

# 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 electors who are resident in:

- a treatment centre that provides medical care on an in-patient 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 officials. A mobile poll may be established in facilities with ten or more residents or in-patients who are electors.

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 officials, to ensure residents' needs are met.

## Who is Eligible to Vote at a Mobile Poll?

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

Qualified electors 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.

In-patients in a treatment centre must be considered, in the opinion of facility officials, to be well enough to vote. It is important that this determination is made by facility officials and not by election officers or scrutineers.

All residents and in-patients 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 in-patient of a treatment centre may prefer to vote for the candidates in the electoral division in which his or her home is located. The elector 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 elector to make arrangements with the returning officer for the pick-up and return of the Special Ballot. The Special Ballot must be returned to the returning officer's office by 8 p.m. on polling day. Most in-patients 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 polling 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.

## 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 officials.

## 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 in-patient electors 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 electors.

### 2) Advise residents or in-patients

Advise resident or in-patient electors 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 electors' 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 electors 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** – electors will be asked to complete a Mobile Poll Oath. A ballot will be provided to the elector once the oath has been completed. In these facilities, the poll generally travels from room to room.

(section 123(2)(a))

**Supportive living facilities** – electors whose names appear on the List of Electors will be provided with a ballot. Electors whose names do not appear on the List of Electors will be asked to complete a Mobile Poll Oath prior to receiving a ballot. 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 electors who may be unable to visit the stationary poll.

At the close of the mobile poll, an official of the facility shall be asked to sign the poll book to confirm that the persons listed are residents or in-patients.

(section 123(4))

## It Works!

The mobile poll effectively accommodates electors 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 electors vote at mobile polls. This is accomplished with the cooperation of facility staff who assist election officers in providing this important service to electors. This brochure is intended to provide general information about the conduct of mobile polls, and to thank the facility staff who help to ensure that the process meets the needs of the residents or in-patients in their care.