

### Can I vote before general voting day?

**Yes.** In every community, one advance voting day will be held on the Wednesday ten days before general voting day, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Many communities offer additional advance voting opportunities as determined by the individual local government or school district. Check with your local government or school district to find out if and when advance voting days will be held in your area.

### What if I am out of town on both advance and general voting days?

Some local governments use mail ballots, which are available to eligible electors who cannot physically attend a voting place or will be out of town on advance and general voting days.

### What if I need assistance to vote?

All local governments are required to make voting places as accessible as possible.

- If you are unable to travel to a voting place due to the illness, injury or physical disability, check with your local government to see if they offer mail-in ballots.
- If you can travel to a voting place, but find it difficult to get into the building or room where voting is taking place, you may request an election official to bring you a ballot. This is called "curb side" voting.

- If you are unable to mark your own ballot, you may ask an election official, friend or relative to help you.
- If you need a translator, you may bring someone to assist you. The translator must be capable of making a solemn declaration that they can and will make the translation to the best of their abilities.

### Do I need identification?

**Yes.** You will need two pieces of identification that prove who you are and where you live. One of them must have your signature on it.

Check with your local government to see what they require.

### What are the penalties for not following elections laws?

Anyone who commits an election offence, such as double voting or signing a false statement, is liable to a fine up to \$5,000 and/or up to one year in prison. They may also be prohibited from holding office and/or voting in local government elections for up to six years.

Anyone convicted of a more serious election offence, such as vote buying or intimidation, could be subject to a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or up to two years in prison.

### How can I get more information about voting in local elections in British Columbia?

For specific questions on voting where you live or own property, please call or write your local government or school district. Address and phone numbers are listed in the blue pages of your local phone book. You can also find contact information for local governments online, at: [www.civicinfo.bc.ca/](http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/)

For other questions on municipal, regional district or Islands Trust elections please call or write:

**Ministry of Community Development  
Local Government Department  
PO Box 9839 Stn. Prov. Govt.  
Victoria, BC V8W 9T1  
Phone 250-387-4020  
[www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/  
gov\\_structure/elections/index.htm](http://www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov_structure/elections/index.htm)**

For other questions on voting for school board trustees, please call or write:

**Ministry of Education  
Governance and Legislation  
PO Box 9146 Stn. Prov. Govt.  
Victoria, BC V8W 9H1  
Phone 250-356-1404  
[www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/  
trustee\\_election/welcome.htm](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/trustee_election/welcome.htm)**

This information is also available in French.  
Cette information est aussi disponible en français.

This information is also available in Chinese.  
本手冊亦備有中文版本。

This information is also available in Punjabi.  
ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

# VOTER'S GUIDE



**Local Elections in  
British Columbia  
2008**



**BRITISH  
COLUMBIA**

The Best Place on Earth

## VOTER'S GUIDE

This guide is designed to answer a few of the basic questions about local government elections in British Columbia.

Local government is government at the community level – government that affects all of us, every day.

Local elections are held for:

- municipalities;
- regional districts;
- school districts; and
- the Islands Trust.

### Am I eligible to vote?

You may vote in a British Columbia local election as a resident elector if you:

- are a Canadian citizen;
- are 18 years of age or more on general voting day;
- have lived in British Columbia for at least six months before you register to vote; and
- have lived in the municipality, regional district or school district where you wish to vote for 30 days or more before you register to vote.

### I own property somewhere else in British Columbia – can I vote there also?

**Yes.** As a non-resident property owner – if you own property in one place but live in another – you have the right to vote both where you live and where you own property.

You may vote in a British Columbia local election as a non-resident property elector if you:

- are not a resident elector in that community;
- are a Canadian citizen;
- are 18 years of age or more on general voting day;
- have lived in British Columbia for at least six months before you register to vote; and
- have owned the property for at least 30 days before you register to vote.

### What if I own more than one piece of property?

You may only vote once as a non-resident property elector for one piece of property in any municipality, regional district or school district.

In other words, if you own two pieces of property in one municipality, you may vote only once. If, however, you own one piece of property in one municipality and a second piece of property in another, you may vote in both jurisdictions.

### What if I own property with someone else?

Only one non-resident property owner may vote for each property.

In other words, if two or more non-resident property owners own a single piece of property, the majority of owners must designate – in writing – one owner as the non-resident property elector for that property. If you own property along with a corporation, then none of the owners of the property are eligible to vote.

### What if I own property with someone else and that person is living in the house?

The person living in the house may vote as a resident elector because they live there. As a non-resident property owner, you are also eligible to vote for that property, but you will still need the written consent of the other owner(s).

### What if I live on a First Nation reserve?

Members and non-members of a First Nation that reside on a reserve that meet the requirements of a resident elector, can vote. Where you vote depends on whether the reserve is located within a municipality or a regional district electoral area. Check with your nearest local government office to determine within which boundary the reserve is located.

### Is there anyone who cannot vote in a local election?

**Yes.** You may not vote in a British Columbia local government election (as either a resident elector or a non-resident property elector) if you:

- have been convicted of an indictable offence and are in custody; or
- have been found guilty of an election offence, such as intimidation or vote buying; or
- do not otherwise meet voter eligibility requirements.

### How do I register to vote?

You may register before the local election at your local government or school district office, or you may register at the voting place.

Some communities may choose to register all voters on the day they vote. Please check with your local government or school district for registration procedures in your area.

### Do non-resident property owners register the same way?

**Yes.** As a non-resident property owner, you may also register in advance with the local government within which you own property, or you may register at the voting place. You will be required to provide legal a description of the real property. If you are one of two or more owners, you must also demonstrate – in writing – that you have the consent of the majority of all owners to vote on behalf of them.

Check with the local government or school district in the area where you own the property for a more detailed explanation of registration procedures.

### When are local elections held?

Local elections are held every three years. General voting day is always the third Saturday in November.

Additional elections – known as by-elections – may be called at other times to fill vacancies.