

Introduction

Recall is a process that allows voters to petition for the removal of a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from office.

The recall petition period begins on the day a petition application is approved in principle and ends either 60 days after the petition is issued, or when the proponent submits the signed petition sheets to the Chief Electoral Officer, if earlier. The Chief Electoral Officer then has 42 days to verify the petition.

Who may canvass for signatures

Canvassers must be approved by the recall petition proponent and must register with Elections BC prior to canvassing for signatures. Signatures gathered by unregistered canvassers will not be accepted during the recall verification process.

Canvassers must also be registered voters.

Who may sign a recall petition

A recall petition must be signed by more than 40% of the voters who were registered to vote in the MLA's electoral district in the last election. On the date a voter signs a recall petition, the individual must be a registered voter in British Columbia.

The proponent and MLA are provided with a list of individuals eligible to sign the recall petition, showing the addresses where those voters are currently registered.

Responsibilities of the canvasser

Canvassers are the proponent's front-line representatives. They collect signatures and interact with the public. Canvassers have a duty to act with integrity and to understand and follow the rules laid out within the *Recall and Initiative Act* and its Regulation.

Failure to comply with the legislated responsibilities of a canvasser is a serious offence. Any individual or organization who commits such an offence is liable to fines of up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment [*Recall and Initiative Act*, s. 159, 162].

Canvassers must:

- witness every signature they collect
- be volunteers
- canvass only during the recall period. Canvassing is not permitted after the close of the petition period, regardless of whether or not the full 60 days has elapsed
- attach the petition cover sheet to the petition sheets while being circulated for signatures
- carry the identification issued by Elections BC and produce it upon request
- inform signatories of the eligibility requirements to sign the petition. Signatories must have been registered to vote in the Member's electoral district when the Member was last elected in a provincial general election or by-election and must be registered voters in B.C.
- ensure that the petition sheets are signed in ink on the pre-printed side
- collect only residential addresses from signatories. Mailing addresses will not be accepted
- only submit valid petition sheets with original signatures. Photocopies will not be accepted

Canvassers must not:

- leave petition sheets unattended
- allow voters to sign a petition more than once
- alter, in any way, the cover sheet and petition sheets provided. Only signatures gathered on copies of the official petition sheet will be considered for petition verification purposes. Signatures gathered on other forms or sheets will not be accepted
- knowingly make any false or misleading statements about a petition or the MLA who is the subject of the petition
- draw a diagonal line across the unsigned portion of a page or make any unnecessary lines or marks on petition sheets
- remove, cross out or interfere with a signature on a petition
- accept recall contributions of money, goods or services unless appointed in writing as an assistant financial agent
- make petition sheets and voters lists available for scrutiny by the public. These documents contain personal information and must be protected
- use information obtained while canvassing for any purpose not authorized by the *Recall and Initiative Act* or any Regulation, including information contained in the voters list.

Note: The proponent must not edit or otherwise change this form. The proponent must store the originals in a secure location during the petition period and return all of them with the other petition materials upon submission.

Canvasser – Frequently asked questions

How much time is allowed for collection of signatures?

The proponent is allowed 60 days from the issue date of the petition to collect signatures.

How do I become a canvasser?

Contact the proponent of the recall petition. Once a recall petition application is submitted to Elections BC for approval, proponents can start recruiting canvassers. The proponent will coordinate recruitment of volunteers, manage the canvasser application process and forward canvasser applications to Elections BC for processing. You can apply to register as a voter and a canvasser by completing the application form included in this package.

Who can register as a canvasser?

Canvassers must be registered voters. Voter qualifications are:

- Canadian citizen,
- at least 18 years old, and
- have lived in B.C. for the past six months.

I was not a registered voter when the petition was issued. Can I still canvass?

Yes, but only if you register first. In order to canvass, you must register to vote and you must also register as a canvasser with Elections BC.

Can a proponent be a canvasser?

Yes, but the proponent must register as a canvasser.

Can I sign and witness my own signature on a petition sheet?

No, you can only sign a petition administered by another canvasser in your electoral district.

What should a registered voter do if they want to sign the petition but they have moved out of the electoral district since the last election?

The voter is still eligible to sign the petition if they were a registered voter in the electoral district at the time the MLA was elected. The voter must sign the petition using their current address and must contact Elections BC to update their voter registration to this address before the petition is submitted to Elections BC.

If an individual has signed the petition with their new legal name but their previous legal name appears on the provincial voters list, how do they ensure their signature is counted during the verification process?

Before the petition is submitted to Elections BC, the voter must update their registration. Voters can register online through Elections BC's website, by phone at 1-800-661-8683 or in person at Elections BC's office or any Service BC location. The voter must provide their former name and current name when updating their registration.

Can I demand access to apartment buildings to collect signatures?

No. Canvassers are not guaranteed access to rental or strata properties. Access may be granted at the discretion of the landlord or property owner.

Can I demand access to malls and recreation centres, etc., to collect signatures?

No. The *Recall and Initiative Act* does not require a landlord or owner to provide access to canvassers. Permission must be obtained from the property owner or manager.

Can I canvass for more than one recall petition?

Yes. However, a separate canvasser application must be completed for each recall petition.

Why am I finding so many people who are not on the recall voters list for this electoral district?

Voters may not be on the list for a number of reasons. They may have chosen not to register; they may have moved into the electoral district since the last election; they may live in a neighbouring electoral district; they may have assumed that registering as a municipal or federal voter automatically registers them as a provincial voter, which is not always the case; or, they may have registered as a voter since the last election.

Who is responsible to determine if a voter is eligible to sign a petition?

A voter is responsible to know if they are eligible to sign a petition. A voter who is uncertain about their eligibility should contact Elections BC. Only individuals who were registered in the MLA's electoral district at the last election of the MLA are eligible to sign the petition.

Voter – Frequently asked questions

I am a registered voter and did not vote in the last election. Can I sign the recall petition?

You are entitled to sign the petition if you were a registered voter on General Voting Day of the last election in the MLA's electoral district.

If I sign the petition, will my personal information be made public?

If you sign a petition sheet, your name, address, signature and telephone number will be available for public inspection at the office of the Chief Electoral Officer. You may request that your residential address and telephone number be obscured from public inspection by checking the box next to your signature on the petition.

Elections BC has the authority to collect, use, disclose and dispose of personal information under the *Recall and Initiative Act* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. This information is used to administer recall petitions as required by statute. For information about Elections BC's privacy policies, visit elections.bc.ca/privacy.

What information do I have to provide when I sign a recall petition?

Your signature on a recall petition must be accompanied by your residential address. Postal addresses, such as P.O. box numbers, are not acceptable. Signatures not accompanied by a residential address will not be counted. You will also be asked to provide a telephone number.

Can I remove my signature? If so, how?

Neither a canvasser or Elections BC can remove signatures from a petition. If asked, a proponent may agree to remove a signature from a petition before it is submitted, but proponents are not required to do so.

My street has two names; which should I use?

You should use the street name you normally use. Elections BC maintains a list of common alternate street names. If you are concerned that Elections BC may not be aware of alternate names for your street, please contact Elections BC.

I haven't moved, but local authorities have changed the name of my street (or given us a house number). I've signed the petition with the new address information. Will my signature still be counted?

Your signature will be counted if you contact Elections BC to update your voter registration before the petition is submitted for verification.

I live in the electoral district now, but I didn't live in this electoral district at the time of the last election. May I sign the recall petition?

No. You are only eligible to sign a recall petition for the electoral district in which you were a registered voter at the time of the last election.

What can I do if I am physically unable to sign the petition? Can a family member, friend or assistant sign on my behalf?

Yes. You may designate a person to sign on your behalf. The canvasser will provide a form for the assistant to sign to show that they have signed the petition sheet on your behalf.

For more frequently asked questions and recall information, contact

Elections BC

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