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Home > News > CJC Federal Election Voting Information

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AllocationsNews and
PublicationsCommunity
Resources

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הוועדה הלאומית
לדיוני ציבוריים

As you may know, the federal election will take place on October 14, 2008, which falls on the first day of Sukkot. Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) has taken a leading role in ensuring that the Jewish community's election needs are accommodated, and we are pleased to share the following information with you to ensure that your voice is heard.

In italicized text below, you will find a letter prepared by Elections Canada for the Jewish community regarding voting procedures both on the day of and in advance of the upcoming federal election.

As well, we encourage you to read "Federal Election 2008: Guide to the Issues for the Community" prepared under the auspices of the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA). The guide is aimed at providing a comprehensive, non-partisan analysis of the issues of importance to our community, complete with policy recommendations and suggested questions for candidates. For your convenience, we have also provided a link to a one page synopsis of this Guide. Click here for the English guide and click here for the French guide.

For a one page synopsis click here for the English version and click here for the French Version. You can also check out the CJC website.

For additional, non-partisan election information, including information on how to vote in your riding, please visit the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee's (CJPAC) 2008 federal election website.

Regardless of when you vote or for whom you vote, Canadian Jewish Congress encourages all members of our community to vote so our voice is heard on the issues of concern to our community.

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Elections Canada Offers Many Options for Voting Before Sukkot

The Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, Marc Mayrand wishes Jewish Canadians to be aware that they can vote before the upcoming Sukkot.

"We understand that this important festival is being celebrated on October 14 and that Jewish Canadians have concerns about how they will be able to cast their ballots," says Mr. Mayrand. "We want them to know that they can choose a method of voting that respects their individual circumstances."

One option is to vote at the advance polls. They will be held on October 3, 4 and 6, from noon to 8:00 p.m. Voters who are observing the Jewish Sabbath can use the advance

polls prior to sundown on Friday, October 3, after sundown on Saturday October 4, or during polling hours on Monday, October 6. If you are registered to vote, you will receive a voter information card in the mail that will tell you where and when the advance polls will be held. If you are not sure if you are on the voters list or if you did not receive a voter information card, please contact your local Elections Canada office or Elections Canada in Ottawa.

Another option is to vote by mail or in person at a local Elections Canada office. Many people are not aware that they can cast their ballot at any point during the electoral period if they first register for a special ballot. This can be done in person by going to any local Elections Canada office. Any elector can also register to vote by mail. All they need to do is complete an application for registration and special ballot, which can be obtained from a local Elections Canada office, on the Elections Canada Web site by clicking on the "I'm Mailing My Vote!" icon, or by phoning Elections Canada.

The completed registration form and the required proof of identity and address must reach the local Elections Canada office or Elections Canada in Ottawa by 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 7. If you choose this method, you cannot change your mind and vote in any other way during this general election. In order to be counted, please ensure you mail your completed special ballot early enough to reach Elections Canada no later than 6:00 p.m. on election day, or take it to the local Elections Canada office before the polling stations close on election day.

"What's essential is that electors are able to participate," says Mayrand. "Elections Canada wants to ensure that all eligible voters have the opportunity to cast their ballots in a way that is most convenient to them."

Elections Canada also reminds voters that there are new rules concerning identification required when voting or registering to vote.

For more information, go to www.elections.ca, or call 1-800-463-6868.

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