

Questions and Answers

Q: How does telephone voting work?

A: Voters in some jurisdictions use SMS text messaging or standard touch tone telephone menus to cast their vote. Using the telephone, voters would call in to the voting line and follow the automated steps to input unique security information and voting password using their phone's key pad. Voters will receive a confirmation upon completion and may only successfully vote once. An opportunity to review their vote and confirm before casting is often provided.

Q: How does internet voting work?

A: Internet voting works by allowing voters to register and cast a virtual ballot on any computer or device with modern browsing capabilities and an internet connection. Voters receive a voting password after completing the registration process, and enter this password and other credentials at the time of election to access a ballot. Voters still receive just one vote and have the exact same options on the ballot as on its offline counterpart.

Q: Aren't there security concerns?

A: Internet voting would share the same vulnerabilities shared by any other interaction online. In the last few years security technology in the internet has improved dramatically, with financial institutions leading the way in secure systems development. Use of this technology, including public-private keys, high level encryption, and secure socket layers will make the online voting process as secure as an online financial transaction. These processes mitigate security concerns by creating a private and verifiable connection between end user and the server.

Q: How would users participate and obtain a password?

A: Users would participate in internet voting by accessing the voting page on the City of Toronto elections website. They would be required to login using unique identification criteria including a unique password obtained through the registration process. Similar criteria currently in place for voter registration would be adopted for online voting registration.

Q: How much does internet and telephone voting cost?

A: On a cost per vote basis, internet and telephone voting systems are cheaper than traditional ballots in the long run. Printing of paper ballots, manual counting, and other features which add perpetual expenses to running an election could be scaled back as more voters use the electronic system.