrutineers, but there are limits on the number that can be present at a given voting or counting opportunity. [s. 70]

This guide focuses on the roles and responsibilities of a candidate representative who is appointed to fulfill the role of a scrutineer. The term candidate representative is used in the remainder of this guide to refer to candidate representatives who are appointed to act as scrutineers.

### What is a political party representative?

The modernized legislation includes new responsibilities for Elections BC headquarters related to vote-by-mail and assisted telephone voting. All vote-by-mail packages requested online or through Elections BC's contact centre will be distributed from Elections BC headquarters. Any packages returned by mail will be processed and counted centrally at Elections BC headquarters. Assisted telephone voting is also administered centrally, including the count of ballots cast using this option.

Given that counting will be occurring at Elections BC headquarters in the 2024 Provincial General Election, the Act now allows registered political parties that have endorsed a candidate in the election to designate individuals to observe counting and quality assurance processes administered centrally. These individuals carry out a scrutineering

function on behalf of political parties and, by extension, the candidates they endorse in the election. These individuals are referred to as political party representatives or party representatives, for short.

[ss. 119, 122.01, 130]

### **The important role of candidate and party representatives**

Candidate and party representatives play an important role in ensuring transparency in election processes. The Act recognizes this role through a variety of provisions that allow for candidate and party representatives to observe and, in some cases, to challenge voters or object to election official decisions. Elections BC encourages candidates and parties to appoint representatives so that the goal of transparency can be achieved to the fullest extent. This guide will help representatives to fulfill their responsibilities effectively by providing information about electoral legislation and processes, how to prepare for observation and appropriate conduct while observing.

Note that while candidates and their representatives play a key role in ensuring transparency, their absence from an observation opportunity does not invalidate anything done in the election.

[s. 72]

# OBSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

For the 2024 Provincial General Election, most of the opportunities to observe will be organized by district electoral officers and available locally in electoral districts.

The opportunities to observe at headquarters are new for this election and parties that have endorsed a candidate in the election can appoint a party representative to observe. These observation opportunities are also available to candidates and their representatives.

The table below summarizes observation opportunities and who can observe at each.

Opportunity	Eligible to attend		
	Candidate	Candidate rep	Party rep
Organized by district electoral officers and available in electoral districts			
Advance voting		X	
Final voting		X	
Special voting		X	
Initial count	X	X	
Final count	X	X	
Quality assurance processes	X	X	
Organized by the Chief Electoral Officer and available at Elections BC headquarters			
Initial count	X	X	X
Final count	X	X	X
Quality assurance processes	X	X	X

[ss. 115, 119, 120.02, 128, 129, 130]

## Notifications of opportunities to observe

Elections BC will notify campaigns of the timing, location and number of representatives permitted at each observation opportunity. District electoral officers will provide notification of observation opportunities in their electoral district and the Chief Electoral Officer will provide notification of observation opportunities at Elections BC headquarters.



## Notification of opportunities to observe in electoral districts

District electoral officers will notify candidates running in their district of the details related to each observation opportunity. This will take place at the candidates’ meeting, scheduled during the week of September 30, 2024, following the close of nominations. Notifications for each opportunity will include the observation dates, times, locations and the number of representatives permitted for each candidate. The table below summarizes the legislated limits on the number of representatives per candidate at different opportunities.

[ss. 117, 128]

### Number of candidate representatives permitted at observation opportunities organized by district electoral officers

Observation opportunity	Number of candidate representatives per candidate
Advance voting	1 per voting station <sup>1</sup> + 1 per voting place
Final voting	1 per voting station + 1 per voting place
Special voting	1 per voting station <sup>2</sup>
Initial count	1 per tabulator or ballot box
Final count	1 per tabulator
Quality assurance processes	1

1. Voting stations are the tables within a voting place where voters are issued ballots.

2. Subject to limits at specific facilities described below.

### *Candidate representative access to voting opportunities*

At advance voting, final voting and special voting opportunities, in addition to the representative allocation indicated in the table above, the candidate’s official agent may also be present in a voting place. Other candidate representatives may be temporarily present in the voting place to pick up participation reports or to share information with other representatives. These candidate representatives are often referred to as runners.

Access for candidate representatives to special voting opportunities at care facilities, hospitals and work camps may be subject to access requirements and limits at the locations in question, many of which are designed to protect the health and safety of

occupants. District electoral officers will work with administrators of special voting locations to ensure the greatest access possible for candidate representatives subject to the limits in the Act and limits that apply at the locations. The Act permits the District Electoral Officer, with permission from the Chief Electoral Officer, to limit the total number of candidate representatives at a special voting opportunity, subject to the requirement that at least two must be permitted to attend.

[ss. 77, 93]

#### *Candidate representative access to counting observation opportunities*

Candidates may have one representative per tabulator at each counting location using technology. At voting places where ballots are counted manually, candidates may have one candidate representative for each ballot box. Unless notified otherwise, counting locations managed by district electoral officers will be as follows:

**Initial count** – final voting places and the district electoral office

**Final count** – district electoral office

#### *Candidate representative access to quality assurance observation opportunities*

Each candidate can have one representative observe the quality assurance processes. These processes demonstrate that tabulators are working properly. Quality assurance includes logic and accuracy testing of tabulators before and after use and a hand count of the ballots processed at initial count by a randomly selected tabulator. For details related to the quality assurance program, please refer to the [Guide to Voting and Counting](#) on Elections BC's website.

[ss. 119, 130]

#### *Candidate access to observation opportunities in electoral districts*

Candidates can attend counting and quality assurance observation opportunities in their electoral district. They may not be present at voting places except to vote.

[ss. 93, 119, 130 & Vote Counting Regulation]

## **Notification of opportunities to observe at Elections BC headquarters**

The Chief Electoral Officer will notify parties and candidates about observation opportunities at Elections BC headquarters. Notifications will be sent out shortly after the writs of election are issued and will include observation dates, times, locations and the number of representatives permitted. Candidates can attend any of the observation opportunities at Elections BC headquarters. The table below summarizes the legislated limits on the number of candidate and political party representatives at the different opportunities.

[ss. 117, 128]

**Number of political party and candidate representatives permitted at observation opportunities organized by the Chief Electoral Officer**

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Number of political party representatives per political party</b>	<b>Number of candidate representatives per candidate</b>
Initial count	1 per tabulator	1 per tabulator
Final count	1 per tabulator	1 per tabulator
Quality assurance processes	1	1

[ss. 115, 117, 119, 120.02, 128, 129, 130]

# PREPARING TO OBSERVE

## Appointments

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### Appointment of candidate representatives

Candidate representatives must be appointed in writing. The appointment form must be signed by the candidate or the candidate's official agent. Candidate representatives must have their appointment forms with them at all times while observing.

The [candidate representative appointment form](#) can be found on Elections BC's website.

[s. 70]

### Appointment of political party representatives

Political party representatives must be appointed in writing. The principal officer of the registered political party must sign the appointment form. Party representatives must have their appointment forms with them at all times while observing.

The [political party representative appointment form](#) can be found on Elections BC's website.

[ss. 119, 120.02]

## Voting and counting procedures

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Candidate and political party representatives should review the procedures they will be observing in order to carry out their role effectively.

A [detailed guide](#) to voting and counting procedures is available on the Elections BC website.

Candidate representatives should know what technology is being used where they are observing. The technology designation of the voting place will determine the voting and counting procedures used. This information will be provided by the District Electoral Officer in the notification of opportunities to observe in the electoral district.

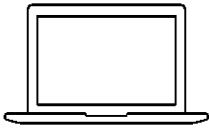

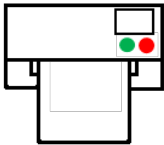
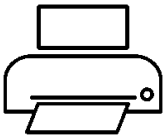
## Voting place technology footprints

Voting places that use technology will use one of two technology footprints: full-tech or partial-tech. Some voting places on Final Voting Day will have no technology deployed to them. These are called non-tech voting places. Technology footprints will be assigned to voting places based on a variety of considerations, including cellular connectivity levels, logistics of technology deployment and the number of voters served by the voting place.


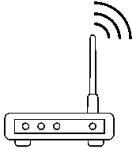
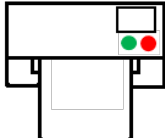
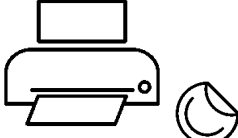
The characteristics of each technology footprint are described below.

[ss. 79.01, 79.02, 79.03, 79.04, 79.05]

### Full-tech footprint

Electronic voting books	Wireless modems	Tabulators	Printers
			
<p>Electronic voting books are used to search the provincial voters list, register voters and strike voters off the voters list when they vote.</p>	<p>Wireless modems are used to create a secure network within the voting place and to synchronize participation data regularly with a central server.</p>	<p>Tabulators are used to produce election results at the close of voting on Final Voting Day.</p> <p>Tabulators are never connected to a network.</p>	<p>Printers are used to print ordinary ballots listing the candidates for out-of-district voters.</p>

## Partial-tech footprint

Electronic voting books	Wireless modems	Tabulators	Printers
			
<p>Electronic voting books are used to search the provincial voters list, register voters and strike voters off the voters list when they vote.</p>	<p>Wireless modems are used to create a secure network within the voting place.</p>	<p>Tabulators are used to produce election results at the close of voting on Final Voting Day.</p> <p>Tabulators are never connected to a network.</p>	<p>Printers are used to print ordinary ballots listing the candidates for out-of-district voters.</p> <p>Label printers are used to print labels for certification envelopes.</p>

## Non-tech

Non-tech voting places do not use technology. They use previous methods, including paper voting books listing registered voters assigned to vote at the voting place.

## Procedure reference sheets

Elections BC has produced a series of procedure reference sheets intended for use as a reference tool by representatives at different opportunities. Representatives are encouraged to review the sheets that pertain to the observation opportunity to which they have been assigned and to have the reference sheets accessible while observing.

### Procedure reference sheets for candidates and candidate representatives observing in electoral districts

Voting opportunity	Technology footprint	Procedures
Voting opportunities in electoral districts		
Advance voting	Full-tech	<a href="#">8030072 – Advance and final voting – full-tech</a>
	Partial-tech	<a href="#">8030073 – Advance and final voting – partial-tech</a>
Final voting	Full-tech	<a href="#">8030072 – Advance and final voting – full-tech</a>
	Partial-tech	<a href="#">8030073 – Advance and final voting – partial-tech</a>
	Non-tech	<a href="#">8030074 – Final voting – Non-tech</a>
Special voting	Partial-tech	<a href="#">8030076 – Special voting</a>
Counting opportunities in electoral districts		
Initial count – advance voting	Full- or partial-tech	<a href="#">8030077 – Initial count with tabulators</a>
Initial count – final voting	Full- or partial-tech	<a href="#">8030077 – Initial count with tabulators</a>
	Non-tech	<a href="#">8030078 – Initial count without tabulators</a>
Final count		<a href="#">8030080 – Preparation for final count and final count in the field</a>

For party representatives, a procedure reference sheet is available on the [Elections BC website](#) describing the processes for preparations for initial count and initial count at Elections BC headquarters. The procedure for final count at headquarters is essentially the same as the procedure for initial count.

## Special situations

Candidate representatives should be aware of a few special circumstances that may arise at voting places.

### *Voter refuses to mark ballot*

A voter who accepts a ballot, but refuses to mark the ballot and returns it to the election official is deemed to have voted. The unmarked ballot will be included in the count of votes as a rejected ballot.

### *Voter spoils ballot*

If a voter spoils a ballot (i.e. makes an error while marking the ballot), it may be returned to an election official and a replacement obtained. The spoiled ballot is then set aside in a separate envelope. Spoiled ballots are not included in the count of votes.

### *Certification envelopes*

In partial-tech and non-tech voting places, some ballots are placed in certification envelopes to be counted at final count. Please refer to the [Guide for Voting and Counting](#) for more detail.

[ss. 113, 123, 274 & Vote Counting Regulation]

## Ordinary and write-in ballots

Eligible voters can vote at any voting opportunity in the province. At voting places that use technology (full-tech or partial-tech), voters are issued an ordinary ballot that lists the candidates running in their electoral district alphabetically by surname. Ordinary ballots are printed on demand for voters voting out-of-district.

At voting places that do not use technology, ordinary ballots are issued to voters voting in their electoral district. A write-in ballot and a List of Candidates is used at non-tech voting places for voters voting out-of-district. To complete a write-in ballot, the voter writes the name of the candidate, registered political party or party leader of their choice.

For counting or transcription purposes,<sup>2</sup> the marking on a write-in ballot is interpreted as follows:

- A vote for a political party will be counted for the local candidate endorsed by the political party.
- A vote for a party leader will be counted for the local candidate endorsed by the leader's party.

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2. Write-in ballots are transcribed onto ordinary ballots where technology is used to count votes. See the [Guide to Voting and Counting](#) for details.



If a voter writes the name of a party leader or political party, the party must have endorsed a candidate in the voter's electoral district, otherwise the ballot will be rejected.

### **Voters needing assistance**

Voters who are unable to mark a ballot because of a physical disability or difficulties with reading or writing can be assisted in marking a ballot. Voters needing assistance to vote may be assisted by an election official or an individual accompanying the voter. Candidates and candidate representatives are prohibited from assisting in marking a ballot.

At advance and final voting places, Braille ballot templates corresponding to the Braille List of Candidates are available for voters with visual impairments to vote independently. To assist voters with sight loss, a poster-sized image of the ballot will be displayed on a wall near the ballot marking stations.

Other than election officials, an individual may only assist one voter in an election unless those being assisted are members of the individual's family, in which case they may assist more than one. To assist a voter in marking a ballot, the assistant must first take a solemn declaration, confirming that they will preserve the secrecy of the ballot, if needed, will mark the ballot according to the voter's wishes, will not attempt to influence the voter and that they have not already assisted another voter other than family members. Voters are also permitted to have translators assist them in being able to read the ballot and instructions for voting. A translator must also make a solemn declaration.

[s. 109]

# AT THE OBSERVATION OPPORTUNITY

## Appointment forms and declaration of secrecy

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Upon arrival, candidate and political party representatives must check in with the Supervisor of the proceedings, show their appointment forms and make a solemn declaration of secrecy.<sup>3</sup> The declaration is required of all candidate and political party representatives, authorized observers and election officials to ensure the secrecy of the vote. Those observing preparations for initial count at Elections BC headquarters or preparations for final count must also protect the secrecy of voting results they become aware of before the official start of the count. Initial count officially starts at 8 p.m. (Pacific time) on Final Voting Day. Final count officially starts on a date and time set by the Chief Electoral Officer.

All observers will be issued a badge that identifies their role (candidate representative or political party representative) and they must wear the badge at all times while observing.

[ss. 70, 72, 90, 93, 128]

## Voting dates and hours

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### Advance and final voting

Advance voting is available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (local time), starting Thursday, October 10, 2024 and ending on Wednesday, October 16. There is no advance voting on Thanksgiving, Monday, October 14, 2024.

Final voting is available on Final Voting Day, Saturday, October 19, 2024, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Pacific time).

Voters are not permitted to vote prior to the official opening times or if they arrive at the voting place after the closing times indicated above. When voting places close, only those voters who entered the voting place (or lined up outside the voting place) prior to the official closing time are permitted to cast a ballot.

[s. 75, 76 & B.C. *Constitution Act* s. 23]

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3. Representatives must solemnly declare that they will preserve the secrecy of the ballot and, in particular, will not interfere with an individual who is marking a ballot, attempt to discover how someone voted, share information about how someone voted, induce someone to show the marking on their ballot or disclose voting results prior to the close of polls.

## Special voting

Special voting is administered by mobile teams of election officials at acute care hospitals, care facilities and work camps. Voting may be held any time, but must conclude no later than 8 p.m. (Pacific time) on Final Voting Day.

[s. 77]

## Duties before voting starts

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Candidate representatives assigned to the first shift on Final Voting Day or the first day of advance voting at a voting place should report to the Supervisor (presenting their appointment forms) no later than 7:45 a.m. in order to take a solemn declaration of secrecy and receive their lapel badges.

Prior to the voting place being opened, representatives should verify that the ballot box is empty and that it is then sealed so that it cannot be opened without breaking the seals. At voting places using technology, candidate representatives should also observe the printing of the tabulator tape that shows that zero votes are stored in the tabulator. Candidate representatives may wish to sign the tabulator tape or the ballot box seal. The tape showing zero votes cast will remain attached to the tabulator during voting.

Candidate representatives must be seated a reasonable distance from the voting screens and the stations where ballots are issued to voters. This is to ensure that no conversation occurs between the voters and representatives, that the marking of the ballots is completely private and that a voter does not address a candidate representative instead of an election official.

[ss. 95, 95.01]

## Challenges and objections

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### Challenging a voter - candidate representatives

Candidate representatives may challenge a voter's right to register in conjunction with voting or their entitlement to vote. Mounting such a challenge is a serious action and candidate representatives must follow the rules related to the timing of their challenge and understand the allowable grounds for any challenges they bring forward.

## Timing of challenges

In the case of a challenge to a voter's right to register, the challenge must be presented before the application for registration is accepted by the election official. For a challenge to entitlement to vote, the challenge must be presented before the ballot is issued to the voter by the election official.

## Grounds for challenges

A candidate representative's challenge must be on the basis that the voter is not entitled to register or to vote, as the case may be.

Voters are entitled to register to vote in the 2024 Provincial General Election if they are:

- A Canadian citizen
- 18 years of age or older as of October 19, 2024
- A resident of B.C. on or before April 18, 2024
- Not disqualified from voting<sup>4</sup>

Voters who are registering in conjunction with voting confirm they meet these qualifications orally in voting places that use technology and by signing the voting book or a certification envelope in non-tech voting places. Voters do not have to show proof of Canadian citizenship, the duration of their residency in B.C. or their age.

Voters are entitled to vote in the election if they meet all of the registration qualifications, they are registered to vote and have not already voted in the election. Voters confirm they meet these qualifications orally in voting places that use technology and by signing the voting book or a certification envelope in non-tech voting places.

### *Identification requirements for registration and voting*

Eligible voters who are not already registered can register in conjunction with voting at any voting opportunity. Voters must prove their identity and place of residence prior to registering in conjunction with voting and prior to being issued a ballot. They do this either by showing acceptable identification or by being vouched for.

Some important points to know about acceptable voter identification include:

- Voters do not have to provide photo ID (e.g., an insurance statement showing the voter's name and address and a library card showing the voter's name is an acceptable combination)
- Electronic documents (e.g., e-bills) and electronic scans of paper documents are acceptable

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4. At time of writing, only the Chief Electoral Officer and the two Deputy Chief Electoral Officers are disqualified from voting.

- A Canadian passport can be used as proof of a voter's identity, but not proof of residential address
- A Certificate of Indian Status satisfies the identification requirement and voters using this form of identification can provide their address verbally with no additional proof of address.
- Recent amendments to the *Election Act* permit residents of facilities designated as site-based voting areas to satisfy the identification requirements with one piece of identification that shows their name when voting is being administered at the facility where they live.

More information on specific [identification and vouching requirements](#) is available on the Elections BC website.

### **What happens if a challenge is made**

If a challenge is made, the election official must record the challenge and the voter has the option to make a solemn declaration regarding their qualifications. Candidate representatives must not interfere with voting or registration proceedings beyond stating their challenge at the appropriate time.

[ss. 30, 31, 41, 41.1]

### **Objecting to election official decisions – candidates, candidate representatives and political party representatives**

Candidates, their representatives and political party representatives have the right under certain circumstances to object to an election official's decision. When an objection is made, the disagreement with the election official's decision is recorded on the designated form. While an objection may result in the election official reconsidering their decision, it **does not** allow a representative to change or over-rule that decision. The decision of the election official at the time the objection is made is final and may only be reconsidered by a more senior election official at a later stage of counting.

#### **Timing of objections**

An objection must be made at the time the election official is considering the ballot or certification envelope that is the subject of the decision.

#### **Decisions that can be subject to objections**

The table below summarizes which election official decisions can be objected to by candidates and representatives.

### Summary of situations where representatives can register objections to decisions

Election official's decision to:	Candidate	Candidate representative	Political party representative
Open or not open a certification envelope at initial count [s. 122.01]	x	x	x
Accept a vote or reject a ballot (manual count only) [s. 124]	x	x	
Open or not open a certification envelope at final count [s. 134]	x	x	x
Marking of a transcribed vote [Vote Counting Regulation]	x	x	x

Candidates and representatives are not able to object to election official decisions outside of these specific areas. If they have any concerns about other election proceedings they observe or their access to observe, they should first speak with the voting place Supervisor and then escalate to the District Electoral Officer, if necessary.

### What happens when an objection is made

Each objection is recorded on the designated form with a sequence number. The same sequence number is recorded on the back of the certification envelope or ballot being objected to. This allows the objection to be reviewed at a later stage in the counting process, if required. For instance, a decision made by an election official during initial count could be reviewed by the Chief Electoral Officer or District Electoral Officer during a recount of ballots considered at initial count. A decision of the Chief Electoral Officer or District Electoral Officer relating to a certification envelope or ballot during final count may only be reconsidered by the presiding Judge in a judicial recount.

### Participation reports

Participation information for most voting opportunities will be provided in electronic format to candidates and political parties through a secure download service.

Paper participation reports are also available. To access these, candidate representatives may visit full-tech and partial-tech advance or final voting places to request a print-out.

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 may take a photo of participation reports and transmit the photo electronically to their campaign office.

Note that the vast majority of participation information for the provincial general election will be reported centrally in electronic format for candidates and political parties to download, but paper participation reports will be the only source of participation information on Final Voting Day for partial- and non-tech voting places.

[s. 51.01]

## **Duties at the close of voting**

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Representatives and candidates can observe the production and reporting of election results and they are entitled to receive a copy of the completed ballot account.

At voting places that use technology (full-tech and partial-tech), the election official responsible for the tabulator will first ensure that all ballots have been inserted into the tabulator. The election official will then produce two copies of the tabulator results tape showing the vote count by electoral district and candidate. One copy of the tape will be posted on the wall for candidates and representatives to review and photograph. The other copy will be used by election officials to report the election results to Elections BC and complete the ballot account.

At full-tech voting places, all ballots cast at the voting place, whether in-district or out-of-district, will be tabulated at initial count.

At partial-tech voting places, in-district ballots will be tabulated at initial count. Ballots cast by voters voting out-of-district will be in certification envelopes. These certification envelopes remain sealed at initial count pending further screening during preparations for final count. At initial count, the sealed certification envelopes are counted, and the number of envelopes is recorded on the ballot account.

At non-tech voting places, the ballots cast by voters voting at their assigned voting place are counted by hand during initial count. Ballots cast by other voters at non-tech voting places will be in certification envelopes. These certification envelopes remain sealed at initial count pending further screening during preparations for final count. At initial count, the number of sealed certification envelopes is counted and recorded on the initial count reconciliation form.

[ss. 119, 120, 120.01, 121 & Vote Counting Regulation]

## CONDUCT

This section provides separate quick reference summaries for acceptable conduct for candidate representatives and for political party representatives. Candidate representatives and political party representatives are an important part of the electoral process, and play a key role supporting election transparency and integrity. They are encouraged to review the guidelines and to have them accessible while observing to ensure their conduct remains consistent with their role.

Voting place supervisors are required to maintain peace, order and safety at the election proceedings. The Act designates voting place supervisors, as well as district electoral officers and their deputies, as peace officers for this purpose. Any individual who is present at a voting place when they are not permitted to be, who is disturbing the peace, acting in a threatening manner or who is interfering with the election proceedings will be ordered to leave. If such an order is given, the individual must leave the voting place and its immediate vicinity and must not return while the election proceedings are ongoing.

It is imperative that election proceedings are in compliance with legislation and that they are completed in a timely way. While some individual representatives may have different opinions about how elections should be administered, they must not attempt to impose their own views on election officials. Election officials have a great responsibility to deliver the election in accordance with the training they have received under the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer. Anyone, including a representative of a candidate or political party, who interferes with the election proceedings, will be ordered to leave the voting place by the Supervisor or District Electoral Officer.

[ss. 88, 273]



## Conduct of candidate representatives

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### Candidate representatives are permitted to do the following:

#### ***Observing and verifying***

- Observe election officials as they set up the voting place
- Verify that the ballot box and its auxiliary compartment, where applicable, are empty prior to the start of voting
- Initial seals on ballot boxes and initial the “zero tape” that is produced by the tabulator to confirm that no votes have been tabulated prior to the start of voting
- Observe voter registration and ballot issuing processes at the ballot issuing stations
- Inspect a voting book, including an electronic voting book, while ensuring not to interfere with the voting proceedings
- Observe ballots being inserted into a tabulator or ballot box
- Observe ballots that are being counted by hand or transcribed
- Initial the tabulator results tape
- Discuss any concerns with the Supervisor of the voting place

#### ***Challenging and objecting***

- Challenge an individual’s right to register in conjunction with voting or an individual’s right to vote on the basis that they do not meet the legislated qualifications
- Object to the election official’s decision on whether or not to open a certification envelope, accept a vote or reject a ballot
- Object to the election official’s transcription of a voter’s candidate choice when transcribing a ballot

#### ***Recording and transmitting information***

- Record voter names as they are announced by election officials
- Obtain a paper copy of a list of who has voted (participation report)
- Take a photo of a list of who has voted and transmit it to their campaign office
- View the tabulator results tape that is posted on the wall and take a photo of the tape

- Request and obtain a signed copy of the ballot account during initial count and final count
- Use cell phones or other electronic devices discretely and silently (e.g., emailing, texting or reading)

***Candidate representatives are not permitted to do the following:***

- Wear anything that would associate them with a registered political party or candidate running in the election
- Attempt to influence how an individual votes by promoting a political party or candidate in the election
- Assist voters in marking a ballot or interfere with voters who are marking a ballot
- Attempt to discover how an individual voted
- Communicate information regarding how another individual voted or marked their ballot, including photographs of marked ballots
- Communicate information about or publicly reveal voting results before the close of voting
- Communicate with election officials when voters are present, other than to present an official objection or challenge
- Take photographs in the voting place, other than to make a copy of the participation report or results tape
- Interfere with election officials who are carrying out voter registration, voting or counting procedures
- Park their personal vehicles at the voting place if this impedes access for voters

Note that while candidate representatives play a key role in ensuring transparency, the absence of a candidate representative from a voting place does not invalidate anything done in the election.

If candidate representatives have any concerns about the election proceedings they observe or their access to observe, they should first speak with the voting place Supervisor and then escalate to the District Electoral Officer, if necessary.

## **Conduct of political party representatives at observation opportunities**

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### **Political party representatives are permitted to do the following:**

#### ***Observing and verifying***

- Verify that the ballot box and its auxiliary compartment are empty prior to the first ballot being fed into the tabulator
- Initial seals on ballot boxes and initial the “zero tape” produced by the tabulator
- Observe ballots being inserted into a tabulator or ballot box by election officials
- Observe ballots that are being counted by hand or transcribed
- Initial the tabulator results tape

#### ***Objecting***

- Object to the election official’s decision on whether or not to open a certification envelope at initial count
- Object to the election official’s transcription of a voter’s candidate choice when transcribing a ballot

#### ***Recording and transmitting information***

- View the tabulator results report and take a photo of the report
- Request and obtain a signed copy of the ballot account during initial count and final count
- Use cell phones or other electronic devices discretely and silently (e.g., emailing, texting or reading)

### ***Political party representatives are not permitted to do the following:***

- Wear anything that would associate them with a registered political party or candidate running in the election
- Attempt to discover how an individual voted
- Interfere with election officials who are carrying out counting procedures

- Communicate information about or publicly reveal voting results before the close of voting
- Take photographs at Elections BC headquarters, other than to make a copy of the results tape

If political party representatives have any concerns about the election proceedings they observe or their access to observe, they should speak with the Supervisor of the proceedings.

# APPENDIX 1: LINKS TO RELEVANT LEGISLATION

## **Legislation**

- [B.C. Constitution Act](#)
- [Election Act](#)

## **Regulations**

- [Voting Opportunities Regulation](#)
- [Voting Options Regulation](#)
- [Vote Counting Regulation](#)
- [Ballot Form Regulation](#)

# QUESTIONS?

For more information:

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

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Website	<a href="http://elections.bc.ca">elections.bc.ca</a>