

2018 General Election

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

Electoral District: Simcoe North, #100

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:

44

b) Home visits:

33

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: Yes.
- 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: No.

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: Yes.
- Home visits: Yes.

4. Other Voting Options

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

0

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.

No comments.

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 route to make the route accessible to electors?

Yes. One location had to alter the route of travel as the main entrance was blocked on polling day. The altered route met all the accessibility requirements as per the Site Accessibility Standard

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):

Yes.

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: 3, 38%;
- Election Day Mandatory Institutions: 16, 94%;
- Election Day Self-Contained Apartment Buildings: 3, 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): 16, 34%.

b) Voting locations in your electoral district that met the Site Accessibility Standards with remediation and/or customer service plan.

- Advance Poll Voting Locations: 5, 63%;
- Election Day Mandatory Institutions: 1, 6%;
- 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): 31, 66%.

c) Total voting locations.

- Advance Poll Voting Locations: 8, 100%;
- Election Day Mandatory Institutions: 17, 100%;
- Election Day Self-Contained Apartment Buildings: 3, 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): 47, 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: 5
- 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): 30

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: 2
- Beveled thresholds: 7
- Mats: 0
- Parking cones: 98
- Signage: 51
- Services of an Information Assistant for Accessibility: 21

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): 2

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

Several schools in Orillia were placed in a lock and hold by the OPP during the afternoon of polling day, two of the locations locked down were polling stations. The Supervising Deputy Returning Officers (SDRO) working in the two schools immediately posted Notice of Disruption Notices. Electors in the polling stations were not allowed to leave and electors arriving at the locations were not allowed to enter. The lock and hold lasted approximately 1/2 hour. As per the CEO's direction, polling was extended for 25 minutes in those two locations to accommodate for the closure.

Other Accessible Voting Location Activities

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

a) Customized remediations:

Yes.

b) Special services to support accessible parking:

Yes.

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

Yes.

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):

No.

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:

Yes.

- d) Additional training for poll officials:

No.

- e) Worked with local stakeholder groups:

Yes.

- f) Other measures:

Yes.

9. Customer Service Feedback

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

Yes.

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: None.

- d) Special Ballots

- Feedback: Positive.
- Negative feedback: None.

- e) Place of voting location

- Feedback: Negative.
- Negative feedback response:
 - Acknowledged: Yes.
 - Resolved: Yes.
 - Modifications made: Yes.

- Take into future consideration: Yes.
- f) Accessibility of voting location
- Feedback: Positive.
 - Negative feedback: None.
- g) Walking distance at voting location
- Feedback: Negative.
 - Negative feedback response:
 - Acknowledged: Yes.
 - Resolved: Yes.
 - Modifications made: Yes.
 - Take into future consideration: Yes.
- h) Accessible parking
- Feedback: Negative.
 - Negative feedback response:
 - Resolved: Yes.
 - Modifications made: Yes.
 - Take into future consideration: Yes.
- i) Voter Information Cards
- Feedback: None.
- j) Documents
- Feedback: None.
- k) Signage
- Feedback: Negative.
 - Negative feedback response:
 - Acknowledged: Yes.
 - Resolved: Yes.
 - Modifications made: Yes.
 - Take into future consideration: Yes.

10. Additional Returning Officer Comments

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

Although some electors were somewhat suspicious of the technology, they appreciated the ease and speed of the process. Not having to stand and wait in line was a big asset.

- 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?

Not aware of an elector with disabilities using a mobile device as an assistive device.

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

SBO's conducting hospital visits brought the ballot box from bed to bed where required.

We received several feedback forms indicating how easy and accessible the process was. However, there were two locations that had accessibility issues. The first, was a newly constructed, fully accessible school with the gym at the back of the school. Arrangements had been made to have electors directed to the back of the school (accessible parking, and ease of entrance), there was also an accessible lift at this location. Additional Information Assistants (IA) were hired, as well as 2 hall monitors (at the direction of the principal).

On election day, the principal refused to allow signage on the property directing the electors to the back of the school. This confused electors which had them parking up top and then having walk to the back of the school (down a hill). The Principal would not allow the use of the lift if an elderly, or disable elector came through the front entrance (even though there were hall monitors in place). The SDR0 (and many electors) tried to reason with the Principal, I had to call the School Board to have them deal with the Principal as he was interfering with the voting process. Once school was out, the issue was resolved. The other location had two accessible parking spots, but they were in constant use, issues resolved by adding additional accessible parking spots later in the day.