



Office of the
Chief Electoral Officer
of Canada



**Report on the
45th General Election of
April 28, 2025**



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Le directeur général des élections • The Chief Electoral Officer



September 15, 2025

The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia, M.P.
Speaker of the House of Commons
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
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Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am pleased to provide the *Report on the 45th General Election of April 28, 2025*. I have prepared the report in accordance with subsection 534(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*, S.C. 2000, c. 9. Under section 536 of the Act, the Speaker shall submit this report to the House of Commons without delay. The report is referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

I request that you table this document on September 15, 2025.

The official voting results will be published in the coming months, in accordance with section 533 of the Act.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Stéphane Perrault".

Stéphane Perrault
Chief Electoral Officer



Table of Contents

Foreword	1
1. Preparing for the General Election	3
Implementing the New Electoral Map	3
Improving Services for Indigenous Electors	4
Enhancing Services for Young Electors	6
Detecting and Addressing Inaccurate Information	6
2. Delivering the General Election	8
Issue of the Writs	8
Local Elections Canada Offices.....	8
National Register of Electors.....	8
Recruitment and Training	9
Recruitment and Training in Indigenous Communities	11
Polling Places	12
Accessibility at the Polls.....	13
Informing Electors	14
Voter Information Cards.....	14
Guide to the Federal Election.....	16
Voter Information Campaign	16
Website.....	17
Voting Services	18
Voting by Special Ballot	19
Voting at Advance Polls and on Election Day.....	23
Voting at Mobile Polls	24
Voting in Indigenous Communities.....	24
Complaints.....	27
Candidates.....	28
Third Party Participation.....	29
Electoral Security and Addressing Inaccurate Information.....	30
Electoral Integrity	31
Environmental Monitoring	32
Physical Security.....	32
Weather Events	33
3. Closing the General Election	35
Counting and Validation of Election Results	35
Counting Ballots in Carleton (Ontario).....	36
Challenges with Special Ballot Voting	36
Validation of Results	37
Judicial Recounts	38
Contested Elections	40



Paying Election Workers	40
Estimated Cost of the Election	40
Appendix A	42
National Register of Electors	42
Coverage, Currency and Accuracy of the Register.....	42
Initiatives to Improve the Register	43
Online Registration	44
Appendix B	45
Adaptations Made Pursuant to Subsection 17(1) of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> During the 45th General Election	45
Appendix C	53
Instructions Issued Pursuant to Section 179 of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i>	53
Endnotes	64





Foreword

On March 23, 2025, Parliament was dissolved, and writs were issued for the 45th general election, with election day on April 28. Ultimately, some 19.8 million Canadians, or 69 percent of registered electors, would cast a ballot, marking the highest turnout since the 35th general election in 1993 and a substantial increase from the 63 percent turnout in the 44th general election. Of the 19.8 million Canadians who voted, 8.7 million, or approximately 44 percent, voted before election day, the highest number in any Canadian election.

In preparing for this election, Elections Canada focused on four key priorities: implementing the new federal electoral boundaries, removing voting barriers for First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, removing voting barriers for young electors through the Vote on Campus program and countering false or misleading information about the electoral process. While each aspect of this work presented its own challenges, the agency was largely successful in increasing its service offerings and, ultimately, served a record number of electors.

The 45th general election marked the first general election conducted under the federal electoral boundaries that had been created following the 2022 redistribution process. Nearly every electoral district in Canada was affected, requiring significant updates to electoral maps, voting services and public communications. These changes introduced a range of operational challenges that required early planning and close coordination with returning officers, and they were magnified by the unpredictability of a minority government context. From updating electoral geography systems to notifying millions of Canadians about changes to their electoral districts and where their assigned polling places might be, Elections Canada focused on ensuring that all electors had the information and support they needed to vote.

Ahead of the election, returning officers were tasked with engaging directly with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities across the country to work together to plan more in-community advance and election day voting services. The agency also increased the number of outreach materials available in Indigenous languages. While most planned services were delivered as intended, I deeply regret that some electors in Nunavik and other northern communities were unable to vote where polling places did not operate as planned. Further strengthening relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, and working to ensure that the electoral process is inclusive and welcoming to all those who wish to participate, will continue to be a priority for the agency.

Recognizing the barriers that some students face in accessing the vote, Elections Canada also implemented, for the first time outside a fixed-date general election, its Vote on Campus program. This involved working closely with post-secondary institutions to offer convenient voting options on or near campuses, thus facilitating civic engagement and participation among younger Canadians.

Like other democracies, Canada continues to face emerging and evolving threats, such as disinformation, foreign interference and cybersecurity risks. In the [final report from the Public Inquiry Into Foreign Interference](#),¹ published on January 28, 2025, Commissioner

Hogue wrote that “information manipulation (whether foreign or not) poses the single biggest risk to our democracy. It is an existential threat.” In preparing for this election, Elections Canada developed a range of strategies and information products to address inaccurate information about the electoral process. Throughout the election period, Elections Canada worked closely with security partners and other stakeholders to monitor and protect the integrity of the election: no incidents of interference were found to have impacted the administration of the event. Nonetheless, the agency remains committed to continuously strengthening the security and resilience of Canada’s electoral system.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of the over 230,000 Canadians across the country who played a vital role in making the 45th general election possible. Their dedication ensured that Canadians could exercise their democratic rights to vote and run for office.



Stéphane Perrault
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada



1. Preparing for the General Election

In the lead-up to the 45th general election, Elections Canada focused on maintaining the strength of its electoral process, while identifying opportunities to improve services to better meet the needs of electors. The agency prioritized four key areas of work with a direct impact on the accessibility, integrity and inclusiveness of the election:

- ▶ Implementing the new electoral map of 343 electoral districts.
- ▶ Improving voting services for First Nations, Inuit and Métis electors by removing barriers and ensuring that the electoral process is inclusive and accessible for those who wish to participate.
- ▶ Enhancing voting services for young electors by delivering the Vote on Campus program for the first time outside a fixed-date general election.
- ▶ Strengthening the agency's ability to detect and address inaccurate information in the environment.

Implementing the New Electoral Map

The [*Constitution Acts 1867 to 1982*](#)ⁱⁱ require that the number of seats in the House of Commons be recalculated, and the boundaries of federal electoral districts reviewed, after each decennial census to reflect the changes and movements of Canada's population.

The new map of 343 electoral districtsⁱ was set out in [two representation orders](#),ⁱⁱⁱ which were proclaimed on September 22, 2023, and came into effect upon the dissolution of Parliament, and when the writs for the 45th general election were issued on March 23, 2025.

An important component of implementing the new map involved appointing returning officers for each of the 343 electoral districts. While many of these were already returning officers whom the Chief Electoral Officer simply reappointed to revised districts, 36 percent were new to the role, and they required targeted support and onboarding to ensure that they were prepared to deliver electoral services.

Significant efforts were also required to update systems, tools and training materials to reflect the revised boundaries. This included collaborating with returning officers to establish new polling divisions² and identifying potential polling places for each division that were accessible, appropriately located and capable of serving the needs of electors.

¹ The total seat count increased from 338 to 343. One seat was added in Ontario, three seats were added in Alberta and one seat was added in British Columbia.

² A polling division is a small geographic section of an electoral district for which a list of electors is prepared and a polling station set up on election day. There are roughly 180 polling divisions per electoral district, and each polling division has roughly 375 electors. In rural areas, one polling division may cover an entire town; in urban settings, there may be one polling division for a high-rise building.

In parallel with these internal preparations, Elections Canada worked closely with political entities to support their transition to the new boundaries. As part of these efforts, the agency delivered 12 information sessions to political parties, explaining the implications of redistribution for electoral district associations and nomination contests. Comprehensive updates were also made to the [Elections Canada website](#)^{iv} to provide information for both the public and political entities. These updates included clear explanations of how redistribution would affect registration processes and financial reporting obligations.

Through this work, Elections Canada ensured that the federal electoral system reflected Canada's evolving population and geography. By supporting returning officers, updating operational tools and engaging political entities, the agency helped ensure that electoral services were delivered consistently and effectively across all electoral districts.

Improving Services for Indigenous Electors

Enabling participation for First Nations, Inuit and Métis electors who wish to take part in Canadian democracy is part of Elections Canada's mission—to ensure that all Canadians can exercise their democratic rights to vote and be a candidate. As part of its preparations for the 45th general election, Elections Canada emphasized reducing barriers by customizing outreach initiatives, increasing access to services and resources in Indigenous languages and developing voting options designed in collaboration with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities.

This work was informed by feedback received directly from First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and captured in the report [Taking Steps Toward Truth and Reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Wishing to Participate in Federal Elections](#),^v which was published in November 2024. The report reflects the agency's engagement with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities in both urban and remote areas across the country. These discussions helped identify persistent barriers to electoral participation, including the generational impacts of colonialism causing a lack of trust, proof of identification and residency, and each community's unique linguistic and cultural reality. The report also underscored the importance of building and maintaining long-term relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, ensuring consistent engagement between elections and improving outreach and communication strategies.

To address some of these findings ahead of the 45th general election, Elections Canada implemented several immediate enhancements, including:

- ▶ Providing cultural training to returning officers and field liaison officers.
- ▶ Mandating returning officers to engage with community leaders in the two years leading up to the general election. Wherever possible, meetings took place in person and focused on hearing about local challenges and planning voting services to meet community needs. These services included selecting familiar sites for polling places and recruiting community members to serve as election workers.

- ▶ As part of a pilot project launched in November 2022 in Northwestern Ontario, hiring an Indigenous education coordinator with strong roots in the region and deep knowledge of local communities to lead civic education activities across six electoral districts.³ The relationships established and maintained through this initiative were key to enabling local Elections Canada offices to deliver services that reflected the needs and expectations of those communities.
- ▶ Offering flexible [advance polls for remote, isolated and low-density communities](#),^{vi} allowing for options tailored to their size and needs.
- ▶ Increasing the use of written and spoken Indigenous languages with new and expanded tools and materials, including radio advertisements,⁴ a new [Community Leader Handbook for Indigenous Electors](#),^{vii} “when and where to vote” posters, infographics on voter ID requirements⁵ and a series of [explainer videos](#)^{viii} on the voting process, what to expect at the polls and how to work as a poll worker.⁶
- ▶ Engaging in proactive outreach through Indigenous media, new Indigenous social media tools and a dedicated section for First Nations, Inuit and Métis electors on the [Elections Canada website](#).^{ix}
- ▶ Providing ongoing support for teachers and students through the Civic Education program, which includes Indigenous perspectives and stories to promote a better understanding of Canada’s democratic process.

Beyond these improvements, Elections Canada continued to provide a range of ongoing services designed to reduce barriers for First Nations, Inuit and Métis electors. [Community relations officers](#)^x played a critical role in this effort by working directly with Indigenous leaders to provide information on when, where and ways to register and vote. These officers helped facilitate communication between local Elections Canada offices and First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, fostering trust and ensuring that electors had the information they needed to fully participate in the democratic process.

Elections Canada also collaborated with eight Indigenous organizations, including the [Assembly of First Nations](#),^{xi} to share critical election information. These partnerships aimed to ensure that First Nations, Inuit and Métis electors had the information they needed to make informed decisions, including details on voter registration, voting options, polling place locations, voter ID requirements, vouching, candidate information and job opportunities with Elections Canada.

Together, these efforts aimed to improve the experience of First Nations, Inuit and Métis electors and remove some of the systemic barriers that have historically limited participation. While challenges remain, this work contributed to more inclusive electoral services during the 45th general election, and it provides a foundation for continued progress.

³ Kenora–Kiiwetinoong, Thunder Bay–Rainy River, Thunder Bay–Superior North, Kapuskasing–Timmins–Mushkegowuk, Sudbury East–Manitoulin–Nickel Belt and Sault Ste. Marie–Algoma.

⁴ The ads were in 14 Indigenous languages.

⁵ These were available in 16 Indigenous languages.

⁶ The videos were in 13 Indigenous languages.

Enhancing Services for Young Electors

Elections Canada has consistently worked to improve access to voting for young Canadians, who historically vote at lower rates than older demographics. Research shows that youth aged 18 to 34 face unique barriers to participation—including lower motivation, limited access to voting information and transitional life circumstances such as education and employment.

Elections Canada's [research](#)^{xii} also highlights that voting is habit-forming: those who vote in their first eligible election are more likely to become lifelong voters. These findings underscore the importance of targeted outreach and accessible voting options to help close the participation gap and build a more inclusive democracy.

As part of its efforts to address these challenges, the agency launched the [Vote on Campus program](#)^{xiii} in 2015, offering students and campus communities convenient registration and voting options. The initiative quickly proved effective, leading to an expanded rollout in 2019; however, the program was suspended in 2021 due to pandemic-related logistical constraints and the unpredictability of a minority government.

To enhance voting services for young electors ahead of the 45th general election, Elections Canada reinstated the Vote on Campus program and incorporated it into its permanent suite of services. This election also marked an important milestone: it was the first time the program had been implemented during an election without a fixed date. Delivering this initiative under such conditions demanded close collaboration with post-secondary institutions, along with agile planning and swift decision-making once the writs had been issued.

By placing voting services directly in post-secondary institutions, the Vote on Campus program allows Elections Canada to meet young electors where they are—both physically and in terms of their everyday routines. These sites provide convenient, familiar and accessible locations that reflect the agency's commitment to reducing barriers for young electors. This tailored approach not only promotes greater civic engagement among youth but also reinforces Elections Canada's efforts to modernize its outreach and adapt to the evolving needs of Canada's electorate.

Detecting and Addressing Inaccurate Information

Canada's democratic institutions operate within a dynamic and increasingly complex threat environment—one shaped by technological change, transnational risks and the evolving tactics of those who seek to undermine public trust. Safeguarding electoral integrity demands a multi-faceted approach rooted in vigilance, collaboration and adaptability. Recent assessments—such as the [Communications Security Establishment's 2025 cyber threats report](#)^{xiv} and the [final report from the Public Inquiry Into Foreign Interference](#)^{xv}—underscore the urgency of implementing proactive measures to defend democratic systems. In advance of the 45th general election, Elections Canada strengthened its protective strategies and built on existing partnerships with cybersecurity experts and intelligence agencies. The agency also enhanced its communications and educational programming to strengthen public understanding of the electoral safeguards built into every step of the electoral process.

This effort included making additions to the [Elections and Democracy](#) website,^{xvi} which supports elementary and secondary educators and students. New content on electoral safeguards was added to the [FAQ: Students Asked, We Answered](#) webpage,^{xvii} along with blog posts for teachers that focused on electoral integrity and addressing inaccurate information. Topics included managing the custody of ballot boxes and reprinting voter information cards.

The agency also monitored the information environment, which allowed it to pre-empt and address false narratives. To support this priority, the [ElectoFacts](#)^{xviii} page was launched in February 2024 and updated regularly throughout the election period to correct misleading claims with accurate information directly from Elections Canada. The agency also introduced new and updated digital resources aimed specifically at improving public awareness and building resilience against inaccurate information. These included:

- ▶ A [digital literacy](#) webpage^{xix} to provide practical tips on how to evaluate the accuracy of information online.
- ▶ A webpage on [understanding foreign interference](#)^{xx} that explains what is, and is not, permitted when it comes to participation by non-Canadians in federal elections, presented alongside a user-friendly reference table.
- ▶ Updates to the [Election Integrity and Security](#) webpage^{xxi} to provide more detailed explanations of the safeguards built into every stage of the electoral process, including how potential voting irregularities are detected and addressed after election day.

To broaden the reach and impact of its educational resources, Elections Canada actively shared them across its official social media channels, along with complementary video content, and supported direct engagement across communities through workshops, events and targeted outreach.

Throughout 2024–25, regional education coordinators in Markham, Ontario, and Surrey, British Columbia, delivered educational sessions⁷ to both students and electors. These workshops included information on electoral safeguards and the voting process, and both coordinators also participated in radio interviews conducted in English, Punjabi and Cantonese to help reach diverse audiences. To further strengthen outreach efforts in western Canada, a new regional outreach coordinator was hired in the Edmonton area, significantly boosting the agency’s capacity to deliver in-person outreach events⁸ across Alberta.

By combining proactive communication with targeted education and outreach, Elections Canada aimed to reduce the impact of inaccurate information during the 45th general election and reinforce public confidence in the electoral process.

⁷ Throughout March and April 2025, the regional education coordinator in Markham delivered 126 activities reaching students and electors, including 37 activities for 1,579 participants during the writ period, while the regional education coordinator in Surrey delivered 73 activities to 2,505 participants, including 22 activities for 1,359 participants during the writ period.

⁸ Between September 2024 and April 2025, the regional outreach coordinator in Edmonton delivered 53 events reaching 1,155 people.



2. Delivering the General Election

Issue of the Writs

On March 23, 2025, the Governor General dissolved the 44th Parliament at the request of the Prime Minister, and writs of election were issued for all 343 federal electoral districts. The date for the 45th general election was set by proclamation of the Governor General as April 28, 2025. Advance polls were to be held one week before election day, from April 18 to 21. The election period was 36 days.

The launch of the election was made more complicated by the fact that Elections Canada was still administering a by-election in Halifax (Nova Scotia) at the time the writs for the general election were issued. This required the agency to maintain parallel operational frameworks for two sets of electoral boundaries, thereby limiting the time available to fully transition to the map of 343 electoral districts. Rigorous planning enabled a smooth transition.

Local Elections Canada Offices

The establishment of 492 local offices⁹ across Canada's 343 electoral districts was the first of several operational steps that were critical to the success of the election. Approximately 98 percent of office leases were secured in advance of the writs of election being issued, while the remaining leases were executed within the first three days. Thus, all offices were operational without delay, and no critical time was lost during the initial stages of the electoral process. By initiating lease agreements before the official launch of the election period, Elections Canada was able to address logistical requirements and respond to growing challenges in the real estate sector. These long-standing constraints—including the growing trend of corporate property ownership, which tends to involve more administrative processes, liability considerations and slower turnaround times than agreements with individual landlords, and the declining willingness of property owners to consider short-term leases—have become increasingly impactful, requiring earlier and more strategic engagement.

By securing leases early, Elections Canada ensured that essential services such as voter registration, staffing and community outreach could begin as quickly as possible. This helped returning officers meet tight timelines and ensured that local Elections Canada offices were able to support electors from the beginning of the electoral period.

National Register of Electors

Elections Canada maintains the National Register of Electors, a database of Canadian citizens who are 18 years of age or older. The Register is updated both between and during

⁹ These consisted of 343 offices for returning officers and 149 offices for additional assistant returning officers. A total of 97.9 percent of these offices met all 15 of Elections Canada's mandatory accessibility criteria.

elections using administrative data received either directly from electors or through agreements with federal, provincial and territorial agencies.¹⁰

When an election is called, Elections Canada uses the data in the Register to produce the preliminary lists of electors, which are provided to registered and eligible political parties and to returning officers. Returning officers then provide the lists for their electoral district to the local confirmed candidates, as required by the [Canada Elections Act](#).^{xxii} The preliminary lists are also used to produce voter information cards and as the basis for both the revised lists of electors¹¹ and the official lists of electors.¹²

At the issue of the writs, 95.2 percent of electors were registered, 92.2 percent of them at their current address. Thus, 87.8 percent of all electors were registered at their current address and “ready to vote.” These registration levels are consistent with the averages observed during other non-fixed-date elections. Percentages tend to be slightly higher for fixed-date general elections, which generally allow for more extensive pre-election registration activities. Appendix A provides further details about the Register and the agency’s initiatives to improve its quality.

Recruitment and Training

Elections Canada’s national multimedia recruitment campaign started on March 28, 2025, and lasted until April 26, 2025, with targeted efforts in electoral districts that had faced staffing challenges in previous elections. The campaign prioritized hiring people from their own communities, recognizing that local residents are best positioned to support election delivery in their area. Hiring local workers not only strengthens community engagement but also reduces the risks associated with transporting materials and staff from outside electoral districts, helping to simplify operations and avoid logistical complications. To support this approach, Elections Canada provided a suite of products to community relations officers, returning officers and recruitment agents. These included posters, flyers and other shareable materials, all accessible through the general election website.

Because delivering electoral services is highly manual and labour intensive, securing a large, dependable and local workforce was essential. While not every electoral district reached its hiring target, these efforts contributed to the successful recruitment of over 230,700 people across the country, including approximately 18,900 office staff and 211,800 poll workers.¹³ Of those hired, only some 61,500 had previously worked at a federal general election or by-election.

In parallel with these recruitment efforts, the [Inspire Democracy program](#)^{xxiii} delivered more than 110 workshops in the lead-up to and during the general election using its [Working at a](#)

¹⁰ Elections Canada receives data from the Canada Revenue Agency; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada; the Canadian Armed Forces; most provincial and territorial agencies responsible for driver licensing and vital statistics; and provincial and territorial electoral management bodies.

¹¹ The revised lists of electors are used at advance polls and incorporate changes made to the lists from the start of the election period until just before advance polling days.

¹² The official lists of electors are used at election day polls and incorporate changes made to the revised lists of electors until just before election day.

¹³ These numbers include just over 13,000 poll workers who were trained but did not work during the general election.

[Federal Election](#)^{xxiv} toolkit. These efforts extended into classrooms as well—for the first time, “working at the polls” posters targeting 16- and 17-year-olds were included in all [Student Vote Canada 2025](#)^{xxv} teacher packages. Recruitment messaging aimed at young Canadians was also featured on the [Elections and Democracy](#) website,^{xxvi} which generated 527 visits to the Elections Canada [Employment page](#)^{xxvii} during the writ period. As a result of these efforts, there were just over 14,000 16- and 17-year-olds working across both advance and election day polls.

Across the country, returning officers implemented a range of specific outreach and recruitment activities to engage youth and under-represented communities, adapting standard strategies to fit local needs. In Regina–Lewvan (Saskatchewan), for example, a pilot initiative involved a retired principal and an Elder delivering civic workshops in two high schools with large Indigenous student populations. This outreach led to the successful recruitment of 31 students, who later shared their experiences with classmates, reinforcing the connection between civic learning and democratic participation. A similar approach was taken in Joliette–Manawan (Quebec), where the returning officer worked closely with four local high schools to promote election day employment opportunities. This partnership proved to be enormously successful: the ultimate result was that, of the 212 election day poll workers hired, 165 were 16- and 17-year-olds.

Elections Canada also implemented several measures targeting the recruitment of bilingual workers. These included:

- ▶ Promoting employment opportunities, particularly through the [Inspire Democracy program](#),^{xxviii} in official language minority communities (OLMCs).
- ▶ Contracting the [Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne](#)^{xxix} to conduct targeted outreach among its members; this helped to raise awareness about employment opportunities during the general election, particularly among francophone women.
- ▶ Providing returning officers with information on local and regional organizations representing OLMCs to support efforts to recruit bilingual election workers.
- ▶ Working with returning officers to increase the number of community relations officers for official language minorities, who are responsible for engaging with members of OLMCs and encouraging them to work at federal elections.

To prepare for the possibility of potential staffing shortfalls, Elections Canada implemented mitigation strategies designed to provide flexibility and ensure appropriate staffing levels throughout the election period. As part of these efforts, returning officers were advised to maintain a standby pool representing approximately 30 percent of the total number of poll workers required. This approach allowed them to respond efficiently to staffing needs, particularly during high-demand periods. To further support preparedness, Elections Canada provided each electoral district with recruitment lists featuring individuals who had worked at previous federal and provincial elections. These lists were distributed in advance and refreshed at the beginning of the election period, helping returning officers ensure appropriate staffing levels at polling places.

These recruitment and training efforts were essential to ensuring that polling places were fully staffed, operations could proceed as planned and electors received timely and consistent service throughout the electoral period.

Recruitment and Training in Indigenous Communities

As documented in Elections Canada’s [Taking Steps Toward Truth and Reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Wishing to Participate in Federal Elections](#),^{xxx} First Nations, Inuit and Métis electors shared with the agency that they place significant value on long-term relationship-building, being served in their own languages, engaging and supporting Indigenous youth and being served by members of their own communities. In addition to being aligned with Elections Canada’s overall recruitment strategy of “neighbours serving neighbours,” working to ensure that poll workers in remote, isolated and low-density communities are recruited from within said communities helps mitigate the logistical and weather-related challenges associated with having outside individuals travel to these locations.

To support recruitment efforts in First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, the agency produced specific printed and digital recruitment materials for the use of Indigenous community relations officers and for community leaders to spread the word about work opportunities. These materials included a handout on the [Indigenous Elder and Youth Program](#).^{xxxii}

National partnerships also played a critical role in extending the reach and credibility of recruitment efforts among First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The [Assembly of First Nations](#) (AFN),^{xxxii} in alignment with Elections Canada’s communications calendar, launched a coordinated social media campaign. Messaging directed audiences to key resources on the Elections Canada website, including information on voting methods, registration, key dates, employment opportunities and [Inspire Democracy materials](#).^{xxxiii} In addition to its social media outreach, the AFN implemented two pre-writ and two post-writ email campaigns that linked directly to Elections Canada’s official voter information and recruitment materials, helping to ensure timely and consistent communication across First Nations communities.

In northern and remote regions, targeted outreach efforts were reinforced through collaboration with the Iqaluit-based [Ilinniapaa Skills Development Centre](#) (iSDC).^{xxxiv} The centre also developed culturally tailored messaging to support northern communities, where election staffing levels have historically been low. The Indigenous education coordinator in Northwestern Ontario also supported six returning officers with recruitment efforts in communities and locations affected by weather-related evacuations.¹⁴

In addition to these broader community outreach efforts, Elections Canada worked with [Connected North](#),^{xxxv} a platform that provides interactive learning opportunities to Indigenous schools in remote areas, to deliver a virtual workshop to students on working during elections. This initiative reached classrooms in Northwestern Ontario and Nunavut, offering accessible information about electoral participation and employment opportunities.

¹⁴ These were Kashechewan and Neskantaga.

These efforts contributed to strengthening relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities by promoting civic engagement and creating opportunities for youth to take part in the democratic process.

Polling Places

One of the biggest challenges for returning officers is that they must identify and secure polling places that meet a range of criteria. Polling places must:

- ▶ Meet, at a minimum, the 15 mandatory accessibility criteria in Elections Canada's [Polling Place Suitability Checklist](#).^{xxxvi}
- ▶ Be located near the homes of electors or within areas they regularly frequent.
- ▶ Be spacious enough to accommodate not only electors but also all the materials necessary to deliver voting services, such as tables for ballot boxes and voting screens, registration desks, as well as poll workers and candidate representatives.
- ▶ Ideally offer reasonable parking and access to public transit.

These efforts to identify suitable polling places begin well in advance of the election period, with returning officers developing extensive lists of potential sites, which are routinely reviewed and re-validated throughout the pre-election period to ensure that they remain accessible, available and fully compliant with operational requirements.

While returning officers cannot lease polling places until the writs are issued and the dates for advance polls and election day are known, efforts to secure pre-identified locations begin immediately after the dissolution of Parliament. During this period, returning officers check the availability of primary, secondary and backup polling places¹⁵ with prospective landlords, city managers, school principals, school boards, First Nations band councils, Inuit and Métis community landlords and other property owners and managers.

However, these early efforts increasingly run up against broader challenges in the real estate market. Many pre-identified polling places were owned by corporations, introducing additional layers of administrative requirements, liability considerations and paperwork that extended the time needed to secure agreements. In some cases, prospective landlords were also unwilling to consider short-term rental arrangements, further narrowing the pool of available venues.

The specific timing of the 45th general election also presented a number of logistical challenges. Delays arose in Alberta and British Columbia, where the beginning of the writ period overlapped with spring break; as schools are frequently used as polling places, the temporary unavailability of school board representatives had a notable impact on site confirmation in those provinces. Additionally, the election period overlapped with fiscal year-end activities in some municipalities, which complicated the process of confirming site availability and signing leases.

¹⁵ A polling place is a location where electors go to vote. One polling place may house several polling stations. Generally, one polling station is established for every polling division in an electoral district. Every polling station has one ballot box and a list of electors. Each elector is assigned to a specific polling station based on their residential address.

Taken together, these challenges required extensive coordination from returning officers. The resulting delays in confirming polling places directly affected the agency’s ability to finalize and mail voter information cards in accordance with prescribed timelines.

Table 1—Number of polling places and stations						
	Polling places			Polling stations		
	44th general election¹	45th general election²	Difference	44th general election¹	45th general election²	Difference
Advance polling days	3,688	3,751	+63	6,429	7,295	+866
Election day	14,405	14,769	+364	65,181	67,473	+2,292

Table Note 1: These are final results, as presented in the [official voting results](#).^{xxxvii}

Table Note 2: These are preliminary figures and may differ from the official voting results when published.

On election day, 99.9 percent of polling stations opened and operated as planned; however, a small number faced logistical and environmental challenges. In total, 100 election day polling stations were impacted. Of these, 73 opened within an hour of their scheduled time, 19 opened between one and three hours late and six opened more than three hours late.¹⁶ Two did not open at all in the electoral district of Abitibi–Baie-James–Nunavik–Eeyou (Quebec). A more detailed review of the circumstances that led to these issues in Nunavik is currently underway and the conclusions will be made public once the review is completed.

Accessibility at the Polls

Accessibility is a key consideration in the delivery of electoral services. The [Canada Elections Act](#)^{xxxviii} requires that local offices and polling places be accessible to all electors. To express that requirement on an operational level, the agency developed both a [Directive on Accessibility Exemptions when Selecting a Suitable Polling Place](#)^{xxxix} and a [Polling Place Suitability Checklist](#),^{xl} which contains 37 accessibility criteria, 15 of which are mandatory.

In the 45th general election, 96.9 percent of polling places met all 15 mandatory accessibility criteria, representing an increase of 2.7 percentage points from the 44th general election. To reduce the impact of using locations that did not meet all mandatory criteria, Elections Canada provided returning officers with a list of recommended measures to address accessibility gaps. These included installing temporary ramps at sites without level access, hiring additional staff to assist with heavy doors and adding temporary outdoor lighting at poorly lit locations.

Elections Canada also ensured that electors were informed about polling place accessibility. This information was published on voter information cards and made available through the

¹⁶ The six polling stations that opened more than three hours late were in the electoral districts of Peace River–Westlock (Alberta), Churchill–Keewatinook Aski (Manitoba), Kapuskasing–Timmins–Mushkegowuk (Ontario), Kenora–Kiiwetinoong (Ontario), Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

online [Voter Information Service](#).^{xi} Electors who were concerned about the accessibility of their polling place were encouraged to contact their returning officer to obtain a transfer certificate, which would allow them to vote at another location. In addition, election workers received improved training on accessibility, and accessibility feedback mechanisms were made available to electors and workers alike.

The electoral district of Carleton (Ontario) was confronted with other accessibility challenges due to the unusually large number of candidates, 91 in total. Elections Canada produced a [ballot](#)^{xlii} measuring 97.08 centimetres long and 30.48 centimetres wide. This was significantly larger than a standard ballot but was necessary to ensure that an appropriate font size could be used.

As was the case in earlier by-elections with a large number of candidates, Elections Canada developed modified templates to ensure that ballots larger than the traditional format would still meet legal and operational requirements while preserving the integrity features of the original design. The ballot format and templates were based on [consultations](#)^{xliii} with key external stakeholders, including ABC Life Literacy, Brain Injury Canada, the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Special Olympics Canada, Special Olympics Ontario and members of Elections Canada's [Advisory Group for Disability Issues](#).^{xliv} Among the options reviewed, the majority of stakeholders identified a two-column layout as the preferred format as it most closely resembled the traditional ballot, maintained the original font size¹⁷ and posed fewer barriers for electors with disabilities, those voting for the first time or individuals with low literacy.

However, despite these preparations, the ballot in Carleton still presented several accessibility concerns. Voters with visual impairments, mobility limitations or literacy challenges faced difficulty managing the oversized format. Physically, the ballot was more difficult to handle, mark and refold. These issues impacted voting autonomy as some electors were forced to rely on assistance from election workers to complete their ballot. Electors at polling places in Carleton also generally experienced longer wait times as a result of these issues, which were especially challenging for individuals who could not stand for extended periods or who required assistance.

Informing Electors

Voter Information Cards

As in past elections, the [voter information card](#)^{xlv} (VIC) played a crucial role in informing electors about the electoral process. A personalized VIC was mailed to each registered elector, telling them when and where to vote, the accessibility of their advance and election day polling places and how to contact their local Elections Canada office. VICs were issued in English and French, with electors in Nunavut receiving additional VICs in English and Inuktitut in order to support effective and inclusive communication. In total, Elections Canada mailed over 28 million VICs to individuals whose names appeared on the preliminary lists of electors.

¹⁷ The size is either 18 point or 16 point.

Delays in confirming polling places affected the timely production and delivery of VICs. These delays compressed the production timeline, requiring a large volume of VICs to be processed in a short period. Once production began, VICs were processed and printed in large batches, which placed considerable pressure on printing facilities and contributed to delivery delays. Because of these challenges, more than 60 percent of VICs were sent out after the day set out in the [Canada Elections Act](#),^{xlvi} as a result, a number of electors in 16 electoral districts¹⁸ did not receive their VIC in time for advance polls.

To mitigate the impact of the delays and ensure that electors remained informed, Elections Canada implemented a range of proactive measures, such as targeted social media messaging in the affected districts. These messages emphasized that a VIC was not required to vote and directed electors to the Elections Canada website for details about their assigned advance and election day polling places.

Though it is not required to vote, the VIC can be an essential piece of identification for some electors. While VICs are primarily issued to inform Canadians about when and where to vote, their role extends further, especially for individuals who cannot present a driver's licence or another document showing their address. Under Canada's [voter identification rules](#),^{xlvii} the VIC can be used as proof of address when paired with another accepted form of ID, making it a key tool to help ensure access to the ballot.

In Nunavut, as VICs could not be delivered before the start of advance polls,¹⁹ the Chief Electoral Officer issued an [adaptation](#)^{xlviii} under section 17(1) of the [Canada Elections Act](#),^{xlix} which allowed election workers in Nunavut to issue a ballot to electors already registered in the community who did not have the normally required identification as long as the returning officer was satisfied as to the identity and residence of the person intending to vote. This adaptation applied to both advance and election day voting and was a viable solution only because of the unique nature of remote, isolated and low-density communities.

To further support electors in Nunavut, 18 Indigenous community relations officers from local Elections Canada offices shared printed materials and key messages within their communities, helping electors understand how to find out where they could vote. Elections Canada also contacted 10 organizations that were either based in Nunavut or closely connected to its residents to provide updates on the VIC delay and details about advance and regular polling places. The agency also consulted with the members of its Inuit Advisory Circle and with the Government of Nunavut to help tailor outreach efforts to local needs, including hiring an Inuktitut-speaking public relations contractor in Iqaluit and issuing multilingual public service announcements on local radio. Finally, Elections Canada leveraged its [Civic Education](#)^l and [Inspire Democracy](#)^{li} networks to distribute key messages through trusted community partners, including the [Ilinniapaa Skills Development Centre](#)^{lii} and [Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami](#).^{liii} These partners helped share accurate, translated information on VIC delays and advance voting across the territory.

¹⁸ These were Chilliwack–Hope (B.C.), Columbia–Kootenay–Southern Rockies (B.C.), Kamloops–Shuswap–Central Rockies (B.C.), New Westminster–Burnaby–Maillardville (B.C.), Prince George–Peace River–Northern Rockies (B.C.), Vancouver East (B.C.), Lakeland (Alta.), Peace River–Westlock (Alta.), Yellowhead (Alta.), Riding Mountain (Man.), Acadie–Annapolis (N. S.), Dartmouth–Cole Harbour (N. S.), Halifax (N. S.), Sydney–Gloucester (N. S.), Terra Nova–The Peninsulas (N.L.) and Nunavut (Nvt.).

¹⁹ Approximately 21,000 VICs were delivered late in Nunavut.

Guide to the Federal Election

Elections Canada distributed its [Guide to the federal election](#)^{liv} to every household in Canada. This brochure provided information about voter eligibility, registration, the ways to vote, identification requirements, accessibility of polling places, voting assistance tools and the services available on election day. It also prompted electors to contact Elections Canada if they had not received a voter information card. The agency distributed 16,656,222 bilingual brochures across Canada and an additional 10,190 quadrilingual brochures in Nunavut.²⁰ Elections Canada also published a version of the guide in 49 languages²¹ on its website.

Voter Information Campaign

To ensure that Canadians can exercise their democratic right to vote, Elections Canada conducts a voter information campaign to provide information on when, where and ways to register and vote in a federal election.

During the 45th general election, the agency delivered information about the voting process throughout the election period through social media; television, radio, digital and print ads; and the Elections Canada website. The messaging targeted Canadians at large as well as specific groups who face higher-than-average barriers to electoral participation. To ensure that these messages were widely distributed to diverse communities, Elections Canada made several of its election-related materials available in multiple languages.

Social and digital platforms played a central role in the campaign, with content shared widely on Meta, X, Snapchat and Spotify. In addition, boosted posts²² were used to respond quickly to emerging issues, such as delays in sending out voter information cards, changes to polling locations or the need to correct inaccurate information with accurate, timely content.

As part of its efforts to expand awareness of early voting methods, Elections Canada introduced targeted messaging to promote the option of voting at local Elections Canada offices. This promotion was launched after the close of candidate nominations and was aimed at encouraging in-person voting for electors seeking flexibility or who preferred to vote before election day, outside the designated advance voting period.

Voting by mail using a special ballot was also consistently promoted as one of four main voting options, alongside voting at a local Elections Canada office, at advance polls or on election day. In the days before election day, Elections Canada reminded electors that if they had not yet had the chance to return their special ballot by mail, they could return it in person at their local Elections Canada office before the close of polls.

Engaging young electors was also a key objective of Elections Canada's media campaign. [Research following the 44th general election](#)^{lv} showed that only 55 percent of Canadians aged 18 to 24 felt "very informed" about how, when and where to vote, compared to

²⁰ For the first time, these brochures were produced in Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, English and French, expanding the agency's efforts to provide information in languages meaningful to Indigenous electors.

²¹ These included 16 Indigenous languages.

²² Boosted posts are social media messages that the agency paid to have amplified so that they would be seen by more users.

74 percent of the general population. In response, Elections Canada launched a dedicated youth campaign to address these gaps. The campaign adopted a more casual tone and used dynamic, visually engaging content that would speak to young audiences. Messaging focused on registration and voting procedures and was delivered primarily through the digital platforms most frequently used by youth, with the goal of increasing awareness among youth about their voting options.

On March 28, 2025, Elections Canada’s Chief Electoral Officer hosted a public [“Ask Me Anything” \(AMA\) session on Reddit](#)^{lvi} to engage directly with Canadians ahead of the 45th general election. The discussion focused on election security, accessibility and voter trust, with questions about foreign interference, voting technology, identification requirements and protections against intimidation. The AMA provided an opportunity to clarify key issues, reinforce transparency and connect with electors through a more informal platform.

To further extend the reach of all the efforts outlined above, Elections Canada engaged in more traditional outreach by holding a [press conference](#)^{lvii} with the Chief Electoral Officer, publishing a [media guide for the 45th general election](#)^{lviii} ²³ and issuing 21 news releases and three media advisories.

Together, these communication efforts supported electors in understanding their voting options and making informed decisions about how and when to participate. By providing timely, accessible and targeted information on a range of platforms, Elections Canada helped ensure that Canadians across diverse communities had the resources they needed to take part in the electoral process.

Website

As in previous events, Elections Canada launched a dedicated general election website to provide Canadians with up-to-date information throughout the electoral period. The website included a link to the [Voter Information Service](#),^{lix} which allowed electors to enter their postal code to access information about their candidates, where and when they could vote as well as polling place locations and their accessibility features. The website also directed users to the online [Voter Registration](#),^{lx} service, which allowed electors to check or update their registration.

The Elections Canada website and its online services saw significantly higher use during the 45th general election compared to previous events. As shown in Table 2, the site recorded more than 32 million visits over the 36-day election period, representing a nearly 72 percent increase from the 44th general election. On election night alone, the number of visits increased by 122 percent compared to the 44th general election.

²³ The guide was available in English, French, Mandarin, Cantonese and Punjabi.

Table 2—Visits to Elections Canada website

General election (No. of days of the election period)	Full election period	Last 36 days of the election	Election day	Election night (results)
45th general election (36 days)	32,114,715	32,114,715	7,075,842	920,654
44th general election (36 days)	18,694,170	18,694,170	3,877,157	414,146
43rd general election (40 days)	16,635,534	16,191,073	4,131,943	349,358

On election night, beginning at 7:00 p.m. (Eastern Time), Canadians experienced difficulties accessing the Elections Canada website. This affected the ability of electors to confirm polling place information, which was particularly impactful for individuals residing in electoral districts where polls were still open.

The agency took action, coordinating with the relevant stakeholders to confirm that this was not the result of a cyber attack and, in parallel, to identify the source of the service interruption. Ultimately, it was determined that the issue was caused by the agency's web services provider being unable to manage the high volume of new visitors to the website. The major impacts of the disruption lasted approximately two and a half hours, during which access to the main site and certain online services was intermittent. To mitigate the problem, Elections Canada directed users to a static version of its website, which provided essential information. The agency also shared updates on the issue through its social media channels and directed electors to consult their voter information card, contact their local Elections Canada office or call the agency directly.

Throughout this time, the distribution of election results to the public continued without interruption. As in previous general elections, results were transmitted to the Canadian Election Media Consortium through a secure data feed, allowing participating media outlets to continue reporting during the disruption.

The website was fully restored to normal operations just after 5:00 a.m. the following morning. Elections Canada worked closely with its service provider to ensure that all the factors and decisions that had led to the disruption were identified and documented and that the necessary corrective measures had been implemented to reduce the risk of similar disruptions occurring in future elections.

Voting Services

Of the 19.8 million Canadians who voted in the 45th general election, 1.2 million voted by special ballot, 7.5 million voted during advance polls and 11 million voted on election day. This means that approximately 44 percent of voters voted before election day.

These figures underscore a significant evolution in voting behaviour: the assumption that most electors will vote on election day is increasingly outdated. This evolution has implications for electoral administration. Processes that were once peripheral have become

central, requiring more resources, training and coordination than ever before. Additionally, as more Canadians choose to vote in advance, Elections Canada faces greater time pressures to complete preparations. Although election periods span several weeks,²⁴ much of the work must now be completed earlier to accommodate the delivery of these advance voting options, leaving a shorter window for readiness.

Voting by Special Ballot

While voting by special ballot is a voting method available to all electors, its flexibility makes it particularly useful for those who are away from their electoral district or who, for one reason or another, cannot vote on any of the advance or election day polling days. Voters in hospitals or remote work camps, students away from home, military electors and Canadians abroad typically rely on special ballots. Special ballot voting has also been used for voters with conflicting religious holidays, voters displaced due to severe weather incidents or voters hesitant to head to the polls during the 2021 pandemic.

Two factors impact the options available to electors voting by special ballot:

- ▶ How they choose to cast their ballot: An elector can cast a special ballot by voting in person at a local Elections Canada office or by mail.
- ▶ Where they are when they apply for their ballot: An elector can apply for a special ballot from within their electoral district, from outside their electoral district but still within Canada or from outside Canada.

The use of special ballots has grown steadily over the past several general elections²⁵ and reflects a broader shift in the expectation of Canadians that, whatever their life circumstances, they will have the opportunity to vote.

The law provides that, for their ballot to be counted, electors who applied from within their electoral district had to make sure that Elections Canada received their completed special ballot before their polls closed on election day. They could return it either by mail or in person at their local Elections Canada office. As shown in Table 4 below, almost 970,000 special ballot kits were issued to electors voting from within their electoral district. Of these, approximately 925,000 (95.3 percent) were returned on time to be counted, representing an improvement over the 44th general election, as shown in Table 5.

The number of electors voting by mail from within their electoral district remained significantly higher than in pre-pandemic elections. As shown in Table 3, approximately 141,000 electors used this option, compared to the fewer than 5,000 in the 43rd general election, representing an increase of over 2,700 percent. This indicates that voting by mail from within their electoral district has become a more established and valued choice for many electors, even without pandemic-related factors driving its use.

²⁴ The exact length of the election period is dictated by the proclamation issued by the Governor in Council but must be no earlier than the 36th day and no later than the 50th day after the day on which the writ was issued.

²⁵ The number of Canadians who cast their ballot using the Special Voting Rules was just over 660,000 in the 43rd general election, just over 1 million in the 44th general election and over 1.2 million in the 45th general election.

Like electors who apply to vote from within their electoral district, electors who apply to vote from within Canada but outside their electoral district could vote in person at a local office or apply to vote by mail. These electors had to return their completed special ballot to the agency's central processing centre in Ottawa by 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time on election day. As indicated in Table 4, more than 301,000 special ballot kits were issued to such electors, and approximately 268,000 (88.9 percent) of them were returned on time to be counted. This marks an improvement over the 44th general election, which saw a return rate of 78 percent, as shown in Table 5.

For Canadian electors living abroad, submitting a special ballot by mail is their only voting option. These electors can apply to be on Elections Canada's International Register of Electors at any time before an election or, once an election has been called, at any time before 6:00 p.m. on the 6th day before election day. Electors on the international register are automatically mailed a special ballot at the beginning of every general election period. The unpredictability of international postal services has historically impacted the number of ballots returned on time. As shown in Table 4, of the approximately 102,000 special ballots issued to electors living outside Canada, slightly more than 57,000 (56.5 percent) were returned on time and counted. This marks an improvement over the 44th general election, which saw a return rate of 48.5 percent, as shown in Table 5.

Table 3—Preliminary statistics: Ballots cast, by voting method¹

Voting method	43rd general election: Ballots cast (with rate)	44th general election: Ballots cast (with rate)	45th general election: Ballots cast (with rate)
Electors voting by mail from inside their electoral district	4,980 (0.03%)	507,722 (2.95%)	140,885 (0.71%)
Electors voting at a local office from inside their electoral district	392,141 (2.14%)	375,093 (2.18%)	783,713 (3.96%)
Electors absent from their electoral district voting by mail, at a local office, Canadian Forces base, or correctional facility	228,755 (1.25%)	158,693 (0.92%)	267,733 (1.35%)
Electors living outside of Canada voting by mail	34,144 (0.19%)	27,035 (0.16%)	57,440 (0.29%)
Subtotal for special ballot voting methods	660,020 (3.60%)	1,068,543 (6.21%)	1,249,771 (6.31%)
Electors voting at their assigned advance polling station	4,879,312 (26.59%)	5,895,072 (34.25%)	7,504,283 (37.88%)
Electors voting at their assigned election day polling station	12,811,027 (69.81%)	10,246,196 (59.54%)	11,056,048 (55.81%)
Total for all voting methods	18,350,359 (100%)	17,209,811 (100%)	19,810,102 (100%)

Table Note 1: These are preliminary figures and may differ from the official voting results when published.

As seen in Table 3, the number of electors who voted by special ballot from within their electoral district more than doubled from the 43rd general election to the 45th general election, from 397,121 to 924,598. While the option to vote by special ballot has become

more popular since the pandemic, the uptake during the 45th general election is mainly attributable to electors voting at a local office.

With respect to vote by mail, a comparison of return rates for special ballots between the 45th and the 44th general elections in Tables 4 and 5, below, shows an increase in the total percentage of ballots returned on time and counted. The overall percentage of ballots returned late has correspondingly declined from 7.3 percent to 3 percent.

Table 4—Categories of special ballot voters for the 45th general election^{1,2}					
	Ballots issued	Ballots returned on time and counted (with rate)	Ballots returned on time and set aside (spoiled) (with rate)	Ballots returned late and set aside (with rate)	Ballots not returned or cancelled³ (with rate)
Electors voting by mail or at an Elections Canada office from inside their electoral district	969,964	924,598 (95.3%)	N/A ⁴ (0.0%)	10,108 ⁵ (1.0%)	35,258 (3.6%)
Electors absent from their electoral district voting by mail or at a local office, Canadian Forces base or correctional facility	301,073	267,733 (88.9%)	836 (0.3%)	12,289 ⁶ (4.1%)	20,215 (6.7%)
Electors living outside Canada voting by mail	101,690	57,440 (56.5%)	411 (0.4%)	19,444 (19.1%)	24,395 (24.0%)
Total	1,372,727	1,249,771 (91.0%)	1,247 (0.1%)	41,841 (3.0%)	79,868 (5.8%)

Table Note 1: These are preliminary figures and may differ from the official voting results when published.

Table Note 2: The figures include all ballots set aside unopened under section 277(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*.

Table Note 3: In situations where an elector requested a special ballot to vote by mail but did not return it, or returned it unused, the special ballot is considered cancelled.

Table Note 4: While spoiled ballots are recorded manually on the Statement of the Vote sheets in each electoral district, this data is not entered into Elections Canada's Event Results System and is therefore not tabulated.

Table Note 5: This figure includes the 235 local special ballots that were cast in Cape Breton–Canso–Antigonish (Nova Scotia) and the 232 local special ballots that were cast in Northumberland–Clarke (Ontario) which were counted but not included in the official results.

Table Note 6: This figure includes the 822 national special ballots that were cast in Coquitlam–Port Coquitlam (British Columbia) and counted but not included in the official results.

Table 5—Categories of special ballot voters for the 44th general election

	Ballots issued	Ballots returned on time and counted (with rate)	Ballots returned on time and set aside (spoiled) (with rate)	Ballots returned late and set aside (with rate)	Ballots not returned or cancelled ¹ (with rate)
Electors voting by mail or at an Elections Canada office from inside their electoral district	1,015,305	882,815 (87.0%)	N/A ² (0.0%)	59,344 ³ (5.8%)	73,146 (7.2%)
Electors absent from their electoral district voting by mail or at a local office, Canadian Forces base or correctional facility	203,446	158,693 (78.0%)	826 (0.4%)	19,231 (9.5%)	24,696 (12.1%)
Electors living outside Canada voting by mail	55,696	27,035 (48.5%)	221 (0.4%)	11,699 (21.0%)	16,741 (30.1%)
Total	1,274,447	1,068,543 (83.8%)	1,047 (0.1%)	90,274 (7.1%)	114,583 (9.0%)

Table Note 1: In situations where an elector requested a special ballot to vote by mail but did not return it, or returned it unused and subsequently voted at their election day polling station, the special ballot is considered cancelled.

Table Note 2: While spoiled ballots are recorded manually on the Statement of the Vote sheets in each electoral district, this data is not entered into Elections Canada’s Event Results System and is therefore not tabulated.

Table Note 3: This figure includes all ballots set aside unopened under section 277(1) of the [Canada Elections Act](#).^{lxi}

Voting on Campus

Elections Canada has long worked to improve access to voting for young Canadians, with the primary objective of facilitating participation among groups that have historically encountered barriers in the electoral process.²⁶ In 2015, the agency launched the [Vote on Campus program](#)^{lxii} to offer students and other members of the campus community a convenient way to register and vote from where they study or work. The initiative quickly demonstrated its effectiveness in reaching young electors, prompting an expanded deployment during the 43rd general election in 2019. Although the program was temporarily suspended during the 44th general election in 2021 due to complications from the COVID-19 pandemic, its reinstatement in the 2025 general election, now as a permanent part of Elections Canada’s service offerings, was a key priority.

The 45th general election marked the first time the Vote on Campus program was delivered during a general election without a fixed date. The uncertainty created by not knowing the exact date of the event ahead of time required significant and ongoing planning on the part of both Elections Canada and post-secondary institutions as well as close coordination and quick decision-making once the writs had been issued.

A total of 109 offices were set up and operated at 96 post-secondary institutions in 79 electoral districts. These temporary voting locations were open for four days, from

²⁶ These are electors with disabilities, students, new electors and Indigenous electors.

Sunday, April 13 to Wednesday, April 16. During this period, a total of 76,255 ballots were issued at Vote on Campus locations, with 69.9 percent of them issued to electors voting from outside their electoral district.

To help evaluate the program's impact and effectiveness, a [survey of campus electors](#)^{lxiii} was distributed during the event. The results are expected to provide valuable insight into the student voting experience.

Voting at Advance Polls and on Election Day

A record number of approximately 7.5 million Canadians voted during the advance polling period for the 45th general election, which took place from Friday, April 18 to Monday, April 21, 2025. This represents a 27 percent increase from the 5.9 million electors who voted at advance polls in the 44th general election, continuing a well-established upward trend in early-voting behaviour.

Three electoral districts²⁷ experienced ballot shortages at advance polls; this led to temporary delays at four polling places. In response, Elections Canada implemented contingency measures to ensure that electors could still vote, including authorizing the local printing of emergency ballots and dispatching additional ballots from nearby locations. In some cases, poll workers collected the names and phone numbers of electors who wished to be contacted and called them once voting had resumed.

To meet the diverse preferences of voters and prepare for the possibility of a high turnout at both advance and election day polls, Elections Canada adapted its operations. Even with these preparations, some locations experienced longer-than-usual wait times during peak hours. Where needed, the following mitigation measures were deployed:

- ▶ Where personnel availability and space permitted, polling stations were divided to double their productivity.
- ▶ When the local Elections Canada office was not far from a busy location, advance poll workers offered electors the option to vote there instead.

The continued rise in popularity of advance polls shows an ongoing shift in voting habits. This marked trend has reached a point where it threatens the agency's ability to meet the expectations of electors for this particular service, at least for general elections that are not held on a fixed date. While only 7.5 percent of Canadians voted before election day 25 years ago, Elections Canada now anticipates that over 50 percent of electors will do so at the next general election. This level of uptake for early voting presents service delivery challenges as the time available to recruit workers and secure polling places remains unchanged.

During the 45th general election, Elections Canada implemented several noteworthy measures to ensure that electors were able to vote. These efforts reflect the agency's continued commitment to accessibility and its ability to adapt to logistical and environmental challenges across the country. Notable examples include the following:

²⁷ These were Yukon, Yellowhead (Alberta) and West Vancouver–Sunshine Coast–Sea to Sky Country (British Columbia).

- ▶ Facilitating voting for electors stationed at a remote weather facility, with the support of the Canadian Armed Forces and Environment and Climate Change Canada, by coordinating with a military refuelling flight to deliver and collect ballots.
- ▶ Coordinating with the Canadian Coast Guard to deliver voting services to lighthouse keepers along the West Coast during a scheduled resupply operation.
- ▶ Deploying Elections Canada staff to two remote gold mining camps in Nunavut, where they provided voting services to mine workers.
- ▶ Using a helicopter to transport voting materials and personnel to a remote community in West Dawson, Yukon, where a melting ice road had prevented electors from accessing polls.
- ▶ Offering voting services in hotels to electors who had been displaced from their home communities.
- ▶ Making special arrangements to serve long-term care residents at isolated facilities in the Northwest Territories by adapting mobile poll procedures.

These efforts reflect Elections Canada’s commitment to ensuring that voting services are available and adaptable across a wide range of circumstances. By expanding early voting options and responding to logistical challenges in real time, the agency helped provide Canadians with reliable and accessible opportunities to vote.

Voting at Mobile Polls

Mobile polls were implemented at long-term care facilities and seniors’ residences in 337 electoral districts.²⁸ In 18 of these districts, outbreaks or other circumstances prevented the use of the standard mobile poll in some facilities. In these cases, special ballot voting was approved to ensure that residents could still vote. Facilities not affected by these issues continued to receive regular mobile poll services on election day.

By offering voting options directly within long-term care facilities and seniors’ residences, Elections Canada helped ensure that electors facing health-related or mobility barriers were able to exercise their democratic right to vote.

Voting in Indigenous Communities

Elections Canada recognizes that providing accessible, culturally appropriate services to First Nations, Inuit and Métis electors is an important aspect of reconciliation. Given the systemic barriers that have historically limited Indigenous participation in the electoral process, addressing these challenges is essential to rebuilding trust and fostering meaningful engagement. In preparation for the 45th general election, the agency made it a key priority to reduce these barriers by implementing culturally relevant outreach, expanding services in

²⁸ Mobile polling services were not offered in six electoral districts due to a combination of factors, including the absence of eligible facilities, an inability to meet the mobile poll grouping requirement under the *Canada Elections Act*, high resident populations requiring a different polling format or a facility declining on-site service. Electors in these six districts were instead invited to cast their ballots by using one of the agency’s other service offerings: by special ballot, either by mail or at the local Elections Canada office, at advance polls or at election day polls.

Indigenous languages and tailoring voting options to meet community needs with the goal of having in-community polling places wherever possible.

The standard model of four days of advance polls, each open for 12 hours, does not meet the needs of many remote, isolated and low-density communities. Securing suitable locations and enough workers for four full days is a recurring challenge for returning officers, particularly in these areas. Without adjustments to the service model, many electors in smaller or isolated communities would be assigned to advance polling places located in larger population centres, often requiring travel of more than 100 kilometres or for some fly-in communities to travel by airplane. This would make it difficult or impossible for many electors to take advantage of this service offering.

Recognizing these challenges, and as part of its broader efforts to reduce barriers to voting, the agency introduced [flexible advance voting services](#)^{lxiv} that could be tailored to each community's circumstances. These options were developed through direct discussions with community representatives to determine the most appropriate service model, which could include fewer advance voting days or reduced hours.

- ▶ 821 communities selected, and confirmed they would be able to support, the full four days of advance voting.
- ▶ 156 communities selected flexible advance voting services as the approach that best suited their needs.
- ▶ When neither the full nor the flexible options met the needs of certain communities, often due to cultural activities such as hunting or other scheduling conflicts, alternative services were offered. In such cases, additional service-point kiosks were used to provide electors with registration and special ballot voting services. A total of 35 communities opted for this approach.
- ▶ 6 communities chose not to have in-community services. Electors in these communities were assigned to the nearest available polling places.

Of these, the number of communities where advance voting services were planned within the community more than doubled compared to the 44th general election, going from 95 to 216. The number of communities where advance voting services were planned for within, or in proximity²⁹ to, communities increased from 564 to 677. Additionally, the number of communities where election day voting services were planned for within, or in proximity to, communities increased from 817 to 828.³⁰

In Nunavut—where the territorial [Official Languages Act](#)^{lxv} recognizes the Inuit Language, English and French as official languages—Elections Canada took extra steps to ensure that voting was accessible to electors who do not speak English or French. As in the 44th general election, the agency provided large-format posters, which were displayed at polling places, along with smaller reference posters placed on voting tables to assist electors in marking their ballot. To ensure accurate representation of candidates' names in Inuktitut, political parties and

²⁹ Rural proximity thresholds are 30km for advance polls and 15km for election day polls. Urban proximity thresholds are 6km for advance polls and 3km for election day polls.

³⁰ These figures represent the number of planned service offerings. As noted elsewhere in the report, there were instances where the number of planned service offerings was not the same as that of the actual service offerings.

which polling stations would be open in these communities, as long as doing so still provided electors with a reasonable opportunity to vote.

Despite Elections Canada's work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities to reduce barriers to voting, a significant service failure occurred in the electoral district of Abitibi–Baie–James–Nunavik–Eeyou (Quebec), where some electors were unable to cast their ballot. In Nunavik, two communities experienced a total lack of voting services, while seven others were limited by severally and unexpectedly reduced service hours at polling places. The shortcomings experienced in Nunavik were unacceptable. The agency is committed to thoroughly reviewing the circumstances that led to this situation, making its conclusions publicly available and working collaboratively with local organizations and communities in Nunavik to strengthen service delivery and ensure that all electors can exercise their right to vote.

Complaints

Elections Canada always welcomes feedback from Canadians on all aspects of the electoral process, even when certain issues fall outside its mandate. As in previous general elections, they could lodge complaints through an online form, by telephone, by email or by regular mail. During the election period, Canadians could also file a complaint at a local Elections Canada office or at a polling place. In addition to filing complaints directly with Elections Canada, electors can submit complaints about the general election through other entities, such as the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

Complaints were given the highest priority when an individual's right to vote was at stake. Such complaints were often dealt with immediately by providing the affected elector with the address of the polling place or the telephone number of the returning officer.

As of July 2, 2025, Elections Canada had received 15,400 complaints. The agency defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction in regard to the products or services it provides, the way in which it provides services or the inappropriate conduct of a person or group in the electoral process.

Of these complaints, 1,977 related to a potential violation or offence under the [Canada Elections Act](#)^{ixix} and were redirected to the Commissioner of Canada Elections for further review.³³ Complaints related to potential violations or offences involving voter contact services were referred to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

Electors provided feedback on their observations and experiences related to a variety of topics, including:

- ▶ Suitability of polling places, including parking availability and accessibility.
- ▶ Interactions with poll workers and polling operations, including wait times.

³³ They were redirected between March 23, 2025, and May 1, 2025.

- ▶ Experience with the overall voting process, such as voting by mail, using a special ballot or voting in person.
- ▶ Specific areas such as voter information cards, voter identification requirements and accessibility issues.

To ensure that data on complaints about the electoral process is sound and presented in context, Elections Canada will publish further findings once the required analysis, review and categorization have been completed.

Candidates

For the 45th general election, Elections Canada, once again, offered prospective candidates the option of submitting their nomination papers through its online Political Entities Service Centre. While the majority of nominations were submitted on paper to returning officers, approximately 10 percent were submitted using the online portal.³⁴

Altogether, 1,959 candidates appeared on ballots in the 45th general election. Of the 343 who were elected to the House of Commons, 255 had been members of the 44th Parliament.

	43rd general election		44th general election		45th general election	
	Confirmed	Elected	Confirmed	Elected	Confirmed	Elected
Identified as male	1,384	240	1,222	235	1,268	234
Identified as female	744	98	734	101	596	102
Did not disclose their gender identity	13	0	45	2	81	7
Identified as another gender	4	0	9	0	14	0
Total	2,145	338	2,010	338	1,959	343

Political affiliation	After the 44th general election (September 20, 2021)	At the dissolution of Parliament (March 23, 2025)	After the 45th general election (April 28, 2025)	Change from dissolution of Parliament
Liberal Party of Canada	159	152	169	+17
Conservative Party of Canada	119	120	144	+24

³⁴ In total, 205 nominations were submitted electronically, with 200 confirmed by returning officers. Of the 1,794 nominations submitted in paper format, 1,759 were confirmed.

Table 7—Number of seats in the House of Commons by political affiliation

Political affiliation	After the 44th general election (September 20, 2021)	At the dissolution of Parliament (March 23, 2025)	After the 45th general election (April 28, 2025)	Change from dissolution of Parliament
Bloc Québécois	32	33	22	-11
New Democratic Party	25	24	7	-17
Green Party of Canada	2	2	1	-1
Independent / No affiliation	1	3	0	-3
Vacant	0	4	0	-4

To support candidates and their official agents in meeting their obligations, Elections Canada expanded its training offerings. At the start of the election period, a self-paced online training module, *Starting the Campaign*, was made available through the agency’s Virtual Training Centre. Electoral district associations and political parties were informed of the training resources, and once all candidates’ nominations had been confirmed, official agents and candidates received credentials to access the platform.

To complement this online training, Elections Canada hosted seven live question-and-answer sessions³⁵ featuring subject matter experts from its Political Financing sector. A total of 213 individuals registered for these sessions, with 161 attending. Participants included candidates, official agents and other individuals involved in campaign operations.

Following the election, additional training was made available to support individuals during the post-campaign period. The *Closing the Campaign* module was launched through the Virtual Training Centre, and 20 live sessions³⁶ were offered to further assist candidates and official agents in meeting their final reporting obligations.

Third Party Participation

For the 45th general election, the agency received, processed and approved 107 applications³⁷ for registration from third parties,³⁸ a 1.8 percent increase from the 44th general election, during which 105 applications were received. In total, 87.9 percent of third parties received confirmation of registration within two business days. As in previous general elections, unions, medical groups, climate action groups, supply management groups and social advocacy groups made up the majority of registered third parties. Financial returns

³⁵ Five sessions were in English, and two sessions were in French.

³⁶ Fourteen sessions were in English, and six sessions were in French.

³⁷ Two incomplete applications were received.

³⁸ Under the *Canada Elections Act*, third parties are required to register with Elections Canada once they incur \$500 or more in regulated expenses during an election period.

from third parties can be viewed on the [Third Parties' Financial Returns](#)^{lxx} section of the Elections Canada website.³⁹

Elections Canada received several enquiries from individuals and groups throughout the 45th general election seeking clarification on whether their activities required registration. In response, the agency proactively reviewed publicly available information and, where appropriate, sent tailored awareness letters⁴⁰ to potentially affected groups.

To further support outreach and compliance, Elections Canada updated its [Tools for Third Parties](#) webpage^{lxxi} with revised frequently asked questions and a new infographic outlining registration requirements. It also published two social media posts during the election period to further highlight the registration obligations for third parties.

Electoral Security and Addressing Inaccurate Information

There is no single solution that can eliminate threats to elections while preserving an accessible, fair and transparent democratic process. These threats are multi-faceted—ranging from criminal activity, terrorism and cyber attacks to foreign interference and the spread of misinformation—and extend beyond Canada's borders and the traditional scope of election management. Elections Canada takes these risks seriously and works closely with partners to mitigate their impact on democracy.

The agency's efforts to protect electoral integrity are informed by internal expertise as well as collaboration with external partners such as the Communications Security Establishment (CSE). Since 2017, the CSE has released biennial reports assessing cyber threats to Canada's democratic systems, with the latest edition published in 2025. In this [report](#),^{lxxii} the CSE assesses that while disinformation and AI-driven cyber activity are very unlikely to fundamentally undermine the integrity of Canada's democratic processes, the threat landscape is evolving rapidly, and risks to future elections are expected to increase.

Similar themes appear in the [final report of the Public Inquiry Into Foreign Interference in Federal Electoral Processes and Democratic Institutions](#).^{lxxiii} Like the CSE report, it emphasizes that attacks are growing more sophisticated with advances in technology, and it provides a series of recommendations to help Canada stay ahead of these evolving threats.

In preparation for the 45th general election, Elections Canada made it a key priority to refine its methods for identifying and responding to inaccurate information and threats to electoral integrity. The agency remains committed to strengthening these efforts, drawing on the expertise of its own team and trusted partners to ensure that Canada's electoral system remains resilient.

³⁹ The availability of returns on the website may vary. The filing deadlines for interim returns for the 45th general election were April 7, 2025, and April 21, 2025. The filing deadline for campaign returns for the 45th general election was August 28, 2025.

⁴⁰ In total, eight awareness letters were sent; one recipient proceeded to register, while three others confirmed that they did not believe they met the threshold for registration.

Electoral Integrity

In addition to safeguarding the [integrity and security of the electoral process](#),^{lxxiv} Elections Canada placed a strong emphasis on sharing information about said safeguards during the 45th general election. As the independent body responsible for administering federal elections in every electoral district, Elections Canada was able to ensure that its messaging and procedures remained consistent across the country. The agency provided clear explanations of the measures that were in place to protect the integrity of the vote, whether electors cast a regular ballot at a polling place or used a special ballot by mail or at a local office.

Protecting the integrity of federal elections requires a coordinated response to a range of complex and evolving threats. Threats to elections can take many forms, including criminal activity, terrorism, cyber attacks, foreign interference and the spread of false or misleading information. These risks are often complex and can originate beyond Canada's borders, requiring a coordinated response across multiple federal organizations. Thus, Elections Canada collaborated with government departments and agencies⁴¹ responsible for threat monitoring, intelligence sharing and the detection of foreign interference. The federal government's [Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force](#)^{lxxv} also remained active during the election period, helping to ensure a cohesive, government-wide response to potential threats.

Addressing inaccurate information about the electoral process was one of the most visible and immediate challenges during the 45th general election, and it remained a key priority for Elections Canada throughout the event. False claims, particularly those related to ballot security, the use of pencils to mark ballots, and voter registration, received widespread attention. These narratives contributed to growing public skepticism about the integrity of the election and the reliability of the voting process. To pre-empt and address this, Elections Canada intensified its public communications to ensure that accurate, fact-based information was accessible to all Canadians both before and during the election period. The agency also actively monitored the online information environment for inaccurate information about the electoral process, corrected false claims through official channels and directed electors to accurate information, including its website and outreach materials.

Though many false or misleading narratives arose throughout the election period, neither the agency nor the [Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force](#)^{lxxvi} detected any evidence of foreign interference, criminal activity, cyber security incident or coordinated disinformation campaign impacting the administration of the event.

Together, these efforts helped protect the integrity of Canada's federal electoral process and ensured that it remained secure, transparent and consistent across the country. By addressing risks proactively and providing clear, accessible information, Elections Canada strengthened public understanding of the electoral system and supported informed, meaningful participation in the democratic process.

⁴¹ These were the CSE, Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, Canadian Security Intelligence Service, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Public Safety Canada and Global Affairs Canada.

Environmental Monitoring

During the election period, Elections Canada monitored 60 digital platforms in 22 languages;⁴² when inaccurate narratives were detected, the agency responded by publishing factually correct information, using its various communication channels. This included expanding on the content in [ElectoFacts](#),^{lxxvii} which offers concise explanations on topics such as ballot box custody and the reprinting of voter information cards. This content was shared proactively on social media and linked directly to the relevant content on the Elections Canada website. In some cases, the agency's social media posts were boosted to extend their reach and ensure that Canadians not already following Elections Canada's social media accounts had access to the correct information.

As part of its broader digital communications strategy, Elections Canada expanded its social media presence during the 45th general election. The agency developed 232 messages, which led to the publication of 1,531 individual posts across platforms including X, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn; this represented an increase from the 1,059 posts shared during the 44th general election. A key focus of this content was electoral integrity and the safeguards that were in place throughout the electoral process. To reach mobile audiences more effectively, the agency introduced vertical video⁴³ content for 26 videos addressing topics such as election integrity and the electoral process, along with six other videos providing general information on when, where and the ways to vote.

Recognizing the vital role that digital platforms play in shaping public debate, particularly during the election period, the Chief Electoral Officer wrote to eight⁴⁴ major digital platforms on April 1, 2025. Each [letter](#)^{lxxviii} was published on the Elections Canada website and acknowledged the contributions that these companies were expected to make during the upcoming election period to help share accurate electoral information. The correspondence emphasized the importance of transparency, accountability and the need for Canadians to know who is trying to influence their choices online.

Through these combined efforts, Elections Canada worked to ensure that accurate and timely information reached as many Canadians as possible throughout the election period. By addressing inaccurate information, increasing transparency and expanding its digital presence, the agency fostered a more informed public conversation about the electoral process and helped Canadians access the reliable information they needed to participate with confidence.

Physical Security

In response to rising social tensions surrounding the safety of political candidates and the integrity of the electoral process, Elections Canada entered the 45th general election with heightened vigilance and strategic foresight. Drawing on lessons learned from the

⁴² These languages were Arabic, Belarussian, Cantonese, Czech, English, French, Hindi, Hungarian, Ilocano, Korean, Mandarin, Marathi, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Urdu and Vietnamese.

⁴³ Vertical video is content filmed in portrait orientation, designed to be viewed on mobile devices without rotating the screen.

⁴⁴ These were LinkedIn, Google (YouTube), Meta (Facebook/Instagram), Reddit, Snap Inc., TikTok, X and Microsoft.

44th general election, the agency undertook several measures to safeguard democratic participation, including releasing an interpretation note on [Security Expenses of Registered Parties, Candidates and Contestants](#),^{lxxix} which provided clearer guidelines and expectations for managing security-related costs. This proactive approach reflected Elections Canada's commitment to supporting candidates, workers and electors amid an increasingly charged political landscape. Elections Canada also provided candidates and political parties with [information on the security services](#)^{lxxx} offered by the Government of Canada as part of a new initiative to protect candidates during the electoral process.

In total, 44 security incidents were reported during the 45th general election, 29 of which required police intervention. Notably, this represents a decrease of more than 50 percent compared to the 44th general election, when 102 incidents were reported, 78 of which required police intervention.

Among the 29 incidents from the 45th general election that required police intervention, three were classified as physical assaults involving shoving and punching, while another three were related to criminal activity unrelated to the electoral process. The remaining 23 incidents involved a range of disruptive or threatening behaviours, including confrontations over voter identification requirements and tampering with signage or other election materials.

Throughout the election period, Elections Canada actively worked to mitigate the impact of these incidents by continuously monitoring the environment, communicating with security partners and supporting election workers with additional resources. These measures helped protect the safety of candidates, election workers and electors, while supporting the smooth delivery of the election in a challenging environment. By responding to incidents promptly and providing clear guidance on security-related matters, Elections Canada helped maintain a safe and accessible electoral process for all Canadians.

Weather Events

As in previous elections, extreme weather events had the potential to impede electors' access to certain voting options. To address these risks, Elections Canada actively monitored environmental events, prepared contingency plans and, in some cases, modified operations.

During the 45th general election, the northern Ontario communities of Kashechewan and Neskantaga declared separate states of emergency. In Kashechewan, the declaration was made due to the risk of spring flooding, while in Neskantaga, it followed the contamination of a local health facility. As a result, some residents from both communities were evacuated to other locations in the province, while others remained in their homes.

To support electors who had been evacuated, the Chief Electoral Officer issued two [adaptations](#)^{lxxxi} to the [Canada Elections Act](#).^{lxxxii} These adaptations authorized returning officers to establish polling stations in the locations where evacuees were being temporarily housed. They also allowed the use of transfer certificates and provided greater flexibility in confirming electors' identity and residence. Elections Canada provided information about these services through posters placed in hotels where the evacuees were staying. This outreach was reinforced through social media messaging and communications by community leaders to ensure that the relocated electors were aware of how, when and where to vote.

At the same time, polling stations were set up in Kashechewan and Neskantaga to serve electors who had not been evacuated. They ensured that all eligible residents had access to voting options regardless of their location.

Elsewhere, Elections Canada responded to local emergencies that affected polling operations. On election day in Windsor–Tecumseh–Lakeshore, a fire caused by an electrical issue disrupted services and required the relocation of several polls. An alternative location was quickly secured, and voting resumed later that afternoon with minimal delay. The change was communicated through updates to online tools, a targeted local media campaign and direct outreach to candidates.

Looking ahead, Elections Canada will continue to strengthen its planning and response capabilities to address the growing risks associated with changing weather conditions. These efforts will help ensure that electoral operations remain resilient and that electors are able to access voting services, even under challenging or unexpected conditions.



3. Closing the General Election

Counting and Validation of Election Results

In a Canadian general election, counting and validating ballots are two distinct but interconnected steps in the electoral process. The counting of ballots begins immediately after the polls close on election night. At each polling station, an election worker opens the ballot box and examines each ballot in the presence of another election worker and, whenever possible, candidates or their representatives. If no candidates or representatives are present, at least two witnesses, usually additional election workers, must observe the process to ensure transparency. The ballots are then sorted and tallied, with any that meet legal grounds for rejection set aside.

In accordance with the [Canada Elections Act](#),^{lxxxiii} counting may begin only once polling has concluded. While the Chief Electoral Officer holds the authority to adapt certain provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* to start counting earlier in exceptional circumstances, permitting early counting requires careful deliberation to safeguard procedural fairness and preserve public trust. Moreover, candidates' representatives play a critical role in both monitoring the count and participating in “get out the vote” efforts throughout election day. Initiating the count prematurely could compromise their ability to fulfill both responsibilities, thereby impacting electoral oversight and campaign operations.

Special ballots follow a separate counting process. They are counted either at the local office in each electoral district by teams of election workers or at Elections Canada's central processing centre in Ottawa by special ballot officers. Whenever possible, and subject to their availability, these counts take place in the presence of candidates' representatives.

Once the count is complete, the results are recorded on a Statement of the Vote, sometimes referred to as a tally sheet, transmitted by phone to the local Elections Canada office for consolidation and then entered manually into Elections Canada's results system. This process enables the agency to share the initial results with the public on election night. While this approach allows the agency to quickly collect and report on results, it is susceptible to human error in the computation and reporting of Statements of the Vote, which is part of why these results are considered preliminary.

Once all the ballots have been counted, the next step is the validation of results. It takes place a few days later and is an administrative review conducted by the returning officer in the presence of candidates or their representatives. Unlike the initial count, the validation process does not involve re-examining individual ballots. Instead, the returning officer reviews the Statements of the Vote from each polling station and cross-references them with the results entered into Elections Canada's system on election night. This important quality assurance process detects any communication or data entry errors that may have been made in reporting the results. If any errors are found, such as mistakes in addition or missing information, they are corrected before the validated results of the election are submitted to Elections Canada.

Counting Ballots in Carleton (Ontario)

The unusually [large ballot used in Carleton](#)^{lxxxiv} during the 45th general election caused significant delays in the vote-counting process. While the core procedures for counting remained consistent with other electoral districts, the size and complexity of the ballot required more time and effort at nearly every stage.

Unfolding the oversized ballots and locating the mark beside the selected candidate took longer, especially since each candidate's name had to be read aloud for the candidates' representatives. In exercising their right to inspect the ballots, the candidates' representatives occasionally requested a closer examination to verify the marks and ensure that the ballots met all the necessary requirements. Sorting ballots into piles for each of the 91 candidates also took more time and required additional space.

To manage potential delays, Elections Canada implemented several measures. An [adaptation](#)^{lxxxv} was issued to allow the votes cast at advance polls to be counted starting six hours before the close of polls on election day. Normally, the counting of votes cast at advance polls can only begin, with the prior approval of the Chief Electoral Officer,⁴⁵ one hour before the close of polls on election day. Additional workers were also assigned to count the advance ballots, and procedural adjustments were introduced to speed up the process. Despite the complexity of the ballot and the added demands on election workers, the reporting of results in Carleton proceeded within the expected timelines as the need for additional time had been anticipated.

Challenges with Special Ballot Voting

While, overall, some 1.2 million electors successfully cast their vote by special ballot, a number of incidents occurred where some special ballots were improperly handled and excluded from the official count. Reporting on these incidents is important to ensure transparency and to support continuous improvement.

On May 7, 2025, Elections Canada informed all registered political parties that 822 national special ballots,⁴⁶ cast by electors from 74 electoral districts across the country, had been mistakenly kept at the local Elections Canada office for Coquitlam–Port Coquitlam (British Columbia). The issue was a result of human error⁴⁷ and a failure to comply with written procedures. According to the [Canada Elections Act](#),^{lxxxvi} the ballots should have been returned to Elections Canada's central processing centre by the deadline of April 28, 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time in order for them to be legally counted. An initial analysis, outlined in a [news release](#),^{lxxxvii} showed that the outcome would not have been affected in any of the 74 impacted districts. To protect voter secrecy in electoral districts where only one ballot was

⁴⁵ See subsection 289(4) of the *Canada Elections Act*.

⁴⁶ National special ballots are ballots cast by electors from within Canada but outside their electoral district.

⁴⁷ The local Elections Canada office misunderstood the Special Voting Rules due to differences between federal and British Columbia's provincial regulations. Two days after polling day, office staff, having received no instructions on counting these ballots, reviewed the guidelines and discovered their error. They promptly notified Elections Canada of the mistake.

cast, the Chief Electoral Officer decided not to adapt the rules to allow these ballots to be counted before the validation of the results.

Additional issues arose in Cape Breton–Canso–Antigonish (Nova Scotia) and Northumberland–Clarke (Ontario), where packages of 235 and 232 local special ballots,⁴⁸ respectively, were found when closing the local Elections Canada offices, after the validation of results had been completed. Over 4,000 votes separated the winning candidate and the one in second place in Cape Breton–Canso–Antigonish, and over 2,000 votes separated the winning candidate and the one in second place in Northumberland–Clarke.

The votes in these three electoral districts had been validly cast and should normally have been counted. Because of this, the Chief Electoral Officer ordered that the ballots be counted following the election and, for transparency, that the tally be published alongside the official voting results, except in those instances where the secrecy of the vote could not be protected.

Finally, another error was identified in the electoral district of Terrebonne (Quebec) concerning the preparation of mailing labels for special ballot return envelopes. Specifically, the last three characters of the postal code for the local Elections Canada office address were incorrect in some instances. In total, the local office issued 115 special ballots for local voting by mail, of which:

- ▶ A total of 85 ballots were returned on time and counted.
- ▶ Five ballots were received late.
- ▶ Sixteen ballots were not returned to the local office, of which at least one was returned to the elector by Canada Post after the election.
- ▶ Nine electors who had requested a special ballot voted in person at the local Elections Canada office.

The error in Terrebonne has resulted in a contested election, which is currently underway, as indicated further below.

To prevent similar occurrences in future elections and to recognize that, with the evolution of the demand for special ballots, the agency needs to make sure that its supporting infrastructure and controls also evolve, Elections Canada will conduct a comprehensive review of its training, control mechanisms and processes.

Validation of Results

For the final validation of results, 341 electoral districts had finished by May 5, 2025, within the seven-day time frame, while the validation dates in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories had to be adjourned due to delays in the return of the ballot boxes to local Elections Canada offices caused by logistical and weather challenges during transportation. The validation was completed in the Northwest Territories on May 9, 2025, and the validation was completed in Nunavut on May 16, 2025.

⁴⁸ Local special ballots are ballots cast by electors from within their electoral district.

Judicial Recounts

Judicial recounts are formal processes conducted to verify the accuracy of vote counts in electoral districts and ensure confidence in the election outcome. They are overseen by a superior court judge and may involve reviewing the official Statement of the Vote or conducting a full manual recount of all ballots. Since the judge may find errors in the ballot count or make decisions with regard to rejecting a ballot, or not, a judicial recount may change the count established at validation and become the official results of an election.

Within four days after validation, an application for a judicial recount must be made by the returning officer if the results in the electoral district are exceptionally close. Such judicial recounts are often called automatic recounts. An application for a judicial recount may also be made by an elector, within the same time frame, in case of errors found in the tabulation or counting of the votes. This second type of recount is allowed at the discretion of the courts.

The judicial recount procedure is set out in detail in the [Canada Elections Act](#),^{lxxxviii} however, because recounts are conducted by different courts, and because judicial discretion plays a role in setting the procedure, there can be a variance in how the procedure is applied and each judge's decisions to reject or accept ballots. This was the case during the four recounts that took place during the 45th general election, though it should be noted that the judges largely took a consistent approach to the substantive question of what ballots to accept. Elections Canada has taken note of the fact that, in most cases, judges took a more generous approach to accepting ballots than elections workers performing the original counts. In some cases, however, judges applied a stricter interpretation and rejected ballots that would typically be accepted by other judges. The agency periodically reviews its materials, including the judicial recount handbook that is provided to judges and counsel participating in recounts, to help ensure that the rules are clearly explained and promote consistency.

The *Canada Elections Act* states that an automatic judicial recount must take place if the difference between the number of votes cast for the candidate with the most votes and the number of votes cast for any other candidate is less than one one-thousandth of the valid votes cast. This threshold was met in three electoral districts:⁴⁹

- ▶ Milton East–Halton Hills South (Ontario), where the difference between the two leading candidates was 29 votes.
- ▶ Terra Nova–The Peninsulas (Newfoundland and Labrador), where the difference between the two leading candidates was 12 votes.
- ▶ Terrebonne (Quebec), where the difference between the two leading candidates was 44 votes.

In Milton East–Halton Hills South, the preliminary results showed Conservative candidate Parm Gill in the lead by 298 votes. After the validation of results, Liberal candidate Kristina

⁴⁹ Judicial recounts are a common occurrence in general elections. The average number of automatic judicial recounts over the last four general elections is four, making this result consistent with historical trends.

Tesser Derksen led by 29 votes. A judicial recount confirmed Liberal candidate Kristina Tesser Derksen as the winner, with a final margin of 21 votes.

In Terra Nova–The Peninsulas, Liberal candidate Anthony Germain held a 12-vote lead on election night and after validation. Following a judicial recount, Conservative candidate Jonathan Rowe was declared the winner by 12 votes.

In Terrebonne, the preliminary results showed Liberal candidate Tatiana Auguste in the lead by 83 votes. After the validation of results, Bloc Québécois candidate Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné led by 44 votes. A judicial recount declared the Liberal candidate, Tatiana Auguste, the winner by a single vote.

A judicial recount may also be requested by an elector or candidate who believes there were errors in the vote count.⁵⁰ In Windsor–Tecumseh–Lakeshore (Ontario), such an application was made by Liberal candidate Irek Kusmierczyk and elector Manvir Shokar. They argued that ballots had been improperly rejected or not counted. The Ontario Superior Court granted the application, and the recount was conducted under judicial supervision. The final margin was just four votes, confirming the Conservative candidate, Kathy Borrelli, as the winner.

Table 8 below summarizes the vote counts for the two leading candidates in these four electoral districts before and after the recounts.

Table 8—Recount Results						
Electoral district	Before recount¹			After recount		
	Liberal	Conservative	Bloc Québécois	Liberal	Conservative	Bloc Québécois
Milton East–Halton Hills South	32,130	32,101	N/A	32,178	32,157	N/A
Terra Nova–The Peninsulas	19,704	19,692	N/A	19,593	19,605	N/A
Terrebonne	23,296	N/A	23,340	23,352	N/A	23,351
Windsor–Tecumseh–Lakeshore	31,985	32,062	N/A	32,086	32,090	N/A

Table Note 1: These figures reflect the results after official validation, not the preliminary election night totals.

For more information on judicial recounts, please consult the [Judicial Recount Handbook](#).^{lxxxix}

⁵⁰ Upon application by an elector, a judge may conduct a judicial recount only if there is credible affidavit evidence of an election officer incorrectly counting or rejecting ballots, an election officer writing an incorrect number on the Statement of the Vote for the votes cast for a candidate or the returning officer incorrectly adding up the results set out in the Statements of the Vote.

Contested Elections

Under the [Canada Elections Act](#),^{xc} an election may be contested either on the ground that the elected candidate was not eligible to be a candidate or that there were irregularities, fraud or corrupt or illegal practices that affected the result of the election. An elector or candidate in the electoral district may apply, to the Federal Court or the superior court of a province or territory, to contest an election within 30 days of either the publication of the election results in the *Canada Gazette* or the day the elector or candidate learned of the grounds for contesting the election. After hearing the case, the court may dismiss the application or annul the results of the election. If the election is annulled, a by-election must take place to fill the vacant seat in the House of Commons.

On May 23, 2025, an application contesting the results of the election in the electoral district of Terrebonne (Quebec) was filed at the Superior Court of Québec by the Bloc Québécois candidate Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné, who, following a judicial recount, lost by only one vote. In her application, Sinclair-Desgagné argued that an irregularity⁵¹ had prevented an elector from voting by special ballot, which had affected the results of the election. At the time of the publication of this report, the outcome of this application is unknown.

Paying Election Workers

Elections Canada commits to paying election workers within six to eight weeks after election day. For this general election, the agency had paid more than 230,000 workers after four weeks. As in any event of this magnitude, some workers' pay needed more attention as the files were incomplete at the time the returning officers were ready to close their offices. Returning officers have been working diligently to ensure that any missed timesheets or information is submitted promptly. Elections Canada continues to work on processing and resolving exceptional cases.

Estimated Cost of the Election

The cost of the 45th general election is estimated at \$570 million. Expenditures related to this general election are being incurred mainly over four fiscal years (2024–25 to 2027–28) as they include the delivery and closing of the event as well as evaluation activities and reimbursements to political entities.

As of this report, many disbursements were still being processed or had yet to be made; nevertheless, an estimate for these items is included in the total cost. Similarly, the costs related to the reimbursement of election expenses for political parties and candidates are based on an estimate.

⁵¹ The last three characters of the postal code in the address of the local Elections Canada office were incorrect on the special ballot return envelope, resulting in the ballot being returned to the elector rather than sent to the local office.

Updates to the cost of the 45th general election, as well as additional details and a cost comparison with the previous general election, will be made available in the [Official Reports](#)^{xci} section of the Elections Canada website.

Appendix A

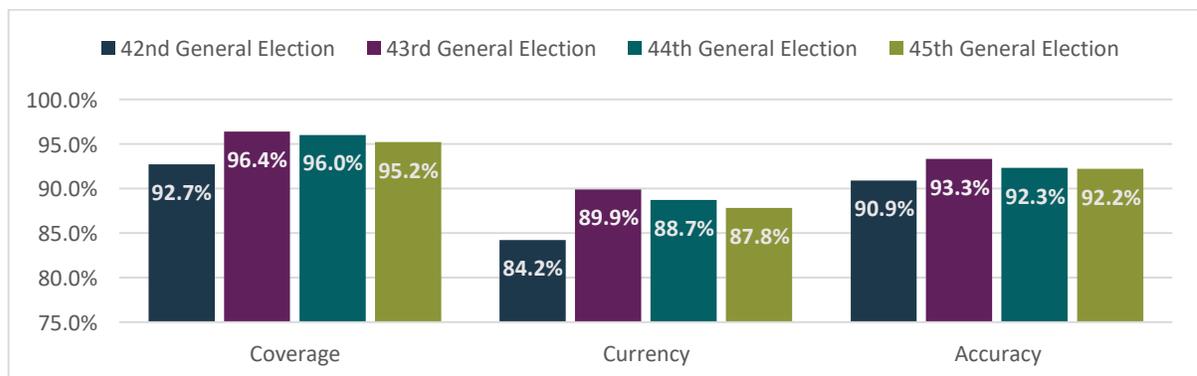
National Register of Electors

Coverage, Currency and Accuracy of the Register

Ensuring that the data contained in the National Register of Electors (the Register) reflects the most up-to-date information available contributes to reinforcing Canadians' confidence in the integrity of the electoral process. The quality of the information ensures that all electors in the Register will appear on the lists of electors and, if their information is current, receive a voter information card (VIC) at their present address. It is also important to political parties and candidates wanting to engage with electors. Quality is a function of three factors: coverage, currency and accuracy.

- ▶ **Coverage** is the proportion of all electors (i.e. Canadian citizens who are 18 or older) who are registered to vote. It has historically varied between 91 and 96 percent, and was at 95.2 percent at the start of the 45th general election when the preliminary lists of electors were issued.
- ▶ **Currency** is the proportion of all electors who are registered at their current address. It has historically varied between 82 and 90 percent, and was at 87.8 percent at the start of the 45th general election when the preliminary lists of electors were issued.
- ▶ **Accuracy** is the proportion of registered electors whose address is current. These electors are correctly registered at their current address and would have received their VIC. Historically, accuracy has varied between 88 and 93 percent, and was at 92.2 percent at the start of the 45th general election when the preliminary lists of electors were issued.

Quality of the preliminary lists of electors (as measured at the beginning of the election period)



Initiatives to Improve the Register

Many factors affect the quality of the data in the Register, including demographic changes and the availability of data. To maximize its accuracy before the 45th general election, Elections Canada undertook the following special initiatives, beyond processing its regular data sources:

- ▶ Reviewed elector records containing the same last name, date of birth and address, and removed any duplicates.
- ▶ Invited electors to update their voter registration or confirm that they were eligible to vote.
- ▶ Invited youth to register online when they reached the age of 18 and added pre-registered future electors as they turned 18.

Between the 44th and 45th general elections, Elections Canada conducted multiple mailouts, supported by advertising and communication campaigns, to verify the accuracy of elector information. In total, three rounds of verification notices were sent by Canada Post to electors listed in the Register whose information was suspected to be outdated. In June 2023, 85,295 letters were sent; in December 2023, 61,562 more were issued; and in January 2025, a final round of 34,493 notices were mailed. In the notices, electors were asked to verify or correct their information using the agency's online [Voter Registration](#)^{xcii} service or to contact the agency's call centre if they were unable to use the online service. The mailing was part of Elections Canada's ongoing efforts to ensure that the Register is as accurate as possible. The [Canada Elections Act](#)^{xciii} authorizes the Chief Electoral Officer to remove from the Register the name of any person who fails to comply with the request within 60 days of receiving a verification notice. In August and September 2023, 94 percent of electors who received verification notices and did not respond were removed from the Register. This removal rate increased to 98 percent in February and March 2024, and was at 97 percent in March 2025.

Elections Canada also sent registration letters to individuals who were identified as potential new electors in select regions with lower youth coverage. The goal of these mailings was to encourage youth to register through the online Voter Registration service if they were eligible to vote. Between the close of the 44th and the 45th general elections, Elections Canada mailed more than 529,000 letters to potential new electors aged 18 and 19 years old. As a result of these youth mailing initiatives, just over 44,000 new electors were added to the Register. To build on these efforts, a digital campaign was deployed in September and October 2024 to encourage youth to register to vote or to confirm that their registration reflected their current address. This initiative was strategically timed to coincide with the back-to-school period, when many students typically change their residence. The campaign substantially exceeded expectations, generating close to 11 million impressions, compared to the 2.8 million initially projected.

Elections Canada replaced its previous approach of sending qualification letters with a more efficient, streamlined process for managing non-citizen data received from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Under the former system, individuals listed in the Register whose information matched IRCC data identifying them as non-citizens, such as permanent residents or foreign nationals, were sent letters requesting confirmation of their eligibility. If no response was received, their names were removed from the Register. The new process now enables Elections Canada to act more promptly and effectively on IRCC data, removing ineligible individuals from the Register without requiring a mailout. Since the

44th general election, approximately 43,000 potential non-citizens have been removed from the Register.

To further improve the quality of the Register before the next general election, Elections Canada plans to:

- ▶ Enhance registration tools and access for electors by:
 - Continuing to sign agreements with partners and data suppliers to obtain data for Canadians under 18 so they can be easily added to the Register when they become eligible.
 - Expanding the online [Voter Registration](#)^{xciv} service to support registrations or updates for specific groups, including individuals under 18, those who have changed their name and those with non-standard addresses.
- ▶ Improve address quality and mail deliverability by:
 - Upgrading data management tools and leveraging additional data sources to enhance the accuracy of elector addresses.
 - Using Canada Post resources, such as a Statement of Accuracy⁵² and monthly data files, to improve delivery of voter information materials.
 - Reviewing the relationship between Indigenous reserve postal codes and electoral geography to identify and correct inconsistencies.
- ▶ Strengthen data processing and record accuracy by manually reviewing elector records containing the same last name, date of birth and address to remove duplicates.

These projects and enhanced processes will ensure ongoing improvements in the coverage, currency and accuracy of the lists of electors, reducing the need for electors to register or update their information during an election and strengthening electoral integrity.

Online Registration

Throughout the revision period, electors could use the online Voter Registration service to check if they were registered to vote, register, update their address information or apply to vote by mail using a special ballot.

Throughout the election period, 1,947,317 million users accessed the online Voter Registration service to check if they were registered. More than 77,000 individuals successfully added themselves to the lists of electors, and approximately 121,000 updated or corrected their information.

As in previous elections, uptake of the online Voter Registration service was most prevalent among 18–24-year-olds, who accounted for 59.2 percent of all new registrations. However, the 25–44 age group made the most use of the service overall, representing 43 percent of confirmations and 53.8 percent of all updates.

⁵² A Statement of Accuracy is generated by comparing a mailing list or database to Canada Post's address data using recognized address accuracy software or through an approved mail service provider. The resulting report helps assess the quality and deliverability of address information.

Appendix B

Adaptations Made Pursuant to Subsection 17(1) of the *Canada Elections Act* During the 45th General Election

Subsection 17(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*^{xcv} (the Act) authorizes the Chief Electoral Officer to adapt any provision of the Act during an election period or within 30 days after the election. To exercise this authority, the Chief Electoral Officer must be satisfied that the adaptation is necessary because of an emergency, an unusual or unforeseen circumstance or an error. This power of adaptation may be used only for the purpose of enabling electors to exercise their right to vote or enabling the counting of votes. This power cannot be used to extend voting hours at an advance polling station and in only limited circumstances to extend voting hours at a polling station on election day.

Statutory provisions	Explanatory notes
Sections 116, 119, 140.1, 140.2, 150, 151, 152, 283, 284, 288 and 289	<p>Title: 17-G-2025-01</p> <p>Purpose: To ensure that the names of all candidates can appear on the ballot and bring related amendments to voting procedures and the counting of votes in the electoral district of Carleton.</p> <p>Explanation: The Act is very specific regarding the template and format of the ballot, as well as the paper on which the ballot is printed. The printing of ballots in the form prescribed in the Act on the paper usually procured by the Chief Electoral Officer physically limits to 26 the number of candidates who can appear on the ballot.</p> <p>As 91 candidates were confirmed in the electoral district in Carleton, the template and format of the ballot needed to be modified to a two-column ballot model rather than the one-column ballot prescribed by the Act in order to include the names of all confirmed candidates. This alternate ballot format allows for the initialing of the ballots by an election officer and the inscription of the elector's polling division number on the back of the ballot as safeguards to the integrity of the voting process even though it does not allow the ballot to feature a numbered stub and counterfoil. It also maintains the font size of the ordinary ballot, minimizing barriers for electors. The voting procedure and the rules governing the counting of the votes were also adjusted to align with the unusual format and size of the adapted two-column ballot.</p>

Section 143

Title: 17-G-2025-02**Purpose:** To facilitate the proof of identification and residence for electors appearing on the list of electors in the electoral district of Nunavut.**Explanation:** Due to difficulties securing polling places in the electoral district of Nunavut, the voter information card was distributed later than anticipated. It was likely that these electors would not receive their voter information in time for the advance polling period and polling day. In this context, the purpose of this adaptation was to ensure that electors who were already registered to vote in this electoral district were not deprived of their right to vote because, due to the delay in receiving the voting information card, they had fewer options to provide proof of residence in the manner prescribed by the Act.

Considering that electors who are registered to vote in these communities have already established that they reside there, many communities in Nunavut are composed of a small and stable population, and the residence of community members is known throughout the community, this adaptation allowed the identity and residence of these electors to be considered proven if the election officer designated by the returning officer was satisfied as to the identity and residence of the person intending to vote.

Section 173

Title: 17-G-2025-03**Purpose:** To allow for ballot production at certain advance polls in the Northwest Territories and West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country electoral districts which could run out of ballots.**Explanation:** The Act prescribes specific rules for the production of ballots.

In the electoral districts of Northwest Territories and West Vancouver–Sunshine Coast–Sea to Sky Country, the higher-than-expected voter turnout in the first three days of the advance poll created reason to believe that some polling stations may run out of ballots and be unable to replenish them before the close of advance polls.

In light of these circumstances, this adaptation allows for the production of ballots under the supervision of an election officer of these advance polling stations to ensure that there are sufficient ballots for electors to be able to cast their vote.

Title: 17-G-2025-04

Purpose: To allow the counting of votes cast at advance polls in the electoral district of Carleton to start six hours before the close of polling stations on polling day.

Explanation: The Act prescribes that that no person shall count the votes cast at an advance poll before the close of voting hours on polling day. An exception permits, with the Chief Electoral Officer's approval, the counting of these votes one hour before close of voting, but not earlier.

Section 289

As a result of the fact that 91 candidates have been confirmed in the electoral district of Carleton, the format of the ballot was adapted to include the names of all 91 candidates. The ballot in this electoral district had a width of 30.48 centimetres (12 inches) and a length of 97.08 centimetres (38.22 inches). The manipulation of a ballot of this size, the number of candidates, and the use of more ballot boxes to accommodate the ballot size added to the time required for counting votes.

Considering these circumstances, this adaptation allowed counting of the votes cast at an advance poll to start six hours before the close of voting hours on polling day as to not unduly delay the count.

Title: 17-G-2025-05

Purpose: To modify the conditions of the counting of the votes cast at advance polls to offer the best experience possible to electors and to not unduly delay the count.

Explanation: While this adaptation also modifies the conditions surrounding the counting of votes cast at advance poll, it is different from adaptation 17-G-2025-04 which is specific to the special circumstances in the electoral district of Carleton regarding the unusual ballot sizes.

Section 289

This adaptation was applicable to all electoral districts across Canada, except for Carleton, and provided the possibility to begin counting the vote cast at an advance poll two hours before the close of voting hours on polling day instead of one hour. It also allowed for election officers who were not assigned to an advance polling station to count the votes cast at advance polls, which is usually not possible in accordance with the Act. These modifications to the conditions of the counting of the votes cast at advance polls were necessary in light of an early high voter turnout at advance polls to ensure the best possible service to electors and to not unduly delay the count.

Title: 17-G-2025-06

Purpose: To provide electors of Kashechewan evacuated due to floods a replacement voting service on polling day.

Explanation: Due to flooding in the community of Kashechewan, located in the electoral district of Kapuskasing–Timmins–Mushkegowuk in Northern Ontario, some voters had to leave their homes and were evacuated to the nearby towns and villages of Timmins, Kirkland Lake, Val-Rita, and Kapuskasing in the same electoral district.

Sections 120 and 158

To ensure that the evacuated residents from one polling division could exercise their right to vote on election day, the Act was adapted to establish two additional polling stations for that polling division on election day, located in Timmins and Kapuskasing, as it does not allow a polling division to be assigned to multiple polling stations. The Act was also adapted to allow voters from Kashechewan affected by the flooding to request a transfer certificate authorizing them to vote at any other polling station located within the same electoral district.

Title: 17-G-2025-07

Purpose: To provide electors of Neskantaga affected or evacuated due to floods a replacement voting service on polling day

Explanation: Due to flooding in the community of Neskantaga, located in the electoral district of Thunder Bay—Superior North in Northern Ontario, some voters had to leave their homes and were evacuated to a hotel in Thunder Bay located in another electoral district. Other affected voters from Neskantaga remained in their community despite the flooding.

Sections 120 and 143 To ensure that the evacuated residents from one polling division could exercise their right to vote on election day, the Act was adapted to establish an additional polling station for that polling division on election day in an area of the city of Thunder Bay that falls within a different electoral district. This was necessary because the Act does not allow a returning officer to establish a polling station outside their own electoral district or to assign a polling division to multiple polling stations. The Act was also adapted to facilitate proof of residence and identity for evacuated electors, as many of them did not have adequate identification to meet proof of identity and residence requirements.

Statutory provisions

Explanatory notes

Section 284

Title: 17-G-2025-08

Purpose: To permit the counting of certain ballots of electors in the electoral district of Sudbury East–Manitoulin–Nickel Belt.

Explanation: The Act indicates that the election officer who counts the votes cast at an advance poll shall reject any ballot that has not been marked in a circle at the right of the candidates' names or on which there is writing or a mark by which the elector could be identified.

On April 19, 2025, in the voting compartments at the advance polling place situated at the Centennial Community Centre in the electoral district of Sudbury East–Manitoulin–Nickel Belt, instructions on how to mark both a special ballot and regular ballot were displayed in error in the voting compartment. Voting compartments should only have included instructions on how to mark regular ballots, as only this type of ballot is used at advance polls.

Since this error had the potential to cause confusion for some electors as to how to correctly mark their regular ballot and result in ballots being rejected, the adaptation ensured that the ballots of electors that had been marked incorrectly because of the presence of two sets of instructions were not rejected.

Section 128

Title: 17-G-2025-09**Purpose:** To modify the opening hours of certain polling stations on polling day in six electoral districts.**Explanation:** The Act prescribes voting hours on polling day based on time zone and provides that polling stations are to remain open for 12 hours.

In the electoral districts of Abitibi–Baie-James–Nunavik–Eyou, Kapuskasing–Timmins–Mushkegowuk, Desnethé–Missinippi–Churchill River, Prince George–Peace River–Northern Rockies, Skeena–Bulkley Valley and Fort McMurray–Cold Lake, difficulties recruiting enough election officers to ensure the operation of the planned polling stations, as well as the distance that election officers have to travel to reach these remote communities, made it impossible to provide a 12 hour voting period for these communities on polling day.

In light of these circumstances, the adaptation provides the returning officer the discretion to set a shorter time period during which the polling station will be open in these communities. This is to be done with prior approval from the Chief Electoral Officer and while ensuring that the adapted time period provides electors with a reasonable opportunity to vote.

Sections 283, 284,
287 and 288**Title:** 17-G-2025-10**Purpose:** To permit the counting of certain ballots of electors who were given ballots from another electoral district.**Explanation:** Despite quality control efforts, a small number of ballots printed for another electoral district were included in booklets used for advance polling division 601 in Calgary Centre and advance polling divisions 602 and 617 in Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke. As one elector in Calgary Centre and three electors in in Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke had indicated to Elections Canada that they have voted at advance poll using ballots printed for another electoral district than their electoral district, there was a risk that these ballots could be rejected during the count.

The adaptation was made to prevent this risk from materializing and ensure that the ballots of these electors could be counted. Ultimately, there was no need to use this adaptation as no ballots printed for another electoral district were found during the count.

Section 284

Title: 17-G-2025-11A**Purpose:** To permit the counting of certain ballots of electors in the electoral district of Cape Breton–Canso–Antigonish.**Explanation:** The Act indicates that the election officer who counts the votes cast at an advance poll shall reject any ballot that has not been marked in the circle to the right of the candidates' names or on which there is writing or a mark by which the elector could be identified.

On April 18, 19, 20, and 21, 2025, in the voting compartments at the advance polling place situated at the Ardoise Community Centre in the electoral district of Cape Breton–Canso–Antigonish, instructions on how to mark a special ballot instead of a regular ballot were displayed in error in the voting compartment. Voting compartments should have included instructions on how to mark regular ballots, as only this type of ballot is used at advance polls. This error had the potential to cause confusion for some electors as to how to correctly mark their regular ballot and could result in their ballot being rejected.

The adaptation ensured that the ballots of electors that had been marked incorrectly because of the presence of the wrong set of instructions were not rejected.

Sections 284 and 285

Title: 17-G-2025-12**Purpose:** To permit the counting of ballots of electors who were asked to initial their ballots in the electoral district of Mount Royal.**Explanation:** An election officer assigned to the polling station located at the Hilton Garden Inn Montreal Midtown in the electoral district of Mount Royal on election day failed to initial the ballots as required by section 138 of the Act. Instead, the officer asked voters to initial their own ballots. Since any ballot that contains a mark or inscription that could identify the voter must be rejected during the vote count, these voters' ballots would not have been counted without an adaptation of the Act.

The adaptation allowed for the ballots of at least 29 voters in the electoral district of Mount Royal not to be rejected solely because the voter had written their initials on the back of the ballot. To maintain the secrecy of the vote, the Act was also adapted to provide that the ballots initialed by voters be counted in accordance with the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer.

Appendix C

Instructions Issued Pursuant to Section 179 of the *Canada Elections Act*

The Chief Electoral Officer may, for the purpose of adapting any provision of the Special Voting Rules in Part 11—sections 177 to 280—of the [Canada Elections Act](#)^{xvii} (the Act), issue instructions to execute the intent of those sections in a particular circumstance. In general, instructions address issues with the Special Voting Rules process that are not contemplated by the Act, or they fill gaps in the Act that would prevent electors who are otherwise eligible to vote from casting their ballot. These instructions can be made applicable for the purposes of a particular election only, or they can be made to continue to apply for future elections until rescinded by the Chief Electoral Officer or superseded by new instructions made by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Statutory provisions	Explanatory notes
Sections 190, subsection 205(3) (Applied during the 45th general election only)	<p>Title: 179-G-2025-01</p> <p>Purpose: To provide an alternative voting period to certain electors who are members of the Canadian Forces participating in an operation.</p> <p>Explanation: Due to the impact on the Canadian Forces Operation CROCODILE, it was not possible to establish a polling station to allow members of the Canadian Forces participating in this operation to vote by special ballot during the voting period set by the Act. The Act stipulates that any elector who is a member of the Canadian Forces must vote under the Special Voting Rules between the fourteenth and ninth day before election day (April 14 to 19, 2025). An instruction authorized the commander of Operation Crocodile to hold the vote within his unit on April 11, 2025, outside the voting period provided by the Act, to allow seven electors participating in Operation Crocodile the opportunity to vote by special ballot.</p>

Title: 179-G-2025-02

Purpose: To permit the use of special ballots for voting at the office of the returning officer in the electoral district of Carleton, after regular ballots have been printed, due to the size of the adapted regular ballots in the riding.

Explanation: Due to the high number of candidates (91) in the electoral district of Carleton in the general election, the format of the regular ballot used in the district had to be adapted and significantly enlarged to include the names of all confirmed candidates and their political affiliations. This unusual format and size made it physically impossible to administer the regular ballot voting procedure at the office of the returning officer in the electoral district of Carleton as prescribed by the Act, because the envelopes used to insert the ballots were not compatible with the adapted regular ballot.

Section 241 and subsection 227(2) of the Act stipulate that an elector who applies in person at the office of a returning officer for registration and special ballot, after the regular ballots have been printed, must receive a regular ballot and insert the marked ballot into an envelope.

This instruction required electors in the electoral district of Carleton who wished to vote in person at the office of the returning officer, after the regular ballots had been printed, to exercise their right to vote using a special ballot, without compromising the integrity or secrecy of the vote.

Section 241

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Statutory provisions

Explanatory notes

Sections 181 and 182, paragraph 267(3)(a), and subsection 267(3.2) and 269(3)

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Title: 179-G-2025-03

Purpose: To permit the appointment of additional Special Voting Rules Administrators due to the high number of applications for registration and special ballot.

Explanation: Due to a significant increase in applications for registration and special ballot submitted by electors during the early weeks of the election period, it became evident that it would be practically impossible for a single person to perform all the duties assigned to the Special Voting Rules Administrator during the general election, under Part 11 of the Act. Since the Act does not allow for the delegation of certain responsibilities assigned to the Special Voting Rules Administrator, it had to be adapted to meet the demand and needs of electors voting under the Special Voting Rules.

These instructions allowed for the temporary appointment of four additional Special Voting Rules Administrators until the day after election day. They were authorized to carry out the responsibilities assigned to the Special Voting Rules Administrator, including those duties that the Act currently prohibits from being delegated.

Sections 232 and 237.1

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Title: 179-G-2025-04

Purpose: To provide electors in West Dawson with a replacement voting service due to lack of access to polling places.

Explanation: The electors of West Dawson, a remote northern community located in the electoral district of the Yukon, did not have access to the various polling places established in the district during the advance voting days and on election day due to the lack of viable transportation options. Access to Dawson City, located on the other side of the Yukon River, was not possible for voters in West Dawson. The ice road typically used at that time of year was closed, and the ferry that connects the community to Dawson City had not yet begun operations. The Chief Electoral Officer had to arrange an alternative voting service for the community's electors.

The instruction allowed electors in the community of West Dawson to exercise their right to vote through a special ballot voting kiosk held on April 21, 2025, as if they were applying for registration and special ballot in person at the office of their district's returning officer. Election officials had to travel to West Dawson by helicopter to conduct the vote.

Statutory provisions

Explanatory notes

Sections 232 and 237.1

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Title: 179-G-2025-05

Purpose: To offer electors residing at Argyle Manor in the electoral district of London–Fanshawe an opportunity to vote by special ballot due to a non-functioning elevator and mobility issues.

Explanation: Several residents of Argyle Manor, a building located in London in the electoral district of London–Fanshawe, were unable to leave their building due to a non-functioning elevator and mobility issues. This situation prevented these electors from accessing local voting services during advance voting, on election day, or at the office of their returning officer.

The instruction allowed residents of Argyle Manor to be given an opportunity to vote at their residence by special ballot on April 23, 2025. The Act was adapted to allow these electors to vote as if they were applying for registration and special ballot in person at the office of their district’s returning officer within the time limits set by the Act. The Act allows electors residing in Canada to apply for registration and special ballot no later than 6:00 p.m. on the sixth day before election day (April 21, 2025).

Subsections 245(1) and section 250

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Title: 179-G-2025-06

Purpose: To authorize an additional voting day at the Sorel-Tracy detention facility due to the high volume of incarcerated electors and logistical challenges.

Explanation: Due to the high number of incarcerated electors and logistical challenges, 35 registered electors incarcerated at the Sorel-Tracy detention facility who wished to vote were unable to exercise their right to vote on the specific day designated by the Act for incarcerated electors. The Act provides that every incarcerated elector has the right to vote by special ballot on the twelfth day before election day, which was April 16, 2025.

The instruction authorized an additional voting day after April 16, 2025, to allow the 35 incarcerated electors the opportunity to vote by special ballot.

Statutory provisions

Explanatory notes

Title: 179-G-2025-07

Purpose: To provide electors of the Kugluktuk community with a replacement voting service since advance polls were unable to open.

Explanation: An advance poll was scheduled to be held in the remote northern community of Kugluktuk, in the electoral district of Nunavut, on April 19, 20 and 21, 2025. However, a training officer who was supposed to deliver the election material and train the election workers was unable to arrive in time for advance voting. His flight, along with other air traffic, was delayed for several days due to poor weather conditions. The Chief Electoral Officer had to arrange an alternative voting service for the community as, according to the Act, advance voting cannot take place after the Monday before election day.

Subsection 171(2)

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

The instruction allowed electors in the community of Kugluktuk to be given another opportunity to vote through a special ballot voting kiosk held on April 21 and 22, 2025. The Act was adapted to allow electors to vote as if they were applying for registration and special ballot in person at the office of their returning officer within the time limits set by the Act. The Act allows electors residing in Canada to apply for registration and special ballot no later than 6:00 p.m. on the sixth day before election day (April 21, 2025).

Statutory provisions

Explanatory notes

Title: 179-G-2025-08

Purpose: To permit the counting of certain special ballots of electors in the electoral district of Lac-Saint-Jean who wrote the name of the political party rather than the name of the candidate on their ballot.

Paragraphs 269(1)(c)
and 279(1)(c)

(Applied during the
45th general election
only)

Explanation: A total of 243 electors in the electoral district of Lac-Saint-Jean who voted between March 23 and April 8, 2025, received incorrect information from election officials before the official list of candidates was available. They were told they could write the name of a political party instead of a candidate's name on their special ballot. However, the Act states that electors voting by special ballot must write the name of the candidate of their choice and, when multiple candidates share the same name, also include the political affiliation of the candidate. Since election officials responsible for counting ballots must reject special ballots that do not bear the name of a candidate, the ballots of these electors could not have been counted without an instruction.

As long as the special ballot clearly indicated the elector's intent, the instruction allowed the ballots of these 243 electors not to be rejected solely because the elector wrote the name of a political party that supports a candidate in the district.

Title: 179-G-2025-09

Purpose: To permit the counting of certain special ballots of electors who were not given inner or outer envelopes in the electoral district of Rosemont-La Petite-Patrie.

Paragraphs 277(1)(a)
and (b)

(Applied during the
45th general election
only)

Explanation: Eight electors in the electoral district of Rosemont-La Petite-Patrie who voted at the office of their returning officer, did not receive an inner envelope and an outer envelope to place their ballot in, as required by the Act. In accordance with the Act, these ballots must be set aside by an election official during the count and cannot be counted.

The instruction helped prevent the ballots of these eight voters from being set aside on the grounds that the ballot marked by the voter was not placed in the inner and outer envelopes, or that the declaration on the outer envelope was not signed by the voter.

Statutory provisions**Explanatory notes**

Title: 179-G-2025-10

Purpose: To permit the counting of special ballots of electors who were not given inner or outer envelopes in the electoral district of Vancouver Fraserview-South Burnaby.

Paragraphs 277(1)(a) and (b)

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Explanation: Forty-seven electors in the electoral district of Vancouver Fraserview–South Burnaby, who voted at the office of their returning officer, did not receive an inner envelope and an outer envelope to place their ballot in, as required by the Act. In accordance with the Act, these ballots must be set aside by an election official during the count and cannot be counted.

The instruction helped prevent the ballots of these 47 voters from being set aside on the grounds that the ballot marked by the voter was not placed in the inner and outer envelopes, or that the declaration on the outer envelope was not signed by the voter.

Title: 179-G-2025-11A

Purpose: To provide electors of the Kashechewam community evacuated in Toronto due to floods with a replacement voting service.

Sections 232 and 237.1

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Explanation: Due to flooding in the community of Kashechewan, located in the electoral district of Kapuskasing–Timmins–Mushkegowuk in Northern Ontario, many electors from this community were unable to vote in person in their electoral district on election day. Some electors had to leave their home and were evacuated outside their electoral district in Toronto.

To permit approximately 50 electors evacuated to Toronto to exercise their right to vote, a special ballot voting kiosk was established at the Crowne Plaza Toronto Airport Hotel on April 26 and 27, 2025. The Act only allows electors to vote in person within their own electoral district on election day. The instruction allowed these electors to vote as if they were applying for registration and special ballot in person at the office of their returning officer within the time limits set by the Act. The instructions also facilitated proof of residence and identity for evacuated electors, as many of them did not have adequate identification to meet proof of identity and residence requirements.

Statutory provisions

Explanatory notes

Section 233, 237 and paragraphs 277(1)(a) and (b)

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Title: 179-G-2025-12

Purpose: To permit the counting of special ballots of electors who were not given inner or outer envelopes in the electoral district of Leduc–Wetaskiwin.

Explanation: In the electoral district of Leduc–Wetaskiwin, 2,242 electors who voted at the office of their returning officer were not provided with an inner and outer envelope to place their ballot in, as required by the Act. Of these 2,242 electors, 1,890 were also not required to complete an application for registration and special ballot before being issued a ballot, contrary to the Act. In accordance with the Act, these ballots must be set aside by an election official during the count and cannot be counted.

The instruction allowed these 2,242 ballots to be counted, preventing them from being set aside on the grounds that the marked ballot was not placed in the outer and inner envelopes, or that the declaration on the outer envelope was not signed by the elector. For the purposes of integrity, the instruction stipulated that an application for registration and special ballot would be deemed to have been completed for the 1,890 electors who did not complete one provided that the elector proved their identity, the elector voted in the presence of an election official, and it was recorded on the electoral list that the elector received a ballot.

Subsection 232(1)

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Title: 179-G-2025-13

Purpose: To provide electors of several long-term care facilities on lockdown with a replacement voting service.

Explanation: Electors in several long-term care facilities located in seven different electoral districts were under lockdown after the sixth day before election day following the implementation of a health protocol. As a result, the returning officers in those districts were no longer able to proceed with mobile polling stations at those facilities. The only way for the residents of these facilities to exercise their right to vote was by special ballot; however, the Act does not allow applications for registration and special ballot to be completed after 6:00 p.m. on the sixth day before election day.

The instruction allowed more than 500 confined long-term care facility residents to have their applications for registration and special ballot processed and approved after the legal deadline, thereby giving them the opportunity to exercise their right to vote.

Statutory provisions**Explanatory notes**

Sections 232 and
237.1

(Applied during the
45th general election
only)

Title: 179-G-2025-14

Purpose: To provide hospitalised electors at the Montreal Neurological Institute-Hospital and Montreal General Hospital with a replacement voting service.

Explanation: The voting service for hospitalized electors at the Montreal Neurological Institute-Hospital and the Montreal General Hospital, in the electoral district of Ville-Marie–Le Sud-Ouest–Îles-des-Sœurs, was not delivered as scheduled between the eighth and sixth day before election day due to an error by an election official. Since many hospitalized electors were unable to travel to their polling station on election day, the only way for them to exercise their right to vote was to schedule an opportunity for them to vote by special ballot at these hospitals, but the Act does not allow electors to complete applications for registration and special ballot after 6:00 p.m. on the sixth day before election day.

The instruction allowed hospitalized electors at the Montreal Neurological Institute-Hospital and the Montreal General Hospital to vote by special ballot after the sixth day before election day as if they had completed their application in person at the office of their returning officer within the time period provided by the Act.

Paragraphs 267(1)(a)
and (b)

(Applied during the
45th general election
only)

Title: 179-G-2025-15

Purpose: To permit the counting of the special ballots of some incarcerated electors of the Centre regional de reception à Saint-Anne-des-Plaines due to declarations on outer envelope not signed by electors

Explanation: Several outer envelopes containing the special ballots of incarcerated electors at the regional reception centre in Saint-Anne-des-Plaines were not completed in accordance with the procedure established by the Act. In 42 cases, the declaration on the outer envelope was not signed by the elector, as required by the Act, but instead was signed by the liaison officer responsible for administering the vote at the correctional facility. Since the absence of the elector's signature on the outer envelope of a special ballot is a ground for setting the ballot aside under the Act, the ballots of these 42 incarcerated electors would not have been counted without an instruction.

The instruction prevented the ballots of these 42 electors from being set aside solely because the declaration on the outer envelope was signed by the liaison officer rather than the elector.

Statutory provisions

Explanatory notes

Section 237.1 and
subsection 239(2)

(Applied during the
45th general election
only)

Title: 179-G-2025-16

Purpose: To permit the counting of special ballots of electors of the Nahanni Butte and Wrigley communities at two polling stations in the electoral district of the Northwest Territories.

Explanation: Due to weather conditions, the plane that was supposed to transport the marked special ballots of electors from the communities of Nahanni Butte and Wrigley, in the electoral district of the Northwest Territories, could not arrive in time at the office of the returning officer for the votes to be counted. The Act stipulates that, to be counted, a special ballot marked by an elector of the electoral district must reach the office of the returning officer before the close of polls on election day.

The instruction allowed the special ballots of electors from the communities of Nahanni Butte and Wrigley to be counted as if they had been processed at the office of the returning officer in accordance with the Act, even though these ballots were physically counted at polling stations located in those two communities.

Subsection 232(1)

(Applied during the
45th general election
only)

Title: 179-G-2025-17

Purpose: To provide electors of two long-term care facilities on lockdown with a replacement voting service.

Explanation: Electors in the long-term care facilities of Maple Health Centre in the electoral district of King–Vaughan and Beverly Lodge in the electoral district of Edmonton Griesbach were under lockdown after the sixth day before election day following the implementation of a health protocol. As a result, the returning officers in those electoral districts were no longer able to organize mobile polling stations at these facilities. The only way for the residents of these facilities to exercise their right to vote was to schedule a special ballot voting opportunity even though the Act does not allow applications for registration and special ballot to be completed after 6:00 p.m. on the sixth day before election day.

The instruction allowed 173 residents confined in two long-term care facilities to have their application for registration and special ballot processed and approved after the legal deadline, thereby giving them the opportunity to exercise their right to vote.

Statutory provisions

Explanatory notes

Title: 179-G-2025-18

Purpose: To permit the counting of special ballots of electors in the electoral district of Cape Spear who were not given inner or outer envelopes.

Paragraphs 277(1)(a) and (b)

(Applied during the 45th general election only)

Explanation: Forty-six electors in the electoral district of Cape Spear who voted at the office of their returning officer were not provided with an inner and outer envelope to place their ballot in, as required by the Act. In accordance with the Act, these ballots must be set aside by an election official at the count and cannot be counted.

The instruction prevented the ballots of these 46 electors from being set aside on the grounds that the marked ballot was not placed in the outer and inner envelopes, or that the declaration on the outer envelope was not signed by the elector.



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