



Tabulators and Voter Assist Terminals

Additional Information for Media

Elections Alberta will be using tabulators to conduct the count for ballots cast at advance voting places in the 2023 Provincial General Election, with hand counts being used for all Special Ballot, Election Day, and Mobile Voting Places.

Returning for 2023, advance voting places will again offer the *Vote Anywhere Service*, which means that any elector in the province can show up at any advance voting place and receive the ballot for their electoral division. With 87 electoral divisions, tabulators are an essential component to managing the count of those ballots and the ability to report all results on election night.

In 2019, the “vote anywhere” ballots were transported back to Elections Alberta where they were counted by high-speed tabulators, with results delayed for three days. For 2023, tabulators in the advance voting places are being utilized for several reasons:

- Eliminates the need to package and transport the ballots for the count in Edmonton,
- Provides transparency for electors on how ballots are being counted,
- Allows Elections Alberta to offer voter assist terminals at voting places, and
- Allows the full reporting of results on election night.

Statistics

	Number of Advance Voting Places	Number of Voters who Voted in Advance	Number of Voters using the Vote Anywhere Service (voting outside their home electoral division)
2019	291	700,476	235,745
2023	330	Estimated: 700,000 to 1 million	Estimated: > 300,000

Assets and Resources

- For more information about Voter Assist Terminals, visit elections.ab.ca/voters/accessible-voting/
- The Advance Voting Directive and additional details on tabulators is available [here](#)
- Photo and video assets of tabulators and voter assist terminals will be available starting the week of May 8.

Commonly Asked Questions

What is a tabulator?

A tabulator is a vote counting device. It scans a paper ballot to determine how the ballot was marked and records that vote. The results are generated from the tabulator once voting closes at 8 PM on election night.

What is a voter assist terminal?

A voter assist terminal is a ballot marking device that allows an elector to insert the same paper ballot issued to all electors into the device and follow on-screen or audio prompts to make their candidate selection. The voter assist terminal then marks the paper ballot for the elector and provides the ballot back to the elector to confirm their selection and deposit in the tabulator for counting.

What company will provide the tabulators and voter assist terminals being used?

Elections Alberta has contracted Election Systems & Software to supply the model DS200 tabulators and AutoMark devices for the 2023 Provincial General Election.

How does Elections Alberta know these devices are accurate and count ballots correctly?

There are multiple safeguards to ensure that the tabulator is counting the ballots as intended by electors and the voter assist terminal is marking ballots as intended by the elector, these include:

- **Logic and Accuracy Testing:** All tabulators and voter assist terminals undergo logic and accuracy testing before and after use in an advance voting place.

For tabulators, the logic and accuracy process entails running a test deck of ballots through the tabulator to ensure that it records the intended results. The test deck includes a ballot marked for every candidate in every electoral division.

For voter assist terminals, the logic and accuracy process entails marking ballots using each of the input methods and confirming that the ballot is marked in the correct location.

Logic and accuracy testing is completed in the presence of candidates or their scrutineers and is repeated after the advance vote results are reported to demonstrate that no changes in the programming of the equipment occurred while it was in use.

A paper copy of the testing results is retained and made available to candidates or their scrutineers. For more details about this process please see Appendix B of the Advance Voting Directive: <https://www.elections.ab.ca/elections/albertas-nextelection/advance-voting-directive/>

- **Security:** Strict security measures are in place to protect the tabulators and voter assist terminals in transport to and from the advance voting places, during advance voting, and overnight between advance voting days.
- **Paper Ballot:** Electors will vote at advance voting places by personally marking a paper ballot.

Completed ballots will be placed in the tabulator, which will read and scan the ballot, tabulate the results, and deposit the paper ballot into the ballot box. All paper ballots are preserved, in accordance with legislation, for a minimum of 3 months after Election Day.

Voter assist terminals mark a paper ballot, and the elector confirms that the ballot is marked as intended before it is deposited in the tabulator.

- **No Network Connections:** The tabulator and voter assist terminal is not part of and is never connected to a network.

What options do electors have if they want their ballot to be hand counted?

While each vote is counted as intended by the elector at any of our voting places, if electors prefer their ballot to be hand counted, they are welcome to vote on Election Day at their assigned voting location.

Where to Vote cards will provide the location, or electors can visit map.elections.ab.ca to find their assigned voting location. For more information about the voting process, visit elections.ab.ca/voters/how-to-vote/.

Has Elections Alberta used tabulators in the past?

Elections Alberta has used tabulators in three election events:

1. At advance voting places for the October 27, 2014, by-elections for Edmonton-Whitemud, Calgary-West, Calgary-Foothills and Calgary-Elbow.

The Chief Electoral Officer's report on those by-elections provides information about the equipment used and results on pages 3 and 5. The report is available here:

https://www.elections.ab.ca/uploads/145862_Elections_AB_report_2014_web.pdf

2. At advance voting places and Election Day voting for the December 14, 2017, by-election for Calgary-Lougheed.

The Chief Electoral Officer's report on the by-election provides information about the equipment used (pg. 4) as well as feedback about use of tabulators (pg. 9-10). The report is available here:

<https://www.elections.ab.ca/uploads/2017-Calgary-Lougheed-By-Election-Report.pdf>

3. During the 2019 Provincial General Election all "vote anywhere" ballots cast across the province during advance voting were couriered post-Election Day to Elections Alberta headquarters. These ballots were counted using high-speed tabulators.

The Chief Electoral Officer's report on the Provincial General Election provides information about the equipment used, including a picture of the equipment on page 8 and more information on the centralized count process on page 39. The report is available here:

<https://www.elections.ab.ca/uploads/Volume-1-2019-Provincial-General-Election-Report.pdf>

Can media arrange a time to collect their own photo/video footage of a tabulator?

The tabulators will be in use during Advance Voting. Media may collect their own footage of tabulators in use at that time. Arrangements must be made in advance with the Returning Officer. Advance Voting is taking place May 23 - 27, 2023, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For a list of returning officers and their contact information, visit <https://elections.ab.ca/current-election-information/returning-offices/>

For additional guidelines on media visits to voting places, visit elections.ab.ca/resources/media/media-visits/