

## 2018 General Election

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### Returning Officer's Report on Accessibility for Electors with Disabilities (F0247)

#### Electoral District: Kitchener South—Hespeler, #049

Each question or statement will be followed by either yes, no, N/A (not applicable) or in a few places, comments.

##### 1. Accessibility Training

Were all returning office staff in your electoral district trained and certified to deliver services in an accessible manner (*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* training)?

Yes.

Were all Special Ballot Officers (SBO) in your electoral district trained and certified to deliver services in an accessible manner, including during home and hospital visits?

Yes.

Were all poll officials in your electoral district trained and certified to deliver services in an accessible manner?

Yes.

Did poll official training include a video demonstrating how accessible customer service is provided to a variety of electors with disabilities, including the use of assistive devices, service animals and support persons?

Yes.

Did the manuals provided to poll officials include directions describing how to assist an elector who:

a) Needed a ballot box brought outside the voting location?

Yes.

b) Was accompanied by an interpreter?

Yes.

c) Required the assistance of a Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) or a friend to vote?

Yes.

d) Required the use of assistive voting materials?

Yes.

e) Comments:

None.

## **2. Materials**

Did your office make available the Braille templates provided by Elections Ontario?

Yes.

Were your staff instructed to inform electors of the availability of documents in alternative formats, as applicable through Elections Ontario?

Yes.

Were election officials provided with the following materials for use at voting locations?

a) Assistive voting devices (e.g. magnifiers, easy-grip pencils, braille ballot templates):

Yes.

b) Directional arrows:

Yes.

c) Customer service feedback kit:

Yes.

d) Notice of Disruption forms:

Yes.

e) Comments:

None.

### **3. Special Ballot Voting Options**

Total number of special ballots cast using the following services:

a) Hospital visits:

20

b) Home visits:

1

Did your Special Ballot Officer (SBO) provide any of the following five services for home and hospital visits?

a) Help the elector fill out special ballot applications?

- Hospital visits: No.
- Home visits: Yes.

b) Read candidates' names and/or instructions to the elector?

- Hospital visits: Yes.
- Home visits: Yes.

c) Assist in marking the ballot at the request of the elector?

- Hospital visits: No.
- Home visits: Yes.

d) Provide assistive devices such as magnifiers or braille ballot template?

- Hospital visits: Yes.
- Home visits: Yes.

e) Other assistance (provide details in the Additional Returning Officer Comments - Section 10):

- Hospital visits: No.
- Home visits: No.

#### **4. Other Voting Options**

Number of votes cast using the Assistive Voting Technology (AVT) devices (e.g. audio tactile interface, paddles or sip and puff device.):

3

Number of requests from electors for Elections Ontario to pay for American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters:

0

Number of electors transferring to other voting locations because of restricted mobility:

0

Please provide any comments on the way people with disabilities interacted with the Assistive Voting Technology (AVT) devices.

We had three electors who were visually impaired use the AVT device to cast their ballots at the Returning Office. All three electors were delighted to be able to vote and each expressed their desire to have technology available in every poll. One couple, both who were visually impaired, lived in a building that was classified as a high-density poll preferred to come to the Returning Office to use the AVT devices as they were not confident in the accuracy of their vote using the Braille Ballot Template.

#### **5. Personnel**

Were persons with disabilities employed in the returning office?

Yes.

Were persons with disabilities appointed as poll officials?

Yes.

## 6. Route of Travel at Each Voting Location

Were Area Managers and/or Supervising Deputy Returning Officers instructed to use the prepared route of travel map at each voting location on polling day?

Yes.

Were there any changes to the make the route accessible to electors?

Yes. One of our voting locations experienced a delay in the planned completion of major construction work. As a result, the accessible route from the accessible parking to the entry door was obstructed and had to be revised. We ordered a ramp from Elections Ontario headquarters a couple of days prior to the election. The ramp was delivered and used at the location, thus providing a completely accessible route to the voting location.

## 7. Accessible Voting Locations

Elections Ontario developed and adopted Site Accessibility Standards for the purpose of determining whether a voting location is accessible under the *Election Act*.

Please confirm that you ensured that the following locations were accessible to electors with disabilities in accordance with the Site Accessibility Standards.

a) Returning office:

Yes.

b) Satellite office(s) (if applicable):

Not applicable.

c) Polling locations:

Yes.

Please indicate the number of voting locations in each category and the percentage of the total for each type of voting location.

a) Voting locations in your electoral district that met the Site Accessibility Standards with no remediation.

- Advance Poll Voting Locations: 2, 50%;
- Election Day Mandatory Institutions: 3, 75%;
- Election Day Self-Contained Apartment Buildings: 15, 100%;
- Election Day Isolated Northern Communities: 0, 0%;
- Regular Poll Voting Locations (**Note:** Not including other categories of polls or advance polls used on election day): 6, 21%.

- b) Voting locations in your electoral district that met the Site Accessibility Standards with remediation and/or customer service plan.
- Advance Poll Voting Locations: 2, 50%;
  - Election Day Mandatory Institutions: 1, 25%;
  - Election Day Self-Contained Apartment Buildings: 0, 0%;
  - Election Day Isolated Northern Communities: 0, 0%;
  - Regular Poll Voting Locations (**Note:** Not including other categories of polls or advance polls used on election day): 22, 79%.
- c) Total voting locations.
- Advance Poll Voting Locations: 4, 100%;
  - Election Day Mandatory Institutions: 4, 100%;
  - Election Day Self-Contained Apartment Buildings: 15, 100%;
  - Election Day Isolated Northern Communities: 0, 0%;
  - Regular Poll Voting Locations (**Note:** Not including other categories of polls or advance polls used on election day): 28, 100%.

### **Voting Location Remediations**

For the locations included above, please indicate the number of voting locations in each category.

- a) Used remediations to meet standards:
- Returning office: 0
  - Satellite office(s) (if applicable): 0
  - Advance poll voting locations: 2
  - Election day mandatory institutions (e.g., nursing homes): 1
  - Election day self-contained apartment buildings: 0
  - Election day isolated northern communities: 0
  - Regular poll voting locations (**Note:** Not including other categories of polls or advance polls used on election day): 21
- b) Authorized to use a customer service plan in addition to remediations to meet standards:
- Returning office: 0
  - Satellite office(s) (if applicable): 0
  - Advance poll voting locations: 0
  - Election day mandatory institutions (e.g., nursing homes): 0
  - Election day self-contained apartment buildings: 0
  - Election day isolated northern communities: 0
  - Regular poll voting locations (**Note:** Not including other categories of polls or advance polls used on election day): 1

Please indicate the total number of remediations used:

- Ramps/sloped walkways: 1
- Beveled thresholds: 6
- Mats: 0
- Parking cones: 88
- Signage: 47
- Services of an Information Assistant for Accessibility: 15

### **Notice of Service Disruption at Voting Locations**

How many Notices of Disruption did you have to post as a result of any last-minute challenges, including construction, road closures, etc.?

- Returning office: 0
- Satellite office(s) (if applicable): 0
- Advance poll voting locations: 0
- Election day mandatory institutions (e.g., nursing homes): 0
- Election day self-contained apartment buildings: 0
- Election day isolated northern communities: 0
- Regular poll voting locations (**Note:** Not including other categories of polls or advance polls used on election day): 0

Please describe any situations where you posted a Notice of Disruption and how you resolved those situations:

Not applicable.

### **Other Accessible Voting Location Activities**

Please indicate if your staff took other measures to make voting locations accessible.

a) Customized remediations:

Yes. Four days prior to the election we discovered that there was major road work taking place in front of one of our polling locations. We contacted the City of Kitchener to express our concern over how the work might disrupt electors from being able to vote. After some negotiation, the project manager agreed to move the paving schedule back (originally planned for June 7th) one day to ensure that the facility was completely accessible on Election Day.

b) Special services to support accessible parking:

No.

c) Moving the ballot box to the entry door of the voting location:

No.

d) Other supports for electors with difficulties walking, e.g. wheelchairs:

No.

e) Lighting, e.g. additional lighting, flashlights, car lights:

No.

f) Other assistance (provide details in section 10):

Not applicable.

## **8. Other Accessibility Measures**

Please indicate if your staff took other measures to provide accessibility for electors with disabilities.

a) Provided documents or information in accessible formats:

Yes.

b) Read candidates' names to electors:

Yes.

c) Promoted Special Ballot home visits in buildings with targeted populations:

No.

d) Additional training for poll officials:

No.

e) Worked with local stakeholder groups:

Yes.

f) Other measures:

Not applicable.



## 9. Customer Service Feedback

Did you receive customer service feedback forms related to accessibility for electors with disabilities?

Yes. Received feedback that assistive voting technology (AVT) devices should be available at all locations. One elector who was told that he could vote at any advanced poll using the AVT device but after visiting an area advanced poll, discovered that devices were only available at the Returning Office; where he eventually arrived to vote.

Please indicate if you received positive or negative feedback for each issue.

**Note:** If you received negative feedback, please indicate the nature of your response.

a) Customer service

- Feedback: Positive.
- Negative feedback: None.

b) Assistive devices (e.g., magnifiers, braille ballot template, easy grip pencils)

- Feedback: None.

c) Assistive voting technology

- Feedback: Negative.
- Negative feedback response:
  - Acknowledged: Yes.
  - Resolved: Yes.
  - Modifications made: Yes.
  - Take into future consideration: Yes.

d) Special Ballots

- Feedback: Positive.
- Negative feedback: None.

e) Place of voting location

- Feedback: Negative
- Negative feedback response:
  - Take into future consideration: Yes
  - No acknowledgement required: Yes.

f) Accessibility of voting location

- Feedback: None.

- g) Walking distance at voting location
  - Feedback: None.
- h) Accessible parking
  - Feedback: None.
- i) Voter Information Cards
  - Feedback: Negative.
  - Negative feedback response:
    - No acknowledgement required: Yes.
- j) Documents
  - Feedback: None.
- k) Signage
  - Feedback: None.

## **10. Additional Returning Officer Comments**

- a) Did the e-poll books and tabulator help serve electors with disabilities more effectively? Please explain.

I do not believe that the e-poll books or tabulators had any impact on the level of service provided to electors with disabilities.

- b) Please describe any situation you observed where electors with disabilities used their mobile devices (e.g. phones, iPads and tablets) as an assistive device during the voting process. Were there any issues or concerns?

None.

- c) Please describe other measures that you took to provide accessibility for electors with disabilities in your electoral district.

Most of our efforts were focused on ensuring that adequate accessible parking was made available for electors. All but one of our voting locations were completely accessible, many were remediated with additional parking, ramps, or Information Assistants.

One location had an entry door to the voting room which was narrower than 33 inches and it was identified with a plan to allow voters to cast their vote in the lobby if they were unable to enter the voting room. We did not encounter any electors who required this service.

I personally noticed two electors who were visually impaired (one with a cane and one with a dog) arrive at the Returning Office in a taxi. I went out to the parking lot and provided help to get them to the advanced poll area within the Returning Office to vote. They were extremely appreciative of our assistance, were especially pleased to be able to use the assistive voting technology and wished that it were available at all voting locations.