



Absentee Voting

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define operating policies surrounding the participation of the Association's individual members who are unable to attend meetings of members in person to vote in elections and other votes conducted by the Association, otherwise known as absentee voting.

DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy is designed to work in conjunction with the provisions for voting in the *Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act* (CNCA) and its associated regulations. It also works with Section 4.13 of the Association's bylaw, which permits absentee voting at meetings by individual members in good standing under specific conditions, either through an in-person proxy holder representing that member, a mailed-in ballot, or means of telephonic, electronic or other communication facility

POLICY STATEMENT

The Association is committed to ensuring that all individual members are able to vote at meetings while balancing the need to complete the voting process in an efficient, accountable and cost-effective manner so that results can be known as quickly as possible.

To promote active engagement of its members, the Association must be as inclusive of all individual members as is practically possible in the voting process. Voting must be conducted in an open and transparent manner with clear questions, added background information where necessary, confidential voting, and well-defined counting procedures supervised by an impartial scrutineer. To balance active participation with an efficient voting process, the Association uses absentee voting through proxies submitted to the Association.

The board has not passed a resolution under article 4.11 of the ACA General Operating By-Law No. 2 addressing the mechanics of members participating in meetings by electronic means. As such, electronic voting is not an option at this time. Likewise, the Association does not currently have system in place to tally telephonic or mail-in ballots without it being possible for the Association to identify how each member voted. As such telephonic and mail-in ballots are not an option at this time.

The following practices occur when absentee voting by proxy is required by the Association:

- When it provides notice of a General or Special Meeting of Members, the Association makes available proxy forms to all individual members clearly identifying the known
- motions to be considered at the meeting, with the three responses to those motions (For, Against, Abstain). Under Section 4.13(a), any individual member unable to attend yet wanting to vote may assign her/his vote to the Board, or an individual Association member as a proxy to vote on their behalf.



- The voting member must submit the signed original proxy to the Association in advance of that Meeting, in accordance with the submission dates and deadlines specified on the proxy form.
- To be represented by an individual proxy holder, that specified individual must attend the meeting, and act at the meeting in the manner and to the extent of the authority conferred by the proxy.
- A member may revoke a proxy by submitting a signed revocation notice to the Association in advance of that Meeting, in accordance with the submission dates and deadlines specified on the proxy form.

By defining a process for absentee voting through proxies, the Association creates an efficient, cost-effective means of ensuring that members have the opportunity to have their say in the direction of the Association's business even though they are not able to attend in person.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS

In order to achieve the goals of this policy, the Association will:

- Create and approve a format for proxies to be distributed to members (see Annex 1).
- Define a process for appointing a scrutineer, for such times when a scrutineer is required.
- Define a format for a declaration of voting report form, for such times when a report is required.

ACCOUNTABILITIES

General Principles

Association members are bound by the Volunteer Code of Conduct when participating in Association business, declaring conflicts of interest, and maintaining confidentiality of information. Employees and contractors of the Association are bound by the terms of their job descriptions or contracts regarding the handling of their duties; in the absence of any specific terms, this policy and the Volunteer Code of Conduct will apply as best practices documents.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors approves all formats and processes pertaining to absentee voting. The Board also reviews and approves the voting package prior to its distribution to the membership.

At its sole discretion, the Board of Directors appoints a scrutineer or scrutineers to count the results of absentee ballots. The scrutineer will be an appropriate individual that has no interest in or business with the Association who is able to supervise the conduct of ballot. The Board of Directors also provides the scrutineer with all the necessary procedures relative to that method of absentee voting.



The Secretary or designate coordinates the absentee voting process. On the day of the counting, the Secretary or designate conducts the balloting in the presence of the scrutineer according to the balloting procedure relative to that type of absentee vote. The Secretary or designate creates an official record of the balloting procedure using a “declaration of voting results” form for that type of vote; this declaration will be examined by the scrutineer and certified correct once it is to the scrutineer’s satisfaction.

The declaration of voting results form will report:

- the number of ballots received;
- the number of ballots accepted (versus those not accepted as having missed the deadline);
- the number of valid ballots (versus those submitted by persons ineligible to vote);
- the number of accepted ballots (versus those that were “spoiled” by unclear voting);
- the final ballot count showing the result of the voting; and
- a declaration by the Secretary and the scrutineer attesting to the accuracy of the counts noted above.

The declaration of voting results form will comply with the Act and the Association’s bylaws so that the votes are verifiable and that the Corporation cannot identify any individual voter.

The Secretary or designate ensures that the results of the ballot are publicized through the Association’s standard communications networks and by an announcement at the first subsequent annual general meeting.

Secretariat

The Secretariat ensures that the voting package is distributed to each member in good standing as recorded in the membership records of the Association at the time the ballot is prepared. The Executive Director of the Association will have a list of members prepared and certified at the time that the voting package distribution.

The Secretariat prepares a voting package consisting of the following:

- A ballot, which includes a clearly-worded question or questions to be voted on and the alternative choices;
- any background information relevant to each ballot;
- an explanation of the balloting procedure, including the deadline to return the ballot to the scrutineer;
- information about how to return the ballot so that it may be counted, which will include the deadline to return the ballot to the scrutineer.

The Secretariat will transfer the declaration of voting results to the designated archival facility as a permanently-preserved record of the Association. The Secretariat will destroy all other balloting materials after one year has elapsed from the ballot’s submission deadline.



Scrutineer(s)

Once appointed, the scrutineer reviews the entire balloting procedure relative to that type of absentee vote. The scrutineer receives all ballots at the address indicated in the voting package. The scrutineer will hold uncounted all ballots until a date no less than ten days after the deadline date in order to ensure the receipt of all valid ballots. The scrutineer supervises the counting of the ballots by the Secretary-Treasurer or designate according to the balloting procedure relative to that type of absentee vote. The scrutineer will examine the “declaration of voting results” form for the vote and certify it correct once the scrutineer is satisfied that it is accurate.

Members

As primary stakeholders of the Association, members are encouraged to make use of the absentee voting options in the event that they want to vote at a meeting but are unable to attend in person.



Association of
Canadian Archivists

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des archivistes

Annex 1: PROXY FORM

**For ACA Individual Members Only
AGM Individual Voting Member Proxy**

The undersigned individual member in good standing of the Association of Canadian Archivists hereby appoints: (please print clearly)

_____ (name of proxy holder*)

or _____ (name of alternate proxy holder*)

as the proxy holder* of the undersigned to vote and act for and on behalf of the undersigned at the Annual General Meeting of the Association, and at any adjournment thereof.

To vote on my behalf in any / all matters under consideration Yes No Except as instructed below

Specific authority / instructions: (please circle one, each line if applicable)

- To vote on my behalf in the consideration of the Association’s budget For Against Abstain
- To vote on my behalf in the Appointment of public accountant For Against Abstain
- To vote on my behalf _____ For Against Abstain

I confirm that I am an individual member in good standing of the Association (ACA) for the current year, and the membership represented by this proxy is to be voted or withheld from voting, in accordance with the instructions of the member, on any ballot that may be called for and that each choice with respect to these matters above to be acted on, the membership is to be voted accordingly.

Signature of Individual ACA Member

Print name of Individual Member

Signed this _____ day of _____

* A proxy may be assigned to a Director or the Board of Directors, another member, or another individual, to be exercised at the meeting identified above.

Proxies are to be submitted to the Association’s Office by (month, date, year), or they can be submitted to the Chair of the Annual General Meeting immediately prior to the commencement of the business.

(Note: This proxy form is to be customized for each Association AGM, including the year of the AGM, its number (e.g., 40th), as well as the date of the AGM, the text of the Motions under consideration that year, and the deadline to deliver the signed proxy to the Association’s office or submit the original to the ACA staff at the location of the Meeting.)