

Alternative Ways to Vote in the Provincial Election

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COVID-19 has stopped us from doing many things, but it shouldn't stop us from our right to vote! It's completely understandable if you don't want to vote in person. Or maybe you don't mind going in person, but you're unsure if the voting location will be accessible. In this article, I'll share some alternative ways to participate in the provincial election on June 2.

Throughout this article, I'll mention contacting your local "returning office" many times. Your "returning office" is the election office in your area.*

Follow these steps to find and learn how to contact your returning office:

1. Click [here](#), enter your postal code, and click "Search." This will tell you which district you are in, for example, North Yorkers is in Willowdale.
2. On the left side of the page, you will see a grey rectangle with multiple links. Click on the second link from the bottom, which says "Contact Your Returning Office."
3. This will take you to your returning office's address, hours of operation, and phone number.

General Information About This Election

To be eligible to vote in this upcoming election, you must be a resident of Ontario, a Canadian citizen, and at least 18 years old on election day, June 2.

This election is to vote for your Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP). The provincial government is responsible for: provincial taxes, hospitals, education, marriage, provincial correctional facilities, property rights, civil rights, rules of the road, and the age of majority.

You can register to vote by mail or online via eRegistration. Click [here](#) for more information on eRegistration. If you've changed your name or address since the last election, you can update your information via eRegistration. Also, you can check that the information Elections Ontario has about you is correct.

The last day to register online is May 23. If you miss this deadline, you can also register to vote on election day at the voting location. You need a piece of government-issued ID and information to prove your address. Click [here](#) to see a full list of acceptable types of ID.

Alternatives to Voting In Person

Vote by mail

To vote by mail, you will need to complete a Vote by Mail application and provide a copy of at least one piece of government-issued ID.* Please note that the required ID for applying to vote by mail is different from what you bring when you're voting in person, so click [here](#) to make sure you're bringing an acceptable form of ID.

Click [here](#) to learn about the different ways to apply to vote by mail. [This video](#) explains the process with visuals and ASL interpretation. Click [here](#) for the Vote by Mail application. The deadline to apply to vote by mail is 6 PM on May 27.* Once you are approved to vote by mail, you will be unable to vote in any other way.

For your vote to be counted, Elections Ontario needs to receive your ballot by 6 PM on June 2.* You can either mail your ballot in the pre-paid envelope that they will send you, or you can drop it off at your returning office.*

Vote by home visit

In this case, two representatives from Elections Ontario would come to your home to help you vote.* For them to come, you need to complete an application form.* To request a home visit, contact your returning office.*

According to the Elections Ontario website, you can request to vote from home if:

- you are unable to go to your voting location because of a disability;
- you are unable to read or write;
- you are unable to complete an application form; and/or
- you are someone who requires assistance.*

Vote while in hospital

Some hospitals are participating in the government's three-day hospital voting program.* This is when election officials bring voting kits to eligible voters in the hospital so that they don't miss out on the opportunity to vote.* To learn about which hospitals are participating, and how the process would work, contact your returning office.

To vote at a retirement home or Long-Term Care Home, contact your returning office.

Alternative Ways to Vote In Person

Advance Voting

If you don't mind voting in person, but you want to minimize your chances of being exposed to COVID-19, voting locations will be less busy if you go before election day on June 2.

Between May 19 and May 28, you can vote at any advance voting location in your district.*
Advance voting locations are open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.*

Contact your returning office if you're unsure of the accessibility of a voting location. It's possible to request a transfer to another voting location that better meets your accessibility needs. You need to make that request at your returning office before election day on June 2.

You can also vote in advance at your returning office! If you do this, you can use Assistive Voting Technology. It's available from May 21 until 6 PM the day before election day on June 2.*

You can also make an appointment to use Assistive Voting Technology on election day.* They strongly recommend that you make an appointment for election day, but they will try to accommodate walk-in requests when possible.*

What is Assistive Voting Technology?*

Assistive Voting Technology lets voters listen to their ballot choices and cast their ballot secretly and independently. You can choose between three controller options:

1. Audio tactile interface: the controller has audio directions, large raised buttons, bright colours, and braille inscriptions.



2. Paddles: vote by pressing the paddles using your hands, feet, or elbows.



3. Sip and puff technology: mark your ballot by “sipping” (inhaling) or “puffing” (exhaling) into a straw.



Accessible Services Available at Voting Locations*

- Curbside voting: You can stay outside of the voting location building and have the ballot brought to you by an election official. To request curbside voting, please contact your returning office.
- Usually, nobody can be with you when you vote, but people with disabilities are allowed to have support persons with them to assist with communication, mobility, personal care for medical needs, and/or accessing goods, services or facilities.
- Elections Ontario accommodates guide dogs or service animals, but they must be under your constant care and control.
- Usually, you’re not allowed to use any technological devices when you’re voting, but people with disabilities are allowed to use their mobile phones and/or devices as an accessibility tool.
- Upon request, voting locations offer magnifiers and ballot templates with braille numbering and cut outs for voter use.

Interpreters & Intervenors*

American Sign Language (ASL) and Langues des Signes Québécoise (LSQ) Interpreters and Intervenors are booked by the voter and fully paid for by Elections Ontario.

ASL and LSQ Interpreters are available through Canadian Hearing Services (in Northern Ontario), and CNIB DeafBlind Community Services (in Western and Eastern Ontario and the Greater Toronto Area).

Here is their contact information:

- Canadian Hearing Services – Interpreting and Translation Services
Phone: 1.866.518.0000
TTY: 1.877.215.9530
Email: interpreting@chs.ca

- CNIB DeafBlind Community Services
Phone: 613.563.4021 ext. 5016
Email: jessica.white@deafblindservices.ca

Braille requests*

Requests for braille voter information cards must be received by May 25 and for braille Notice to Voters by May 29.

You can request these braille items by:

1. Email: info@elections.on.ca
2. Phone: 1-888-668-8683

How to Ask Questions and Give Feedback to Elections Ontario

If you require assistance with the Elections Ontario website, or want to provide general feedback, you can contact them in one of the following ways:

Email: info@elections.on.ca Phone: 1-888-668-8683 TTY: 1-888-292-2312

Fax: 1-866-714-2809 Go in person at 51 Rolark Drive, Toronto.

Mail: Elections Ontario, 51 Rolark Drive, Toronto, Ontario, M1R 3B1

All questions and feedback will be processed within 24 hours.

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If you think you may be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, take the self-assessment at www.ontario.ca/coronavirus. Follow all directions from your medical provider or your local health unit at the following phone numbers:

Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000

Toronto Public Health: 416-338-7600

Peel Public Health: 905-799-7700

Durham Region Health Department: 905-668-7711

York Region Public Health: 1-877-464-9675