8. Accessible Voting

To learn more about accessible voting, visit the Elections Canada page on accessible voting (français).

Building Accessibility

A) What is an “accessible” polling station?

Elections Canada has a video and transcript about building accessibility at the polling station (ASL version).

If a polling station is labeled “accessible”, this means it has met 15 mandatory criteria set by Elections Canada:

● Exterior (outside building)
  ○ There must be no obstacles on the pathway to the polling station.
  ○ The pathway to the polling station must be at least 36” wide.
  ○ There must be step-free access to the polling station.
  ○ There must be good exterior lighting.
  ○ There cannot be any protruding objects at the entrance to the polling station.

● Entrance
  ○ The door to the entrance must be at least 32” wide.
  ○ The door threshold must be a maximum 1/4” tall.
  ○ The door to the polling station must not be too heavy to open.

● Interior (inside building)
○ Any doors inside the polling station must be at least 32” wide.
○ The doors inside the polling must not be too heavy to open.
○ The door thresholds inside must be a maximum 1/4" tall.
○ The corridors inside the polling place must be at least 36”.
○ There must not be any protruding objects inside the polling station.
○ The voting room and the entrance must be on the same level.
○ The interior lighting must work.

B) How do I check if my polling station is accessible?

1. You can check on your voter information card if you received one. Accessible polling/voting stations are labeled with an accessibility (wheelchair user) symbol ⚙.
2. You can check online by entering your postal code in the Voter Information Service. This website will tell you which of the 15 mandatory criteria your polling station meets.
3. You can contact Elections Canada to ask:
   ○ Phone: 1-800-463-6868
   ○ TTY: 1-800-361-8935 (TTY)
   ○ Elections Canada can accept Video Relay Service (VRS) calls
   ○ Hours: 7:00 a.m. to midnight (Eastern Time), everyday
   ○ Contact form and information page
Voting Tools and Services

Elections Canada has a video and transcript about services offered at the polling station (ASL version).

- **Polling stations will have:**
  - Large print/braille list of candidates at the polling station
  - Magnifiers with a light
  - Large-grip pencil
  - Braille and tactical voting templates
  - Signature guides (in case you need to sign your name)
- Elections Canada has increased the ballot since the last election. You find more information about the ballot size on the Elections Canada website.
- Voting screens do not have an overheard cover anymore; this will let in more light.

- You can have services to help you vote:
  - Help to mark your ballot
    - You can bring a support person (such as a family member, friend, personal support worker, or intervener). They will have to take an oath.
    - You can ask an election worker to help you. A second election worker will be there too, to witness.
  - Sign language interpretation
You need to request sign language interpretation by Tuesday, September 14 at 6 PM:

- Fill out the online form
- Phone: 1-800-463-6868
- TTY: 1-800-361-8935

Help to prove your identity

- Someone else can vouch for your identity. They have to be an eligible elector assigned to your polling station. They can only vouch for one person.
- If you’re living in a seniors’ residence or long-term care facility, a worker may vouch for more than one person.

C) How do I give feedback on my polling station’s accessibility?

- You can give feedback to the election worker at the polling station.
- You can fill out the feedback form online or in person.

Information for People with Sensory Sensitivities

- It may be loud in the polling station.
  - You can bring earplugs, earphones, or ear-defenders.
  - Polling stations are less busy during working hours (9:00 AM-5:00 PM local time), except lunch hour (12:00 PM-1:00 PM).
○ You may be provided with a sharpie to vote that has a strong scent. You can ask for something that smells less strongly.
○ Some polling stations may use fluorescent lighting.

● Line-Ups:
○ There may be a long line to vote at times.
○ Mid-morning and mid-afternoon tend to be less busy.
○ If the polling station looks too busy, try coming back later if possible.
○ You can also consider voting in advance or by mail to give yourself more time and options to vote.

Getting to the Polling Station

● If you are having trouble going to the polling station, here are some things you can do:
  ○ Ask a friend or family member to drive you / carpool
  ○ Some organizations (including candidates) may be offering rides to polling stations on election day. You do not need to vote for a candidate if they help provide rides. You can check their website or contact them to ask.
  ○ Vote earlier if an advance polling station is easier to go to
  ○ Vote at an Elections Office
  ○ Vote by mail
  ○ Request a transfer to a different polling station by contacting Elections Canada
Additional Accessibility Resources

- Information for People with Disabilities
- Accessible Polling Places
- List of Services Offered at Polling Stations
- Full Accessibility Criteria List
- Information in Alternative Formats