

Supporting Resident Participation in Municipal Elections

Land Acknowledgement

Together, let us now pause as we acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of all the lands that we are on today, from wherever we are virtually participating in today's meeting. Let us take a moment to acknowledge the importance of the land we each call home.

We do this to affirm our commitment and responsibility to improving relationships between nations, and to improving our own understanding of local Indigenous Peoples and their cultures.

We acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territory of all the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people who call this nation home.

Let us now join in a moment of reflection to acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past and to consider how each of us, in our own way, can move forward in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

Meet the Panelists



La Vern
Simkins



Andrea
Phoenix



Stephanie
Ventura



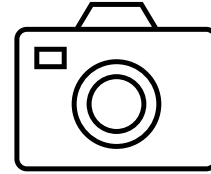
Sierra
Roberti

Webinar Housekeeping



Chat Box

The chat feature is open - we ask that all questions and comments be productive and respectful.



Group Photo

We'd love to take a group photo at the end of the session. Feel free to turn off camera/log off if you would prefer not to be captured.



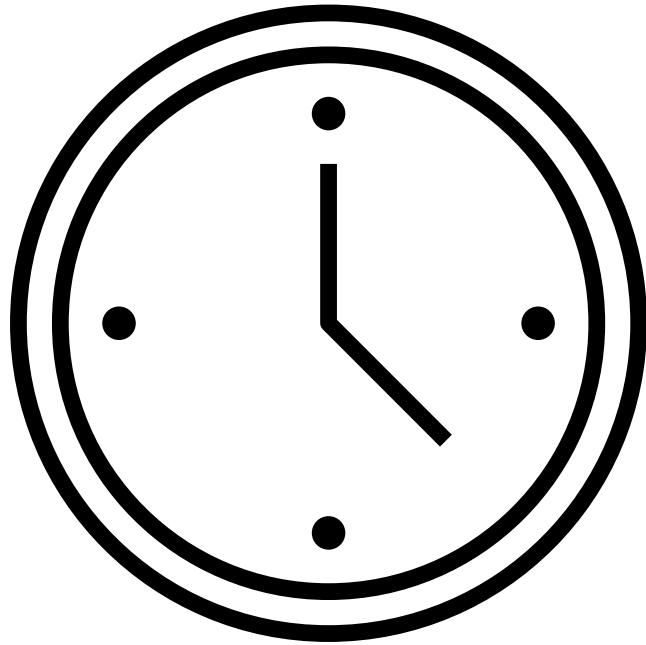
Recording

Today's discussion will be recorded and shared with participants following the session via email.



Evaluation

After the webinar, a pop-up screen asking you to complete a survey will appear. Your feedback and suggestions are appreciated.



Our Time Together

- Why Voting Matters for Residents
- How to Prepare to Vote
- Planning for a Smooth Voting Experience
- Questions and Conversation

How Municipal Elections Work in Ontario



Municipal elections are held every 4 years in Ontario



Ontario sets the election rules, but each municipality runs its own election so voting procedures may vary from one municipality to another



The Municipal Clerk oversees the election in each community

2026 voters' guide

Ontario municipal council and
school board elections

Ontario 

2026 Voters' Guide

- A Government of Ontario resource that explains municipal and school board elections.
- Provides information on voting rights, eligibility, accessibility, and voting options.
- Helps voters, families, and long-term care staff understand election rules.
- Does not replace the Municipal Elections Act, but summarizes the key rules in plain language.

Important Dates

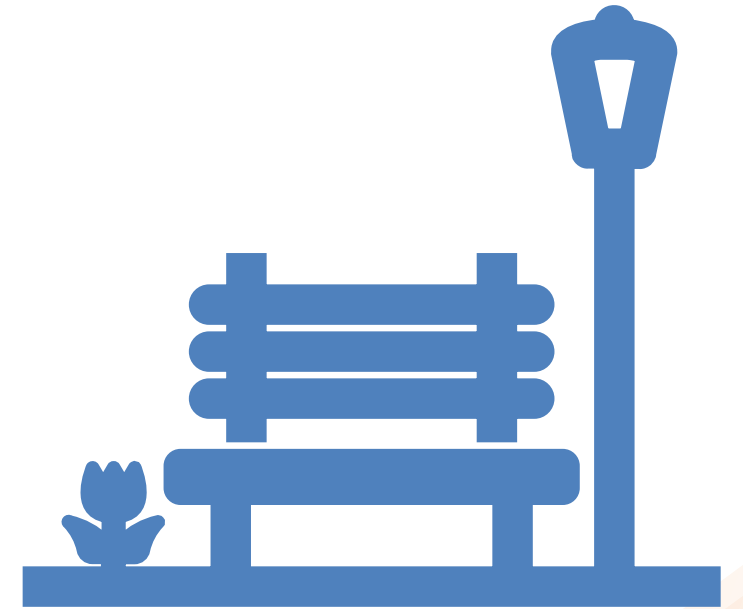
- Municipal Elections will take place on Monday, October 26, 2026
- The voters' list will be prepared on September 1, 2026.
- To add, remove, or change listed information **on or after September 1, 2026, contact your municipal clerk.**
- Check your [municipality's website](#) to get in touch with your municipal clerk.



Why Municipal Elections Matter

What services do you use that are provided or influenced by your municipality?”

- Accessible transportation
- Sidewalks
- Snow removal
- Libraries
- Recreation programs
- Emergency services
- Age-friendly community planning



Why Voting Matters

Residents Are Citizens

- Moving into a long-term care home does **not** take away a person's rights as a citizen
- Residents continue to have:
 - The right to vote
 - The right to participate in civic life
 - The right to express opinions
 - The right to make personal choices



Residents' Bill of Rights



The Fundamental Principle and the Residents' Bill of Rights under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021

Home: the fundamental principle

1. The fundamental principle to be applied in the interpretation of this Act and anything required or permitted under this Act is that a long-term care home is primarily the home of its residents and is to be operated so that it is a place where they may live with dignity and in security, safety and comfort and have their physical, psychological, social, spiritual and cultural needs adequately met.

Residents' Bill of Rights

3. (1) Every licensee of a long-term care home shall ensure that the following rights of residents are fully respected and promoted:

RIGHT TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT

1. Every resident has the right to be treated with courtesy and respect and in a way that fully recognizes the resident's inherent dignity, worth and individuality, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability.
2. Every resident has the right to have their lifestyle and choices respected.
3. Every resident has the right to have their participation in decision-making respected.

RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT

4. Every resident has the right to freedom from abuse.
5. Every resident has the right to freedom from neglect by the licensee and staff.

RIGHT TO AN OPTIMAL QUALITY OF LIFE

6. Every resident has the right to communicate in confidence, receive visitors of their choice and consult in private with any person without interference.
7. Every resident has the right to form friendships and relationships and to participate in the life of the long-term care home.
8. Every resident has the right to share a room with another resident according to their mutual wishes, if appropriate accommodation is available.
9. Every resident has the right to meet privately with their spouse or another person in a room that assures privacy.
10. Every resident has the right to pursue social, cultural, religious, spiritual and other interests, to develop their potential and to be given reasonable assistance by the licensee to pursue those interests and to develop their potential.
11. Every resident has the right to live in a safe and clean environment.

12. Every resident has the right to be given access to protected outdoor areas in order to enjoy outdoor activity unless the physical setting makes this impossible.
13. Every resident has the right to keep and display personal possessions, pictures and furnishings in their room subject to safety requirements and the rights of other residents.
14. Every resident has the right to manage their own financial affairs unless the resident lacks the legal capacity to do so.
15. Every resident has the right to exercise the rights of a citizen.

RIGHT TO QUALITY CARE AND SELF-DETERMINATION

16. Every resident has the right to proper accommodation, nutrition, care and services consistent with their needs.
17. Every resident has the right to be told both who is responsible for and who is providing the resident's direct care.
18. Every resident has the right to be afforded privacy in treatment and in caring for their personal needs.
19. Every resident has the right to:
 - i. participate fully in the development, implementation, review and revision of their plan of care,
 - ii. give or refuse consent to any treatment, care or services for which their consent is required by law and to be informed of the consequences of giving or refusing consent,
 - iii. participate fully in making any decision concerning any aspect of their care, including any decision concerning their admission, discharge or transfer to or from a long-term care home and to obtain an independent opinion with regard to any of those matters, and
 - iv. have their personal health information within the meaning of the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 kept confidential in accordance with that Act, and to have access to their records of personal health information, including their plan of care, in accordance with that Act.
20. Every resident has a right to ongoing and safe support from their caregivers to support their physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing and their quality of life and to assistance in contacting a caregiver or other person to support their needs.
21. Every resident has the right to have any friend, family member, caregiver or other person of importance to the resident attend any meeting with the licensee or the staff of the home.
22. Every resident has the right to designate a person to receive information concerning any transfer or any hospitalization of the resident, and to have that person receive that information immediately.
23. Every resident has the right to receive care and assistance towards independence based on a restorative care philosophy to maximize independence to the greatest extent possible.
24. Every resident has the right not to be restrained, except in the limited circumstances provided for under this Act and subject to the requirements provided for under this Act.

25. Every resident has the right to be provided with care and services based on a palliative care philosophy.
26. Every resident who is dying or who is very ill has the right to have family and friends present 24 hours per day.

RIGHT TO BE INFORMED, PARTICIPATE, AND MAKE A COMPLAINT

27. Every resident has the right to be informed in writing of any law, rule or policy affecting services provided to the resident and of the procedures for initiating complaints.
28. Every resident has the right to participate in the Residents' Council.
29. Every resident has the right to raise concerns or recommend changes in policies and services on behalf of themselves or others to the following persons and organizations without interference and without fear of coercion, discrimination or reprisal, whether directed at the resident or anyone else:
 - i. the Residents' Council,
 - ii. the Family Council,
 - iii. the licensee, and, if the licensee is a corporation, the directors and officers of the corporation, and, in the case of a home approved under Part IX, a member of the committee of management for the home under section 136 or of the board of management for the home under section 128 or 132,
 - iv. staff members,
 - v. government officials,
 - vi. any other person inside or outside the long-term care home.

Further guide to interpretation

(2) Without restricting the generality of the fundamental principle, the following are to be interpreted so as to advance the objective that a resident's rights set out in subsection (1) are respected:

1. This Act and the regulations.
2. Any agreement entered into between a licensee and the Crown or an agent of the Crown.
3. Any agreement entered into between a licensee and a resident or the resident's substitute decision-maker.

Enforcement by the resident

(3) A resident may enforce the Residents' Bill of Rights against the licensee as though the resident and the licensee had entered into a contract under which the licensee had agreed to fully respect and promote all of the rights set out in the Residents' Bill of Rights.

Regulations

(4) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations governing how rights set out in the Residents' Bill of Rights shall be respected and promoted by the licensee.

15. Citizens' rights

"Every resident has the right to exercise the rights of a citizen."

In other words: When you move into a long-term care home, you keep all of the rights you have as a citizen.

Accessibility in Municipal Elections



- Accessibility helps ensure residents can vote with dignity, independence, and confidence.
- Municipalities must make voting accessible for people with disabilities.
- Municipal Clerks must identify and remove barriers to voting.

Voting Rights and Cognitive Impairment

- Ontario municipal elections do not require a cognitive or capacity test for voters.
- Having dementia or another cognitive impairment does not automatically remove the right to vote.
- Eligible voters may receive assistance and accommodations when voting.
- Residents should be supported to participate in the democratic process whenever possible.



Voting by Proxy

- A voting proxy is someone appointed to vote on behalf of another voter.
- The voter must complete and sign a proxy form and have it certified by the Municipal Clerk.
- A Power of Attorney (POA) cannot automatically vote for a resident.
- The proxy must be an eligible voter and vote according to the resident's wishes.
- LTC staff may be appointed as a proxy but homes should carefully consider conflict-of-interest and undue-influence concerns.

Ontario 

Ministry of Municipal Affairs
and Housing

Appointment for Voting Proxy – Form 3
Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (Section 44)

Instructions
Complete two copies of this form and sign each copy.

Person Appointing a Proxy

1. You must be eligible to vote in the municipality.
2. The person you are appointing must be eligible to vote in the municipality.
3. You must know the person who you are appointing and be able to fill in their information.

To complete the form:

1. Provide your information in Box A.
2. Provide the information of the person you are appointing in Box B.
3. Sign and date the form in Box C.

Note: You must fill in the information of the person you are appointing before signing the form in Box C.

After completing two copies of the form, give them to the person who you are appointing as your proxy.
This form is a public record and the copy on file with the clerk may be inspected by any person.

Person Being Appointed

1. You must be eligible to vote in the municipality.
2. You may be appointed as the proxy of one or more family members (parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, sibling or spouse) **or** as the proxy of one person who is not a family member.

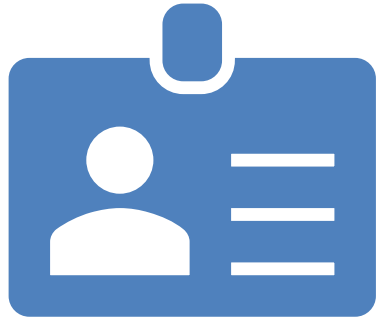
To certify the appointment:
Once the person appointing you has given you two copies of the completed form, take them to the municipal clerk (or a person designated by the municipal clerk).

Voting in Long-term Care Homes

- Ontario municipalities are required to provide voting opportunities in certain long-term care homes.
- Municipalities may also offer options such as mail-in voting or internet voting depending on local practices.

The exact voting process will vary by municipality.





Identification Requirements

- Voters must provide proof of identity and residence.
- LTC residents may use:
 - Home-issued documents
 - Resident charts/records
 - Wristbands
 - A resident list provided by the LTC home

Contact the Municipal Clerk if there are questions about acceptable identification

Creating a Successful Voting Day

A smooth voting day includes:

- Good communication with the municipality
 - Early planning
 - Accessibility supports
 - Staff awareness
 - Respect for resident choice
 - A non-partisan environment
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For Residents

- Know when voting will occur
- Ask questions early
- Consider what issues matter most to you
- Request accommodations if needed
- Learn about the candidates in your area



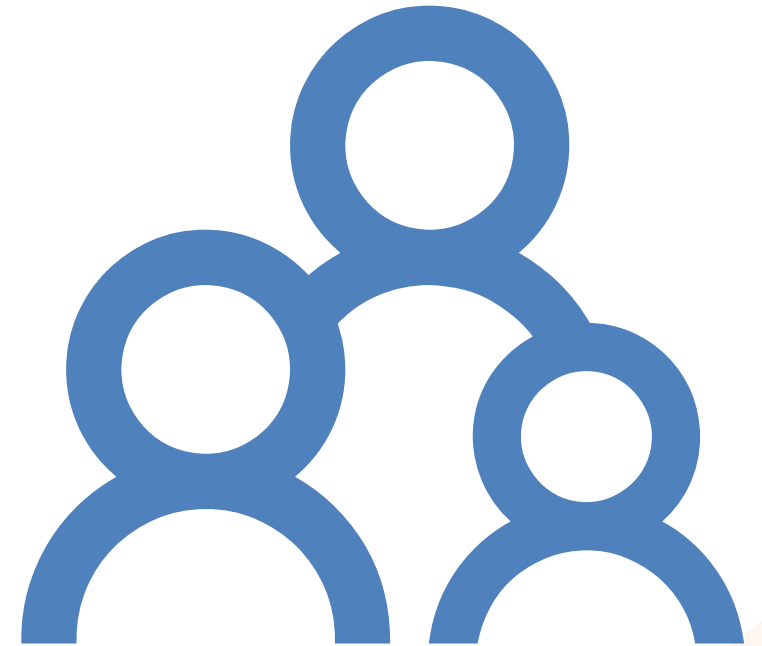
For Team Members

Do:

- Help residents access information
- Plan and assist with logistics (portering, signage, reminders...)
- Involve families, friends and volunteers
- Respect privacy and choice

Avoid:

- Telling residents who to vote for
- Influencing voting decisions
- Marking ballots for residents unless permitted under local election procedures



Key Takeaways



Residents of long-term care homes have the same democratic right to vote as other eligible citizens.



A diagnosis of dementia does not automatically prevent someone from voting.



Municipal elections affect issues that matter to residents.



Prepare early by checking local voting arrangements.



Every municipality may conduct the election differently. Contact your municipal clerk for local information and guidance.

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