



ELECTIONS BC

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

GUIDE TO VOTING AND COUNTING

2024 PROVINCIAL GENERAL ELECTION

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PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide provides detailed information about voting and counting procedures for British Columbia's 43rd Provincial General Election, scheduled for October 19, 2024. This will be the first provincial general election administered under the modernized voting and counting provisions of the *Election Act* (the Act).

All voting and counting procedures are designed to comply with legislation, ensure election integrity, and provide good service to voters.

Legislative framework

The *Election Act* and regulations of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO regulations) prescribe voting and counting procedures for provincial elections. CEO regulations include the Ballot Form Regulation, the Voting Options Regulation, the Voting Opportunities Regulation, and the Vote Counting Regulation. [Appendix 1](#) provides links to the relevant legislation.

Using this guide

This guide references applicable sections of the *Election Act* and CEO regulations. References appear as a number between square brackets. All refer to the *Election Act* unless otherwise noted. For example:

“Candidates do not have to be a resident in the electoral district in which they are seeking election.” [s. 52 & *Constitution Act* s. 28 and 32]¹

The Act and its regulations are the exclusive authority on the conduct of provincial elections in British Columbia. If there is a conflict between the legislation and this guide, the Act and its regulations take precedence.

Scope of this guide

This guide provides an overview of the voting opportunities for British Columbia's next provincial general election and detailed information about voting and counting processes, including recounts of initial count and judicial recounts.

1. The example above refers to section 52 of the *Election Act* and sections 28 and 32 of the *Constitution Act*, which provide additional information about who is eligible to be a candidate in a provincial election.

Dates used in this guide assume the next provincial election will be called as scheduled on September 21, 2024 (with Final Voting Day on October 19, 2024). If the next provincial election is called prior to the scheduled date, the dates in this guide will be updated and a revised version of the guide will be published on the Elections BC website.

This guide does not cover Part 8 of the *Election Act*, which describes the requirements for applications to the Supreme Court of British Columbia to challenge an election's validity or an individual's right to take office. These challenges can only be addressed by an application under Part 8 and cannot be addressed at a judicial recount.

[s. 150]

Revision table

The table below lists the revisions made to this guide since its original publication.

Date	Version number	Description
November 10, 2023	2023/11	Original release
July 3, 2024	2024/07	Information about the use of transfer ballot boxes added under Voting Opportunities, Advance Voting (p. 20).
July 30, 2024	2024/08	Updated eligibility criteria for assisted telephone voting (Appendix 2, p. 54).

BACKGROUND

B.C.'s next provincial election is scheduled for October 19, 2024. This will be the province's 43rd Provincial General Election and the first administered under the modernized voting and counting provisions of the *Election Act*.

The new provisions introduced through the *Election Amendment Act, 2019*, represent the most significant update to B.C.'s electoral legislation in over 25 years. They allow Elections BC to use technology to make voting faster and easier. This includes using electronic tabulators to count hand-marked paper ballots, and electronic voting books to look up voters and cross them off the voters list. The new provisions also allow Elections BC to count more ballots on election night, including ballots cast by voters outside their electoral district.

Although the scope of change to the legislation and procedures around voting and counting is extensive, the voting process will be familiar to voters. Elections BC has been careful to select proven technologies that have been used for years by other jurisdictions, and with which many voters may already have experience through their participation in local elections.

The new procedures and related technology were used successfully in B.C.'s last four provincial by-elections. These events provided an opportunity for voters to experience the new voting model, and post-event survey results have consistently shown that voters have a high-level of comfort with the changes.

Key benefits for voters and political participants include:

- Vote anywhere (voters can vote at any voting place in any electoral district)
- First-come, first-served model at voting places to reduce line-ups
- Same voting procedures at almost all voting places ²
- Streamlined requirements for certification envelopes
- Timely distribution of electronic participation data for parties and candidates to support get-out-the-vote efforts
- Faster results:
 - Almost all ballots counted on election night
 - Preliminary results reported shortly after voting closes on election night

2. Only non-tech voting places will use voting procedures from the previous model (e.g., paper voting books to record participation). See Voting place technology footprints on p. 10.

- Some ballots in certification envelopes counted on election night in Victoria
- Final count of vote-by-mail and absentee ballots will happen sooner than in previous elections
- Retention of key aspects of the previous model, including:
 - Hand-marked paper ballots (retained in case of a recount)
 - Opportunities for candidates and their representatives to observe voting and counting processes

THE ELECTION CALENDAR – IMPORTANT DATES

The table below shows key activities in the election calendar by date. The election calendar in B.C. has a 29-day campaign period, with the writs of election issued on Day 0 and Final Voting Day on Day 28.

Timings of legislated milestones are adjusted if they fall on a holiday or a Sunday. The start of advance voting has been moved one-day earlier in the calendar below because Thanksgiving Monday, October 14, 2024, falls within the advance voting period. District electoral offices and advance voting places will be closed on Thanksgiving Monday.

Category	Scheduled date	Milestone
Online vote-by-mail (VBM) package request opens	Tuesday, July 23	Voters can request a vote-by-mail package online starting July 23.
VBM package issuing begins	Thursday, August 22	Elections BC headquarters begins issuing VBM packages requested over the previous 30 days. While voters may receive their package before the election is called, they must not vote until the writs are issued on September 21, 2024.
Last day of standing nominations	Friday, September 20	Last day for candidates to file standing nomination documents with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).
Election is called (Writ Day)	Saturday, September 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writs of election are issued by the CEO and Lieutenant Governor for all 93 electoral districts ▪ Voting begins in district electoral offices. ▪ Vote-by-mail packages can be requested in district electoral offices. ▪ First day for candidates to file ordinary nomination documents with their district electoral officer.
Where to Vote app goes live	Saturday, September 21	Where to Vote app goes live – wheretovote.elections.bc.ca

Category	Scheduled date	Milestone
Nomination Day	Saturday, September 28	Close of ordinary nominations at 1 p.m. (Pacific time)
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	Monday, September 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District electoral offices closed. ▪ No voting or package request in district electoral offices.
Logic and accuracy testing of tabulators	Thursday, October 3 to Saturday, October 5	<p>Logic and accuracy testing of tabulators. District electoral officers and Elections BC headquarters to confirm dates and times with campaigns.</p> <p>See Quality assurance on p. 34 for details.</p>
General registration closes	Monday, October 7	Online and telephone voter registration closes at midnight; registration continues to be available in conjunction with voting.
Where to Vote cards	Monday, October 7 to Tuesday, October 8	Delivery of Where to Vote (WTV) cards.
Advance voting begins	Thursday, October 10	Advance voting, assisted telephone voting and special voting begin.
Online VBM package request closes	Sunday, October 13	Online vote-by-mail package request closes at 8 p.m. to ensure enough time for package assembly and delivery by mail.
Thanksgiving	Monday, October 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District electoral offices and advance voting places closed. ▪ No voting or package drop-off at district electoral offices or advance voting places.
Advance voting ends	Wednesday, October 16	Last day of advance voting.
Final Voting Day	Saturday, October 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final Voting Day; voting from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Pacific time).

Category	Scheduled date	Milestone
Initial count	Saturday, October 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial count conducted after close of voting at district electoral offices, final voting places and Elections BC headquarters. ▪ Preliminary results published on the Elections BC website.
Results quality assurance	Sunday, October 20 to Monday, October 21	Review of reconciliation forms against results entered on election night; correction of data entry errors, if any.
Quality assurance	Monday, October 21	<p>Post-election tabulator quality assurance and pre-final count logic and accuracy testing of tabulators at district electoral offices and at Elections BC headquarters.</p> <p>District electoral officers and Elections BC headquarters to confirm dates and times with campaigns.</p> <p>See Quality Assurance on p. 34 for details.</p>
Recount of initial count – deadline to request	Tuesday, October 22	Deadline to request recount of ballots considered at initial count.
Final count	TBD - Between Saturday, October 26, and Monday, October 28	<p>Final results published on Elections BC website as they are reported from the field and Elections BC headquarters.</p> <p>The timing of final count depends on the volume of vote-by-mail ballots cast in the election. Campaigns will be notified of the timing of final count during the event.</p>
Judicial recount – deadline to request	TBD - Friday, November 1, or Monday, November 4	Deadline to request a judicial recount is within six days after the conclusion of final count and the declaration of official results.
Return Day	Tuesday, November 5.	Date by which writs of election must be returned. Writs may be returned earlier if final count is completed earlier, or later if there is a judicial recount.

VOTING OPPORTUNITIES AND PROCEDURES

From Writ Day through Final Voting Day, voters will have many days and many ways to vote. All eligible voters can vote during the advance voting period, on Final Voting Day, at district electoral offices, or by mail. Assisted telephone voting is available to a limited number of voters who meet the strict eligibility criteria for that option ([Appendix 2](#)).

The image below provides a high-level summary of voting opportunities throughout the election period and assumes the provincial general election is called on Saturday, September 21, 2024.

Voting opportunities through the election period

Monday, September 30, and Monday, October 14, are statutory holidays. District electoral offices and voting places will be closed on statutory holidays.

Month	SEPTEMBER									
Day of week	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M
Day	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Voting										
Online request for VBM package	[Brown bar]									
DEO request for VBM package	[Purple bar]									
Vote by mail (VBM)	[Dark purple bar]									
DEO voting	[Green bar]									
Assisted telephone voting										
Special/Mobile voting										
Advance voting										
Final voting										
Day of election period	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9


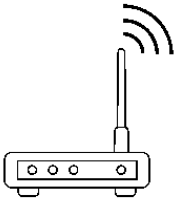
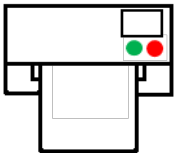
Month	OCTOBER																		
Day of week	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S
Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Voting																			
Online request for VBM package	[Brown bar]																		
DEO request for VBM package	[Purple bar]																		
Vote by mail (VBM)	[Dark purple bar]																		
DEO voting	[Green bar]																		
Assisted telephone voting	[Teal bar]																		
Special/Mobile voting	[Red bar]																		
Advance voting	[Purple bar]																		
Final voting	[Dark blue bar]																		
Day of election period	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Note: Out-of-district voting is permitted at all voting opportunities.


Technology in the voting place

The *Election Act* allows for the use of technology in voting places to administer voting and counting, including electronic voting books, tabulators, printers and related peripherals.³

A description of the technology used at voting places is provided below.

	<p>Electronic voting books are used to check voters in, record voter registration information and strike voters off the voters list when they vote.</p> <p>Electronic voting books are laptop computers equipped with a power cable, barcode scanner and mouse.</p>
	<p>Wireless cellular modem/routers are used to establish a secure internal network to allow electronic voting books within the voting place to share participation information. All transmissions of participation information within the voting place are encrypted.</p> <p>At some voting places, the modem securely shares participation information every five minutes with a central server and other voting places. All network transmissions for the purposes of synchronizing participation information between the voting place and the central server are encrypted.</p> <p>Participation recorded at other voting places that use technology is securely synchronized with the central server daily after the close of voting.</p>
	<p>Tabulators are used to scan and count voter-marked paper ballots. Either the voter or Tabulator Officer may feed a ballot into the tabulator. Voting places have up to three tabulators, depending on anticipated volumes.</p> <p>Tabulators are never connected to the internet.</p> <p>If a voter is unable to put their ballot in the tabulator, they may place it into a ballot box auxiliary compartment that is attached to the tabulator.</p>

3. Internet voting and voting without a voter-marked paper ballot are prohibited by the *Election Act* [s. 79.01(2)].



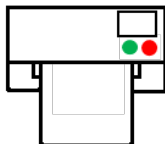

	<p>Printers are used to print ordinary ballots on-demand for voters voting out-of-district.</p> <p>Printers are also used to print voter participation reports for candidate representatives and to print reconciliation forms and other reports during initial count.</p>
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Voting place technology footprints


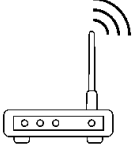
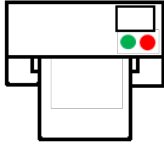
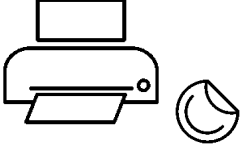
The term technology footprint refers to the technology used at a given voting place. Voting places that use technology will use one of two technology footprints: full-tech or partial-tech. Some voting places on Final Voting Day will have no technology deployed to them. These are called non-tech voting places. Technology footprints will be assigned to voting places based on a variety of considerations, including connectivity levels, logistics of technology deployment and the number of voters served by the voting place.

The characteristics of each technology footprint are described below.

Full-tech footprint

Electronic voting books	Wireless modems	Tabulators	Printers
			
<p>Electronic voting books are used to search the provincial voters list, register voters, and strike voters off the voters list when they vote.</p>	<p>Wireless modems are used to create a secure network within the voting place, and to synchronize participation data regularly with a central server.</p>	<p>Tabulators are used to produce election results at the close of voting on Final Voting Day.</p> <p>Tabulators are never connected to a network.</p>	<p>Printers are used to print ordinary ballots listing the candidates for out-of-district voters.</p>

Partial-tech footprint

Electronic voting books	Wireless modems	Tabulators	Printers
			
<p>Electronic voting books are used to search the provincial voters list, register voters, and strike voters off the voters list when they vote.</p>	<p>Wireless modems are used to create a secure network within the voting place.</p>	<p>Tabulators are used to produce election results at the close of voting on Final Voting Day.</p> <p>Tabulators are never connected to a network.</p>	<p>Printers are used to print ordinary ballots listing the candidates for out-of-district voters.</p> <p>Label printers are used to print labels for certification envelopes.</p>

Non-tech footprint

Non-tech voting places do not use technology. They use traditional methods, including paper voting books listing registered voters assigned to vote at the voting place.

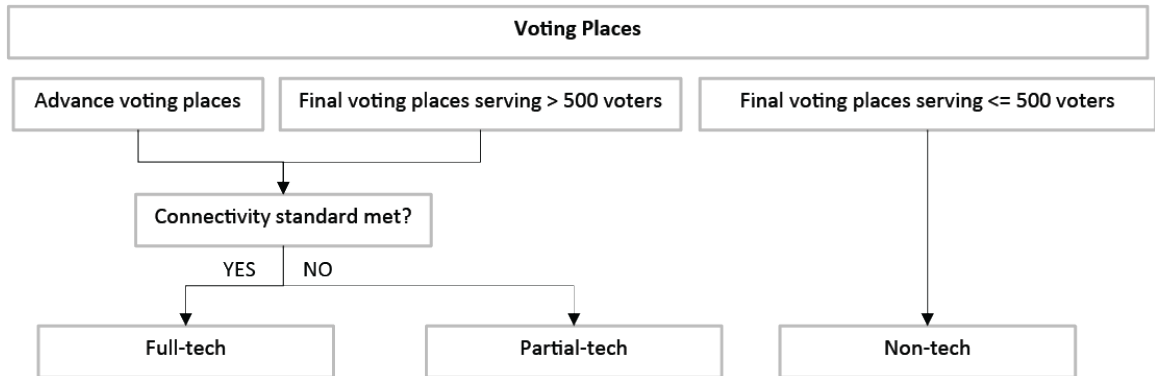
Assignment of technology footprints to voting places

All advance and final voting places that serve more than 500 registered voters will use either the full-tech or partial-tech footprint.⁴ If a voting place meets the cellular connectivity standard (to permit the exchange of participation information with the central server), it will use the full-tech footprint. If it does not, it will use the partial-tech footprint.

The key difference between full- and partial-tech is that full-tech voting places share participation information with the central server and other full-tech voting places every five minutes, whereas participation information from partial-tech voting places is synchronized only once per day (at the district electoral office after voting closes that day).

4. This threshold (500 registered voters) may be adjusted after voting places are selected. If the threshold changes, this guide will be updated and republished on the Elections BC website.

Criteria for determining technology footprint used at voting places



In addition to advance and final voting places, the full-tech footprint will be used to administer voting in district electoral offices. Special voting, which is delivered by mobile teams of election officials, will use the partial-tech footprint, with participation information synchronized with the central server when the team returns to the district electoral office and establishes a secure connection to the central server. At Elections BC headquarters, the full-tech footprint will be used to administer assisted telephone voting and vote by mail.

On Final Voting Day, some voting places will use the non-tech footprint. These voting places will be in small communities where it would be challenging to transport technology and provide technical support. In these voting places, paper-based procedures offer the best service to voters.

ELIGIBILITY, IDENTIFICATION AND BALLOTS

Eligibility and registration

To vote in the 2024 Provincial General Election, individuals must be:

- a Canadian citizen
- 18 years of age or older as of October 19, 2024
- a resident of B.C. since April 18, 2024
- registered to vote in B.C.
- not disqualified from voting.

Elections BC maintains a continuously updated Provincial Voters List (voters list). The list is updated based on information received directly from voters, from the Insurance Corporation of BC's identification card database (drivers' licences, BC Services Cards and BCIDs), from Elections Canada's National Register of Electors, from registration forms submitted during local elections, and from the B.C. Vital Statistics Agency's death notification system.

Voters may register or update their name or address using the Online Voter Registration system anytime before the voters list closes at midnight on October 7, 2024.

After the close of the voters list, voters may still register to vote or update their name and address at the time that they vote. Electronic voting books include a province-wide database of voters. If a registered voter has recently moved, their name can be looked up and their information can be updated.

[s. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39.1, 40, 45, 46]

Identification and vouching

All voters must prove their identity and residential address before voting. There are three ways to do this:

1. Showing a single piece of government-issued photo ID that includes the voter's name and residential address, or showing a Certificate of Indian Status card;
2. Showing two pieces of ID, both of which include the voter's name, and one of which includes their residential address;

3. Having the voter's identity vouched for by another person. The voucher must be registered to vote in the voter's electoral district, or a member of the voter's family or a personal care authority.⁵ In all cases, the voucher must provide acceptable identification, and both the voter and voucher must make a solemn declaration confirming the voter's residential address and identity.

Recent amendments to the *Election Act* permit residents of facilities designated as site-based voting areas to satisfy the identification requirements with one piece of identification that shows their name.⁶

More information on [specific identification and vouching requirements](#) is available on the Elections BC website.

[s. 41, 41.1]

One person, one vote

Each eligible voter is entitled to vote once in the provincial election.

Under the previous legislation, voters who voted during advance voting had their names struck off in the paper voting book used on Final Voting Day. Voters who voted at an absentee opportunity had their ballots placed in certification envelopes. These envelopes were not opened until final count, leaving time to confirm that the voters had not voted at another opportunity.

The use of technology means that absentee processes are not required for the vast majority of ballots cast in a provincial election. Electronic participation information allows election officials to know if a voter has already voted. After a voter votes, the electronic voting book displays the voter's record with a line through it. If a voter tries to vote again, this line through the voter's record signals to the election official that the voter has already voted.

There are procedures in place to address rare cases where it appears that another voter has voted in the voter's name, to allow the affected voter to make a solemn declaration that they have not voted in the election and to receive a ballot.

Multiple voting is an offence under the *Election Act* subject to significant penalties. All potential cases of multiple voting are investigated after an election.

[s. 89, 112, 257]

5. Personal care authority is distinct from power of attorney. Unlike personal care authority, power of attorney on its own does not meet the criteria to vouch for a voter's identity

6. Site-based voting areas are special voting opportunities at residential care facilities. See Special/mobile voting on p. 28.

Ballots

The Ballot Form Regulation prescribes three general ballot forms:

1. Ordinary ballots
2. Write-in ballots issued directly to voters by election officials, and
3. Write-in ballots issued by Elections BC headquarters for vote-by-mail.

All three of these ballot forms will differ from those used in previous elections:

- 8.5 x 11" (letter-sized) ballot papers on heavy white paper stock will replace the small black ballot papers used previously.⁷
- Ballots will no longer be packaged in booklets.
- Ballots will no longer include a removable stub or counterfoil bearing the ballot's serial number; election officials will record their initials directly on the ballot when they issue it.
- Ballots will be bundled in sealed packages of 50 to facilitate ballot security and reconciliation.

Ordinary ballots

Ordinary ballots list the names of the candidates running in an electoral district alphabetically by surname, as well as their political party affiliation, if any. Candidates who declare as independent of a political party are listed on the ballot as independent.

Voters mark the ordinary ballot by filling in a circle ● or writing an "X" in the circle next to the name of the candidate of their choice.

To ensure ballots are readable by the tabulators, voters will be provided a black felt-tipped marker (instead of a pencil) to mark their ballot in the voting place.

Write-in ballots

The *Election Act* allows for two write-in ballot forms: one for use in vote-by-mail packages issued by Elections BC headquarters and one for use by election officials to administer certain types of voting. Both types of write-in ballots include instructions to voters on how

7. It is an offence to print or reproduce a ballot or a paper that is capable of being used as a ballot. Individuals convicted of such an offence are subject to significant penalties under the *Election Act*, including a fine of up to \$10,000 or imprisonment for up to a year, or both. [s. 260]

to mark the ballot. The vote-by-mail write-in ballot also includes instructions on how to find the current list of candidates for the voter's electoral district and a toll-free number to call for more information.

Voters will mark their write-in ballot by writing the name of the candidate, registered political party or party leader of their choice.

- A vote for a political party will be counted for the local candidate endorsed by the political party.
- A vote for a party leader will be counted for the local candidate endorsed by the leader's party.

If a voter writes the name of a party leader or political party, the party must have endorsed a candidate in the voter's electoral district, otherwise the ballot will be rejected.

Vote by mail and voting in the district electoral office are the two voting opportunities that are available before nominations close on September 28, 2024. Write-in ballots will be used for these opportunities before the close of nominations. Both opportunities will switch to ordinary ballots by October 4, when ordinary ballots are expected to become available from the proofing and printing process. Write-in ballots are also used on Final Voting Day for out-of-district voting at non-tech voting places.

[s. 86, 104, 105, Voting Options Regulation, Ballot Form Regulation]

Ordinary ballot

Year Election Title		GO
Electoral District Name		
To vote, mark an <input type="checkbox"/> or fill in the circle <input type="radio"/> next to the candidate of your choice.		
	Bill CHAN Registered Political Party	<input type="radio"/>
	Lis JOHAL	<input type="radio"/>
	George William STILES Independent	<input type="radio"/>
	Mary STILES Registered Political Party	<input type="radio"/>
		EDC

Write-in ballot for vote-by-mail packages

BIO Initials	ED Code

PROVINCIAL ELECTION

Write-in Ballot

How to mark your write-in ballot

In the box below, clearly print the name of:

- a candidate, or
- a political party or its leader

A vote for a party or party leader will be counted for the candidate representing that party in your district.

Do not write anything else on this ballot.

I vote for -

WARNING: It is an offence to print or reproduce this ballot or a paper that is capable of being used as a ballot. Individuals convicted of such an offence are subject to significant penalties under the Election Act (s. 263), including a fine of up to \$10,000 or imprisonment for up to a year, or both.

Write-in ballot issued directly to voter by election official

BIO Initials	ED Code

PROVINCIAL ELECTION

Write-in Ballot

How to mark your write-in ballot

You may vote for a candidate or a political party running in your electoral district.

To indicate your choice, you must print the name of the candidate, political party or political party leader clearly in the white box below. Do not write anything else on this ballot. A vote for a political party or political party leader will be counted for the candidate representing that party in your electoral district.

If you are voting after candidate nominations close, refer to the List of Candidates for your electoral district.

I vote for -

WARNING: It is an offence to print or reproduce this ballot or a paper that is capable of being used as a ballot. Individuals convicted of such an offence are subject to significant penalties under the Election Act (s. 263), including a fine of up to \$10,000 or imprisonment for up to a year, or both.

VOTING OPPORTUNITIES

Advance voting

Eligibility

- Advance voting is available to all voters; there are no special eligibility requirements.

Where and when

- Advance voting is available for six days and concludes two days before Final Voting Day. Advance voting begins on Thursday, October 10 and concludes on Wednesday, October 16, 2024. **Advance voting places will be closed on Monday, October 14, 2024, for Thanksgiving.** The hours of advance voting are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (local time).
- District electoral officers will notify candidates of specific locations where advance voting will be held. Some advance voting places may only be available on specific days of the advance voting period.
- It is anticipated that most advance voting locations will be full-tech.
- Voters can vote at any advance voting location in any electoral district.

Procedures

- Voters will be served on a first-come, first-served basis.
- At the ballot issuing station, voters will present identification, register in conjunction with voting if necessary, and complete any required oral declarations.⁸
- In-district voters will be issued pre-printed ordinary ballots.
- Out-of-district voters will be printed an ordinary ballot listing the candidates running in their electoral district.

8. Voters who do not have identification can have their identity vouched for by another person. Both the voter and the voucher must make a solemn declaration confirming the voter's identity and residential address. See the Elections BC website for [specific identification and vouching requirements](#).

- Along with their ballot, voters will be issued a marker and a cardboard secrecy folder.
- Voters will be struck off the voters list in an electronic voting book connected securely to the central server. At the ballot marking station, voters will mark the ballot for one candidate and insert their marked ballot into the secrecy folder.
- At the ballot casting station, voters will deposit their ballot into the tabulator.
- Results for advance voting will be tabulated during initial count at the district electoral office.

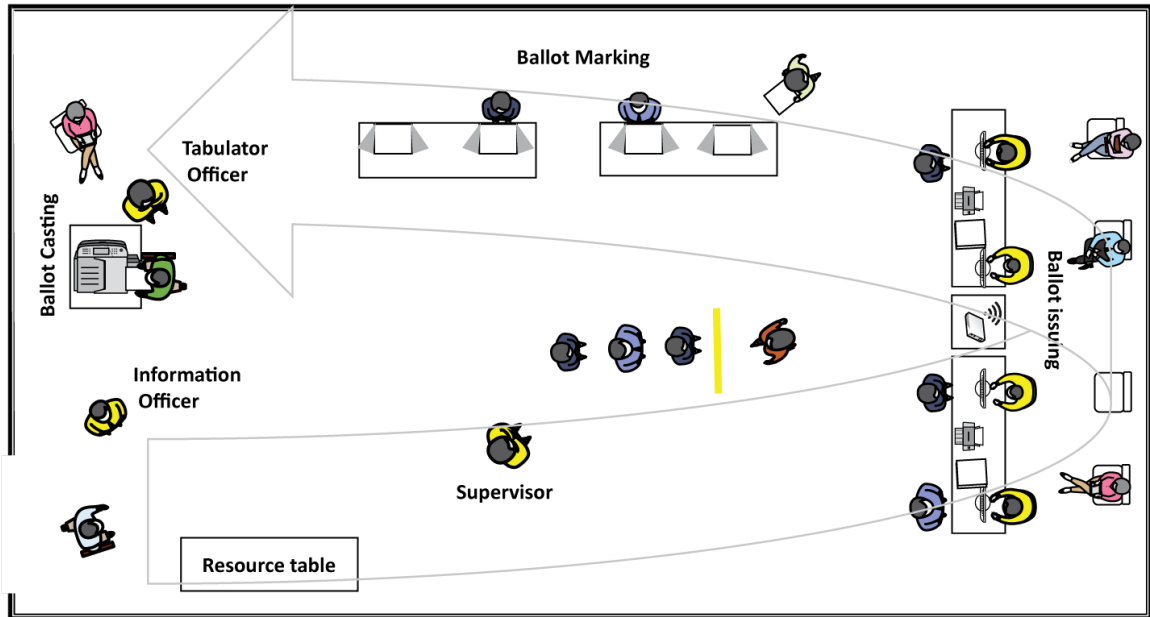
At the end of each day at advance voting

To ensure that the official record of the votes is kept secure, the ballots cast at the advance voting place will be transferred from their original ballot box to a transfer ballot box at the end of each day. The transfer ballot box will be sealed and labelled with the voting place name, the date and the tabulator ID. The transfer ballot box will be stored off-site at the district electoral office or at the home of the voting place supervisor.

Candidate representatives are encouraged to observe the process of transferring ballots from their original ballot box to the transfer ballot box and may sign the seal on the transfer ballot box. They may also observe each morning at 7:45 a.m. that the original ballot box is empty. The tabulator will then be placed on top of the original ballot box and seals applied so that it is ready for use during voting.

An [advance voting procedure sheet](#), intended as a quick reference for candidate representatives, is available on the Elections BC website.

Flow of voters in a full-tech advance voting place



[s. 62, 76, 97, Voting Opportunities Regulation]

Voting on Final Voting Day

Under the modernized *Election Act*, General Voting Day has been renamed “Final Voting Day” to signal that this is the last day of numerous voting opportunities.

Eligibility

- Final voting is available to all voters; there are no special eligibility requirements.

Where and when

- Final voting is available on Saturday, October 19, 2024 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Pacific time).
- District electoral officers will notify candidates of the final voting place locations in their electoral district.

- Most final voting locations will be full-tech. A small number of final voting places will use the partial-tech footprint. Voting places in rural and remote areas will use traditional paper-based methods to serve voters.
- Voters will be assigned to final voting places based on their voting area of residence within their electoral district. These final voting place assignments will be printed on Where to Vote cards. Voters will usually be assigned to the closest voting place to their home address.
- Voters can vote at any final voting place; they are not required to vote at their assigned final voting place.⁹

Procedures

- The voting procedures at full-tech voting places are the same for advance voting and final voting. See Advance voting on p. 19 for a description of the procedures to be followed in full-tech voting places on Final Voting Day.
- Partial-tech voting places follow the same procedures as full-tech voting places, except out-of-district voters are considered to be absentee and their ballots are placed into certification envelopes for counting at final count.
- Non-tech voting places use paper voting books to record participation. Voters voting at their assigned voting place are issued a pre-printed ordinary ballot that is counted on election night. All other voters are considered absentee and their ballots are placed in certification envelopes for counting at final count.

The Elections BC website includes procedure reference sheets for each type of voting place:

- [Full-tech](#)
- [Partial-tech](#)
- [Non-tech](#)

[s. 27, 62, 96, Voting Opportunities Regulation]

9. Registered voters will receive information about their assigned voting place on their Where to Vote card. See Where to Vote cards on p. 31 for more information.

Vote by mail

Eligibility

- Voting by mail is available to all voters; there are no special eligibility requirements.
- Voters must request their own vote-by-mail package. Requests can be made through the Elections BC website, by calling Elections BC, or in-person at a district electoral office.

Package contents and requirements

- Vote-by-mail packages will be issued with step-by-step instructions.
- Before ordinary ballots are available, packages will be issued with write-in ballots.
- When ordinary ballots are available, they will be used in vote-by-mail packages instead of write-in ballots.
- If a voter is not registered, or if their voter information is not current, the voter will be required to prove their identity. The Chief Electoral Officer will establish an identity verification process in regulation.
- All voters will also provide their birthdate when voting by mail to confirm their identity. Voters provide their birthdate on the certification envelope in their vote-by-mail package.

Requests

- Requests for vote-by-mail packages can be made from July 23, 2024, until 4 p.m. (Pacific time) on Saturday, October 19, 2024.
- Voters who request a package online before the writs are issued must not vote until Writ Day, Saturday, September 21, 2024.
- Telephone and online requests close at 8 p.m. (Pacific time) on Sunday, October 13, 2024. These requests are fulfilled by mail and are closed after this date to allow sufficient time for voters to receive their packages prior to Final Voting Day.
- In-person requests in the district electoral office will be available from when the writs are issued until 4 p.m. (Pacific time) on Final Voting Day, Saturday, October 19, 2024.

Issuing

- Packages requested online or by phone are issued by mail from Elections BC headquarters.
- Packages requested in the district electoral office are issued in person.

Return

- Packages must be **received by** Elections BC by 8 p.m. (Pacific time) on Saturday, October 19, 2024.
- Voters have three options to return their package. They can
 1. Return it by mail in the postage-paid return envelope,
 2. Drop it off at the district electoral office, or
 3. Drop it off at an advance voting place or final voting place.¹⁰
- Voters are considered to have voted when they put their package in the mail or return it to the district electoral office or voting place, and they must not vote again at any other voting opportunity.
- On receipt, all vote-by-mail certification envelopes will be struck off the voters list in an electronic voting book.
- After strike-off, certification envelopes are screened to ensure they meet the requirements of the *Election Act* and deposited into a ballot box for counting.
- Vote-by-mail certification envelopes that are ready for counting at Elections BC headquarters by the close of advance voting will be counted at initial count, and the remainder that are received at headquarters will be counted at final count.
- Vote-by-mail certification envelopes returned in person to a district electoral office, voting place or other designated drop-off location will be screened and then opened and counted in the district electoral office at final count.

[s. 104.01, 105, 106, 107, 274]

10. The Chief Electoral Officer may designate other drop-off locations for vote-by-mail packages. All drop-off locations for vote-by-mail packages will be posted on the Elections BC website.

District electoral office voting

Eligibility

- District electoral office voting is available to all voters; there are no special eligibility requirements.

Where and when

- District electoral office voting is available during office hours from when the writs are issued on Saturday, September 21, 2024, until 4 p.m. (Pacific time) on Final Voting Day, Saturday, October 19, 2024. There will be 94 district electoral offices in the 2024 Provincial General Election: one in each of the 93 electoral districts and an additional office in the Powell River-Sunshine Coast electoral district.
- District electoral office hours are as follows:

Monday to Friday	9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (local time)
Saturday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (local time)
Sunday	Closed, except during advance voting
Advance voting days	8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (local time)
Final Voting Day	8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Pacific time) for voting and package issuing 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Pacific time) for package drop-off

Note: During the 2024 Provincial General Election, **district electoral offices will be closed** to the public on:

- Monday, September 30 (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation), and
- Monday, October 14 (Thanksgiving).

Procedures

- Voters will be served on a first-come, first-served basis.
- At the ballot issuing station, voters will present identification, register in conjunction with voting if necessary, and complete any required oral declarations. Voters will be struck off the voters list in an electronic voting book connected securely to the central server.

- Voters will use write-in ballots before ordinary ballots are available. The write-in ballot will be inserted into a sorting envelope and then into a ballot box.¹¹
- When candidate nominations close and ordinary ballots are available, they will be printed on demand for voters. The ordinary ballot will list the candidates for the voter's electoral district. After marking the ballot, the voter will insert the ordinary ballot into a secrecy folder and then into a tabulator.
- During the period when ordinary ballots are available, but the tabulator has not yet been tested for logic and accuracy, ordinary ballots will be issued to voters and stored temporarily in the auxiliary compartment of the tabulator. For more information on the auxiliary compartment, see Use of auxiliary compartment on p. 31.
- Candidates will be notified by the District Electoral Officer when these ballots will be inserted into the tabulator and will have an opportunity to observe this process.
- Results for district electoral office voting will be tabulated during initial count at the district electoral office.

The Elections BC website includes a procedure reference sheet for [voting in the district electoral office](#).

[s. 104, Voting Options Regulation]

Assisted telephone voting

Eligibility

- Assisted telephone voting is intended for voters who face significant barriers to participating in other voting opportunities. Section 108.01 of the *Election Act* limits this opportunity to voters with a current registration record. Voters who are eligible and who wish to vote by assisted telephone voting must ensure their registration is current by the close of general voter registration at midnight on Monday, October 7. Registration or updating in conjunction with voting is not an option when voting by telephone.

11. Write-in ballots used for district electoral office voting are placed in a sorting envelope so that they can be sorted by electoral district at initial count.

- Assisted telephone voting is available to voters with a visual impairment, disability, or underlying health condition that prevents them from voting independently or that would make it unsafe or impossible to vote. The opportunity may also be used by voters who, due to distance or other factors, cannot attend an in-person opportunity or vote by mail. Detailed eligibility criteria are provided in [Appendix 2](#). Voters must declare that they meet at least one of the eligibility criteria for assisted telephone voting.

Where and when

- Voters who satisfy the eligibility requirements can vote by assisted telephone voting starting Thursday, October 10, through 7 p.m. (Pacific time) on Final Voting Day, Saturday, October 19. Voters can access this opportunity by calling 1-800-661-8683 and identifying themselves as a telephone voter.
- Assisted telephone voting is available:

Thursday, October 10, 2024 - Friday, October 18	8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Pacific time)
Saturday, October 19 (Final Voting Day)	8 a.m. to 7 p.m. (Pacific time)

Note: Assisted telephone voting is closed on Monday, October 14 (Thanksgiving).

Procedures

- Assisted telephone voting procedures are carefully designed to ensure that a voter's identity and eligibility can be confirmed and the voter can be accurately struck off the list, while also ensuring that the secrecy of their vote is protected.
- Upon receiving a request for assisted telephone voting, the Telephone Operator will confirm that the voter's registration record is current, assign a unique telephone voting number to the voter and transfer the voter into the telephone queue to vote.
- A Telephone Voting Officer, who does not know the identity of the voter and who is working in a separate space from the Telephone Operator, will pick up the voter's call from the queue and will remind the voter not to reveal their identity during the voting process.
- The Telephone Voting Officer will then ask the voter to declare their eligibility to vote in the election and entitlement to vote by assisted telephone voting.
- Working with a second official, the Telephone Voting Officer will record the voter's vote on an ordinary ballot and the other election official will confirm to the voter that the vote was recorded accurately.

- The voter's marked ballot will then be inserted into a secrecy sleeve and a certification envelope bearing the voter's unique telephone voting number.
- Another election official, working in a different space and who has no knowledge of how the voter voted, will then decode the voter's telephone voter number to identify the voter and strike them off in an electronic voting book.
- The completed certification envelope is then reviewed for completeness and deposited into a ballot box for counting at Elections BC headquarters. Those certification envelopes that are ready for counting by the close of advance voting will be counted at initial count, and the remainder will be counted at final count.

[s. 108.01, Voting Options Regulation]

Special/mobile voting

Special voting, also called mobile voting, takes place at care facilities where voters live, or at locations where voters are staying temporarily, such as hospitals or work camps. It is intended to provide voters who face significant barriers an opportunity to vote.

District electoral officers and their deputies work with facility administrators in their electoral district to make arrangements for a mobile team of trained election officials to visit each location and administer voting. In some cases, facility staff may be trained and appointed as election officials.

Eligibility

- Special voting opportunities will be established to serve residents of care facilities. Most, if not all of these care facilities, will be designated site-based voting areas (SVAs).
- Mobile teams will also be deployed to locations that serve voters who are unable to vote at regular voting opportunities, such as hospitals, provincial correctional institutions and remote work camps.
- In both cases, facility staff or family members who are eligible to vote in the election may also vote at these opportunities.

Where and when

- Special voting opportunities are generally scheduled between the start of advance voting (Thursday, October 10) and Final Voting Day (Saturday, October 19). The District Electoral Officer will notify candidates of dates and times so that candidate representatives can attend.

Procedures

- Details of the approach to voting to be used at each facility (e.g., centralized voting in the lobby or bed-to-bed) will be provided to candidates by the District Electoral Officer after arrangements are made.
- Mobile teams will use electronic voting books to search for voters on the provincial list and strike them off as they vote. Participation data will be synchronized with the central server on return to the district electoral office. Ballots will be inserted into a tabulator at the district electoral office on the same day that they are collected.
- Recent amendments to the *Election Act* permit residents of SVAs to satisfy identification requirements with one piece of identification that includes their name. This amendment recognizes that proof of residence is not necessary for these voters because they reside at the facility where voting is taking place.
- Under section 77(6) of the Act, the Chief Electoral Officer may establish different procedures at a special voting opportunity than those established elsewhere in the Act. The following variations from procedures may be used at special voting opportunities:
 - Residents of care facilities that are not designated SVAs, but otherwise meet the criteria to be designated as SVAs, can satisfy the identification requirements with one piece of identification that shows their name. Elections BC designates residential care facilities as SVAs if the residents are unable to travel to a voting place due to medical or physical limitations. SVAs differ from hospitals or acute care facilities because the residents live at the facility and do not have another residential address.
 - The CEO will allow care facility staff, including those who do not reside in the electoral district where the care facility is located, to vouch for the residential address and identity of more than one resident of a care facility where they work if it is challenging for residents to satisfy the identification requirements.
 - Facility staff appointed as election officials may be permitted to assist more than one resident of the care facility to complete their vote-by-mail package.

- Access for candidate representatives to special voting opportunities is subject to access requirements and limits at the locations in question, many of which are designed to protect the health and safety of residents. The District Electoral Officer will work with administrators of special voting locations to ensure the greatest access possible for candidate representatives subject to the limits in the Act and limits that apply at the locations.
- Results for special voting will be tabulated at initial count at the district electoral office.

A procedure reference sheet for [special voting](#) is available on the Elections BC website.

[s. 41, 77, 98, Voting Opportunities Regulation]

Use of tabulators during voting

The following two sections address new procedures for using tabulators during voting.

Tabulator notifications

Voters can insert their ballot into the tabulator, or the Tabulator Officer can do so on their behalf. Either way, the voter should not leave until the tabulator confirms that the ballot was deposited successfully

Tabulators provide a notification to the voter if their ballot was not accepted due to any of the following circumstances:

- No mark is on the ballot in a candidate marking zone (blank ballot)
- More than one candidate marking zone is marked on the ballot (over-vote)
- A mark is sensed in a candidate marking zone, but it is faint (ambiguous mark)

If any of these situations arise, the Tabulator Officer will talk discretely with the voter and provide them with options for resolution. For example:

- If the tabulator provides a blank ballot notification, the voter can:
 - Return to the ballot marking station and mark the ballot by filling in a circle or marking an "X" next to one candidate, or
 - Cast the ballot with no mark, which would be interpreted by the tabulator as a rejected ballot.
- If the tabulator provides an over-vote notification, the voter can:

- Return to any Ballot Issuing Officer to be issued a new ballot (their original ballot would be spoiled), or
- Cast the ballot as is, which would be interpreted by the tabulator as a rejected ballot.
- If the tabulator provides an ambiguous mark notification, the voter can:
 - Return to the ballot marking station and increase the size of the mark on the ballot (by filling in a circle or marking an “X” next to one candidate), or
 - Place the ballot in the auxiliary compartment to be considered by election officials at initial count. If it is determined at that time that the voter’s intent is clear and valid, the ballot will be transcribed. If the voter’s intent is not clear, the ballot will be rejected by the election official.¹²

[s. 79.04]

Use of the auxiliary compartment

The auxiliary compartment of the ballot box is a temporary storage area for ballots. It is used under the following circumstances:

- there is a line-up at the tabulator and a voter does not have time to wait
- the tabulator is temporarily out-of-service
- a voter does not want to resolve a tabulator notification for an ambiguous mark

In these cases, the ballots are stored in the auxiliary compartment of the ballot box during the remainder of voting proceedings that day and then fed into the tabulator at the close of voting by election officials. If a ballot produces a notification when inserted into the tabulator under these circumstances, it is set aside to be assessed for transcription by election officials during initial count.

Voting accessibility

After nominations close and ordinary ballots are printed, assistive technologies will be available in district electoral offices to allow voters with disabilities to mark their ballot independently. This includes voters with vision impairment and low-literacy voters. Voters will have the option to listen to an audio recording of the candidate list for their district

12. Unlike over-votes or under-votes, ballots that are marked ambiguously cannot be cast into the tabulator because the tabulator is unable to determine whether to accept the ballot as a vote for a candidate or to reject it.

and then to indicate their vote by using a hand-held selector device, sip-and-puff straws or paddles. The voter's ballot paper, bearing their candidate selection, will then be printed face down and fed into the district electoral office tabulator.

At advance and final voting places, Braille ballot templates corresponding to the Braille List of Candidates are available for voters with visual impairments to vote independently. To assist voters with vision loss, a poster-sized image of the ballot will be displayed on a wall near the ballot marking stations.

Vote by mail and assisted telephone voting may also be suitable options for voters with accessibility challenges.

[s. 108.01, 109, 109.01, Voting Options Regulation]

Where to vote

Elections BC ensures voters receive current and accurate information about where to vote during an election. This information is provided through many channels, including Where to Vote cards and the Where to Vote app.

Where to Vote cards

The Where to Vote card is an important source of voting place information for voters. Elections BC sends two types of Where to Vote cards to voters during an election: addressed and unaddressed. Addressed Where to Vote cards are sent to registered voters; unaddressed Where to Vote cards are sent to every residential address in B.C. at which no voters are registered.

Addressed Where to Vote cards - first mailing

These cards are delivered to registered voters before advance voting starts. They include information about voter eligibility, advance voting places and the dates they are open, and the registered voter's assigned voting place for Final Voting Day. This type of Where to Vote card can be used as one of two pieces of voter ID, as it is addressed to a registered voter and includes their name and address.

Addressed Where to Vote cards - second mailing

As the voters list remains open until Day 16 (October 7) at midnight, it is possible that voters will move into a district or update their address after the first Where to Vote card mailing is prepared. For this reason, a second and much smaller Where to Vote card mailing is delivered between Day 20 and 25 to catch new registrants and those who

updated their address after the main mailing. This type of Where to Vote card can be used as one of two pieces of voter ID, as it is addressed to a registered voter and includes their name and address.

Unaddressed Where to Vote cards

Unaddressed Where to Vote cards are sent to addresses with no registered voters. They include information about voter eligibility, voter registration, and voting opportunities. This type of Where to Vote card can **not** be used as one of two pieces of voter ID, because it is not addressed to a voter.

[s. 41, 79]

Where to Vote app

The Where to Vote app is on the Elections BC website at wheretovote.elections.bc.ca. The app, which shows all of the voting places in the province and when they are open, is an excellent source of current voting place information for voters and campaigns. In addition to showing voting place and routing information for assigned voting places, it also displays the voting locations closest to the voter. The app will be updated with any changes to voting places that may arise during the election period. The Where to Vote app will be launched on Writ Day, Saturday, September 21, 2024.

COUNTING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

This section describes the processes for counting ballots in a provincial election, and the quality assurance processes that ensure votes are counted accurately. It also provides details regarding recounts of ballots.

The legislative framework for counting and quality assurance processes includes the *Election Act* and the Vote Counting Regulation, which are linked in [Appendix 1](#).

In a provincial election, there are four types of counts.

1. **Initial count:** takes place immediately after the close of voting on Final Voting Day.
2. **Final count:** count of absentee ballots about one week after initial count.
3. **Recount of initial count:** as part of final count, some or all of the ballots considered at initial count may be recounted in certain circumstances that meet legislated requirements.
4. **Judicial recount:** conducted after final count in certain circumstances that meet legislated requirements.

A quality assurance process is in place to ensure that tabulators count ballots accurately. These processes begin before tabulators are used in the election, and they end with testing conducted after they are used.

[s. 79.04, 120.02, 121, 136, 139, 142, Vote Counting Regulation]

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance includes ensuring that voting equipment is suitable for its intended purpose. Elections BC has acquired tabulators with a proven track record of delivering accurate and secure performance in elections throughout North America.

Elections BC gained valuable experience with tabulators in the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite and the 2018 Referendum on Electoral Reform. Tabulators were also used in the four by-elections administered under the modernized rules in 2022 and 2023. Tabulators are an accurate and efficient means of scanning and interpreting voter-marked ballots and producing election results. They are also an effective tool when voters vote out-of-district because they can accurately interpret ballots from any electoral district, and tabulate results separately for each district.

To ensure accurate and transparent vote counting under the new model, section 120.02 of the *Election Act* requires the Chief Electoral Officer to make regulations to establish a quality

assurance process to verify that tabulators processed ballots accurately during initial count. The Act requires that the quality assurance process take place between initial count and final count. Section 4 of the Vote Counting Regulation lays out the specific requirements of the quality assurance process.

Listed below are five activities that will ensure that tabulators have accurately recorded voting results.

[s. 79.04, 120.02, Vote Counting Regulation]

1. Pre-use logic and accuracy test

Prior to use in voting, each tabulator will undergo a logic and accuracy test. The purpose of this test is to confirm that the tabulators accurately count the votes cast for all candidates and that the tabulators behave as specified when they encounter a marking that should be rejected or a ballot that cannot be read. A test set of production ballots is used for the logic and accuracy test and the results produced by the tabulator are compared to the results for the test ballots.

This pre-use logic and accuracy test will be conducted in each district electoral office and at Elections BC headquarters. The tests on tabulators used at initial count will be conducted during the week of September 30, 2024. Tabulators used at final count will be tested during the week of October 21, 2024. Campaigns will be notified of specific times and locations.

Candidate representatives may attend logic and accuracy testing and may select the markings for “wildcard” ballots to be used in the test. “Wildcards” are ballots included in the test set of production ballots that are marked at the time of the test based on input from those who attend the count. The inclusion of wildcard ballots ensures that the results of the test cannot be known before it begins.

2. Zero tape

Before a tabulator begins accepting ballots, an election official will show any candidate representatives and other witnesses present that no votes are stored in the tabulator. This is done by printing a report that shows that zero votes have been tallied by the tabulator (the “zero tape”). This report is printed on a paper tape that remains attached to the tabulator. Candidate representatives will have an opportunity to sign the tape before voting begins. When it is time to produce results at initial count or final count, the election results will be printed on the same, continuous paper tape.

To demonstrate that no ballots have been inserted into the ballot box prior to the start of voting, election officials will show any candidate representatives and other witnesses present that the ballot box and auxiliary compartment are empty.

3. Ballot reconciliation

Initial count and final count reconciliation forms will show that all ballots issued to election officials have been accounted for and that ballots issued to voters reconcile to vote totals from the tabulators.

4. Post-election hand count of randomly selected tabulators

After initial count some tabulators are randomly selected for a hand-count. This will take place during the week of October 21, 2024, at each district electoral office and at Elections BC headquarters. The tabulators will be selected in the presence of candidates or their representatives. Hand counts of ballots tabulated by the randomly selected tabulators will be conducted to confirm that the tabulators functioned as specified during the election with ballots cast by voters. This process is required by the Vote Counting Regulation.

5. Post-use logic and accuracy test

During the week of October 21, a post-use logic and accuracy test will be conducted at the district electoral office and at Elections BC headquarters on all tabulators that processed ballots during initial count.

During the same session, a pre-use logic and accuracy test will be conducted on tabulators that will be used at final count.

Initial count

Initial count occurs after voting closes at 8 p.m. on Final Voting Day, Saturday, October 19, 2024. The vast majority of ballots cast in the provincial election will be counted at initial count.

Initial count includes all ballots cast except for:

- vote-by-mail packages received by mail after the close of advance voting,
- vote-by-mail packages dropped off at a designated drop-off location,
- ballots cast by out-of-district voters at partial-tech or non-tech voting places, and
- ballots cast by in-district voters at a non-tech voting place to which they were not assigned.

Part 7, Division 1 of the *Election Act* establishes the process for initial count in an election. The Vote Counting Regulation sets out the transcription procedure for initial count.

When and where initial count is conducted

As illustrated in the table below, initial count will take place in several locations. The initial count of ballots for advance voting, district electoral office voting and special voting will occur at district electoral offices at 8 p.m. on Final Voting Day. The count of votes for final voting will occur at final voting places.

The Chief Electoral Officer has specified that any ballots in certification envelopes processed by Elections BC headquarters by the close of advance voting will be included in initial count. The Chief Electoral Officer has also authorized an early start to preparations for initial count at headquarters. The timing of preparations for initial count at headquarters may be adjusted based on the volume of vote-by-mail ballots cast in the election.¹³ The tabulator results by candidate will not be produced until after voting closes at 8 p.m. (Pacific time) on Final Voting Day, October 19, 2024.

Initial count locations and times by voting opportunity

Voting opportunity	Location of initial count	Start time of initial count
Advance voting	District electoral offices	8 p.m. (Pacific time) on October 19, 2024
District electoral office voting		
Special/mobile voting		
Final voting	Final voting places	8 p.m. (Pacific time) on October 19, 2024
Assisted telephone voting	Elections BC headquarters (Victoria)	Preparations: TBD
Vote by mail (returned by mail)		Initial count: 8 p.m. (Pacific time) on October 19, 2024

[s. 115, 116, 117, Vote Counting Regulation]

Who may be present at initial count

The election official responsible for the ballot box or tabulator and at least one other election official must be present during initial count. Candidates may be present, and each candidate is entitled to have one candidate representative (scrutineer) present for each ballot box or tabulator for which a count is being separately conducted.

13. Elections BC headquarters will notify candidates of the timing of preparations for initial count.

For initial count at Elections BC headquarters, registered political parties that have endorsed candidates in the election may designate one political party representative per tabulator to observe the count. Candidates may also be present at headquarters and they may appoint one candidate representative per tabulator to be present

Candidate and political party representatives must be appointed in writing. No other individuals may be present at initial count, unless permitted by the Chief Electoral Officer, a district electoral officer or delegate.

[s. 119]

Conducting initial count

The image below provides a summary of the process for conducting initial count in voting places using the partial- or full-tech footprint.

At the close of voting, two streams of activity occur simultaneously, overseen by different election officials: results reporting and reconciliation.

Results reporting

Timely and accurate results reporting is a priority. Two elections officials are responsible for producing the tabulator results tapes and reporting the results to Elections BC. They begin by checking the auxiliary compartment of the tabulator(s) to see if any ballots were stored there temporarily during voting proceedings. If there are ballots in the auxiliary compartment, an election official will insert them into the tabulator. If transcription is required, it will be completed at this stage so that all ballots have been scanned by the tabulator before the results tapes are printed. The process for transcription is described in the next section.

Following completion of transcription and after ensuring that all ballots have been fed into the tabulator, two copies of the tabulator tape showing the results by candidate will be produced by each tabulator. One copy will be posted on the wall for observers to review. The other copy will be used by an election official to report the election results to Elections BC.

Reconciliation

At the same time, the Supervisor will complete the reconciliation form to account for the ballots issued to election officials and voters at the voting place. The Supervisor will enter the candidate results from the tabulator tape(s) into the reconciliation form. When the reconciliation form is complete, signed copies will be provided to candidates and their representatives. The reconciliation form will include a summary of votes by candidate for the district in which voting is being administered.

Initial count process at voting places using the partial- or full-tech footprint

Results reporting	Reconciliation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insert ballots from auxiliary compartment into tabulator, if any 2. Complete transcription, if any 3. Print two copies of the results tape for each tabulator 4. Report preliminary results 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect voting station worksheets from election officials 2. Enter voting station worksheets into reconciliation form 3. Complete initial count reconciliation form using results tape 4. Provide copies of initial count reconciliation form to candidates and their representatives
Pack up the voting place	

At partial-tech voting places, out-of-district ballots will be in certification envelopes. The ballots in these envelopes are counted at final count after the certification envelopes have been screened. At initial count, the sealed certification envelopes are counted, and the number of envelopes is recorded on the initial count reconciliation form.

At non-tech voting places, the ballots cast by voters voting at their assigned voting place are counted by hand during initial count. Ballots cast by other voters at non-tech voting places will be in certification envelopes.¹⁴ These certification envelopes remain sealed at initial count pending further screening during preparations for final count. At initial count, the sealed certification envelopes are counted, and the number of envelopes is recorded on the initial count reconciliation form.

The Elections BC website includes procedure reference sheets providing an overview of initial count procedures for each of the following scenarios:

- [Initial count with tabulators](#)
- [Initial count without tabulators](#)
- [Preparations for initial count and initial count at Elections BC headquarters](#)

[s. 120.01, 121, Vote Counting Regulation]

14. Ballots in certification envelopes at non-tech voting places include ballots cast by voters voting out-of-district and ballots cast by in-district voters who were not at their assigned voting place.

Transcription

A goal of voting modernization is to produce timely and accurate results and count as many ballots as possible on election night. Tabulators are key to achieving this goal, particularly when out-of-district ballots are being counted. As such, when write-in ballots are used the voter's choice is transcribed onto an ordinary ballot that can be read by the tabulator.

In addition to write-in ballots, ordinary ballots may also need to be transcribed. This may occur when the auxiliary compartment of the ballot box was used to temporarily store ballots during voting proceedings. If a ballot that was in the auxiliary compartment produces a tabulator notification when inserted into the tabulator by an election official, it will be assessed at initial count to determine if it should be transcribed. Ballots in these circumstances are deemed eligible for transcription if the voter's mark on the original ballot is valid (i.e., not required to be rejected under section 123 of the *Election Act*).

Examples of situations where an ordinary ballot would be transcribed include a validly marked ballot that is damaged (e.g., ripped) or a ballot where a voter's intent is clear, but due to the way the voter marked the ballot, the tabulator views the marking as an over-vote, under-vote or ambiguous mark.

Examples of ordinary ballots that would be transcribed

Ripped ballot:

Year Election Title
Electoral District Name K

To vote, mark an or fill in the circle next to the candidate of your choice.

Bill CHAN Registered Political Party	<input type="radio"/>
Lis JOHAL	<input type="radio"/>
George William STILES Independent	<input type="radio"/>
Mary STILES Registered Political Party	<input type="radio"/>

EDC

Intent clear but tabulators sees over vote:

Year Election Title
Electoral District Name KL

To vote, mark an or fill in the circle next to the candidate of your choice.

Bill CHAN Registered Political Party	<input type="radio"/> No
Lis JOHAL	<input type="radio"/> No
George William STILES Independent	<input type="radio"/>
Mary STILES Registered Political Party	<input type="radio"/> No

EDC

Candidates and their representatives may observe transcription. The process must be conducted by two election officials working as a team. The original and transcribed ballots are marked with a sequence number such that they can be identified as a unique pair for audit purposes and only the transcribed ballot is tabulated.

Candidates and their representatives may object to the marking of a transcribed ballot during the transcription process if they believe the voter's intent has not been accurately represented. The election official's decision is final for the purposes of initial count, even if objected to, and may only be changed during a recount of ballots considered at initial count or by a judge at a judicial recount. The transcription process will follow the process set out in the Vote Counting Regulation ([Appendix 1](#)).

[s. 120.01, 132, Vote Counting Regulation]

Initial count reconciliation

Where technology is used in voting places, tabulated votes are reconciled to ballots issued to voters at the voting place level instead of the voting station level. This means

there will be a single reconciliation form for each advance and final voting place that uses technology, which will account for all the ballots issued at the voting place and will reconcile that count to the total votes tabulated at the voting place. At non-tech voting places, voters will be served at their assigned station and reconciliation will be completed at the voting station level.

[s. 121, 133]

Preliminary results

Preliminary election results are reported at the close of voting on election night. Voting opportunities contributing to preliminary results are shown in the table below.

Initial count - voting opportunity contributing to preliminary results

Voting opportunity	Type of voting place	Ballots included in initial count
Advance voting	Full-tech	All ballots
	Partial-tech	In-district only
Final voting	Full-tech	All ballots
	Partial-tech	In-district only
	Non-tech	At assigned voting place only
District electoral office voting	Full-tech	All ballots
Special voting	Partial-tech	In-district only
Vote by mail - dropped off	Full-tech	None
Vote by mail - returned by mail	Full-tech	All ballots received by close of advance voting
Assisted telephone voting	Full-tech	All ballots received by close of advance voting

With most votes counted by tabulators, it is expected that preliminary results will be available relatively quickly following the close of voting on election night. The reporting strategy prioritizes in-district ballots, which will account for most of the results on a given tabulator tape. Preliminary results will be reported on the Elections BC website showing vote counts by candidate.

[s. 125]

Final count

Final count is a count of ballots that were not considered as part of initial count, and a determination of the results of the election based on the votes accepted at initial count and final count. Part 7, Division 2 of the *Election Act* establishes the process for final count in an election.

At the end of final count for an election, the District Electoral Officer reports the candidate that received the most votes in the election to the Chief Electoral Officer and the Chief Electoral Officer declares the results official.

If a recount of ballots considered at initial count is required, the recount will occur immediately prior to conducting final count. The Vote Counting Regulation establishes the process for preparing ballots considered at initial count for a recount during final count. See Recounts of initial count, p. 48 for more information.

[s. 125]

When and where final count is conducted

Final count will take place in district electoral offices and at Elections BC headquarters about one week after Final Voting Day. The timing of final count depends on the volume of vote-by-mail ballots cast in the election. It will likely occur between Saturday, October 26, and Monday, October 28. The District Electoral Officer and the Chief Electoral Officer will notify candidates of the time and location of final count.

[s. 127, 128, 129, 130, 136]

The table below summarizes the voting opportunities that could potentially be a source of ballots considered at final count. In the field, district electoral officers will oversee the screening of certification envelopes and the counting of ballots for all certification envelopes cast by voters in their electoral district. At a district electoral office, this may include up to four different classes of certification envelopes: advance voting, final voting, special voting and vote by mail. The voting opportunities included in final count in a given electoral district will depend on the types of voting places used to administer voting and whether out-of-district voting occurred. All vote-by-mail and assisted telephone voting certification envelopes at Elections BC headquarters that were not counted at initial count will be counted at final count.

Final count - voting opportunities contributing to final results

Voting opportunity	Type of voting place	Ballots included in final count	Location of final count
Advance voting	Partial-tech	Out-of-district only	District electoral offices
Final voting	Partial-tech	Out-of-district only	District electoral offices
	Non-tech	Out-of-district or not at assigned voting place	
Special voting	Partial-tech	Out-of-district only	District electoral offices
Vote by mail - dropped off	N/A	All ballots	District electoral offices
Vote by mail - returned by mail	N/A	All ballots received after close of advance voting	Elections BC headquarters (Victoria)
Assisted telephone voting	N/A	All ballots received after close of advance voting	Elections BC headquarters (Victoria)

Who may be present at final count

The district electoral officer must be present for final count, along with at least one other election official. At Elections BC headquarters, the Chief Electoral Officer, or their delegate, and at least one other election official must be present during final count.

Candidates may be present and each candidate may have one candidate representative present per tabulator used to tabulate votes at final count. If envelope opening and separation is being conducted by teams of election officials, candidates may have an additional representative for each election official team.

In addition, at Elections BC headquarters, registered political parties that endorsed candidates in the election may designate one political party representative per tabulator to observe the count.

Candidate and political party representatives must be appointed in writing. No other individuals may be present at final count, unless permitted by the Chief Electoral Officer, a district electoral officer or delegate.

[s. 130]

Conducting final count

The Chief Electoral Officer and district electoral officers can be assisted when preparing for final count and during final count and may delegate authority to election officials. However, the District Electoral Officer may not delegate responsibility to deal with objections related to envelopes or ballots considered at final count and must personally deal with those objections.

[s. 129]

The number of election officials involved with the count in the field will depend on the volume of certification envelopes, and could range from the District Electoral Officer and one other election official to a few teams of election officials. At Elections BC headquarters, final count will be conducted by several teams of election officials.

Preparations for final count

In preparation for final count, election officials review results reported on election night against the tabulator results tapes and initial count reconciliation forms. Discrepancies (e.g., transposition of numbers or allocation of a result to the incorrect candidate) will be corrected on the Elections BC website and candidates will be notified. If an issue cannot be resolved without considering ballots, the District Electoral Officer or the Chief Electoral Officer, as applicable, will decide to recount the ballots during final count and will notify candidates accordingly.

As part of preparations for final count, election officials also check that certification envelopes are completed as required by the *Election Act*, and that voters did not attempt to vote more than once. The outcome of the screening process is recorded on each envelope. Certification envelopes to be opened are sorted by class and electoral district and placed in a separate ballot box for each class. Certification envelopes that do not pass the screening checks will be marked to remain unopened for final count.

[s. 134]

Final count reconciliation

The top portion of a Final Count Reconciliation form is completed before counting starts. This portion of the form shows the total number of certification envelopes received for the class, the number of envelopes that did not pass screening, and the number that will be opened at final count. A separate reconciliation form is completed for each class of certification envelope that is being counted.

Removing ballots from certification envelopes

The election official responsible for the count will open the ballot boxes one class at a time. Any certification envelopes that were not accepted for final count will be announced

and set aside to remain unopened. The election official will then open each accepted certification envelope and remove the secrecy sleeve. The secrecy sleeve is placed in a box designated for the class being counted.

A certification envelope must be resealed during final count if it contains more than one election ballot. If a certification envelope contains more than one secrecy sleeve, the election official must open the secrecy sleeves to verify whether they contain election ballots. The election official must take care to ensure that the secrecy of the vote is maintained during this process. If there is more than one election ballot in a certification envelope, these ballots must be resealed in their respective envelopes and must not be considered at final count. The resealing of a certification envelope will be recorded on the ballot account for the class.

After all certification envelopes for a class have been opened and the secrecy sleeves placed in a box, the election officials will open each secrecy sleeve and remove the ballot. If a secrecy sleeve contains more than one marked ballot, all of the ballots must be returned to the secrecy sleeve and removed from the count.

[s. 135]

Electoral District Name								
	Candidate A	Candidate B	Candidate C	Candidate D	Candidate E	Total valid votes	Rejected ballots	Registered voters ¹
	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Independent			
<i>Advance voting - in-district</i>								
Voting place A	761	34	907	174	5	1,881	6	
Voting place B	349	35	1,616	338	13	2,351	8	
Voting place C	233	17	899	159	9	1,317	2	
Voting place D	396	28	1,383	292	12	2,111	8	
Sub-totals:	1,739	114	4,805	963	39	7,660	24	
<i>Final voting - in-district</i>								
Voting place A	367	28	1,102	288	10	1,795	3	4,731
Voting place B	950	64	946	229	15	2,204	15	7,627
Voting place C	227	19	868	220	6	1,340	2	4,672
Voting place D	272	18	1,009	244	6	1,549	5	4,437
Voting place E	458	26	1,467	310	10	2,271	8	5,849
Voting place F	388	29	974	286	3	1,680	3	5,686
Voting place G	170	16	626	119	7	938	7	3,559
Voting place H	155	19	575	150	6	905	3	3,261
Sub-totals:	2,987	219	7,567	1,846	63	12,682	46	39,822
<i>Advance voting - out-of-district</i>	18	1	46	13	1	79	2	
<i>Final voting - out-of-district</i>	57	3	167	50	1	278	4	
<i>Special voting</i>	50	3	148	25	8	234	1	203
<i>DEO office voting</i>	54	1	163	22	1	241	1	
<i>Vote by mail</i>	708	38	1393	169	7	2,315	15	
<i>Assisted telephone voting</i>	88	3	143	17	1	252	2	
Grand totals	5,701	382	14,432	3,105	121	23,741	95	40,025
% of valid votes	24.01%	1.61%	60.79%	13.08%	0.51%			
Summary - valid votes								
Advance and final voting - in-district	20,342	85.68%				Total valid votes		
Advance and final voting - out-of-district	357	1.50%				Total valid votes		
Special voting	234	0.99%				Total valid votes		
DEO office voting	241	1.02%				Total valid votes		
Vote by mail	2,315	9.75%				Total valid votes		
Assisted telephone voting	252	1.06%				Total valid votes		
Total valid votes	23,741							
Rejected ballots	95	0.40%				Ballots cast		
Registered voters who voted	23,836	59.55%				Registered voters		
Registered voters	40,025							
Candidate elected:	Candidate C (Party C)							

Objections to the opening of certification envelopes

A candidate or their representative may object to a decision of whether a certification envelope is to remain unopened at final count. The election official must record the objection on the Objection to Acceptance or Rejection of a Ballot or Certification Envelope form and indicate the reason for the objection. The election official marks on the back of the election ballot the corresponding number from the Objection to Acceptance or Rejection of a Ballot or Certification Envelope form and initials this number. A decision by the District Electoral Officer, the Chief Electoral Officer, or the Chief Electoral Officer's designate is final for the purposes of final count, even though objected to, and may only be changed by a judge at a judicial recount.

[s. 124, 134]

Counting ballots

Other than recounts of ballots considered during initial count, the final count is conducted using a tabulator for each class of ballots being counted. After ballots have been removed from the secrecy sleeves, write-in ballots are assessed for transcription and ordinary ballots are fed into the designated tabulator for the class.

If the tabulator does not accept a ballot and produces a notification, the ballot is removed and assessed for transcription. When all ballots for the class, including those that were sent back to the transcription station for assessment and transcription, have been either processed through the tabulator or rejected by hand, the election official closes out the tabulator and prints the results tape.

The election official then completes the ballot account in the Final Count Reconciliation form and enters results into Elections BC's Voting Results System on an office computer.

The Elections BC website includes procedure reference sheets providing an overview of [final count procedures](#).

Final results

Because ballots from across the province are being counted in every district electoral office and at Elections BC headquarters, final results will not be published for an electoral district until the Chief Electoral Officer has been notified that final count has concluded at all counting locations. Under the new procedures, there is no direct connection between a ballot box and a particular voting area during final voting, so it is not possible to provide a voting area breakdown for votes cast on Final Voting Day. Therefore, in-district final voting results are shown in the same format as advance voting, by voting place.

Final results will be presented in the format shown below.

Recounts of initial count

As part of final count, the district electoral officer or the Chief Electoral Officer may recount some or all of the ballots that were considered at initial count. A recount will occur if the district electoral officer or Chief Electoral Officer have serious concerns related to any of the following areas:

- Votes were not correctly accepted or ballots were not correctly rejected,
- Unopened certification envelopes or secrecy sleeves contain ballots that should be considered,
- A ballot account does not accurately record the number of votes for a candidate, or
- The results of the quality assurance process indicate that the vote-counting equipment did not process ballots accurately.

In addition, the District Electoral Officer will conduct a full recount of ballots considered at initial count if the preliminary election result shows a difference of 100 votes or fewer between the top two candidates in the electoral district.

Under the *Election Act*, candidates or their official agents can request a recount of initial count within three days after Final Voting Day. Recount requests must be made on the same bases outlined in the list above.

After considering the request, the Chief Electoral Officer or District Electoral Officer, as applicable, will determine if the application meets the requirements of section 136(1)(b) of the *Election Act* and, if so, the appropriate scope of the recount. For example, if an issue pertains to a single voting place, the District Electoral Officer may choose to recount the ballots considered at initial count from that voting place before proceeding with final count.

[s. 136, 139, Vote Counting Regulation]

When a recount of initial count is conducted

While a request to recount some or all of the ballots considered at initial count may be made at any time between October 20 and 22, 2024, the Chief Electoral Officer or District Electoral Officer, as applicable, must not conduct the recount until final count begins.

When final count begins, the District Electoral Officer or the Chief Electoral Officer will complete the recount of ballots considered at initial count prior to conducting final count.

Conducting a recount of initial count

The Vote Counting Regulation requires that a recount of ballots considered at initial count by a District Electoral Officer or the Chief Electoral Officer must be conducted by hand. The ballots from each ballot box or tabulator must be considered separately and a new Initial Count Reconciliation form must be completed and attached to the original reconciliation form.

If the recount of initial count is due to a close margin between the top two candidates, the District Electoral Officer responsible for the electoral district must request that ballots contributing to the result that were considered in other electoral districts, or at Elections BC headquarters, be sent to the electoral district where the recount is to be conducted. The process by which the ballots are repatriated to their home district is prescribed in the Chief Electoral Officer's Vote Counting Regulation. The requirement for repatriation of the ballots in a close margin recount may delay the start of final count for the electoral district that must conduct the recount.

[s. 136, Vote Counting Regulation]

Who conducts a recount

The Chief Electoral Officer and district electoral officers can be assisted when conducting a recount and may delegate authority to election officials. However, the District Electoral Officer may not delegate responsibility to deal with objections related to ballots considered at initial count and must personally deal with those objections.

[s. 129]

Who may be present

During a recount of election ballots conducted in the field, the District Electoral Officer and at least one other election official must be present. At Elections BC headquarters, the Chief Electoral Officer, or designate, and at least one other election official must be present. Candidates can be present, along with one representative. If election official teams are assigned to carry out the recount, the number of candidate representatives that may be present equals the number of counting teams plus one. No other individuals may be present unless permitted by the District Electoral Officer or Chief Electoral Officer.

[s. 130]

Judicial recounts

A judicial recount is conducted by a justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia and may include some or all the ballots and certification envelopes for an election. An application for a judicial recount can be made on the basis that errors were made in the acceptance or rejection of certification envelopes or ballots, or that the ballot account is not correct. Applications for judicial recount can also be made on the basis that the results of the quality assurance process indicate that the vote-counting equipment did not process ballots accurately.

In the event of a tie vote, or if the difference between the first two candidates is less than 1/500 of the total ballots considered, the District Electoral Officer must make an application for a judicial recount. An application must be made within six days after the declaration of official results following the conclusion of final count. The procedures for a judicial recount, including whether to use tabulators, are at the discretion of the court.

[s.139-143]

Who may apply for a judicial recount

A voter, candidate, candidate representative or district electoral officer may make an application for a judicial recount of election ballots.

[s. 139(4)]

When an application is made

An application for a judicial recount may be made between the declaration of official election results following the conclusion of final count, and six days after that declaration.

When a judicial recount is conducted

Within 72 hours after an application has been filed, if that application is accepted, the court registry must notify the applicant of the date, time and place at which the judicial recount is to be conducted. The date set must be no later than eight days after the petition commencing the application is filed. The *Election Act* does not specify the time by which a judicial recount must be completed.

[s. 139(3), 140]

Appeal of a judicial recount

A candidate in an election may appeal the decision of the Supreme Court to the Court of Appeal. An appeal must be commenced within two days after the results of a judicial recount are declared. The time set for the hearing of the appeal must be no later than 10 days after the Court of Appeal receives the notice of appeal.

[s. 144-145]

APPENDIX 1: LINKS TO RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Legislation

- [Election Act](#)

Regulations

- [Voting Opportunities Regulation](#)
- [Voting Options Regulation](#)
- [Vote Counting Regulation](#)
- [Ballot Form Regulation](#)
- [Electoral Purposes for Access to and Use of Personal Information Regulation](#)

APPENDIX 2: ASSISTED TELEPHONE VOTING

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To vote by assisted telephone voting, you must be a registered voter and you must fall within one of the following circumstances:

Eligibility criteria	When each criterion applies	Declaration statement: To confirm you are eligible to vote by telephone, do you declare that . . .
1	Throughout	you are legally blind or have sight loss?
2	Throughout	you have a disability or health condition which makes it unsafe or otherwise prevents you from voting by other means?
3	Throughout	you are outside the country or elsewhere in Canada and unable to receive mail?
4	Throughout	you are a resident of a care facility?
5	Throughout	you are receiving care in a hospital?
6	Throughout	you are a deployed member of the military/ coast guard?
7	Throughout	you are a protected voter?
8	Final Voting Day only	an emergency or extraordinary circumstance (as determined by the Chief Electoral Officer) makes it impossible for you to reach a voting place?

APPENDIX 3: HOURS OF OPERATION AND KEY CONTACTS

District electoral offices

District electoral offices will be open as soon as possible following issuance of the writ.

District electoral office hours	
Monday to Friday	9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (local time)
Saturday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (local time)
Sunday	Closed, except during advance voting
Advance voting days	8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (local time)
Final Voting Day	8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Pacific time) for voting and package issuing 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Pacific time) for package drop-off

Note: District electoral offices will be closed to the public on Monday, September 30 (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation) and Monday, October 14, 2024 (Thanksgiving).

Elections BC headquarters

Address: 100—1112 Fort Street, Victoria B.C., V8W 9J6

Toll-free number: 1-800-661-8683

Toll-free line hours (Pacific time)	
Monday to Friday	8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday	9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Advance voting days	8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Final Voting Day	8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Contact for political parties:

Aidan Brand - 778-974-3285 - correspondence@elections.bc.ca

Election webpage: elections.bc.ca/2024election

QUESTIONS?

For more information:

Phone toll-free	1-800-661-8683
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Or contact Elections BC at:

Mailing address	PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9J6
Phone	250-387-5305
Fax	250-387-3578
Toll-free fax	1-866-466-0665
Email	electionsbc@elections.bc.ca
Website	elections.bc.ca

