



# The VOICE of Albertans with Disabilities

April 1, 2025

## VAD AGM - Did you know?

VAD members have voting rights at the Annual General Meeting, held this year on June 21, 2025, virtually. A full member (iVAD) or an organizational supporting member (a designated representative for voting purposes) is entitled to hold office as well as to enjoy full speaking rights at members' meetings.

The purpose of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) is to elect Directors of the Society in accordance with the VAD bylaws, to review the financial statements of the Society, prepared by the auditor, and to transact such other matters as may properly come before the members. This year the acting Board of Directors would like to review and vote on the strategic plan and the changes to the bylaws.

The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom, and you must register to attend as well as be a VAD member in good standing. If you are not a member of VAD but would like to participate in the AGM this year, please fill out a membership form (<https://vadsociety.ca/?contact=appointment>) and become a VAD member with all the rights of membership.

The Board of Directors is a governing body of VAD. Those who serve on the board are elected by shareholders (aka the individuals and entities that have investment in the organization - VAD Members) to help to oversee its strategy and make decisions. The members of the board are tasked with giving the Society leaders advice and represent the shareholders' best interests. Their job is to be of service in a way that's consistent with the goals and values of the organization.

### **1. Safeguard the interests of the shareholders.**

Board members are responsible for protecting the interests of the stakeholders. All board members ensure that organizations have good governance. This looks like treating employees and volunteers fairly and spending the money it raises in ways that are consistent with its mission and bylaws.

### **2. Ensure that leadership is right for the job.**

Board members are responsible for the functionality of the senior leadership team of VAD. The board also ensures that the company has a succession plan to replace them (even on an interim basis) if necessary.

### **3. Show commitment.**

The commitment to serving on a board means showing up for meetings, as attendance is taken. The VAD board meets monthly; in between these larger meet-

ings, it's common for smaller committees with more specific responsibilities — like reviewing the company's governance, compensation structure, and so on — to meet throughout the year and report to the full board at the monthly meetings. Materials for board meetings are provided ahead of time, and board members are expected to have read all the information in advance and be ready to engage in discussions. These discussions occur between fellow board members and VAD's leadership team. There are opportunities for board members to ask questions and share their advice and perspectives. The more informed a board member is, the more robust and meaningful the discussion becomes. The board is responsible for the highest level of decision-making and legal authority in an organization. Governing boards have responsibility for:

- **Purpose**, by establishing and implementing the organization's mission and vision.
- **Continuity**, by providing continuity for managing and implementing the organization's affairs;
- **Progress**, by setting the rate of progress that the organization takes in reaching its mission and vision.
- **Identity**, by securing community support and appreciation for the organization's objects, beliefs, vision, mission, and long-term direction.

VAD's quorum for the AGM is a minimum of 8 members, either virtually or by proxy. After the quorum is established, the AGM will proceed using Roberts Rules of Order to keep the meeting on track.

Every voting member may authorize another person to act for such voting member by proxy. Every proxy shall be in writing and shall be signed by the voting member or their attorney. Proxy forms are available in this newsletter or by contacting the office – 780-488-9088.

The Directors of the Society shall be comprised of those individuals who are members of the Society in good standing and elected as Directors by the voting members at the AGM. In accordance with VAD's bylaws, all nominations for directors must be given in writing to a director, designated by the Board of Directors. If you are interested in being part of VAD's Board of Directors, contact the Executive Director to discuss the process of putting your name forward to become a board member.

Directors of the Board have terms of two years with a maximum of 3 consecutive terms on the Board. Any vacancy on the board that has occurred during the year, shall be filled at the AGM with proper notice of such a meeting.



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## VAD Membership

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities has started a new fiscal year and we need your memberships to help offset operational costs.

### iVAD or Individual Membership

This group is made up of individuals with lived experiences, their families and their allies. iVAD is about building relationships, speaking to common issues while not being disability specific. iVAD members can attend various VAD events throughout the year. Fees to become an iVAD member are \$25 annually but can be waived if they cause financial hardship.

### Organizational members

Organizational members are nonprofit organizations and associations who provide services to the disability community and individuals with disabilities. Fees for organizational members are \$99 a year.

### Corporate members

Corporate Members are for profit businesses that offer products and services for a fee to the general public with a focus on disabilities. Cost of Corporate Membership is \$150 annually.

These 3 groups work to generate ideas and solutions to issues that are brought forward to VAD by our board members and the community. VAD works in collaboration with these groups to advocate solutions to community issues.

### Membership benefits:

- Monthly Newsletter: The Voice –digital or in print – sign up online
- Option to Participate in research and projects throughout the year, Invitations to the AGM and other VAD hosted events
- A printed members' directory and distribution of member information through VAD social media and newsletters
- A Web link to members' website in our online Resource Directory, and a printed certificate of membership
- There is an option for organizations and businesses to participate in our feature spotlight on the home page of our website
- Member organizational information is also listed on the NEWS BOARD in our member only section of the website as well as other resources
- And most importantly, we ask our iVAD members to support our organizational and corporate members first in their search for products and services.

## Advertising in the Membership Directory

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities' Membership Directory is published annually and provided free of charge to individuals and organizations in the disability communities all over the province.

The directory is published in an easy to use format. Advertising space is available on the outside back cover, inside front cover

and within the directory. The deadline for membership directory ads is May 1 of each year.



### Highlights of the directory:

- Circulation throughout the province to members
- Distributed annually each year to VAD members
- Advertising in the directory demonstrates you are a corporate leader that has invested in VAD, reflecting positively on your business
- Directory encourages members to shop locally and use VAD members for services
- Directory is used as a guide throughout the year as a resource that is popular among VAD members

Back Outside Cover full colour	- \$500.00	7.5" x 10.75"
Inside Cover full colour	- \$500.00	7.5" x 10.75"
Full page full colour	- \$300.00	7.5" x 10.75"
Half page colour	- \$200.00	7.5" x 4.8"
Half page black & white	- \$150.00	7.5" x 4.8"
Business Card ad colour	- \$125.00	3" x 2.2"
Business Card ad black & white	- \$100.00	3" x 2.2"
Logo full colour	- \$50.00	1.75" X 2.3"
Coupon black & white	-\$25.00	3" x 4.8"

## Robert's Rules Simplified

New board members should learn the basics of Robert's Rules as soon as they join a board. Board members will use the basic rules for making decisions at most meetings.

### Guiding Principles:

- Everyone has the right to participate in



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discussion if they wish, before anyone may speak a second time.

- Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times. Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.
- Only one thing (motion) can be discussed at a time. A motion is the topic under discussion (e.g., "I move that we add a coffee break to this meeting"). After being recognized by the president of the board, any member can introduce a motion when no other motion is on the table. A motion requires a second to be considered. If there is no second, the matter is not considered. Each motion must be disposed of (passed, defeated, tabled, referred to committee, or postponed indefinitely).

### How to do things:

You want to bring up a new idea before the group. After recognition by the president of the board, present your motion. A second is required for the motion to go to the floor for discussion, or consideration. You want to change some of the wording in a motion under discussion. After recognition by the president of the board, move to amend by

- adding words
- striking words or
- striking and inserting words.

You like the idea of a motion being discussed, but you need to reword it beyond simple word changes. Move to substitute your motion for the original motion. If it is seconded, discussion will continue on both motions and eventually the body will vote on which motion they prefer.

You want more investigation given to the idea being discussed. Move to refer to a committee. Try to be specific as to the charge to the committee.

You want more time personally to study the proposal being discussed. Move to postpone to a definite time or date.

You are tired of the current discussion. Move to limit debate to a set period of time or to a set number of speakers. Requires a 2/3rds vote.

You have heard enough discussion. Move to close the

debate. Also referred to as calling the question. This cuts off discussion and brings the assembly to a vote on the pending question only. Requires a 2/3rds vote.

You want to postpone a motion until some later time. Move to table the motion. The motion may be taken from the table after 1 item of business has been conducted. If the motion is not taken from the table by the end of the next meeting, it is dead.

To kill a motion at the time it is tabled requires a 2/3rds vote. A majority is required to table a motion without killing it.

You believe the discussion has drifted away from the agenda and want to bring it back. "Call for orders of the day."

You want to take a short break. Move to recess for a set period of time.

You want to end the meeting. Move to adjourn.

You are unsure the president of the board announced the results of a vote correctly. Without being recognized, call for a "division of the house." A roll call vote will then be taken.

You are confused about a procedure being used and want clarification. Without recognition, call for "Point of Information" or "Point of Parliamentary Inquiry." The president of the board will ask you to state your question and will attempt to clarify the situation.

You have changed your mind about something that was voted on earlier in the meeting for which you

Quick Reference					
	Must Be Seconded	Open for Discussion	Can be Amended	Vote Count Required to Pass	May Be Reconsidered or Rescinded
Main Motion	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Amend Motion	✓	✓		Majority	✓
Kill a Motion	✓			Majority	✓
Limit Debate	✓		✓	2/3 <sup>rds</sup>	✓
Close Discussion	✓			2/3 <sup>rds</sup>	✓
Recess	✓		✓	Majority	
Adjourn (End meeting)	✓			Majority	
Refer to Committee	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Postpone to a later time	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Table	✓			Majority	
Postpone Indefinitely	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓

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were on the winning side. Move to reconsider. If the majority agrees, the motion comes back on the floor as though the vote had not occurred.

You want to change an action voted on at an earlier meeting. Move to rescind. If previous written notice is given, a simple majority is required. If no notice is given, a 2/3rds vote is required.

#### Unanimous Consent:

If a matter is considered relatively minor or opposition is not expected, a call for unanimous consent may be requested. If the request is made by others, the president of the board will repeat the request and then pause for objections. If none are heard, the motion passes.

You may INTERRUPT a speaker for these reasons only:

- to get information about business –point of information to get information about rules– parliamentary inquiry
- if you can't hear, safety reasons, comfort, etc. –question of privilege
- if you see a breach of the rules –point of order
- if you disagree with the president of the board's ruling –appeal
- if you disagree with a call for Unanimous Consent –object.

## Are you experiencing obstacles with administrative procedures?

Finautonomie is an organization dedicated to promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities by offering free support services, in French and English.

Online resources: Virtual conferences as well as free webinars are available on our website  
<https://www.finautonomie.org/>



Call us toll-free at: 1-833-866-7334



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Or contact us via: <https://www.finautonomie.org>

Susanne Bergmann

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Ligne d'aide: 1-833-866-7334

\*\*\*NOUVEAU: <https://www.finautonomie.org/Pages/conferences>

## Many Ways to Vote in Federal Elections – Find Out How!

2025 is an Election year! Election day is set for April 28, and you may be wondering how you can exercise your democratic right as a Canadian with a disability. Elections Canada, the independent and non-partisan agent of parliament responsible for conducting federal elections, is committed to reducing barriers to the electoral process for people with disabilities. This article provides important information to ensure you have the information you need to vote and work at the polls in the upcoming election.

To vote in a federal election, you must be a Canadian citizen, be at least 18 years old on election day, and prove your identity and address. The first step is to ensure you are registered to vote, or your registration is up-to-date with your current address. There are many ways to register or check/update your information. An easy way to do this is by visiting the Elections Canada's Online Voter Registration Service. Registering to vote will ensure that you receive a voter information card once the election is called, which will provide details on where and when to vote. Your voter information card can also be used as a proof of address at the polls.

Every polling place must meet essential accessibility criteria, and there are several tools available to assist you while voting, including:

- Ballot with candidate names in large print
- Large-print and braille lists of candidates
- Tactile and braille voting template
- Magnifiers
  - Language and sign language interpretation (and other assistance upon request in advance)
  - Assistance marking your ballot (bring someone you know or ask an election worker)
- Large-grip pencil (limited quantity) You can also bring your own pen or pencil
- Signature guide
- Note: Braille lists of candidates are only available on polling day. Large print is available on advance polling days and on polling day. If your





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polling place does not meet your needs then Elections Canada can arrange to transfer you to an alternative polling place near your home that is accessible to you.

Also, did you know that there are alternative ways to vote, such as registering to vote-by-mail? This option is a great alternative if voting at a polling station is not accessible for you. Information about these options can be found on your voter information card, at [www.elections.ca](http://www.elections.ca), or by calling 1-800-463-6868. For those who are deaf or hard of hearing, TTY service is available at 1-800-361-8935.

To vote, you are required to provide proof of identification and address, but there are multiple ways to do so. First, you can present one government-issued ID with your name, address and photo. If you do not have this type of ID, you can alternatively provide two authorized pieces of identification, both showing your name, with one also showing your address. A full list of authorized IDs can be found on our website, along with alternative options if you do not have two authorized forms of identification.

Want to be more involved in the electoral process? Working at the polls is a great opportunity to learn more about elections, connect with your community, and earn some income. Some of these short-time jobs require no previous experience and are a great way to build up a resume. Elections Canada is dedicated to reflecting Canada's diversity at polling places. Applications for the next election are open on our website, and there is an accessibility box in the online form where you can request accommodations or discuss how we can support your work at the polls.

We hope this short article has helped to demystify the voting process. If you have for questions please do not hesitate to reach out to Jessica at [jessica.burylo@elections.ca](mailto:jessica.burylo@elections.ca)

## Join VAD for the National Accessibility Awareness Week (NAAW) Wrap Up BBQ - May 31, 2025 – Edmonton, AB

National Accessibility Week (NAAW) improves understanding and knowledge of Canadians on accessibility and disability inclusion, reduces stigma and attitudinal barriers towards persons with disabilities, and shares best practices and lessons learned related to NAAW activities within the disability community.



National AccessAbility Week (NAAW) takes place every year starting on the last Sunday in May, this year it runs from May 25 to May 31. It is an opportunity to celebrate the valuable contributions of Canadians with disabilities. It is also a time to recognize the efforts of individuals, communities and workplaces that are actively working to remove barriers to accessibility and inclusion.

To celebrate NAAW this year, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD) is hosting a NAAW Wrap Up BBQ and Silent Auction on May 31, 2025, from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. in Borden Park - Site 1, Edmonton. We are opening the event up to the disability community, VAD's membership and volunteers, as well as inviting collaborating associations, stakeholders and partners.

The purpose of this event is to increase awareness and celebrate National AccessAbility Week. VAD is promoting a campaign of NAAW activities throughout the week and will use the BBQ as a wrap up to the week's activities in the community. VAD is seeking food donations for the BBQ, sponsorship of the event, in-kind donations to cover supplies and silent auction items for the attendees to bid on at the event.

As a bonus to the BBQ, we are asking local agencies to set up a table at the event and promote their services. This is a no-cost opportunity for networking and promotion of services.

To support VAD in the National Accessibility Week BBQ in May, please contact Teresa at 780-488-9088 or [vad@vadsociety.ca](mailto:vad@vadsociety.ca). We are most grateful for all VAD supporters and the disability community participation.



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Get ready to fire up your taste buds  
and soak up the sun at our  
unforgettable National Accessibility  
Awareness Week barbecue

NATIONAL ACCESSIBILITY AWARENESS WEEK

# BBQ & SILENT AUCTION

PLEASE RSVP

VAD is seeking sponsors and in-kind donations for this event, if  
interested in supporting the BBQ or have a Silent Auction donation,  
please call 780-488-9088.



MAY 31, 2025  
12 PM - 2 PM



BORDEN PARK - SITE 1  
EDMONTON, AB



Silent Auction

**RSVP**

[vad@vadsociety.ca](mailto:vad@vadsociety.ca)  
780-488-9088



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