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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

March 29, 2021

### **ELECTORS WHO WISH TO VOTE BY SPECIAL BALLOT ARE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE THEIR APPLICATIONS AT EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY**

All electors have the option to vote by special ballot. Special ballot applications at returning offices and online/mail have been open for two weeks. As of 10 AM on Monday, March 29, a total of 1,376 electors have voted by special ballot.

With expanded opportunities and access to vote by special ballot, there has been a general increase in the uptake of electors voting by special ballot. That said, the significantly higher volumes of special ballot electors experienced by other jurisdictions over the past year has not yet materialized.

For electors who wish to vote by special ballot, they are reminded and encouraged to apply at the earliest opportunity. This is particularly important if an elector wishes to receive and/or return their special ballot by mail.

#### **Quote by Max Harvey, Chief Electoral Officer, Elections Yukon**

Electors who wish to vote by special ballot are encouraged to visit their returning office at the earliest opportunity and cast their vote. They can also apply for a special ballot kit online or by mail. Electors must consider the mail delivery times needed to send and receive completed special ballots. An elector can apply and receive a special ballot from their local returning office, at any of the 19 returning offices in the territory (plus the five community offices), online or by mail. Special ballots can be returned to your local returning office, Elections Yukon, or deposited in the drop box outside the main administration building in Whitehorse.

#### **Key Points:**

- Special Ballot applications remain open until Friday April 9<sup>th</sup>.
- The fastest way to get a special ballot is to visit the returning office in the electoral district where you are an elector. You can vote and deposit your ballot envelope in the ballot box.
- The second fastest way is to visit any returning office and receive your special ballot kit. You cannot deposit the ballot envelope in a returning office that is not in the electoral district where you are an elector. It must be returned to the returning officer in the electoral district where you are an elector or to Elections Yukon (by mail or drop box).
- Special ballots from online or mail applications will be mailed out from Elections Yukon. They can be returned to Elections Yukon (by mail or drop box) or to the returning office in the electoral district where the elector resides.
- Consider mail out/mail return times, as Friday April 2<sup>nd</sup> and Monday April 5<sup>th</sup> are statutory holidays, and no mail will be delivered or picked up.

- Special ballots must be received at Elections Yukon (by mail or drop box) or the returning office in the electoral district of the elector by close of polls at 8 PM on Monday April 12<sup>th</sup>. If not received by close of polls, the ballot will not be counted.
- If an elector has not applied online or by mail for a special ballot in time to allow for return, they should go to the returning office where they are an elector to vote by special ballot.
- When a special ballot is issued or mailed out to an elector, they are considered to have voted. They cannot vote at an advance Poll, or at an ordinary poll on polling day.

**Contact Elections Yukon**

Dave Wilkie, Assistant Chief Electoral Officer

Phone: 867-667-8683 or 1-866-668-8683 (toll free) Email: [info@electionsyukon.ca](mailto:info@electionsyukon.ca)

**Elections Yukon is an independent non-partisan office of the Legislative Assembly that is responsible for the administration of territorial, school council and school board elections.**

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION REGARDING VOTING BY SPECIAL BALLOTS

### SPECIAL BALLOT APPLICATIONS

Special ballot voting begins with an application. It will include registration if not already registered. For special ballot applications, proof of identification is required. For online or mail applications, a copy of identification, a picture of the identification, or a file with name and address is required.

The options to vote by special ballot are noted below; it will assist electors in ensuring their ballot gets back in time to be counted.

- **APPLY AT THE RETURNING OFFICE OF THE ELECTORAL DISTRICT WHERE YOU ARE AN ELECTOR:**

This is the most expedient option, as you can register, apply, be issued a ballot, and vote at the returning office. Your vote is complete. The vote will be counted at the returning office on polling day.

**Note:** You must apply for your special ballot by Friday, April 9<sup>th</sup>.

- **APPLY AT ANY RETURNING OFFICE OUTSIDE YOUR ELECTORAL DISTRICT:**

Electors can apply at any of the 19 returning offices (or five branch offices) in the territory.

If an elector applies at a returning office in a district where they are not an elector, they can apply and will be issued a ballot. Electors would then follow all the steps as an elector voting by special ballot in their electoral district including completing their ballot and certification envelope and having it in their return envelope ready to mail.

As the special ballot is not in the correct electoral district to be counted, it must be returned to where it can be counted or to Elections Yukon.

**Note:** You must apply for your special ballot by Friday, April 9.

- **APPLY ONLINE ([electionsyukon.ca](http://electionsyukon.ca)) OR BY MAIL:**

Electors can apply for a special ballot online or by mail. This is a new option and electors must consider the mail delivery times to receive their special ballot voting kit, complete it, and have their ballot mailed and received by close of polls on Monday April 12<sup>th</sup> at 8 PM.

### RETURN AND COUNTING OF SPECIAL BALLOTS:

Special ballots do not have to be returned where they are issued (e.g., if received by mail from online application, it can be returned to the returning office of the electoral district where the elector resides).

Special ballots can be returned and counted at one of two places:

- Returning Offices: Each of the 19 returning offices can accept and count ballots for their own electoral district only. Any other ballot would be sent to the proper returning office or to Elections Yukon.
- Elections Headquarters can accept and count special ballots from any electoral district.

**Note:** Regardless of when or from where a special ballot was issued, they must be returned before close of polls on Monday April 12<sup>th</sup> at 8 PM to be counted.

**Accepting Ballots at the Returning Office in the Electoral District of the Elector:** While returning officers can issue special ballots to any elector, returning offices can only receive and count special ballots from electors of their electoral district.

Regardless of where the special ballot was issued (by mail or from any returning office), an elector can return the special ballot envelope to the returning officer where they are an elector.

**Returning Special Ballots to Elections Headquarters (From Any Electoral District):** Elections Yukon headquarters in Whitehorse will count special ballots returned to Elections Yukon in the addressed, postage paid return envelopes. They will count and report results to the 19 returning officers.

- By Mail – Canada Post will deliver mail daily except for weekends or statutory holidays.
- Drop Box – a drop box (marked with signage outside the main administrative building – 2701 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave in Whitehorse).

**Note Re: Mail Delivery Times:** Online or mail applications for special ballots typically require one day to process and 3-5 days for delivery within Yukon. If you wish to have a special ballot kit sent to you in Yukon, online or mailed applications should be received at Elections Yukon headquarters no later than Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. Special ballot kits will be sent on Thursday April 1<sup>st</sup>. Please note that Friday April 2<sup>nd</sup> and Monday April 5<sup>th</sup> are statutory holidays and there is no mail pick up or delivery.

**RETURNING OFFICE LOCATIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION:**

There are 19 returning offices and 5 branch offices (Faro, Pelly Crossing, Carmacks, Ross River, and Beaver Creek) where special ballots applications can be made.

A list of the 19 returning offices and five additional community offices locations are available online at [electionsyukon.ca](http://electionsyukon.ca). Phone numbers and emails of the returning officers are also included.

For more information, contact Elections Yukon by email at [info@electionsyukon.ca](mailto:info@electionsyukon.ca). The Elections Yukon helpdesk can be reached at (867) 667-8683 or (866) 668-8683 (toll free).