

Election Public Opinion Polls

Section 358 of the *Elections Act* (the "Act") states that the first person who transmits the results of an election public opinion poll to the public during an election period and any person who transmits them to the public within twenty-four hours after they are first transmitted to the public must provide the following information together with the results:

- (a) the name of the sponsor of the public opinion poll;
- (b) the name of the individual or organization that conducted the public opinion poll;
- (c) the date on which or the period during which the public opinion poll was conducted;
- (d) the population from which the sample of respondents was drawn;
- (e) the number of people who were contacted to participate in the public opinion poll; and
- (f) the margin of error, if any, in respect of the data obtained.

In addition, the following must be provided in the case of a transmission to the public by means other than broadcasting:

- (a) the wording of the public opinion poll questions in respect of which data is obtained; and
- (b) the means by which a report referred to in subsections 358(3) and (4) may be obtained.

Subsection 358(3) states a sponsor of an election public opinion poll shall, at any time during an election after the results of the public opinion poll are transmitted to the public, provide, on request, a copy of a written report on the results of the public opinion poll. The report must include the following:

- (a) the name and address of the sponsor of the public opinion poll;
- (b) the name and address of the person or organization that conducted the public opinion poll;
- (c) the date on which or the period during which the public opinion poll was conducted;
- (d) information about the method used to collect the data from which the public opinion poll results are derived.

See subsection 358(4) for additional details of what is required to be included in this report.

Public opinion poll not based on recognized polling methods

Section 359 of the *Act* states that the first person who transmits the results of an election public opinion poll that is not based on recognized polling methods to the public during an election period and any person who transmits them within twenty-four hours after the results are first transmitted to the public must indicate that the public opinion poll was not based on recognized polling methods.

No new public opinion poll results on election day

No person shall knowingly cause to be transmitted to the public on election day the results of a public opinion poll that have not previously been transmitted to the public.

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this circular, please contact:

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The views expressed in this information sheet are not law and are not intended to replace the official text of the Act. How the Act applies to any particular case will depend on the individual circumstances of that case. Elections Nova Scotia reserves the right to reconsider any interpretations expressed in information sheets, either generally or in light of the actual circumstances of any case, and in accordance with continuing legislative and judicial developments.