

The County of Peterborough  
Joint Services Steering Committee

To: Chair and Members of Committee  
From: Bob English, Chief, Emergency Medical Services  
Date: February 10, 2011.

---

**Subject: EMS Departmental Report To County Council  
Re: EMS Costs Associated With Elections**

**Recommendation:** For Information Only

**Financial Impact:** 2010 EMS Budget - \$3500.

---

Background/Analysis:

Attached please find the above noted departmental report presented to County Council on November 17, 2010.

No further action is required by JSSC or Peterborough City Council. For information purposes only.

Respectfully Submitted:

Robert S. English, Chief

The County of Peterborough  
County Council

To: Warden and Members of Council  
From: Randy Mellow, Deputy Chief, EMS  
Date: November 17, 2010.

---

**Subject:** EMS Costs Associated with Elections

**Recommendation:** Council appeal to the Provincial and Federal Governments to amend the Elections Acts to exempt emergency service employers from the mandate to provide hours free from work where alternate methods of voting are available.

**Financial Impact:** Potential Cost Savings

---

**Background/Analysis:**

Federal, Provincial and Municipal Election Acts all provide for employees to be afforded time free from work in order to vote in elections, as follows;

Federal Elections Act:

132. (1) Every employee who is an elector is entitled, during voting hours on polling day, to have three consecutive hours for the purpose of casting his or her vote and, if his or her hours of work do not allow for those three consecutive hours, his or her employer shall allow the time for voting that is necessary to provide those three consecutive hours.

Provincial Elections Act:

6. (3) Every employee who is qualified to vote shall, while the polls are open on polling day at an election, have three consecutive hours for the purpose of voting and, if the hours of his or her employment do not allow for three consecutive hours, the employee may request that his or her employer allow such additional time for voting as may be necessary to provide those three consecutive hours and the employer shall grant the request. R.S.O. 1990, c. E.6, s. 6 (3).

Municipal Elections Act:

50.(1)An elector whose hours of employment are such that he or she would not otherwise have three consecutive hours to vote on voting day is entitled to be absent from work for as long as is necessary to allow that amount of time. 1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 50 (1).

Further, the collective agreement between the Corporation of the County of Peterborough and CUPE Local 4911 (paramedics) provides that;

Employees shall be permitted time off to vote in elections in accordance with the minimum legislative requirements.

For the October 25th, 2010 election, in order to fully comply with the legislated requirements EMS Staff estimates an increased cost of \$3500 for wages and benefits, excluding administrative costs. These costs were incurred due to the need to call in staff to cover off paramedics working 12 hour day shift and who would therefore not have the legislated hours free from work to vote.

These costs are not unique to Peterborough EMS. In fact, similar financial burden is experienced by a broad range of services and industries that provide 24 hour services and extended shift patterns such as Fire, Police and Hospitals.

In recent years several alternative options for voting have been introduced including advanced polls, vote by mail and electronic/internet voting. Should these options be promoted and utilized by employees who are required to work during the hours of the elections, significant cost savings could be realized.

In consideration of the information contained in this report, EMS staff recommends that council appeal to the Provincial and Federal Governments to amend the Elections Acts to exempt emergency service employers from the mandate to provide hours free from work where alternate methods of voting are available.

Respectfully submitted,

Originally signed by

Randy Mellow  
Deputy Chief