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a guide for the conduct of mobile polls

thank you for hosting a
mobile poll!



What Is A Mobile Poll?

It is a means for voters who are resident in:

- ◆ a treatment centre that provides medical care on an inpatient basis (such as a hospital or nursing home), or
- ◆ a supportive living facility (such as a seniors' lodge)

to vote within the facility on Polling Day.

A mobile poll is established by the Returning Officer in each facility that is deemed appropriate, after consultation with the facility administrators. A mobile poll may be established only in facilities with ten or more residents or inpatients who are qualified voters.

A mobile poll adapts to the needs of the residents. It may be set up in a central location, or may travel from room to room, or may provide both of these services. The decision will be made by the Returning Officer in consultation with the facility administrators, to ensure residents' needs are met.

Who Is Eligible To Vote At A Mobile Poll?

All qualified voters within the facility where a mobile poll has been established are eligible to vote at the mobile poll.

Qualified voters are:

- ◆ Canadian citizens,
- ◆ at least 18 years of age on Polling Day, and
- ◆ ordinarily resident in Alberta for the six months immediately preceding Polling Day.

Inpatients in a treatment centre must be considered, in the opinion of facility staff, to be well enough to vote. It is important that this determination is made by facility staff and not by election officers.

All residents and inpatients are deemed to be ordinarily resident in the facility. That means that they are entitled to vote for the candidates who are contesting the election in the electoral division in which the facility is located.

An inpatient of a treatment centre may prefer to vote for the candidates in the electoral division in which his or her home is located. The voter is allowed by law to do that, but is responsible for contacting the Returning Officer in his or her own electoral division to obtain a Special Ballot. It is the responsibility of the voter to make arrangements for the pick-up and return of the Special Ballot with the Returning Officer. The Special Ballot must be returned to the Returning Officers' office by 8 p.m. Most inpatients choose to vote at the mobile poll established within the facility.

Residents of supportive living facilities may vote at the mobile poll or at the voting place established for the area in which the facility is located. Most residents choose to vote at the mobile poll established within the facility.

Who Is Allowed To Be Present At A Mobile Poll?

By legislation, the following individuals are allowed to be present during the conduct of a mobile poll:

- ◆ the deputy returning officer,
- ◆ the poll clerk,
- ◆ the Returning Officer or election clerk,
- ◆ an interpreter,
- ◆ a member of the staff of the treatment centre or supportive living facility, and
- ◆ each candidate or the candidate's official agent or scrutineer.

However, it is recognized that it may not be appropriate to allow this number of individuals to be present in a mobile poll established in a treatment centre, particularly if the poll is moving from room to room. On the recommendation of a member of the treatment centre staff, the deputy returning officer may limit the individuals present to:

- ◆ the deputy returning officer,
- ◆ the poll clerk,
- ◆ an interpreter, and
- ◆ a member of the treatment centre staff.

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When Will A Mobile Poll Be Available?

A mobile poll will be available on Polling Day. The hours of the mobile poll will be determined by the Returning Officer, in consultation with the facility administrators.

How Does The Mobile Poll Process Work?

It's as easy as 1-2-3 — just Arrange, Advise and Accompany!

1) Arrange the Time and Location

Arrange the mobile poll hours and location with the Returning Officer. Discuss any concerns you may have, including any particular challenges you feel resident or inpatient voters may experience. Since you are most familiar with your client group, your expertise is valuable to ensure that adequate time is available for the conduct of the poll and that the location will accommodate all interested voters.

2) Advise Residents or Inpatients

Advise resident or inpatient voters that a mobile poll will be established within the facility on Polling Day. Advise them in advance of the location and the hours of operation. This may be done by posting the notice provided by the Returning Officer. You may direct voters' questions on the mobile poll or voting process to the Returning Officer.

3) Accompany the Election Officers on Polling Day

It is helpful if a staff member is available during the conduct of the mobile poll. This will help to ensure that all interested voters are able to participate, and that the conduct of the mobile poll does not interfere with facility operations. The deputy returning officer and poll clerk will arrive with a ballot box, ballots, and all other necessary material.

The following process will be followed:

Treatment centres - voters will be asked to complete an Oath of Treatment Centre Resident, since no List of Electors is available for these facilities. A ballot will be provided to the voter once the Oath has been completed. In these facilities, the poll generally travels from room to room.

Supportive living facilities - voters whose names appear on the List of Electors will be provided with a ballot. Voters whose names do not appear on the List of Electors will be asked to complete the Oath of Elector prior to receiving a ballot. Completion of the Oath requires that voters provide two pieces of identification. In these facilities, a poll is generally established in a central location. The poll may also travel from room to room to facilitate the voting process for voters who may be unable to visit the stationary poll.

At the close of the mobile poll, an official of the facility will be asked to sign the Poll Book to confirm that the persons listed are residents or inpatients.

It Works!

The mobile poll effectively accommodates voters who may have difficulty travelling to the regular polling place established for the election, or who may find it impossible to do so.

Every election, thousands of voters vote at mobile polls. This is accomplished with the cooperation of facility administrators who assist election officers in providing this important service to voters. This brochure is intended to provide general information about the conduct of mobile polls, and to thank the facility administrators who help to ensure that the process meets the needs of the residents or inpatients in their care.