

a guide for scrutineers



chief electoral office

Introduction

This guide is designed to provide general information and guidance to scrutineers appointed by candidates to represent them at polling stations during an election, by-election or plebiscite. Scrutineers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the contents of *A Guide for Candidates* and *A Guide for Polling Place Officials*. The *Election Act*, particularly Sections 71 to 125 inclusive, governs all aspects of conducting an election. Copies of the *Election Act* are available from the Queen's Printer.

Appointment and Conduct of Scrutineers

A candidate may appoint up to four resident electors of the electoral division as representatives at a polling station and registration officer's station. Only one scrutineer per candidate may, at any one time, be present at the station.

Before observing at the station, scrutineers must present their Appointment of Scrutineer form to the deputy returning officer or registration officer and take the Oath of Secrecy. Scrutineers who leave and return to the same station do not have to take the Oath a second time.

While at a polling station or registration officer's station, no election badge, circular, card, poster, bill, ribbon or other item that might be construed as an identification of a candidate or political party may be worn or carried by any scrutineer. Scrutineers will receive appropriate identification from the deputy returning officer.

Scrutineers in attendance prior to the official opening of the poll at 9:00 a.m. on polling

day may examine ballots and other election forms and supplies, inspect polling booths and check to ensure that the ballot box is empty before it is sealed by the deputy returning officer.

While the scrutineer is present at a polling place, the scrutineer shall not interfere with the conduct of the poll or impose upon the deputy returning officer, poll clerk or other election officers. If, in the opinion of the scrutineer, irregularities or differences of opinion occur at the polling place, the scrutineer may take note of such irregularities and report them to the candidate or official agent for resolution with the Returning Officer.

A scrutineer may, in good faith, if the eligibility of any voter is in doubt, request the deputy returning officer to administer the Oath of Elector to that voter even though the voter's name appears on the List of Electors. A voter who has taken the prescribed oath before the registration officer because their name was not on the List of Electors cannot be required to take another oath before the deputy returning officer.

A scrutineer may view the Poll Book at a time that will not inconvenience electors. As the poll is taken, the poll clerk will advise the scrutineer of the electors who have voted by calling out the List of Electors number.

Cell phones are not permitted in the polling place because they are disruptive.

If you are acting as a scrutineer at a poll other than the poll at which your name appears on the List of Electors, you may vote at the advance poll or by special ballot prior to polling day.



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Election Act
(Sections 79, 92)
CEO-ELO7-06

Appointment of Scrutineer

Electoral Division _____

I, hereby appoint _____

(Print Name of Scrutineer)

of _____

(Residential Address of Scrutineer)

as a scrutineer for _____

(Print Name of Candidate)

(Political Affiliation)

at polling station number(s) _____

and/or registration officer station location _____

(Date)

(Signature of Candidate or Official Agent)

Scrutineer must be an elector resident in the electoral division. Form to be retained by election officer while scrutineer is present at polling station or registration officer's station. Only one scrutineer per candidate for each ballot box or registration officer's station may be present at any one time.

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Voting Procedure

A person who is entitled to vote will be given a ballot paper on which the initials of the deputy returning officer are placed. A counterfoil is attached to the ballot on which the deputy returning officer has recorded a number which corresponds to the number in the Poll Book. When the folded ballot is returned, the deputy returning officer in the presence of the voter shall, without unfolding the ballot, check to see that it is the issued ballot, remove and dispose of the counterfoil, and place the ballot in the ballot box. A voter may not personally deposit the ballot in the ballot box.

Swearing In

A person who is entitled to vote, but whose name is not included on the List of Electors, must complete the Oath of Elector before voting. The registration officer or deputy returning officer may administer the oath.

Voter Assistance

If the voter is unable to read the ballot or is incapacitated by a physical cause, the deputy returning officer may, after the voter has taken the oath, assist that voter to mark the ballot in the presence of the poll clerk.

A voter who is unable to read the ballot or is incapacitated by a physical cause may, if accompanied by a friend, be permitted to have that friend assist in marking the ballot, provided that both the voter and the friend take the appropriate oaths.

Scrutineers at Treatment Centres

The treatment centre's official representative will decide whether the scrutineers may accompany the deputy returning officer and poll clerk during the conduct of a treatment centre poll.

Conduct of the Unofficial Count

After the close of the polls on polling day the scrutineer may be present during the unofficial count of ballots. Upon request, the deputy returning officer will provide the scrutineer with a Tally Sheet to record the unofficial count. The decision of the deputy returning officer on any disputed ballot is final and may only be changed by the Returning Officer during the official count of ballots. The deputy returning officer shall record the scrutineer's objections to any ballot in the appropriate section of the Poll Book.

Upon completion of the unofficial count, scrutineers in attendance shall be provided with a copy of the Statement of Poll. It is a record of the unofficial count of ballots. When all of the Ballots Counted for Candidate Envelopes have been placed and sealed in the large Valid Ballot Envelope, scrutineers in attendance may sign across the Valid Ballot Envelope and its flap before it is sealed in the ballot box for delivery to the Returning Officer. Scrutineers may also sign across the envelopes and flaps of the Unused Ballot Envelope and the Rejected Ballot Envelope.