

Chief Electoral Officer Directives for Hiring of Election Officers

(Elections Act, R.S.N.B. 1973, c.E-3, s.10.01, 10.1, 61, and 87.51)



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Staffing Requirements

As soon as possible after their appointment, each returning officer, in consultation with Elections NB, will determine the locations of the polling stations, which polling divisions will report to each polling station, and confirm availability with the respective polling station landlords. Elections NB will then assist each returning officer to develop a plan of the staffing requirements for each of the polling stations in the electoral district. This plan of staffing requirements will include:

1. A description of each election officer's duties and job prerequisites;
2. The requirement that each election officer not be an immediate family member of a candidate or spouse of a candidate;
3. The requirement that each election officer be a qualified elector in NB. Notwithstanding this, a person who is 16 years of age or older may be appointed as a voters list officer, a poll revision officer or a constable if the person would be qualified as an elector if not for their age;
4. The numbers of each type of election officer required; and
5. The rate of pay for each election officer.

Lists of Nominees

Polling Station Election Officers

Each returning officer will then forward to each District Association in their electoral district, the list of staffing requirements, together with a brief description of each position and its rate of pay. The returning officer will request that each District Association develop a list of nominees for all or some of the required polling station election officer positions. The final determination of positions for all nominees shall be made by the returning officer. The list of nominees should include the following information:

1. The name and telephone number of each nominee;
2. The bilingual capability of the nominee (none, limited, fluent);
3. The technical capability of the nominee to work with a laptop computer; and
4. The polling station(s) at which the nominee is available to work.

The returning officer will request that this information be provided as soon as possible to begin contacting and scheduling workers, but in any case must be provided before noon on the seventh day following the issuance of the writ. Returning officers are to keep in contact with each District Association as to the development of their lists to promote early confirmation of available workers.

Special Voting Officers

Each returning officer will also forward to the District Associations for both the Government party and Official Opposition party in their electoral district, the staffing requirements for Special Voting Officers, together with a brief description of the positions and the rate of pay. The returning officer will request that each Electoral District Association develop a list of nominees to be employed as Special Voting Officers working from the returning office. The list of nominees should include the following information:

1. The name and telephone number of each nominee;
2. The bilingual capability of the nominee (none, limited, fluent);
3. The technical capability of the nominee to work with a laptop computer; and
4. Assurance that the nominee has a vehicle available to travel as required.

The returning officer will request information for Special Voting Officers be provided as soon as possible. These officers must be hired and trained so that they are able to begin work immediately upon the issuance of the writ of the election.

Individual Applicants

Once the returning offices are opened to the public, returning officers may also receive applications from any person applying to the returning officer to be appointed as an election officer.

Allocation of Election Officer Positions

As the returning officer receives lists of nominees or individual applications, they shall review the qualifications of each and allocate election officer positions in accordance with this directive.

Appointment of Election Officers

Communicable Disease Prevention Measures

Before hiring potential election officers to work at a returning office, they must be screened to determine if they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Election officers who are not willing to provide proof of vaccination will be required to wear a community face mask at all times in a returning office or when they visit a polling station.

ALL Special Voting Officers who will be conducting out-of-office voting in any manner MUST be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and provide the returning officer proof of their vaccination.

Before hiring potential election officers to work at a polling station, they must be screened to determine if they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Each person will be required to sign a declaration stating their vaccination status as proof of vaccination. Election officers at polling stations who declare they are not fully vaccinated with two doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine will be required to wear a community face mask at all times while attending in-person training or working at a polling station.

Polling Station Election Officers

The main objective of a returning officer is to ensure they have capable and qualified election officers at each polling station on each day of voting. Historically, election officers at polling stations have been divided equally, whenever possible, from lists of nominees provided by the Government party and the Official Opposition party. This allows the parties and the general public to assume that the process is fair and transparent. This practice is enshrined in the present *Elections Act*.

Accordingly, to the greatest extent possible, the returning officer will appoint qualified election officers at each polling station equally from the lists of nominees provided by the Government party and Official Opposition party. If one party has not provided enough qualified nominees, the returning officer will fill the remaining election officer positions from any other party's list of qualified nominees. Regardless of other considerations, the returning officer must use their best efforts to ensure that each polling station has at least one nominee from the Government Party and the Official Opposition Party.

Returning officers will be encouraged to seek out and employ high school students, 16 years of age or older, who possess bilingual and/or technical capability and are interested in working at a polling station as a voters list officer, a poll revision officer or a constable. The returning officer may appoint qualified student applicants as election officers, deducting these positions equally as far as possible from worker allocations that may have otherwise been provided by District Association nominees.

If the lists of nominees from the District Associations and available high school students do not provide sufficient quantities of qualified election officers to fill all vacancies, the returning officer may appoint qualified applicants as election officers.

Special Voting Officers

As soon as possible after their appointment, a returning officer shall appoint four Special Voting Officers able to provide adequate additional voting opportunities to electors in the electoral district, in the following manner:

1. two or more officers from the list of nominees from the Government party;
2. two or more officers from the list of nominees from the Official Opposition party.

In some electoral districts a returning officer may appoint additional Special Voting Officers, to be decided in conjunction with Elections NB.

Special Voting Officers will work from each returning office in pairs, normally one nominated by the Government party and one by the Official Opposition party. The returning officer will ensure these Special Voting Officers are trained in their duties prior to issuing ballots to voters, which may be done immediately following the issuance of the writ.

During the hours the returning office is open to the public, two Special Voting Officers will be on duty to accept applications and permit voters to vote throughout the election period. Once Special Voting Officers begin to conduct "Out-of-Office" voting, including Additional Polls, two other Special Voting Officers will collect votes away from the returning office. Returning officers shall ensure that appointments and schedules are prepared to maximize the number of locations that will be visited in any one day.

Notification to Candidates

Polling Station Election Officers

Not later than the tenth day before ordinary polling day, the returning officer shall furnish each candidate with a list of the election officers assigned to each of the advance polling stations. The list will include the following:

1. The name of each election officer;
2. The position in which each election officer will be employed; and
3. The polling station where each election officer will be employed.

Not later than two days before ordinary polling day, the returning officer shall post a list of election officers assigned to each of the ordinary polling stations in the returning office. In addition, the returning officer will furnish each candidate with this same list. The list will include the following:

1. The name of each election officer;
2. The position in which each election officer will be employed; and
3. The polling station where each election officer will be employed.

The returning officer shall permit free access to and afford full opportunity for inspection of the list of appointed election officers by any candidate, official agent or elector during normal operating hours of the returning office.

If a returning officer makes changes in the appointments of election officers after a list has been furnished to the candidates and posted, they shall notify each candidate without delay and correct the posted list.

Special Voting Officers

As soon as all Special Voting Officers are appointed, the returning officer shall furnish each District Association with a list of the names of the Special Voting Officers.