

Recalling UCP MLAs: A Step-by-Step Guide Under the Updated Recall Act (Bill 52 as Amended by Bill 54)

The Recall Act (Bill 52, 2021) provides Albertans with a formal, democratic mechanism to remove an MLA from office before the end of their term if constituents believe the MLA is not fulfilling their responsibilities. Bill 54 (assented May 2025) introduced significant amendments to streamline the process, reduce barriers, and clarify timelines. This guide reflects the current law as of November 2025.

What Is Recall?

Recall is a voter-initiated process to remove a sitting MLA and trigger a by-election. It requires:

1. Approval of a recall petition by Elections Alberta.
2. 60% of eligible voters who voted in the last election, in the electoral division, signing the petition within 90 days.
3. A recall vote (simple majority required for removal).
4. If successful, the MLA's seat is vacated, and a by-election is held.

Legal Reference (Recall Act, s. 5):

“A successful petition must contain valid signatures of at least 60% of the electors on the post-election day list of electors for the electoral division.”

Why Pursue Recall?

Recall allows constituents to hold MLAs accountable mid-term when:

The MLA fails to represent constituency interests.

There is evidence of serious misconduct, incompetence, or neglect of duty.

Key local issues (e.g., healthcare access, education funding, infrastructure) are ignored.

Recall is not a popularity contest — it requires clear, documented reasons in the 100-word statement.

Who Can Initiate a Recall

Only a resident elector of the electoral division may apply.

AB Resistance (or any organization) cannot apply on your behalf unless a board member lives in your riding.

When Can You Apply? (Bill 54 Changes)

| Time Period | Status |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| First 18 months after the election | Blocked (Nov 29, 2023 – May 29, 2025) |
| 6 months before fixed election (Oct 2027) | Blocked (Apr 2027 onward) |
| Current open window | November 29, 2024 – March 31, 2027 |
| Only one active petition per riding | No overlapping applications |

Step-by-Step Process (Updated with Bill 54)

Step 1: Form a Petition Committee

Assemble local residents (ideally 5–10) to coordinate.

Appoint:

1. Applicant (submits the application)
2. Chief Financial Officer (CFO) (manages funds, files reports)

Step 2: Submit Application to Elections Alberta

| Document | Details |
|----------------------|--|
| Application Form | Available on elections.ab.ca |
| 100-Word Statement | Reason for recall (must be factual, not defamatory) |
| Applicant ID | Government-issued photo ID + proof of address |
| CFO Appointment Form | Name, address, phone, email |
| \$500 Fee | Certified cheque/money order to "Government of Alberta" |

Bill 54 Change: Fee reduced from \$1,000 to \$500.

The Chief Electoral Officer will determine within 7 days of receiving the application whether the applicant has met all the requirements above.

If the Chief Electoral Officer is not satisfied the requirements have been met, the Chief Electoral Officer will reject the application and provide written notice to the applicant, including the reasons for the rejection.

If the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied the requirements have been met, within 7 days, the Chief Electoral Officer will provide written notice the application has been approved to:

1. the applicant,
2. the MLA named in the application,
3. if applicable, to the leader of the party to which the applicant the MLA belongs, and
4. the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

The member named in an application approved may submit a statement in response to the applicant's statement to the Chief Electoral Officer. This statement must:

1. not exceed 100 words,
2. set out why, in the opinion of the member, the recall is not warranted, and
3. be received by the Chief Electoral Officer within 7 days after the date notice was provided to the member.

The applicant will also be provided with the petition signature sheet and witness affidavit in the format that must be used. Signatures collected on other forms will not be accepted. The applicant is responsible for making copies of the forms.

Within 7 days after the date on which the member's statement is received, or the period to respond expires, whichever is earlier, Elections Alberta will publish on their website:

Step 3: Approval & Petition Launch

Elections Alberta reviews in 10–14 days. If approved, you receive:

1. Official petition sheets
2. 90-day signing window
3. List of eligible electors (post-2023 election list)

Step 4: Register Canvassers

Every signature collector must:

- Be an elector in the riding
- Have lived there 3+ months
- Submit Application to Canvass + ID

There is no limit on the number of canvassers.

Bill 54 Change: Removed cap of 100 canvassers per petition.

Step 5: Collect Signatures

| Requirement | Details |
|-------------------------|---|
| Who can sign? | To be eligible to sign a petition, an individual must be an eligible elector who has resided in the electoral division for at least three months before signing the petition. |
| What must they provide? | Full name, home address, phone/email, signature, date |
| Time limit | All signatures within 90 days |
| Target (average riding) | 34,000 electors → **13,600 valid signatures** |

Canvassing Math (34,000 electors)

| Canvassers | Doors per Person (90 days) | Daily Shift (4 hrs) |
|------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 80 | 275 | > 60–70 doors |
| 40 | 550 | |
| 25 | 880 | |

Bill 54 Change: Signatures now scannable via app (optional digital verification reduces errors).

Step 6: Submit Petition

Deliver to Elections Alberta by Day 90.
Include witness affidavits for each sheet.

Step 7: Verification

Elections Alberta verifies signatures (2–4 weeks).
Random sampling + full audit if close.

If it becomes clear during any part of the verification that the count will not meet the 60% threshold, no further verification is done.

Within 7 days after completing the verification of the petition, Elections Alberta will provide written notice reporting the results to:

- the applicant;
- the member named in the Notice of Recall Petition;

if applicable, the individual who is the leader of the registered party to which the member named in the notice belongs; and
the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

The results will be published on the Elections Alberta website.

Step 8: Recall Vote

If 60% threshold met → recall vote scheduled within 60 days.

Simple majority removes MLA.

By-election follows within 6 months.

How AB Resistance Can Help (Without Applying)

AB Resistance cannot file but provides:

Research support (MLA voting records, constituency neglect)

Town hall organization

Canvassing training & strategy

Promotional materials

CFO guidance

Contact: info@abresistance.ca or abresistance2027@gmail.com

What If Recall Fails?

No penalty to organizers.

No new petition in same riding until next election.

Political impact: Even a failed petition (e.g., 30% signatures) signals discontent and may influence the next election.

Defining “Upholding Responsibilities”

Per the Legislative Assembly of Alberta:

“MLAs represent all constituents, advocate in the Assembly and community, study issues, facilitate policy, and act as goodwill ambassadors.”

Evidence may include:

Voting against constituency interests

Absenteeism from riding events

Failure to respond to constituent concerns

Support for controversial legislation (e.g., Bill 2 & 9, notwithstanding clause use)

Final Notes

Recall is legal, constitutional, and protected.

No need to target Premier Smith — recall is per-riding only.

Cross-party support welcome — NDP, Alberta Party, former UCP voters all eligible.

Ready to Start?

[Join our newsletter](#) to get updates about your constituency.

Check [OperationTotalRecall.ca](https://www.operationtotalrecall.ca) to see if a recall has been started in your constituency.

Download forms at elections.ab.ca/recall

Begin community outreach — town halls, door-to-door, social media.

Your MLA works for you. If they've stopped listening, recall is your voice.

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