



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

2024 TRANSITION GUIDE FOR MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SEEKING RE-ELECTION



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1. Message from the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

On behalf of the Legislative Assembly Administration, I wish to thank the Members who served in the 42nd Parliament of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia for your service and dedication to our province. It has been a pleasure for us all to be in your service and in the service of the institution.

This Guide is intended to assist **Members seeking re-election** in the 43rd provincial general election by consolidating key information and guidelines relating to the transition that will be triggered at dissolution. This Guide provides information at a high level and is intended to serve as a “frequently asked questions” document. More detailed information is available on the Members’ Guide to Policy and Resources website at <http://members.leg.bc.ca> and through the [Constituency Office Portal](#) and the [Client Care Portal](#).

To assist with the transition process, a series of guides are being issued to streamline information to assist Members and their staff as may be relevant to their circumstances. These are:

- ❖ Transition Guide for Members Seeking Re-election;
- ❖ Transition Guide for Members Not Seeking Re-election;
- ❖ Post-election Guide for Members Re-elected;
- ❖ Post-election Guide for Members Not Returning;
- ❖ Dissolution Guide for Caucuses.

For any assistance, Members are encouraged to connect with Client Care. The team will either look after the query or will connect Members and their staff with the appropriate support or services available through the Legislative Assembly Administration. Another key point of contact is the IT Service Desk for any queries relating to devices, equipment, and records management.

If Members have matters that they would like to discuss in confidence, they are invited to connect with the transition executive lead, Artour Sogomonian, Clerk Assistant, Parliamentary Services (Artour.Sogomonian@leg.bc.ca or 250-952-0615) or me (Kate.Ryan-Lloyd@leg.bc.ca or 250-356-2895). It would be our pleasure to assist you.

Kate Ryan-Lloyd
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

KEY CONTACTS

Client Care
ClientCare@leg.bc.ca | 250-356-9091

IT Service Desk
ServiceDesk@leg.bc.ca | 778-401-6323

2. 43rd Provincial General Election

It is anticipated that on September 21, 2024, the Lieutenant Governor, acting on the advice of the Premier, will dissolve the Legislative Assembly, pursuant to section 23 (1) of the *Constitution Act* (R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 66).

Pursuant to section 24 of the *Election Act* (R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 106), the Lieutenant Governor in Council is expected to direct the Chief Electoral Officer to issue writs of election for all electoral districts, set the date of issue for the writs of election (which must be the same for all writs), specify the final voting day for the election, and direct that the writs of election be returned.

The issuance of the writs of election means that the Chief Electoral Officer sends a formal document to the Returning Officer in each of the 93 electoral districts, stipulating that an election must be held in accordance with provincial statute. The final voting day is the last day for taking the votes of eligible electors. The return of the writs of election is the date that the formal results of the election are made known.

The 2024 election will be British Columbia's 43rd provincial general election. It is anticipated to take place on the following timeline:

Saturday, September 21, 2024	Dissolution of the Legislative Assembly Issuance of the writs of election
Saturday, October 19, 2024	Final voting day
Tuesday, November 5, 2024	Return of the writs of election

For the purposes of this Guide, the “election period” refers to the period from the issuance of the writs of election (which follows the dissolution of the 42nd Parliament of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia) to final voting day – that being from September 21 to October 19, 2024. The “post-election period” refers to the period commencing on October 20, 2024.

Further information on the 43rd provincial general election is available on the Elections BC website at www.elections.bc.ca and general information line at 1-800-661-8683.

3. Overview — Dissolution

A Liaison Officer will be assigned to each Member through Client Care to support Members and their staff in ensuring that the ‘to dos’ outlined in this guide are completed. The Client Care Team is available to support Members and their staff with any matters during the transition period.

Key Information

At dissolution, anticipated to be September 21, 2024:

- ❖ Members cease to be Members of the Legislative Assembly and can no longer identify themselves as such. The title and post-nominals “MLA” should be removed from any communications, websites, and social media pages.
- ❖ Members may not initiate expenses related to promotional or communications activities or other discretionary costs to be charged against their constituency office allowance. During the election period, no constituency communications, advertisements, or householders (mailings) can be distributed.
- ❖ If the Member’s constituency office staff are working on a campaign, appropriate notice must be provided to Client Care to advise whether staff are using vacation time or are going on leave without pay so that appropriate payroll arrangements are made.
- ❖ Constituency offices may continue to provide services, may operate on reduced hours, or may close, at the discretion of the Member. Voicemail messaging should be changed to a generic greeting (depending on whether the office will remain open or not during the election period) without mentioning an MLA name, but rather referencing the electoral district name.
- ❖ Legislative Assembly resources and facilities and assets paid for with Legislative Assembly (Vote 1) funds cannot be used for election purposes.
- ❖ Facilities and assets paid for with public funds cannot be used for campaign purposes.
- ❖ Members’ travel cards are suspended.
- ❖ Travel expenses cannot be incurred.

4. Rules Applicable During the Election Period

An underlying principle of democratic elections is that there must be a “level playing field” for all candidates. An incumbent should not have an advantage over other candidates because of access to public funds or because of the status associated with being a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Use of the Title “Member of the Legislative Assembly” or “MLA”

Upon dissolution, Members cease to be Members of the Legislative Assembly. Members should therefore refrain from using the title “Member of the Legislative Assembly” or “MLA” during the election period, including in any print or online campaign materials or advertisements. They may, however, state that they have served as the MLA for [name of electoral district] from [month year] to September 2024.

MLA websites should be suspended during the election period. A redirection to a campaign website should not be made.

If the Member’s constituency office remains open to assist constituents during the election period and a constituency office website is required to support constituency services, the following message should be displayed: *“The Legislative Assembly is currently dissolved. This website will not be updated until after the general provincial election on October 19, 2024.”* No new content should be added to the website.

A campaign website must not incorporate the title MLA in the domain name (e.g., www.NameMLA.ca).

Use of Social Media Accounts

Member and constituency office social media accounts may be suspended or adapted during the election period. Should an incumbent Member choose to use an existing social media account during the election period, the steps below should be taken.

Social media account usernames and handles used during the election period cannot retain the title MLA (e.g., @NameMLA or @MLAName).

An existing MLA video sharing account (such as YouTube) maintained by a Member should not host campaign videos. Such videos should be uploaded to a campaign account. No new videos should be uploaded to the Member’s video sharing account during the election period.

Members are not permitted to refer to themselves as a Member of the Legislative Assembly or MLA in any social media profile, biography, or description other than to state they have served as the MLA for [name of electoral district] from [month year] to September 2024.

Use of Hansard Transcripts and Videos

The use of Hansard transcripts and videos for party political advertising, partisan activities, or electoral campaigning, is prohibited. Members should refrain from uploading or sharing Hansard

videos on social media accounts and websites associated with a candidate's election campaign during the election period. For further information on campaign advertising, please refer to the Elections BC website at www.elections.bc.ca.

Use of Personalized Letterhead and Stationery

Members are not to use the Legislative Assembly visual identity and personalized Legislative Assembly stationery identifying them as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, MLA, or Minister during the election period. Ministers may use government stationery as required.

Use of Photographs

Members may not, at the expense of the Legislative Assembly, have their photographs taken, or order prints from existing proofs, once the Legislative Assembly is dissolved. Photographs paid for by the Legislative Assembly may not be used for election campaign purposes.

5. Members' Basic Compensation and Benefits at Dissolution

Basic Compensation

In respect of basic compensation, a Member is considered to be a Member throughout the election period, up to and including the day immediately preceding final voting day (as per section 9 of the *Members' Remuneration and Pensions Act* (R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 257)). Therefore, a Member's basic compensation will continue until October 18, 2024, the day prior to final voting day, after which they move to transitional assistance. Basic compensation will continue without interruption for Members who are re-elected. Members not re-elected move to transitional assistance after that date.

Additional Allowances

Additional allowances paid under the *Members' Remuneration and Pensions Act* for the following positions are discontinued on the date of dissolution:

- ❖ Caucus Chair;
- ❖ Caucus Whip and Deputy Caucus Whip;
- ❖ Chair and Deputy Chair of a select standing committee or a special committee;
- ❖ Deputy Speaker, Assistant Deputy Speaker, and Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole;
- ❖ Leader of the Official Opposition, Leader of the Third Party, and Leader of the Fourth Party;
- ❖ Official Opposition House Leader, Third Party House Leader, and Fourth Party House Leader;
- ❖ Parliamentary Secretary.

Exceptions to this are the Speaker, who is considered to occupy that position from the date of their election as Speaker until a new Speaker is elected or a Speaker-designate is named in the new Parliament, and Ministers, who, as Members of the Executive Council, continue to receive their ministerial salary until their appointment to the Executive Council is terminated by order in council.

Members' Benefits

Deductions for pension contributions, group life insurance, and optional benefits continue through the election period, as does applicable benefits coverage. Deductions and coverage for Members re-elected continue without interruption following final voting day. For Members not returning, please refer to the *Post-election Guide for Members Not Returning* for applicable information.

6. Continuation of Allowances at Dissolution

Capital City Living Allowance

Members may continue to access the Capital City Living Allowance during the election period.

Constituency Office Allowance

The prorated constituency office allowance continues to be accessible during the election period. Unavoidable and ongoing costs such as staffing and utilities may continue.

Discretionary spending in constituency offices must be suspended during the election period. This includes advertising, travel, events, non-essential office supplies, and contractor fees. Discretionary expenses submitted during the election period will not be processed by Financial Services. However, discretionary and routine expenses that were incurred prior to the date of dissolution may still be submitted for payment through DocuWare.

New expenditures should be limited to ensure that constituency office funds are only utilized for necessary expenses relating to office administration and continuity. Examples of permissible expenditures include ongoing water delivery and Members fulfilling responsibilities as set out in this Guide, such as to remove or cover constituency office signage.

Members' Travel Expense Allowance

The Members' Travel Expense Allowance is paid on a quarterly basis. Amounts issued in quarter 2 (July 1 to September 30) will be prorated to the date of dissolution.

This allowance is not available during the election period. The amount will be re-calculated and paid to re-elected Members in the next quarterly payment, excluding the election period of September 21 to October 19, 2024.

Members' Travel Reimbursement Cutoff

Members will not be reimbursed for Member-related travel costs incurred on or after the date of dissolution. This includes out-of-constituency travel, travel between the Member's constituency and Victoria, committee-related travel, and Speaker-authorized travel.

7. Resources and Assets at Dissolution

Members' Travel Card

The Bank of Montreal Corporate Travel MasterCard will be deactivated on the date of dissolution. The Speaker and Members of the Executive Council should use a personal credit card and retain receipts for reimbursement of valid expenses during the election period. Members must pay off all balances by the due date.

Members' Individual Legislative Assembly Email Accounts

Members will continue to have access to their individual Legislative Assembly email account for administrative and wind-down purposes. Legislative Assembly email accounts cannot be used for campaign purposes.

Information Technology Devices

The Legislative Assembly does not pay for any charges for mobile communication or smart devices incurred by Members during the election period.

Any charges to the corporate account during the election period are considered personal charges to the individual Member and will be recovered following the election period.

Returning Members who use a personal mobile communications device (or other device not provided through the Legislative Assembly corporate account) for Legislative Assembly business may submit the associated bills for reimbursement for charges incurred after final voting day.

8. Constituency Office Operations

Continuation of Constituency Office Operations

Constituency offices may remain open during the election period for those Members seeking re-election. Services should be limited to referring constituents to the appropriate government department for assistance with issues. Members should place a sign at the office entrance, such as: *“As the Legislative Assembly is currently dissolved, there are no Members of the Legislative Assembly. This office will be closed (or provide limited services only) until after the provincial general election on October 19, 2024.”* Members may also decide to close their constituency office(s) for the election period.

Restrictions of Use

Constituency offices are not to be used for political or election activities at any time, including during the election period.

Constituency Office Staff — Notice Requirement

BC NDP Caucus

Constituency office staff of Members affiliated with the BC NDP Caucus have a collective agreement where layoff and recall provisions apply. Generally, notice is deemed provided to constituency office staff on the date of dissolution. Members with any questions should contact the Caucus Executive Director or their designate.

Other Caucuses and Independent Members

Upon election to the 42nd Parliament, Members were provided an employment contract template by the Legislative Assembly Administration. For Members who used this contract template for their constituency office staff, the employment relationship is for a fixed term, and therefore no notice is required to be provided to staff. If a Member is unsure and requires assistance, they may contact Client Care.

Constituency Office Staff — Continuation & Leave of Absence

If a Member opts to keep their constituency office open during the election period, constituency office staff may remain on pay. Staff cannot undertake electoral campaign or party activities during their workday.

Constituency office staff who choose to work on a campaign can utilize their banked vacation (prorated for the current year) or take an unpaid leave of absence during this period. Client Care must be advised of the time taken as vacation with a confirmation that there is sufficient time in the staff's leave bank. Leave exceeding the banked time will be without pay.

Telephone Greeting

Telephone lines in constituency offices will be left in place during the election period. Members are to change voicemail messages to exclude reference to their position as a Member of the Legislative Assembly or MLA. Voicemail messages must also indicate that, until final voting day, constituency office services will be suspended, or limited, whichever is applicable, depending on how the Member has decided to proceed.

IT Device and Internet Use

Legislative Assembly-issued devices should be used for constituency office business only. Members cannot use constituency office equipment for political or election campaign purposes.

Use of the public MLA e-mail address during the election period should be limited to constituency business only, and any political correspondence should be dealt with at the campaign office. A Member's network accounts and individual e-mail accounts supported by the Legislative Assembly will continue to be accessible and should only be used for administrative purposes only.

MLA or constituency office websites should be suspended during this period. A redirect to a campaign site is not permitted.

If a constituency office remains open to assist constituents during the election period and a constituency office website is required to support constituency services, the following steps should be taken:

- ❖ Members should display the following message for any website: *The Legislative Assembly is currently dissolved. This website will not be updated until after the provincial general election on October 19, 2024.*
- ❖ No new content should be added to the website.

The restrictions that apply to the constituency offices for use of IT devices and internet access during this period are extended to the Members' legislative offices on the Legislative Precinct.

Communications and Advertising

Upon dissolution, householder mailings and/or advertising by a Member is not permitted. Any pre-booked communications and advertisements must be withdrawn, even if they were paid for prior to dissolution.

Constituency Office Signage

All signs that contain the name of a Member seeking re-election and the title "Member of the Legislative Assembly" or "MLA" should be removed or covered during the election period wherever possible. Signage is considered advertising, and an incumbent cannot be deemed to have an advantage over other candidates. Any costs associated with the coverage of a Member's name should be paid for using the Member's constituency office allowance.

Constituency Office Lease

The 43rd provincial general election will mark a change in how the Legislative Assembly manages constituency office leases, following new parameters set by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee in 2024. The electoral district boundary changes coming into effect at the 43rd provincial general election will result in some existing constituency offices not being suitable for continued use following the election due to their location.

In 2023, Members were asked to complete a constituency office condition assessment to assist with an evaluation of whether an existing constituency office is suitable for continued use as a constituency office. These assessments will inform decisions on whether the Legislative Assembly Administration will enter into negotiations with a landlord on the continued use of the space.

Currently, constituency office leases are between a Member in their personal capacity and the landlord; this responsibility will be shifting to the Legislative Assembly Administration as of the 43rd provincial general election. Client Care will connect with Members not seeking re-election to provide them with a template for the lease termination letter for their landlord, if applicable. Depending on the Member's circumstances, the lease may be terminated effective November 30, 2024. Client Care will provide the appropriate information to the Member by early September.

9. Legislative Office Operations

Restrictions of Use

The restrictions applied to constituency offices for use of equipment, facilities, and supplies during the election period also apply to a Member's legislative office on the Legislative Precinct (i.e., that they cannot be used for election or campaign purposes).

The restrictions applied to constituency office staff for work on a campaign during the election period also apply to Members' legislative staff.

Access to Services on the Legislative Precinct

The Legislative Library, the Parliamentary Dining Room, and the Parliamentary Gift Shop continue their operations during the election period. All Legislative Library books and other material must be returned. Members must settle their accounts with the Parliamentary Dining Room and the Parliamentary Gift Shop.

Parking on the Legislative Precinct

Members who have opted to have a designated parking space on the Legislative Precinct continue to have access to the parking space until the date of dissolution. After this date, the parking space is no longer available and the application of the taxable benefit ceases.

For Members re-elected, Client Care will administer a parking opt-in process following the certification of the results of the election.