

Public Guide

How to Produce a Petition

for a Municipal Plebiscite

Nunavut's Plebiscites Act



General Information for Nunavummiut

(NOT about Liquor Plebiscites)

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Elections Nunavut



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Produce a Petition for a Local Plebiscite



Introduction

This guide focuses on information about how to produce and use a public petition for a **municipal plebiscite** under Nunavut’s *Plebiscites Act*. It includes a sample petition template.

Read the Act to know the exact laws.

This is one of a several Elections Nunavut guides about the *Plebiscites Act*.

- Voters Guide to the *Plebiscites Act*
- Plebiscite Authorities Guide—Administer a Local (non-municipal) Plebiscite
- Plebiscite Authorities Guide—Administer a Nunavut-wide Plebiscite
- Plebiscite Authorities Guide—Administer a Municipal Plebiscite
- Financial Agent Guide—Nunavut-wide Plebiscite
- Registered Group and Authorized Representative Guide—Nunavut-wide Plebiscite
- Public Guide—Produce a Petition for a Local (non-municipal) Plebiscite
- Public Guide—Produce a Petition for a Municipal Plebiscite
- Public Guide—Produce a Petition for a Nunavut-wide Plebiscite

Petition Basics

A petition is a document that asks for a plebiscite about a certain question. It is a way for the public to ask a plebiscite authority to have a plebiscite. For a local plebiscite, the plebiscite authority is the municipality or the district education authority (DEA).

A person or group may decide to produce a petition about a topic or issue that they care about and want action on.

A plebiscite is when eligible voters answer a question on a secret ballot, to vote and give their opinion about an important public issue.

Who must sign a petition

An eligible petitioner is someone who meets the criteria under the *Plebiscites Act* to sign a petition. An eligible petitioner is:

- A Canadian citizen.
- At least 18 years old.
- A Nunavut resident for at least one year.
- A resident in the proposed plebiscite area (municipality or DEA).

Each petitioner that signs must have an adult person sign as their witness.

Petitioner's authorized representative

The group that organizes the petition appoints an authorized representative. The authorized representative is the spokesperson and contact point for the petitioners.

The authorized representative is responsible to answer any questions about the petition that come from the:

- Plebiscite authority: municipality or DEA.
- CEO, Elections Nunavut.
- Public.

The following people are NOT eligible to be the authorized representative:

- A person not eligible to vote.
- An MLA or candidate for election to the Legislative Assembly.
- A corporation.
- A plebiscite officer.
- A person prohibited under the *Public Service Act*.
- A person who broke a law anywhere in Canada related to an election, plebiscite, or referendum—within the last five years.
- A person who did not follow a compliance agreement related to a plebiscite or election—within the last five years.

Petitioner's Authorized Representative

Consent to Act

Plebiscite question: [clear, direct, neutral; voters understand.]

Proposed plebiscite area: [name municipality or DEA]

Threshold number of voters for the area (20% of registered eligible voters in municipality):

Name:

Civic address:

Mailing address:

Phone number:

Email:

Declaration:

I swear/affirm that I am eligible to be an authorized representative, under the *Plebiscites Act*.

I agree to act as the authorized representative for this group of petitioners.

I understand this means that:

- I am spokesperson for the petitioners.
- I provide any information and answer questions about the petition from the plebiscite authority, the CEO, Elections Nunavut, and the public.

I understand that I take on these duties and tasks as soon as I sign.

Date:

Signature authorized representative:

Witness:

Word	Meaning
	oppose one side of the plebiscite question.
CEO	Chief Electoral Officer—the person in charge of Elections Nunavut.
Civic address	Lot and house number; different from a mailing address. To register with Elections Nunavut, voters need to give their civic address.
Compliance agreement	An agreement with a person who allegedly broke the laws. The person agrees to do certain things. In exchange, the Integrity Commissioner agrees to not go ahead with a trial.
Counterfoil	The numbered tab on a ballot. The DRO rips it off just before the ballot goes in the ballot box.
Declaration	A formal or legal statement a person makes to say something is true or they intent to do something. If you break this promise it’s the same as breaking the law. Declaration is similar to affirm, oath, or swear.
DRO	Deputy returning officer, Elections Nunavut. The plebiscite officer responsible for each polling station on plebiscite day.
Education authority	A District Education Authority or other governing body of a school under the <i>Education Act</i> .
Elections Nunavut	Elections Nunavut is an independent agency. They oversee all elections under the <i>Nunavut Elections Act</i> , all plebiscites under the <i>Plebiscites Act</i> , and liquor plebiscites under the <i>Liquor Act</i> .
Judicial recount	Elections Nunavut applies to the court for a recount when the difference between the number of votes for the first choice and any other choice is less than 2% of the total number of votes.
Non-binding or not binding	A plebiscite is non-binding when the plebiscite authority may choose to follow the results or not. The plebiscite may be a consultation tool. The writ states if the plebiscite is binding or not.
Oath	A formal, legal promise that something is true; a promise to do something. Plebiscite officers take an oath to be impartial in their



Word	Meaning
	job. Oath is similar to affirm, declaration, or swear.
PC	Poll clerk, Elections Nunavut. The plebiscite officer that works with the DRO at the polling station on plebiscite day.
Petition	For the <i>Plebiscites Act</i> , a public document that asks a plebiscite authority to conduct a plebiscite. It is a request, not a demand. At least 20% of eligible voters in the affected area must sign it.
Plebiscite	A vote by secret ballot conducted under the <i>Plebiscites Act</i> so that a plebiscite authority can find out what Nunavummiut think about a certain issue. Separate from a liquor plebiscite conducted under the <i>Liquor Act</i> .
Plebiscite authority	The body or person with authority to initiate a plebiscite. The <i>Plebiscites Act</i> names six plebiscite authorities.
Plebiscite officers	The people that work for Elections Nunavut to run the plebiscite: returning officer (RO), assistant returning officer (ARO), deputy returning officer (DRO), poll clerk (PC), registration clerk (RC). Same as election officers.
Plebiscite period	A 35-day period that starts with the writ and ends with plebiscite day; the official time for the plebiscite.
Plebiscite question	The question(s) and choice(s) set out in the writ and on the ballot that eligible voters can vote on.
Plebiscite report	Shows the number of votes for each choice. The RO fills it out when they review all the statements of the poll. The RO can delay the report for up to two weeks after plebiscite day, if needed.
Polling record	A list of everyone who voted at the polling station; any changes to the voters list; notes about everything that happens during voting.
Polling place	A building that holds one, two, or more polling stations. Each polling place has an ARO and RC. Communities such as Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet have more than one constituency. The polling place has an ARO and RC for each constituency.

Word	Meaning
Witness	A person who signs a document to say that another person's signature is truly their signature.
Writ	The official notice to say there is a plebiscite. The CEO sends it to each RO. Each RO posts the writ in their office. The return of the writ is the back side. It shows the plebiscite results. The RO fills it out and sends it to the CEO after plebiscite day.