

HANDOUT 2.3: HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

1871	First general election in province of British Columbia.
1872	Chinese and First Nations peoples disenfranchised (lose the right to vote).
1876	Property qualification for voting dropped.
1878	School teachers prohibited from voting or campaigning.
1883	Prohibition against school teachers lifted.
1893	Persons residing in a Provincial Home are disqualified from voting.
1895	Japanese disenfranchised.
1899	Provincial civil servants disenfranchised.
1900	Civil servant disenfranchisement repealed.
1907	South Asians disenfranchised.
1916	Clergy no longer prohibited from running and sitting as MLAs.
1917	Franchise extended to women.
1931	Doukhobors disenfranchised.
1939	Persons residing in a Provincial Home are no longer disqualified from voting.
1945	Members of prohibited groups, if otherwise qualified, allowed to vote if they served in World War I or World War II.
1947	Persons without an adequate knowledge of English or French are disqualified from voting.
1947	Prohibition against Chinese and South Asians removed.
1947	Canadian citizenship recognized as qualification in addition to being a British subject.
1948	Mennonites and Hutterites no longer ineligible to vote.
1949	Status Indians, namely Aboriginal individuals recognized and registered under the <i>Indian Act</i> , and Japanese prohibition removed.
1952	Voting age changed to 19.
1952	Doukhor prohibition removed.
1979	Blind voters able to mark own ballots by means of templates.
1982	Persons without an adequate knowledge of English or French are no longer disqualified from voting.
1985	“British subject” dropped as qualification to vote.
1985	Persons detained in a provincial mental health facility or other mental institution by court authority are disqualified from voting.
1988	Persons who have been convicted of an indictable offence and have been released on probation or parole and are not in custody are no longer disqualified from voting.
1992	<i>Elections Amendment Act</i> lowers the voting age to 18 from 19 and eases restrictions on voting day registration.
1995	Persons imprisoned in a correctional institution serving a sentence of less than two years are no longer disqualified from voting.
1995	Persons detained in a provincial mental health facility or other mental institution by court authority are no longer disqualified from voting.
1995	Chief Electoral Officer and the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer are disqualified from voting.
2003	Persons imprisoned in a correctional facility serving a sentence longer than two years are no longer disqualified from voting.