

Election Records Checklist

Retention and Destruction

This document summarizes election-related records, applicable legislative references, minimum retention periods, and destruction requirements under the *Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA)*. Should you have any questions regarding the content of this document, please contact a municipal advisor at 780-427-2225 (toll-free in Alberta by dialing 310-0000) or email ma.advisory@gov.ab.ca.

Record Type	Legislative Reference	Destruction Requirement / Notes
Nomination papers	<i>LAEA</i> s.28 (7) The returning officer or secretary must retain all the filed nomination papers until the term of office to which the papers relate has expired.	Must be destroyed once the applicable term of office ends.
Ballot boxes (sealed)	<i>LAEA</i> s.101 (1) The secretary shall retain the ballot boxes with their seals unbroken for a period of at least 6 weeks from election day.	Seals must remain unbroken during retention period. See row below for ballot box contents destruction information.
Ballot box contents	<i>LAEA</i> s.101 (2) The secretary shall, in the presence of 2 witnesses, cause the ballot boxes to be opened and their contents destroyed (a) no later than 12 weeks after voting day, or (b) if a judge has ordered that the ballot boxes must be kept until a date that is more than 12 weeks after voting day, as soon as practicable after that date. (3) Each of the 2 witnesses referred to in subsection (2) shall make an affidavit that the witness has witnessed the destruction of the contents of the ballot boxes.	A reminder that at the conclusion of ballot counting, the packets in accordance with section 90 of the <i>LAEA</i> shall be placed in the ballot box. A sample 'Affidavit of Witness for Destruction of Election Materials' is available at: Alberta.ca/Municipal Election Forms .
Ballot accounts	<i>LAEA</i> s. 100 (1.1) The secretary must retain the ballot account and the nomination papers until the term of office to which they relate has expired.	Must be destroyed once the applicable term of office ends.
Form 26: Campaign Disclosure Statement and Financial Statement	The <i>LAEA</i> does not expressly address this. Good practice may include retaining Form 26s until the term of office to which they relate has expired.	This applies to the September 30 statement (January 1 to July 31) in the year of a general election and the March 1 statements (for the previous years).

Record Type	Legislative Reference	Destruction Requirement / Notes
Form 13s – copy (not original)	<i>LAEA</i> s. 91.1 (1) The presiding deputy shall make a copy of the documents referred to in section 91(1)(f) and provide the copies to the relevant local jurisdiction. (2) The local jurisdiction shall use the copies received under subsection (1) to revise the permanent electors register (PER) and then shall destroy the copies as soon as reasonably practicable.	After the local jurisdiction has updated the PER, the copies of Form 13s may be destroyed as soon as reasonably practicable.
Permanent Elector Register (PER)	Refer to Elections Alberta or the local jurisdiction's records retention bylaw.	Refer to Elections Alberta or the local jurisdiction's records retention bylaw.
Oaths, affirmations, and election officials' records	The <i>LAEA</i> does not expressly address this. Good practice is to retain for the full council term (4 years).	These records may be retained longer if required for audit, investigation, or legal proceedings.
Unissued reserve ballots	The <i>LAEA</i> does not expressly address unissued reserve ballots. The RO may use the following process as best practice: At Opening of Voting Stations • Issue an initial supply of ballots to each voting station and record the number on each ballot account. • Record the number of ballots issued to each station (one spreadsheet may be used). During Voting Hours • Monitor ballot usage at each voting station. • Issue additional ballots from the reserve as needed. • Update ballot accounts each time ballots are issued. Before Closure of Voting Stations • Issue any remaining reserve ballots to one voting station. • Confirm no printed, unused ballots remain unissued. After Close of Voting • Collect ballot accounts from all voting stations. • Confirm the total ballots equals total ballots printed. • Resolve any discrepancies immediately. • Ensure all printed ballots are fully accounted for.	See ballot box contents for destruction details.

This is not a legal document. If there is any discrepancy between this checklist and the *LAEA*, the *LAEA* shall prevail. This resource only provides a summary of election records retention and the dates and deadlines prescribed within the *LAEA*, therefore **do not** base your decisions on this checklist alone, but instead use the summary in conjunction with the appropriate legislation. Copies of the *LAEA* can be obtained from the King's Printer bookstore.

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