

Terms and Conditions of Employment for Temporary Staff in District Electoral Offices



ELECTIONS BC

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

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Introduction

This policy document outlines the terms and conditions of employment, including standards of conduct and employee benefits, established by the Chief Electoral Officer for temporary staff hired on a short-term basis to work in district electoral offices, including staff hired to work as enumerators. This document does not apply to permanent staff or other temporary staff of Elections BC, such as staff employed at Elections BC's head offices or as election officials at voting places.

Employees hired for temporary work terms are public servants. However, their employment relationship is separate and distinct from permanent employees hired under the *Public Service Act*. The *Public Service Act* does not apply to temporary employees of Elections BC. The Chief Electoral Officer establishes the terms and conditions of employment.

All employees of Elections BC are excluded from union or association membership.

Complying with these employment terms and standards of conduct is a condition of employment. Employees who fail to comply may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Elections BC may update these policies periodically. Elections BC will communicate any changes to temporary employees by revising this document and providing a copy to all temporary employees.

Standards of conduct

Temporary employees in district electoral offices are representatives of the District Electoral Officer and Chief Electoral Officer, and must conduct themselves accordingly. Employees must ensure that their conduct is above criticism at all times to maintain and enhance the public's trust in the provincial electoral process. They must conduct themselves in a manner that will earn and maintain the respect, confidence and trust of the public and the Legislative Assembly of the Province.

[Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#), governs the standards of conduct for all persons and organizations covered by the *Public Service Act*. As this policy statement broadly applies to all employees in the public service, Elections BC extends this policy to all temporary employees hired under the *Election Act*.

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Upon joining Elections BC, temporary employees must read, understand and generally adhere to [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct policy for Public Service Employees](#), including amendments made from time to time, unless a term in the within document specifically overrides the general Standards of Conduct.

[Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#) describes what Elections BC expects of employees, and defines related employer and employee responsibilities. Employees who breach Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Human Resource Policy 9 is available from the MyHR website at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/careers/managers-supervisors/managing-employee-labour-relations/standards_conduct.pdf

[Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#) broadly applies to all employees in the public service. Some of the specific language in [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#) is not applicable to employees of Independent Offices of the Legislature. Offices have a unique relationship with government and the Legislative Assembly. **As a result, the below information is a supplement to and must be read with [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#).**

1. References to “Deputy Minister” should be interpreted as the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).
2. References to “Ministry” should be interpreted as the Office of the CEO (Elections BC).
3. Elections BC employees have a duty of loyalty to Elections BC and the CEO who, in turn is accountable to the Legislative Assembly, not to the government.
4. References to the “Oath of Employment” should be interpreted as the Oath of Office for temporary employees, which the Election Act requires every temporary employee to swear or affirm on hire.

In addition to the interpretation guide above, there are certain sections of [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#) that are superseded by the requirements of the *Election Act* and/or Elections BC policies. **The following policy should be read in conjunction with [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#):**

Loyalty

Elections BC employees serve the Legislative Assembly, the CEO and the public impartially and to the best of their ability, not the government of the day.

Confidentiality

Temporary employees will have access to sensitive, confidential and/or personal information as defined under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. In addition to the confidentiality requirements of [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#), temporary employees must comply with Elections BC's privacy and information-sharing policies, available on the DEO Desktop intranet site or from Elections BC's Privacy Officer.

Public comments

In addition to the public comments requirements of [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#), temporary employees must not speak to the media and should refer media requests to their supervisor.

They must also read and abide by the Social Media Guidelines for BC Public Service Employees to help employees make appropriate choices about the personal use of social media and understand the potential impacts of its use in the context of their employment. Social Media Guidelines are available on the MyHR website at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/about-the-bc-public-service/ethics-standards-of-conduct/social-media-guidelines>.

District electoral office staff must take additional care when commenting on public issues. They must not express personal opinions to the public regarding the Acts which Elections BC administers, Elections BC's policies, or any political party or candidate. Public trust and confidence in Elections BC may be severely impaired if employee statements appear to take sides or positions on matters of public concern.

Political activity

Elections BC is a non-partisan Office of the Legislature. It is essential that staff are, and appear to be, impartial in the conduct of their duties. Policy 24.2, "Being Non-Partisan", available on the Elections BC website at <https://elections.bc.ca/docs/emp/policy-24.2-being-non-partisan.pdf>, and the DEO Desktop intranet site, outlines prohibited and acceptable political activities for Elections BC staff.

Elections BC policy 24.2 supersedes the Political Activity section outlined in [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#).

Non-partisan policies are not meant in any way to interfere with an employee's rights as a private citizen but focus on the collective responsibilities and public expectations of Elections BC as a whole.

Service to the public

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms establishes equality of voting rights for all citizens. In addition to the service to the public requirements of [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#), district electoral office staff must place a greater emphasis on the needs of voters rather than administrative convenience when making voting arrangements and providing access to voting opportunities.

Workplace behaviour

In addition to the workplace behaviour requirements of [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#), Elections BC extends the following policies to temporary employees:

- Human Resources Policy 11, Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace, available from the MyHR website at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/careers/managers-supervisors/managing-employee-labour-relations/hr-policy-pdf-documents/11_discrimination_harassment_workplace_policy.pdf.
- Human Resources Policy 4, Occupational Safety and Health, available from the MyHR website at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/careers/managers-supervisors/managing-employee-labour-relations/hr-policy-pdf-documents/04_occupational_safety_and_health_policy.pdf.

All employees may expect to work in and have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe workplace.

Workplace behaviour and occupational safety and health concerns are to be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor and/or Elections BC Human Resources.

Discrimination and harassment complaint procedures for temporary employees will follow the procedures for excluded employees of the BC Public Service as explained in [Human Resources Policy 11, Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace](#). For purposes of complaint procedures, the Chief Electoral Officer has the same authorities as a Deputy Minister.

Conflicts of interest

In addition to the conflicts of interest requirements of [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for Public Service Employees](#), the following guidelines and resources apply to all employees of Elections BC. Employees should familiarize themselves with these guidelines, and direct any questions to their supervisor, Elections BC Human Resources or Elections BC's ethics advisor.

- Conflict of Interest Guidelines - available on the MyHR website at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/about-the-bc-public-service/ethics-standards-of-conduct/what-is-a-conflict-of-interest-in-the-bc-public-service>.

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- Social media guidelines - available on the MyHR website at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/about-the-bc-public-service/ethics-standards-of-conduct/social-media-guidelines>.

Elections BC's Ethics Advisor is the Deputy CEO, Corporate Services. District electoral office staff may also seek advice from the Senior Director, Human Resources and Development Services.

Allegations of wrongdoing

In addition to the allegations of wrongdoing requirements of [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for BC Public Service Employees](#), Elections BC employees must report allegations or concerns in writing to a Deputy CEO. Where an allegation involves the CEO, the employee will forward the allegation to another appropriate independent officer of the legislature, such as the Ombudsperson or the Auditor General of BC.

Employees may also report allegations of wrongdoing under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act* to their supervisor, designated officer (Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Corporate Services or Senior Director, Human Resources and Development Services) or the Ombudsperson. They must not make disclosures to the BC Public Service Agency designated officer. The BC public service HR Policy on Public Interest Disclosure and the Procedures for Managing Disclosures do not apply to employees of an Office of the Legislature. Elections BC has its own internal procedures under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*.

For more information about public interest disclosure, see the MyHR website at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/about-the-bc-public-service/ethics-standards-of-conduct/known-about-public-interest-disclosure/pid-abc>.

Legal proceedings

In addition to the legal proceedings requirements of [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for BC Public Service Employees](#), temporary employees may only sign affidavits for court proceedings that were prepared or reviewed by a lawyer acting for Elections BC and authorized by the CEO. Employees must not sign affidavits prepared by Legal Services Branch of the Ministry of Attorney General. Employees are obliged to cooperate with lawyers pursuing or defending Elections BC's interest during legal proceedings.

Working relationships

Temporary employees in district electoral offices report to the District Electoral Officer and Deputy District Electoral Officer. In addition to the working relationships requirements of [Human Resource Policy 9, Standards of Conduct for BC Public Service Employees](#), employees who are direct relatives of, or who share the same household as, the District Electoral Officer, Deputy District Electoral Officer, or Office Manager, must not be employed in a direct reporting relationship. This policy aims to prevent any conflict of interest, inappropriate influence, or real or perceived collusion that might compromise the integrity of Elections BC.

General terms of employment

Employment term

Compensation and the length of the work term will be outlined to temporary employees at the time of offer of hire. Most employment terms in a district electoral office will be less than three months in duration. Individuals may have worked as temporary staff for Elections BC in the past, but each temporary position/work term is separate and distinct. Due to the short-term nature of the employment, offers of employment may be verbal or in writing.

Compensation

Compensation rates for temporary employees are established by Elections BC, and rates are outlined in the Tariff of Fees for District Electoral Officer (5005001). Compensation rates reflect role responsibilities and will be communicated at the time of offer of hire.

Employees will be paid bi-weekly and the pay cheque is mailed to the employee's home address. Elections BC will make deductions from earnings as required by law for the Canada Pension Plan, income tax and employment insurance.

Reimbursement for travel expenses for pre-authorized travel will be provided according to the Tariff of Fees for District Electoral Officer (5005001). Travel status generally begins from the place of business and not the residence. Travel to and from work is not a recognized travel expense.

Elections BC does not provide extended health or dental benefits to temporary employees in district electoral offices.

Hours of work

Elections BC's policies on rest and meal breaks, minimum daily pay, overtime pay and hours free from work meet the requirements of the *Employment Standards Act*. For details, see the employment standards fact sheet "Hours of Work and Overtime" at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/employment-standards/hours>.

District electoral offices are open to the public in accordance with direction from Elections BC head office.

Most temporary employees in district electoral offices, including enumerators, will work part-time shift work, as required. Work hours may include weekends and evenings.

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For district electoral offices, a standard work day is eight hours of work time, with a minimum 30 minute unpaid meal break. Specific work hours will be discussed at the time of hire, and a schedule will be provided by the supervisor. Employee shifts may change during advance voting and on Final Voting Day to ensure staff are available during extended hours of operation.

An employee must not work more than five hours in a row without a 30-minute meal break. Coffee breaks are at the discretion of the supervisor and will be scheduled per operational requirements.

Work schedules will be posted in the district electoral office. Employees must record their hours of work on time sheets provided by Elections BC.

To meet operational requirements, shift changes may occur. Elections BC will provide employees with 24 hours' notice of shift changes unless the shift change results in the employee being on overtime.

If employees are unable to be at work during their regular work hours due to illness or other circumstances, they must notify the District Electoral Officer or Deputy District Electoral Officer immediately.

Overtime

Work schedules are designed to limit overtime. Any overtime must be pre-approved by the District Electoral Officer or Deputy District Electoral Officer. Temporary employees may be requested to work overtime to deal with unexpected operational demand.

Where authorized in advance by the District Electoral Officer or Deputy District Electoral Officer, employees will be entitled to overtime compensation for time worked or travelled on Elections BC business in excess of eight hours in a day or 40 hours in a week. Overtime worked will be paid at the following rates:

- An employee will be paid 1.5 times their regular wage for time they are directed to work over eight hours on a regularly scheduled work day.
- An employee will be paid two times their regular wage for time they are directed to work over 12 hours on a regularly scheduled work day.
- An employee will be paid 1.5 times their regular wage for time they are directed to work over 40 hours in a week. Only the first eight hours worked each day are used to calculate total hours for weekly overtime no matter how long the employee works on any day of the week.
- An employee will be paid 1.5 times their regular wage for time if they are required to work during the 32 consecutive hours they are entitled to have free from work each week.

Overtime compensation is monetary only. No averaging agreements or banked overtime agreements will be made.

Statutory holidays

Eligibility for statutory holiday pay is as per the *Employment Standards Act*. To be eligible for statutory holiday pay, a temporary employee must have:

- been employed for 30 calendar days before the statutory holiday, and
- worked or earned wages on 15 of the 30 days preceding the statutory holiday

An ineligible employee who does not work on a statutory holiday will not receive statutory holiday pay. An eligible employee who does not work on a statutory holiday will receive an average day's pay as defined by section 45 of the *Employment Standards Act* at www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96113_01.

An ineligible employee who works on a statutory holiday will be paid as if it were a regular work day. An eligible employee who works on a statutory holiday will be paid at the rate of 1.5 times their regular wage for the time worked, up to 12 hours, and two times their regular wage for time worked over 12 hours.

Staff in Elections BC Payroll are available to answer specific questions about statutory holiday pay.

Vacation

Temporary employees in district electoral offices are not entitled to take annual vacation. Employees who have been employed for at least five calendar days receive 4% of their gross salary on each payday in lieu of paid vacation leave.

Unpaid leave options

When accepting temporary employment terms, district electoral office staff are indicating to the best of their knowledge that they are available to work that term.

Temporary employees are entitled to certain types of unpaid leave as specified by the *Employment Standards Act*. For details, see the Employment Standards fact sheet "Leaves of Absence" at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/employment-standards/time-off/leaves-of-absence>.

See the General Illness and Injury Leave and COVID-19 Leave sections of this document for more details about these types of leave.

Other unpaid leave may be granted by the supervisor depending on operational requirements. The supervisor must approve all leave in advance. If unforeseen circumstances prevent an employee from working a designated shift, they must notify their supervisor as soon as possible. Employees will be on unpaid leave for any shifts they miss.

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An employee who is not on approved leave and not at work will be considered to have abandoned their employment contract and severed their employment relationship with Elections BC.

Employees are not entitled to time off to vote on Final Voting Day for a provincial general election as per section 74(5) of the *Election Act* and are encouraged to use advance voting opportunities.

General Illness/injury leave

District electoral office staff and enumerators are eligible for three days of job-protected leave if they are unable work due to illness or injury. As their work terms are less than 90 days in length, general leave due to illness/injury is unpaid leave.

If an employee, regardless of the length of their work term, has been advised by a medical professional to remain at home because they are sick or the employee is in the hospital for treatment, the CEO may grant additional paid or unpaid, job-protected leave.

If requested, employees need to provide enough information to satisfy Elections BC that they are ill or injured and therefore entitled to the leave.

Consult with EBC HR if you have questions or concerns about general illness or injury leave.

COVID-19 leave

Under the provisions of the *Employment Standards Act*, district electoral staff can take [job-protected leave related to COVID-19](#) if they are unable to work for any of the following reasons:

- They are assisting a dependant being vaccinated against COVID-19.
- They have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are following the instructions of a medical health officer or the advice of a doctor or nurse.
- They are in isolation or quarantine and are acting in accordance with an order of the Provincial Health Officer, an order made under the Quarantine Act (Canada), or guidelines from the BC Centre for Disease Control or the Public Health Agency of Canada.
- The employer has directed them not to work due to concern about their exposure to others.
- They need to provide care to an eligible person for a reason related to COVID-19 including a school, daycare or similar facility closure.
- They are outside of B.C. and unable to return to work due to travel or border restrictions.
- They are more susceptible to COVID-19 in the opinion of a medical professional because of an underlying health condition, ongoing treatment, or other illness and are receiving Canada recovery sickness benefits for the leave.

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Employees must immediately inform their supervisor as soon as possible of the inability to report to work because of circumstances outlined above.

Job-protected leave related to COVID-19 is **unpaid** leave.

The *Employment Standards Act* does not limit the length of COVID-19 leave. If any of the above circumstances are present or remain at the end of the employee's term of employment, it is possible that a temporary employee may remain on COVID-19 leave until their work term ends.

Employees can take up to 3 hours of paid leave to be vaccinated against COVID-19. If necessary, they can take additional paid leave for additional doses. If requested, employees may need to provide confirmation of a vaccine appointment, but employees are not required to provide a doctor's note or proof of having received a vaccine.

To support sick workers in staying away from work when they are sick, temporary employees may receive **up to 10 days (80 hours) paid leave** in the following circumstances:

- They have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are following the instructions of a medical health officer or the advice of a doctor or nurse to self-isolate and not return to work until the self-isolation period ends.
- They are experiencing symptoms of illness consistent with COVID-19 such as fever, chills, new or worsening cough, or shortness of breath, and their supervisor has instructed them not to come to work.

If requested, employees need to provide enough information to satisfy their supervisor that they are entitled to the paid leave in the above circumstances. Employees are not required to provide a doctor's note for COVID-19 leave.

The CEO may grant additional paid, job-protected COVID-19 leave in exceptional circumstances.

Consult with Human Resources if you have questions about COVID-19 leave or sick pay for temporary staff.

Returning to work after illness or isolation

Unless otherwise instructed by Public Health, fully vaccinated employees who have mild symptoms of illness can generally return to their routine activities, including work, once all the following criteria are met:

- Fever has resolved for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medication.
- All illness symptoms (respiratory, gastrointestinal, and systemic) are improving or have resolved.

It is important not to come to work until they are feeling well enough to resume their regular activities, or they understand their current condition is not linked to COVID-19 or other communicable diseases (e.g. not influenza or a cold - perhaps migraine-related or allergies).

End of employment relationship

Temporary employees are hired for, and enter into an agreement for, a specific work term with an anticipated end date. An employee's employment will end automatically on that anticipated end date without further notice or pay required. If for some reason employees are not able to complete their term and resign, Elections BC requests that they provide as much notice as possible.

Terminations by Elections BC may occur on or before the projected completion date of any Elections BC project due to unforeseen circumstances, including changes to policy or financial considerations. When Elections BC terminates the employment, the work term is considered over. In addition, terminations by Elections BC can occur at any time, without notice, for cause, and, in that case, an employee will receive no further compensation or benefits effective the date of termination, except only earned and accrued pay.

Elections BC may also terminate an employee without cause, at any time prior to the anticipated expiration of the work term, in its sole discretion, in which event, Elections BC will provide the employee with notice of termination, or pay in lieu of notice, in an amount equivalent to the minimum amount of notice to which the employee is entitled under the *Employment Standards Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 113.

For details, see the Employment Standards fact sheet "Quitting, getting fired or laid off" at www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb/facshts/termination.htm.

Letters of reference will be provided at the discretion of the supervisor. Letters of reference will be copied to Elections BC Human Resources to be placed on employee files.

Records of employment will be submitted electronically with Service Canada.

Employee files are kept for two years. After that time, it is not possible for Elections BC to provide any information regarding employment for references or other reasons.

Contact

Phone toll-free: 1-800-661-8683 / TTY: 1-888-456-5448

Mailing address: PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9J6

Phone: 250-387-5305

Fax: 250-387-3578 / Toll-free: 1-866-466-0665

Email: electionsbc@elections.bc.ca

Website: elections.bc.ca