



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE – ME-2026-09

SCRUTINEER'S PROCEDURE

2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cassandra Child". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Cassandra Child, AOMC, Dipl.M.A.
Clerk/Returning Officer**

Town of Cochrane

March 18, 2026

SCRUTINEER PROCEDURE
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE – ME-2026-09**1. LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

- a) This procedure is established pursuant to sections 16 and 47 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and under the authority granted to the Clerk by sections 11 and 12 of the Act.
- b) A candidate may appoint scrutineers to represent the candidate during the voting period, at any Help Centre established by the Clerk, during the tabulation of results, and at a recount.

2. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

- a) The appointment of a scrutineer shall be made in writing using the prescribed form approved by the Clerk. The form shall be signed by the candidate and provided to the scrutineer, who shall produce it upon request of election personnel. (*Form EL12A - Appointment of Scrutineer by Candidate*)
- b) Before being admitted to any Help Centre or location where results are being processed, a scrutineer shall provide proof of appointment and proof of identity in accordance with applicable regulations. Each scrutineer shall take the prescribed oath of secrecy prior to performing any duties. (*Form EL12B - Oral Oath of Secrecy*)
- c) No person who is appointed as an election official shall act as a scrutineer.

3. NUMBER OF SCRUTINEERS

- a) No more than one scrutineer per candidate may be present at a Help Centre or results processing location at any one time, unless otherwise permitted by the Clerk. Scrutineers shall not interfere with the administration of the election and shall comply with all directions issued by election personnel.

4. ROLE AND CONDUCT AT HELP CENTRES

- a) In an election conducted using an Alternative Voting Method, scrutineers are entitled to observe the general conduct of the voting process at Help Centres. Scrutineers may observe the operation of voting access terminals and the interaction between electors and election personnel, provided that such observation does not compromise the secrecy of the vote.
- b) Scrutineers shall not approach voting terminals while an elector is casting a ballot, shall not observe ballot selections, shall not request or record elector PINs or credentials, and shall not interfere with or attempt to influence an elector.
- c) Where an elector requests assistance in casting their ballot, scrutineers shall maintain a reasonable distance sufficient to preserve ballot secrecy.

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- a) In an election conducted using certified electronic voting equipment, scrutineers are not entitled to examine individual ballots, object to ballots during tabulation, or interfere with the electronic counting process.
- b) The vote totals produced by the certified electronic AVM and accepted by the Clerk shall constitute the official results, subject only to recount in accordance with the *Recount Procedure ME-2026-03*.
- c) Upon request, and where practicable, Election Officials may provide candidates or scrutineers with a copy of the unofficial results at the conclusion of Voting Day.

6. OBJECTIONS TO BALLOTS

- a) In an election conducted using an Alternative Voting Method and certified electronic vote counting, no scrutineer is entitled to object to, examine, or challenge an individual ballot during the voting period, tabulation, or reporting of results. Any concern raised by a scrutineer respecting the conduct of the voting process shall be directed to the Clerk or designate, who may record the concern as an election incident or procedural note, but no ballot shall be separately reviewed, rejected, or marked as disputed on that basis. For greater certainty, any challenge to the validity of the election result or counting process must proceed only in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, including the recount and court application provisions.

7. OBJECTIONS TO ELECTORS

- a) Where a scrutineer questions an elector's qualification at a Voter Help Centre, the matter shall be addressed in accordance with *ME-2026-07 (Voter Assistance Services Procedure – Objections to Elector Qualification)*.
- b) For greater certainty, objections to elector qualification shall not be entertained during electronic voting conducted remotely through the Alternative Voting Method.

8. CONDUCT AND REMOVAL

- a) Scrutineers shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. The Clerk or designate may require any scrutineer to leave a Help Centre or election administration location where the scrutineer contravenes the Act, these Procedures, or disrupts the orderly conduct of the election.
- b) Removal of a scrutineer shall be documented.

9. RECOUNT

- a) Scrutineers are entitled to attend and observe any recount conducted pursuant to *ME-2026-03* and in accordance with the Act.