

March 2010

RULES FOR MEDIA IN POLLING PLACES

The *Elections Act* states in subsection 227(2):

“The chief electoral officer shall establish rules for representatives of the media to be present at a polling station.”

The following rules apply to media representatives who wish to film or photograph inside a polling place:

1. All media representatives will request in writing, **AND BEFORE POLLING DAY**, the chief electoral officer’s permission to enter any polling place. **Unauthorized entry to a polling place will not be permitted.**
 2. Photographing and filming will be permitted from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on polling day.
 3. Requests for photographs and filming during the advance poll must also be made in writing to the chief electoral officer.
 4. The chief electoral officer will authorize the polling places in which photographing and filming can take place.
 5. Photographs or filming of voters who are marking their ballot papers in polling booths are not permitted.
 6. Photographs or filming of voters who are being assisted by deputy returning officers to mark their ballot papers are not permitted.
 7. Permission to film or photograph the leaders of registered political parties or other candidates while they are voting should be obtained from the leaders or the candidates. The pictures must be taken during the times permitted by the chief electoral officer.
 8. Any person who accidentally observes for whom an elector has marked a ballot paper will not reveal that information. Section 341(1) of the *Elections Act* states: “Every candidate, election officer, agent or other person in attendance at a polling station shall maintain and aid in maintaining the secrecy of the voting...”
 9. Buttons, lapel pins, or material in support of candidates or registered political parties must be removed before entering the polling place. Subsection 222.1(a)(iii), (b) of the *Elections Act* states: “Everyone commits an offence who... uses, wears or displays a flag, ribbon, label, poster or badge in a polling station, if the item appears to support any candidate or the political or other opinions entertained or supposed to be entertained by a candidate; or (b) engages actively in the issue or promotion of political propaganda within 100 metres of a polling station.”
-