

Local Government Elections
For Rural Municipalities
In Saskatchewan

Pre-Election Day
Webinar
Part 1 of 2

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Respect and Integrity
Serving Citizens
Excellence & Innovation
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Elections for Rural Municipalities (RMs)

- RMs hold a general election for selected divisions every two years. Next general election in a RM is:
 - 2018 for even-numbered divisions; and
 - 2020 for reeve and odd-numbered divisions.
- Council members are elected for a term of four years.
- Terms begin and end at the first meeting of council.

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General Tips

- Download ***The Local Government Elections Act, 2015 and Regulations.***
- Download **An Election Guide for Saskatchewan Municipalities:**
 - Contains flowcharts, timelines, charts and detailed processes.
- Download the **Interactive Election Schedule.**

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Council Duties

- In a RM, council shall:
 - set the remuneration to be paid to election officials;
 - name one or more polling places within Saskatchewan for each division;
 - pay all costs or the municipality's share of the costs incurred in holding the election; and
 - direct the returning officer to establish an advance poll if desired.

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Council Powers

- Council has discretionary authority to act respecting certain aspects of the election. For some activities, legislative deadlines apply.
- The Election Guide has a list of these discretionary authorities which include:
 - establishing advance polls;
 - offering a mail-in ballot system; and
 - requiring criminal record checks.

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Residency

- Residency impacts both the ability to run for office and the ability to vote.
- A person's residence is the place they typically refer to as "home".
- There are special provisions for active members of the Canadian Forces and full-time students.

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Candidate Qualifications in a RM

- At least 18 years of age on Election Day;
- A Canadian citizen and a Saskatchewan resident for the past six months; and
- Is eligible to vote in the RM.
- In addition:
 - a person cannot be nominated for more than one office within a municipality.
 - candidates cannot be a court judge or the municipality's auditor or solicitor.
 - municipal employees are required to take a leave of absence to seek office.

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Voters in a RM

- A voter must:
 - be at least 18 years of age;
 - be a Canadian Citizen; and
 - meet one of the following criteria:
 - (a) a resident in the RM for at least three consecutive months immediately preceding the day of the election;
 - (b) the registered owner (or purchaser under a bona fide agreement for sale) of land in the RM;
 - (c) assessed with respect to land in the RM under a lease, license, permit, or contract in agreement with the registered owner;
 - (d) assessed with respect to an improvement in the RM;
 - (e) hold a permit in the RM with respect to a trailer or mobile home;
 - (f) a spouse of a person mentioned in clause (b), (c), (d), or (e); or
 - (g) the chief executive officer of a duly incorporated co-operative, corporation or religious association that is assessed on the last revised assessment roll with respect to property in the RM that is not exempt from taxation.

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Voting in Divisions

- Each voter in a RM is entitled to vote for the reeve and for one division councillor.
- The administrator must notify voters in which division they are entitled to vote by:
 - including the division number on the assessment notice and on the tax notice; and
 - preparing and posting a list of all assessed landowners and the division in which they vote before each election and by-election.

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Determining the Division

The division where a person is eligible to vote is determined by the *first* applicable clause:

1. The division where the voter resides.
2. The division where the voter owns assessed property.
3. The division where the voter holds a permit as the occupant of a trailer or mobile home.

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Determining the Division cont.

4. The division where the voter has the highest total assessment, OR the lowest numbered division if the assessments are equal.
5. The division where the spouse of the voter is entitled to vote, when the spouse does not reside in the municipality.
6. Where a corporation is the assessed owner, the division the CEO is entitled to vote in is the division with the highest assessment OR is the lowest numbered division if the assessments are equal.

Residents always vote in the division where they live.

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Determining the Division cont.

- 7. Non-residents may choose to designate a division on or before September 1:
 - A voter who owns assessed property in more than one division may choose to designate the division by providing written notice to the administrator on or before the first of September in any year;
 - A voter who has property in one division and their spouse has property in another division, either of them may designate one of those divisions as the division in which they wish to vote by providing written notice to the administrator on or before the first of September in any year;
 - Voters are bound by the notice as long as they have property in those same divisions or they amend the notice; and
 - Amendments do not take effect for at least four years.

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Returning Officer

- The returning officer is the person responsible for all matters relating to the election including:
 - calling for nominations;
 - receiving nominations;
 - establishing one or more advance polls if required;
 - appointing all other election officials; and
 - receiving and declaring election results.

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Election Officials

- Legislation requires the returning officer to appoint:
 - one or more deputy returning officer(s) for each polling place, including advance polls;
 - poll clerks for each polling place, including advance polls; and
 - enumerators, if a voters list is being prepared.
- The returning officer may also choose to appoint:
 - nomination officers to receive nominations and issue receipts on behalf of the returning officer;
 - constables to maintain order at a polling place; and
 - any other officials deemed necessary to conduct the election.

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Deputy Returning Officer (DRO)

- The DRO is responsible to:
 - set up the polling place;
 - post required notices and signs;
 - ensure voters complete voter registration forms (unless a voters' list is used);
 - provide assistance to voters with disabilities;
 - keep the ballot box in sight at all times;
 - keep track of ballots;
 - provide direction to candidates and agents;
 - close the poll;
 - count the ballots after the poll is closed;
 - make the final decision to approve or reject a ballot;
 - complete required forms; and
 - turn over all election materials to the returning officer.

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Poll Clerk

- The poll clerk assists the DRO in:
 - setting up and opening the polling place;
 - conducting the vote;
 - allowing voters to cast their ballots in an orderly fashion;
 - counting of ballots; and
 - closing the poll.

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Oaths

- Before starting any of the duties required for the election, the returning officer must complete:
 - Form E – Oath, Affirmation or Declaration of Election Official . This form may be administered by:
 - a Notary Public;
 - a Commissioner for Oaths; or
 - a Justice of the Peace.
- Other people appointed as election officials (DRO, poll clerk, constable, etc.) must also complete the Oath administered by the returning officer or a person authorized to administer oaths.

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Required Notices

Prescribed Forms	Non-Prescribed Forms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form H – Notice of Call for Nominations • Form L – Notice of Call for Further Nominations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of Poll • Abandonment of Poll • Notice of Advance Poll

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Call for Nominations

- Call for Nominations (Form H) is posted and published at least 10 business days before Nomination Day.
- The list of owners of assessable property and the divisions in which they vote may be posted at the same time as the Call for Nominations.

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Receiving Nominations

- Nominations for candidates will be received at the specified location (usually the municipal office):
 - during normal office hours after posting the call for nominations until Nomination Day begins; and
 - between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Nomination Day.
- Nominations are received for the entire period including lunch hour on Nomination Day.

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Filing the Nomination Form

- A nomination form may be submitted to an authorized election official by:
 - personal service by the candidate or a person acting on the candidate’s behalf;
 - registered or ordinary mail;
 - fax;
 - email; or
 - as otherwise specified by the returning officer.

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Withdrawal Period and Nomination Outcome

- Following the period for withdrawal of nominations, the returning officer must assess the outcome for each office. There may be:
 - less candidates than vacancies;
 - equal candidates to vacancies; or
 - more candidates than vacancies.

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Call for Further Nominations

- The returning officer will need to call for further nominations when:
 - there are no candidates nominated for reeve or a specific division:
 - post Form L : Notice of Call for Further Nominations.
- Nominations are received until 4:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday following the close of the withdrawal period from the first call for nominations.

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Candidates Acclaimed

- The returning officer will acclaim the candidate when there is only one nomination received for the office of reeve or division councillor.
- After the withdrawal period is over, the returning officer will:
 - declare the candidate to be elected; and
 - post a Notice of Abandonment of Poll.

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Vote Required

- Where there is more than one candidate for the reeve or division councillor, the returning officer:
 - declares that a vote will be held;
 - names when, where, and for which offices the vote will be held;
 - names when and where the results of the vote will be declared; and
 - posts a Notice of Poll (no prescribed form).
- The returning officer may also post a Notice of Advance Poll (no prescribed form) if applicable.

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Death of a Candidate

- If a candidate dies before the close of voting on Election Day, the candidate is deemed to have withdrawn and:
 - if there are more remaining candidates than vacancies for office, a vote is required and the election proceeds; or
 - if the number of remaining candidates is equal to the number of vacancies for the office in question the returning officer immediately declares the remaining candidates as elected.

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Ballots

- Ballots are prescribed forms – Form N:
 - Refer to Candidate’s Acceptance for occupation and correct spelling of name; and
 - Provide printer with a copy of section 41 of the Regulations.
- When ballots are received:
 - Verify accuracy of candidate information;
 - Ensure same font is used for all candidates;
 - Ensure order of candidates’ names is correct; and
 - Count the ballots.

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Election Supplies

- Ballot boxes must be durable and sealable.
- Voting compartments must provide privacy for voters.
- Ensure a sufficient supply of all forms:
 - Required materials – Checklist provided in the Election Guide.

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Information Available Online

- <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/municipal-administration/elections>; and
- <http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca>.
 - Includes:
 - General information about municipal elections.
 - Election Guide for Saskatchewan Municipalities.
 - Interactive Election Schedule.
 - Other election information.

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- Questions?

Ministry of Government Relations
Advisory Services and Municipal Relations
(306) 787-2680
muninfo@gov.sk.ca

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Exercise 1: Residency Profiles for RM's

Sections 3&4 LGEA, 2015

Am I a resident here?

1. Andrew and Trish took over the farm from Andrew's parents. They keep a house in town--it is handy for the kids who are going to school; they also spend time out on the farm in the family farm house over the summer months and during seeding and harvest because Andrew's parents have passed away recently and left the home quarter to Andrew and Trish.

Andrew and Trish reside in:

How does their place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote?
- Eligibility to run for office?

2. Colin is enjoying his retirement. When the weather gets cold and dreary, Colin packs up and spends his time in sunny Arizona in a trailer park. Then he makes his way to the RM of Fair Valley in Saskatchewan, from April until the end of September, where he owns a serviced lot.

Colin resides in:

How does his place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote?
- Eligibility to run for office?

3. Mandy was raised on the family farm in the RM of Plainsview, located in south east Saskatchewan. Since September of 2017, Mandy has been a full time student who studies Civil Engineering at the University of Toronto. Her parents are thankful that she comes home to help around the farm for the summer when she is out of class.

Mandy resides in:

How does her place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote?
- Eligibility to run for office?

4. Aaron grew up in the RM of Here in Saskatchewan. Aaron is a full time pharmacy student at University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Aaron also works part time at a grocery store to help pay his bills. Aaron rarely returns to the RM of Here—his semester load is really heavy, and he needs to pick up extra shifts over the summer to help cover his costs while he goes to school.

Aaron resides in:

How does his place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote?
- Eligibility to run for office?

5. Christopher is a Canadian Forces member originally from the RM of Creekside in Southwest Saskatchewan. Christopher is currently stationed at 15 Wing Moose Jaw.

Christopher resides in:

How does his place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote?
- Eligibility to run for office?

Exercise 1: Residency Profiles for RM's

Answer Key — Sections 3&4 LGEA, 2015

Am I a resident here?

1. Andrew and Trish took over the farm from Andrew's parents. They keep a house in town--it is handy for the kids who are going to school; they also spend time out on the farm in the family farm house over the summer months and during seeding and harvest because Andrew's parents have passed away recently and left the home quarter to Andrew and Trish.

Andrew and Trish reside in: **Wherever they designate as their primary resident.**

How does their place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote? **It may impact the division in which they vote.**
- Eligibility to run for office? **It would not affect their ability to run for office.**

2. Colin is enjoying his retirement. When the weather gets cold and dreary, Colin packs up and spends his time in sunny Arizona in a trailer park. Then he makes his way to the RM of Fair Valley in Saskatchewan, from April until the end of September, where he owns a serviced lot.

Colin resides in: **the RM of Fair Valley, Saskatchewan.**

How does his place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote? **He would vote in the division he resides.**
- Eligibility to run for office? **No impact.**

3. Mandy was raised on the family farm in the RM of Plainsview, located in south east Saskatchewan. Since September of 2017, Mandy has been a full time student who studies Civil Engineering at the University of Toronto. Her parents are thankful that she comes home to help around the farm for the summer when she is out of class.

Mandy resides in: **RM of Plainsview**

How does her place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote? **She votes in the division with the residence.**
- Eligibility to run for office? **No impact.**

4. Aaron grew up in the RM of Here in Saskatchewan. Aaron is a full time pharmacy student at University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Aaron also works part time at a grocery store to help pay his bills. Aaron rarely returns to the RM of Here—his semester load is really heavy, and he needs to pick up extra shifts over the summer to help cover his costs while he goes to school.

Aaron resides in: **Both the RM of Here and the City of Saskatoon.**

How does his place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote? **He votes in the division of his residence.
He also votes in the City of Saskatoon.**
- Eligibility to run for office? **No impact. He may run for office in both the RM and the City.**

5. Christopher is a Canadian Forces member originally from the RM of Creekside in Southwest Saskatchewan. He does not own any land in the RM. Christopher is currently stationed at 15 Wing Moose Jaw.

Christopher resides in: **He may elect one of the following:**

- **The RM of Creekside OR**
- **15 Wing Moose Jaw.**

How does his place of residence impact:

- Eligibility to vote? **Either the RM of Creekside or the RM in which 15 Wing Moose Jaw is situated, whichever he elects as his residence.**
- Eligibility to run for office? **If he elects the RM as his residence, he may run for office in the RM of Creekside;
If he chooses 15 Wing Moose Jaw as his residence, he may run for office in the municipality in which 15 Wing Moose Jaw is situated.**

Exercise 2: Voting Divisions

Section 39 LGEA, 2015

“What division do I vote in?” Remember, a person may vote only in one division.

1. Andrew resides in Division 1 and has assessed property in Division 1
 - Andrew votes in Division ____
2. Blair resides in Division 1 and has assessed property in Division 1 (\$5,000) and Division 4 (\$14,000)
 - Blair votes in Division ____
3. Colin resides in Division 2 with parents and has assessed property only in Division 4
 - Colin votes in Division ____
4. Dennis resides in a nearby town and has assessed property only in Division 1
 - Dennis votes in Division ____
5. Dakota resides in nearby community and has assessed property in Division 1 (\$8,000) and Division 4 (\$14,000).
 - Person votes in Division ____
6. Reed resides in nearby community and has assessed property in Division 3 (\$14,000) and Division 4 (\$14,000).
 - Reed votes in Division ____
7. Four family members, none of whom live in the rural municipality, jointly own land in a number of divisions:

Owners	Division	Assessed Value
Andrew & Blair	1	8000
Colin & Dennis	1	9000
Andrew and Dennis	1	7500
Blair and Colin	4	7800
Andrew and Colin	4	6900
Blair and Dennis	4	7300

- To determine the division in which each person votes, determine the total taxable assessment for each person in each division (table provided next page).

Person	Division	
	1	4
Andrew		
Blair		
Colin		
Dennis		

- Based on the above calculations:
 - Andrew votes in Division ____
 - Dennis votes in Division ____
 - Blair votes in Division ____
 - Colin votes in Division ____

- 8. The same four family members owning the same land (example 7), but Colin lives in Division 1. Other family members reside outside of the municipality.
 - Colin votes in Division ____
 - Andrew votes in Division ____
 - Dennis votes in Division ____
 - Blair votes in Division ____

- 9. David and Denise (spousal relationship exists) live in a nearby community. David is assessed in Division 1. Denise is assessed in Division 4.
 - David is entitled to vote in Division ____
 - Denise is entitled to vote in Division ____
 - Either David or Denise has the option to provide notice (in writing) to the administrator no later than September 1 if they both want to vote in the same division.
 - The notice is binding as long as both David and Denise continue to be assessed (licensed or hold a permit) in those divisions.
 - At least four years prior to the next election to be held in the division, the parties may elect to both vote in the other division.
 - There is no provision to revert to the original entitlement of voting in separate divisions.

- 10. Paul and Mandy (spousal relationship exists) reside in a nearby community in Saskatchewan. Paul owns assessed land in Division 1. Mandy is not assessed for any property in the municipality, and is not licensed or granted a permit relative to a home based business, mobile home or trailer.
 - Paul votes in Division ____
 - Mandy votes in Division ____

- 11. Steve and Leanne (spousal relationship exists) reside in a community in Alberta. Steve is the CEO of a corporation (or co-operative or religious association) assessed for property in Division 1 (\$14,000) and Division 4 (\$8,000).
 - Steve votes in Division ____
 - Leanne votes in Division ____

Exercise 2: Voting Divisions

Answer Key — Section 39 LGEA, 2015

“What division do I vote in?” Remember, a person may vote only in one division.

1. Andrew resides in Division 1 and has assessed property in Division 1
 - Andrew votes in **Division 1**
2. Blair resides in Division 1 and has assessed property in Division 1 (\$5,000) and Division 4 (\$14,000)
 - Blair votes in **Division 1**
3. Colin resides in Division 2 with parents and has assessed property only in Division 4
 - Colin votes in **Division 2**
4. Dennis resides in a nearby town and has assessed property only in Division 1
 - Dennis votes in **Division 1**
5. Dakota resides in nearby community and has assessed property in Division 1 (\$8,000) and Division 4 (\$14,000).
 - Person votes in **Division 4**
6. Reed resides in nearby community and has assessed property in Division 3 (\$14,000) and Division 4 (\$14,000).
 - Reed votes in **Division 3**
7. Four family members, none of whom live in the rural municipality, jointly own land in a number of divisions:

Owners	Division	Assessed Value
Andrew & Blair	1	8000
Colin & Dennis	1	9000
Andrew and Dennis	1	7500
Blair and Colin	4	7800
Andrew and Colin	4	6900
Blair and Dennis	4	7300

- To determine the division in which each person votes, determine the total taxable assessment for each person in each division.

Person	Division	
	1	4
Andrew	8000 + 7500 = 15,500	6900
Blair	8000	7800 + 7300 = 15,100
Colin	9000	7800 + 6900 = 14,700
Dennis	9000 = 7500 = 16,500	7300

- Based on the above calculations:
 - Andrew votes in **Division 1**
 - Dennis votes in **Division 1**
 - Blair votes in **Division 4**
 - Colin votes in **Division 4**
8. The same four family members owning the same land (example 7), but Colin lives in Division 1. Other family members reside outside of the municipality.
- Colin votes in **Division 1**
 - Andrew votes in **Division 1**
 - Dennis votes in **Division 1**
 - Blair votes in **Division 4**
9. David and Denise (spousal relationship exists) live in a nearby community. David is assessed in Division 1. Denise is assessed in Division 4.
- David is entitled to vote in **Division 1**
 - Denise is entitled to vote in **Division 4**
 - Either David or Denise has the option to provide notice (in writing) to the administrator no later than September 1 if they both want to vote in the same division.
 - The notice is binding as long as both David and Denise continue to be assessed (licensed or hold a permit) in those divisions.
 - At least four years prior to the next election to be held in the division, the parties may elect to both vote in the other division.
 - There is no provision to revert to the original entitlement of voting in separate divisions.
10. Paul and Mandy (spousal relationship exists) reside in a nearby community in Saskatchewan. Paul owns assessed land in Division 1. Mandy is not assessed for any property in the municipality, and is not licensed or granted a permit relative to a home based business, mobile home or trailer.
- Paul votes in **Division 1**
 - Mandy votes in **Division 1**
11. Steve and Leanne (spousal relationship exists) reside in a community in Alberta. Steve is the CEO of a corporation (or co-operative or religious association) assessed for property in Division 1 (\$14,000) and Division 4 (\$8,000).
- Steve votes in **Division 1**
 - Leanne votes in **Division—not entitled to vote in this RM**