

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members
From: Craig Smith, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)
Date: March 28, 2025
Regarding: **Dissolution of Parliament March 2025**

Dissolution

Dissolution terminates Parliament, ending all business in the Senate and in the House of Commons, and is followed by a general election.¹³¹ The date of the election is set in accordance with the provisions of the Canada Elections Act, which stipulates that a general election must be held on the third Monday in October in the fourth calendar year following polling day from the last general election.¹³² However, given that dissolution is a prerogative act of the Crown, the Governor General, on the advice of the Prime Minister, may dissolve Parliament any time before this date and issue a proclamation for a general election.¹³³

Three proclamations are usually issued at the time of dissolution. The first is for the dissolution itself, stating that Parliament is dissolved and declaring that “the Senators and Members of Parliament are discharged from their meeting and attendance”. A second proclamation appears simultaneously; it calls the next Parliament and informs with regard to the issuance of writs of election, the date set for polling and the date set for the return of the writs. The third proclamation fixes the date on which Parliament is summoned to meet, sometime following the return of the writs.¹³⁴ The date of this summons may be changed through the issuance of a further proclamation.¹³⁵

A Parliament may be dissolved in accordance with the provisions set down in the Canada Elections Act or earlier, regardless of whether the House is scheduled to meet or not that day.¹³⁶ If the House is sitting and there is not to be a prorogation ceremony in the Senate Chamber, the dissolution is usually announced to the House by the Prime Minister or another Minister.¹³⁷ The Speaker then leaves the Chair.

The demise of the Crown does not have the effect of dissolving Parliament.¹³⁸ In ancient British practice and until 1843 in Canada, the demise of the Crown did result in an automatic dissolution of Parliament. Because the summoning of Parliament is a royal prerogative and Parliament sits at the pleasure of the Crown, its demise meant a lapsing of the summons and thus dissolution.¹³⁹ In 1843, an act was passed in the Province of Canada providing that a Parliament in existence at the time of any future demise of the Crown should continue as it would have otherwise, unless dissolved by the Crown.¹⁴⁰ Similar legislation existed in other provinces prior to Confederation.¹⁴¹ The law was re-enacted in the First Session of the First Parliament of Canada.¹⁴²

Effects of Dissolution

With dissolution, all business of the House is terminated. The Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and the members of the Board of Internal Economy continue in office for the acquittal of certain administrative duties until they are replaced in a new Parliament.¹⁴³ For the purposes of certain allowances payable to them, Members of the House of Commons at the time of dissolution are deemed to remain so until the date of the general election.¹⁴⁴ Members' offices, both in Ottawa and in their constituencies, remain open to allow Members and their staff to provide services to constituents.¹⁴⁵ As the office budget for Members is drawn from public funds, Members' offices and staff may not be used for electoral purposes.

All items on the Order Paper including government and private Members' bills die.¹⁴⁶ The government's obligation to provide answers to written questions, to respond to petitions or to produce papers requested by the House also ends with dissolution.¹⁴⁷ The government must wait until the new Parliament is in session before tabling any document that is required pursuant to an act, resolution or Standing Order.

Committees cease to exist until the House reconstitutes them following the election. All orders of reference expire, and the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of all committees cease to hold office. The government is no longer required to provide responses to committee reports.

The executive committees of interparliamentary associations carry over from one Parliament to another. However, as a general rule, the activities being organized by the associations are postponed during a dissolution. Since multilateral assemblies continue to meet, Canada's representation is usually ensured by Senators.¹⁴⁸ Once an election has been held and prior to the start of a new Parliament, both Senators and re-elected Members may participate. Official parliamentary exchange programs with other assemblies are also usually postponed.

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For more information regarding this *Communiqué* please contact the Local office by phone at 519-474-3150, or by email at etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com