



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheets	Lead
<i>Bill C-65</i>	
Proposed change in fixed election date	IRPPA
Advance polling	EEI
Vote on Campus	EEI
Special ballot voting	EEI
Assistance by a person	EEI
Transfer certificates	EEI
Party privacy policies	LS/PF
Foreign interference	LS
Partisan activities of unions (communication with members)	PF
<i>Other</i>	
Long ballot accessibility considerations	PACE
Complaints in foreign languages	PACE
Redistribution and pre-election period	LS
Supporting documentation	Lead
House of Commons debate at second reading	IRPPA
Letter to Minister LeBlanc (names on ballots)	LS
<i>Impacts of an October 2025 Fixed-Date General Election on Religious and Cultural Groups, EC Consultation Report</i>	PACE

**Binder prepared for the appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs on November 21, 2024 on the subject of Bill C-65.*



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Proposed change in fixed election date

Key messages

- The proposed new election date conflicts with Nunavut's fixed-date territorial election date.
- This conflict would make it very difficult to find enough polling places and elections workers in this electoral district.

Facts

- Bill C-65 would amend the *Canada Elections Act* (CEA) to, among other things, change the next fixed-date election to October 27, 2025. Under the current legislation, the fixed-date election is scheduled for October 20, 2025. If the next fixed-date election is moved to October 27, 2025, the federal election will coincide with the Nunavut territorial election also being held on October 27, 2025.
- Past consultations and planning have identified several key risks to service delivery in Nunavut during overlapping ordinary polling days, including:
 - Recruitment of office workers and poll workers: To deliver the 44th general election (GE), the returning officer (RO) was only able to hire 77 percent of staff required for polling day; for the 43th GE, the RO could only recruit 53 percent of the staff required.
 - The drop-out rate for recruited poll workers is higher in Nunavut than across the country. In Nunavut, compensation for federal poll workers is not competitive with other work opportunities, including workers hired by Elections Nunavut who receive higher wages, meals during their workdays and other benefits.
 - Competition for polling places and challenges in securing lease agreements: In 2019, advanced polling day for Nunavut's municipal elections was held on October 21, the same day as the ordinary polling day for the 43rd GE. As many communities in Nunavut do not have several locations suitable for polling places, an overlap in polling dates imply potentially a need to share polling locations. Hosting two elections in the same location would take significant negotiation efforts to ensure the location could be shared.
 - Confusion among voters and electoral workers about different service offerings between the federal and territorial levels.
- The challenges created by the overlapping election dates, in conjunction with the potential conflict with religious, cultural and traditional days of significance, will require Elections



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Canada (EC) to prepare mitigation strategies to reduce the impact of conflicts and assess which challenges are more likely to be overcome.

- As for the date of October 20 which coincides with Alberta's municipal elections and Diwali, although far from ideal, this situation does not create the same administrative challenges as those in the electoral district of Nunavut.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Advance polling

Key messages

- As more electors choose to vote at advance polls in federal elections, the changes proposed in Bill C-65 would offer Canadians greater access and flexibility for this voting option.
- The number of additional days reflects a service offering that is currently available in other Canadian jurisdictions.

Facts

- There is a trend of increased uptake in advance poll voting, with a record number of Canadians—over 5.8 million—voting at advance polls in the 2021 federal general election (GE).
- As more Canadians opt to use this voting service, the proposed changes in Bill C-65 would make it more accessible to Canadians in the following ways:

Additional days of advance poll voting

- Bill C-65 would add two days of additional advance poll voting—one on the Thursday, 11 days before ordinary polling day, and the other on the following Tuesday, 6 days before ordinary polling day.
- While finding poll workers and accessible, familiar and proximate polling locations to cover all six days could prove challenging in some instances, this is a preferred approach in comparison to staffing three days of ordinary polls, as advance poll voting requires 4,000 locations, while ordinary polls require 16,000.
- Changes to key technological systems and polling operations, instructions and manuals would be necessary.

Advance polls in remote, isolated and low-density communities

- Elections Canada (EC) intends to use the flexibility provided by s. 168(8) of the *Canada Elections Act (CEA)* to provide advance polls in remote, isolated and low-density communities—many of which are Indigenous communities—for fewer than the full six-day advance polling period.
- Bill C-65 would allow for greater flexibility in the administration of this voting option. It would allow these polls to now be established in one or more community, would allow for polling to take place on overlapping days in different communities and would allow polling stations to be open for a time that the returning officer (RO) deems necessary for electors to have a “reasonable opportunity to vote.”



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

- These changes would allow ROs to establish advance polls in remote, isolated and low-density communities in a more efficient and effective way.

Transfer certificates for electors for whom an advance poll is created for in remote, isolated or low-density communities

- If an elector has an advance poll created for them under s. 168(8), it will be for less than the full six days of advance polls.
- Thus, if an elector attends a different advance polling place in their electoral district and signs an attestation that they cannot attend the advance poll created for them under s. 168(8), they can vote at that advance polling place.
- This will ensure that all electors still have access to the full six days of advance polls.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Vote on Campus

Key message

- I support this proposal in Bill C-65 as it largely codifies activities that Elections Canada (EC) is already undertaking in this area.

Facts

- After a successful pilot during the 42nd general election (GE), where 69,096 electors used the service, EC made Vote on Campus a national program.
- For the 43rd GE, the program was deployed in 98 post-secondary institutions across 86 electoral districts in the country. At the time, 119 external service point offices were opened, marking more than a 200 percent increase over the 39 locations in 2015. 110,395 electors voted at these offices, with more than three quarters requesting to vote from outside their home electoral district. While any elector could vote by special ballot at these offices, most were students.
- According to the *Survey of Special Ballot Voters*, a majority (62 percent) of students chose to vote on campus because the location was convenient for them. This continued the trend observed during the 2015 pilot and suggests that Vote on Campus services are particularly well suited to the needs of students and other electors who cannot easily vote at their assigned polling station.
- Due to challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the context of a minority government in 2021, the Vote on Campus program was not deployed during the 44th GE. However, following the 44th GE, EC committed to making Vote on Campus a permanent service offering. We are currently planning to offer the service on 119 campuses. A definitive list of participating post-secondary institutions will be finalized when the next election is called, once office spaces are secured and leases are signed.
- The proposed provision will make Vote on Campus a permanent service offering. If adopted, the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) will define the eligibility criteria for post-secondary institutions. The post-secondary institutions that request an on-campus voting location and meet the criteria, will be accepted. Criteria used during GE42, GE43 and GE44 will be reevaluated to implement the provision.
- This service offering relies on strong engagement efforts with post-secondary institution administrations (including through readiness activities conducted by returning officers (RO)) and with national student associations.
- The voting process at campus offices is administered using the special ballot process. While primarily designed for students, all eligible electors can vote at a Vote on Campus location.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

- The offices may be open from Day 15 (Sunday) to 6:00 p.m. on Day 8 (Sunday) for a maximum of 12 hours a day. For GE45, it is currently planned that offices on campus will be open from Day 15 (Sunday), 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and on Days 14, 13 and 12 for 12 hours a day.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Special ballot voting

Key messages

- The proposed changes would provide electors with more flexibility to receive and return their special ballot in a timely manner, which would most likely have a positive impact on accessibility.
- There are a number of proposed amendments relating to special ballot voting which are reflected in my 2022 recommendations report.
- However, Bill C-65 should be amended to provide that no special ballots be issued prior to the issue of the writ.
- It should also be amended so that electors may only request a regular ballot in place of their special ballot at an ordinary poll on election day.

Facts

Growing popularity

- There has been a steady increase in the use of voting by special ballot: 1.9% in 2011, 3.4% in 2015, 3.5% in 2019, and 6.1% in 2021.

Pre-registration to vote by special ballot

- Currently, an elector may submit their application for registration and special ballot at the issue of the writs.
- The proposed legislative change would allow, in the context of a fixed-election date, for electors residing in Canada to submit their application in writing or electronically to register to vote by special ballot during the pre-election period (i.e. as of June 30).
- This change would allow electors to receive their voting kit by mail earlier and provide them with more time to return their kit by the deadline, which could have a positive impact on accessibility.
- To implement this amendment, all applications would be processed by Elections Canada's (EC) administrative centre in Ottawa:
 - This would ensure both standardization of the process and cost effectiveness (i.e. special ballot applications would also be counted at EC's administrative centre).
 - Voting kits would be pre-assembled and mailed to electors at the issue of writs and would be expected to be received at the office of the Special Voting Rules Administrator no later than 6 p.m. on election day. These electors would not, however, be able to return their ballot using the ballot boxes for depositing special ballots.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Return of special ballots to polling stations through ballot boxes for special ballots

- The proposed legislative change would allow electors voting in their own electoral district to have access to ballot boxes intended to deposit their local special ballot at a polling station, in their electoral district, before the close of polls on polling day only.
- Local electors (i.e. electors who register to vote by special ballot from within their electoral district) would still be able to return their local marked ballot to the office of the returning officer (RO) by mail or “other means,” with the change affecting only the method of returning these kits.
- The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) would have the option of not providing these ballot boxes for special ballots at certain locations, where it would be impractical, but would be required to publish the list of these locations on its website and in the *Canada Gazette* no later than the 6th day before polling day.

Ability to cancel special ballot voting

- Currently, once an elector’s application for registration and special ballot has been accepted, the elector may only vote by special ballot unless otherwise permitted by the Special Voting Rules Administrator following the instructions issued by the CEO (i.e. during the pandemic election in 2021).
- The proposed legislative change would allow an elector to change their mind on their special ballot registration at any point throughout the general election.
 - 1) During advance polling days and on polling day, electors could visit their respective polling location to cancel their previous special ballot registration in order to vote at the polls.
 - 2) Electors would also be allowed to cancel their special ballot voting registration at their local RO office in order to vote at the polls.
- To do so, an elector would have to meet one of the following conditions:
 - 1) The elector is authorized by the RO to vote at the polls rather than by special ballot.
 - 2) The elector returns the special ballot and outer envelope they received to a designated election officer in person to the office of the RO in the elector’s electoral district or at the elector’s advance or regular polling station.
 - 3) The elector makes the required solemn declaration.
- Safeguards to properly manage this process include the data entry of status change certificates before the verification of outer envelopes and counting. This way, potential double votes are identified prior to the count and the outer envelopes can be set aside. In addition, to maintain the highest level of integrity, the CEO may need to issue additional instructions to address any specific issues or gaps, such as handling outer envelopes mistakenly deposited into the ballot boxes for special ballots.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Assistance by a person

Key messages

- This change would allow an elector to request assistance to mark their ballot from any individual of the elector's choosing.
- I support this amendment, which reflects my recommendation in the 2022 Recommendation Report.

Facts

- The *Canada Elections Act* (CEA) currently authorizes electors to request and receive assistance in marking their ballot at advance and ordinary polls by a specific list of individuals (election officer, a friend, the elector's spouse or common-law partner, or a relative). To protect the secrecy and the integrity of the vote, an individual assisting is required to make a solemn declaration beforehand. They are subject to penalties if they fail to do so.
- The list of those authorized to provide assistance does not consider that electors with disabilities are often assisted at the polls by caregivers or personal support workers. These trusted assistants are frequently neither family nor friends. The strict definition of the CEA does not reflect the professional nature of the relationship and often at the polls they register as "friends," as there is no requirement to prove the individual's status as a friend or relative. Treating a professional relationship as a "friendship" may be demeaning for both the elector with disabilities and the caregiver. Since election workers have no means of verifying that an individual is in fact a "friend" or a "relative," these distinctions are not meaningfully enforced.
- In his 2022 Recommendations Report, (recommendation 7.4.1), the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) recommended that the Act be amended to allow an elector to request assistance to mark their ballot from any individual of the elector's choosing, provided the individual makes the required solemn declaration (as is done now). This recommendation was put forward to allow electors requiring assistance to obtain it from an individual they know and trust at this important step in the voting process.
- Notably, a solemn declaration (included on form with pertinent information on elector or individual providing assistance) would be required for each elector requesting assistance from an individual, as is the current process for family members who assist more than one elector at advance and ordinary polls.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Transfer certificates

Key messages

- It should be clear that transfer certificates are an exceptional measure and not a means to “vote anywhere.”
- Depending on uptake, this could impact the capacity at a poll and cause increased service times and material shortages.

Facts

- Under the current legislation, transfer certificates may only be used in four specific scenarios:
 1. An elector who is an election officer working at the polls
 2. An elector is a candidate for the electoral district
 3. An elector with accessibility needs, whose assigned polling place would not allow them to vote without difficulty
 4. An elector’s polling station was moved
- Bill C-65 allows for an elector who attends the incorrect polling station in their electoral district on ordinary polling day to vote if they make a solemn declaration that “they are unable to attend at the polling station for which their name appears on the list of electors before its close.”
- It also allows for a transfer certificate when an elector assigned to an advance poll under subsection 168(8) of the *Canada Elections Act* (CEA) attends a different advance polling place in their electoral district and signs an attestation that they cannot attend the advance poll created for them under 168(8).
- Thus, transfer certificates under Bill C-65 have a much wider scope on polling day. This will help ensure that electors who attend the wrong polling station on ordinary polling day are still able to vote and that electors assigned to an advanced poll under subsection 168(8) still have access to six full days of advanced polls if they are not in their community at the time of voting.
- The new, broader use of transfer certificates could impact election procedures and material planning for each polling station, and could also cause slowdowns at the polling place, depending on how widely this is used.
- A comprehensive communication and deployment strategy will need to be developed to address the widespread use of this option and electors’ expectations.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Party privacy policies

Key messages

- The changes proposed in Bill C-65 constitute a step forward as they would add some minimal requirements to party privacy policies and subject parties to a level of enforcement through administrative monetary penalties.
- Nonetheless, the proposal falls short of my 2022 recommendation.
- In that recommendation, I proposed that at a minimum, party privacy policies should have to include three elements: allowing Canadians to opt out of communications, allowing Canadians to request and correct their information, and explaining how information is shared by political parties.

Facts

- Under Bill C-65, parties would be required to submit a privacy policy as part of their application for registration, or for existing registered parties, within three months of the bill receiving royal assent.
- The policy will have required elements:
 - The designation of a privacy officer for the party and their contact information
 - A statement of the types of personal information the party collects, retains, uses, discloses and disposes of, along with illustrative examples of these activities
 - A description of the training offered to employees and volunteers
 - A requirement to protect the personal information under its control through proportionate physical, organizational and technological security safeguards
 - A requirement to take appropriate steps in the case of loss of information
 - A requirement that the party ensure that any person or entity to which it transfers personal information provide an equivalent level of protection
 - A requirement that the privacy officer or delegate attend at least one meeting per year on the protection of personal information held by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)
 - A prohibition on the party providing false information about the purposes for which the party collects personal information, selling personal information or disclosing personal information to the public for the purpose of causing harm
- The proposal does not reflect the CEO's 2022 Recommendations Report (recommendation 6.1.1). The CEO had recommended the adoption of the principles in the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)* with oversight by the Privacy Commissioner. As an alternative, the CEO had recommended that policies of parties should have to include at a minimum three elements: allowing Canadians to opt out



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

of communications, allowing Canadians to request and correct their information and explaining how information is shared by political parties. The new privacy policies will not have to include any of these required elements.

- If parties change elements of their policy, they will need to notify the CEO of the changes, as is the case for all changes to the Registry of Political Parties.
- The party will need to file, on an annual basis, a statement that it complies with its policy.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Foreign interference

Key messages

- There are a number of amendments to help protect against foreign interference in Bill C-65.
- The bill includes recommendations concerning foreign interference, in full or in part, that were made in my June 2022 Recommendations Report.
- I have also recently brought forward a number of recommendations related to foreign interference for Parliament's consideration in my report titled *Protecting Against Threats to the Electoral Process*.

Facts

- Bill C-65 would make minor changes to s. 282.4, which prohibits undue influence by foreigners, by expanding the scope of the provision to include periods outside the election period, as support or opposition to eligible parties and potential candidates.
- In his June 2022 Recommendations Report, the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) made a number of recommendations that would provide additional tools for combating foreign interference in Canadian elections.
- Although not targeted at foreign interference, implementation of these recommendations would provide additional tools for combatting foreign interference. A number of them are included, or partially included, in Bill C-65.
- Recommendation 2.3.1 proposes a regime to more effectively prevent the use of foreign funds by third parties. This recommendation provides that third parties other than individuals who wish to rely on their own funds to finance regulated electoral activities need to provide Elections Canada (EC) with audited financial statements showing that no more than 10% of their revenue in the previous fiscal year came from contributions. (Included in Bill C-65.)
- Recommendation 4.1.1 proposes to prohibit false statements about the voting process made to disrupt the conduct of the election or undermine the legitimacy of the election or its results (Partially included in Bill C-65.)
 - To protect against inaccurate information that is intended to disrupt the conduct of an election or undermine its legitimacy, amend the *Canada Elections Act* (CEA) to prohibit a person or entity, including foreign persons and entities, from knowingly making false statements about the voting process, including about voting and counting procedures, in order to disrupt the conduct of the election or to undermine the legitimacy of the election or its results.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

- Recommendation 4.2.1 proposes expanding two existing prohibitions found in ss. 282.4 and 481 by extending the period to which they apply. (Included in Bill C-65.)
 - Section 282.4 specifically deals with foreign interference and was added by Bill C-76 to replace the existing unclear prohibition in former s. 331. It currently applies during the election period. The recommendation proposes extending this to a pre-election period.
 - Section 481 makes it an offence to distribute, transmit or publish material that misleadingly claims to be from EC, an election officer, a party, a candidate or a prospective candidate. It currently applies during the election period. The recommendation proposes extending this to all times.
- Recommendation 4.2.2 proposes expanding the scope of section 482, which relates to the misuse of computers. (Partially Included in Bill C-65.)
 - Section 482 currently prohibits the misuse of computer systems by acting fraudulently with the intention of affecting the results of the election. The recommendation proposes expanding this to include actions meant to disrupt the conduct of the election or undermine the legitimacy of the election or its results.
- Recommendation 5.1.1 proposes to require online platforms to publish their policies on the administration of paid electoral communications and on user accounts during the pre-election and election periods as well as how they will address certain content that misleads electors. (Not included in Bill C-65.)
- Recommendation 8.4.1 proposes to ban the use of untraceable instruments, such as prepaid credit cards, and to adopt specific rules for contributions using cryptocurrencies. (Included in Bill C-65.)

In his November 2024 Recommendations Report, the CEO repeated a number of these recommendations for combating foreign interference in Canadian elections, and added additional recommendations. Topics in the 2024 report include:

- Improving the transparency of online-platform policies
 - That online platforms be required to publish their content-moderation policies (recommendation 1.1)
 - That such platforms should be required to publish their policies on how they administer paid electoral communications (recommendation 1.2)
- Addressing emerging threats arising from artificial intelligence and deepfakes
 - That the impersonation provision (s. 480.1) of the CEA be modified and expanded to apply to any misrepresentations of the individuals listed in paragraphs (a) to (e) involving the manipulation by any means of their voice or image (recommendation 1.3)
 - That ss. 480.1 and 481 be expanded to also apply outside an election period, as previously recommended in 2022 (recommendation 1.4)
 - That all paid and unpaid electoral communications (image, audio, video or text) distributed during a regulated pre-election and election period, or a contest, that



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

- has been generated or manipulated by AI should include a clear transparency marker. This requirement would also apply to nomination and leadership contests during the contest period (recommendation 1.5)
- That platforms that have AI-generated chatbots or search functions should be required to indicate in their responses where users can find official or authoritative information (recommendation 1.6)
 - Understanding the source of electoral communications
 - That, during a pre-election period and an election period, any electoral communication (regardless of whether it is paid) made by registered political entities or by political entities that are required to register (third parties who spend above the statutory registration threshold) should include a tagline or a source of information on or embedded in the message (e.g. a link or address) that indicates its origin (recommendation 1.7)
 - Measures to protect against efforts to undermine trust
 - That the CEA be amended to prohibit false information that is being spread with the goal of undermining trust in an election and its results. The prohibition should capture situations where it is shown that (1) the person knew the statement to be false and (2) the statement was made with the goal of undermining trust in the election and its results (recommendation 1.8)
 - Political financing
 - That the CEA should provide that third parties, other than individuals, who wish to rely on their own funds to finance regulated electoral activities need to provide EC with audited financial statements showing that no more than 10% of their revenue in the previous fiscal year came from contributions. All other third parties (that are not individuals) should be required to incur expenses to support or oppose parties and candidates only from funds from Canadian citizens and permanent residents (recommendation 2.1)
 - That foreign entities should be prohibited from making a contribution to a third party for the purpose of conducting regulated activities (recommendation 2.2)
 - Clarify that a third party is prohibited from using property or services provided by a foreign entity for regulated activities (recommendation 2.3)
 - Prohibit the payment of party membership fees by any entity other than an individual wishing to become a party member (recommendation 2.4)
 - Membership applications should be made directly by an individual seeking to become a member (online to the party, or to a person authorized by the party) (recommendation 2.5)
 - Prohibit making contributions in cryptocurrency and untraceable instruments (recommendation 2.6)
 - Nomination and leadership contests
 - That only Canadian citizens and permanent residents be eligible to vote in a nomination or leadership contest (recommendation 2.7)
 - That registered political parties be required to obtain a declaration from their members regarding their status as Canadian citizen (or permanent resident) and



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

that they be required to maintain records, of who has voted in their contests and voters' declaration of eligibility for a minimal period, such as seven years (recommendation 2.8)

- Expand s. 282.4 to apply at all times (not just during an election period) and apply to influencing any person to vote for or against a nomination or leadership contestant (recommendation 2.9)
- Expand the prohibitions found in Part 11.1 of the CEA to nomination and leadership contests to help protect their integrity as key parts of the democratic process (recommendation 2.10)
- Expand ss. 480.1, 481 and 482 to prohibit efforts to lie or commit fraud in a nomination or leadership contest in a manner that is equivalent to the way in which they currently apply to elections (recommendation 2.11)
- That parties and electoral district associations should be required to file with EC their rules for nomination and leadership contests (recommendation 2.12)
- That the entity holding a contest should file a notice with EC before the contest (recommendation 2.13)
- That all contestants should be required to file a financial return with EC (recommendation 2.14)



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Partisan activities of unions (communication with members)

Key message

- The *Canada Elections Act* (CEA) was expanded in 2018 so that a third party's communications with its own members supporting or opposing a party or candidate, while not considered advertising, may be considered partisan activities or election surveys that are subject to a spending limit during a pre-election or election period.
- Many non-partisan informational and get-out-the-vote activities, including some issue-based activities, can still be conducted without limit.
- A legislative change would be required to exempt all of a union's communications with its members from regulation.

Facts

Concerns expressed by Members of Parliament (MPs) and unions

- In House of Commons debates on Bill C-65, some MPs mentioned that unions should not be unduly prohibited from communicating with their members about politics and that this should be addressed at the committee stage in the context of third-party rules.
- Elections Canada (EC) has heard similar concerns from unions, mostly recently during consultation on a draft version of the 2024 political financing handbook for third parties.

Background

- Parliament amended the third-party rules in December 2018 (Bill C-76) so that they applied to spending on a broader range of activities beyond advertising where the spending is to promote or oppose a party or candidate.
- EC understands that this was done in response to parliamentarians' concerns about the increased, unregulated activities of third parties and the impact on the level playing field and transparency.
- Based on the legislation, EC handbooks since 2019 have stated that partisan activities and election surveys are regulated, including those directed at a third party's own members.

Legislative provisions

- A partisan activity is "an activity, including canvassing door-to-door, making telephone calls to electors and organizing rallies," that promotes a political entity, other than by taking a position on an issue (s. 349 of the CEA). The definition nowhere makes a distinction that activities involving unions or their members should be exempted from the application of the provision.
- Similarly, an election survey (ss. 2(1), 349) is a survey of "persons." Nothing suggests that internal surveys of union members are exempted from its scope.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

- Although the definition of election advertising (s. 349) provides that the transmission of a document by a third party to their members, employees or shareholders is not advertising (e.g. subject to tagline and election-day blackout rules), this does not prevent such communications from meeting the different definitions of “partisan activity” or “election survey.”
- Courts have consistently upheld the importance of third-party rules for protecting election integrity, instilling public confidence in elections and preserving freedom of political expression. See *Harper v. Canada* 2004 SCC 33 and *Libman v. Quebec (Attorney General)* [1997] 3 SCR 569.

Activities that can still be conducted

- Unions are not prohibited from conducting partisan activities, election surveys and advertising, but they must register with EC once they conduct regulated activities with combined expenses of \$500 or more (increased to \$1,500 in Bill C-65), stay within the spending limit and report their financial transactions.
- The CEA leaves many activities outside the scope of regulation, including non-partisan efforts to encourage members to vote; informing members of issues that affect them as union members, without promoting or opposing a party or candidate; and recommending that members raise issues of concern during the campaign.
- Even if an issue is clearly associated with a party or candidate, if the union sends a communication (other than advertising) that does not identify a political entity, the communication is not regulated as a partisan activity or subject to a spending limit.
- Activities that do not have expenses associated with them are also not reported or limited.

Third party expenses limits

- The CEA imposes limits on expenses that a third party can incur for regulated activities conducted during a general election or by-election.
- If a general election is called before March 31, 2025, the overall expense limit for the election period is \$602,700 or \$5,166 in a given electoral district.
- These limits have been adjusted for inflation. The base amounts are \$350,000 and \$3,000 for a general election period.
- In a pre-election period of a fixed-date election, the base amounts are \$700,000 and \$7,000 (by way of indication: over \$1,200 000 and over \$12,000 for October 2025 with inflation adjustment).



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Long ballot accessibility considerations

Key messages

- Elections Canada (EC) strives to ensure that the ballot's design is adapted to fit any number of confirmed candidates while maintaining a balance of accessibility, security, reliability and fairness.
- Long ballots create additional barriers for voters and electoral workers with disabilities.
- Long ballot accessibility considerations were first identified during the November 2022 by-election in Mississauga–Lakeshore.
- Since then, EC has used various channels to gather feedback on accessibility considerations associated with long ballots.

Facts

From EC's research reports:¹

- Electors who reported that they often or always limit their daily activities due to a physical condition, a sensory impairment, pain or a mental health issue, were less likely to say it was easy to complete their ballot (90%) than those who limit their activities sometimes (96%) or never (97%).
- Among those who found it difficult to complete the ballot, 71% attributed this to the list of candidates being too long or having difficulty finding their choice of candidate on the list; 13% mentioned the ballot paper being too large to handle or difficult to fold.

From EC's consultations:²

- Members of the Advisory Group for Disability Issues (AGDI) unanimously expressed the opinion that long ballots create major accessibility barriers.
- Having a large number of candidates on a ballot makes it visually unfamiliar, overwhelming and confusing, particularly for voters with low vision, dyslexia and cognitive issues.

¹ Research was completed on the ease of use by electors through the [Survey of electors following the June 19, 2023, by-election in the districts of Winnipeg South Centre, Portage-Lisgar, Oxford, and Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Westmount and the July 24, 2023, by-election in the district of Calgary Heritage](#).

² A consultation on Ballot Redesign Options for the Mississauga-Lakeshore By-election was conducted on November 15-16, 2022 with members of EC's Advisory Group for Disability Issues (AGDI) and with the following organizations: ABC Life Literacy Canada; Brain Injury Canada; Canadian Alliance of Student Associations; Canadian Association for the Blind; Special Olympics Canada and Special Olympics Ontario. A consultation was held with AGDI members on September 11-12, 2024, during which members provided additional feedback on accessibility concerns with the long ballot.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

- Explaining and comprehending the unique instructions of the long ballot for voters whose first language is neither English nor French also poses an accessibility barrier.
- The extraordinary size of the ballot makes it very difficult to handle and mark, especially for voters with dexterity and mobility issues.
- Some voters have trouble unfolding, refolding and placing long ballots in the ballot box.
- For those in a wheelchair, it is very difficult to reach past the middle of a long ballot without pulling a portion of it off the table and therefore risk damaging and spoiling their ballot.
- These visual and physical challenges impact the independence and secrecy of the voting experience since some voters with disabilities must resort to asking for assistance from an election officer to properly handle or mark the long ballot.
- The long ballot also created accessibility issues for some election workers, as the boxes used to transport the ballots are much heavier and more difficult to carry.
- Blind electors will not be able to use our new assistive voting technology (AVTD) with long ballots.

From EC's Accessibility and GBA+ office:³

- Returning officers (RO) and field liaison officers (FLO) reported that the length of the long ballot was an issue for some electors. Specifically, some electors had trouble both opening and closing the ballot and required assistance with the voting process.
- During the counting process, election workers needed to stand for long periods of time because of the size of the ballot; in some cases, they were standing for hours.
- The boxes used to transport the ballots were heavy and awkward to carry and store. Some older election workers struggled with carrying the ballot boxes.
- The long ballot was difficult to read and, if electors were using the magnifying glass, it was difficult to position the ballot straight.
- Explaining the long ballot to those who do not have English or French as a first language was difficult for the election workers.

³ EC's Accessibility and GBA+ office consulted with Ros and FLOs who are members of the Accessibility Plan Working Group on Sept 13, 2024.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Complaints in foreign languages

Key message

- Elections Canada (EC) currently has options to intake verbal (by phone or at local EC offices) enquiries in languages other than French and English.
- EC currently does not offer the option of submitting written enquiries in languages other than French and English but could explore options in the future.
- EC is currently working with the Office of the Commissioner of Canada Elections (OCCE) to explore options to increase the public's awareness of the OCCE's ability to receive complaints in multiple languages.

Facts

- Interpretation services are available through CanTalk, a language interpretation service, for:
 - Voice calls answered by our Public Enquiries Unit (PEU) and our outsourced contact centre service agents.
 - Voice calls and in-person interactions in/at the electoral district offices by election administrators (EAs).
- CanTalk agents provide real-time interpretation services by phone in a broad range of heritage and Indigenous languages.
- Responsibility for capturing details of the conversation falls to the contact centre agent, or the EA using case management software or the hard copy forms available in the local EC offices.
- No process is currently in place for written submissions in languages other than English and French.
- No written submissions have been received in languages other than English or French in the past five years. Two unretrievable exceptions date back prior to five years ago:
 - A Spanish-speaking PEU agent informally addressed a Spanish-speaking complainant based on their own ability to do so.
 - A German language (written) submission was met with a request to resubmit their feedback in one of Canada's two official languages.
- EC could explore options for written translation support through CanTalk or another interpretation and translation service.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

- The general election website includes messaging about the CanTalk service, and we are looking at ways to increase visibility of this live interpretation service as part of the path forward.
- The OCCE has indicated to EC that they would appreciate communications support from EC to let Canadians know that the OCCE has the ability to receive complaints in languages other than French and English.
 - EC has begun discussions with the OCCE communications team to explore ways to incorporate messaging to that effect.



Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer

Bill C-65 *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (Electoral Participation Act)*

Fact sheet

Redistribution of electoral boundaries and pre-election period

Key messages

- The pre-election period that exists in the *Canada Elections Act* (CEA) now with respect to certain political financing obligations, and will be extended to pre-registration opportunities for candidates and special ballot voters will commence before the new boundaries come into force on the issue of the writs.
- Elections Canada (EC) interprets the CEA in this case to provide that although the new boundaries have not yet come into force, the pre-election period will be conducted according to the 343 electoral districts that will be used in the general election.
- This means that spending limits and candidate and voter pre-registration will take place on the basis of the 343 electoral districts (EDs) described in the representation order.

Facts

- In the pre-election period, although activities will be performed based on the presumption of the existence of 343 EDs, these EDs (post-representation order) do not formally come into force until the dissolution of Parliament, which generally happens at the same time as the issue of the writs for the general election (GE).
- There will therefore be a period between June 30, 2025, and the dissolution when EC will be preparing for an election based on 343 EDs without those EDs being formally in place.
- In Bill C-65, a candidate or elector may apply to a returning officer (RO) in an ED for either pre-registration as a candidate or for their special ballot.
- In the existing law, s. 349.1(2) provides that in a pre-election period a third party is limited in how much it can spend “in a given electoral district.” There are related interim third party reporting requirements where EC has required reporting by ED of certain expenses.
- If Parliament were to change the law to clarify that, in a pre-election period following the publication of a representation order and before it comes into force, references to “in an electoral district” refer to the representation order EDs and not the pre-representation order EDs, that would likely clarify things.
- That said, EC’s interpretation taking a purposive and contextual approach is that Parliament intends the pre-election period to take place according to the same rules as the GE, and therefore it should be conducted on the basis of 343 EDs.

Party/MP/ Senator	Comments
Debate at second reading (House)	
May 31, 2024	
<p>Liberal Party</p> <p>Kevin Lamoureux</p>	<p>Mr. Lamoureux said that EC plays a critical role in building and maintaining public confidence in elections and is second to none around the world.</p> <p>For the most part, Mr. Lamoureux highlighted high-level changes proposed in the bill. He also encouraged MPs to provide feedback on the bill or to bring ideas they see in other jurisdictions to consider at committee. His key messages of interest are below by topic.</p> <p><u>Privacy</u> Databanks have evolved significantly in elections; we must protect electors' personal information as much as we can, without compromising the principles of democracy.</p> <p>Noted that Elections Manitoba provides phones numbers with electors' information, which might be something worth considering at the committee stage.</p> <p><u>Vote anywhere</u> It might be difficult for EC to put into place something to allow for electors to vote anywhere in the riding for the 2025 election, but it would be a good addition for future elections.</p> <p><u>Three-day election</u> Mr. Lamoureux noted that a three-day election will not be ready for 2025 but said it will take place in 2029. He noted that this will be a good way to avoid conflicts related to weather or conflicting election dates in provinces.</p> <p><u>Change of election date</u> In response to questions about the bill allowing more MPs to access a pension, Mr. Lamoureux encouraged members to let the bill go to committee so this can be discussed and said the government will agree with the majority if there are alternative dates proposed. Mr. Lamoureux also repeatedly pointed out that other parties' members will benefit from pensions.</p>

Party/MP/ Senator	Comments
<p data-bbox="203 367 391 428">Conservative Party</p> <p data-bbox="203 468 431 596">Michael Cooper (PROC member), Tom Kmiec, David Epp</p>	<p data-bbox="483 367 813 394"><u>Change of election date</u></p> <p data-bbox="483 401 1403 495">Mr. Epp said that while some changes in the bill are “supportable” (i.e.: changes to third party regime to address foreign interference), the CPC is very concerned about proposed changes to the fixed election date.</p> <p data-bbox="483 531 1409 663">Mr. Cooper and Mr. Kmiec argued that this is really just a “pension bill” to allow the Liberals elected in 2019 to qualify for their pension. Mr. Epp also noted that the change in date will cost taxpayers much more than additional election days would.</p> <p data-bbox="483 699 1382 930">Mr. Epp also noted that in 2019 the CEO decided not to move the election date that interfered with a Jewish high holy day, noting that there are always Canadians who can’t vote on election day. Mr. Epp argued that this precedent shows no need to change the fixed date. He suggested, however, that if the government wants to move the election date, October 6 would not interfere with Diwali or Jewish observed days.</p> <p data-bbox="483 966 773 993"><u>Third party financing</u></p> <p data-bbox="483 999 1419 1161">Mr. Cooper noted that the bill is a step in the right direction with respect to third party financing (including an “important step forward with respect to pre-election and election periods”) but does not close a loophole where parties can use contributions of foreign funds to influence elections.</p> <p data-bbox="483 1197 672 1224"><u>Special ballot</u></p> <p data-bbox="483 1230 1419 1535">Mr. Cooper also noted problems that the CPC cannot support, including the ability to fill in a party name on a special ballot; he argued that this raises constitutional questions as the constitution does not reference parties and that we elect individuals, not political parties. Mr. Cooper also pointed to the proposed ability that an individual can assist an unlimited number of voters and does not have to have a connection with the person they are assisting, which he said raises concerns of potential abuse and should be carefully scrutinized at committee.</p> <p data-bbox="483 1570 919 1598"><u>Additional advance voting days</u></p> <p data-bbox="483 1604 1393 1698">When asked if he supported additional advanced voting days, Mr. Cooper said that he did, but there are other issues with the bill that need to be discussed.</p> <p data-bbox="483 1734 1317 1801"><i>*At the end of his speech, Mr. Cooper moved that the House decline the second reading of the bill.</i></p>

Party/MP/ Senator	Comments
<p>Bloc Québécois</p> <p>Xavier Barsalou-Duval, Martin Champoux, Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné</p>	<p><u>Change of election date</u> Mr. Champoux said there are two reasons the BQ will not vote for this legislation; they don't agree with making changes for religious accommodation, and the change of date will conflict with a number of municipal elections in Quebec. Mr. Champoux also argued that changing the election date so some MPs qualify for pensions would create more cynicism among electors.</p> <p><u>Additional advance voting days, on-campus voting, three-day voting, vote anywhere in ED</u> Mr. Barsalou-Duval said the BQ is not opposed to a number of items in the bill, including: additional advance days; changes for long-term care homes; on-campus voting; and measures to allow for a three-day voting period and to vote anywhere in the ED (depending on what the CEO reports about implementation and how practical it is). He noted, however, that issues with finding polling places and staff could make three-day voting difficult.</p>
<p>NDP</p> <p>Lisa Marie Barron, Lindsay Mathyssen (PROC member)</p>	<p>Ms. Mathyssen called the legislation a good step to “give power back to Canadians” and pointed to the NDP’s willingness to work together with the government to move toward fairer elections. She also spoke in support of replacing the first-past-the-post system and a citizens’ assembly.</p> <p><u>Change of election date</u> Ms. Barron said that the NDP will be putting forth an amendment to move the fixed election date back to its original date.</p> <p><u>Additional advance voting days, on-campus voting, long-term care, special ballots</u> Ms. Mathyssen said that the bill will need to be improved at committee, but pointed to some “wins” including: additional advance polling days; online registration and the option to register early for mail-in ballots; the option to return ballots in person on election day; easier voting in long-term care facilities ; on-campus voting; the ability for an elector to choose who they want to assist them with voting.</p> <p><u>Improvements to the bill</u> Among the items the NDP would like to discuss at the committee stage, Ms. Mathyssen listed Indigenous languages, telephone voting and lowering the voting age (but did not expand on these items). Ms. Mathyssen also argued that unions should be able to communicate with their members about politics, and pointed out that gender parity is important in politics.</p>

Party/MP/ Senator	Comments
June 17, 2024	
<p>Conservative Party</p> <p>Eric Duncan (PROC member), Len Weber, Bernard Généreux</p>	<p><u>Change of election date</u> In his speech, Mr. Duncan identified the bill’s provision to change the election date, which would allow 2019 elected officials to obtain pensions if they do not seek re-election.</p> <p>Mr. Généreux pointed out that a new federal election date was very close to the date of municipal elections in Quebec.</p> <p>Mr. Weber also mentioned that the bill is not about increasing voter turnout, and other means of voting during elections; if the bill were to go to committee, they are of the opinion that the election date should not be changed. Mr. Weber confirmed that he would support the bill if the election date remained unchanged.</p>
<p>Bloc Québécois</p> <p>Luc Desilets, Alain Therrien</p>	<p><u>Change of election date</u> Mr. Desilets also highlighted the measure calling for a change in the election date, for reasons similar to those of the CPC.</p> <p><u>Vote on campus and vote anywhere in ED</u> Mr. Therrien mentioned that the bill presented several interesting elements, including measures concerning foreign interference and the possibility of voting on campuses and in long-term care facilities.</p>
<p>NDP</p> <p>Peter Julian</p>	<p><u>Change of election date</u> Mr. Julian repeated that the NDP plans to move an amendment regarding this aspect of the bill.</p> <p><u>Voting age</u> The NDP raised the issue of lowering the voting age to 16.</p>
June 18, 2024	
<p>Liberal Party</p> <p>Michael Coteau, Kevin Lamoureux</p>	<p><u>Privacy</u> Mr. Coteau argued that electors’ information must be protected and said that if electors think their private information is at risk, they may be hesitant to vote.</p> <p><u>Electors with disabilities</u> When asked about improving the bill to ensure electors with disabilities are better served, Mr. Coteau noted that his father is legally blind, and he is always amazed by the professionalism and tools provided by Elections Canada when he takes his father to vote.</p>

Party/MP/ Senator	Comments
	<p><u>Change of election date</u> Mr. Lamoureux highlighted that while there are concerns about October 27 being close to the date of Quebec’s municipal elections, October 20. This is the same date as Alberta’s municipal elections.</p>
<p>Conservative Party</p> <p>Garnet Genuis, Ed Fast, Brad Vis</p>	<p><u>Change of election date</u> Mr. Genuis argued that Liberals want to stay in power longer; Conservatives (CPC) believe there should be an earlier election. Mr. Genuis said that his party would oppose the bill.</p> <p>When asked to clarify if the CPC would support the bill if the NDP proposes an amendment to remove the proposed change of election date, Mr. Genuis said the CPC supports Mr. Cooper’s amendment to not give second reading to the bill.</p> <p>When asked if he would support the bill knowing the NDP will be putting forward an amendment to change the electoral date back to what it was initially, Mr. Fast replied he didn’t trust a Liberal-NDP government.</p> <p><u>Third party financing</u> Mr. Fast spoke about trust in the electoral process and some of the provisions of the bill that touch on foreign interference, which the CPC agrees with. These include changes to third party donations to ensure that foreigners cannot illegally donate. He argued that this “modest” improvement is marred by the proposal to move the fixed election date.</p> <p><u>Writing party name on special ballot</u> Mr. Vis argued that the ability to write the party name on a special ballot is a key problem of Bill C-65, and is a “dereliction of our historical practice of electing individual members to the House of Commons and not political parties.”</p>
<p>Bloc Québécois</p> <p>Luc Thériault, Christine Normandin</p>	<p><u>Change of election date</u> Mr. Thériault said that the Bloc Québécois is seeking a formal guarantee that the proposal to change the fixed date will be removed, and said the BQ will not support the bill without it. He pointed to the Quebec municipal elections that would fall close to the proposed date, and recruitment issues for election officers.</p> <p>Mr. Thériault also argued that the CEO should have the tools to intervene if a general election conflicts with other jurisdictions’ election dates.</p>

Party/MP/ Senator	Comments
	<p>Ms. Normandin argued that there are a variety of different ways to vote, making it not necessary to move the election date because it conflicts with a religious holiday.</p>
<p>NDP</p> <p>Lisa Marie Barron, Alistair MacGregor</p>	<p><u>Accessibility</u></p> <p>Ms. Barron discussed the importance of accessibility for all Canadians to vote anywhere, use mail-in ballots, and to vote on campus and in long-term care facilities, and to choose who can assist them in casting ballots.</p> <p>Ms. Barron also noted the inclusion of Inuktitut on federal ballots as being vitally important to lower barriers to vote, and to electors understanding confidently who they are voting for. She also referenced Bill C-297 and expressed hope that this will be used to move forward in the right direction.</p> <p>Ms. Barron also mentioned that during her visit to Nunavut, she realized the inaccessibility for non-English or French speaking Indigenous persons to use the complaint process.</p> <p><u>Change of election date</u></p> <p>Mr. MacGregor highlighted that the NDP will introduce an amendment once the bill reaches the committee stage to bring the election date back to its original date of October 20.</p>



Le directeur général des élections • The Chief Electoral Officer

Our file: 2024-106505

September 18, 2024

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs
66 Slater Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister LeBlanc:

On September 16th, 2024, electors voted in the electoral district of LaSalle-Emard-Verdun using a ballot featuring 91 confirmed candidates and that required modifications in terms of size, font and design. The large number of candidates continues a trend that began during the 44th General Election and has continued through four successive by-elections through 2022, 2023 and 2024 as part of a protest movement known as the “longest ballot committee”. Each of these elections featured significantly more candidates than is the norm in Canadian federal elections. Most of the large number of candidates in these elections indicate their affiliation as “independent”, even though they are part of a coordinated effort.

Whatever the motivation behind this initiative (and it is not my role to question it), the very large number of candidates has resulted in longer and more complicated ballots that present significant accessibility issues for Canadians. We have now reached the point where any further increase to the number of candidates will require me to reduce the font size of the names on the ballot, further compounding the accessibility challenges. Marking modified ballots takes longer and is more complex for all voters, resulting in decreased service times in voting locations. Finally, counting modified ballots takes significantly longer and delays the availability of provisional results.

I have to date resorted to making adaptations to the *Canada Elections Act*, as authorized by s. 17 of the Act to deviate from some of the prescriptions related to ballot format and the time at which the count of advance polls begins. These derogations have been necessary to accommodate an exceptionally large number of candidates but do not provide a satisfactory solution for voters. Unless the Act is amended, I have no appropriate legal or administrative responses available to me.

For this reason, I write to ask you to consider an amendment that could be brought before by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs during its study of Bill C-65, *The Electoral Participation Act*.

Clause 7 of the Bill proposes to reduce the number of signatures required to support a person's nomination as a candidate. While I applaud measures to lessen the burden on those who wish to become candidates, it is also essential that the requirement for supporting signatures not be turned on its head. In the case of the longest ballot initiative, we have seen nomination papers for the various participating candidates contain largely identical signatures. This indicates that voters who sign the nomination papers are supporting the nomination not of any particular candidate, but rather of as many candidates as possible whomever these may be (consistent with the goals of the longest ballot committee).

In my view, voters who support the nomination of a candidate should be limited to signing in support of only one candidate. This would ensure that those who wish to participate as candidate in the election actually have the support of the requisite number of electors for their candidacy. It is essential, however, that candidates should not have their nomination papers rejected or challenged simply because a person happens to have signed someone else's nomination paper, something which candidates may very well have no control over or any means of knowing. For that reason, while a prohibition on supporting more than one candidate should be created, accompanied by sanctions for those who sign more than once or encourage others to do so, the fact that a candidate's nomination papers include a signature that is also found in another candidate's nomination paper should not invalidate either nomination.

While it is my intention to recommend such a measure if I am called to appear before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs as it studies Bill C-65, I would also urge the government to consider putting forward an amendment to that effect at the earliest opportunity.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Stéphane Perrault', with a large loop at the top and a wavy tail.

Stéphane Perrault
Chief Electoral Officer

**Impacts of an
October 2025 Fixed-
Date General
Election on
Religious and
Cultural Groups**
Consultation Report
August 2024



elections.ca



Table of Contents

Context	
Background	3
Approach	4
Results	6
Participation	6
Findings	6
Religious communities	6
Indigenous communities	8
Provincial, Territorial and Municipal Elections	11
Conclusion	14
Annexes	17
Annex A – List of religious and cultural groups and individuals contacted	17
Annex B – List of Indigenous organizations contacted	19
Annex C – List of dates (religious / cultural)	22

Context

Background

Since the 2007 introduction of fixed election dates in Canada, the *Canada Elections Act* (CEA) provides that, subject to the government's discretion to call an election at any time, each general election must be held on the third Monday in October in the fourth year following the previous general election (i.e. election day or polling day).

The CEA currently grants the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) the discretion to recommend to the government an alternate day for the general election, if the CEO is of the opinion that the date is not suitable, including by reason of its conflicting with a day of cultural or religious significance, or a provincial or municipal election. Under the CEA, if a recommendation is made and accepted, the alternate day must be either the next day or the following Monday. Advance polling days also need to be adjusted if election day changes. Any such recommendation must be decided upon by August 1 of the election year. Under current legislation, the fixed date for the next federal general election is Monday, October 20, 2025.¹

In 2019, the fixed date for the 43rd general election fell on October 21. This date presented a direct conflict with Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, two holy days in the Jewish religious calendar. In addition, the four days of advance polls coincided or overlapped with other Jewish holy days. The conflict between the Jewish religious calendar and 2019 electoral calendar impacted in different ways and to different degrees the ability of observant Jewish electors and candidates to participate in the electoral process. Elections Canada developed an action plan to accommodate electors observing Jewish holidays. Returning officers worked with Jewish community leaders in 54 of 338 federal ridings (where adjusted 2016 census data showed the Jewish population to be over 1 percent) to design local solutions to meet community needs.

Following the 2019 election, the CEO committed to a post-election review of the fixed-date election, which would consider input from a variety of religious and cultural communities. This input informed the CEO's 2022 recommendations to Parliament regarding the electoral calendar and the fixed-date election currently set out in the CEA. The results of this consultation can be found on [Elections Canada's website](#).

In 2021, during the 44th GE, three First Nations communities in the riding of Kenora, Ontario, did not have a poll in their communities on election day, despite one being advertised on the voter information card. The returning officer replaced the election day

¹ At the time of writing this report, [Bill C-65, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act](#), has been introduced to Parliament. Tabled in March 2024 in the House of Commons, it has passed second reading and has been referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs for consideration. If it passes, the bill may change the date of the fixed-date general election and the duration of advance polls.

poll with a one-day advance poll because hunting and cultural activities were taking place on election day. The change was not communicated clearly to electors or to the community leadership ahead of election day. A post-election [report](#) on the incident pointed to a need for Elections Canada to review how it plans for and delivers election services in First Nations communities.

In 2022, the CEO submitted his report [Meeting New Challenges: Recommendations from the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada following the 43rd and 44th General Elections](#). Recommendation 7.2.1 reads as follows:

- To improve the accessibility of the election by setting an inclusive election date, amend the Act as follows:
 - Provide for a designated period in the fourth year following the previous general election (e.g. within the first four weeks beginning in October) within which polling day must occur.
 - Require Elections Canada to consult with religious and cultural communities regarding an appropriate date for polling day one year before the designated election period.
 - Require the CEO to make a public recommendation to the Governor in Council regarding polling day, based on their consultations. The CEO's recommendation should be made no later than 12 months prior to the beginning of the designated period.
 - Require the Governor in Council, within one month of receiving the recommendation, to either adopt the date recommended by the CEO or to choose another date within the designated period and issue an Order in Council to that effect.

In the spirit of this recommendation and to ensure that the 2025 fixed-date election is as accessible and as inclusive as possible, Elections Canada consulted with religious and cultural groups, national Indigenous organizations, as well as Indigenous community leaders across the country to identify any potential conflicts and assess how it may best organize polling days to mitigate them.

Approach

Elections Canada consulted in two ways to identify the days of cultural, religious and traditional significance for the communities and the impacts of conflicts between these days and electoral participation.

First, Elections Canada conducted a written consultation with groups and organizations in its [Inspire Democracy](#) network, a program that works with stakeholders to reduce barriers to electoral participation. Elections Canada reached out to its network of contracted and non-contracted stakeholders. This included a total of 121 contacts from Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and interfaith groups, as well as

Indigenous organizations and institutions serving Indigenous people. The lists of contacts are available in [Annexes A](#) and [B](#).

Elections Canada sent its contacts an email on June 10, 2024, inviting them to identify, in a pre-populated table, any days of significance that may conflict with electoral participation. There were three types of conflicts: conflicts with voting, conflicts with working at the election and conflicts with running as a candidate. Please see the table in [Annex C](#). Participants were asked to reply before June 28, 2024.

Secondly, returning officers connected with the Indigenous community leaders in their electoral districts. Returning officers were mandated between June 20 and July 19, 2024, to connect with Indigenous community leaders in their electoral districts. Elections Canada provided an email template for them to invite Indigenous leaders to identify days of significance for their community. The goal was to understand how Elections Canada could better accommodate their communities during polling days in a fixed-date election calendar, should one take place in 2025.

Returning officers asked Indigenous community leaders to share any dates of events and traditional activities taking place between September 25 and November 11, 2025, that could conflict with a possible fixed-date election calendar—they did not require that their contacts specify which type of electoral participation (voting, working at an election and running as a candidate) would be impacted.

Results

Participation

Out of 121 invitations to participate that were emailed to stakeholders in the Inspire Democracy Network, Elections Canada received 21 responses. This included 2 responses from Christian contacts, 7 responses from Indigenous contacts, and 12 responses from Jewish contacts.

Through the special mandate of returning officers to reach out to Indigenous communities in their riding, returning officers reached out to 747 Indigenous communities and received responses from 449.

Findings

Religious communities

Respondents submitted the filled-out table and several shared comments. For the full list of conflicts identified by respondents, please see [Annex C](#). While the table included days of significance for the entire year, this analysis will focus on the dates between September 25 and November 11, 2025. These dates were chosen based on the widest interpretation of the proposed legislative changes to the CEA in Bill C-65. If enacted into law, the bill would allow for more alternate days, up to two weeks before and after the fixed date.

A few conflicts have been identified (Table 1) for the days between September 25 and November 11. It is important to note that there are many identified days of significance for which we did not receive answers. To fill in the missing information, the results of Elections Ontario's report, "Electoral Events: Days of Cultural and Religious Significance in 2024," were used to complete the table below.² They are identified by "(E-ON)."

² "Elections Ontario has consulted with recognized organizations from cultural and religious communities that represent at least one per cent of Ontario's population. In the summer of 2023, Elections Ontario conducted e-mail consultations with [...] organizations to determine the days of cultural and religious significance for 2024 and to confirm if any of these days would pose a barrier to voting for electors in their communities. This methodology has proven to be successful in the past and has informed the [Elections Ontario] 2024 report." *Electoral Events: Days of Cultural and Religious Significance in 2024*.

Table 1 – Days of Significance for Religious and Cultural Communities in Conflict with Electoral Participation Between September 25 and November 11, 2025

Date	Day of Significance	Group/Calendar	Conflicts
September 27, 2025	The Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross	Christian Orthodox (Old Calendar)	Voting (E-ON) ³
September 29, 2025	Michaelmas	Christian Protestant	Voting (E-ON)
October 1, 2025	Eve of Yom Kippur	Jewish	Voting; working
October 1, 2025	The Holy Protection of the Theotokos	Christian Orthodox (New Calendar)	Voting
October 2, 2025	Dussehra (Dasara)	Hindu	Voting (E-ON)
October 2, 2025	Yom Kippur	Jewish	Voting; working; running as a candidate
October 7–13, 2025	Sukkot	Jewish	Voting; working; running as a candidate
October 14, 2025	The Holy Protection of the Theotokos	Christian Orthodox (Old Calendar)	Voting (E-ON)
October 14–15, 2025	Shemini Atzeret	Jewish	Voting; working; running as a candidate
October 15, 2025	Simchat Torah	Jewish	Voting; working; running as a candidate
October 17–22, 2025	Diwali	Sikh	Voting (E-ON)
October 20, 2025	Diwali	Hindu	Voting (E-ON)
October 20, 2025	Bandi Chhor Divas	Sikh	Voting (E-ON)
October 28, 2025	The Holy Protection of the Theotokos	Christian Orthodox (New Calendar, Greek)	Voting
November 1, 2025	All Saints' Day	Christian Protestant	Voting (E-ON)
November 2, 2025	All Souls' Day	Christian Catholic	Voting (E-ON)
November 5, 2025	Gurpurab of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib	Sikh	Voting (E-ON)

³ Elections Ontario's consultation focused on conflicts with voting only.

Generally, respondents noted more conflicts with voting than with working at an election or running as a candidate. Some respondents also noted that the days in the list were correct but did not identify any conflicts.

Many respondents from the Jewish community noted that their holidays start at sundown the day before the date in the table; therefore, the same conflicts would apply to the evening before the day of significance. Some also noted that from sunset on Fridays through Saturday evening is also a conflict every week of the year, which can interfere with the option of going to advance polls as a mitigation for conflicts with election day.

Indigenous communities

Results of the responses received by Indigenous contacts in the Inspire Democracy program and by returning officers from Indigenous communities in their ridings showed similar conflicts.

From September 25 to November 11, a range of events that would impact electoral participation for Indigenous electors were identified (Table 2). These include events with approximate dates and range from national days to local events.

Many responses included notes that varying dates between mid-September and late October are traditional times of hunting, harvesting, fishing and feasts. For example, traditional moose hunting, cultural weeks and high harvesting times will take place during the September 25 to November 11 timeframe and, in many cases, their specific dates cannot be determined this far in advance. Many events will also be taking place, including some where a large part of the community might be away. Therefore, it will be important to communicate with communities in the months leading up to the next federal general election to find solutions and possible mitigation strategies if polling days coincide with said events.

Table 2 – Days of Significance for Indigenous Communities

Date	Event	Province and Community (if applicable)
September 25, 2025	Formal signing of Treaty 6	Alberta–Enoch
September 28, 2025	Commemoration of Joyce Echaquan	Quebec–Les Atikamekw de Manawan
September 30, 2025	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation/Orange Shirt Day	All
End of September	Fort Folly First Nation Pow Wow	New Brunswick–Fort Folly First Nation
September 10–October 31, 2025	Fall Fishing Season	Quebec–Eel River Bar First Nation
September–October	Traditional hunting season(s)	Many communities
October–dates to be determined	Indian National Finals Rodeo	Alberta–Banff–Airdrie, Goodstoney, Stoney, Chiniki and Bearspaw
October–dates to be determined	Regional meeting of all hamlet mayors	Nunavut–Coral Harbour
October 1, 2025	Treaty Day	All
October 3, 2025	Treaty 3 Signing	Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation
October 4, 2025	Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada/Sisters in Spirit Day	All

Date	Event	Province and Community (if applicable)
October 4, 2025	Commémoration de la survie de la communauté d'Odanak après le massacre de Rogers	Quebec–Première Nation des Abénakis de Wôlinak–Odanak
October 4, 2025	Community Assembly	Yukon–Nahanni Butte
October 4–7, 2025	Beausoleil First Nation Band Meetings	Ontario–Beausoleil First Nation (Christian Island)
October 6–10, 2025	Cultural Week	Quebec–Pekuakamiulnuatsh First Nation
October 6–10, 2025	Cultural Week	Quebec–Les Atikamekw de Manawan
October 8–12, 2025	Potlatch	British Columbia–ED 59037
October 26, 2025	Memorial Service for the Six Chiefs	British Columbia–Williams Lake
November 8, 2025	Indigenous Veterans Day	All
November 11, 2025	Remembrance Day	All
November 11, 2025	James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNAQ Day)	Quebec–Makivvik
November, date to be determined	Band Elections	Alberta–Eden Valley (Bears paw)

Date	Event	Province and Community (if applicable)
November, date to be determined	Election for Chief and Council	New Brunswick–Fort Folly First Nation
November, date to be determined	Fall Feast	Ontario–ED 35042

Provincial, territorial and municipal elections

Another factor to consider in this range of dates are the scheduled general and municipal elections planned in the different provinces and territories between September 25 and November 11, 2025 (Table 3).

Table 3 – Provincial, Territorial, General and Municipal Elections between September 25 and November 11, 2025

Date	Jurisdiction and Type of Elections
September 30, 2025	Newfoundland and Labrador Municipal Elections
October 14, 2025	Newfoundland and Labrador General Election
October 20, 2025	Alberta Municipal Elections
October 27, 2025	Nunavut General Election
November 2, 2025	Quebec Municipal Elections
November 3, 2025	Yukon General Election

The advance polls for these elections may conflict with a fixed-date federal election. In many cases, there is a range of dates during which these advance polls could be held.

Advance polls also depend on other factors, such as the issuance of the writ, before they are calculated and assigned a specific date.

Table 4 – Advance Poll Information and Possible Dates for Provincial, Territorial General and Municipal Elections Between September 25 and November 11, 2025

Jurisdiction and Type of Elections	Advance Polling Information	Possible Dates (if applicable)
Newfoundland and Labrador municipal elections advance polls	(1) A council may hold an advance poll not earlier than 14 days immediately preceding the day established as election day. (2) Where it considers it appropriate, a council may hold a second advance poll on the Saturday immediately preceding election day.	(1) September 16–29, 2025 (2) Saturday, September 27, 2025
Newfoundland and Labrador general election advance polls	Advance polls may be held on 1 or more of the 7 days immediately preceding ordinary polling day.	Can be held on 1 or more of the following days: October 7–13, 2025
Alberta municipal elections advance polls	No advance vote shall be held within 24 hours of election day. The returning officer must determine the days and hours when the advance vote under subsection (2) or (3) is to be held. (2) Subject to subsection (3), an elected authority may by resolution provide for holding an advance vote for an election. (3) Subject to subsections (4) and (7), a municipality with a population greater than 5,000 must provide for holding an advance vote.	Any day except October 19, 2025

Jurisdiction and Type of Elections	Advance Polling Information	Possible Dates (if applicable)
Nunavut general election advance polls	<p>(1) An advance vote must be held in each constituency and, where a constituency includes more than one municipality, in each municipality, on Monday the 7th day before election day.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Holiday</p> <p>(1.1) If the day of the advance vote is a holiday, the day of the advance vote shall be Tuesday the 6th day before election day.</p>	October 20, 2025
Quebec municipal elections advance polls	<p>Whenever a poll is required, an advance poll must be held seven days before polling day.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the foregoing, the returning officer may decide that the advance poll shall be held for two consecutive days beginning seven days before polling day.</p>	<p>October 26, 2025</p> <p>With possibility of October 27, 2025, as an additional day</p>
Yukon general election advance polls	Advance polls shall be held on the 23rd and 24th days after the issue of the writ between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.	23rd and 24th days after the issue of the writ

Conclusion

If a fixed-date election occurs in Fall 2025, there are many conflicts with days of religious, cultural and traditional significance and provincial, territorial and municipal elections that the CEO might consider to recommend a different polling day, or plan to mitigate the impact on communities. Specifically, the following conflicts with polling days have been identified:

- An election on October 6 would conflict with an identified cultural week for some Indigenous communities and Beausoleil First Nation Band Meetings. Advance polls from September 25 to 30 would conflict with:
 - The formal signing of Treaty 6 on September 25;
 - The Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross on September 27 for Christian Orthodox communities;
 - Michaelmas on September 29 for Christian Protestant communities;
 - National Day of Truth and Reconciliation on September 30;
 - Possible advance polls for the Newfoundland and Labrador municipal elections from September 25 to 29;
 - and the Newfoundland and Labrador municipal elections on September 30.
- An election on October 13 would conflict with Sukkot for Jewish communities and possible advance polls for the Newfoundland and Labrador general election. Advance polls from October 2 to 7 would conflict with:
 - Dussehra on October 2 for Hindu communities;
 - Yom Kippur on October 2 for Jewish communities;
 - Treaty 3 signing on October 3 for the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation;
 - Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada/Sisters in Spirit Day on October 4;
 - A community assembly on October 4 for the Nahanni Butte community;
 - Beausoleil First Nation band meetings from October 4 to 7;
 - Possible advance polls for the Newfoundland and Labrador general election on October 7;
 - and Sukkot on October 7 for Jewish communities.
- An election on October 20 would conflict with Diwali for Sikh and Hindu communities and Bandi Chhor Divas for Sikh communities, advance polls for the Nunavut general election and the Alberta municipal election. Advance polls from October 9 to 14 would conflict with:
 - Sukkot between October 9 and 13 and Shemini Atzeret on October 14 for Jewish communities;
 - The end of a cultural week on October 9 and 10 for a few different Indigenous communities and a planned potlatch and its preparations between October 9 and 12;

- The Holy Protection of the Theotokos on October 14 for Christian Orthodox communities following the Old Calendar;
- and the Newfoundland and Labrador general election on October 14 and its possible advance polls between October 9 and 13.
- An election on October 27 would conflict with the Nunavut general election and the possible additional day of advance polls for the Quebec municipal elections. Advance polls from October 16 to 21 would conflict with:
 - Diwali between October 17 and 21 for Sikh communities;
 - Diwali on October 20 for Hindu communities;
 - Bandi Chhor Divas on October 20 for Sikh communities;
 - advance polls in the Nunavut general election on October 20;
 - and the Alberta municipal elections on October 20.
- An election on November 3 would conflict with the Yukon general election as well as Treaties Recognition Week for Indigenous communities. Advance polls from October 23 to 28 would conflict with:
 - Memorial service for the six chiefs on October 26 for the Indigenous community in Williams Lake;
 - The advance polls of the Quebec municipal elections on October 26 and the possible additional day of advance polls on October 27;
 - The Nunavut general election on October 27;
 - And the Holy Protection of the Theotokos on October 28 for Christian Orthodox communities following the New Calendar.
- An election on November 10 would not conflict with any days of religious, cultural or traditional significance. Advance polls from October 30 to November 4 would conflict with:
 - All Saints' Day on November 1 for Christian Protestant communities;
 - All Souls' Day on November 2 for Catholic communities;
 - The Quebec municipal elections on November 2;
 - The Yukon general election on November 3;
 - and Treaties Recognition Week between November 2 and 4.

This list does not reflect possible conflicts with other undetermined events of significance, such as hunting, fishing and harvesting, or advance polling dates that are impossible to forecast at this time.

No combination of election day and advance poll days can avoid all conflicts. While mitigation strategies can be implemented to reduce the impact of conflicts between polling dates and religious, cultural, and traditional days of significance, conflicts with provincial, territorial and municipal elections are more difficult to mitigate due to the fact that these elections often rely on the same workforce and use the same polling locations as federal elections.

Elections Canada would like to thank everyone who participated and helped identify days of significance and their impact on electoral participation for their communities. Their contributions have been essential in the identification of possible conflicts and will

help inform Elections Canada's plans for mitigating the impact of possible conflicts with the 45th federal general election.

Annexes

Annex A – List of religious and cultural groups and individuals contacted

Name of organization or person
Anglican Church of Canada
Avi Benlolo – Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies
Balpreet Singh, General Counsel – World Sikh Organization of Canada
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
Canadian International Jewish Association
Catherine Rodd, Executive Officer in Communications – General Council of the United Church of Canada
Chani Aryeh-Bain
Davindra Singh, Chair – Sikh Foundation of Canada
Dr. Aileen Van Ginkel, Co-Chair – Canadian Interfaith Conversation
Salvation Army
Fondation des instituts juifs orthodoxes
Grand rabbinat du Québec
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Canada
Heyna (Joannie) Tansky
Hindu Federation of Canada
Imam Refaat Mohamed, President – Canadian Council of Imams
International Buddhist Society in Canada
Ira Walfish
Mandy Zirkind
Michael Mostyn – B'nai Brith
Msgr. Frank Leo, Jr., C.S.S., General Secretary – Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
National Council of Canadian Muslims
Pandit Roopnauth Sharma, President – Hindu Federation of Canada
Peter Noteboom, General – Canadian Council of Churches
Rabbi Aaron Greenberg
Rabbi Avram Feigelstock – Orthodox Rabbinical Council of BC
Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl – Beth Tzedec Congregation, Toronto
Rabbi Dovid Engel, Principal – Toronto Cheder
Rabbi Isaac Feigenbaum
Rabbi Jonathan Jaffit, Director of Campus Outreach – Ohr Somayach, Toronto
Rabbi Joseph Kanofsky, Ph.D. – Kehillat Shaarei Torah
Rabbi Lionel Moses, Rabbi Emeritus - Shaare Zion Congregation
Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Lowy – Vaad Harabonim of Toronto
Rabbi Schneur Zalman Rabin, Development Officer – Beth Rivkah Academy

Name of organization or person

Rabbi Sherril Gilbert – Montreal Open Shul

Rabbi Yehoshua Botnick – Congregation Lubavitch, Ottawa

Rabbi Yirmi Cohen – Ohalei Yoseph Yitzchak Congregation

Sharaf Sharafeldin, Executive Director – Muslim Association of Canada

Shimon Koffler Fogel – Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs

Stephen Kendall, Principal Clerk, General Assembly Office – Presbyterian Church in Canada

Tejinder Singh Sidhu, President – World Sikh Organization of Canada

The Rev. Laurette Gauthier Glasgow, Special Advisor for Government Relations

The Rev. Tatsuya Aoki, Bishop – Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada

The Venerable Bhikkhu Mihita, President – Buddhist Council of Canada

World Sikh Organization of Canada

Zul Kassamali, Co-Chair – Canadian Interfaith Conversation

Annex B – List of Indigenous organizations contacted⁴

Name of organization
Assembly of First Nations
ilinniapaa Skills Development Centre
Indspire
National Association of Friendship Centres
Advanced Business Match
Native Women’s Association of Canada
Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
Confederacy of Mainland Mi’Kmaq
Nunavummi Disabilities Makinnasuaqtiit Society
Nunavut Arctic College
Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities
Kakivak Association
Qikiqtaaluk Corporation
Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
Tuktoyaktuk Community Corporation
Innu Round Table
Manitoba Inuit Association
Inuit Children, Youth and Family Centre
Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
Makivik Corporation
Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Alberta
Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association
Bow Valley College, Aboriginal Centre
Métis Nation of Alberta
Edson Friendship Centre
BC First Nations Rock the Vote
Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of British Columbia
DGW Law Corporation
Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre
Kaxla Society
Métis Nation British Columbia
Quality Education for First Nations Learners – FNSA
Sto:lo Aboriginal Skills & Employment Training
Ursa Creative

⁴ Elections Canada also mandated returning officers to connect with Indigenous leaders in their riding. Returning officers reached out to 747 communities.

Name of organization

BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres
Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Society
First Nations Financial Management Board
Prince George Native Friendship Centre
Indigenous Student Centre at University of Manitoba
Manito Ahbee
Manitoba Métis Federation
North Point Douglas Women's Centre
Southeast Collegiate
Flin Flon Indian-Métis Friendship Centre
Riverton & District Friendship Centre
The Pas Friendship Centre
Aboriginal Peoples Television Network
Nelson House
Labrador Friendship Centre
First Light Native Friendship Centre
North Slave Métis Alliance
Northwest Territory Métis Nation
Tłı̄chʔ Łeàgı̄ą Ts'ı̄ı̄ı̄ K9 Friendship Centre (formerly Rae-Edzo FC)
Algoma University – Anishnaabe Outreach
Carleton's Ojigkwanong Centre
Equay-Wuk – Women's Group
Métis Nation of Ontario
Mohawk College
Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
Ne-Chee Friendship Centre
The Indigenous Network
Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health
Wasauksing First Nation Public Library
M'Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre
Métis National Council
Independent First Nations Alliance
First Nations Child & Family Caring Society
Seven Generations Institute
First Nations Information Governance Centre
Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association
Femmes Autochtones du Québec
KWE Québec
Le Réseau jeunesse des Premières Nations
Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec

Name of organization

ReseauMTLnetwork

First Nations Education Council

Conseil de la Nation Atikamekw Sipi

Conseil d'Éducation des Premières Nations

Quebec Native Women's Association

Conseil de la Nation Huronne-wendat/Visite du Centre de formation huron-
Wendat/École

Université Laval et conseillère principale à la réconciliation et à l'éducation autochtone

École des dirigeants des Premières Nations

Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue

Ile-à-la-Crosse Friendship Centre

Saskatoon Indian & Métis Friendship Centre

Tatanka Oyate Holdings LP

Annex C – List of dates (religious/cultural)

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
Note: This list of days of significance is not meant to be exhaustive or final.		✓ (Yes) ✗ (No)	✓ (Yes) ✗ (No)	✓ (Yes) ✗ (No)	✓ (Yes) ✗ (No)	
Buddhist						
February 28	Losar/Lunar New Year					
February 15	Nirvana Day					
February 13	Magha Puja Day					
April 4	Ching Ming Festival					
April 13	Theravada New Year					
May 5	Buddha's Birthday					
May 12	Vesak					
July 10	Guru Purnima					
September 6	Ullambana Festival					
December 8	Bodhi Day/Rohatsu					
Christian – Catholic						
January 1	Mary, Mother of God					
January 5	Epiphany					
January 12	Baptism of the Lord Jesus					
January 25	Conversion of St. Paul					
February 2	Candlemas					
March 5	Ash Wednesday					

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
March 17	St. Patrick's Day					
April 13–April 20	Holy Week					
April 17	Holy Thursday					
April 18	Good Friday					
April 20	Easter Sunday					
May 3	Saints Philip and James Day					
June 1	Ascension of Jesus					
June 8	Pentecost					
June 15	Trinity Sunday					
June 22	Corpus Christi					
June 29	Feast of Saints Peter and Paul					
August 15	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary					
August 29	Beheading of John the Baptist					
September 8	Nativity of the Virgin Mary					
September 14	Triumph of the Cross					
October 4	St. Francis' Day/Blessing of the Animals					
October 18	St. Luke the Apostle					
November 1	All Saints' Day					
November 2	All Souls' Day					
November 23	Christ the King					
November 30–December 24	Advent					
November 24	St. Andrew's Day					
December 6	St. Nicholas' Day					
December 8	Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary					

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
December 12	Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe					
December 24	Christmas Eve					
December 25	Christmas					
December 26	St. Stephen's Day					
December 28/December 29	Holy Innocents					
December 28	Feast of the Holy Family					
Christian – Orthodox (New Calendar)						
Jan 5	Eve of the Theophany		✓			
Jan 6	The Baptism of Christ (Theophany or Epiphany)		✓			
Feb 2	The Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple		✓			
March 25	The Annunciation of the Theotokos		✓			
April 13	Palm Sunday		✓			
April 18	Good Friday/Holy Friday		✓			
April 20	Great and Holy Pasha (Easter)		✓			
April 21	Orthodox Easter Monday (Renewal Monday)		✓			
May 29	The Ascension of Christ		✓			
June 8	Pentecost		✓			
June 24	Nativity of the Forerunner John the Baptist		✓			
August 6	Transfiguration of the Lord		✓			
August 15	The Dormition of the Theotokos		✓			

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
September 8	The Nativity of the Theotokos		✓			
September 14	The Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross		✓			
October 28	The Holy Protection of the Theotokos		✓			
December 24	Christmas Eve		✓			
December 25	Christmas Day		✓			
December 26	Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos		✓			
[add date]	[add day of significance]					
June 9	Monday of the Holy Spirit		✓			
Christian – Orthodox (Old Calendar)						
January 6	Christmas Eve					
January 7	Christmas Day					
January 8	Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos					
January 9	Afterfeast of the Nativity of Christ					
January 14	Circumcision of the Lord					
January 18	The Eve of Theophany					
January 19	Theophany/Baptism of Christ					
February 15	The Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple					
April 7	The Annunciation of the Theotokos					
April 13	Palm Sunday					
April 18	Good Friday/Holy Friday					
April 20	Great and Holy Pasha (Easter)					
April 21	Renewal Monday/Bright Monday					

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
May 29	Ascension of Christ					
June 8	Pentecost					
July 7	The Nativity of the Forerunner John the Baptist					
August 19	Transfiguration of the Lord					
August 28	The Dormition of the Theotokos					
September 11	The Beheading of St. John the Baptist					
September 21	The Nativity of the Theotokos					
September 27	The Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross					
October 14	The Holy Protection of the Theotokos					
December 4	Entrance of the Theotokos in the Temple					
Christian – Protestant						
January 5	Twelfth Night					
January 6	Epiphany					
January 12	Baptism of Jesus					
February 2	Candlemas					
March 4	Shrove Tuesday					
March 5	Ash Wednesday					
April 13	Palm Sunday					
April 13–20	Holy Week					
April 17	Maundy Thursday					
April 18	Good Friday					
April 20	Easter Sunday					

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
June 8	Pentecost					
June 15	Trinity Sunday					
June 21	National Indigenous Day of Prayer					
August 6	Transfiguration					
August 15	Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary					
September 14	Triumph of the Cross					
September 29	Michaelmas					
October 31	Reformation Day (All Hallow's Eve)					
November 1	All Saints' Day					
November 22	Christ the King (ordinary form)					
October 26	Christ the King (extraordinary form)					
November 30	Advent Sunday					
November 30–December 24	Advent					
December 24	Christmas Eve					
December 25	Christmas					
December 28	Holy Innocents					
Hindu						
January 13	Lohri/Makar Sankranti					
January 14	Pongal/Makar Sankranti					
February 2	Vasant Panchami					
February 26	Maha Shivaratri					
March 14	Holi					
March 30	Ugadi					

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
March 29–April 6	Chaitra (Navratri)					
April 6	Rama Navami					
July 10	Guru Purnima					
August 9	Raksha Bandhan					
August 16	Krishna Janmashtami					
August 26–September 6	Ganesh Visarjan					
October 2	Dussehra (Dasara)					
October 10	Karva Chauth					
October 20	Diwali					
Indigenous						
June 21	National Indigenous Solidarity Day		✓			
August 9	International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples		✓			
September 30	National Day of Truth and Reconciliation		✓			
November 2–8	Treaties Recognition Week		✓			
November 7	International Inuit Day		✓			
[add date]	[add day of significance]					
May 05, 2025	National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls					
November 11, 2025	James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement Day					

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
November 16, 2025	Execution of Louis Riel – Day of Observation for Red River Métis					
End of September to October 21	Hunting					
October	Traditional Moose Hunting					
Unspecified weeks in Fall and Spring	Cultural weeks or “Mos break”					
November 11, 2025	James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement Day					
Jehovah’s Witnesses						
April 12	The Memorial of Jesus’s Death					
Jewish						
February 13	Tu B’Shevat	✓				
March 14	Purim	✓ ⁵	✓	✓	✓	
April 13–20	Pesach (Passover)		✓	✓	✓	
May 1	Yom Ha’Atzmaut	✓	✓			
May 16	Lag B’Omer	✓				
June 2–3	Shavuot		✓	✓	✓	
August 3	Tisha B’av	✓	✓	✓	✓	
September 23–24	Rosh Hashanah		✓	✓	✓	

⁵ In some cases, while some respondents noted conflicts with voting, working and running as a candidate for a day of significance, others responded “No conflict” for the same day. In such cases, checkmarks appear in both the “No conflict” column and the relevant conflict columns.

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
October 2	Yom Kippur		✓	✓	✓	
October 7–13	Sukkot		✓	✓	✓	
October 14–15	Shemini Atzeret		✓	✓	✓	
October 15	Simchat Torah		✓	✓	✓	
December 15–22	Chanukah	✓	✓			
[add date]	[add day of significance]					
April 24, 2025	Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day)					
April 30, 2025	Yom HaZikaron					
July 13, 2025	7th Tammuz					
October 01, 2025	Eve of Yom Kippur		✓	✓		
Muslim						
January 1/December 21	Rajab (Sacred month)					
January 27	Lailat al Miraj					
January 31	Sha'ban					
February 13	Lailatul Barat					
February 28–March 29	Ramadan					
March 28	Jumu'atul-Wida (Farewell Friday) [Jamat Ul-Vida]					
March 27	Laylat al Qadr					
March 30	Eid-ul Fitr					
March 30	Shawwal					
April 29	Dhul-Qa'dah (Sacred month)					
May 28	Dhul-Hijjah (Sacred month)					

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
June 5	Wuquf in 'Arafa-Hajj Day					
June 7	Tashreek					
June 6	Eid-ul Adha					
June 26	Islamic New Year					
June 26	Muharram (Sacred month)					
July 5	Ashura (10th Muharram)					
July 26	Safar					
August 25	Rabi-al-Awwal					
September 5	Mawlid (Birth) of the Prophet					
September 23	Rabi-al Thani					
October 23	Jumada-al-Ula					
November 22	Jumada-al-Akhirah					
Sikh						
January 13	Lohri					
January 13	Maghi					
January 6	Guru Gobind Singh GURPURAB					
March 13–15	Hola Mohalla					
April 14	Baisakhi (Vaisakhi)					
April 18	Birth of Guru Angad Dev					
June 16	Guru Arian Dev Sahib Martyrdom					
September 1	Installation of Scriptures as Guru Granth (Birth of The Guru Granth)					
October 20	Installation of Scriptures as Guru Granth (Birth of The Guru Granth)					
October 17–22	Diwali					

Date in 2025	Event or Activity	No Conflict	Conflict: Voting	Conflict: Working	Conflict: Running as a Candidate	Comments
October 20	Bandi Chhor Divas					
November 5	Gurpurab of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib					
November 24	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur					