

# ELECTIONS SASKATCHEWAN



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## Field Leadership Team Newsfeed

### July 14, 2015: Issue One

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#### Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

I'm writing to all of you today regarding our new communication platform, the Field Leadership Team Newsfeed, or the Newsfeed for short. The purpose of the Newsfeed is to keep ESK's Field Leadership Team (FLT) up-to-date on matters pertaining to the upcoming 28th Provincial General Election.

The Newsfeed was designed as an efficient and practical communications vehicle, through which the FLT can receive important elections updates quickly. It will include training snippets, reminders of important tasks and dates, news updates, and information about other important topics.

For your convenience, the Newsfeed will be available in multiple formats. You've received this initial message by email, the content of which will also be available both in downloadable PDF format and on ESK's website. You can access both the PDF and website formats by [clicking here](#). I want to have a few different format options so you may view the Newsfeed's content in the manner that works best for you.

Thank you for all you are doing to make the upcoming provincial general election a success. As we get closer to election day there will be a significant amount of information that ESK's head office staff will need to share with the FLT. I am excited about this new communication vehicle, through which much of this information will be delivered.

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the Newsfeed, please send them to [news@elections.sk.ca](mailto:news@elections.sk.ca).

Sincerely,

Michael D. Boda, D.Phil., Ph.D.  
Chief Electoral Officer  
Province of Saskatchewan

## Schedule of Fees

The fees paid to all election workers are set in regulation. Making changes to regulations is a detailed process that takes many months to complete. ESK is pleased to announce that an updated Schedule of Fees was approved in June.

ESK considered a number of factors when proposing the Schedule of Fees. First, we reviewed fee rates set in other jurisdictions. Secondly, we identified economic changes such as cost of living increases since the last update. Thirdly, we examined rates for specific positions that have been traditionally hard to recruit.

ESK used the analysis to recommend proposed rates. The proposed rates were initially sent to the Ministry of Justice so that new regulations could be drafted. The draft regulations are submitted to Cabinet for their review. The law requires all information related to the Schedule of Fees proposal to be kept confidential until the amounts are officially approved by Cabinet. As you can appreciate, this process takes several months to complete.

We are pleased to inform you that the majority of the positions in the Schedule of Fees have increased by 8.4%. In addition, some roles had larger increases. For example, enumerators had their base pay increased from \$200 to \$350.

Returning Officers are to be paid \$500 for the first five polling divisions enumerated (Election Clerks – \$375) per the Schedule of Fees. These amounts were paid in June to all Returning Officers and Election Clerks who conducted a targeted enumeration. The Schedule of Fees also states that Returning Officers shall receive an additional \$200 for each polling division enumerated beyond the first five (Election Clerks – \$150). These additional amounts will be paid in a future payroll.

We are aware of the concerns raised with respect to Returning Officer and Election Clerk enumeration pay as set out in the Schedule of Fees. We hear your concerns. For your information, we have initiated new discussions with the Ministry of Justice regarding additional compensation beyond what is set in the Schedule of Fees for Returning Officers and Election Clerks with respect to enumeration. The amount of time it will take to make any required changes will depend on whether additional changes to the Schedule of Fees are required.

We will provide a further update to the field leadership team regarding enumeration compensation within the next month. Rest assured, we are working hard to try to ensure all workers receive a fair and appropriate compensation for helping to make this the best enumeration in history.

For further information about the Schedule of Fees, please contact Bonnie Schenher at (306) 787-0156, or by email at [bschenher@elections.sk.ca](mailto:bschenher@elections.sk.ca).

## Timing of the General Election

As you may be aware, Saskatchewan's 28th General Election is scheduled for Monday, November 2, 2015. This date will be delayed until Monday, April 4, 2016 in the event that Saskatchewan's writ period overlaps with the federal general election's writ period. This means that if the federal election proceeds on October 19, 2015 as planned, our election will be delayed. Recent local and national news coverage has made this delay seem inevitable, but until the federal writ drops, and we know for certain what the federal government's election schedule is, we must continue to work towards the November 2015 election date.

We are grateful to our Field Leadership Team for diligently completing and submitting their pre-writ assignments. The next step for the head office staff is to review the pre-writ assignments. Normally returning office space would be secured in July with the intent to open offices in September. However, renting office space starting in September would not be a responsible use of public funds if the election

is delayed until April 2016. Therefore, ESK has delayed the decision on rental agreements for the time being.

We do recognise, however, that there are constituencies that will have difficulty securing office space later rather than sooner. We will handle these sort of issues on a case-by-case basis, always with the goal to use public funds in a responsible manner.

If you have more questions regarding the pre-writ assignments, please contact Kathy Fiedelleck at (306) 551-7565, or by email at [kfiedelleck@elections.sk.ca](mailto:kfiedelleck@elections.sk.ca).

## Now Hiring: Deputy Supervisory Returning Officers

ESK is planning to hire Deputy Supervisory Returning Officers (DSRO) for each of the province's electoral zones. Under the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), the DSRO assists the Supervisory Returning Officer (SRO) on an as-needed basis.

In between electoral events, the DSRO may be assigned to assist with the recruitment and training of Returning Officers (RO) and Election Clerks (EC), the development of instructional manuals, review and re-design of election forms, review of election website material, and other tasks as needed. During an electoral event, the DSRO works to assist the SRO, but may also be dispatched to various constituencies to provide guidance and assist ROs and ECs with various issues that may arise. The role and responsibilities of the DSRO may change as ESK's needs change. We will notify the Field Leadership Team via the Newsfeed once more information is available.

## Accessibility Report

On July 8, 2015, Elections Saskatchewan released the third publication in the Chief Electoral Officer's Assessment Series, *Toward Improved Accessibility for Saskatchewan Voters*. Hardcopies were mailed to the members of the Field Leadership Team. The report is also available in several other convenient formats, which can be accessed by visiting [www.elections.sk.ca/accessibility](http://www.elections.sk.ca/accessibility).

This report's assessment includes:

- The proposed amendments to *The Election Act, 1996*, and the resulting legislative changes with the introduction of *The Election Amendment Act, 2014*;
- Details of Elections Saskatchewan's Electoral Accessibility Initiative that you participated in; and
- Elections Saskatchewan's Accessibility Implementation Plan for the 28th General Election.

Our goal at Elections Saskatchewan is to build an electoral process that provides voters in the province with a choice of services that are delivered in a modern, accessible, safe, secure, and transparent manner that protects the secrecy and integrity of the vote. This assessment outlines the actions taken to date and demonstrates our commitment to increasing accessibility, public awareness and knowledge of the electoral process.

If you have any questions regarding the accessibility report, please contact Tim Kydd at (306) 787-7355, or by email at [tkydd@elections.sk.ca](mailto:tkydd@elections.sk.ca).