



In general, anyone eligible to vote is eligible for nomination and election to the House of Commons. There are no property or educational qualifications.

Some exceptions to this rule are members of provincial legislatures, judges, persons convicted of corrupt electoral practices, public servants, except those having been granted leave of absence without pay to seek nomination under the Public Service Employment Act, and members of the regular armed forces. None of these may run for election to the House of Commons.

Most candidates are the official representatives of the various political parties, chosen at party-nominating meetings.

Nominations close 28 days before election day. A candidate need not reside in the constituency he or she is contesting. The nomination, however, must be endorsed by at least 25 electors in the constituency, and must identify the official agent and the auditor he or she is required to appoint. The candidate must put up a \$200 deposit which is returned if he or she wins the election or polls 15 per cent of the total valid votes cast. This is to discourage frivolous nominations.

Parties

Everyone is free to form a political party and to join or support any party he or she chooses, but only a federally-registered political party may enjoy election expenses privileges.

Two parties have hitherto shared the allegiance of most Canadian voters. They are the Progressive Conservatives, usually called simply the Conservatives, and the Liberals. Every Canadian government up to now has been formed by one or other of these parties or a merger of elements of both. Other parties have succeeded in winning provincial elections and have regularly elected members to the House of Commons. Two of the most prominent in this respect are the New Democratic and the Social Credit Parties.

At the last federal election in 1984, there were 11 registered political parties. One advantage of registration is that the name of the party is printed on the ballot paper used by electors together with the name of each candidate. A party must officially field candidates in at least 50 constituencies at an election for its registration to become effective.