

**INFORMATION
CIRCULAR NO.**

ESKIC-2020/01

DATE: March 6, 2020

SUBJECT

Date Absentee Voting Applications will be Accepted by the Chief Electoral Officer

REFERENCE

SECTION 87 OF *THE ELECTION ACT, 1996*

This Information Circular has been created specifically for Saskatchewan's 29th General Election to offer clarification regarding the date that the Chief Electoral Officer will begin accepting absentee voter applications.

1. **Legislative Ambiguity Identified:** Some ambiguity exists within provincial law regarding when the Chief Electoral Officer should accept absentee voter application packages for elections that may not be held in accordance with Saskatchewan's fixed election date legislation. Subsection 87(2) of *The Election Act, 1996* reads:

(2) An application pursuant to this section must be received:
(a) by the Chief Electoral Officer no earlier than seven months before polling day and at least nine days before polling day

2. **Uncertainty in Election Timing:** Premier Scott Moe has indicated that he may choose to exercise his prerogative to dissolve the Legislative Assembly and cause a general election to be held earlier than the legislated date of October 26, 2020.
3. **Legal Advice on the Matter:** The Chief Electoral Officer obtained advice from legal counsel on this matter. The Chief Electoral Officer was advised that, given the uncertainty surrounding when Saskatchewan's 29th General Election will be held, and in the interests of ensuring voters who need to vote using an absentee ballot are able to do so, he could make the absentee ballot application package available to voters. Given this advice, the Chief Electoral Officer has decided that he will post the absentee voting application on the Elections Saskatchewan website and will begin accepting such applications immediately.
4. **The Absentee Ballot Application Materials** will be posted onto the Elections Saskatchewan website. If the election is not called, and Elections Saskatchewan receives an application more than seven months before polling day, staff will contact the voter to determine the status of the application.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Michael D. Boda'.

Dr. Michael Boda
CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER
PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN