

City of Ottawa 2018 Elections Detailed Accessibility Plan

The [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#) (“MEA”) governs municipal elections for all Ontario municipalities. Under the MEA, the clerk is responsible for the preparation and conduct of municipal elections. The *Good Government Act, 2009* introduced changes to the MEA, which emphasized accessibility for people with disabilities. These changes took effect in time for the 2010 municipal elections.

The MEA was further amended by the *Municipal Elections Modernization Act, 2016* (“Bill 181”). One amendment requires the clerk to “prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election” [Section 12.1 (2)].

As in past elections, the City of Ottawa Elections Office continues to be proactive on accessibility initiatives. Elections staff continues to consult with the City’s Accessibility Advisory Committee and hold outreach events to receive feedback from the public on accessible elections.

For the 2018 municipal elections, the Elections Office will offer all of the accessible tools and services that were available to electors and candidates during the 2014 municipal elections. Staff will put more emphasis on advertising its accessibility services to electors and candidates, including the expansion of the special advance voting days and the creation of five public facing applications (online webpages that assist electors with reviewing and updating their voting information).

The 2018 Accessibility Plan contains eight sections.

1. MEA on Accessibility
2. Training – Overview and Principles
3. Accessible Voting Tools
4. Accessible Transportation
5. Accessible Vote Tabulators (AVT)
6. Establishing Accessible Voting Places
7. Built Environment
8. Information for the Public

1. *The Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (MEA) on Accessibility*

The MEA includes requirements for accessible elections: both the voting process and the voting place must be accessible and the clerk must prepare reports on these topics.

Accessibility Planning and Voting Procedure

Under Section 12.1 of the MEA, a clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities. The clerk is also required to develop a plan on the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities. This plan must be available to the public before voting day. Also, the clerk must provide a follow-up report to the public within 90 days after voting day.

The MEA also requires the clerk to develop a ballot that allows electors with visual impairments to mark it independently, and permits an elector with a disability to receive assistance during the voting process.

Accessibility of the Voting Place

The MEA requires that each voting place be accessible to electors with disabilities. In instances where an elector cannot enter the room used for voting due to a disability, election workers will attend to the elector elsewhere at the voting place.

The MEA also requires the clerk to establish a voting place at institutions with 20 or more beds occupied by persons who are disabled, chronically ill or infirm. Similarly, the clerk is required to establish a voting place at a retirement home with 50 or more occupied beds. The clerk must also establish a voting place at an institution for the reception, treatment or vocational training of members or former members of the Canadian Forces.

Relevant Sections

Section 12.1

Electors and candidates with disabilities

12.1 (1) A clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities. 2009, c. 33, Sched. 21, s. 8 (8).

Plan re barriers

(2) The clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and

shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election. 2016, c. 15, s. 11.

Report

(3) Within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, the clerk shall prepare a report about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the report available to the public. 2016, c. 15, s. 11.

Ballots [...]

41 (3) The clerk shall make such changes to some or all of the ballots as he or she considers necessary or desirable to allow electors with visual impairments to vote without the assistance referred to in paragraph 4 of subsection 52 (1). 1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 41 (3); 2001, c. 32, s. 30 (1).

Voting Procedure [...]

52. (1) 4. The deputy returning officer may permit an elector who needs assistance in voting to have such assistance as the deputy returning officer considers necessary.

Accessibility

45 (2) In establishing the locations of voting places, the clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities. 2009, c. 33, Sched. 21, s. 8 (23).

Voting places in institutions, retirement homes

45 (7) On voting day, a voting place shall be provided on the premises of the following:

- 1. An institution for the reception, treatment or vocational training of members or former members of the Canadian Forces.*
- 2. An institution in which, on September 1, 20 or more beds are occupied by persons who are disabled, chronically ill or infirm.*
- 3. A retirement home in which, on September 1, 50 or more beds are occupied. 1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 45 (7); 2016, c. 15, s. 34 (2, 3).*

Attendance on resident

45 (8) The deputy returning officer for a voting place described in subsection (7) may attend on an elector who is a resident of the institution or retirement home, to allow him or her to vote. 1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 45 (8).

Attendance on electors with disabilities [“curbside and bedside voting”]

45 (9) To allow an elector with a disability to vote, a deputy returning officer shall attend on the elector anywhere within the area designated as the voting place. 2001, c. 32, s. 30 (3).

2. Training – Overview and Principles

All elections workers, both City staff and members of the public, are given mandatory accessibility training prior to working on a voting day. This training covers the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) (“AODA”) and emphasizes service delivery to all electors.¹ In keeping with these authorities and the City's [Accessibility Policy](#), the Elections training program addresses the following relevant topics:

- Assistive Devices
- Documentation
- Service Animals
- Support Persons
- Communication and Terminology
- Notice of Service Disruption(s)
- Feedback

Election workers are trained to apply four guiding principles when serving electors with disabilities:

- dignity
- equality of opportunity
- independence
- integration

Election workers are also instructed to offer service by asking if and how they can help the elector, and to refrain from making assumptions. Workers are trained to identify and remove barriers, and to make adaptations to ensure accessibility for all electors.

Accessible Voting Processes

In terms of the voting process itself, all election workers are trained on various processes to ensure that electors with disabilities have equal opportunity to cast their

¹ Customer Service Standards are found in Part IV.2 of the [O. Reg 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation](#) (“IASR”) under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005*.

ballot independently and privately. This includes information on how to use accessible voting tools and disability-specific customer service tips.

Assisting the Elector

Electors may request assistance with all or part of the voting process. Assistance might include an elections worker reading the names of the candidates aloud to the elector from the other side of the voting screen. Electors may also ask the elections worker to mark the ballot on their behalf (all elections workers take an oath to serve impartially and protect the secrecy of the ballot).

Serving Electors at their Bedside in an Institution

If required, an elections worker will attend to an elector who is a resident of a long-term care facility, seniors' residence, or hospital to allow them to vote. For example, elections workers at a retirement residence or long-term care facility will bring a ballot, in a privacy sleeve, to the door or bedside of the elector. Once the elector has marked the ballot, the ballot is to be placed in the privacy sleeve and immediately returned to the voting area and inserted into the vote tabulator.

Attendance on Electors who cannot enter the Building (Curbside Voting)

If required, an elections worker will attend to an elector with a disability to assist him or her with voting anywhere on the voting place property. For example, if a resident is unable to enter a particular area or room in the voting place, they can contact the Elections Office and request to have their ballot brought to them outside of the building, to their vehicle. The Elections Office will contact the elections workers at the voting place and ask them to bring the ballot to the parking lot. Once the elector marks the ballot, the ballot is to be placed in the privacy sleeve and immediately returned to the voting area and inserted into the vote tabulator.

Support Persons

Through training, elections workers learn that a support person who accompanies an elector is permitted in the voting place, as required under the IASR. The legislation defines a support person as a person who accompanies an individual in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs. The City's [Accessibility Policy](#) states that if a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, both

persons are permitted to enter the premises together and the person with a disability is not to be prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises. Elections workers are also trained to seek the elector's consent before discussing confidential information in front of the support person. Finally, the support person is required to take the *Oral Oath to Assist an Elector* before accompanying an elector behind the voting screen.

Service Animals

The Elections Office ensures that service animals are permitted in the voting place, as required under the IASR. Elections workers are instructed that a variety of animals can act as a service animal and can assist an elector in a variety of ways. Elections workers are also taught that a service animal is a physical extension of a person with a disability, which is there to work, and should not be touched or distracted.

Voting Proxies

If an elector is unable to attend a voting place, the elector may appoint another qualified elector, for example a friend or family member, to vote on their behalf as a proxy. The MEA establishes requirements pertaining to the proxy appointment process, including the completion of a prescribed form and the dates and times during which the prescribed form can be certified. The period for appointing a voting proxy is from September 4, 2018 to October 22, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.

Accessibility Leadership by City Staff

Approximately 1,200 City of Ottawa employees, from across the corporation, will provide important leadership on voting days to ensure that the voting process is accessible to all electors and candidates. Mandatory accessibility training is taken by all City employees once they become part of the corporation. By recruiting City staff for key elections worker positions, the Elections Office ensures that individuals who have previously completed AODA training are at each voting place. The Elections Office also requires all elections workers to complete supplementary accessibility training, which focuses on practical ways to identify, prevent and remove barriers for electors and candidates with disabilities.

Additional Election Assistants

The Elections Office will be assigning additional Accessibility Assistants to all voting places to address accessibility related issues. In cases where a voting place does not

have accessible power doors, an Accessibility Assistant will be hired to open the door. In some cases, additional Accessibility Assistants will be required to operate elevators on behalf of electors.

Elections Workers' Right to Request an Accommodation

The AODA and IASR place an emphasis on workers' rights:

- “Every employer shall notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.” [IASR, s. 22]
- “During a recruitment process, an employer shall notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process, that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.” [IASR, s. 23(1)]
- “If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the employer shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.” [IASR, s. 23(2)]

A number of adaptations are available to remove barriers for election workers with disabilities. The Elections Office's application form provides applicants an opportunity to request proactively an accessibility-related accommodation.

In 2018, the Elections Office will continue to focus on accessibility accommodations during the recruitment campaign and will offer City staff the opportunity to develop an Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Information (“IWERI”) Plan.

3. Accessible Voting Tools

As in past elections, each voting place will continue to offer the following tools and services to electors:

- Braille listings of candidate names and Braille ballot templates
- large print ballot
- magnifying sheet
- access to a cell phone with Elections call centre staff on standby
- notice of temporary disruption communication tools
- accessibility feedback cards

Braille Listing of Candidates and Braille Ballot Template

The Supervisor Deputy Returning Officer is provided with a Braille listing of candidates and three Braille templates for electors with vision impairments. An elector may choose to use these tools together, by matching the Braille on the listing of candidates to the corresponding Braille on the template. An elector may also choose to use the template on its own. For example, an elector may ask the elections worker to read the candidates' names in order and aloud from the other side of the voting screen, while they use the Braille template to feel for the corresponding holes and mark the ballot as desired.

Large Print Ballot

The large print ballot is a larger replica of the ballot that may be used as a guide for an elector with vision impairments. Every voting place will be equipped with a large print ballot of each of the five ballot types: English-Public, English-Separate, French-Public, French-Catholic, and Commercial Non-Resident.

Magnifying Sheet

For the first time during the 2010 elections, a magnifying sheet was available behind every voting screen, at every voting place. Originally recommended by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind ("CNIB"), the 4x Page Size Magnifier Sheet ("Fresnel Lens") could be used to read ballots and/or any other election-related documents. The tool was so well received by electors that many inquired about obtaining a magnifying sheet for personal use. Based on this feedback, the Elections Office continued to offer the magnifying sheet in the 2014 Elections, and will continue to do so in the 2018 Elections as well.

Cell Phone

In every voting place, a cell phone will be available to electors should they choose to have an Elections call centre employee read the ballot aloud to them over the phone. Electors who have impaired vision, limited literacy skills, or a cognitive disability often choose to access this service.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

In the event of a disruption in service related to accessibility, the City has a legal obligation to provide notice to electors. Disruptions of service include, but are not limited to:

- an elevator under repair
- renovations that limit access to an area
- technology that is temporarily unavailable (for example, an accessible vote tabulator)

During a voting event, *Notice of Temporary Disruption* signs are provided to all Supervisor Deputy Returning Officers. In the case of a temporary disruption, election workers are to complete the blank fields on the sign, indicating the following:

- reason for the disruption
- the date(s) of disruption
- its anticipated duration
- a description of alternative facilities or services

Elections workers are instructed to post the sign in a highly visible place, with consideration of electors who are most affected by the disruption. For example, if the elevator is out of service, election workers are to post the sign at the entrances of the voting place and ensure that it is placed at a height that someone in a wheelchair could easily see. The Supervisor Deputy Returning Officer is also instructed to notify the Elections Office so that it might take additional measures to provide notice, such as posting information on Ottawa.ca, depending on the circumstances.

Accessibility Feedback Cards

Feedback cards will be available at all voting places listing ways for electors to provide feedback to the Elections Office, as required by the IASR. The feedback cards are printed to CNIB's guidelines for clear print and include Braille.

4. Accessible Transportation

New for the 2018 municipal elections is a partnership between the Elections Office and Para Transpo. On the advice of the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Elections Office has partnered with Para Transpo for the upcoming municipal elections. Para Transpo customers can reserve their trip to and from a voting place **48 hours in advance** on any of the six voting days: October 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, and 22.

This will ensure that electors who use Para Transpo have the opportunity to schedule their trips ahead of the 24-hour casual bookings.

5. Accessible Vote Tabulators (AVT)

In 2018, electors will have five opportunities to vote using an AVT: four special advance days and advance vote day. On voting day, AVTs will be available at all retirement homes and long-term care facilities. In total, the AVT will be available at 212 voting places.

Accessible Vote Tabulators - Bilingual Messages

The Elections Office has worked with the vendor and the City's French Language Services Branch to ensure that electors can use the AVT in both English and French.

Pronunciation of Names

Among other messages, the AVT can read the candidates' names aloud to the elector. Based on the advice of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Elections Office will use an actual human's voice for the AVT's audio files as opposed to computer-generated speech.

To ensure accuracy of the pronunciation of candidates' names, candidates will be invited to record their name when filing their nomination and/or on a dedicated phone line established by the Elections Office.

Testing and Preparation

Each AVT is thoroughly tested prior to being deployed to voting places. The systems test takes approximately 90 minutes per AVT with all five ballot types (English Public, English Separate, French Public, French Catholic and Commercial Non-Resident) for each ward being tested. Also, all of the AVT's features will be tested including the audio and assistive technology devices.

Logistical Challenges

In 2014, the AVT introduced unanticipated logistical challenges, which required the Elections Office to introduce several new processes.

Due to the significant size and weight of the AVT, and to prevent injury, the Elections Office required two people per AVT to deliver the machines to all assigned voting places.

To address these challenges in 2014, the Elections Office created a new position on voting days: ImageCast Evolution (“ICE”) Drivers. These elections workers were responsible for delivering, helping set up, and returning the AVTs. In between deliveries, the ICE Drivers were assigned to one of six command centres across the City as additional support and troubleshooting resources. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the AVTs remained supervised at all times, the Supervisor Deputy Returning Officer’s hours of work were often extended to accommodate the delivery schedule.

For the 2018 elections, the Elections Office will once again partner with the Public Works and Environmental Services Departments to deliver the AVTs to all the voting places as required.

Availability

The AVT will be available to electors at all special advance voting places, ward-wide advance voting places, and voting places in seniors residences and long-term care facilities. All electors will be offered a minimum of five opportunities to vote using an AVT: October 4-7, 2018, and October 12, 2018.

Special advance voting was piloted in 2014, where voting was offered at three locations over three days. In 2018, the Elections Office is extending special advance voting to six locations over four days.

The expansion to the south core of the city, as well as the south and west suburbs, will offer equal opportunities to electors across the municipality.

6. Establishing Accessible Voting Places

The Elections Office has developed comprehensive guidelines to ensure that all voting places are accessible to electors and candidates with disabilities. Efforts are made to ensure that each voting place is as central as possible within the voting area it is meant to serve. In selecting a voting place, consideration is also given to factors such as parking, transit, and familiarity for electors. More information about the review of voting places is described below in the Built Environment section of this plan.

Legislatively Required Voting Places

One of the City’s mandatory accessibility initiatives is the establishment of voting places in seniors’ residences and long-term care facilities. The MEA prescribes that the clerk shall establish the number and location of voting places for an election that is

considered to be most convenient for electors. In particular, subsection 45(7) prescribes that a voting place shall be provided on the premises of the following:

1. *An institution for the reception, treatment or vocational training of members or former members of the Canadian Forces.*
2. *An institution in which, on September 1, 20 or more beds are occupied by persons who are disabled, chronically ill or infirm.*
3. *A retirement home in which, on September 1, 50 or more beds are occupied.*
1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 45 (7); 2016, c. 15, s. 34 (2, 3).

In the City of Ottawa, 117 seniors' residences and/or long-term care facilities have been identified as voting places based on legislation and past practice.

Multi-Residential Property Strategy

For decades, the Elections Office has established advance vote locations in multi-residential properties such as apartment and condominium buildings. Establishing these voting locations meets and exceeds legislative requirements, and provides a convenient voting place for electors residing in the building, particularly if they are seniors.

In order for a voting place to be established within a multi-residential dwelling, the property needs to meet one of the following descriptions:

- a) within a multi-residential building where an advance vote location had previously been provided for and where it is anticipated that:
 - i) the number of qualified electors appearing on the Voters' List will be 400 or more; and,
 - ii) the average participation rate for the last three regular municipal elections is 10% or greater.
- b) within a multi-residential building where an advance vote place had previously been provided for and where it is anticipated that the number of qualified electors appearing on the Voters' List will be less than 400 yet equal to or greater than 100; if
 - i) the percentage of seniors (65 years of age and over) is anticipated to be 25% or more; or,
 - ii) the average participation rate from the previous three municipal elections is equal to or greater than the City average of 44% for those three elections.
- c) within the premise of multi-residential dwellings where an advance vote location has not been previously provided and where it is anticipated that:
 - i) the number of qualified electors appearing on the Voters' List will be 100 or more; and,

ii) the percentage of seniors (65 years of age and over) is anticipated to be 25% or more.

7. Built Environment

In terms of the voting place, the Elections Office undertakes a comprehensive review of the built environment for each voting place. This process is achieved through the completion of a detailed accessibility checklist that is developed in consultation with staff in the City's Accessibility Office and Infrastructure Services. The review includes the evaluation of features such as elevators, ramps, handrails, lighting and door widths resulting in several renovations and adaptations to remove barriers for electors.

Where a barrier can be corrected, the Elections Office will make an investment in construction to make the facility accessible. In some cases, where the traditional or proposed voting place do not meet accessibility standards, an entirely new facility will be selected to ensure the voting place is accessible.

Preventing Barriers through Research and Collaboration with Infrastructure Services

Prior to its 2018 site visits, the Elections Office contacted the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department for background information regarding the accessibility of City facilities, including recent and planned renovations. In several cases, the two departments worked together to review renovation schedules against the elections schedule to avoid posing barriers to electors.

The Elections Office will continue to collaborate with the Planning, Infrastructure and Economical Development Department throughout the election year.

Accessible Parking Signage

In some cases, temporary accessible parking spaces are added to voting places by installing temporary signage in the parking lot. For example, in the case of some schools, the existing accessible parking spaces are situated far from the entrance used by electors. To ensure a reasonable travel distance for electors, the Elections Office works with the school principal and engages the Public Works and Environmental Services Department to have temporary signage installed near the entrance used by electors.

8. Information for the Public

Since voting tools and methods are not standardized across jurisdictions in Canada, electors are sometimes unsure about what to expect when voting in the City's elections. An elector's negative past experience, including an experience facing a barrier, can cause doubt about the accessibility of the City's present-day elections.

To ensure that electors understand the accessibility of the City's elections, accessibility figures prominently in communications and outreach to electors.

Public Outreach Events

Prior to voting day, the Elections Office has participated in several public outreach events to raise awareness about its accessibility initiatives:

- Meeting with the Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Demonstrations of accessibility tools at select branches of the Ottawa Public Library
- Presentations at various accessibility events such as AccessAbility Day

Voter Notification Brochures

More than 600,000 electors will receive a brochure with their voter notification letter. The brochure includes, among other things, information about the availability and accessible features of the AVT. The brochure also includes information on how to appoint a proxy voter for electors who are unable to attend a voting place.

Ottawa.ca/vote

With respect to electronic media, the Elections Office has a webpage on Ottawa.ca/vote dedicated to accessibility. This webpage includes details about the accessibility of the voting process, the built environment, voting by proxy, customer service training, and information on how to contact the Elections Office to ask questions or provide feedback.

"How to Vote" Video

Based on the advice of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Elections Office created a "How to Vote" video in 2014. The video, which was posted to Ottawa.ca/vote, visually and verbally explained the voting process to electors. It was also used as an alternative learning method to supplement in-class training. The video was available in both English and French, and it featured captioning. An accessible transcript was also available on the video's landing page.

A “How to Vote” video will again be available to electors leading up to the 2018 Elections.

Public Facing Applications

The Elections Office and Information Technology Services are developing five public facing applications (webpages), which will be used to increase overall accessibility and service levels for the 2018 Elections.

The applications are:

- Where do I vote?
- Am I on the Voters’ list?
- Add my name to the Voters’ List (new)
- Amend my information on the Voters’ List (new)
- Election Worker Application

The five applications are being developed to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (“WCAG”) 2.0 AA standards. The applications will be user tested by persons with disabilities.

Paper forms of the web-based applications will still be available, and voting place and Voters’ List inquiries will still be received over the phone, by email, and in person.

Social Media

The City also makes accessibility information available on social media and mobile devices. Through its official Twitter accounts, [@ottawavote](#) and [@ottawavotez](#), and official [Facebook account](#), the Elections Office will regularly communicate information about the election, including information about accessibility.

Information for Candidates

Through its Accessibility webpage, the Elections Office provided candidates with a copy of the “Candidate’s Guide to Accessible Elections.” This guide is produced by the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks, and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) to provide accessibility information and guidance to candidates.

Candidates will be given the opportunity to participate in Candidate Information Sessions where tips and resources will be shared on running accessible campaigns. Topics to be covered include accessible communications, selecting an accessible campaign office, budgeting for accessibility, and accessible customer service.

Web Accessibility

The Elections Office ensures that all content posted to Ottawa.ca is accessible and, in particular, compliant with the AODA and Section 14 of the IASR (Accessible Websites and Web Content).

Other Web Content

The Elections Office will work closely with Service Ottawa to ensure that all content posted to Ottawa.ca complies with relevant standards. All maps posted to Ottawa.ca will be accessible using screen readers. This includes adding accessible tags to maps in PDF format and making the related information available in alternate formats. For example, voting subdivision maps will be posted with accompanying “street index” tabular data (such as accessible HTML 5 format).

The Elections Office will ensure that candidates’ Financial Statements are posted to Ottawa.ca/vote in an accessible format, in order to comply with requirements under both the MEA and the AODA.

Financial Statements are submitted on a provincially prescribed form (“Form 4”). Subsection 88 (9.1) of the MEA requires the clerk to publish these forms for viewing by the public on a website, as soon as possible after the documents are filed. Meanwhile, the AODA requires the City to ensure that all its web content is accessible.

At this time, the province has yet to make Form 4 available in an accessible format. Furthermore, the forms are submitted by candidates in hard copy and bearing an original signature, as required under the MEA, which makes it more challenging to comply with the above-noted accessibility requirements.

To ensure the City is compliant with both pieces of legislation, the Elections Office will post both a scanned copy of the original Financial Statement – Form 4 and an accessible copy of the form. The accessible version will be created by the Elections Office, which includes creating a template and manually entering variable data. Finally, to ensure compliance with the City’s Bilingualism Policy, the accessible version will be available in both English and French.

Printed Materials – Clear Print Design Standard

The Elections Office ensures that printed materials meet accessible design standards. This approach is important, because as the City’s population ages, certain eye conditions such as cataracts, glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration become

increasingly common. In turn, reading a form or sign can be difficult if the materials are not designed with accessibility in mind.

The Elections Office works closely with the Printing Unit to ensure that forms, signs, Voters' Lists, and other documents are designed to meet the CNIB's Clear Print Design Standard. Following this design standard, the Elections Office is able to ensure that fonts, point sizes, colours/contrast, spacing and other formatting are accessible.

The Elections Office also works with the Surveys and Mapping Unit to make the electoral maps more accessible. Improvements include varying the line colour and thickness of different types of boundaries. The improved maps will be available both in hard copy and posted in electronic format to Ottawa.ca/vote.