



**Renfrew**  
INC • 1858  
Bridging Charm and Convenience

# Elections Procedural Manual



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## Statement of Commitment

The Town of Renfrew is committed to conducting municipal and school board elections that are fair, accessible, transparent, and administered in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and all applicable legislation.

The Clerk, acting as Returning Officer, is responsible for the independent, impartial, and professional administration of the election. In fulfilling this role, the Clerk is committed to upholding the integrity of the electoral process, maintaining public confidence, and ensuring that electors, candidates, and third-party advertisers are treated fairly, consistently, and respectfully.

The Town of Renfrew recognizes the importance of removing barriers to participation in the electoral process. Election services, voting methods, voting locations, and election information will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of electors and candidates, including those with disabilities, and supports equal access to the democratic process.

This Elections Procedural Manual reflects the Town's commitment to accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement. The procedures contained herein are intended to support the effective administration of the election while safeguarding the secrecy of the vote, the accuracy of results, and the overall integrity of the election process.

## Definitions

**Accessibility** - the provision of election services, voting methods, voting locations, and election information in a manner that enables electors and candidates with disabilities to participate in the election process independently, with dignity, integration, and equal opportunity, in accordance with section 12.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Act** - the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, S.O. 1996, c. 32, as amended.

**Advanced Voting Period** - the period established by the Clerk during which eligible electors may vote prior to Voting Day using one or more authorized voting methods, including internet voting and in-person voting.

**Alternative Voting Method** – a method of voting authorized by by-law under subsection 42(1) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* that does not require an elector to attend a Voting Location, including internet voting.



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**Automated Vote Tabulation System** - the system, including all components and sub-components, used in an election to tabulate and report voting results.

**Ballots** - a paper ballot or an electronic ballot image that lists all offices, candidates, by-laws, or questions for an election and provides a means for the elector to mark their vote; and, in the case of telephone voting, an audio set of instructions describing all available choices and the method for recording a vote.

**Ballot Box** - the sealed container into which voted paper ballots are deposited by the vote tabulator.

**Ballot Marking Pen** - the designated pen provided to an elector for marking a paper ballot.

**Cancelled Ballot** - a ballot that has been marked by an elector and:

- cannot be properly read by a tabulator,
- or has been inadvertently spoiled,
- and for which the elector has requested and received a replacement ballot from an Election Official.

**Candidate** - a person who has been nominated under section 33 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Certified Candidate** - a candidate whose nomination has been certified by the Clerk under section 35 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Clerk** - the Clerk of the Municipality, who is responsible for conducting the municipal election under the authority of the Act. For the purposes of this manual, the Clerk shall act as the Returning Officer. Any reference to a Clerk's designate means a person to whom the Clerk has delegated election duties in writing pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Compact Flash Card / Memory Card** - the pre-programmed memory device sealed within a vote tabulator that contains candidate and ballot information and stores voting results.

**Corporation** - a legal entity incorporated under the laws of Canada or a province that carries on business in Ontario and is eligible to register as a third-party advertiser under the Act. A sole proprietorship is not a corporation and is not eligible to register.

**Declined Ballot** - a ballot returned by an elector who formally declines to vote. A declined ballot is documented but is not counted as a vote cast.



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**Deputy Returning Officer** - a person appointed by the Clerk to whom specific election duties and powers are delegated under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Election Campaign Advertisement** – any advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic, or other medium that has the purpose of promoting or supporting the election of a candidate, and that is purchased by or under the direction of the candidate, as defined in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Election Help Centre (Help Centre)** - the designated municipal facility where electors may make additions, deletions, or corrections to the Voters' List and receive assistance with the election process. Where applicable, the Help Centre may provide access to internet voting during regular business hours as established by the Clerk.

**Election Official / Designated Election Official** - the Clerk or any person appointed in writing by the Clerk to carry out election duties under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. An Election Official may only perform duties assigned by the Clerk and must take the prescribed oath.

**Election Period** – the period beginning on May 1 in the year of a regular election and ending on the day the Clerk declares the official results of the election, unless otherwise provided for under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Elector** - a person who is qualified to vote in the election in accordance with section 17 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*

**Internet Voting Service Provider** – a qualified third-party vendor retained by the municipality and authorized by the Clerk to provide technology, software, and related services for the conduct of internet voting as part of the Voting System, in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, applicable by-laws, and procedures established by the Clerk.

**Internet Voting System** - the secure electronic system authorized by by-law and established by the Clerk that allows eligible electors to cast a ballot via the internet during the Voting Period.

**Nomination Day** – The final day of the nomination period for a regular election, with nominations closing at 2:00 p.m., in accordance with section 32 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. [August 21, 2026 for the 2026 Municipal Election]

**Normally Resident in Ontario** - the place in which an individual regularly returns if their presence is not continuous.



**Overvote** – a voting result where an elector selects more candidates or options for an office, by-law, or question than is permitted, resulting in a no vote being counted for that race.

**Owner or Tenant** - Has the same meaning as set out in section 1 of the Act, including a non-residential tenant, subject to the time-share restrictions specified in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Personal Identification Number (PIN)** - a unique multi-digit number assigned to an elector to provide secure access to the internet voting system.

**Preliminary List of Electors (PLE)** - the list of electors compiled by Elections Ontario and provided to the municipality prior to the election, as required by the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Proof of Identification** - proof of identity and residence as prescribed by Ontario Regulation 304/13 under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Recount** – the re-tabulation or re-counting of votes cast in an election or for a particular office, conducted in accordance with section 56 to 63 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, whether required by statute, ordered by a court, or conducted by the Clerk where authorized.

**Registered Third Party / Third Party Advertiser** - an individual, corporation, or trade union that meets the eligibility requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and whose registration has been certified by the Clerk.

**Restricted Period for Third Party Advertisements** - the period beginning on the first day an individual, corporation, or trade union is permitted to file a notice of registration and ending at the close of voting on Voting Day.

**Results Tape** - the printed record generated from a vote tabulator or voting system that shows the number of votes cast for each candidate, by-law, or question.

**Revision Period** – the period beginning on September 1 in the year of a regular election and ending at the close of voting on Voting Day, during which electors may apply to add, delete, or correct information on the Voters' List in accordance with sections 22 to 25 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.



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**Scrutineer** - an individual appointed in writing by a certified candidate or, in the case of a recount, by an elector, to observe voting or counting proceedings in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Security Key** - the electronic device used by an Election Official to access administrative functions of a vote tabulator.

**Third Party Advertisement** - an advertisement that promotes, supports, or opposes a candidate but does not include an advertisement by or under the direction of a candidate or an advertisement that incurs no expense, as defined by the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Time / Clock** - the official time as indicated by the National Research Council Canada Web Clock. In the event of a discrepancy, the Clerk's determination of official time is final.

**Town Hall Office** - the Town of Renfrew Administration Building located at 127 Raglan Street South, Renfrew, Ontario.

**Trade Union** - a trade union as defined in the *Labour Relations Act, 1995* or the *Canada Labour Code (Canada)*, including a central, regional, or district labour council in Ontario.

**Undervote** – a voting result where an elector submits a ballot without selecting a candidate or option for a particular office, by-law or question.

**Voter Information Letter (VIL)** - a letter or notice provided to an elector containing voting instructions, access credentials (including a PIN where applicable), and information on voting methods, locations, dates, and times.

**Voters' List** - the Preliminary List of Electors, as corrected by the Clerk under section 22 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Voting Assistance** – an assistance provided to an elector who requires help to vote, either by a friend of the elector or by an Election Official, in accordance with section 52 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Voting Day** - the final day for voting in an election, being Monday, October 26, 2026, with voting to close at 8:00 p.m. in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

**Voting Location** – a place established by the Clerk for the purpose of casting a ballot, including on Voting Day and during any advance voting period, and for any other election-related activities authorized by the Clerk under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.



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**Voting Period** - the period during which voting is open, commencing at the time established by the Clerk and ending at the close of voting on Voting Day.

**Voting Privacy Sleeve** - a folder used by an elector to conceal the face of a marked paper ballot while inserting it into a vote tabulator.

**Voting System** – collectively, all voting methods, technologies, equipment, software, procedures, and processes authorized by by-law and established by the Clerk for the conduct of voting in an election, including internet voting systems and vote-counting equipment.

**Vote Tabulator** - an electronic voting device that optically scans paper ballots and tabulates voting results.

**Zero Report** - the printed record generated from a vote tabulator or voting system prior to the opening of voting, indicating that no votes have been cast for any candidate, by-law, or question.

## Introduction

This Elections Procedural Manual has been prepared to guide the administration of the 2026 Municipal Election for the Town of Renfrew. It outlines the procedures, processes, and administrative practices established by the Clerk, acting as Returning Officer, to conduct the election in compliance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, its regulations, and other applicable legislation.

The purpose of this Manual is to provide a clear and consistent framework for the conduct of the election and to assist election officials, candidates, third party advertisers, and the public in understanding how the election will be administered. While the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* sets out the legislative requirements governing municipal elections, it does not prescribe every administrative detail. Accordingly, this Manual documents the procedures adopted by the Clerk under the authority of the Act to address matters not otherwise provided for and to support the orderly and efficient conduct of the election.

This Manual should be read in conjunction with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, its regulations, and any applicable municipal by-laws. In the event of a conflict between this Manual and the Act or its regulations, the Act and regulations shall prevail.

The Clerk retains the authority to provide for any matter or procedure not otherwise addressed in this Manual where, in the Clerk's opinion, it is necessary or desirable for the



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proper conduct of the election. Any such decisions or procedures shall be applied consistently and in a manner that upholds the principles of fairness, transparency, accessibility, and integrity.

This Manual may be amended from time to time to reflect legislative changes, operational requirements, or best practices. Where revisions are made, the most current version of the Manual will be made publicly available in accordance with established municipal practices.

## Application

### 1.0 Authority

1.1 These procedures and forms apply to an election conducted by the Clerk of the Town of Renfrew under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

1.2 Municipal elections shall be conducted in a manner that upholds the integrity of the democratic process and maintains public confidence. In administering the election, the Clerk shall be guided by the following seven core principles:

- the secrecy and confidentiality of the individual vote is paramount;
- the election shall be fair and non-biased;
- the election shall be accessible to all electors;
- the integrity of the election process shall be maintained throughout the election;
- there shall be certainty that the results of the election accurately reflect the votes cast;
- electors and candidates shall be treated fairly and consistently; and
- the election outcome shall be determined by counting all valid votes and rejecting invalid ballots in accordance with legislated rules, ensuring that the will of the majority governs.

1.3 The Clerk is responsible for conducting the election, including responsibility for:

- a) preparing for the election;
- b) preparing for and conducting any recount;
- c) maintaining peace and order in connection with the election; and
- d) in a regular election, preparing and submitting the accessibility plan and post-election accessibility report.



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- 1.4 The Clerk may provide for any matter or procedure that is not otherwise provided for in an Act or regulation and that, in the Clerk's opinion, is necessary or desirable for conducting the election.
  - 1.5 The Clerk has the authority to establish forms, including forms of oaths and statutory declarations, and to require their use.
  - 1.6 Any unforeseen circumstances not otherwise dealt with in these procedures shall be recorded and addressed through an addendum, which shall form part of these procedures upon being signed by the Clerk.
  - 1.7 With respect to an election held for offices of a municipal council and an English-language public or separate school board, notices, forms, and other information required under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* shall be made available in English only.
  - 1.8 Pursuant to section 9.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, notices, forms, and other information required under the Act for the election of members of a French-language district school board shall be made available in both English and French.

## 2.0 Nominations

### 2.1 Nomination Papers

- Public notice of the nomination period shall be provided in at least one (1) conspicuous place in the municipality and on the municipal website on or before May 1 of an election year.
- The prescribed Nomination Paper (Form 1) and Endorsement of Nomination (Form 2), where applicable, shall be made available online and for in-person pick-up at the Town Hall Office on or before May 1, as determined by the Clerk, and shall remain available until 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day in a regular election year.
- Nomination papers shall be filed in person by the candidate or by an agent, together with the prescribed declaration. Where required under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, a nomination must be endorsed by at least twenty-five (25) persons who are eligible to vote in the election for the office. Endorsements are required only for offices with four thousand (4,000) or more eligible electors.  
*Note: School board trustee do not have to submit endorsements signatures.*



- The prescribed nomination filing fee shall be paid at the time of filing and is set at \$200.00 for the office of Head of Council and \$100.00 for all other offices. Payment shall be made by cash, debit card, certified cheque, or money order payable to the Corporation of the Town of Renfrew, together with proof of identification.
- Nomination papers transmitted by fax, email, or any other electronic means shall not be accepted. Original signatures are required in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- Nomination papers for school board trustee offices must be obtained from and filed with the designated municipal clerk as follows:
  - English Public School Board Trustee – Town of Renfrew
  - English Separate School Board Trustee – Town of Renfrew
  - French Public School Board Trustee – Town of Petawawa
  - French Separate School Board Trustee – Town of Petawawa
- Nomination filings shall be completed by appointment throughout the nomination period. If a person is present at the Town Hall Office prior to 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day but has not yet completed the filing of their nomination papers, they shall be permitted to do so before the close of nominations, provided all required documentation is submitted. No extensions beyond 2:00 p.m. shall be permitted.
- A Commissioner of Oaths for the Town of Renfrew shall administer the required oaths on the Nomination Paper and Declaration of Qualifications. Commissioning of nomination documents shall be completed by appointment. The date and time of filing shall be recorded by the Election Official at the time the nomination is received.

## 2.2 Estimated Maximum Campaign Expenses

- At the time a Nomination Paper is filed, the Clerk shall provide the candidate or their agent with a preliminary certificate setting out the estimated maximum campaign expenses permitted for the office, calculated in accordance with section 33.0.1(1) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and Ontario Regulation 101/97. This preliminary estimate is based on the number of electors used for the previous regular election and is subject to adjustment.
- For candidates for municipal council offices, the Clerk shall also provide a preliminary estimate of the maximum permitted combined contributions by the candidate and the candidate's spouse, calculated in accordance with sections



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33.0.2 and 88.9.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. This provision does not apply to candidates for school board trustee offices.

- On or before the date prescribed by the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Clerk shall provide each certified candidate with a final certificate of maximum permitted campaign expenses and, where applicable, maximum contributions to the candidate's own campaign. The final calculation shall be based on the verified number of electors and shall supersede the preliminary estimate. The Clerk's final calculation is final.
- The Clerk shall provide a Notice of Penalties to each candidate or their agent before Voting Day, in accordance with section 33.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. As a matter of administrative practice, the Notice of Penalties shall be provided at the time the Nomination Paper is filed.

## 2.3 Unofficial List of Candidates

- The Clerk shall maintain and make available an unofficial list of candidates on the municipal website. The unofficial list shall be updated as nomination papers are received and shall clearly indicate that the information is "UNOFFICIAL."
- The unofficial list may distinguish between nominations that have been received and nominations that have been certified in accordance with section 35 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

## 2.4 Certification of Nomination Papers

- The Clerk shall review each nomination received to determine whether the candidate is qualified and whether the nomination complies with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- Nomination papers that meet the requirements of the Act may be certified by the Clerk at any time during the nomination period. All nominations shall be certified or rejected no later than 4:00 p.m. on the day following Nomination Day.

## 2.5 Rejection of Nomination Paper

- If the Clerk determines that a candidate is not qualified to be nominated, or that a nomination does not comply with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Clerk shall reject the nomination. The Clerk's decision is final.
- The Clerk shall promptly notify the person whose nomination has been rejected. Notification may include a telephone call as a courtesy; however, written notice shall be provided and shall constitute the official notice of rejection.



## 2.6 Withdrawal of Nomination Papers

- A person who has been nominated may withdraw their nomination only by filing a written Withdrawal of Nomination, in the prescribed form, in person with the Clerk, no later than 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day, in accordance with section 36 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- A nomination may be withdrawn only for the office for which the candidate was nominated.
- A nomination cannot be transferred to another office. A candidate who wishes to run for a different office must withdraw their existing nomination and file a new Nomination Paper for the desired office before the close of nominations.
- Upon receipt of a valid withdrawal, the Clerk shall update the unofficial list of candidates to reflect the withdrawal.

## 2.7 Official List of Candidates

The final list of certified candidates shall be posted on the municipal website and at the Town Hall Office no later than 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026, following the certification of nominations in accordance with section 35 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

## 2.8 Declaration of Election

- If, following the certification of nominations at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026, the number of certified candidates for an office exceeds the number of persons to be elected to that office, the Clerk shall declare that an election shall be held for that office, in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- Where an election is to be held, the Clerk shall give notice to electors of the election, including, but not limited to:
  - the location of voting places;
  - the dates and times voting places will be open;
  - the voting period and voting methods available, including internet voting where authorized;
  - the manner in which electors may obtain assistance or information, including the location and hours of operation of any Election Help Centre.
  - The Clerk shall post the notice on the municipal website, applicable Town social media page(s) and in a publication having general circulation in the municipality.



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## 2.9 Acclamations

If, following the certification of nominations at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026, the number of certified candidates for an office is equal to or fewer than the number of persons to be elected to that office, the Clerk shall declare the candidate(s) elected by acclamation. No election shall be held for that office. Notice of the acclamation shall be posted on the municipal website and at the Municipal Office.

## 2.10 Filling Vacancies After Nomination or Election

If an office of the Municipal Council remains vacant following the declaration of candidates elected by acclamation or after the election, the vacancy shall be addressed in accordance with the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as applicable.

## 2.11 Death or Ineligibility of a Candidate

- If a certified candidate dies or becomes ineligible before the close of voting, and the result would not be an acclamation, the candidate's name shall be omitted from the ballot. If ballots have already been prepared, the Clerk shall post notice of the death or ineligibility in a conspicuous place in every voting place and help centre, and the election shall proceed as though the candidate had not been nominated.
- If the death or ineligibility of a certified candidate before the close of voting would result in an acclamation for an office, the election for that office is void and a by-election shall be held. The 60-day period for holding the by-election shall commence on the date of death or ineligibility.

## 2.12 Final Calculation of Campaign Expenses

The Clerk shall provide each certified candidate with a final certificate of the maximum permitted campaign expenses for the office for which they are nominated, calculated in accordance with section 88.20 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and Ontario Regulation 101/97. The final certificate shall be provided on or before September 30, 2026.



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For the purposes of the final calculation, the number of electors shall be the greater of:

- the number of electors on the voters' list from the previous regular election as it existed on September 15 of that year, adjusted for changes approved under sections 24 and 25 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*; or
- the number of electors on the voters' list for the current election as it exists on September 15 of the election year, adjusted for changes approved under sections 24 and 25 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

A candidate's expenses incurred for the purpose of holding parties or making other expressions of appreciation after the close of voting shall not exceed the amount calculated in accordance with the prescribed formula under Ontario Regulation 101/97.

The Clerk's final calculation of campaign expense limits is final and shall be made in accordance with Ontario Regulation 101/97.

## 3.0 Voters' List

### 3.1 Voter Qualifications

A person is entitled to be an elector at an election held in a local municipality if on Voting Day they are:

- a Canadian citizen;
- at least 18 years old;
- resident in the local municipality or is the Owner or Tenant of land in the local municipality, or the spouse of such Owner or Tenant;
- not prohibited from voting under subsection 17(3) of the Act or otherwise by law.

### 3.2 Persons Prohibited from Voting

The following are prohibited from voting:

- a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution
- a Corporation
- a person acting as executor or trustee or in any other representative capacity
- a person who was convicted of a corrupt practice described in subsection 90(3) if Voting Day in the current election is less than five years after Voting Day in the election in respect of which they were convicted.



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### 3.3 Preliminary List of Electors (PLE)

- The Preliminary List of Electors supplied by Elections Ontario, derived from the Permanent Register of Electors for Ontario, shall be delivered to the Clerk in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. The list shall contain the name and address of each person entitled to be an elector, together with any additional information required to determine the offices for which each elector is eligible to vote, including school support information provided by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation.
- The Clerk shall, to the extent permitted by law, ensure that an elector's name appears on the Preliminary List of Electors for a local municipality only once.
- Where an elector qualifies at more than one location in the municipality, the elector may vote only once for each office, and the qualifying address for voting purposes shall be the elector's place of residence.
- An elector's name may appear on the voters' list of more than one municipality, and the elector may be entitled to vote in each municipality, subject to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- Votes for school board trustee offices shall be cast in the municipality where the elector resides.

### 3.4 Correction of Errors

- Prior to the certification of the voters' list, the Clerk shall correct any obvious errors in the Preliminary List of Electors and notify Elections Ontario through the prescribed process, in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- The Clerk may use any information in the municipality's custody or control when correcting obvious errors, as permitted under subsections 22(2) and (3) of the Act.

### 3.5 Certification of Voters' List

- The corrected Preliminary List of Electors becomes the Voters' List once it is reproduced and certified by the Clerk on or before September 1, 2026.
- Notice of the availability of the Voters' List shall be provided on the municipal website and at the municipal office.



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### 3.6 Requests for Copies of the Voters' List

Upon written request, and not earlier than September 1 of the election year, the Clerk shall provide a certified candidate with a copy of the Voters' List containing the names of electors entitled to vote for that office. Each candidate shall sign a declaration regarding the proper use of the Voters' List in accordance with applicable policy.

### 3.7 Amendments to the Voters' List

- An elector may apply to add, remove, or amend their information on the Voters' List using the prescribed form and providing proof of identification.
- Prior to August 13, 2026, electors are encouraged to confirm or update their information directly with Elections Ontario through the voter registration portal.
- During the revision period, which begins on or before September 1, 2026 and ends at the close of voting on Voting Day, applications for revisions shall be made to the Clerk in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

### 3.8 Removal of a Deceased Person's Name

- The Clerk may remove a person's name from the Voters' List up to the close of voting on Voting Day if satisfied that the person has died.
- An application may be made requesting the removal of a deceased person's name from the Voters' List during the revision period.

### 3.9 Interim List of Changes

During the revision period, the Clerk shall prepare and distribute Interim Lists of Changes to the Voters' List to each person entitled to receive a copy of the Voters' List and to each certified candidate, as required under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

### 3.10 Certification of the Voters' List

The Clerk shall compile all approved changes to the Voters' List and certify the Voters' List for use at each voting place.

### 3.11 Final List of Changes

- Following Voting Day, the Clerk shall prepare the Final List of Changes to the Voters' List and provide the required information to Elections Ontario in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.



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## 4.0 Candidate Campaigning

### 4.1 Campaign Advertising

- A candidate shall not incur campaign expenses, including expenses related to campaign advertising, until their Nomination Papers have been filed in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- Election signs, including road signs, shall comply with the Town of Renfrew's Sign By-law, as amended from time to time, and with any applicable policies, guidelines, or requirements of the County of Renfrew or the Ministry of Transportation, depending on the road authority having jurisdiction.
- All election campaign advertisements purchased by or under the direction of a candidate shall include the mandatory identification information required by section 88.3 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, including the name of the candidate.

### 4.2 Municipal Authority to Remove Advertisements

- If the municipality is satisfied that there has been a contravention of section 88.3 (candidate election campaign advertisements), section 88.4 (third party advertisements), or section 88.5 (mandatory information in third party advertisements) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the municipality may require the removal of the advertisement or the discontinuance of the advertising.
- The municipality may require removal by a person whom the municipality reasonably believes contravened the Act, caused or permitted the contravention, or by the owner or tenant of the land on which the advertisement appears, in accordance with section 88.7 of the Act and any applicable municipal by-laws.

## 5.0 Use of Municipal and Local Board Resources During an Election Period

The use of municipal and local board resources during an election period shall be governed by the Town of Renfrew's *Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Period Policy*, as adopted and amended by Council, in accordance with section 88.18 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. The policy applies to members of Council, candidates, staff, and any person acting on their behalf.



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## 6.0 Third Party Advertisers

### 6.1 Notice of Registration

- A Notice of Registration for Third Party Advertising shall be filed with the Clerk from May 1, 2026 to Friday, October 23, 2026, during regular office hours, by appointment and in person, by the individual, or by a representative of the corporation or trade union, together with proof of identification, in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- Notices of Registration transmitted by fax, email, or other electronic means shall not be accepted, as original signatures and a statutory declaration are required.
- The Clerk shall administer the required declaration on the prescribed Notice of Registration for Third Party Advertising and shall record the date and time of filing.
- Upon registration, the Clerk shall provide the registered third party with a preliminary estimate of the maximum permitted third party advertising expenses, calculated in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and Ontario Regulation 101/97. The Clerk's calculation is final.
- At the time a Notice of Registration is filed, the Clerk shall provide the registered third party with a Notice of Penalties, in accordance with section 88.9 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- A list of registered third parties shall be posted on the municipal website and at the municipal office.
- The Clerk shall review each Notice of Registration to determine whether the registrant is qualified and whether the notice complies with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. Where satisfied, the Clerk shall certify the registration. Where not satisfied, the Clerk shall reject the notice. The Clerk's decision is final.
- On or before September 30, 2026, the Clerk shall provide each registered third party with a final certificate of the maximum permitted third party advertising expenses, calculated using the number of eligible electors from the voters' list provided by Elections Ontario, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 101/97. The Clerk's calculation is final.
- Expenses incurred by a registered third party for the holding of parties or making other expressions of appreciation after the close of voting shall not exceed the amount calculated in accordance with the prescribed formula under Ontario Regulation 101/97.



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## 6.2 Restricted Period for Third Party Advertising

Third party advertisements may only appear during the restricted period beginning on May 1, 2026 and ending at the close of voting on Voting Day, in accordance with section 88.4 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

## 7.0 Scrutineers and Candidates at Voting Locations

7.1 A Candidate may appoint Scrutineers to represent them at a Voting Location during a voting period, including the review of the Zero Report, the counting, tabulation and transmission of voting results, and during any recount conducted by the Returning Officer.

7.2 The appointment of a Scrutineer shall be made using the prescribed *Appointment of Scrutineer by Candidate* form.

- the form must be signed by the Candidate in person at the Town Hall Municipal Office.
- the Candidate shall present proof of identification when signing the form.
- the Candidate shall provide the signed appointment form to their Scrutineer.

7.3 Before being admitted to a Voting Location, a Scrutineer shall:

- present the completed *Appointment of Scrutineer by Candidate* form;
- present proof of personal identification; and
- take an Oral Oath of Secrecy administered by an Election Official.

A Candidate who enters a Voting Location is deemed to be a Scrutineer for the purposes of this by-law.

7.4 Only one Scrutineer per Candidate, or the Candidate themselves, may be present at a Voting Location at any one time during:

- voting;
- the Zero Report or “0” count audit;
- the counting, tabulation or transmission of voting results; and
- any recount ordered or conducted by the Returning Officer.

7.5 Scrutineers and Candidates are entitled to:

- enter the Voting Location up to fifteen (15) minutes before the opening of voting to inspect the ballot box, ballots, and all other papers, forms and



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documents relating to the vote, provided such inspection does not delay the opening of the Voting Location;

- place their own seal on the ballot box immediately before the opening of voting, and immediately after the close of voting on each day of advance voting, provided the seal contains no writing or markings that could be considered election campaigning;
- observe the entry of ballots into the vote tabulating equipment;
- object to a ballot or to the counting of votes in a ballot;
- sign the Statement of Results prepared by the Returning Officer; and
- periodically examine the Voters' List to determine who has voted or to count how many electors have voted, provided they do not interfere with the conduct of voting.

7.6 Scrutineers and Candidates shall not:

- position themselves close enough to the vote tabulating equipment to see how an elector has marked their ballot;
- campaign or display election material of any kind, including buttons, pins, or apparel, within a Voting Location;
- attempt, directly or indirectly, to influence or interfere with how an elector votes;
- compromise or attempt to compromise the secrecy of voting;
- obtain or attempt to obtain information about how an elector intends to vote or has voted;
- communicate any information obtained at a Voting Location about how an elector intends to vote or has voted; or
- park or leave a vehicle displaying campaign material within the boundaries of the Voting Location, including the parking lot.

7.7 Election Officials are responsible for the conduct and control of the Voting Location, and no Scrutineer or Candidate has the right to interfere with Election Officials in the discharge of their duties. The following rules apply at all Voting Locations:

- Any person creating a disturbance at a Voting Location may be removed by an Election Official.
- Scrutineers or Candidates wishing to discuss matters with another Scrutineer or Candidate shall leave the Voting Location to do so.



- No campaign material or literature of any nature shall be displayed within a Voting Location. The boundaries of the Voting Location include the entire property on which the Voting Location is situated.

7.7.1 The following provisions govern the observation of voting procedures and recounts by Scrutineers and Candidates:

- Scrutineers and Candidates wishing to observe the transmission of voting results must be present at the Voting Location prior to its closing at 8:00 p.m. No person shall be admitted after that time. The following provisions shall apply:
- Scrutineers and Candidates wishing to observe the counting of advance votes or any recount shall be present at the location designated by the Returning Officer prior to 8:00 p.m. on Voting Day, unless otherwise directed by the Returning Officer.
- Where a recount is conducted, an elector or Candidate may appoint one Scrutineer for each recount station established by the Returning Officer.
- The total number of votes cast for each Candidate as counted by the vote tabulating equipment and online voting platform are final. The Returning Officer or their delegate is not required to conduct a second recount.

## 8.0 Election Personnel

- 8.1 The Clerk shall appoint a Deputy Returning Officer for each Voting Location and may appoint such other Election Officials as the Clerk considers necessary for the conduct of the election, including advance voting, alternative voting methods, and any recount.
- 8.2 The Clerk may delegate in writing to a Deputy Returning Officer or other Election Official any of the Clerk's powers or duties under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as the Clerk considers necessary. The Clerk may continue to exercise any delegated power or duty despite the delegation.
- 8.3 The Clerk may designate one or more qualified persons to act in the Clerk's place for the purpose of administering election matters in the event the Clerk is unavailable.
- 8.4 The Clerk shall complete and sign the prescribed Oath of Returning Officer prior to carrying out any duties under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.



8.5 All other Election Officials shall complete and sign the prescribed Appointment and Preliminary Oath or Affirmation for Election Officials prior to performing any election duties.

8.6 The Clerk may establish and implement written procedures, manuals, training materials, and role descriptions governing the appointment, duties, conduct, training, and supervision of Election Officials, provided such procedures are consistent with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and this Elections Procedural Manual.

## 9.0 Proxy Voting

9.1 Pursuant to subsection 42(1)(b) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Town has authorized the use of an alternative voting method that does not require an elector to attend a Voting Location.

In accordance with subsection 42(5) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the provisions respecting the appointment of voting proxies under section 44 of the Act do not apply, and voting by proxy shall not be permitted for the election.

## 10.0 Notice of Results

10.1 A Candidate or their appointed Scrutineer may attend and observe the closing of the voting system on Voting Day at Town Hall Municipal Office, subject to the direction and control of the Clerk.

- Candidates and Scrutineers may arrive no earlier than 7:45 p.m
- Electronic devices are not permitted.
- Proof of identification may be required by the Returning Officer.

10.2 Anyone who is creating a disturbance will be removed as directed by the Clerk.

10.3 After the results report has been compiled, those present including the Clerk, Election Officials, Candidates or their Scrutineers shall sign the report.

10.4 The Clerk shall make the unofficial results for each Candidate available as soon as practicable after 8:15 p.m. on Voting Day at the myFM Centre, located at 1 Ma-te-way Drive, Renfrew.

- The Clerk shall also post the same unofficial results on the municipality's website.



- Unofficial results are provided for information purposes only and do not constitute the official declaration of the election.

10.5 The Clerk shall forward the results for school board offices to the Clerk responsible for conducting the school board election as soon as practicable following the close of all voting.

10.6 As soon as practicable after Voting Day, the Clerk shall declare the official results of the election and post the results at the Town Hall Office and on the municipality's website and Town led media platforms.

The declaration by the Clerk constitutes the official results of the election, subject only to recounts or court proceedings under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

10.7 As soon as practicable after Voting Day, the Clerk shall make the following information available to the public at no charge, either on the municipality's website or in another electronic format:

- the number of votes cast for each Candidate;
- the number of declined ballots; and
- the number of votes for the affirmative or negative on a by-law or question.

10.8 Where vote tabulating equipment is used, ballots are not manually reviewed and therefore are not "rejected."

The vote tabulating equipment may record:

- races left blank (under-votes); and
- races where more than one voting target was selected (over-votes).
- The Clerk shall report the number of under-votes and over-votes for each race.

10.9 Declined ballots are processed by the Designated Election Official issuing the ballot and are not inserted into the vote tabulator or ballot box.

The Clerk shall report the number of declined ballots through a manual process that is separate from the results produced by the automated vote tabulation system.



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## 11.0 Recount

### 11.1 Manner in Which a Recount is Conducted

- A recount shall be conducted in the same manner as the original count, whether by vote-counting equipment, an internet voting system, or a combination of methods, unless ordered otherwise by a judge.
- Where there is a tied vote for an office and both or all Candidates cannot be declared elected, the Clerk shall conduct a recount in accordance with section 56 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- A recount may be conducted where required or authorized under sections 57, 58 or 59 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, by resolution of Council or a school board, by order of the Minister, or by order of the Superior Court of Justice.
- The Clerk shall conduct all recounts for elections for which the Clerk is responsible, except for recounts conducted by the Superior Court of Justice.
- The Clerk shall give notice of the recount to the persons and bodies required under subsection 60(2) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and Ontario Regulation 101/97.
- The persons entitled to be present at a recount are those set out in section 61 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

### 11.2 Recount Procedure

The Clerk may establish administrative procedures, guidelines, or instructions to support the conduct of a recount, provided that such procedures are consistent with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and do not conflict with this manual or any order of a judge.

### 11.3 Declaration of Results Following a Recount

- Unless an application has been made for a judicial recount, the Clerk shall declare the results of the recount and the successful Candidate(s) elected in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- Where an application for a judicial recount has been made, the Clerk shall act in accordance with the direction of the Superior Court of Justice and the applicable provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.



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## 12.0 Campaign Financial Statements and Compliance

### 12.1 Filing of Financial Statements

- Every Candidate and Third-Party Advertiser shall file the prescribed *Financial Statement – Auditor’s Report*, if applicable, with the Clerk in accordance with the requirements and timelines set out in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- Financial statement forms shall be provided to Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers at the time of nomination or registration, and additional guidance materials may be made available by the Clerk.
- Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers are responsible for ensuring that all information contained in their financial statements is complete, accurate, and filed on time, in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- The Clerk shall provide notice to Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers of filing requirements, entitlement to a refund of the nomination filing fee, and applicable penalties, as required by the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

### 12.2 Default and Public Disclosure

- Where a Candidate or Third-Party Advertiser fails to file a required financial statement by the prescribed deadline, the Clerk shall take the actions required under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, including reporting the default to the appropriate Council or local board.
- The Clerk shall make available to the public the name of any Candidate or Third-Party Advertiser in default and a description of the nature of the default, in accordance with the Act.
- The Clerk shall make available to the public, in the manner required by the Act, a report identifying Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers and indicating compliance with financial reporting requirements.
- A Candidate is entitled to receive a refund of the nomination filing fee only if the financial statement is filed in accordance with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

### 12.3 Review of Contributions

- The Clerk shall review financial statements to determine whether any contributor appears to have exceeded the contribution limits established under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.



- Where the Clerk identifies an apparent contravention of contribution limits, the Clerk shall prepare and forward the required report(s) to the Compliance Audit Committee in accordance with the Act.
- The Compliance Audit Committee shall deal with any reports referred to it in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

## 12.4 Compliance Audit Applications

- An elector who is entitled to vote in an election may apply for a compliance audit of a Candidate's or Third-Party Advertiser's campaign finances in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- Upon receipt of a compliance audit application, the Clerk shall forward the application to the Compliance Audit Committee in accordance with the Act.

## 13.0 Accessibility

13.1 The Clerk shall have regard to the needs of electors and Candidates with disabilities and shall ensure that election services are provided in a manner that is accessible and consistent with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

13.2 The Clerk shall prepare and maintain an Election Accessibility Plan that identifies, removes, and prevents barriers that affect electors and Candidates with disabilities.

The Election Accessibility Plan shall:

- be made available to the public prior to Voting Day in a regular election; and
- guide the delivery of accessible election services, voting locations, and supports.

13.3 In establishing the locations of a Voting Location or Help Centre, the Clerk shall ensure that they are accessible to electors with disabilities, in accordance with the Election Accessibility Plan.

Election Officials shall provide assistance to electors with disabilities in a manner consistent with the Act and the Election Accessibility Plan, including attending to an elector anywhere within the area designated for voting where required.

13.4 An elector who requires assistance to vote may receive assistance in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, including:

- a) assistance provided by an Election Official, subject to the elector taking the prescribed oral oath; or



b) assistance provided by a friend chosen by the elector, subject to the prescribed oral oath and the restrictions set out in the Act.

Candidates and Scrutineers shall not act as a friend of an elector.

Where an elector requires an interpreter, the interpreter shall take the prescribed oral oath and translate the oaths and any lawful questions put to the elector.

13.5 Within the timeframe prescribed by the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Clerk shall prepare a report on the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affected electors and Candidates with disabilities and shall make the report available to the public.

## 14.0 Emergencies

14.1 If the Clerk is of the opinion that circumstances have arisen that are likely to prevent the election from being conducted in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Clerk may declare an emergency.

14.2 Upon declaring an emergency, the Clerk may make such arrangements as the Clerk considers advisable for the conduct of the election. Any arrangements made by the Clerk, if they are consistent with the principles of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, prevail over anything in the Act and the regulations made under it.

14.3 An emergency continues until the Clerk declares that it has ended. If made in good faith, the Clerk's declaration of emergency and any arrangements made shall not be reviewed or set aside on account of unreasonableness or supposed unreasonableness.

14.4 The Clerk shall, to the best of their ability, provide notice of the declaration of an emergency and any arrangements made in response to the emergency, in a manner the Clerk considers appropriate.

## 15.0 Internet and Use of Alternative Voting

### 15.1 Internet Voting

- Pursuant to subsection 42(1)(b) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, Renfrew Town Council passed By-law No. 97-2024 on November 12, 2024, authorizing the use of optical scan vote tabulators for the counting of votes, the use of internet voting as an alternative voting method, and the conduct of advance voting for the 2026 Municipal Election.



- The voting period shall provide for internet voting in advance of Voting Day, commencing Tuesday, October 13, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. and concluding on Monday, October 26, 2026 at 8:00 p.m., or such other dates and times as may be authorized in accordance with the applicable by-law and procedures established by the Clerk.
- The Town shall utilize an internet voting service provider retained through a Joint RFP process and authorized by the Clerk for the conduct of internet voting. For the 2026 Municipal Election, the service provider is Voatz Canada Ltd.

## 15.2 System Integrity

- The integrity of the voting process, including the use of internet voting and vote-counting equipment, is the responsibility of the Clerk and shall be maintained in accordance with the principles of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
- The Clerk shall ensure that reasonable and appropriate safeguards are in place to protect the security, confidentiality, accuracy, and integrity of the voting system, including elector authentication and vote tabulation.
- The Clerk shall provide opportunities, in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, for eligible electors to be added to or to amend the Voters' List up to and including Voting Day.
- Prior to the commencement of the Voting Period, the Clerk shall ensure that the voting system is tested and verified in accordance with applicable procedures.
- Candidates and Scrutineers may observe elements of the voting process, including system opening and closing, in accordance with this manual and procedures established by the Clerk.

## 15.3 Preparation of Voter Information Letters

- Voter Information Letters shall be prepared using the Voters' List, as amended, and issued to eligible electors in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and procedures established by the Clerk.
- Voter Information Letters are intended to provide electors with the information necessary to participate in the authorized voting methods, including internet voting, and to access voter assistance services where required.
- An elector shall not give their Voter Information Letter or voter credentials to another person for the purpose of voting. The use or attempted use of another



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person's voter credentials constitutes an offence under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and is subject to the penalties set out in the Act.

#### 15.4 Internet Voting Process

- Internet voting shall be conducted during the authorized Voting Period, as established by the Clerk in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.
- An eligible elector may cast one ballot for each race or question for which they are entitled to vote, using the authorized voting system.
- An elector shall be required to authenticate their eligibility prior to voting, in accordance with procedures established by the Clerk.
- Once an elector has successfully cast a ballot, the ballot is final and the elector shall not be permitted to vote again by any voting method.
- Information respecting which electors have voted shall be made available to the Clerk for election administration purposes. The secrecy of the vote shall be maintained, and it shall not be possible to determine how an elector has voted.
- Candidates may receive strike-off information identifying electors who have voted, in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and procedures established by the Clerk.

#### 15.5 Voter Credential Issues

- An eligible elector who is unable to access the voting system or who has not received their Voter Information Letter may attend or contact the Clerk at Town Hall Office.
- Election Officials may investigate voter credential issues and, where appropriate, issue replacement voter credentials in accordance with procedures established by the Clerk.
- Replacement voter credentials shall only be issued upon satisfactory proof of identification and verification of the elector's eligibility and shall not be issued over the telephone.
- Where replacement voter credentials are issued, appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that any previously issued credentials are rendered unusable.
- An elector may only vote once. The misuse, duplication, or improper use of voter credentials constitutes an offence under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and may be subject to investigation and penalties under the Act.



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## 16.0 Vote-Counting Equipment

### 16.1 Ballots

- Ballots shall be designed in accordance with section 41 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 and shall be compatible with the vote-counting equipment authorized by Renfrew Town Council under By-Law No. 97-2024.
- Each ballot shall provide a clearly designated voting space for each Candidate, office, question, or by-law, as applicable.
- Instructions for marking the ballot shall be clearly indicated on the ballot.

### 16.2 Use of Vote-Counting Equipment

Vote-counting equipment authorized by Renfrew Town Council under By-law No. 97-2024 shall be used to count ballots in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and procedures established by the Clerk.

### 16.3 Programing, Testing, and Security

- The Clerk shall be responsible for the programming, testing, custody, and secure operation of vote-counting equipment.
- Prior to use, the vote-counting equipment shall be tested to verify accuracy, functionality, and system integrity, in accordance with procedures established by the Clerk.

### 16.4 Conduct of Voting Using Vote-Counting Equipment

- Ballots shall be processed using the vote-counting equipment in a manner that ensures:
  - the accuracy of the count,
  - the secrecy of the vote, and
  - the integrity of the voting process.
- Election Officials shall manage the operation of vote-counting equipment in accordance with training and procedures established by the Clerk.

### 16.5 Tabulation and Results

- Following the close of voting, the Clerk shall cause the vote-counting equipment to be closed, and results generated in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and applicable procedures.



## 17.0 Long-Term Care Facilities and Off-Site Accessible Voting

- The Clerk may establish a Voting Location within a long-term care facility, retirement home, institution, or other location to provide accessible voting opportunities for eligible electors.
- Where appropriate, voting within such facilities may be conducted on a mobile basis within the facility to accommodate electors with accessibility needs.
- In circumstances where voting is conducted outside of a traditional Voting Location or where vote-counting equipment is not used at the point of voting, a secured ballot box may be utilized for the collection of ballots.
- The handling, security, transportation, and custody of ballots cast at a long-term care facility, retirement home, institution, or other off-site accessible voting location shall be conducted in accordance with procedures established by the Clerk to ensure the integrity and secrecy of the vote.

## Revisions to the Elections Procedural Manual

This Elections Procedural Manual was made publicly available on May 1, 2026.

The manual may be revised from time to time to reflect changes in administration, best practices, or operational requirements.

Where revisions are made, the most current version of the Manual will be posted on the Town of Renfrew’s Elections website. Significant revisions will be identified in the revision history below.

### Revision History

Version	Date	Description of Revision
1.0	May 1, 2026	Initial public release of the Elections Procedural Manual