

Indigenous Elder and Youth Program

Information sheet

Introduction

This information sheet provides a high-level description of the Indigenous Elder and Youth Program (IEYP) for easy reference during the “3.7.2 Outreach and Continuous Engagement with Indigenous Communities” assignment. This information sheet will help guide ROs in their discussions with Indigenous communities and in their efforts to identify Elders and youth for the program. This is not a public-facing document; a flyer for the public is being created for that purpose. However, this document may be shared during meetings with Indigenous leaders.

Purpose of the IEYP

The IEYP is intended to make polling places more welcoming and to make voting easier for electors in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities by:

- removing barriers to registration and voting on polling day
- creating a comfortable setting through a familiar presence (i.e., members of the community)
- offering translation services in the language of the community, if the elector is not comfortable in French or English

Background

The IEYP has been in place since 1997 (formerly the Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program [AEYP]) and has been well received by Indigenous communities across Canada.

Under the IEYP, ROs should appoint an Elder and a youth to work at the polling place on polling days in any area where there is a First Nations reserve, settlement, or a community with a significant population of First Nations electors. The IEYP will benefit Inuit and communities. For the 45th general election, the IEYP program has been expanded to include advanced polling days.

The role

To be appointed as an Elder or a youth in the program, the person is **not** required to reside in the electoral district, nor required to be eligible to vote in it.

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On polling day, their role is to:

- split their shifts during the 12 hours of voting (usually the Elder takes the first shift)
- offer translation services to electors, if needed
- help explain to electors the voting process, including registration procedures
- answer electors' questions
- act as a liaison between poll workers and electors
- help with voting procedures, such as reading the ballot before it is handed to an elector

By law, the Elder and youth are **not** allowed to go behind the voting screen to help an elector mark their ballot. If an elector cannot mark the ballot because they are unable to read or because of a disability, the deputy returning officer (DRO) may assist them behind the voting screen.

Impartiality

The Elder and youth are **not** allowed to canvass for a political party or a candidate, or to try to influence electors. In addition, they must:

- take an oath before they begin work
- remain non-partisan throughout their duties
- agree to maintain the secrecy of the vote

Remuneration

Elders and youth who participate in the program shall be remunerated as Interpreters according to level 2 positions in the *Tariff of Fees – Reference Table* (EC 11795).