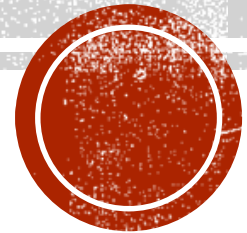


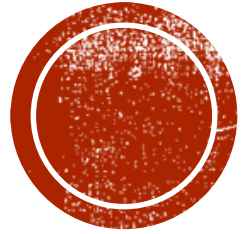
# NEGLECTED CITIZENRY: HOMELESSNESS AND VOTING IN TORONTO

*Anna Kopec*

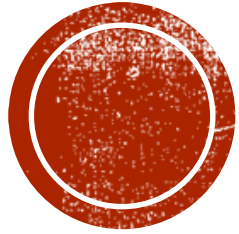
*PhD Student*

*University of Toronto*





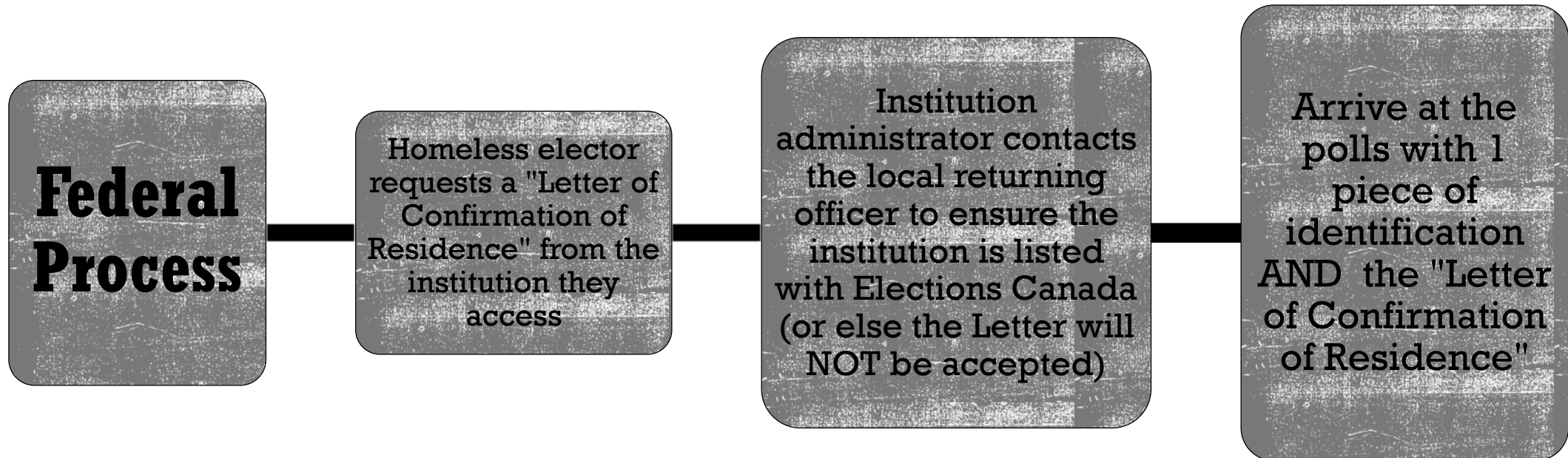
**CAN CANADIAN CITIZENS  
WITHOUT A PERMANENT  
ADDRESS VOTE?**



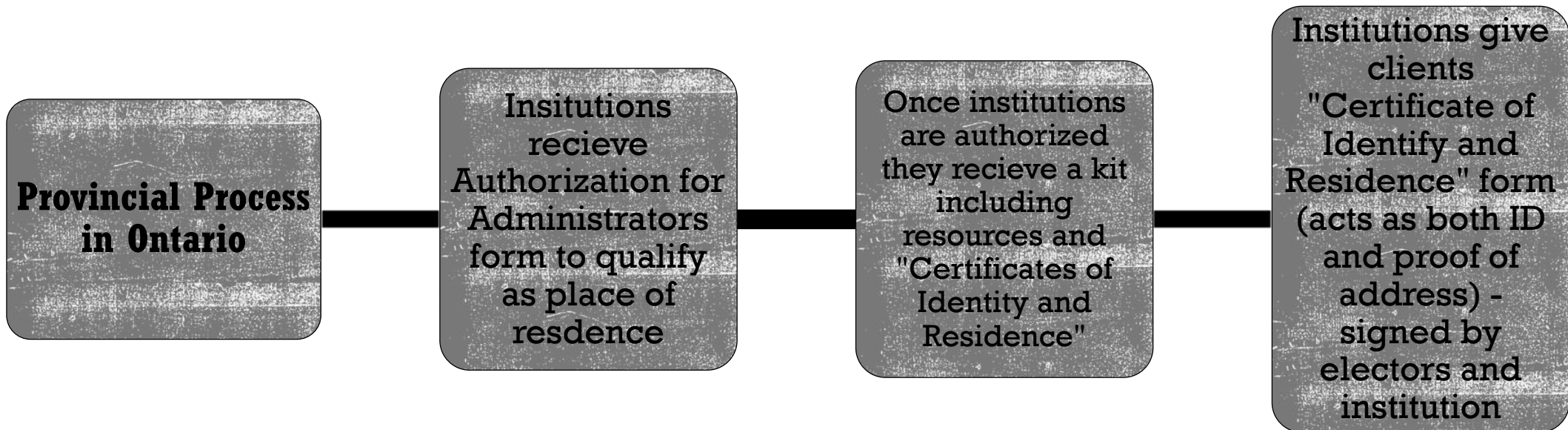
**HOW?**



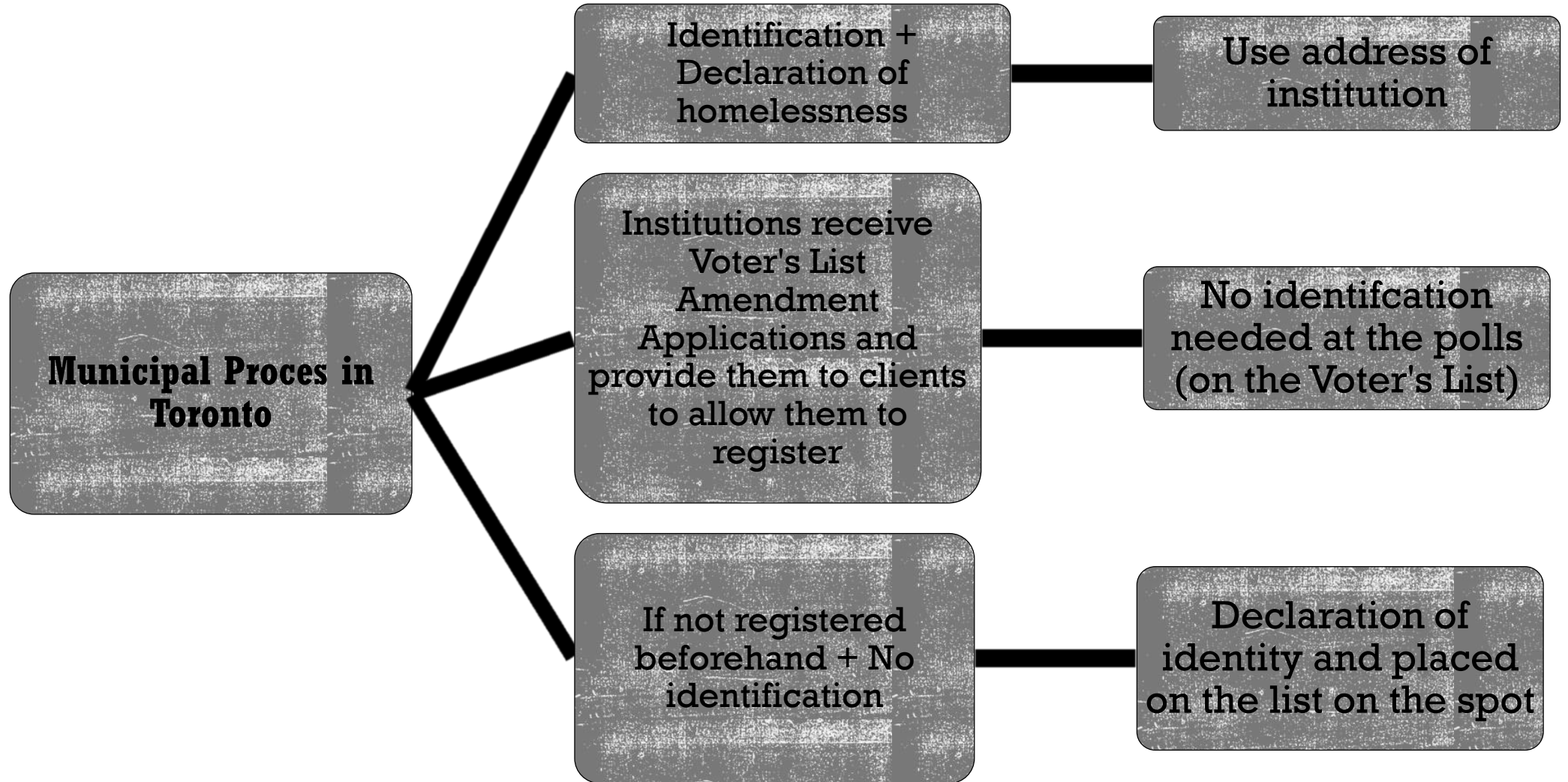
# FEDERAL PROCESS

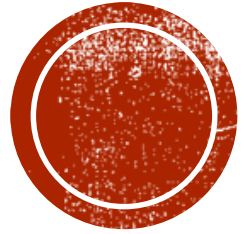


# PROVINCIAL PROCESS (ONTARIO)



# MUNICIPAL PROCESS





# DO CITIZENS WITHOUT A PERMANENT ADDRESS VOTE?

*We don't know... It has not been an area of much research*

*Why not consider the political citizenship of citizens experiencing homelessness?*

# RESEARCH PROJECT

- **Question**
  - What barriers do Canadian citizens experiencing homelessness in Toronto face to voting?
- **Methodology**
  - 45 qualitative interviews
    - 9 service providers from 7 institutions
    - 28 individuals experiencing homelessness from 3 institutions
    - 3 election agency representatives (Elections Canada (via email), Elections Ontario, Toronto City Clerk's Office)
    - 5 politicians (MP's, MPP's, City Councillors)





# ASSUMPTIONS

- It is often assumed that citizens experiencing homelessness do not *want* to participate or are not *knowledgeable* on politics to vote
- “We are smarter than people think”
- Election agencies have identified citizens experiencing homelessness as a vulnerable group requiring further effort/outreach
  - But what does this look like on the ground?
- Politicians focus efforts are focused “where the votes are”
  - They do not see citizens facing homelessness as voters



# KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROCESS

- Over half (54%) of the participants experiencing homelessness were not aware (or unsure) of the processes that exist and therefore believed they could not vote without an address
- Half of those who were aware of the process were from the same drop-in centre
  - That was a polling station during municipal elections



# VOTING

- A majority (71%) of participants experiencing homelessness voted in the past
- Only 25% voted using the process for citizens without a permanent address
- 80% of those that did not vote did not know the process of voting for those without a permanent address



# **BARRIERS**

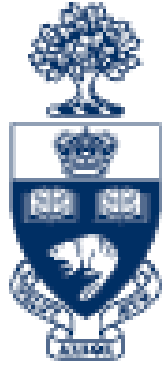
- **Complexity of the processes**
- **Disconnect between election agencies and institutions**
- **Lack of resources**
- **Lack of trained election/polling staff**
  
- **Possible solutions?**



# FUTURE RESEARCH

- *Implementation of the policies*
  - *What is the policy trail?*
- *What actors are involved and what are their responsibilities?*





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**QUESTIONS?**

