

A FIPA guide to the Federal election. Find key information and questions you can ask candidates plus background on how political parties are to respect your privacy and access to information in this campaign.

2021 Election Guide

FIPA Fast Facts

Freedom of Information and Privacy Association





2021 Federal Election

The Freedom of Information and Privacy Association's goal is to empower citizens by increasing their access to information and their control over their own personal information. We serve a wide variety of individuals and organizations through programs of public education, public assistance, research, and law reform. We are one of very few public interest groups in Canada devoted solely to the advancement of freedom of information and privacy rights.

FIPA encourages everyone to have their voice heard in the election!

Canada's Federal Election will be held on Sept. 20, 2021.

Looking for progressive research about privacy and access to Information?
FIPA has several research publications [here](#).

In August 2021, FIPA prepared a report outlining our priority areas for Access to Information reform. Our report can be found [here](#).

A few things for you to consider:

- Check with [Elections Canada](http://www.elections.ca) (www.elections.ca).
 - Ensure you are registered to vote.
 - Stay up to date about advance or mail-in voting opportunities.
- Make a plan.
 - Election Day is Sept. 20, 2021.
 - Plan to vote on election day, OR vote in advance.
- Remember to follow all public health guidelines and directives.
 - With the Covid-19 pandemic, some election rules may have changed.
 - Check [Elections Canada](http://www.elections.ca), and your local public health authority to stay up to date.
- Get involved.
 - Volunteer in support of a local candidate.
 - Contact [local candidates](#), ask them their stance on these issues.

Questions to Candidates

Privacy – Protecting your information from being used without your consent.

- Canada was once considered a leader in the privacy field. Today, Canada's privacy laws are out of date and out of step with international standards, putting our personal information at risk. What is your party going to do to protect my information from being misused by corporations?
- Canada's public bodies at all levels including agencies like the RCMP are increasingly sacrificing privacy. They are gathering more information on citizens and using it without proper safeguards. What is your party going to do to protect my information from being misused by government?

Transparency – Providing access to government information and decisions.

- Trust is gained through transparency. It allows the public to know what government money is being spent where and why decisions are made. The pandemic highlights how important this is. What is your party going to do to improve government transparency and enshrine it in law?
- The *Access to Information Act* does not require public bodies to release information that is in the public interest or release it in a timely manner. For example, First Nations seeking to investigate deaths at Indian Residential Schools still encounter barriers accessing information. What is your party going to do to make the public interest paramount in access to information? What is your party going to do to eliminate delays and ensure access requests are responded to quickly?

A public record – Maintaining access to information now and into the future.

- Given all the online platforms being used and all the new media being created by government, support and funding to ensure public records are still available to the public now and into the future is critical. What is your party going to do to ensure resources are provided to and available through Canadian Archives and Libraries so they can carry out this crucial work?

Whistleblower Protection – Ensuring protection when reporting bad actions.

- Taxpayers are left footing the bill to solve class action lawsuits brought about because potential whistleblowers either feared to come forward or were ignored when they raised legitimate concerns. What is your party going to do to ensure whistleblowers are protected and supplied a complaint mechanism avoiding conflict of interest?

What personal information do political parties have about you?

Elections Canada creates and manages a voters list.

- In Canada the candidates and registered parties have a right to certain information. They are provided with various voters' lists to be used according to rules and follow the Elections Canada Guidelines.

The parties manage your information within their Privacy Policy.

- A list of all registered Federal Parties can be found here.
- We have linked major parties' privacy policies here:
 - Bloc Québécois
 - Conservative
 - Green
 - Liberal
 - Maverick
 - New Democratic Party of Canada
 - People's Party of Canada

Every party commits to respond to your questions and concerns.

- You might want to contact their privacy officer and ask:
 - What information do you have about me?
 - Is my information accurate and up to date?
- If you do not wish to be contacted by a political party:
 - You can be placed on their internal "Do-Not-Call List."
 - You can unsubscribe from their email list.

Only in British Columbia do you have added protection.

- No federal privacy laws currently apply to federal political parties.
- In BC candidates and parties fall within the Personal Information Protection Act. This adds rules and oversight through the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC).
- The OIPC has investigated and reported on political parties' use of personal information as recently as 2019.
- In BC, if you have complaints about how a Party or candidate is using your personal information, there is a procedure you can follow to make a complaint.