

Chief Electoral Officer Directives for Handling Ballot Papers

(*Elections Act*, R.S.N.B. 1973, c.E-3, s. 63 and 68.1)



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Ballot Papers

This directive describes the procedures required for handling ballot papers during an election. It is through the ballot that electors exercise their right to vote. The Returning Officer is ultimately responsible for the security and accounting of all activities regarding the preparation, distribution and counting of the ballot papers in his or her district.

In a provincial election, there are three types of ballot papers that must be accounted for:

1. Ordinary Ballot Papers: Ordinary ballot papers are printed with the candidates' names and party affiliations and are used during ordinary, advance, and special voting opportunities. They are produced after the close of nominations during the election period.
2. "Write-In" Special Ballot Papers: "Write-In" Special Ballot Papers are a form of ballot paper used to allow voting by electors who may wish to vote after the writ of election and prior to the returning office receiving the ordinary ballot papers. These are printed with a space for the elector to write the name of the candidate being voted for.
3. "Blank" Special Ballot Papers: "Blank" Special Ballot Papers are blank sheets of paper shipped to the returning offices. They have the same security features as other ballot papers. These blank special ballot papers are used in the Ballot on Demand printer when voters visit a returning office to vote who are ordinarily resident in another electoral district. Blank special ballot papers are also used in the audio vote tabulation machine printer when voters visit a returning office to vote using an audio ballot.

In addition, Braille facsimiles of each electoral district's candidates and party affiliations are prepared. They are not cast in the ballot box, but instead are used to enable visually impaired electors to vote independently on an Ordinary Ballot Paper. Within a polling station, they may be used by several voters during the day. The only requirement in preparing these facsimiles is that the same information, and in the same order, is presented on the facsimiles as it is on the Ordinary Ballot Paper.

Printing and Supply of Paper to Printing Company

In accordance with subsection 63(3) of the *Elections Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer shall provide the printing company with the paper on which ballot papers shall be printed. The chosen paper will have security features particular to Elections New Brunswick. Sufficient paper shall be provided to ensure that sufficient ballot papers are printed, for each electoral district in an election.

Any paper shipped to the printing company shall be documented on form P 02 250, *Delivery of Ballot Paper to Printer / Livraison de papier pour bulletins de vote à l'imprimeur* and require the signatures of those involved.

Printing of Ballot Papers for an Election

“Write-In” Special Ballot Papers:

“Write-In” Special Ballot Papers shall be cut and printed by the printing company prior to an election, in the prescribed form and bundled in books of 50. After printing, all “Write-In” Special Ballot Papers and waste paper shall be delivered to the Elections NB warehouse. In accordance with subsection 68(1) of the *Elections Act*, any paper shipped to the Elections NB warehouse from the printing company shall be documented on form P 02 251/252, *Declaration Of Ballot Printing Company / Déclaration de l'imprimeur des bulletins de vote* and require the declaration and signatures of those involved.

Ordinary Ballot Papers:

After the close of nominations:

1. For each electoral district, the Returning Officer will electronically submit the candidates' name and party affiliation as they are to appear on the ballot, based on the information submitted on each Nomination Paper, to Elections NB.
2. Elections NB will enter the candidates' name and party affiliations into the ballot and results reporting Election Management System (EMS) database.
3. The EMS database will produce electronic ballot proofs of each electoral district's ballot.
4. Each electronic ballot proof will be sent to the appropriate Returning Officer, for verification and approval sign-off.
5. Each Returning Officer will approve their electronic ballot proof forthwith.

After each Returning Officer approves their electronic ballot proof:

6. Elections NB will send the approved electronic ballot proofs and the required quantities for each electoral district to the printing company to begin printing of ballot papers.
7. Elections NB will arrange the audio recording of each candidate's name and party affiliation as they are to appear on the ballot, to be used by the audio vote tabulation machine.
8. The person recording the candidate names shall file a statutory declaration on form P 02 254, *Declaration of Audio Ballot Recorder / Déclaration de la personne qui enregistre le bulletin de vote audio*, stating that the audio recording of each candidate's name and party affiliation is an accurate and impartial recording of that information.
9. Elections NB will arrange to program a memory card and vote tabulation machine to be used to test the readability of all ballot papers.
10. Elections NB will perform random sampling of each electoral district's ballot papers as they are printed by the printing company, to ensure they meet the technical specifications required to be tabulated electronically.

11. After random sampling of each electoral district's ballot papers have confirmed they meet the required technical specifications, the printing company will bundle each electoral district's ballot papers in packages of 50 or 100 sheets, as required.
12. The printing company will deliver the appropriate ballot papers to each Returning Officer. In accordance with subsection 68(1) of the *Elections Act*, any ballot paper shipped to the Returning Officer from the printing company shall be documented on form P 02 251/252, *Declaration of Ballot Printing Company / Déclaration de l'imprimeur des bulletins de vote* and require the declaration and signatures of those involved.

"Blank" Special Ballot Papers:

13. "Blank" Special Ballot Papers shall be cut and produced by the printing company, in the prescribed form and bundled in packages of 100 sheets. The printing company will deliver the appropriate "Blank" Special Ballot Papers to each Returning Officer. In accordance with subsection 68(1) of the *Elections Act*, any ballot paper shipped to the Returning Officer from the printing company shall be documented on form P 02 251/252, *Declaration of Ballot Printing Company / Déclaration de l'imprimeur des bulletins de vote* and require the declaration and signatures of those involved.

Braille Facsimiles:

14. After each Returning Officer approves their electronic ballot proof, Elections NB will arrange the production of sufficient quantities of Braille facsimiles to send one per polling station in each electoral district. Each electoral district's candidates' names and party affiliations must be printed as they are to appear, and in the same order, as on the Ordinary Ballot Papers.
15. In accordance with subsection 68.1(2) of the *Elections Act*, the person(s) preparing the Braille facsimiles, shall file a statutory declaration on form P 02 253, *Declaration of Braille Facsimile Printer / Déclaration de l'imprimeur des facsimilés en braille*, stating that the Braille facsimiles are true and accurate representations of the printed Ordinary Ballot Papers, the number of Braille facsimiles prepared, the name of the person(s) who prepared the Braille facsimiles, and that no copies of the Braille facsimiles of the Ordinary Ballot Papers have been provided to any person except the Chief Electoral Officer or Returning Officers.
16. The person(s) who prepared the Braille facsimiles for each electoral district will then send the Braille facsimiles forthwith to the appropriate Returning Officer.

Security and Accounting of Ballot Papers by Returning Officers

After each Returning Officer receives their "Write-In" Special Ballot Papers, "Blank" Special Ballot Papers, or Ordinary Ballot Papers:

1. The Returning Officer will verify that the number of ballot papers shipped by either Elections NB or the printing company have been received.
2. The Returning Officer will account for the number of ballot papers of each type received on form P 02 701, *Returning Officer Ballot Record / Registre des bulletins de vote du directeur ou de la*

directrice du scrutin, and secure them until they are issued to election officers in preparation for voting.

3. The Returning Officer will issue a sufficient quantity of “Write-In” Special Ballot Papers to the Special Voting Officers at the start of the election period to enable voters to vote. Any ballot papers issued will be accounted for on form P 02 701, *Returning Officer Ballot Record / Registre des bulletins de vote du directeur ou de la directrice du scrutin*.
4. After the close of nominations, the Returning Officer will issue a sufficient quantity of “Blank” Special Ballot Papers to the Special Voting Officers to enable voters to vote using the audio vote tabulation machine or ballot on demand software. Any ballot papers issued will be accounted for on form P 02 701, *Returning Officer Ballot Record / Registre des bulletins de vote du directeur ou de la directrice du scrutin*.
5. Prior to the first day of advance polling, the Returning Officer will issue a sufficient quantity of Ordinary Ballot Papers to each Poll Supervisor to enable voters to vote at the advance polling stations. Any ballot papers issued will be accounted for on form P 02 701, *Returning Officer Ballot Record / Registre des bulletins de vote du directeur ou de la directrice du scrutin*.
6. Prior to ordinary polling day, the Returning Officer will issue a sufficient quantity of Ordinary Ballot Papers to each Poll Supervisor to enable voters to vote at the ordinary polling stations. Any ballot papers issued will be accounted for on form P 02 701, *Returning Officer Ballot Record / Registre des bulletins de vote du directeur ou de la directrice du scrutin*.

Security and Accounting of Ballot Papers by Election Officers

1. After the Special Voting Officers receive ballot papers from the Returning Officer, they shall verify the number of ballot papers issued and record the number in C 06 701, *“In-Office” Special Ballot Poll Book*, or C 06 702, *Additional Poll Book*, as necessary. The Special Voting Officers will ensure the all ballot papers are kept securely until each is issued to a voter. Cast ballots, spoiled ballot papers, and unused ballot papers are to be kept separate and returned to the Returning Officer on Election Day in accordance with the special voting procedures.
2. After each Poll Supervisor receives ballot papers from the Returning Officer, he or she shall verify the number of ballot papers issued and record the number in C 07 702, *Poll Supervisor Ballot Record*. Each Poll Supervisor will ensure the all ballot papers are kept securely until each is issued to the Ballot Issuing Officers in a polling station, and then in turn, to voters. Cast ballots, spoiled ballot papers, and unused ballot papers are to be kept separate and returned to the Returning Officer on Election Day in accordance with the procedures for voting at polling stations.