



# Interested in helping your community members get ready for the next federal election?

Here are steps you can follow to help your community learn about registering and voting in a federal election.



**Step 1:** Learn about the barriers that your community members may face

**Step 2:** Discover the tools to help address barriers to registering and voting



Elector's Guidebook to Registering and Voting



**Step 3:** Make a plan



**Step 5:** Tell us how it went

**Step 4:** Carry out your plan



Let us help you help your community!



# Registering and Voting in a Federal Election

## Inspire Democracy

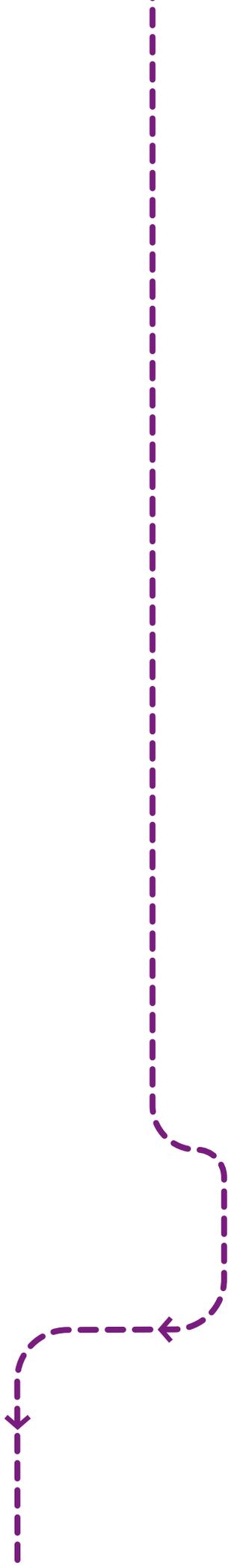
Inspire Democracy is an Elections Canada program. It's designed to help community organizers spread the word about taking part in federal elections.

The Inspire Democracy program helps reduce information barriers by providing tools to engaged community members such as you. In this way, Canadians can learn from people in their own communities.

This guide is part of our [third toolkit](#). Two more toolkits are available to help you inform your communities about participating in federal elections:

- [Running in a federal election](#)
- [Working at a federal election](#)

All three toolkits are on the Inspire Democracy website.



## Overview

Elections are important: when you vote, you choose the person who will represent you in the federal government. This person will make decisions that affect you and your community. By actively participating in the electoral process and by sharing information about elections, your community's needs can be better represented.

As a community organizer, you have a role to play in getting your community members ready for the next federal election. We know that this election if called during the pandemic will be different from previous ones. Members of your community will likely have lots of questions about the voting process and how to vote safely.

The following journey map provides you with detailed information on when, where and the ways to register and vote in this federal election. As well, you will see some suggestions on activities and available tools.

Knowing all the options to register and vote in a federal election allows you and your community to create a plan so your community has the best voting experience possible. During a pandemic, things can take a bit more time. It will be more important than ever that members of your community **plan ahead** as deadlines may apply. Some will consider **voting by mail** for the first time, others may want to know about how to stay safe when they vote at their assigned polling station in advance or election day polls. Measures are in place to keep you and your community safe no matter how you choose to vote. Make sure you know your **options to register and vote safely**.

### Let's get started!

Here are some guidelines to help you plan for your community's journey to the ballot box. There are five steps:

1. **Learn about the barriers that your community members may face**
2. **Discover the tools to help address barriers to registering and voting**  
Read the **Electors' Guidebook to Registering and Voting**
3. **Make a plan**
4. **Carry out your plan**
5. **Tell us how it went**



## Step 1: Learn about the barriers that your community members may face

- Research shows that, although all Canadian citizens over the age of 18 are eligible to vote in a federal election, some groups—including Indigenous electors, electors with disabilities, youth electors and new Canadians—continue to face barriers to the electoral process.
- These barriers include not knowing where to register or how to update their registration, how they can vote, being unable to provide the proper identification, and not understanding the voting process.
- Sharing information on how to register and vote in federal elections is important if you feel that members of your community face these barriers.

To learn more about these barriers, visit the [Inspire Democracy website](#).

### DID YOU KNOW?

The right of every Canadian citizen to play a meaningful role in the electoral process is protected by law under Section 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.



## Step 2: Discover the tools to help address barriers to registering and voting

- Elections Canada has produced the following resources to help you:
  - [Elector's Guidebook to Registering and Voting](#): This toolkit includes a step-by-step guide that you can use in your outreach efforts to help electors through their journey. The kit focuses on registration and voting. See below for more information.

- **[Inspire Democracy toolkits](#)**: These toolkits are designed for community organizers to walk them through some of the many ways to participate in a federal election.
- **[Voter Information Campaign](#)** products: These include infographics, flyers, videos, and more about the upcoming federal election that you can use to engage your community. The campaign also includes information about the health and safety measures in place to keep polling places safe for everyone during the pandemic.
- You can also use outreach tools to spark discussion about elections:
  - **[Democracy Talks](#)**: A series of discussions designed to engage citizens in politics.
  - **[Vote PopUp](#)**: A toolkit to ignite interest in elections and explain the voting process for first-time and infrequent voters.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

These Elections Canada materials are available in three accessible formats, 16 indigenous languages and 32 heritage languages:

- **[Guide to the Federal Election](#)**
- **[Voter ID Info Sheet](#)**

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

The **[Elections Canada website](#)** is the official source for all election material, and is a great resource. All official election information (TV and radio ads, videos and social media content) can be found there which will be continually updated.



# Elector's Guidebook to Registering and Voting

In this Elector's Guidebook, you will find important information on when, where and the ways to register and vote, accessibility tools and services, and additional information about federal elections. The guidebook is meant to address barriers such as not knowing where to register and vote, being unable to provide the proper identification, and not understanding federal elections and the voting process.

When planning for the upcoming federal election, make sure you're well-informed so you can provide accurate information to your community and help them prepare to vote. We don't expect you to be an expert in federal elections, so we have put key information at your fingertips so you can help your members get ready. Here are the steps to help you prepare:

1. [Build or refresh your knowledge about federal elections](#)
2. [Learn about the candidates](#)
3. [Make sure you are registered to vote](#)
4. [Make sure you have ID that can prove your identity and address](#)
5. [Choose the way to vote that works best for you - particularly during the pandemic](#)
6. [Vote!](#)

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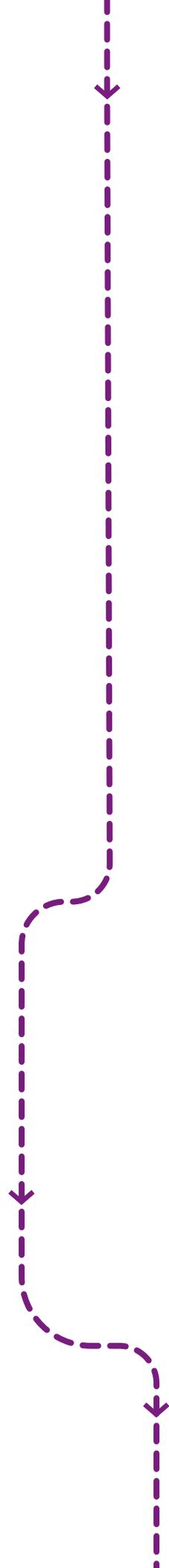
## Build or refresh your knowledge about federal elections

When making a plan for the next federal election, it's always good to start with the basics. In this section, we provide information and links on the federal election and voting in Canada. It's important for voters to understand the impact of federal elections on their daily lives.

### What should I know about the Canadian federal system?

Canada is a representative democracy. This means that citizens elect representatives to the House of Commons. Those representatives, along with the Senate, then make laws and decisions for the country and its people.

We have a first-past-the-post system (also called a single-member plurality.) This means electors vote once for one candidate in their riding (sometimes called an electoral district): the candidate who receives the most votes wins the seat in the House of Commons. This person is your member of Parliament.



## Who is allowed to register and vote in a federal election?

To register and vote in the federal election, you must:

- be a Canadian citizen
- be at least 18 years old on election day
- prove your identity and address

## Why should I vote?

Voting is the way you will choose someone to represent you in Canada's Parliament. That person will make decisions about issues that affect you and your community. By expressing your choice, you are exercising a right that is key to the democratic process of government that generations of Canadians have fought to build. For more information, see [A History of the Vote in Canada](#).

## What are federal elections all about?

When you vote in a federal election, you are choosing a person, your member of Parliament, to represent you in the House of Commons. Each member of Parliament has a seat in the House of Commons, where they debate and pass laws on your behalf.

Canada has 338 [members of Parliament](#), one for [each riding in Canada](#).

Candidates can represent a [political party](#) or they can be independent, meaning they have no association with a political party.

The political party with the most members elected to the House of Commons forms the government, and their leader becomes the prime minister.

The Prime Minister and members of Parliament decide on Canada's national policies and priorities. They make sure those policies are put into action. They guide the government's legislation through the House of Commons and the Senate.

To learn more about Canadian federal elections, explore these links:

- [Our Country, Our Parliament](#) from the Library of Parliament site
- [The Electoral System of Canada](#), an Elections Canada publication
- [Canada's Political System and Elections Step by Step](#) from Elections Canada's Elections and Democracy site.
- [Infographics](#) on federal elections from the Apathy is Boring site
- [Guide to the Federal Election](#) (archive) - an Elections Canada publication

## 2

### Learn about the candidates

#### Who are the candidates in my riding?

First, you need to know which riding is yours. Enter your postal code into Elections Canada's [Voter Information Service](#). You will get the following information:

- the name of your riding
- a map of your riding
- information about voter registration

During an election, this page will also tell you

- where and when to vote
- as they are confirmed, the names of candidates in your riding and their political party

#### What are Canadians voting for in a federal election?

Here are some of the things the federal government is responsible for:

- citizenship and immigration
- Indigenous lands and rights
- banking regulations
- natural resources and the environment
- International affairs: how Canada deals with other countries

#### DID YOU KNOW?

There are different types of elections:

- federal
- provincial/territorial
- municipal

First Nations electors may also vote in band elections.

Each of these levels of government is responsible for different issues that may impact your life.



Want to learn more? Explore these links:

- [Know Your Basics](#) (a video from Apathy is Boring);
- [Provincial and Territorial Elections](#) from the Elections and Democracy website; and
- [Three Levels of Elections](#) (a video made in collaboration between Elections Canada and other Electoral Management Bodies in Canada).

## 3

### Make sure you are registered to vote

The next step in your journey to the ballot box involves registering in a federal election. In this section, you will learn about registering to vote and why it's so important. Learn how easy it is to use the [Elections Canada Online Voter Registration Service](#).

#### What is voter registration?

To vote in a federal election, you must be registered. You can register any time by visiting [elections.ca](#), or by calling **1-800-463-6868**. Once the election has been called you can register in person when you go to vote.

Elections Canada maintains a National Register of Electors, which is a permanent, continually updated database of Canadians who are eligible to vote in federal elections. Elections Canada uses this database to create lists of electors, that is Canadians who are registered and eligible to vote during the federal election.

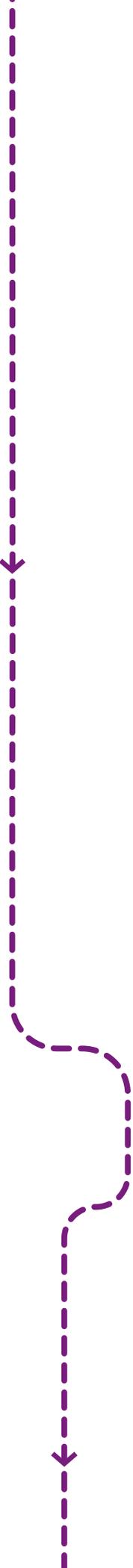
#### [More information on Elections Canada's privacy policy](#)

Most Canadians who are eligible to vote are already registered. Some Canadians may not be registered, or may be registered at a previous address, particularly if they have recently moved, recently became a Canadian citizen, or are voting for the first time. It is always good to check and update your information. To learn how to register, see "[How do you register between elections?](#)"

#### Why should I register or update my registration before the election?

If you register or update your registration before the election, Elections Canada will mail you a voter information card after the election is called. It tells you where and when you can vote.

You can always register when you go to vote, if you haven't already registered.



Voter information cards are mailed to all registered electors. Expect to receive your card about two weeks before election day. The voter information card tells you:

- Where and when you can vote, including the locations of your assigned polling station for election day and advance polling days;
- The accessibility of your assigned election day and advance polling stations;
- How to request voting assistance in advance, including language and sign language interpretation; and
- The address of the closest Elections Canada office where you can register and vote by special ballot.

When you get your voter information card, check the name and address on it. If you didn't get a voter information card, or the information on the card is incorrect, your voter information may not be up to date. Visit [elections.ca](https://elections.ca) to register or update your address, or call us at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)** for assistance. You can also register when you go to vote.

To make the voting process simpler, when you go to vote you can use your voter information card as a proof of address if your name and address are spelled correctly on the card. You will still need to bring one other piece of ID with your name.

### How do I register between elections?

You have two options:

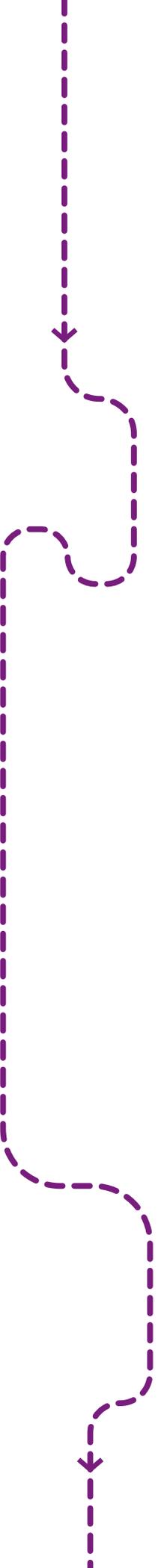
1. online, using the [Voter Registration Service at elections.ca](https://elections.ca)
2. by mail: Call Elections Canada at **1-800-463-6868** to request a registration form. You'll need to fill in your information and return it by mail, with proof of identity and address.

### How do I register once the election is called?

You can register before you go to vote or when you go to vote.

Register before you go to vote:

1. Online (before the Tuesday before election day): Visit [elections.ca](https://elections.ca) and use the Online Voter Registration Service to register or update your information.



Register when you go to vote:

1. At any Elections Canada office across Canada before the Tuesday before election day at 6:00 p.m.
2. At your assigned polling station on election day or on advance polling days. Make sure to bring [accepted ID](#).

### **Confirming your place of residence: Which riding do you call home?**

Your place of residence or home address is the place where you normally live, or the place you consider to be your home. You must have ID with that address to register or vote.

If you leave your home temporarily (for school, work or any other reason) but intend to return, you can still use your home address as your place of residence.

Once you've decided on your place of residence, bring ID with that address when you go to register and vote.

### **What identification documents do I need when registering online?**

If you register online, you may be asked for the number from:

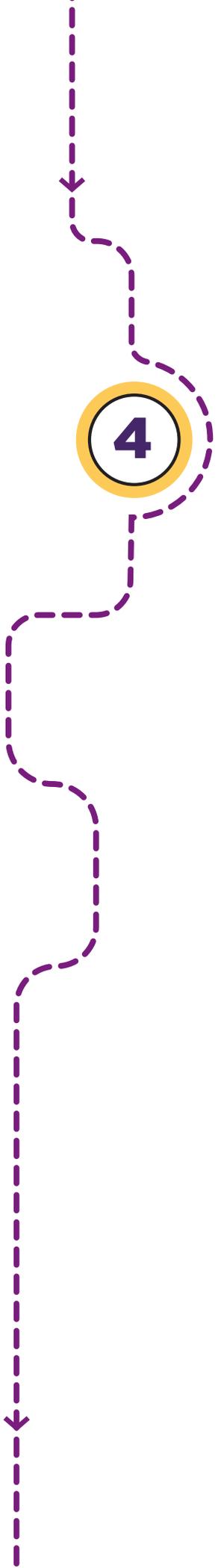
- a driver's licence from any province or territory except Quebec
- provincial or territorial ID card from Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan or Yukon (ID cards from certain provinces and territories are accepted and others excluded due to information-sharing agreements with Elections Canada)

If you don't have the above forms of ID, you may use the Document Submission feature of the [Online Voter Registration Service](#) to provide another form of identification. Here's the [list of accepted ID](#).

### **Do I have to register every time there's a federal election?**

No. Once your information is in the National Register of Electors, you stay registered.

Visit [elections.ca](#) or call Elections Canada at **1-800-463-6868** to check or update your address and other information. For example, if you have moved, you may need to update it.



If you have changed your name, you must request an update from Elections Canada; fill it in, provide ID and send the completed form to Elections Canada.

About two weeks before election day, you should receive a voter information card in the mail. If you don't get a card, or if the information on the card is wrong, you may not be registered or your voter information may not be up to date.

## 4

### **Make sure you have ID that can prove your identity and address**

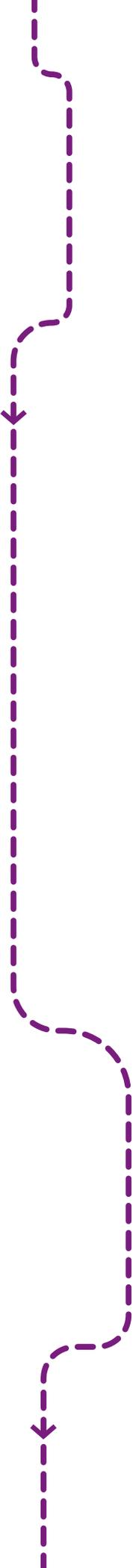
**[Voter identification on Elections Canada's website](#)**

To vote in a federal election, you must prove your identity and address. An important part of your voting plan involves having all the information for proving your identity and address. There are a number of options. In this section, find the one that works best for you, and plan to come prepared when you vote.

#### **How do I prove my identity and address?**

You have three options to prove your identity and address:

1. Show one piece of government-issued ID with your photo, name and current address. Example: your driver's licence.
2. Show two pieces of ID. Both must have your name, and at least one must have your current address. Example: your voter information card and a bank statement, or a utility bill and your student ID card. Don't have these? No problem! There are other pieces of **[accepted ID](#)**.
3. If you don't have ID on that list, you can still vote if you declare your identity and address in writing and have someone who knows you and who is assigned to your polling station vouch for you. The voucher must be able to prove their identity and address. A person can vouch for only one person (except in long-term-care facilities).



Elections Canada accepts the following forms of identification:

- Original ID cards and documents, including e-statements and e-invoices
- Documents issued electronically: you can print them or show them on a mobile device
- Expired pieces of ID
- Different pieces of ID from the same source if the documents serve different purposes. Example: an invoice and a transcript from the same school.
- Proof of address only: your voter information card (if your name and address are correct on the card). You will still need to bring one other piece of ID containing your name.

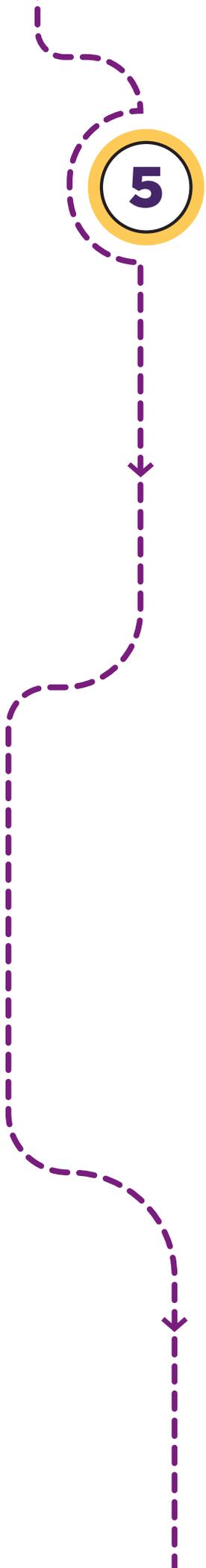
For a piece of ID to be accepted, your name and/or address must be printed on the document. They can't be added by hand unless they are added by the issuer of the document, like a residence administrator. For example, a current or expired Canadian passport may be used as a proof of identity (your name) but not as a proof of address, because the passport holder writes their current address by hand in the passport.

Some voters may have trouble proving their address. If you live in or receive services from any of the following places, you can ask for a letter of confirmation of residence. This includes

- a student residence
- a First Nations band or reserve
- an Inuit local authority
- a seniors' residence
- a long-term-care facility
- a shelter or soup kitchen
- a community-based residential facility

If you need a letter of confirmation of residence:

- Contact your place of residence as soon as possible after the election is called. They may issue a letter of confirmation on their official letterhead or use the Elections Canada template Letter of Confirmation of Residence available at [elections.ca](https://elections.ca).
- You will need to show a second piece of ID with your name.



# 5

## Choose the way to vote that works best for you - particularly during the pandemic

### [Infographic: Ways you can vote in a federal election](#)

During a pandemic, things can take a bit more time. That's why it is more important than ever that you make a plan and choose the voting option that works best for you.

Your health and safety is our priority: measures are in place to keep you safe, no matter how you choose to vote.

Knowing the different voting options and what to expect when you cast your vote can help you choose a time and place to vote that is easiest for you. Remember, you can vote almost any time during the election period, and voting early can reduce line-ups and crowds during the pandemic.

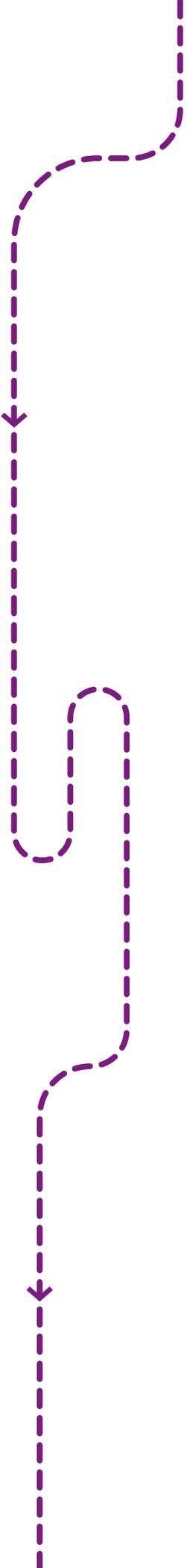
*If you have tested positive for or have symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have been in contact with someone who has the virus, [visit elections.ca](#) to apply to vote by mail. Deadlines apply.*

In this section, you will learn about all the voting options. Pick the one that's most convenient for you and include it in your voting plan.

### What are the voting options?

You can vote at the following times and places:

- **On election day**
  - **Where:** You vote at your assigned polling station in your community based on where you live. Soon after an election is called, to find your polling station, check your voter information card or use our online [Voter Information Service](#).
  - **When:** Your assigned polling station will be open for 12 hours (hours of operation vary by province and territory). Do not enter the polling station if you think you have COVID-19; follow your public health authority's guidelines and stay home.
  - **What to expect:**
    - *Wear a mask.* If you don't have one, we can provide one for you.
    - At your polling station, poll workers will be wearing masks.
    - There will be hand sanitizer stations, clear physical distancing markers and poll workers will be behind a plexiglass barrier.
    - Practice physical distancing by staying at least two metres away from voters and poll workers
    - When you enter the polling station, an election worker will greet you and show you to the right table. If you need help, ask an election worker.
    - You show your proof of identity and address to an election worker.

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- An election worker checks your name on the list of electors and gives you a folded ballot.
  - You go behind the voting screen, mark your ballot and refold it to keep it secret. We will provide you with a single-use pencil to mark your ballot, or you can bring your own pen or pencil.
  - You return your ballot to the election worker. They will remove the tab so your ballot can't be traced back to you.
  - You put your ballot in the ballot box.

- **On advance polling days**

- **Where:** You vote at your assigned advance polling station in your community based on where you live. It might be the same polling station you would vote at on election day, or it might be a different one. Safety measures will be in place. Check ahead of time to make sure you're heading to the right polling station: you can find this information on your voter information card or online at the [Voter Information Service](#).
- **When:** Your assigned polling station will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday the week before election day. If you think you have COVID-19, follow your public health authority's guidelines and stay home and apply to vote by mail before the Tuesday before election day at 6:00 p.m.
- **What to expect:** The voting process and the safety measures in place on advance polling days are the same as for voting on election day.

- **At any Elections Canada office across Canada**

- **Where:** You can vote in person at any of the over 500 Elections Canada offices across the country. Every riding in Canada has an Elections Canada office. Visit [elections.ca](#) to find the office nearest you.
- **When:** You can vote at any Elections Canada office by the Tuesday before election day at 6:00 p.m. Keep in mind that the final list of candidates is not confirmed until 19 days before election day. Elections Canada offices are open seven days a week once the election is called (hours of operation may vary). If you think you have COVID-19, follow your public health authority's guidelines and stay home.
- **What to expect:** Voting at an Elections Canada office is different than voting on election day or advance polling days. Here, you will vote using the special ballot process.
  - *Wear a mask.* If you don't have one, we can provide one for you.
  - Poll workers will be wearing masks.
  - There will be hand sanitizer stations, clear physical distancing markers and workers will be behind a plexiglass barrier.

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- Practice physical distancing by staying at least two metres away from voters and office workers.
  - An election worker will greet you at the counter and ask for proof of identity and address.
  - The election worker will add, update or confirm your information and ask you to verify it on the computer screen.
  - You will be given a ballot and instructions.
  - You can ask for the list of candidates for your riding if you need it.
  - You go behind the voting screen, mark your ballot and return to the election worker. We will provide you with a single-use pencil to mark your ballot, or you can bring your own pen or pencil.
  - The election worker will give you two envelopes. First, you put the ballot in the unmarked inner envelope and seal it. Then, you put that envelope in the outer envelope and seal it.
  - You read the declaration on this outer envelope and sign it, then put the envelope in the ballot box.

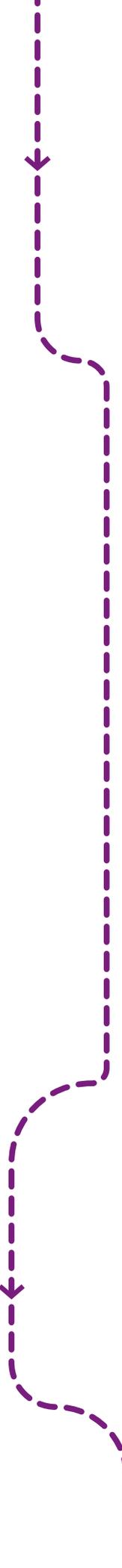
### [More information on voting by special ballot](#)

- **By mail**

- **Where:** If it is more convenient for you, if you have tested positive for or have symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have been in contact with someone who has the virus, you can visit [elections.ca](#) to apply to vote by mail.
- **When:** You will need to apply so that Elections Canada can send you a special ballot voting kit in the mail. The deadline to apply to vote by mail is the Tuesday before election day at 6:00 p.m. Apply as soon as possible after the election is called to allow enough time for your special ballot voting kit to reach you and for you to return your marked ballot to Elections Canada by election day. Once you've applied to vote by mail or at an Elections Canada office, it's the **ONLY** way you can vote in this election.

Here is how to apply to vote by mail:

- [apply online at elections.ca](#),
  - at any Elections Canada office across Canada, or
  - by calling Elections Canada at **1-800-463-6868** to request an application form.
- **What to expect:** When you vote by mail, you are voting by special ballot.
    - [Your special ballot is blank](#): it won't have the names of any candidates in your riding. To vote by mail, you will need to write the first and last name of the candidate you're voting for. If you write only the name of a political party, your vote won't be counted.

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- The list of candidates is not final right away. Candidates continue to be confirmed until about three (3) weeks before election day. If you already know who you are voting for, you can mark your ballot at any time. If you aren't sure, or prefer to wait until all of the candidates in your riding have been confirmed, you can simply wait until the final list has been published.

You can find the names of candidates in your riding at [elections.ca](https://elections.ca). The list is updated regularly as candidates are confirmed, and the final list is published shortly after the nomination period ends (about three [3] weeks before election day).

- The voting kit comes with easy-to-follow instructions.
- Write the name of the candidate you want to vote for on the ballot.
- Put your ballot in the blank envelope.
- Then, put that blank envelope in the bigger envelope with your name and riding on it, and seal it.
- Mail the ballot to Elections Canada. Plan ahead as much as possible to make sure it will arrive on time.
  - If you're voting by special ballot from within your riding, we must receive your marked ballot before the polls close in your riding on election day.
  - If you're voting by special ballot while away from your riding, we must receive your marked ballot in the mail by 6:00 p.m. EST on election day.

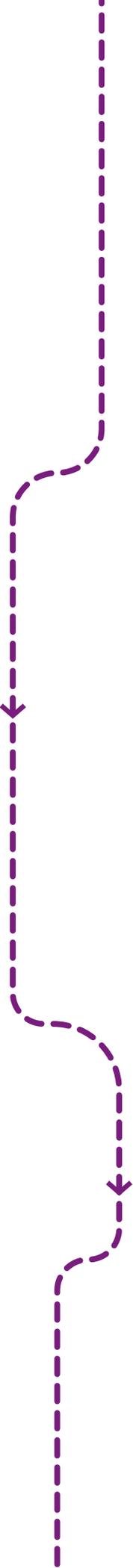
### **DID YOU KNOW? KEEPING YOUR VOTE SECRET**

For voting by special ballot: When it's time to count the ballots, the election worker will remove all the unmarked inner envelopes from their signed outer envelopes. The election worker will then return **only** the unmarked inner envelopes to the ballot box and mix them up. This way, no envelope can be traced back to the voter, and your vote remains secret.

### **Accessibility Tools and Services**

Learn more about all of Elections Canada's accessibility tools and services. Think about whether you will need any assistance at the polls and who can help you.

If you have a disability, require extra help or are helping someone else, choose the voting option that will best meet your needs.



With a little planning, you can ensure that your voting experience will be as easy and accessible as possible. Keep in mind that you may need to make arrangements for some of these services before you vote.

### [Infographic: Voting Tools and Services](#)

#### How do I know if my polling station will be accessible to me?

All electors are assigned to polling stations for election day and advance polling days. Once the election is called, you can make sure your assigned polling stations meets your accessibility needs by

- checking your voter information card
- visiting [elections.ca](#) and entering your postal code into the Voter Information Service box; or
- calling Elections Canada at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**

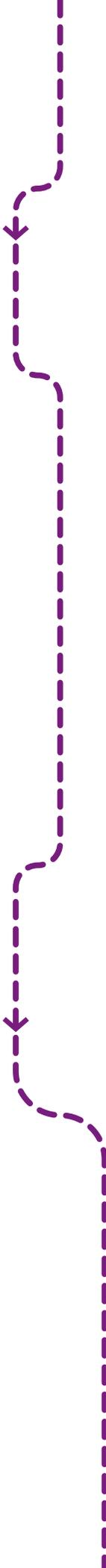
If your assigned polling station doesn't meet your accessibility needs, or if you live in a community where there is no polling station within a reasonable distance from your home, call us at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**. We will help you find an alternate polling station or discuss other ways you may be able to vote.

#### What accessibility tools and services are available?

Elections Canada offers many tools and services to make voting in the federal election easier. If you need help during the voting process, you can call Elections Canada, visit any Elections Canada office, or speak to an election worker when you go to vote.

Voting assistance tools and services available on election day at polling stations include:

- a larger ballot with candidates' names in large print
- lists of candidates in large print and Braille
- tactile and Braille voting templates
- magnifiers
- accessible polling stations. Almost all polling stations are accessible. Visit [elections.ca](#) to see if yours meets your needs before you go to vote. If the accessibility of the polling station does not meet your needs, you can contact us before 6:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before election day to make arrangements.
- language and sign language interpretation (and other assistance upon request in advance)
- assistance in marking a ballot (you can bring someone you know or ask an election worker)
- large-grip pencil (limited quantities) You can also bring your own pen or pencil



You are also welcome to bring help when you vote: for example, a friend or family member, your service animal, or an assistive device, such as a mobile device or smart phone.

To request voting assistance in advance, including language and sign language interpretation, you need to call the Elections Canada office in your riding by the Tuesday before election day at 6:00 p.m. You can find this number

- on your voter information card
- by entering your postal code into the Voter Information Service box at [elections.ca](https://elections.ca) 
- by calling Elections Canada at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**

### Can I bring my own assistive device when voting?

Yes. When voting, you may use an assistive device, such as your own pencil, to mark the ballot, or a personal mobile device, such as a smart phone, to read the ballot behind the voting screen.

### What are the options for voters living in a hospital, long-term-care institution or seniors' residence?

In some ridings, election workers take mobile polls to certain facilities (such as long-term-care institutions or seniors' residences) at scheduled times to allow electors who are staying there to vote.

This service is not available at all facilities and, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, alternative voting services may be required at some facilities. To learn more about the services offered at facilities in your riding, call your local Elections Canada office or reach us at **1-800-463-6868**.

Voting in acute-care facilities (hospitals where people stay short term) is different. Electors do not live in these facilities and, therefore, must vote by special ballot. Elections Canada adopts procedures allowing these electors to register and vote by special ballot from the facility where they are receiving care.

### Can I vote at home?

Electors who are unable to read or to vote using the special ballot process because of a disability may, upon request, vote at home. Electors who request to vote at home must meet the criteria outlined in the *Canada Elections Act*. All other voting options (including voting by mail) must be considered first.

If you or a family member requires this service, you must contact the Elections Canada office in your riding to request this voting option before the Tuesday before election day at 6:00 p.m.

If your request is approved, an election officer will come to your home and assist you in voting.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

For all the official information you need to vote, visit [elections.ca](https://elections.ca). The website is fully accessible and has voting information in multiple languages. You can also order products in many other formats, including large print, Braille and audio.

While most eligible voters can vote using one of the options listed above, some voters cannot use these options. Elections Canada has special services for these groups:

- [Members of the Canadian Forces](#)
- [Canadians living abroad](#)
- [Canadians living in hospitals or long-term-care facilities](#)
- [Homeless electors](#)

## 6

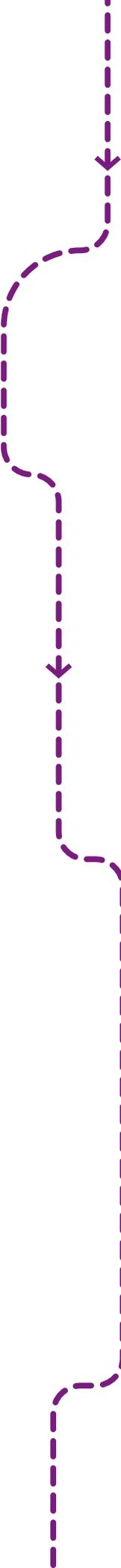
### **Vote!**

#### **Where is my polling station?**

##### [Voter Information Service](#)

Whether you are voting on election day or during advance polling days, here is where to find the date, hours of operation and address of your assigned polling station and Elections Canada office soon after the election is called:

- on your voter information card
- on the [Elections Canada website](#)
- by calling Elections Canada at **1-800-463-6868** or **1-800-361-8935 (TTY)**



### What if I don't have the right ID when I go to vote?

- If you don't have a government-issued ID with your photo, name and current address, check the complete list of accepted ID at [elections.ca](https://elections.ca) or with an election worker to see if you have two other acceptable pieces of ID. You can use your voter information card to prove your address if your name and address are spelled correctly on the card. You will still need to bring one other piece of ID with your name.
- You may have one acceptable piece of ID in your wallet, and an acceptable e-statement or e-invoice on your phone.
- If you don't have ID, you can still vote if you declare your identity and address in writing and have someone who knows you and who is assigned to your polling station vouch for you. The voucher must be able to prove their identity and address. A person can vouch for only one person (except in long-term care facilities).

### What if I forgot to register in advance?

- You can register when you go to vote
  - at any Elections Canada office across Canada
    - Go to any Elections Canada office before the Tuesday before election day at 6:00 p.m. Be sure to bring accepted ID.
  - at your assigned polling station
    - Go to your assigned polling station on election day or on an advance polling day. Be sure to bring accepted ID.

### What if I'm working all day on election day?

You can get time off from work to vote in a federal election on election day. By law, eligible electors must have three consecutive hours to cast their vote on election day. If your hours of work do not allow for three consecutive hours to vote, **your employer must give you time off** without any penalties or pay deductions.

### Can I get help marking my ballot?

- Yes. If you need help marking your ballot, you can bring someone to help you or ask an election worker for assistance. Just let an election worker know if you brought someone to help you or if you need assistance.
- If you bring a helper, they will be required to make a solemn declaration to make sure they respect the secrecy of your vote. The deputy returning officer will administer the declaration.

- 
- If you do not have a trusted helper, an election worker can help you mark your ballot. This will always be done in the presence of another election worker. In these situations, no one else may be present.
  - A relative, spouse or partner may assist more than one elector. A friend or helper may assist only one elector (and they will have to make a solemn declaration swearing that they have assisted only one person).
  - A person who assists you does not need to be an eligible elector (An eligible elector is a Canadian citizen who is at least 18 years old.)

### **What if I have a vision impairment? What if I forget my glasses at home?**

In 2019, the ballot was redesigned to be larger than before to make it easier to handle and read. To improve readability, we have made the background grey instead of black, increased the font sizes and replaced dots with dashes.

Your polling station will also have many tools to make voting easier for everyone, including people who are blind or who have vision impairment.

These tools include:

- Ballot with candidate names in large print
- tactile and Braille voting templates
- the list of candidates in large print and Braille
- magnifiers

**Note:** Braille lists of candidates are only available on election day. Large print is available on advance polling days and on election day.

### **Can I bring my own assistive device when voting?**

Yes. You may use an assistive device when voting, such as your own pencil to mark the ballot, or a personal mobile device, such as a smart phone, to read the ballot behind the voting screen. Since 2019, the ballot has been redesigned to be easier to read using a screen reader on your smart phone or other device.

### **Can I bring a support animal?**

Yes. You can probably bring your support animal to most polling stations. In some exceptional cases, local laws might regulate the presence of service animals in public spaces. To find out whether your service animal will be permitted in your polling station, contact your [Elections Canada office](#) .

### What if I don't speak or read English or French?

We can usually get you an interpreter to help you vote, if you ask ahead of time. The deadline to ask for interpretation services is the Tuesday before election day at 6:00 p.m.. If you require service in a language other than English or French,

- visit [elections.ca](https://elections.ca) for voting information in multiple languages
- call **1-800-463-6868**: we offer language interpretation services by phone
- call your nearest Elections Canada office ahead of time to request language interpretation at your assigned polling station on election day.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

You are not allowed to take photos inside a polling station, including selfies and photos of your ballot. Electors with a visual impairment can use their smart phones or devices to verify the accuracy of their marking using screen readers. If you want to share your voting experience on social media, you can always take a selfie outside the polling station.

## Step 3: Make a plan

Now that you know about all the registering and voting options that are available, you can start **making a plan to help your community register and vote!**

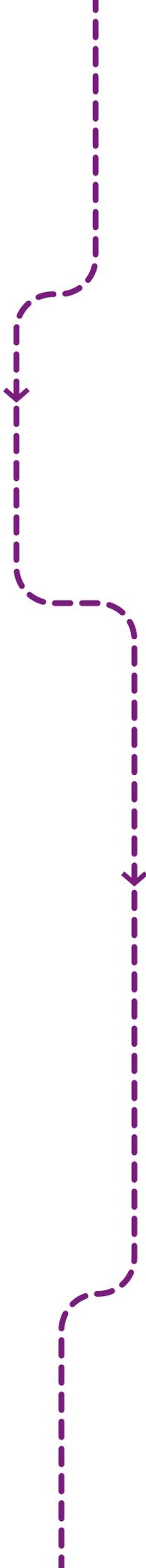
A good plan is an important step when trying to organize activities in your community. It is even more important during a pandemic. We recommend sharing information early and digitally wherever possible, especially when engaging with more vulnerable electors who may be at higher risk of exposure to COVID-19. Activities can include: engaging with audiences digitally, putting up posters, handing out Voter Information Campaign products at your community centre, sharing social media messages and organizing an information session or an election simulation like Vote PopUp. Don't forget to set your goals for each activity. It's always a good idea to have some calls to action for your community members, too!

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

One of the most effective tools in [enhancing voter participation](#) is encouraging someone to vote or asking someone to volunteer to help.

### **Finding people who may be interested in helping**

- When making your plan, start by identifying the people who might want to help you. For example, it is always good to have people on your team who could help with logistics or communications to your community.
- Look for people who are active on social media. They can help you get the word out to your community members.
- Individuals who were active in engaging your community during the last general election or in provincial elections may have recommendations and best practices to share with you.
- Once an election is called, you may want to contact the returning officer at the Elections Canada office in your riding. If you want to bring a group to vote at an Elections Canada office, let the returning officer know ahead of time. The returning officer is responsible for organizing and administering federal elections in their riding and for hiring all the election workers in their riding. [Find your riding](#).
- Once an election is called, the returning officer can put you in touch with a community relations officer. This person is responsible for sharing information with specific communities that face barriers in the riding.



## How can I help my community members with registering and voting?

There are many ways to help get your community members ready. Remember to review the information from the previous section and all the other tools that are available at your fingertips like the [Voter's Checklist](#).

Here are a few suggestions:

- Make sure people have the right identification. Tell them about the [list of ID options](#) that are available to all Canadians.
- Many groups that face barriers to the voting process are unaware of the early voting services that are offered during a federal election. When engaging your community, make sure you let them know there are many ways to vote. You can find all the [voting options in Toolkit 3](#).
- Help people register to vote using the [Online Registration Service](#). You can set up a place or an online meeting where they can register online for an election with your guidance. If there are any problems, find out [how to troubleshoot](#) or call Elections Canada for help. If someone you are helping has trouble registering online, help them [apply to vote by mail](#) or contact the Elections Canada office in their riding during an election.
- If members of your community are not familiar with the voting process, consider running a [Vote PopUp](#). This is a great way to explain the voting process.

## When should I start these activities?

- Start helping your community members register or helping them check their registration before an election is called by using the [Online Voter Registration Service](#).
- More products will be available on the Elections Canada website once an election is called.
- We have [tools](#) to help you decide what to say and when to say it.
- It's a good idea to review the [electoral calendar](#). This calendar typically begins 36 days before a federal election and contains all the dates your community needs to know about. If an election is called earlier than usual, the calendar could be up to 50 days.



## Step 4: Carry out your plan

You have the tools and a plan to address some of the information barriers that your community may face when it comes to registering and voting. Now you need to put them into action.

When carrying out your plan to engage your community members on registering and voting, you may want to [connect with us](#) to get information products to hand out during your event. There are both [print](#) and [digital](#) tools you can use. Remember, we have many tools to help you on your journey to engage your community: you're not alone! We suggest that you check the [Inspire Democracy website](#) regularly, as new resources will be available in the months before a general election.



## Step 5: Tell us how it went

Elections Canada wants to hear from you!

Tell us how we can better engage with your community during the next election:

- Share your story with us: [tell us about your community's journey \(and your own\) to the ballot box](#).
- Was the information in these toolkits helpful?
- What did you like?
- What could we improve?
- Inspire Democracy is always looking for people who are inspired by democracy! [Stay connected with us by being a part of Inspire Democracy's network](#).

For more information, [contact us](#).