

Summary of Key Changes in Elections Bylaw 50M2024

Alternative Voting Equipment

Municipalities are prohibited from using alternative voting equipment (such as vote tabulators) to count votes. As votes must be counted by hand, Elections Bylaw 50M2024 does not include references to vote tabulators to align with the *Local Authorities Election Act* (LAEA).

Ballots

A composite ballot (i.e., candidates for all elected offices are printed on a single ballot paper) is required when using vote tabulators. As vote tabulators are prohibited, Elections Bylaw 50M2024 does not include authorization to use a composite ballot.

CCSD By-election Requirements

A by-election will be held on 2025 January 31 for two vacant school board trustee positions with the Calgary Catholic School District (CCSD). In consultation with representatives of the CCSD, due to operational constraints the blind elector template will not be provided for the 2025 January 31 By-election. Therefore, Elections Bylaw 50M2024 exempts any by-elections held before 2025 March 1 from use of the blind elector template.

Counting Centre

With the requirement to count ballots by hand, it will be necessary to have a central counting centre to conduct the count of advance vote, institutional and special (mail-in) ballots. Section 85.1(4) of the LAEA provides that advance vote, institutional and mail-in ballots may begin being counted no earlier than 7:30 p.m. on Election Day. Due to the length of time that will be required to conduct a hand count, Elections Bylaw 50M2024 includes this provision.

Criminal Record Check

Section 21.1 of the LAEA provides that “an elected authority, by a bylaw passed prior to December 31 of the year before a year in which a general election is to be held, may require a person seeking to be nominated as a candidate to provide a criminal record check.”

At the 2024 November 26 Regular Meeting of Council, Council directed the Returning Officer to include an Elections Bylaw requirement for Council member candidates to provide a criminal record check dated no earlier than six (6) months before the date of the candidate’s nomination submission. The criminal record check is required to be sourced from the Calgary Police Services (known as a Police Information Check, or “PIC”) and paid for by the candidate.

Elector Assistance

To support electors with limited mobility, reduced vision, or blindness to mark their ballots independently, the Bylaw 50M2024 provides authority to use a blind elector template in keeping with Section 78 of the LAEA.

Permanent Electors Register

Previously, the LAEA provided discretionary authority to create permanent electors register as reflected in Bylaw 35M2018. Amendments to the LAEA require the use of a permanent electors register for municipal council elections. Therefore, Elections Bylaw 50M2024 excludes references to the permanent electors register.

Voting Station Hours

Voting hours on Election Day are set in the LAEA as 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. The LAEA also provides discretionary authority for voting stations to be open earlier than 10 a.m. on Election Day. Elections Bylaw 35M2018 permits voting stations to be open at 8 a.m. on Election Day. This provision was introduced at the request of the Returning Officer in the 2021 General Election to reduce the capacity of electors in voting stations and support social distancing during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The requirement to hand count ballots will result in election officials working additional hours following the close of voting stations. To mitigate worker fatigue and support vote counting accuracy, early voting hours is not requested by the Returning Officer and is excluded from Elections Bylaw 50M2024 to align with the voting hours set out in the LAEA.