Voter Identification Guide

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer
Elections Ontario

August 2019
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Purpose

Canadian citizens who are 18 years of age and reside in an electoral district in Ontario (or temporarily reside outside Ontario and intend to return to Ontario) are eligible to participate in Ontario electoral events, including a general election, by-election or referendum. However, in order to participate, eligible persons must provide proof of identity and residence and/or entitlement to vote.

The Election Act requires the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Elections Ontario to determine the list of documents that can be used to prove identity, place of residence and/or entitlement to vote. This Guide outlines the list of documents that has been established by the CEO and when these documents are required. The guide also serves to ensure that eligible electors are informed and enabled to freely participate in the democratic process.

Application

The identification requirements outlined in this Guide are applicable when eligible persons are performing the following electoral activities:

- Applying to added, updated or removed in the Permanent Register of Electors for Ontario (permanent register or PREO);
- Applying to be added, updated or removed in the Register of Absentee Electors (Absentee Register);
- Applying to be added, updated or removed in the Ontario Register of Future Voters (ORFV);
- Applying to be added, updated or removed to the list of electors during an electoral event;
- Obtaining a certificate to vote during an electoral event; or
- Receiving a ballot to vote during an electoral event.

Effective Date

This Guide take effect on August 1, 2019 and may be revised at the discretion of the CEO.
## Definitions

The following table defines applicable terminology used in this Guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absentee Elector</td>
<td>An absentee elector is an individual who is a Canadian citizen, at least 18 years old, has resided in Ontario for at least 12 consecutive months prior to leaving and intends to re-establish residence in Ontario. The individual’s last residential address before leaving Ontario determines the electoral district in which the individual is eligible to vote. There is a two-year limit for absentee eligibility, calculated from the date when the absentee elector left Ontario. The two-year limit does not apply to an absentee elector who is absent from Ontario:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• on active duty as a member of the armed forces of Canada;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• in the service of the Government of Ontario;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• in the service of the Government of Canada and absent from Canada;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• attending an educational institution; or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• as a family member of one of the above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate to Vote</td>
<td>A certificate to vote is a document that can be obtained by eligible electors whose names do not appear on the list of electors, or whose information may need to be updated, for the purpose of obtaining a ballot on advance poll days or on election day. A certificate to vote is not considered proof of identity (name) for the purposes of obtaining a ballot on election day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elector</td>
<td>An elector is person who is a Canadian citizen, at least 18 years old on election day, and who resides in the electoral district in which the election or by-election is being held and is not disqualified by the Election Act or otherwise prohibited by law from voting; also known as a voter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Event</td>
<td>Electoral Event refers to the provincial by-election, general election or referendum Elections Ontario is mandated to administer under the Election Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Member</td>
<td>Family member refers to anyone who lives with a person on active duty as a member of the armed forces of Canada, in the service of the Government of Ontario, in the service of the Government of Canada and absent from Canada or a person attending an educational institution while they reside outside Ontario.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Voter</td>
<td>A person who is 16 or 17 years old, a Canadian citizen, and resides in Ontario. Future voters are not entitled to vote until they become an elector (as above).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>The documents used in determining an individual’s identity and residence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Identity is information about an individual that distinguishes that individual from others. In the context of this Guide, identity means proof of name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of Electors</td>
<td>The list of electors is a copy of elector information obtained from the Permanent Register of Electors for Ontario, which consists of elector and address information. It is prepared by the CEO when a general election or by-election is called.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Register of Future Voters</td>
<td>Ontario Register of Future Voters is a provisional register of Canadian citizens aged 16 and 17 years old who reside in Ontario.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Register of Electors for Ontario</td>
<td>The Permanent Register of Electors for Ontario (Permanent Register or PREO) is a database of eligible Ontario voters who reside in Ontario. The Permanent Register contains the names, residential and mailing addresses and date of birth of each elector as well as a unique identifier.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Residence                                 | Refers to a person’s permanent lodging place in Ontario to which, whenever absent, he or she intends to return. In the context of this Guide, residence means proof of residential address in Ontario. For the purposes of the *Election Act*:*  
   a. A person can have only one residence at a time;  
   b. The place where a person’s family resides is also the person’s residence, unless the person moves elsewhere with the intention of changing his or her permanent lodging place;  
   c. If a person has no other permanent lodging place, the place where he or she occupies a room or part of a room as a regular lodger or to which he or she habitually returns is his or her residence;  
   d. If a person is an inmate in a penal or correctional institution under sentence of imprisonment, the place where he or she last resided before being imprisoned shall be deemed to be his or her residence.  
   e. If a person has no permanent lodging place as described above, the person’s residence is the place to which the person most frequently returned to sleep or eat during the five weeks preceding the determination of his or her residence;  
   f. If the person returns with equal frequency to one place to sleep and to another to eat, the place to which he or she returns to sleep is his or her residence; and  
   A person’s affidavit (which is contained in a form prescribed by Elections Ontario) regarding the places to which he or she returned to eat or sleep during a given time period is conclusive, in the absence of evidence to the contrary. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Register of Absentee Electors</td>
<td>The Register of Absentee Electors (Absentee Register) is a database of eligible Ontario electors who qualify as an absentee elector (individuals who are temporarily absent from Ontario and intends to reside in Ontario again). See definition of absentee elector to determine eligibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter Information Card (VIC)</td>
<td>The Voter Information Card is an event-specific document sent to electors on the List of Electors informing them of when and where to vote. The VIC includes returning office and voting location information. It is prepared by Elections Ontario following the writ being issued for a general election or by-election.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Important Information about Identification**

Elections Ontario is committed to administering the identification requirements in a manner that promotes and maintains the balance between the integrity of the electoral process and the right for Ontarians to participate in the democratic process. The following information as it pertains to identification requirements applies to voting as well as registration activities conducted in-person or online:

1. To prove name and residential address, an elector, absentee elector or future voter is required to show one piece of identification that includes both name and residential address.
2. To verify residence, an elector, absentee elector or future voter must use identification that contains his or her residential address in Ontario.
3. An elector, absentee elector or future voter is permitted to use an original piece of acceptable identification or a photocopy of a piece of acceptable identification. The photocopy is NOT required to be certified or notarized, and may be presented as a paper copy, or as an electronic copy displayed on a mobile device.
4. Photo identification is NOT required to participate in Ontario’s electoral events.
5. Electors who wear coverings over their faces are NOT required to remove them at the polls.
6. Electors may present e-statements and e-invoices of acceptable identification. These e-documents may be printed or displayed on a mobile device.
7. An elector, absentee elector or future voter may present pieces of identification that are not listed in this Guide provided that they include the individual’s name and residential address.
Identification Requirements for Voting

During an electoral event (general election, by-election or referendum), electors are required to provide proof of name only or name and residential address in order to obtain a ballot to vote. The following rules apply in order to obtain a ballot to vote:

1. Electors who are on the list of electors and have received a Voter Information Card (VIC) from Elections Ontario must present one piece of identification with their name along with their VIC. The VIC serves as proof of residential address. Schedule A on page 10 contain examples of identification authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer that can be used to prove name.

2. Electors who are not on the list of electors do not receive a VIC from Elections Ontario. These electors must present one piece of identification that includes both name and residential address. Schedule B on page 11 contain examples of identification authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer that can be used to prove both name and residential address.

3. Some electors may be required to obtain a Certificate to Vote to revise their information on the list of electors or transfer their polling location. To obtain a Certificate to Vote, the electors must present one piece of identification that proves both name and residential address using any document listed in Schedule B.

4. Electors with a Certificate to Vote can obtain a ballot to vote only after presenting one piece of identification with their name using any document in Schedule A.

5. Electors may present e-statements and e-invoices corresponding to the documents in Schedules A and B. These e-documents may be printed or displayed on a mobile device.

6. Other identification documents approved by Elections Ontario (such as the Certificate of Identity and Residence Form) may be used by electors who do not have identification. For more information, please refer to Alternative Identification for Registration or Voting on page 9.

Special Ballot Voting

Special ballot voting is available to eligible electors who cannot, or do not want to vote at an advance poll or on polling day. Below are the options for special ballot voting along with the identification requirements:

- In person at the returning office
  - If an elector who is on the list of electors applies for special ballot voting and wishes to vote immediately in person, the elector is required to provide one piece of identification with their name.
  - If an elector who is on the list of electors applies for special ballot voting and does not wish to vote immediately, the elector must present one piece of identification that proves both name and residential address.
  - If an elector who is not on the list of electors applies for special ballot voting, the elector must present one piece of identification that proves both name and residential address.
• By home visit (for electors with a disability and/or who require assistance)
  o If the elector is on the list of electors, the elector is required to provide one piece of identification with their name.
  o If the elector who is not on the list of electors, the elector must present one piece of identification that proves both name and residential address.

• By hospital visit (only available during a general election at participating hospitals)
  o The elector’s application for special ballot voting must include one piece of identification that proves both name and residential address. Note: the elector’s hospital identification bracelet is an acceptable proof of name and the statutory declaration on the Special Ballot Application is sufficient as proof of residential address.

• By mail
  o If an elector applies via mail, email or fax to obtain a special ballot voting kit, one piece of identification that proves both name and residential address must accompany the elector’s application. Note: Absentee electors and incarcerated electors can only vote by mail. The identification requirements for absentee electors is provided on page 9 while the requirements for incarcerated electors is on page 10.

Identification for Inclusion in the List of Electors

During an electoral event (general election, by-election or referendum), the list of electors is created from the Permanent Register; and serves as a record of registered electors who reside in the electoral district where the election is called. It also serves as a list of eligible electors who are entitled to receive a ballot and vote. This list is managed by the Returning Officer and their staff. Electors may request for their information to be added, updated or removed from the list of electors. Electors are required to present one piece of identification that includes both name and residential address along with their application. Any document listed in Schedule B may be used for this purpose.

Identification Requirement for Registration

Electors can request to have their personal information added, removed or updated in the Permanent Register, Absentee Register or the Ontario Register of Future Voters. For these purposes, the following rules apply whether applications are submitted in-person or online:

Permanent Register

1. To apply to be added, updated or removed in the Permanent Register, an elector must provide one piece of identification that includes both their name and residential address. Any document in Schedule B on page 11 can be used for this purpose.
Ontario Register of Future Voters

1. To apply to be added, removed, or updated in the Ontario Register of Future Voters, a future voter must provide one piece of identification that includes both their name and residential address. Any document in Schedule B on page 11 can be used for this purpose.

Absentee Register

1. To apply to be added, removed, or updated in the Absentee Register, an absentee elector must provide one piece of identification that includes both their name and last residential address in Ontario. Any document in Schedule B on page 11 can be used for this purpose.

Additional Identification Requirement for Absentee Electors

According to the Election Act, an individual who is claiming eligibility to be included in the Absentee Register as a person on active duty as a member of the armed forces of Canada, in the service of the Government of Ontario, in the service of the Government of Canada and absent from Canada, or a person attending an educational institution is required to provide proof of occupational status in addition to proving name and last residential address in Ontario.

An Individual who is absent from Ontario and apply to be named as a family member of a person on active duty as a member of the armed forces of Canada, in the service of the Government of Ontario, in the service of the Government of Canada and absent from Canada, or a person attending an educational institution is also required to provide proof of the occupational status of the person they are claiming eligibility through.

To prove occupational status a person on active duty as a member of the armed forces of Canada, in the service of the Government of Ontario, in the service of the Government of Canada and absent from Canada, or a person attending an educational institution or family member of any of the above, these electors are required to provide any piece of identification listed in Schedule C on page 12.

Alternative Identification for Voting

There are situations where some electors, particularly members of reserve communities, homeless electors, electors in shelters and incarcerated electors, may experience difficulty presenting acceptable identification documents. In such situations, these electors may present the following documents in order to receive a ballot to vote.

Residents of First Nations Communities

- The Confirmation Letter of Residency for Elections Ontario (Confirmation Letter) serves as an identification document for the purpose of voting.
- The Confirmation Letter must be completed and signed by the elector and by a representative of a Band council in order for it to be an acceptable proof of identification.
- The Confirmation Letter can be obtained from Elections Ontario during an electoral event.
Homeless Electors or Electors in Shelters

- The Certification of Identity and Residence (E0824 Form) serves as an identification document to prove name and residential address for the purpose of voting.

- The form must be completed and signed by the elector and by an official such as the administrator of a shelter or food bank or a community health care worker in order for it to be an acceptable proof of identification.

- Administrators may obtain the Certification of Identity and Residence from Elections Ontario during an electoral event.

Incarcerated Electors

- The Special Ballot Application and Certificate of Identity and Residence for Incarcerated Electors (F1611 Form) serves as proof of name and address for special ballot voting by mail.

- The Form includes the elector’s name and residential address, and must be signed by the elector and a federal or provincial institutional administrator or representative in order for it to serve as an acceptable proof of name and residential address.

- Administrators or representatives obtain Special Ballot Application and Certificate of Identity and Residence for Incarcerated Electors (F1611) form from Elections Ontario during an electoral event.

Removal of Names of Deceased Electors from the Permanent Register

To apply on behalf of a deceased elector for removal from the Permanent Register, Absentee Register or Ontario Register of Future Voters, the applicant must show proof of death and may use one of the following documents to meet this requirement.

a) A Memorandum of Notification of Death issued by the Chief of the National Defence Staff
b) A Statement of Verification of Death from the Department of Veterans Affairs
c) A notarial copy of Letters of Probate
d) An official notification from the Public Trustee
e) A Registration of Death
f) A burial or death certificate
g) A document/receipt issued by a cemetery/crematorium in Ontario that proves burial or cremation
h) A Medical Certification of Death
i) A Life or Group Insurance claim along with a statement signed by a medical doctor
j) A statement from a medical doctor, coroner or funeral director
k) A program or notice from a funeral ceremony
l) An obituary from a newspaper
### Schedule A – List of Documents to Prove Name

Schedule A provides a list of documents that can be used to provide proof of name.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Show one piece of identification that proves your name (your name must match the name on the voters list).</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Examples:

**Government-issued documents**
- Birth Certificate
- Canadian Forces Identification Card
- Canadian Passport
- Certificate of Canadian Citizenship (Citizenship Card)
- Certificate of Indian Status (Status Card)
- Old Age Security Card
- Ontario Health Card
- Social Insurance Number Card
- Veterans Affairs Canada Health Card
- Any document:
  - issued by the Government of Canada, Ontario or a municipality in Ontario or from an agency of such a government
  - issued by a Band Council in Ontario (established under the *Indian Act*)

**Other documents**
- Credit/Debit Card
- Employee Card
- Hospital Card or Bracelet
- Student Card
- Union Card or Professional Licence

Any document in Schedule B
Schedule B – List of Documents to Prove Name and Residential Address

Schedule B provides a list of documents that can be used to provide proof of name and residential address.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule B – Proof of Name and Residential Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show one piece of identification that includes both your name and residential address.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

**Government-issued documents**
- Ontario’s Driver’s Licence
- Ontario Motor Vehicle Permit
- Statement of Government Benefits (child tax benefit, old age security, etc.)
- Ontario Photo Card
- Any document:
  - issued by the Government of Canada, Ontario or a municipality in Ontario or from an agency of such a government*
  - issued by a Band Council in Ontario (established under the *Indian Act*)

**Other documents**
- Cellular Phone Bills
- School Admissions Letter
- School Transcript/Report Card
- School Tuition/Fees Statement
- Bank/Credit Card Statement
- Cancelled Personalized Cheque
- “Certification of Identity and Residence” form signed by authorized administrator
- Cheque stub, T4 tax slip or pay receipt issued by an employer
- CNIB Identity Card
- Hospital Record/Document
- Insurance Policy/Statement
- Loan/Agreement with a Financial Institution
- Residential Lease, Rental or Mortgage Agreement/Statement
- Utility Bill (gas, hydro, etc.)
## Schedule C – List of Documents to Prove Occupational Status

Schedule C provides a list of documents that can be used to provide proof of occupational Status for the Register of Absentee Electors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule C</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proof of occupation for military personnel</strong></td>
<td>• Canadian Forces Identification Card (NDI 20);&lt;br&gt;• Temporary Identification Card (NDI 10);&lt;br&gt;• Record of Service Identification Card (NDI 75 or CAF 75).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proof of occupation for employees of the Government of Ontario and Government of Canada</strong></td>
<td>• Confirmation of Employment Letter;&lt;br&gt;• Government Identification Card;&lt;br&gt;• Photocopy of Diplomatic Passport or Special Passport; or&lt;br&gt;• RCMP Service Identification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proof of occupation for students</strong></td>
<td>• Official Enrollment Letter/Acceptance Offer Letter;&lt;br&gt;• Photocopy of student ID (with valid date/year);&lt;br&gt;• Photocopy of course registration;&lt;br&gt;• Photocopy transcript or class schedule; or&lt;br&gt;• Tuition Fees invoice or receipt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>