

ELECTIONS SASKATCHEWAN



Communique for Chief Official Agents January 17, 2017

New year's greetings to all of you! I hope you had a restful holiday season. I have not formally communicated with you in some time so I want to provide some information that will be of interest to you.

Pending By-Election – Saskatoon Meewasin

You will no doubt have heard that the passing on November 29 of Mr. Roger Parent, MLA for the constituency of Saskatoon Meewasin, has left a vacancy in the Legislative Assembly. By law, this vacancy must be filled by means of a by-election within six months of the seat becoming vacant, meaning there will be a by-election held before May 29, 2017.

My office has begun making arrangements to be ready to administer this by-election once I am ordered by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to issue a writ of election to the constituency Returning Officer. When that happens, I will make formal contact with you through a By-Election Communique.

Clarification on Homebound Voting

Following the 28th General Election, my Office has been and continues to diligently review how our electoral processes might be improved within the parameters of legislation. Homebound voting was just one innovation introduced through legislation in advance of the general election. While reviews to date have been very positive, I have determined that some refinements will be necessary during subsequent electoral events.

With this in mind, I want to clarify that homebound voting is only available to an individual who is unable to attend a regular or advance poll due to a disability (or a person offering care to that individual). Our Homebound Application form will be amended to highlight this requirement.

In addition, all homebound applications need to be submitted to Elections Saskatchewan directly by the voter or a family member/caregiver. The process cannot be facilitated or managed by a registered political party or candidate. If you or your representatives make contact with individuals who wish to use homebound voting, I would ask that you direct them to our website or provide them with our telephone number so that we can serve them directly.

By-Election Voter Registration

Within the next few days, we will be encouraging voters who reside in Saskatoon Meewasin to ensure they are registered and that their information is accurate. Voters can choose to visit our online Voter Registration Portal, found at <http://www.elections.sk.ca/voterregistration/> or phone our office at 1-877-958-8683.

Deadlines for voter registration will depend on the date of the by-election. These dates will be communicated to you through a by-election communique.

Absentee Voter Applications

No doubt there will be some residents of Saskatoon Meewasin who have opted to enjoy a sunny climate over the next few months. With this in mind, we will be making the absentee voter application form available shortly. The deadline for submission of the absentee voter application form will be, by legislation, eight days before by-election day.

Once available, the absentee voter application form (as well as the homebound voter application form) will be available at <http://www.elections.sk.ca/voters/ways-to-vote/>.

2017 Expense Limits

The calculations for the annual political party and candidate expense limits will be completed by January 23 and posted to our website under the Expenditures and Election Expense Limits heading within the Candidates and Parties section. These expense limits will apply to this by-election, as well as any others, that take place in 2017. Jennifer Colin, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, will contact you with a direct link to this information once it is available.

Report on Young Voters and the 2015 Federal Election

Some of you may be familiar with Samara Canada, a charity dedicated to reconnecting citizens with politics. Late last year they issued a report entitled *Can You Hear Me Now? Young People and the 2015 Federal Election*. You will find a copy of that report attached. I think you will find the report informative as it debunks many commonly held assumptions as to how young people feel about elections, politics and democracy. I hope you find the results as interesting as I did. I would encourage you to share it with other members of your party.

Best wishes for 2017. I look forward to working with you over the coming year. With an eye towards the pending by-election, I hope that you will not hesitate to be in touch with me if you have any questions.



Dr. Michael Boda
Chief Electoral Officer
Province of Saskatchewan