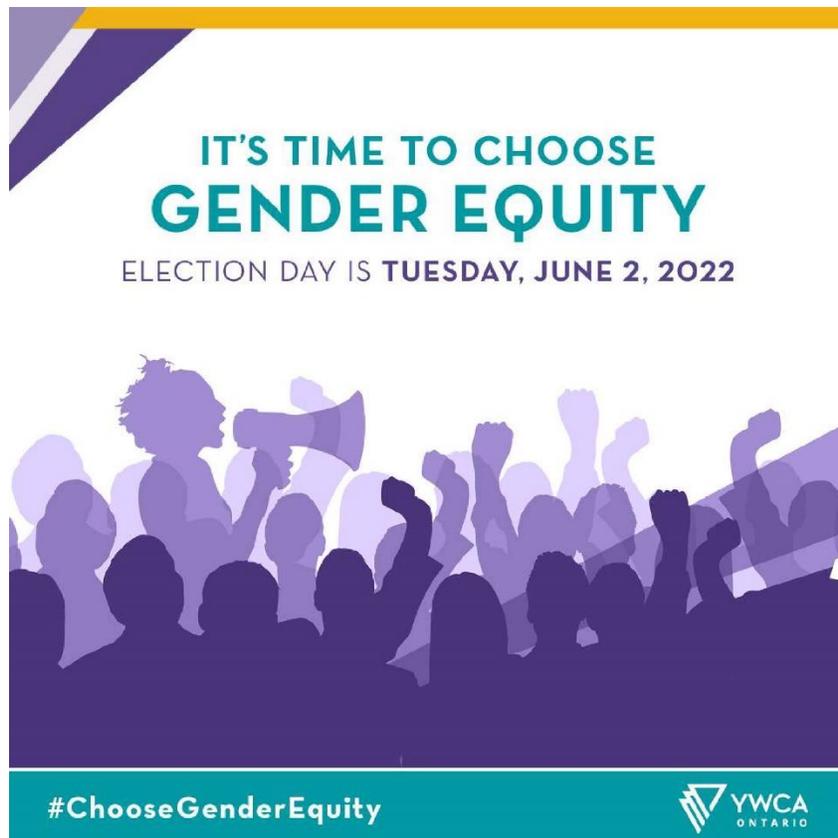


# YWCA Ontario Provincial Election Guide 2022



June 2022



**ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2022**  
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This document is a guide for YWCA Member Associations and their staff to use internally and externally to engage program participants in the 2022 provincial election.

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Keep your eyes peeled for more election coverage from YWCA Ontario Member Associations (MA) in the coming weeks! Please make sure to follow your nearest YWCA MA on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. You can also visit our website: [ChooseGenderEquity.ca](http://ChooseGenderEquity.ca). [Find your closest member association.](#)

## 2022 Ontario Election

### The 43<sup>th</sup> General Election

Ontario's 43<sup>th</sup> election starts when the writ drops, which is expected to happen on May 4, 2022 and will end on Election Day on June 2, 2022. By law, a writ period, or, when political candidates are allowed to campaign for peoples' votes, must last at least 28 days.

There are 124 seats in the Ontario Legislature: Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario (67), New Democratic Party of Ontario (39), Ontario Liberal Party (7), Green Party of Ontario (1), New Blue Party of Ontario (1), Ontario Party (1), Independents (no party affiliation), (5) and there are 3 vacant seats. A party needs 63 seats in order to win a majority government.

Women's representation stood at roughly 40% with 49 seats filled in the 2018 election. At the time, this was the highest proportion of women in government achieved in any provincial legislature across the country. Since then, British Columbia and Quebec have surpassed Ontario with 42.5% and 44% of seats held by women. Black, Indigenous and racialized people, as well as 2SLGBTQ+ in the Ontario legislature, are still underrepresented. While we do not have exact demographic data, we know a mere 27 of the 124 (21.8%) seats are held by Black, Indigenous or racialized MPPs, and we know of only two seats (1.6%) held by 2SLGBTQ+ MPPs.

This is the first provincial election to occur since the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, Elections Ontario will be implementing health and safety measures to protect election workers and voters. Please keep an eye on Elections Ontario for updates on COVID 19 safety protocols. Updates can be found [here](#). You can also find your electoral district [here](#).



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**YWCA Ontario and the Provincial Election**

YWCA Ontario has launched a provincial election campaign called Choose Gender Equity and is using the hashtag #ChooseGenderEquity. The coalition of YWCA Member Associations in Ontario will highlight issues that are core to our mission. Our five-point feminist plan calls for

- Increasing social assistance rates to \$2000;
- Investing in safe, affordable housing options;
- Enhancing the child care agreement to include decent work and pay provisions for child care workers;
- Implementing decent work conditions for women; and,
- Creating and implementing a province wide strategy to eliminate gender-based violence.

We are excited to share our 2022 provincial election campaign with you! It features an online petition ([ChooseGenderEquity.ca](http://ChooseGenderEquity.ca)) that lets supporters send a message to their local candidates about our key issues and a social media toolkit you can use to amplify and support these issues online. Your local YWCA may host election events, be sure to stay tuned to their social channels for updates. Together, we will send a strong message to candidates that gender equity must be prioritized in #Elxn43.

## Election FAQs

**Why should I care about the provincial election?**

The provincial government is responsible for key policy areas that impact your everyday life:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Direct taxes              | <input type="radio"/> Marriage                  | <input type="radio"/> Transit   |
| <input type="radio"/> Health care and hospitals | <input type="radio"/> Property and civil rights | <input type="radio"/> Agriculture and immigration is shared with the federal government |
| <input type="radio"/> Education                 | <input type="radio"/> Community safety          |   |
| <input type="radio"/> Child care                | <input type="radio"/> Housing                   |   |

Most importantly, the provincial government creates laws in the above-listed policy areas and manages the distribution of provincial tax dollars as well as federal transfers. This helps to pay for things like child care, education, health care, housing, public safety, infrastructure and transit.

These are systems we interact with every day: Maybe you pursue education at college or university or have a child enrolled in a child care program. Perhaps you take public transit on a local roadway to work every day. Social services like child care, affordable housing, and social assistance are all under provincial jurisdiction. We know that



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women, girls and gender diverse people, particularly those who are low-income, are disproportionately reliant on these public services.

The provincial government makes huge decisions on priorities and spending. By participating in the election process, either by speaking out or voting if you are able, you can have a say in the direction of this province. Every election is a chance to push all political parties to share their vision for our province, especially on the issues that impact women, girls and gender diverse people. Your vote counts; your participation matters.

### **How does a provincial election work?**

The Premier visits the Lieutenant Governor formally to request an election. The Chief Electoral Officer of Ontario prepares the writs (a form of written command) of election, one for each of the 124 electoral districts in Ontario. The Lieutenant Governor signs the writs, which starts an election. During a general election, eligible voters can vote for a local candidate in their electoral district (also known as a constituency or riding). The candidate who wins the most votes in each electoral district becomes its Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP). The political party with the most elected MPs forms the new provincial government, which can be either majority or minority depending on the number of seats won. A party always holds more power if they win a majority. When all MPPs meet in the Legislature at Queen's Park in Toronto, they make the laws that govern the province.

### **I am not 18 yet; why should I care about the election?**

Your voice in this election matters! Even if you are not eligible to vote, an election is a time to speak out on key issues that matter to you, your family and your community. An election is a great opportunity to learn about the political process and the platforms of the different political parties. You can call on the party leaders and the local candidates in your area to speak to their plan to address the challenges faced by women, girls and gender diverse individuals, if elected.

Elections Ontario also maintains the Register of Future Electors, a database for Canadians aged 16 or 17 to register to vote in advance of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. If eligible, you can input your information ahead of time so that you do not have to go through the registration process later. Information from the Register of Future Electors is automatically transferred to the Voters List when a person turns 18 and their eligibility is confirmed. You can find out more about the Register and add yourself [here](#).

### **I am unable to vote in Ontario; why should I care about the election?**

The decisions made at Queen's Park ("the Legislature") still impact your life every single day. Even if you are currently not eligible to vote, it is still important to engage yourself in what is happening in the provincial election.



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This is your chance to speak out about the issues that matter to you, your family and your community. It is a time to make yourself aware of the political process and the platforms of the different political parties. You can call on the party leaders and the local candidates in your area to speak to their plan to address the challenges faced by women, girls and gender-diverse people, if elected. For example, sharing on social media, blogging about topics that matter to you, signing and initiating petitions, joining community groups that advocate for certain issues etc. are all great ways to exercise your political power without voting. Lived experience is policy expertise!

You can also influence the people around you by talking about the election and the key issues at stake. By engaging with people in your network – whether friends, neighbours or colleagues – you are contributing to a crucial dialogue that promotes civic engagement and highlights key issues that should be on the public agenda.

## Voting Information

### Who can vote?

To be eligible to vote in this provincial election, you must be:

- At least 18 years of age on election day; and
- A Canadian citizen; and
- A resident of Ontario; and
- Be able to prove your identity and address.

All criteria must be met in order to vote.

### How do I vote?

Electors who are on the Voters List will receive a Voter Information Card in the mail from Elections Ontario with information about when, where and how to vote. If you receive a Voter Information Card, you are on the Voters List. Bring your Voter Information Card **and** one piece of ID that has your name on it to vote.

**In person:** You can vote at a polling station in your riding on **Election Day, June 2**. The polls in your riding are **open for 12 hours from 9:00 am – 9:00 pm**. Or, you can vote in person at your returning office from the day after an election is called in your electoral district until 6 pm the day before election day. **You can also vote in advance at a polling station at any polling station within your riding from May 19 - May 28, 2022 from 10 am - 8 pm**. Not all locations are open every day so be sure to check [elections.on.ca](http://elections.on.ca) for days and locations.



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**By mail:** If you are part of a vulnerable population or will not be in your riding during advance or election day polls, you can vote by mail. **It is important to note that voting by mail involves advance planning and requires you to upload a photo of or copy and mail your ID.** You can apply for your voting kit by mail any time after the election is called (after May 4, 2022). Applications must be received by Elections Ontario before 6:00 pm on Friday, May 27, 2022 (applications must be received six days before election day) and all completed voting kits must be received before 6:00 pm on June 2, 2022. Once you have decided to vote by mail, you cannot change your mind and go to the polls in person. **You can apply to vote by mail at [www.elections.on.ca](http://www.elections.on.ca).**

**By home visit:** If you are unable to go to your returning office because of a disability, are unable to read or write, are unable to complete an application form and/or are someone who requires assistance, you can request to vote by home visit. To request a home visit, reach out to your returning office contact - you can find that [here](#).

**For more information about accessible voting provisions, see page 9-10 of this document.**

For voter information in other languages, visit [Elections Ontario's Information in Other Languages page](#).

#### **What if I did not get a Voter Information Card?**

If you did not receive a Voter Information Card, your name may not be on the Voters List. If you are eligible to vote based on the four criteria previously mentioned, you must add your name and address to the Voters List. Go to [www.elections.on.ca](http://www.elections.on.ca) and upload a photo of an ID that proves your name and where you live. During an election, you can register at a voting location or at the returning office for your electoral district with ID – once registered, you can vote.

If you DID receive a Voter Information Card, you need to show it and one piece of ID with your name on it in order to vote. Some forms of acceptable ID:

- Any document issued by the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, a municipality or a government agency
- Birth certificate
- Canadian citizenship card
- Canadian Forces ID card
- Canadian passport
- Credit/debit card
- Employee card
- Hospital card/bracelet
- Old Age Security card
- Ontario health card



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- Professional licence
- SIN card
- Status card
- Student card
- Union card
- Veterans Affairs health card
- Any document from the list below

If you did not receive a Voter Information Card (or lost it), you need to show one piece of ID with both your name and CURRENT address on it in order to vote. Don't fret - there are many options for ID:

- Any document issued by the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, a municipality, OR a government agency
- Band council documentation
- Band membership card
- Bank statement
- Blood donor card
- Certificate of Identity & Residence (E0824)
- CNIB ID card
- Correspondence letter
- Credit card statement
- Credit union statement
- Government cheque or cheque stub
- Government statement of benefits or EI
- ID issues by Inuit authority
- Indian status card
- Income tax assessment
- Insurance certificate, policy or statement
- Letter from a public curator, public guardian or public trustee
- Letter of confirmation of residence from a First Nation band or reserve or an Inuit local authority
- Medical clinic card
- Métis card
- Mortgage contract or statement
- Ontario driver's licence
- Ontario motor vehicle permit
- Parolee card
- Pay stub



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- Pension plan statement
- Personal cheque
- Property tax assessment
- Public transportation card
- Residential lease or sub-lease
- T4 tax slip
- Transcript or report card
- Tuition statement
- Utility bill
- Vehicle ownership

**What if I do not have a fixed/permanent address?**

- If you do not have a permanent residence or an ID, you can complete a temporary identification form called a Certificate of Identity and Residence. To receive this certificate, please speak to the administrator at your site of residence.

Examples of non-permanent residences:

- Student residence
- Seniors' residence
- Long-term care facility
- Shelter
- Soup Kitchen / food bank
- Community-based residential facility

**Will voting meet my accessibility needs?**

Elections Ontario has multiple tools and services available to ensure voting is as accessible as possible. Accessibility services are offered at voting locations, including magnifiers and access to ballot templates with braille numbering and cut-outs. You are also able to have assistance from a friend or support person in marking your ballot, or use your mobile phone or device as an accessibility tool. To book these services, be sure to call your returning office. Find your returning office contact information at [voterinformationselections.on.ca/en/election/search](http://voterinformationselections.on.ca/en/election/search) or by calling 1.888.668.8683 (TTY: 1.888.292.2312) when the election is called.

**Accessible voting locations:**

To confirm the accessibility of your voting location, visit [voterinformationselections.on.ca/en/election/search](http://voterinformationselections.on.ca/en/election/search) when the election is called. Election officials can bring the ballot outside the voting location to make the process more accessible. You can also apply to transfer your voting location if another one better meets your accessibility needs by contacting your returning office before election day. Service animals are allowed.



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**Interpreters and intervenors:**

Voters who require an American Sign Language or Langue des Signes Québécoise interpreter may book through Canadian Hearing Services. Voters who require an intervenor may book through Canadian Hearing Services or the CNIB DeafBlind Community Services.

In Western and Eastern Ontario and the Greater Toronto Area, CNIB is the intervenor service provider. In Northern Ontario, Canadian Hearing Services is the intervenor service provider. These service providers will bill Elections Ontario directly for the cost.

CNIB DeafBlind Community Services  
Phone: 613.563.4021 ext.5016  
Email: [jessica.white@deafblindservices.ca](mailto:jessica.white@deafblindservices.ca)

Canadian Hearing Services – CHS Interpreting & Translation Services  
Phone: 1.866.518.0000, TTY: 1.877.215.9530  
Email: [interpreting@chs.ca](mailto:interpreting@chs.ca)

**Assistive voting technology:**

Assistive voting technology lets voters listen to their ballot choices and cast their ballot secretly and independently. It will be available at returning offices from May 21 to June 1. On election day, June 2, assistive voting technology is available by appointment only. Walk-in requests to use the technology on election day are not guaranteed but will be accommodated where possible.

Voters can choose one of three controller options:

- Audio tactile interface: the controller has audio directions, and features large, raised buttons, bright colours, and braille inscriptions.
- Paddles: the paddles can be pressed using hands, feet, or elbows to vote.
- Sip and puff technology: the device allows voters to mark their ballot by “sipping” (inhaling) or “puffing” (exhaling) into a straw.

**Accessible format requests:**

Voting information can be provided in accessible formats upon request. Requests can be made by contacting [info@elections.on.ca](mailto:info@elections.on.ca) or by calling 1.888.668.8683 (TTY: 1.888.292.2312).

**Voting by home visit:**

Contact your returning office to request a home visit from May 5 to June 1 if you are:



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- Unable to go to the returning office because of a disability;
- Unable to complete an application form; or,
- Someone who requires assistance.

Find your returning office contact information at <https://voterinformationselections.on.ca/en/election/search> or by calling 1.888.668.8683 (TTY: 1.888.292.2312) when the election is called.

#### **Voting while in hospital**

If you are temporarily in hospital during the election, you may be able to vote through the hospital program from May 16 to May 18. Contact your returning office to find out if your hospital is participating.

Find your returning office contact information at <https://voterinformationselections.on.ca/en/election/search> or by calling 1.888.668.8683 (TTY: 1.888.292.2312) when the election is called.

#### **Elections Ontario App**

Download the Elections Ontario app from the App Store or Google Play and create an account to access:

- A scannable version of your Voter Information Card;
- A full list of your voting locations and dates;
- Customizable election notifications; and,
- A list of candidates for your electoral district.

The app has been designed to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and is compatible with assistive technologies.

Website: <https://my.elections.on.ca/en/account/download-app>



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## Resources to Engage Participants in the Election

### [Elections Ontario](#)

This is the home base for all things related to the democratic process of voting in this provincial election. It will help you figure out your registration status, find your riding and its past results, profile information and a list of candidates. The site also offers information on health and safety measures, different methods of voting and logistical information about the types of ID needed to vote. <https://www.elections.on.ca/>

### [Democratic Engagement Exchange](#)

This project out of X University in downtown Toronto is focused on creating a more inclusive democracy. They are hosting workshops across the province, have a great voter outreach and engagement handbook to read and a number of easy-to-use digital videos, graphics and templates to share. [www.engagedemocracy.ca/ontario-election-2022](http://www.engagedemocracy.ca/ontario-election-2022)

### [Ontario Equal Pay Coalition](#)

The Equal Pay Coalition is comprised of dozens of trade unions, women's organizations, and community groups seeking to end gender pay discrimination and close the gender pay gap. The Coalition has many resources available for the 2022 election, including polls related to women's economic equality, an email template to send to MPPs asking for equal pay, and a recording of the April 2022 leaders debate focused on closing the gender pay gap. <http://equalpaycoalition.org/>

### [Internal Engagement Strategy](#)

Please refer to the internal engagement strategy for more ideas on how to engage participants in the election.



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## The Issues

### YWCA Ontario urges action on gender equity during #ELXN43

YWCA Ontario calls on all provincial political parties to prioritize gender equity this election and to commit to a **five-point, feminist plan**. Support our campaign and let candidates know that you **#ChooseGenderEquity** this election!

#### Income Security

Ontario's social assistance program does not meet basic needs. Ensuring the health and dignity of women on low and fixed incomes, reducing poverty and supporting families must be of paramount concern to all political parties.

##### 1. Increase social assistance rates to at least \$2000 per month

- Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) rates should be raised immediately to \$2000 per month to reflect the federal government's benchmark of a minimum income security program.
- Invest in increases to OW and ODSP until monthly benefits reflect this minimum standard, ensuring that people living with disabilities have access to additional support.
- Ensure women and all people with precarious immigration status have access to income support and an expedited path to permanent residency.

#### Housing

The lack of affordable and supportive housing in Ontario is at crisis levels. Women and racialized communities are concentrated in industries that have been most impacted by COVID-19 – and face a higher risk of eviction and homelessness. This is particularly true for women, gender diverse and Two-Spirit Indigenous community members. We need greater, intersectional funding for deeply affordable housing, with special investments in homes for women-led families, particularly those fleeing violence.

##### 2. Invest in a continuum of housing options for women and gender diverse people – including safe, affordable housing, emergency shelters, transitional and supportive programs

- Invest in a range of supportive housing for specific communities of women including Indigenous women and Two-Spirit people, senior women and trans individuals.



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- Invest in culturally-responsive housing supports to ensure women, particularly survivors of violence, and women with experiences of chronic homelessness, institutionalization and substance abuse, can maintain housing.
- Invest in a provincial Portable Housing Benefit to ensure women and other people experiencing income instability can maintain their housing.

### **Child Care**

Ontario’s signing of the federal child care agreement was a historic win for gender equality. However, advocates have been clear that in order for the plan to succeed, it must include a workforce strategy to recruit and retain child care workers. Child care workers deserve decent work and fair wages.

#### **3. Enhance the federal child care agreement to include decent work and pay provisions for all child care workers**

- Address the shortage of early childhood educators and improve the long-term affordability and accessibility of child care by providing enough funding to pay child care workers at least \$25 per hour.
- Ensure federal child care dollars support a public and non-profit-driven expansion of child care services that offer a range of flexible models for quality early learning.
- Prioritize immediate support for non-profit child care centres that are currently operating at a deficit to ensure these spots do not permanently close.

### **Women’s Employment**

The pandemic brought on the first-ever global she-cession, which saw a significant drop in women’s labour market participation. Many women-focused employment programs are funded on year-by-year bases, which makes it difficult to recruit staff, plan for the future or meet growing demands. We need better funding for women-focused employment and training programs and more comprehensive government action to improve employment and labour standards, particularly for the care economy and other feminized industries.

#### **4. Implement decent work conditions for women that include gender-inclusive upskilling and other employment programs**

- Raise Ontario’s employment standards to a decent work floor for care workers and all workers, including minimum wages that reflect living wages and adequate paid sick days. Ensure all workers in our province, including seasonal workers, have access to minimum employment standards.



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- Invest in multi-year funding for employment, training and upskilling programs for women and ensure programs are offered by women-focused organizations. Modify Employment Ontario to include women as a priority category in order to ensure clear gender targets in funding allocations.
- Take meaningful action to address gender and racial pay disparities and ensure care work is decent work by enhancing public expenditures in the public and non-profit care economy.

### **Violence Against Women and Gender Diverse People**

Gender-based violence was a grave concern for women, girls and gender diverse people long before COVID-19 but cases of violence have soared during the pandemic. Violence against women and gender diverse people is persistent, life threatening and on the rise. Significant government action is needed to end gender-based violence.

#### **5. Create and implement a coordinated province wide strategy to eliminate gender-based violence**

- Support permanent, multi-year operating funding for organizations providing support to women and gender diverse people, including violence against women shelters, transitional housing, child care, girls' programs, violence prevention and education work and employment programs.
- Eliminate red tape that prevents women without status from being able to attain housing and social assistance, including child benefits.
- Repeal Bill 124, which disproportionately impacts women-concentrated fields that support women, girls and gender diverse people, such as transitional housing and shelter employees, child care workers and nurses – the very fields that bore the brunt of the pandemic.

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## Ways to Engage with the Issues

There are many ways to talk about the issues that matter to you! Below are some ideas:

- **Raise them at an all-candidates’ debate**, which is a public meeting that brings together all candidates running for elected office in an electoral district (also known as a constituency or riding) during an election campaign and invites the community to have conversations with the candidates.
- **Chat with canvassers when they come to your door.** If you hear a knock at your door during the election period and you feel comfortable answering the door, it could very well be canvassers for political parties. While their job is to try to convince you to vote for them, it is a good chance for you to ask questions about the issues that matter to you (for example: “What is your party’s plan for making sure I can find and afford a child care space?”)
- **Talk about them on social media**, where your views and perspectives can be shared and amplified across a network of people.
- **Have conversations with friends and family.** Chatting about the issues playing out in an election with the people we care about can help emphasize the way in which politics impacts parts of our day-to-day lives.
- **Participate in YWCA events.** Throughout the election period, YWCA’s across the province will be working to engage participants in the election. Stop by and join the conversation! At these events, you will learn about the YWCA Ontario campaign #ChooseGenderEquity and our five-point feminist plan for candidates and how to vote. Even if you are not eligible to vote, these events are for you. Election issues are everyone’s issues!

### Key Questions:

While these are geared toward candidates, you can always use them as prompts or entry points for conversations about the election or just bear them in mind before heading to the polls.

#### *Child care*

- Accessible and affordable child care is central to gender equity and women’s economic empowerment, as the pandemic has clearly shown. What concrete steps will your party take to ensure the rollout of the child care agreement signed with the federal government is accessible to every family in Ontario who needs child care?
- Will your party address the shortage of early childhood educators and improve the long-term affordability and accessibility of child care by providing enough funding to pay child care workers at least \$25 per hour?
- Will your party commit to ensuring federal child care dollars support a public and non-profit-driven expansion of child care services that offer a range of flexible models for quality early learning?
- Will your party prioritize immediate support for non-profit child care centres that are currently operating at a deficit to ensure child care spots are not lost?



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- Recognizing that even \$10/day child care is out of reach for low-income families in Ontario, will your party commit to a sliding scale fee model to ensure the program is accessible to all families who wish to access it?

#### *Housing*

- There is a critical need for gender-responsive housing options for women, including safe, affordable housing, emergency shelters, transitional and supportive programs. What concrete steps will you take to address the critical issues of housing and support for women, girls, gender diverse individuals and their families?
- What is your party's plan to expand and invest in safe, affordable housing? What about supportive housing?
- How will your party respond to urgent calls for rent relief to mitigate the devastating impacts of job losses and lost wages due to lockdowns and COVID infections?
- How will your party support housing strategies by and for Indigenous women and women's organizations?

#### *Income security*

- How will your party ensure people who live at or below the poverty line in Canada are not further marginalized?
- Will your party commit to increasing social assistance rates to at least \$2000 per month?
- How will your party create a more sustainable and just social safety net while also addressing the rising cost of living in Canada?
- How will you make Employment Insurance more accessible?
- How will your party ensure livable incomes for all people – including those who cannot participate in the labour market and have to rely on social assistance to survive?

#### *Gender-based violence*

- What is your party's plan for addressing systemic issues that contribute to gender-based violence?
- How much money will your party invest in the prevention and response to gender-based violence in Ontario?
- What is your party's plan to centre the voices of the populations most impacted by gender-based violence in its work to protect women, gender diverse people and future generations?
- How will your party prioritize the needs and voices of Indigenous women in creating plans and programs to address gender-based violence?

#### *Decent work & decent pay*

- What is your party's plan for closing the gender pay gap?
- Does your party support mandating paid sick days?
- What is your party's position on raising the minimum wage to at least \$20 per hour?
- How will your party work towards helping women recover economically from Covid-19?
- What is your party's plan to reduce working poverty, which is on the rise?
- Will your party establish affordable, accessible public childcare with decent wages and conditions for childcare workers, health, community & social services, and education workers?



ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2022  
#ChooseGenderEquity [www.ChooseGenderEquity.ca](http://www.ChooseGenderEquity.ca)

Keep your eyes peeled for more election coverage from YWCA Ontario Member Associations in the coming weeks! Please make sure to follow your nearest YWCA MA on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. You can also visit our website: [ChooseGenderEquity.ca](http://ChooseGenderEquity.ca). [Find your nearest MA](#).

#### Ontario YWCA Member Associations

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