

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS BULLETIN

August 18, 2021



44th General Federal Election

*The Assembly of First Nations issues regular updates on work underway at the national office.
More information is available at www.afn.ca.*

SUMMARY:

- The 44th General Federal Election is taking place on September 20, 2021.
- The AFN is providing information to help make the voter registration and voting process more accessible for First Nations.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, early voter registration and voting by mail-in special ballot is encouraged.
- First Nations and Elections Canada Returning Officers are urged to communicate to establish electoral health and safety measures, and polling station locations.
- Band administrators are reminded to issue a Letter of Confirmation of Residence to community members without a proof of address.

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is working together with Elections Canada to eliminate barriers to First Nations' participation in the federal election. As such, the AFN is officially notifying First Nations that the 44th General Election will take place on September 20, 2021.

The AFN encourages First Nations and Elections Canada Returning Officers to work together to determine polling station locations, and how to implement COVID-19 health and safety measures at the polls. Get contact information for your community's Returning Officer and make a request to set up polling stations by contacting Elections Canada at 1-800-463-6868.

The AFN also reminds First Nations of the opportunity for community members to get involved in the electoral process. A number of seasonal employment opportunities are available online now at elections.ca/jobs.

Registering to vote

Early voter registration helps to avoid long wait times on election day and reduce crowds which could contribute to the spread of COVID-19. For this reason, early voter registration is encouraged.

People who register early will receive a Voter Information Card (VIC) from Elections Canada in the mail. The VIC can be used as a proof of address for individuals when paired with another piece of accepted ID, such as a status card.

Here are five quick and easy ways community members can register to vote:

Method 1: [Register online.](#)

Method 2: Register by regular mail or telephone. [Review Elections Canada contact information.](#)

Note: We encourage voters who wish to *register by mail* and First Nations communities that plan to register multiple citizens in the same mail-out to act *as early as possible*, to allow Elections Canada enough time to process requests.

Method 3: [Register at their local Elections Canada office.](#)

Method 4: Register at their polling place when they go to vote. Although we strongly recommend early registration via the above options, voters can still choose to register at their polling places as a last-minute option.

- Option 1: Register to vote by bringing the [required ID](#) to an advance polling location.
- Option 2: If a voter is unsure about their registration status on Election Day, they can still go to a polling station on Election Day with the appropriate ID and register and vote on location.

Voting by mail

Voting by mail is the safest way to vote. Here are the steps:

1. Submit an Application for Registration (by methods 1, 2, or 3 above).
2. [Apply for a special ballot.](#)
3. Voters will receive a special ballot voting kit by mail that explains how to mark their ballot and mail it back.

Note: Voters will need to write the first and last name of their chosen candidate for their riding on the ballot. If they only write the party, or the party leader, the ballot will not be counted. Once registered to vote by mail, voters must follow all instructions on completing and returning their ballots before polls close on election day.

4. If voting in person at an Elections Canada office, voters may drop their envelope in a ballot box.

Letter of Confirmation of Residence

First Nation band offices can help their community members with confirming their address by issuing a Letter of Confirmation of Residence.

A Letter of Confirmation of Residence can be used as ID to validate an elector's address at the polls when presented alongside a secondary piece of ID verifying their name (for example, a Status card). [Template for Letter of Confirmation of Residence.](#)

Vouching

Eligible voters can also establish their identity and address through a process called “vouching,” which involves bringing someone who knows them (like a friend or neighbour) to a polling station to serve as their “voucher.”

The voucher will sign a written document provided by Elections Canada attesting to the voter's identity and address. Review information on [voter ID and vouching](#).

Sharing election materials

Posting and sharing Elections Canada's printed materials in your community is a great way to help people know where, when, and ways to vote.

Using the digital order form, you can order materials to be delivered to your community, including Voter ID posters, guidebooks to the federal election, and employment flyers.

- [Order printed materials online \(offered in 16 Indigenous languages\)](#)
- [Download Elections Canada resources](#)
- [Download the handbook for Indigenous leaders](#)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email electoraloutreach@afn.ca. You can find more information on the election on the Elections Canada website, elections.ca.

We thank First Nations leaders, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and citizens for their continued interest in the electoral process.