

Appendix 7: Pandemic Protocols for the 2022 Municipal Election

Procedure Number: ELEC-Appendix 7
Sub-Topic: Voter Assistance
Topic: Elections
Applies to: Municipal Elections and By-Elections

Purpose

This document provides the Town of Newmarket's procedures for Election Officials with regard to health and safety initiatives and protocols that may be implemented as required during the 2022 Municipal Election in the event of escalation of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The health of voters, election officials and other Town employees remains a key priority for the Town.

Application

These procedures apply to Election Officials designated by the Town Clerk, electors at designated Voter Assistance Centres (VACs), special voting locations, candidates, scrutineers, and any other person who is involved with or working during the Town of Newmarket 2022 Municipal Election.

Current National, Provincial and Regional Health policies and guidelines in place at the time of the election take precedence and will be adhered to over and above any procedures described in this document. Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, the protocols described below are subject to change without notice. These protocols should not be considered an exhaustive list, and where protocols do not exist to respond to a situation, best practices and collective common sense should prevail.

Procedures

1.0 Online Voting Platform

Wherever possible, voters are encouraged to use the Town's online voting system to cast their ballot during the 10-day voting period, October 15th-24th, using an internet-connected device (e.g. smartphone, tablet, or computer).

2.0 Access to Voter Assistance Centres

Election officials and voters should ensure that they are feeling well prior to coming into Voter Assistance Centres.

- 2.1 Election Staff – should follow protocols in place for all Town of Newmarket employees at the time of the election. If staff are concerned about a COVID exposure or experience symptoms, they are to complete the [COVID-19 worker and employee screening](#) on the provincial website which will provide guidance on self-isolation requirements.
- 2.2 Voters – should follow all protocols in place at the time of the election as stipulated by the various levels of government. Signage shall be posted at entrances to Voter Assistance Centres reminding voters to self screen for symptoms of COVID-19 prior to entering the building.

3.0 Special Voting Locations

Assisted voting at designated special voting locations (e.g. Southlake Hospital, Long Term Care Facilities, Shelters, etc.) shall be administered in compliance with health, safety and pandemic policies and protocols in place at these facilities during the 10-day voting period.

4.0 Sanitization of Voting Equipment and Precautions

- 4.1 Hand sanitizer pumps will be available at all Voter Assistance Centres for voters and staff to use, whenever required.
- 4.2 Election staff will use sanitation wipes, to wipe contact surfaces of computing equipment after use by each voter.
- 4.3 Supplies needed for the voters to mark off their ballot (ballot marking pens, secrecy sleeves) will be single use supplies only; they will be properly disposed of or sanitized once the ballot has been accepted by the tabulator machine and the voter has completed their vote.
- 4.4 All election officials working will be equipped with personal protective equipment (masks, face shields, gloves, etc.).
- 4.5 Desk positions, such as the Deputy Returning Officer and the Revisions Officer, will have Plexiglas barriers on their stations.
- 4.6 Election staff will be trained on all aspects of pandemic protocol and have a thorough understanding of the process and procedures put into place.

5.0 Social Distancing

- 4.4 The Voter Assistance Centres are prepared with social distancing markers on the floor and signage from the entrance to the exit.
- 4.5 Every effort will be made to limit the number of voters in a Voter Assistance Centre at one time.
- 4.6 Voting stations and election worker stations are set 2 m apart.
- 4.7 The entrance and exit to the Voter Assistance Centre are located at separate doors.

Contact and Approval

Lisa Lyons
Town Clerk, Legislative Services Department
llyons@newmarket.ca

Procedure Version History

Version	Date Effective	Sections Updated
1	May 31, 2022	Original