

Recall and Initiative Act s. 19(2)(c) **Number of words in proponent statement**

Elections BC will count the number of words in the statement as if the written statement was being read aloud. Further, abbreviations, numerals, acronyms and initialisms will be read as if they were written in full.

While Elections BC will not correct errors or otherwise amend a submitted statement, for the purpose of determining the number of words in the statement, Elections BC will interpret words as they would typically be written, regardless of how they appear on the page as submitted. [For example, if the statement read “recalltheMember”, Elections BC would consider it to say “recall the Member” and count it as three words; however, the statement would still be published as “recalltheMember”.]

Other standards to be followed when calculating the number of words in a submitted statement are:

- Contractions are to be considered one word
 - e.g. “can’t” is one word, not two
- In the case of hyphenated terms made up of two (or more) words that could each stand alone, each segment is considered an individual word. Segments of hyphenated terms that cannot stand alone would not be considered individual words.
 - e.g. “write-in” – since both “write” and “in” can stand alone, “write-in” is two words, not one
 - e.g. “re-elected” – since “re” is not a word on its own, “re-elected” is one word, not two
 - e.g. “where-to-vote” – since all three segments can stand alone, “where-to-vote” is three words, not one
 - e.g. “non-write-in” – since “non” is not a word on its own, “non-write-in” is two words, not three
- Subject to the standard on hyphenated terms above, numerals are to be spelled out in words before calculating the number of words
 - e.g. “85” is two words (eighty-five)
 - e.g. “one hundred” is two words
 - e.g. “twenty-three” is two words
 - e.g. “2010” is three words (two thousand ten)

- Electoral District names that are hyphenated are to be read without the hyphen and each word in the name considered as a unique word
 - e.g. “Powell River-Sunshine Coast” is four words, not three
- Initialisms and acronyms are to be spelled out in full before calculating the number of words
 - e.g. “MLA” is five words, not one (Member of the Legislative Assembly)
 - e.g. “NASA” is five words, not one (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)
- Initials included in an individual’s name are to be considered separate words.
 - e.g. “Robert I. Jones” is three words
- Subject to the standard on numerals, each segment of a date written in words or words and numerals are to be spelled out in words before calculating the number of words
 - e.g. “May 12, 2009” is five words
 - e.g. “10/10/11” is five words
- Dollar amounts written with a monetary symbol are to be spelled out in words before calculating the number of words
 - e.g. “\$100” is three words (one hundred dollars)
 - e.g. “\$1 million” is three words (one million dollars)

The Oxford English Dictionary will be used to determine the typical use of words for the purposes of this interpretation.

Counting the number of words in the statement must be done manually. Electronic word counting functions, such as the word count feature in MS Word, do not follow the standards used by Elections BC.