

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Voters' Questions

1. When is General Voting Day?

General Voting Day for local government elections in the province of British Columbia is always the third Saturday in November. In 2008, that will be November 15. The voting place is Glenwood Centre, 4480 Vimy, open from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.

2. How many people can I nominate to run in the local election?

A person entitled to make a nomination may subscribe to as many nomination documents as there are persons to be elected to fill the office for which the election is being held.

3. Am I eligible to vote?

You are eligible to vote in the City of Port Alberni municipal election as a resident elector if you:

- are a Canadian citizen;
- are 18 years of age or more on general voting day;
- have lived in British Columbia for at least six months before you register to vote; and
- have lived in the City of Port Alberni for 30 days or more before you register to vote; and,
- are not disqualified by the *Local Government Act*, any other enactment, or the Courts from voting in an local election.

You may be eligible to vote in the City of Port Alberni municipal election as a non-resident property elector if you:

- are eligible to vote as a resident elector in another municipality, regional district or school district; and,
- own property in the City of Port Alberni for 30 days or more before you register to vote.

For more information, check the Voter's Guide to Local Elections in BC.

4. Do I need identification in order to vote?

If you appear on the list of registered electors, it is not necessary to produce ID at the time of voting. Please contact Russell Dyson, Chief Election Officer (250-720-2810) to confirm if you are on the list of electors.

If you are registering to vote on the day of voting, you must have two pieces of identification (ID). The ID must show your residential address and one of them must have your signature. If your ID doesn't show your residential address, you can make what is called a "solemn declaration" as to your residence. The voting clerk will have the form you need to make that declaration.

5. Do I get time off work to vote in a local government election?

There is no legislated requirement that employers must provide time off work so that employees can vote in a local government election. The voting place is open on voting day, Saturday, November 15, 2008, from 8:00 in the morning to 8:00 at night to provide time to vote. In addition, two advance voting opportunities are held, Wednesday, November 5, 2008, 8:00 am – 8:00 pm at (City Hall, 4850 Argyle Street) and Wednesday, November 12, 2008, 8:00 am – 8:00 pm (at Alberni Elementary Community School Gym off Arrowsmith Road) so that people who are unable to vote on general voting day have another chance to vote.

6. I am a member of a First Nation, living on reserve. Can I vote in a local government election?

The two reserves – Hupacasath and Tseshaht are not in City boundaries and residents of the reserves do not qualify to vote in the City election except if they qualify as a non-resident (see question 2). Check with Alberni Clayoquot Regional District to determine your local government voting opportunities (250-720-2705).

7. I moved here two weeks before General Voting Day. Can I vote?

No, you must have resided in the local government for 30 days to be eligible to vote.

8. I won't be here on General Voting Day; how can I vote?

The City provides two advance voting opportunities:
November 5th @ City Hall, 4850 Argyle Street; and
November 12th @ Alberni Elementary Community School Gym off of Arrowsmith Road

9. I don't have access to a vehicle and I live too far to walk to Glenwood Centre on voting day. How do I vote?

This year any qualified voter can vote during the advance polls we are offering these in North Port and South Port to enable better access to vote. Alternatively, it is acceptable for candidates or others to provide rides to the voting place.

10. Can I vote by mail or through the Internet?

No.

- 11. I own a company in the City of Port Alberni, do I get an extra vote?**
No. Local government voting rights are granted to citizens, on the basis of residency or property ownership. There is no corporate vote in British Columbia.
- 12. Can someone who has a physical disability or other difficulty receive assistance in voting?**
Yes, a solemn declaration will be required and election officials are able to assist you with voting. Check with an election official at the time of voting.
- 13. Can a candidate help me vote if I need assistance?**
No. Candidates and their representatives and agents are prohibited from assisting electors.
- 14. Can I look at a candidate's financial disclosure statements?**
Yes. They are available at the local government office, during regular office hours, from the time of filing until 7 years after the election to which they relate.

Candidates' Questions

1. Can I run for office?

If you are qualified to vote in a general local election and if you have not otherwise been disqualified, you are eligible to run for office. In addition, you must:

- be 18 or older;
- be a Canadian citizen; and
- be a resident of British Columbia for at least 6 months before the election.

2. Do I have to live in the City to run for Mayor or Council?

No.

3. Can I run for Councillor in the City of Port Alberni and for electoral area director in the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District?

Yes.

4. Can I be both a local government representative (Mayor, Councillor, electoral area director, islands trustee or school trustee) and a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) or Member of Parliament (MP)?

Yes, however there is a considerable amount of time involved in filling any of these offices; you may choose to do just one.

5. Can I run for office if I work for the City of Port Alberni holding the election?

No, there is a specific restriction against both working for, and holding office in, the same local government. However, if you were to take a leave of absence from your job, you could run in the election. If elected, you would have to resign your job.

6. When can I start campaigning?

Whenever you like. Just make sure you record all your election contributions and expenses for the disclosure statement you must file within 120 days after voting day. The same applies to elector organizations, campaign organizers and candidates alike.

7. Where can I get some information on campaign financing disclosure requirements?

Contact the Chief Election Officer, Russell Dyson (250)720-2810 for all forms and an explanation.

8. Is there a limit to what I can spend on my campaign?

No, but you must record and report all contributions and expenses.

- 9. How many people need to nominate me to run for office?**
The minimum number of people is two, but it's wise to have more in case it turns out that one of them is not an eligible nominator.
- 10. Do I have to pay a fee to run for office?**
No.
- 11. Are there any other requirements for me as a candidate?**
You must open a separate bank account for all campaign contributions and expenses. You should open that account as soon as you receive your first election contribution, or before you spend any money on your campaign.
- 12. What if I receive no contributions and spend nothing on my campaign, do I still have to open a separate account?**
No, however you must open one or more accounts before incurring a campaign expense or as soon as possible after receiving a campaign contribution.
- 13. If I don't win the election, do I still have to file disclosure documents?**
Yes. This applies not only to candidates but to elector organizations and campaign organizers as well.
- 14. Can the public view my campaign financing disclosure statement?**
Yes, they are available for public inspection at City Hall during regular office hours until 7 years after the general voting day to which they relate.
- 15. Can I have campaign signs at the voting place on voting day?**
No, there can be no campaign material (signs, buttons, brochures, etc.) within 100 metres of a voting place or advance voting opportunity.
- 16. Can I advertise on the day of the election?**
No, there can be no election campaigning advertising in newspapers or on radio or television on the day of the election, and there must be no campaign material (signs, buttons, brochures, etc.) within 100 metres of a voting place. If you advertise in a weekly newspaper that is distributed on a Saturday be sure that your ad does not appear on election day.