

The Literacy NL Guide to Provincial Elections



Why should I vote in the NL provincial election?

Voting gives you a chance to have a say in how our province is run. It doesn't take a lot of time or effort.

Your vote supports the person you think is the best one for the job. It also supports the political party to which that person belongs.

Everyone's vote is important because the person who wins the election has an influence on provincial laws and regulations that affect everyone.

Some of the things the Provincial Government makes decisions about are:

- education for you and your children
- hospital and medical services
- welfare programs
- road construction and repair
- taxes like sales tax, gasoline tax, and income tax

Do I have the right to vote in the NL election?

To vote you must:

- be at least 18 years old by election day
- be a Canadian citizen
- be a primary resident of Newfoundland and Labrador the day before election day (on October 10, 2011)
- be a primary resident of the electoral district where you plan to vote on election day (on October 11, 2011)

They're making a list...

Elections Newfoundland and Labrador updates the voters list on a continuous basis. Contact them if you have:

- recently turned 18 years of age;
- moved residence;
- recently moved to Newfoundland and Labrador; or
- changed your name.

You may also contact Elections NL to:

- confirm that you are on the list
- confirm your correct electoral district.

Please note that even if your name is not on the list, you can still vote. Go to the polling station on election day and speak to the Returning Officer. You will have to swear an oath and present appropriate identification.

The person in charge of the election for your area is called the District Returning Officer. If you would like to speak to your District Returning Officer, you can call Elections NL at 1-877-729-7987 for contact information.

Where do I go to vote?

The place where people vote is called a polling station. It will be a building in your neighbourhood, usually a church, school or community hall. Elections NL advertises the names of the polling places and the hours that they are open through Voter Information Letters sent through the mail and on their website: www.elections.gov.nl.ca. You can also call Elections NL or your district Returning Officer to find out where to vote.

Elections NL will advertise the name and phone number of your District Returning Officer after the election is announced. You can find this information in the Voter Information letter being mailed out and on the Elections NL website.

Getting ready to vote

When it is time to vote, go to your polling place. If you wish, you can bring a friend or relative along to help you read the ballot. You can bring your children with you.

The people at the polling place will find your name on the Voters List and will record that you have come to vote. Next they will give you a folded piece of paper called a ballot. You are ready to vote.

On the ballot you will see a list of names of all the candidates in your district. The ballot will have a white space beside each candidate's name and political party.

There will be a screen set up so you can vote in private. Take your ballot there.

How do I mark my ballot?

Unfold your ballot and find the name of the person you want to vote for. Mark an “X” in the white space beside this person’s name.

Be careful not to spoil your ballot:

- only make one “X”
- do not sign your name or mark anything else on your ballot

After you mark your “X” refold your ballot and give it back to the officer, who will remove the ballot number and return it to you. You then place it in the ballot box. You have finished voting.



If you make a mistake on your ballot, you can get a new one. Take it back to the officer and say you have made a mistake. The officer will give you a new ballot.

If you know that you are going to be away on election day, you can still vote by using the advance polls or a Special Ballot.

Advance Polls

The advance poll is a chance to vote before the regular voting day. Advance poll voting will take place on October 4, 2011 from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. (half-hour earlier in parts of Labrador).

If you want to vote in the advance poll, call your District Returning Officer or 1-877-729-7987 to find out where the polling place will be for the advance poll.



Special Ballot Voting

If you are going to be unable to vote in person at an advance poll or at the ordinary poll, you may still be able to vote using what is called a Special Ballot. You will need to fill in an application. You can get it from your Returning Officer or Elections NL. You can also download it from the Elections NL web site. You need to make an application for a Special Ballot early enough to meet the established deadlines.

You also need to send a copy of a piece of official identification which contains your name, current address and your signature. This could be your driver's licence which shows your name, address and signature, or a combination of documents providing the same information.

Send your completed form with the copy of your identification by fax, mail or deliver it yourself to your District Returning Officer or the Chief Electoral Office at Elections NL. The address is:

Elections NL
39 Hallett Crescent
St. John's, NL
A1B 4C4

Another way to vote

Elections NL also conducts Special Ballot Voting for people in personal care homes and hospitals. This will happen on October 3, 2011.

To find out more, get in touch with Elections NL at **1-877-729-7987**.

You can also visit the Elections NL web site at www.elections.gov.nl.ca

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Contact Literacy Newfoundland and Labrador at 1-800-563-1111 or visit our web site at www.literacynl.ca.

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