



Native Women's  
Association of Canada

L'Association des  
femmes autochtones  
du Canada

**HONOURING OUR PAST,  
SHAPING OUR TOMORROW**

**Vote**

**VOTING GUIDE**

**Rising Voices: The Power  
of Indigenous Youth**



# Rising Voices: The Power of Indigenous Youth

Indigenous youth are among the fastest-growing population segment in Canada. In 2021, it was reported that 28% of Indigenous peoples were under the age of 25.<sup>1</sup> However, Indigenous youth are also greatly under-represented in voter turnout in Canadian elections. In the last election, the number of registered Indigenous youth voters was much lower than expected, meaning that the voices of Indigenous youth were not fully represented in the last election.<sup>2</sup> The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is striving to improve youth interaction in the next federal election, which is why we are hosting a workshop for Indigenous youth on when, where, and how to vote.

## WHY VOTE?

This upcoming federal election is more important than ever, providing Indigenous youth with an opportunity to be heard and make a difference. We need a government that will deliver meaningful and concrete change to support the success, health, and safety of Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse (W2STGD+) Peoples. To achieve this, Indigenous youth need to **use their voice and vote for change**.

Voting is about asserting the democratic right to power to:

- Decide one's own future
- Claim and extend opportunities for one's children
- Assert the rights of a community
- Shape the broader society

“

INSIGHT FROM MP LEAH GAZAN

**It's hard to motivate people to vote when the very people you're electing often vote on things that violate your human rights.** Indigenous vote matters. And electing people that uphold human rights matters.”

There's a larger reason why Indigenous youth should vote. When governments know that an entire community can be for or against them in the next election, they are compelled to listen, to respond, and to represent the priorities of that community in some way. In the end, being an active part of a community of voters is another way to strengthen that community and bring issues that matter most to them to the forefront. For Indigenous youth, this could include using your vote to make an impact on key issues, such as:

- Education
- Employment opportunities
- Food insecurity
- Housing
- Mental health
- MMIWG2S+
- Substance use

1 [Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. \(2023\). "Indigenous Peoples and Communities." \*Government of Canada\*. https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013785/1529102490303](https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013785/1529102490303)

2 [Elections Canada. \(2023\). "Turnout by Age and Gender – Estimate of Turnout in Indigenous Communities in the 43rd and 44th General Election." \*Elections Canada\*. https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rec/eval/pes2021/etic&document=p4&lang=e](https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rec/eval/pes2021/etic&document=p4&lang=e)



## PLANNING YOUR VOTE – Q&A

### *Am I eligible to vote?*

You are eligible to vote if:

- 1 You are a Canadian citizen
- 2 You are at least 18 years old on election day
- 3 You can prove your identity and address

or have someone eligible vouch for you.

### *How Do I Register To Vote?*

- 1 Using the [Online Voter Registration Service](#) (e-registration) at [elections.ca](#).
- 2 At an Elections Canada office once the election is called.
- 3 At the polls. If you couldn't register ahead of time, you can still register when you go to vote.

### *How Do I Vote In A Federal Election?*

- 1 On Election Day – Vote by going to the polling station.
- 2 At the Advance Polls – You can vote earlier at the advance polls, held on the tenth, ninth, eighth, and seventh day before the election, by visiting your assigned polling station.
- 3 By Special Ballot – If you won't be able to make it to your polling station on election day or during advance polls, you can apply to vote by special ballot. When you vote by special ballot, you can vote in any of the over 500 Elections Canada offices or by mail. If you need to vote by special ballot, make sure you submit your request early as deadlines do apply.

For more information on how to vote, please visit [Elections Canada](#).





### What should I bring with me?

To vote in the federal election, all electors must prove their identity and address upon arriving at their polling station through presenting an [accepted ID card](#) or, if you don't have an ID card, by having someone you know vouch for you.

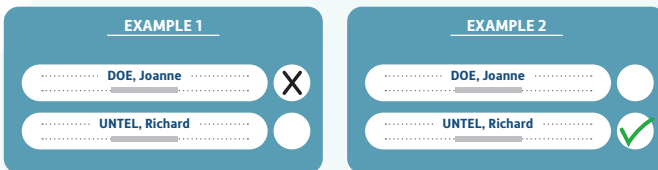
### What will my ballot look like? How do I properly mark my ballot?

According to Elections Canada, properly marked ballots will be ACCEPTED if the:

- Ballot is marked in only one circular space to the right of the candidate
- Ballot is marked with an "X" or other mark made with any writing instrument (i.e., pen, pencil)
- Counter is satisfied with the mark or any other writing on the ballot is not so distinctive that it could be used to identify an elector

Following these guidelines, marked ballots will be accepted and counted if they appear as below.

#### ACCEPTABLE MARKING



### How do I decide who to vote for?

Deciding who to vote for can be tricky. Here are four steps to get you started.

#### STEP 1

Gather information on political parties and compare their views on issues you care about. You can do this by following the news, watching political debates, and doing research on party platforms online.

#### DID YOU KNOW



### That you can still vote while living away from home as a student?

If you live in two places – one while at school, the other while away from school – you can choose which you consider home and use that address to register to vote. If you consider your campus residence to be your home, you can vote at a polling place on most post-secondary campuses. You will need ID proving your address on campus and to be assigned to that polling place. **Note that home or away, you can vote at an Elections Canada office or by mail. Deadlines apply.**

#### STEP 2

Find your riding to determine which candidates are running there. The list of candidates in your riding will be published 17 days after the election is called.

#### STEP 3

Once you have chosen your preferred political party choice, learn about the candidate's leadership abilities, experience, and past actions. Have they been active on the issues you want addressed in your community?

#### STEP 4

Make your judgement. Which political party and candidate will best represent you and your community?



# More Ways To Get Involved!

## PARTICIPATION FROM OUTSIDE

- Help with awareness campaigns
- Engage in social media activism.
- Join a group that advocates for a cause that is close to your heart
- Sign petitions on ongoing issues
- Raise funds for issues or organizations you support
- Volunteer for events in the community or with local non-profits
- Stay up to date with the news
- Talk about voting with your friends and family

## PARTICIPATION FROM WITHIN

- Support or volunteer for a party or candidate during their election campaign
- Apply to work as a poll worker in your riding
- Run for band council elections
- Promote a candidate in your community
- Vote in a band council election
- Vote in provincial, territorial, or municipal elections



### INSIGHT FROM MP YVONNE JONES

It's about making life better for the generations that walk with us now and are coming behind us."

## How Do I Contact Elections Canada?

Call: 1-800-463-6868

Visit: [www.elections.ca](http://www.elections.ca)

