

Candidate Nomination Package



Visit the Town's website for more information: www.notl.com

Town Clerk: Grant Bivol
elections@notl.com | 905-468-3266



Candidate Nomination Package

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Notice of Nomination for the 2026 Municipal Elections:

NOMINATION PERIOD: Nominations for the offices listed below may be made by filing Nomination Papers with the Clerk of the appropriate municipality. Nomination Papers must be signed by the candidate and filed in person or by an agent, during regular office hours between Friday, May 1, 2026 and Thursday, August 20, 2026, and between **9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026** (Nomination Day).

- One (1) Lord Mayor
- Eight (8) Town Councillors
- Four (4) English Public School Board Trustees
- Two (2) English Separate School Board Trustees
- One (1) French Public School Board Trustee
- One (1) French Separate School Board Trustee

NOMINATION PROCESS: The Nomination Paper must be accompanied by the following:

- A filing fee in cash, cheque, debit or money order payable to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, in the amount of:
 - \$200.00 for the Office of the Lord Mayor
 - \$100.00 for the Office of the Municipal Councillor or School Board Trustee
- Each Nomination Paper (excluding School Board Trustee candidates) must be endorsed by 25 eligible voters supporting the nomination.
- Each candidate must provide proof of Canadian citizenship when filing their Nomination Paper.
- Third Party Advertising registrations accepted between May 1st, 2026 (1st day for filing nominations) and October 23, 2026 (Friday before Voting Day) during regular business hours.

GENERAL INFORMATION: Please have regard for the following:

- A candidate **must** have registered by filing the nomination form and fee before he/she expends any funds on a campaign or accepts any contributions.
- In the event there is an insufficient number of certified candidates to fill the positions available in each municipality, nominations will be reopened by the appropriate Clerk, for the vacant positions only. In this case, additional nomination papers will be accepted **between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2026**.
- All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that candidates and electors with disabilities are able to receive information and copies of election documents in a format that takes into account their disability. The format may be agreed upon between the candidate and the Clerk.



Department of Corporate Services
1593 Four Mile Creek Road
P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0
905-468-3266 • Fax: 905-468-2959

WHERE TO FILE YOUR NOMINATION PAPERS:

Nominations for the following offices will be received by the **Office of the Town Clerk** during the nomination period at Town Hall at *1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil*;

- Lord Mayor
- Municipal Councillors
- School Board Trustees *filed with lead municipality

For further information, please contact the Town Clerk.

Grant Bivol, Town Clerk
1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Box 100
Virgil, ON L0S 1T0
(905) 468-3266 ext. 228 – grant.bivol@notl.com

Instructions

It is the responsibility of the person being nominated to file a complete and accurate nomination paper. Please print or type information (except signatures).

Nomination paper of a person to be a candidate at an election to be held in the following municipality

Nominated for the Office of			Ward Name or Number (if any)		
Nominee's name as it is to appear on the ballot paper (subject to agreement of the municipal clerk)					
Last Name or Single Name			Given Name(s)		
Nominee's full qualifying address					
Suite/Unit Number	Street Number	Street Name			
Municipality			Province		Postal Code
Mailing Address <input type="checkbox"/> Same as qualifying address					
Suite/Unit Number	Street Number	Street Name			
Municipality			Province		Postal Code
Email Address			Telephone Number	Telephone Number 2	

Declaration of Qualification

I, _____, declare that I am presently legally qualified (or would be presently legally qualified if I were not a member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario or the Senate or House of Commons of Canada) to be elected and to hold the office for which I am nominated.

Signature of Nominee

Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Date Received (yyyy/mm/dd)	Time Received	Initial of Nominee or Agent (if filed in person)	Signature of Clerk or Designate
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Certification by Clerk or Designate

I, the undersigned clerk of this municipality, do hereby certify that I have examined the nomination paper of the aforesaid nominee filed with me and am satisfied that the nominee is qualified to be nominated and that the nomination complies with the Act.

Signature

Date Certified (yyyy/mm/dd)

Instructions

- Candidates must obtain a minimum of 25 original signatures.
- An individual providing an endorsement signature must be a Canadian citizen, aged 18 or older and have a qualifying address in the municipality. An individual may sign an endorsement for more than one person seeking nomination.
- The qualifying address provided must include the postal code.

Personal information collected on this form is obtained under the authority of sections 33 and 95 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. Under section 88 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (and despite anything in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*) documents and materials filed with or prepared by the clerk or any other election official under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* are public records and, until their destruction, may be inspected by any person at the clerk's office at a time when the office is open.

Name of person seeking nomination

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

Endorsement signatures for the nomination of a person for an office in the municipality of _____ in the year _____.

Name of person providing endorsement – 1

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

Qualifying Address

Suite/Unit Number

Street Number

Street Name

Municipality

Province

Postal Code

I endorse _____ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.

Signature

Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Name of person providing endorsement – 2

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

Qualifying Address

Suite/Unit Number

Street Number

Street Name

Municipality

Province

Postal Code

I endorse _____ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.

Signature

Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Name of person providing endorsement – 3

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

Qualifying Address

Suite/Unit Number

Street Number

Street Name

Municipality

Province

Postal Code

I endorse _____ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.

Signature

Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Name of person providing endorsement – 4

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

Qualifying Address

Suite/Unit Number

Street Number

Street Name

Municipality

Province

Postal Code

I endorse _____ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.

Signature

Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Name of person providing endorsement – 5

Last Name or Single Name

Given Name(s)

Qualifying Address

Suite/Unit Number

Street Number

Street Name

Municipality

Province

Postal Code

I endorse _____ as a candidate and declare that I am qualified to be an elector in this municipality.

Signature

Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Instructions

All candidates must complete Boxes A and B. Candidates who receive contributions or incur expenses must complete Boxes C, D, Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 as appropriate. Candidates who use a broadcaster or publisher for an election campaign advertisement must complete Schedule 3. Candidates who receive contributions or incur expenses in excess of \$10,000 must also attach an Auditor's Report.

All surplus funds (after any refund to the candidate or their spouse) shall be immediately paid to the clerk who is responsible for the conduct of the election.

For the campaign period from (day clerk received nomination)

YYYY	MM	DD
------	----	----

to

YYYY	MM	DD
------	----	----

- Initial filing reflecting finances from start of campaign to December 31 (or 45 days after voting day in a by-election)
- Supplementary filing reflecting finances from start of campaign to end of extended campaign period

Box A: Name of Candidate and Office

Candidate's name as shown on the ballot		
Last Name or Single Name	Given Name(s)	
Office for Which the Candidate Sought Election	Ward Name or Number (if any)	
Municipality		
Spending Limit General \$	Parties and Other Expressions of Appreciation \$	Contribution Limit Contributions from Candidate and Spouse \$

I did not accept any contributions or incur any expenses. (Complete Boxes A and B only)

Box B: Declaration

I, _____, declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief that these financial statements and attached supporting schedules are true and correct.

Signature of Candidate _____
Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Date Filed (yyyy/mm/dd)	Time Filed	Initial of Candidate or Agent (if filed in person)	Signature of Clerk or Designate
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Box C: Statement of Campaign Income and Expenses

LOAN

Name of bank or recognized lending institution

Amount borrowed
\$

INCOME

Total amount of all contributions (from line 1A in Schedule 1)

+ \$

Revenue from items \$25 or less

+ \$

Sign deposit refund

+ \$

Revenue from fundraising events not deemed a contribution
(from Part III of Schedule 2)

+ \$

Interest earned by campaign bank account

+ \$

Other (provide full details)

1. + \$

2. + \$

3. + \$

4. + \$

5. + \$

6. + \$

Total Campaign Income (Do not include loan)

= \$ **C1**

EXPENSES (Note: Include the value of contributions of goods and services)

1. Expenses subject to general spending limit

Inventory from previous campaign used in this campaign
(list details in Table 2 of Schedule 1)

+ \$

Advertising

+ \$

Brochures/flyers

+ \$

Signs (including sign deposit)

+ \$

Meetings hosted

+ \$

Office expenses incurred until voting day

+ \$

Phone and/or internet expenses incurred until voting day

+ \$

Salaries, benefits, honoraria, professional fees incurred until voting day

+ \$

Bank charges incurred until voting day

+ \$

Interest charged on loan until voting day

+ \$

Other (provide full details)

1. + \$

2. + \$

3. + \$

4. + \$

5. + \$

6. + \$

Total Expenses subject to general spending limit

= \$ **C2**

2. Expenses subject to spending limit for parties and other expressions of appreciation

1. + \$

2.	_____	+ \$	_____
3.	_____	+ \$	_____
4.	_____	+ \$	_____
5.	_____	+ \$	_____
Total Expenses subject to spending limit for parties and other expressions of appreciation		= \$	C3

3. Expenses not subject to spending limits

Accounting and audit	_____	+ \$	_____
Cost of fundraising events/activities (list details in Part IV of Schedule 2)	_____	+ \$	_____
Office expenses incurred after voting day	_____	+ \$	_____
Phone and/or internet expenses incurred after voting day	_____	+ \$	_____
Salaries, benefits, honoraria, professional fees incurred after voting day	_____	+ \$	_____
Bank charges incurred after voting day	_____	+ \$	_____
Interest charged on loan after voting day	_____	+ \$	_____
Expenses related to recount	_____	+ \$	_____
Expenses related to controverted election	_____	+ \$	_____
Expenses related to compliance audit	_____	+ \$	_____
Expenses related to candidate's disability (provide full details)			
1.	_____	+ \$	_____
2.	_____	+ \$	_____
3.	_____	+ \$	_____
4.	_____	+ \$	_____
5.	_____	+ \$	_____
Other (provide full details)			
1.	_____	+ \$	_____
2.	_____	+ \$	_____
3.	_____	+ \$	_____
4.	_____	+ \$	_____
5.	_____	+ \$	_____
Total Expenses not subject to spending limits		= \$	C4

Total Campaign Expenses (C2 + C3 + C4) = \$ **C5**

Box D: Calculation of Surplus or Deficit

Excess (deficiency) of income over expenses (Income minus Total Expenses) (C1 – C5)	_____	+ \$	D1
If there is a surplus, deduct any refund of candidate's or spouse's contributions to the campaign	_____	- \$	
Surplus (or deficit) for the campaign		= \$	D2

If line D2 shows a surplus, the amount must be paid in trust, at the time the financial statements are filed, to the municipal clerk who is responsible for the conduct of the election.

Schedule 1 – Contributions

Part I – Summary of Contributions

Contributions in money from candidate and spouse	+ \$	
Contributions in goods and services from candidate and spouse (include value listed in Table 1 and Table 2)	+ \$	
Total value of contributions not exceeding \$100 per contributor • Include ticket revenue, contributions in money, goods and services where the total contribution from a contributor is \$100 or less (do not include contributions from candidate or spouse).	+ \$	
Total value of contributions exceeding \$100 per contributor (from line 1B; list details in Table 3 and Table 4) • Include ticket revenue, contributions in money, goods and services where the total contribution from a contributor exceeds \$100 (do not include contributions from candidate or spouse).	+ \$	
Less: Ineligible contributions paid or payable to the contributor Contributions paid or payable to the clerk, including contributions from anonymous sources exceeding \$25	– \$	
	– \$	
Total Amount of Contributions (record under Income in Box C)	= \$	1A

Part II – Contributions from candidate or spouse

Table 1: Contributions in goods or services
(Note: Must also be recorded as Expenses in Box C.)

Description of Goods or Services	Date Received (yyyy/mm/dd)	Value (\$)
Total		

Additional information is listed on separate supplementary attachment, if completed manually.

Table 2: Inventory of campaign goods and materials from previous municipal campaign used in this campaign
(Note: Value must be recorded as a contribution from the candidate and as an expense.)

Description	Date Acquired (yyyy/mm/dd)	Supplier	Quantity	Current Market Value (\$)
Total				

Additional information is listed on separate supplementary attachment, if completed manually.

Part III – Contributions exceeding \$100 per contributor – individuals other than candidate or spouse

Table 3: Monetary contributions from individuals other than candidate or spouse

Name	Full Address	Date Received (yyyy/mm/dd)	Amount Received (\$)	Amount Returned to Contributor or Paid to Clerk (\$)
Total				

Additional information is listed on separate supplementary attachment, if completed manually.

**Table 4: Contributions in goods or services from individuals other than candidate or spouse
(Note: Must also be recorded as Expenses in Box C.)**

Name	Full Address	Description of Goods or Services	Date Received (yyyy/mm/dd)	Value (\$)
Total				

Additional information is listed on separate supplementary attachment, if completed manually.

**Total for Part III – Contributions exceeding \$100 per contributor
(Add totals from Table 3 and Table 4 and record the total in Part 1 – Summary of Contributions)** \$ _____ **1B**

Schedule 2 – Fundraising Events and Activities

Complete a separate schedule for each event or activity held.

Additional schedule(s) attached, if completed manually.

Fundraising Event/Activity 1

Description of fundraising event/activity _____

Date of event/activity (yyyy/mm/dd) _____

Part I – Ticket revenue

Admission charge (per person) \$ _____ **2A**

(If there are a range of ticket prices, attach complete breakdown of all ticket sales)

Number of tickets sold x _____ **2B**

Total Part I (2A X 2B) (include in Part I of Schedule 1) = \$ _____

Part II – Other revenue deemed a contribution

Provide details (e.g., revenue from goods sold in excess of fair market value)

1.	_____	+ \$	_____
2.	_____	+ \$	_____
3.	_____	+ \$	_____
4.	_____	+ \$	_____
5.	_____	+ \$	_____

Total Part II (include in Part I of Schedule 1) = \$ _____

Part III – Other revenue not deemed a contribution

Provide details (e.g., contribution of \$25 or less; goods or services sold for \$25 or less)

1.	_____	+ \$	_____
2.	_____	+ \$	_____
3.	_____	+ \$	_____
4.	_____	+ \$	_____
5.	_____	+ \$	_____

Total Part III (include under Income in Box C) = \$ _____

Part IV – Expenses related to fundraising event or activity

Provide details

1.	_____	+ \$	_____
2.	_____	+ \$	_____
3.	_____	+ \$	_____
4.	_____	+ \$	_____
5.	_____	+ \$	_____

Total Part IV Expenses (include under Expenses in Box C) = \$ _____

Schedule 3 – Broadcasters and Publishers

Complete if candidate used a broadcaster or publisher for an election campaign advertisement.

Table 5: Contact information for broadcasters and publishers used during the election campaign

Name	Type of Advertisement (e.g. print, television, radio etc)	Contact Information

Additional information is listed on separate supplementary attachment, if completed manually.

Auditor's Report – *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (Section 88.25)

A candidate who has received contributions or incurred expenses in excess of \$10,000 must attach an auditor's report.

Professional Designation of Auditor

Municipality			Date (yyyy/mm/dd)
Contact Information			
Last Name or Single Name		Given Name(s)	Licence Number
Address			
Suite/Unit Number	Street Number	Street Name	
Municipality		Province	Postal Code
Telephone Number		Email Address	

The report must be done in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and must:

- set out the scope of the examination
- provide an opinion as to the completeness and accuracy of the financial statement and whether it is free of material misstatement

Report is attached

Personal information, if any, collected on this form is obtained under the authority of sections 88.25 and 95 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. Under section 88 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (and despite anything in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*) documents and materials filed with or prepared by the clerk or any other election official under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* are public records and, until their destruction, may be inspected by any person at the clerk's office at a time when the office is open. Campaign financial statements shall also be made available by the clerk in an electronic format free of charge upon request.

Preliminary Certificate of Maximum Candidate Expenditures:

There are limits on the amount a candidate may spend on expenses during the candidate's campaign period. Campaign expense limits are based on a formula that corresponds to the number of electors in the jurisdiction in which the candidate is seeking office. There are different expense limits for heads of municipal council and for councillors, and school boards.

The clerk will provide each candidate with an estimated spending limit upon filing of a nomination paper. The estimate will be calculated based on the number of electors in the previous election.

By October 1, 2026, the Town Clerk will provide each candidate with a final spending limit. The final campaign spending limit will be calculated based on the number of electors on the voters' list for the current election (2026). If the final limit is lower than the estimate, the higher amount becomes the candidate's official spending limit.

FORMULA TO CALCULATE THE CANDIDATE'S LIMIT:

Lord Mayor:

\$7,500 plus \$13,686.70 (16,102 – 2022 eligible electors X \$0.85) = \$21,186.70

Councillor:

\$5,000 plus \$13,686.70 (16,102 – 2022 eligible electors X \$0.85) = \$18,686.70

Third Party Advertisers

\$5,000 plus \$805.10 (16,102 – 2022 Eligible Electors x \$0.05) = \$5805.10

School Board Trustees

English Public School Board Trustee to be supplied by the City of St. Catharines

English Separate School Board Trustee to be supplied by the City of St. Catharines

French Language Public School Board Trustee to be supplied by the City of Welland

French Language Separate School Board Trustee to be supplied by the City of St. Catharines

Preliminary Certificate of Maximum Contribution to a Candidates Own Campaign:

There is a limit on the total amount a candidate and candidate's spouse may collectively contribute to a candidate's own election campaign. The contribution limit is determined using a formula that corresponds to the number of electors who are eligible to vote in the jurisdiction in which the candidate is seeking office.

All of the contributions that a candidate and candidate's spouse make to their own election campaign count towards this limit, including:

- contributions of money
- the value of goods or services that a candidate or spouse donate to the campaign
- the value of any inventory from the previous election that a candidate uses again in this campaign

The clerk will provide each candidate with an estimated self-funding limit upon filing of a nomination paper. The estimate will be calculated based on the number of electors in the previous election.

By October 1, 2026, the Town Clerk will provide each candidate with a final self-funding limit. The final campaign self-funding limit will be calculated based on the number of electors on the voters' list for the current election (2026). If the final limit is lower than the estimate, the higher amount becomes the candidate's official spending limit. There is a cap of \$25,000. If the formula results in a number greater than \$25,000, the limit will still be \$25,000.

FORMULA TO CALCULATE THE CANDIDATE'S PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION LIMIT:

Lord Mayor:

\$7,500 plus \$3220.40 (16,102 – 2022 eligible electors X \$0.20) = \$10,720.40

Councillor:

\$5,000 plus \$3220.40 (16,102 – 2022 eligible electors X \$0.20) = \$8,220.40

School Boards

This limit does not apply to school board trustee candidates.

NOTICE OF PENALTIES RELATED TO CAMPAIGN EXPENSES

(Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c.32, Sched. S.33.1, as amended)

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with Section 33.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, of the penalties under subsections 88.23 (2) and 92 (1) related to election campaign finances.

Notice of penalties

33.1 The clerk shall, before voting day, give to each person nominated for an office notice of,

- (a) the penalties under subsections 88.23 (2) and 92 (1) related to election campaign finances; and
- (b) the refund of the nomination filing fee that the candidate is entitled to receive in the circumstances described in section 34. 2016, c. 15, s. 25.

Effect of default by candidate

88.23 (1) A candidate is subject to the penalties listed in subsection (2), in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed under this Act,

- (a) if the candidate fails to file a document as required under section 88.25 or 88.32 by the relevant date;
- (b) if a document filed under section 88.25 shows on its face a surplus, as described in section 88.31, and the candidate fails to pay the amount required by subsection 88.31 (4) to the clerk by the relevant date;
- (c) if a document filed under section 88.25 shows on its face that the candidate has incurred expenses exceeding what is permitted under section 88.20; or
- (d) if a document filed under section 88.32 shows on its face a surplus and the candidate fails to pay the amount required by that section by the relevant date. 2016, c. 15, s. 60.

Penalties

(2) Subject to subsection (7), in the case of a default described in subsection (1),

- (a) the candidate forfeits any office to which he or she was elected and the office is deemed to be vacant; and
- (b) until the next regular election has taken place, the candidate is ineligible to be elected or appointed to any office to which this Act applies. 2016, c. 15, s. 60.

Offences by candidate

92 (1) A candidate is guilty of an offence and, on conviction, in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed under this Act, is subject to the penalties described in subsection 88.23 (2),

- (a) if the candidate incurs expenses that exceed the amount determined for the office under section 88.20; or
- (b) if the candidate files a document under section 88.25 or 88.32 that is incorrect or otherwise does not comply with that section. 2016, c. 15, s. 68 (1).

Refund

34 A candidate is entitled to receive a refund of the nomination filing fee if the documents required under subsection 88.25 (1) are filed on or before 2 p.m. on the filing date in accordance with that subsection. 2016, c. 15, s. 26.



Department of Corporate Services
 1593 Four Mile Creek Road
 P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0
 905-468-3266 • Fax: 905-468-2959

2026 Municipal Elections Polling Stations and Advance Polls

Advance Polls	
Wednesday, October 7, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	Council Chambers, Town Hall, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil, ON, L0S 1T0
Saturday, October 17, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	Simpson Room, Community Center, 14 Anderson Lane, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, L0S 1J0
Internet Voting Days	
Monday, October 5, 2026, 10:00 a.m. to Sunday, October 25, 2026, 8:00 p.m.	Once the PIN is received via postal mail, voting can take place anywhere with internet access.
Election Day Polling Stations	
Monday October 26, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	Gymnasium, Community Center, 14 Anderson Lane, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, L0S 1J0
Monday October 26, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	Holiday Inn, Inspire Room, 524 York Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, L0S 1J0
Monday October 26, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	Crossroads Public School, 1350 Niagara Stone Rd, Virgil, ON, L0S 1J0
Monday October 26, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	St. Davids Public School, 1344 York Rd, St. Davids, ON, L0S 1P0
Monday October 26, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	Laura Secord House, 29 Queenston St, Queenston, ON, L2E 6T2

Declaration of Qualifications
For the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake 2026 Municipal Election Candidates
Municipal Elections Act, 1996

I, _____, a nominated candidate for the office of:

- Lord Mayor
 Councillor

Do Solemnly Declare That:

1. I am qualified pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and the *Municipal Act, 2001* to be elected to and to hold the office of:
 Lord Mayor
 Councillor
2. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 1, on Voting Day, October 26, 2026, I will be at least eighteen years of age, a Canadian citizen, a resident of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake or the owner or tenant of land in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake or the spouse of such owner or tenant.
3. I am not ineligible or disqualified under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the *Municipal Act, 2001*, the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* or any other Act to be elected to or hold the above-mentioned office.
4. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 3,
 - I am not an employee of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, or if I am an employee of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, I am on an unpaid leave of absence as provided for by section 30 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. In respect of nominations for the office of Lord Mayor, I am not an employee of the Regional Municipality of Niagara, or if I am an employee of the Regional Municipality of Niagara, I am on an unpaid leave of absence as provided for by section 30 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
 - I am not a judge of any court.
 - I am not a member of the Assembly as provided in the *Legislative Assembly Act* or of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada or, if I am such a person, I will provide proof of my resignation in a form satisfactory to the Clerk of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake prior to 2:00 p.m. on nomination day, August 21, 2026. I understand that the Clerk of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake will reject my nomination for the above-mentioned office if I fail to provide proof of resignation by this deadline.

- I am not a member of the Executive Council of Ontario or a Federal Minister of the Crown.
 - I am not a Provincial Crown employee within the meaning of the *Public Service of Ontario Act*, or if I am a Provincial Crown employee, I am on an unpaid leave of absence as provided by Part V of such Act.
 - I am not a Federal employee within the meaning of the *Public Service Employment Act*, or if I am a Federal employee, I have followed and will continue to follow all the relevant provisions of Part 7 of such Act.
5. I am not prohibited from voting at the municipal election under subsection 17(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
6. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 5,
- I am not a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution; and
 - I am not a person who was convicted of a corrupt practice described in subsection 90(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, during an election that occurred less than five years prior to Monday, October 26, 2026.
7. I am not a candidate who was convicted of a corrupt practice under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* or of an offence under the Criminal Code (Canada), in connection with an act or omission with respect to a municipal election if the Voting Day in that election is less than eight years prior to Monday, October 26, 2026.
8. I am not disqualified from being elected to or holding office by reason of any violations of the election campaign financial requirements or violations for not filing the financial statement pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

AND I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing it to be true, and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath and by virtue of the *Canada Evidence Act*.



Department of Corporate Services
 1593 Four Mile Creek Road
 P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0
 905-468-3266 • Fax: 905-468-2959

Declared before me at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

This _____ day of _____, 2026

 (Signature of candidate)

 (Signature of Clerk or designate)

Name of Candidate			
Candidate for the Office of			
Address	Suite/ Unit	Town	Postal Code
Home Phone No.	Business Phone No.	Fax No.	Campaign Office Phone No.
E-mail Address		Website	
<p>In accordance with the <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i>, as amended, I hereby authorize election staff to include on The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake website, and make available to any person upon request by all of the following methods: person, by phone, mail, e-mail, or fax, the information shown with respect to my candidacy for elected office.</p>			
_____ Signature of Candidate		_____ Date	

Personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the *Municipal Elections Act (1996) ss.29 and 30*, for the purpose of assessing a nominee's eligibility for election to municipal council. Pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act (1996) s.88* this document is a public record, despite anything in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (1990)*, and, until its destruction, may be inspected by any person at the Town Clerk's Office at a time when the office is open. Questions about this collection of personal information should be directed to the Town Clerk, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, PO Box 100, Virgil ON L0S 1T0 (905) 468-3266.

FOI Release – Public Information		
Part I – Name of Candidate (please print)		
Part II – Candidate for the Office of (check one only)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Lord Mayor <input type="checkbox"/> Councillor		
Part III – Candidate Information to be Posted on the Municipality’s Website		
In accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, as amended, I hereby authorize election staff to include on the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Election web site the following information with respect to my candidacy for elected office:		
Mailing Address		
Street Address	Town / Province	Postal Code
Home Phone Number	Cell Number	E-mail Address
Signature of Nominated Candidate		Date
The personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996. This information is used for authorizing candidate information to be posted on the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Elections web site and will be available for public inspection in the office of the Clerk, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake until the next municipal election. Questions about this collection can be directed to Grant Bivol, Town Clerk, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil, Ontario L0S 1T0 905-468-3266 ext. 228		

Key Dates for the 2026 Municipal Elections

Nomination Period Commences	Friday, May 1, 2026	Nomination papers may now be filed by candidates with the Clerk at any time, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding statutory holidays, from Friday, May 1, 2026 to Thursday, August 21, 2026 . On Nomination Day (Friday, August 21, 2026), nominations may only be filed with the Clerk between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
Campaign Period	Friday, May 1, 2026 to Thursday, December 31, 2026	The campaign period begins on Friday, May 1, 2026 or when a candidate files his or her nomination paper, whichever is later, and ends on Thursday, December 31, 2026, unless the candidate withdraws the nomination, the Clerk rejects the nomination or the candidate is continuing their campaign to erase a deficit.
Nomination Day	Friday, August 21, 2026	Last day for filing nominations up until 2:00 PM.
Withdrawal of Candidacy	Friday, August 21, 2026	Final day for withdrawal of candidacy.
Certification of Nominations	Monday, August 24, 2026	All nominations to be examined and certified by 4:00 p.m. Acclamations declared, if any.
Election Signs	Thursday, August 27, 2026	Candidates may begin erecting their election signs on Thursday, August 27, 2026.
Election Day	Monday, October 26, 2026	Voting is held between the hours of 10:00 AM and 8:00 PM.
Official Election Results	Tuesday, October 27, 2026	Town Clerk will publicly declare the election of candidates.



Department of Corporate Services
1593 Four Mile Creek Road
P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0
905-468-3266 • Fax: 905-468-2959

Removal of Election Signs	Monday, November 2, 2026	Election signs must be removed within seven (7) days after Election Day by the candidate or the candidate's representative.
Council Orientation	To be Determined	An orientation session will be held for the councillors-elect.
Inauguration Day	Tuesday, November 24, 2026	The elected members must take the oath of office prior to taking their seat.
Deadline for Filing Financial Statements	Tuesday, March 30, 2027	This is the final date by which all nominated candidates must file their financial statement. The statement covers the period from the day the candidate filed their nomination paper until January 25, 2027.



2026 Meeting Schedule

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May

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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30				

July

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August

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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September

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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October

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				1	2	3
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

- Council
- Committees of Council
- Conferences
- COTW - Planning
- MHC
- Election Key Dates*
- COTW - General
- Stat/Holiday Closure
- Meeting Hold
- COA
- March Break

*Election Key Dates

- May 1 - Nomination Period Opens
- August 21 - Nomination Day
- October 26 - Voting Day
- November 15 - New Term Begins
- November 24 - Inaugural Meeting
- November 26 - December 16 - Training Meetings

2026 Conferences

Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference for 2026: **January 18–20**, 2026 in Toronto, Ontario

Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) / “Good Roads” Conference: **March 29–April 1**, 2026 in Toronto, Ontario

Ontario Small Urban Municipalities (OSUM) Annual Conference: **April 29–May 1**, 2026 in Parry Sound, Ontario

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA): **May 24–27**, 2026 in Whistler, B.C.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference & Trade Show: **June 4–7**, 2026 in Edmonton, Alberta

Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) Annual Conference: **June 7–10**, 2026 in Huntsville, Ontario

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference: **August 16-19**, 2026 in Ottawa, ON.

2026 Election Key Dates

May 1 – Nomination Period Opens

August 21 – Nomination Day

October 26 – Voting Day

November 15 – New Term Begins

November 24 – Inaugural Meeting

November 26 – December 16 – Potential Council Training Meetings

Committees of Council – Final Meeting Dates

Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) – January 12

Agricultural Committee (AG) – February 9

Heritage Trail Committee (HTC) – January 21, February 18

Irrigation Committee (IC) – February 11 and April 8

March Break – March 15-21, 2026 *no changes to services or operations

Statutory Days and Holiday Closures

January 1 - New Year's Day

January 2 – Town Offices Closed

February 16 – Family Day

April 3 – Good Friday

May 18 – Victoria Day

July 1 – Canada Day

August 3 – Civic Holiday

September 7 – Labour Day

September 30 – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

October 12 – Thanksgiving

December 24 – Christmas Eve – ½ Day Closure

December 25 – Christmas Day

December 28 – January 1 – Town Offices Closed

Meeting Hold Dates

February 17

March 26

April 7

May 19

June 30

July 28

August 11

September 29

Committee of the Whole (COTW) – Planning (P) and General (G) Meeting Dates

January 13 – COTW P&G

February 3 – COTW P

February 10 – COTW G
March 3 – COTW P
March 10 – COTW G
April 14 – COTW P
April 21 – COTW G
May 5 – COTW P
May 12 – COTW G
June 2 – COTW P
June 16 – COTW G
July 7 – COTW P
July 14 – COTW G
September 15 – COTW P&G
December 8 – COTW P&G

Council Meeting Dates

January 27
February 24
March 24
April 28
May 26
June 23
July 21
September 22
November 24 – Inaugural Meeting
December 15

**THE CORPORATION
OF THE
TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE**


BY-LAW NO. 2026-012

**A BY-LAW TO ENACT A CORPORATE POLICY – USE OF
CORPORATE RESOURCES DURING AN ELECTION
CAMPAIGN POLICY - FOR THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE TO REPEAL BY-LAW
NO. 5050-18**

BE IT ENACTED AS A BY-LAW OF THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE as follows:

1. THAT By-law No. 5050-18 authorizing Policy P-CS-18-006 is hereby repealed; and
2. THAT the Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Campaign Policy for The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, attached as Policy P-CS-26-02, be and the same is hereby approved; and
3. THAT the Lord Mayor and Town Clerk be authorized to affix their hands and the Corporate Seal; and
4. THAT this by-law shall come into force and take effect immediately upon the passing thereof.

**READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME THIS 24TH DAY OF MARCH
2026**



LORD MAYOR GARY ZALEPA



TOWN CLERK GRANT BIVOL



Use of Corporate Resources During
an Election Campaign Policy
Policy Number P-CS-26-02

1. Policy

Policy Number:	P-CS-26-02
Policy Name:	Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Campaign Policy
Effective Date:	03/24/2026
Last Revised:	03/25/2018
Last Reviewed:	03/1054/2026
Supersedes	P-CS-18-006

2. Policy Statement

This policy is to ensure that the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is in compliance with section 88.18 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, which requires the Town to establish rules and procedures for Candidates running in a municipal election. Public funds and resources are not to be used for any election related purposes, including the promotion of, or opposition to, the candidacy of a person for elected office.

3. Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Act	means the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended from time to time, and includes any regulation made thereunder.
Blackout Period	is a term that refers to the temporary period from the day prior to Nomination Day to and including Voting Day that certain privileges are discontinued for sitting members of Municipal Council and the Lord Mayor.
Campaign	means any activity undertaken with the intention of influencing electors to vote for or against a Candidate or question on a ballot.
Campaign Period	begins on the first day of the nomination period and ends on Voting Day, or as otherwise defined by applicable legislation.
Candidate	means a person who has filed a Nomination Form as a Candidate in the Town's municipal or local board election or by-election, or a person who is a Candidate or who is seeking a nomination in a provincial or federal election or by-election, including acclaimed Candidates.
Corporate Resources	includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town facilities and property; • Staff time and services; • Town funds and budgets, including Council office budgets; • Equipment, technology and information technology systems;



Use of Corporate Resources During
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town-owned photographs, videos, branding and graphic materials; • Town logo, crest, coat of arms, slogans and identifiers; • Mailing lists, databases and records; • Communications platforms and social media accounts; • Vehicles, office supplies and printing services • Town Events
Elected Official	means a person elected to an office of municipal, provincial, or federal government, or a local board.
Election Period	means the official campaign period for a Municipal, Regional, Provincial or Federal election or by-election.
Member of Council	means a person elected to an office of the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.
Municipal Publications	means any Town publication.
Nomination Day	for a regular municipal election is the third Friday in August in the year of the election.
Nomination Form	means the prescribed form and declaration of qualification, executed and filed by the Candidate.
Registered Third Party	means an individual, corporation or trade union that has filed a Notice of Registration as a third party advertiser in the federal, provincial, or municipal election.
Social Media	means online technologies and practices used to share opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives through words, pictures, music, videos and audio. Social media can take many different forms, including but not limited to internet forums, web logs (blogs), social blogs, messaging, wikis, podcasts, pictures, video, music sharing, rating and bookmarking. A non-exhaustive list of examples of social media include Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, TikTok, Threads and LinkedIn.
Staff or Employee	means all full-time, part-time, volunteer, and contract employees of the Town, including members of Council
Town Clerk	means the Clerk of The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, an election official in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, and the position responsible for conducting municipal elections within the municipality.
Town or Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake	means The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.
Town Property or Municipal Facilities	means all Town-owned, leased, operated and/or controlled properties and facilities, including but not limited to indoor and outdoor recreation fields; parks and parkland; gardens; open space and boulevards; buildings and rooms; furniture;



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	equipment and fixtures; vehicles and fleet vehicles; parking lots and parking spaces; and the Lord Mayor's office.
Town-organized Event(s)	means events organized or funded solely or jointly by the Town.
Voting Day	means the day on which the final vote is taken in an election.

3. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish clear, comprehensive and enforceable rules governing the use of Corporate Resources during an Election Period. The provisions contained herein provide a consistent approach to the use of Town Corporate Resources during a Campaign Period and expressly prohibit contributions and the use of Corporate resources for campaign purposes.

This Policy affirms that:

- The Town shall not make a contribution, directly or indirectly, to any Candidate or Registered Third Party.
- Corporate Resources shall not be used for any Campaign or campaign-related purpose.
- All Candidates shall be treated fairly and consistently.
- Municipal facilities shall remain free from campaign activity at all times.
- Public confidence in the neutrality and integrity of municipal government shall be maintained throughout all election periods.

This Policy shall be interpreted as a general prohibition against the use of Corporate Resources for campaign-related purposes.

This Policy is intended to:

- Ensure compliance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, in regards to the prohibitions against the Town contributing to a municipal, trustee, or a registered third party election campaign.
- Ensure Candidates and Registered Third Parties are treated fairly and consistently within the municipality.
- Ensure that the integrity of the election process is maintained at all times.
- Establish the appropriate use of Corporate Resources during an election period, in order to:
 - protect the interests of Elected Officials, Candidates, Registered Third Parties, Staff and the Corporation, and
 - ensure accountable and transparent election practices.
- Maintain non-partisanship and demonstrate impartiality towards provincial and federal partisan political activities during the Campaign Period.



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Limitations

This policy does not preclude a member of Council or Regional Council from performing their duties as a Councillor, Lord Mayor, Regional Councillor, or Regional Chair nor inhibit them from representing the interests of the constituents who elected them.

Nothing in this Policy shall preclude Staff from exercising their civic right and duty to participate in an election process, including a municipal election process, as a private citizen.

4. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All Members of Council, including the Lord Mayor, whether or not they are seeking re-election;
- All Candidates in municipal elections and by-elections;
- All Registered Third Parties;
- Members of local boards
- Candidates in provincial and federal elections where Town resources may otherwise be associated;
- All Staff of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, including full-time, part-time, temporary, contract and volunteer personnel.

Exceptions:

- Municipal information prepared, posted, and maintained by the Town, names and photographs of Elected Officials, their contact information, and a list of current representation on committees that are prepared, posted and maintained by the Town.
- Media releases and Town materials that describe inter-governmental activities of the Lord Mayor in the capacity as Head of Council
- A provincial or federal announcement in which one government is in a writ period may be permitted if directly related to government business.
- Municipal election-related education meetings that are organized by Town Staff may be held at any Town Property.

This Policy applies during:

- Municipal election periods and by-elections;
- Provincial election periods (commencing upon issuance of the writ);



Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Campaign Policy Policy Number P-CS-26-02

- Federal election periods (commencing upon issuance of the writ).

Federal and Provincial Elections

The Town continues to emphasize the importance of strengthening relationships with all levels of government and actively engages in political advocacy campaigns, including during federal and provincial elections, to promote the interests of the Town.

To avoid the appearance of Town support for partisan political activities, discretion will be used in considering requests for government events leading up to and during the period when the writ of election (dissolution of parliament [federal] or legislature [provincial]) is issued.

6 Policy Provisions

6.1 Statutory

This policy operates along with and as a supplement to existing legislation and Town policies governing the use of municipal resources during an election campaign period:

- the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended
- the Election Finances Act, 1990, as amended
- the Canada Elections Act, 2000, as amended
- the Council Code of Conduct (By-law 5061-18)

6.2 Activities

The following activities are not permitted during an election period:

- Use of Town Property, whether directly or indirectly booked, for any election purpose(s)
- Campaigning or solicitation (including display or distribution of Campaign material, wearing Campaign buttons or clothing) within any Town Property.
- Campaigning or solicitation (including display or distribution of Campaign material, wearing Campaign buttons or clothing, etc.) at a Town-organized Event (e.g. flag raisings, etc.).
- Use of equipment, supplies, services, Staff or other resources of the municipality for any Campaign or Campaign-related activities.
- Use of Town funds to acquire or produce any resources for any Campaign or Campaign-related activities, including ordering of stationary, print and office supplies.



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Note: Campaigning on Town Property, whether it is during or outside of an election period, is not permitted at any time.

6.3 Campaign Material

The following restrictions apply to campaign related material:

- Use of Council office budgets to sponsor or produce any campaign material
- Use of Town funds or resources to print or distribute any material that makes reference to, or contains the names or photographs of, or identifies Candidates or Registered Third Parties.
- Use of lists, data and files produced using Town resources, with the exception of lists to which a particular Candidate is entitled, pursuant to the Municipal Elections Act, for the current election (e.g. permitted use of Voters' List for election purposes only).
- Display of Campaign material, including clothing, in or on any Town Property.
- Display of Campaign material at any voting location, including the voting location's parking lot.
- Display of Campaign material, including clothing, by any Town Staff, during working hours.

6.4 Information Technology Resources and Social Media

The following restrictions apply to the use of information technology resources and social media during a Campaign Period:

- Make reference to and/or identify any individual as a Candidate, political party, Registered Third Party or a supporter or opposer of a question on a ballot during an election, on any social media sites, blogs, and other new media created and/or managed by the Town and/or Town staff.
- Use Town owned or managed Technology (IT) assets, infrastructure, or data (e.g. computers, wireless devices, portals, corporate email, voicemail, web pages, blogs, telephone) to communicate election-related messages.

Note: Once a member of Council registers to become a candidate, any links to social media accounts and personal links will be removed from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's website and any social media platforms. However, during an election period, Lord Mayor and Council biographies will remain static, and no changes to these pages will be allowed.

Candidates are permitted to link to any Town document available to the public or on a public Town webpage from their campaign website.



Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Campaign Policy Policy Number P-CS-26-02

6.5 Member of Council Use of Social Media

- The following restrictions apply to Member of Council use of social media during a campaign period: All links to social media accounts and personal external websites shall be removed from Town websites and domains during an election period.
- Members are not permitted to use electronic materials paid for by the Town for municipal election campaign purposes.
- Councillors and candidates may not include election related material on websites or domain names paid for or maintained by the Town.

Note: Members of Council must ensure that their use of social media is consistent with the Council Code of Conduct and Town policies. Sitting members of Council who choose to create or use social media accounts for campaigning must include, for the duration of the election period, a clear statement on each campaign website or social media account's home page indicating that the account is being used for election campaign purposes and is not related to their duties as a member of council.

Social media use is not completely "cost-free." Town images and logos, staff, and volunteers working in council offices and using Town computers, smart phones, services and email accounts are Town resources and shall not be used for campaign purposes.

6.6 Election Signs

Election signs, including "wrapped" cars cannot be posted or displayed on Town property or at voting locations. Placement of election signs for municipal, provincial and federal elections must be in accordance with the current Town Sign By-law and any related election sign by-law.

6.7 Photography at Voting Locations

Election procedures prohibit the use of cameras inside a voting location. Candidates or Registered Third Parties are permitted to be photographed outside a voting location, provided there are no Town identifiers in the photograph.

6.8 Use of Town Logo and Identifiers

The Town's brand, logos and identifiers are registered trademarks and owned by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Use of a video, photo, logo, crest, coat of arms, slogan, or identifier for which the Town has proprietary rights, including municipal election logos (e.g. NOTL Votes logo), in any capacity, is strictly prohibited.



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6.9 Member of Council Advertising and Publications

The following services will be discontinued for Members of Council who are a Candidate as of the end of Nomination Day:

- All forms of advertising and communication, including Municipal Publications (e.g. paper or web-based).
- All printing services, including distribution, photocopying and printing of publications, such as newsletters, business cards, swag, and reports, with the exception of communications specifically related to an authorized or scheduled Town-organized Event (e.g. Public Meeting).
- Links to Member of Council related websites or social media platforms, unless those platforms are clearly marked as an official Member of Council site and are not used for election Campaign purposes.

Note: As per the Town's Procedure By-law (2025-021) the agenda items "Lord Mayor's Report" and "Members Announcements" will not be permitted between the first day of the nomination period and voting day, as defined by the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

7 Conduct

7.1 Candidate and Registered Third Party Conduct

- Candidates and Registered Third Parties who attend Town-organized Events are not permitted to campaign, including without limitation, distribute campaign material, or wear campaign buttons or clothing. The Town's Staff supervising a Town-organized Event may request that a Candidate or Registered Third Party leave the event if campaigning is reported or suspected.
- Members of Council attending Town-organized Events, or events held at a Town Property may act as a representative participant in their capacity as an elected official, including speaking and offering greetings. Elected Officials and Members of Council who are also Candidates at the time of their attendance and participation at the Town-organized Event may not campaign. No election signs or Campaign materials, including clothing, may be publicized at the event.
- Candidates or Registered Third Parties are not permitted to engage in Campaign activities directed at Town employees while those employees are at their workplace or engaged in work for the Town.

Note: The above extends to registered Candidates and Registered Third Party advertisers for a provincial or federal election or by-election.



Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Campaign Policy Policy Number P-CS-26-02

There should be no additions to the Council approved Town-led events listing scheduled between Nomination Day and Voting Day during the year of a municipal election, unless extenuating circumstances require an official Town event to take place.

7.2. Town Staff Conduct

In recognizing the right of employees and volunteers to participate in political activity, the provisions set out below ensure the requirement for public service to be politically impartial. Town Staff, including volunteers, shall not:

- Canvass or perform any work in support of a Candidate or Registered Third Party (e.g. campaign), during hours in which a person is working for and/or receiving any compensation from the Town, except during scheduled time off (e.g. scheduled vacation time).
- Distribute campaign material on behalf of a Candidate or Registered Third Party at Town facilities or on Town property including Town parks at any time.
- Engage in any political activity while wearing a Town uniform or identifier (e.g. name badge, hat, lanyard).
- Engage in any political activity while wearing clothing or buttons that advertise any Candidate, Registered Third Party or political party while wearing a Town uniform or identifier.
- Use their title or position within the Town in a way that may lead a member of the public to infer that the Town is endorsing a Candidate, Registered Third Party or political party.

Note: Employees engaged in political activities must take care to separate those personal activities from their official positions. Employees may participate in political activity at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, providing that such activity does not take place during work hours or use corporate assets or resources, or property. Notices, posters or similar material in support of a particular candidate or political party are not to be produced, displayed or distributed by employees on Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake work sites.

8. Blackout Period (Municipal Election Year)

From the day prior to Nomination Day to and including Voting Day:

- No member of Council, including the Lord Mayor shall advertise, print, photocopy, or distribute any newsletters unless directed and approved by Council.
- No member of Council, including the Lord Mayor shall order office furniture or furnishings, except those of an emergency nature; or order any stationery or



Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Campaign Policy Policy Number P-CS-26-02

business cards, except within reason and as needed to carry out their current duties.

- Members may attend Town events during the blackout period in their capacity as an elected official provided there is no campaigning at the event.
- Members shall ensure their backgrounds and attire during any virtual events and meetings held by the Town are neutral, without reference to the election campaign.

9. Monitoring and Compliance

The Town Clerk's Office, Legislative Services, shall ensure this Policy is reviewed on a regular basis (not to exceed four years) and remains relevant to the needs of the Corporation, in accordance with legislative requirements and good business practices.

9.1 Non-Compliance

Should a complaint arise regarding the alleged use of Corporate resources in contravention of this Policy, the Town Clerk or their designate shall have the authority to investigate and resolve the complaint up to and including involving the Integrity Commissioner and/or Ombudsman.

9.2 Consequences of non-compliance

Town staff who observe or are made aware of an apparent contravention of this Policy shall address the individual or shall report the apparent contravention to their direct report.

10. Implementation

This policy shall become effective immediately upon approval by Council.

11. Rational and Legislative Authority

It is necessary to establish on the appropriate use of corporate resources during an election period to protect the interests of both members of Council and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The Act prohibits a municipality from making a contribution to a candidate (Section 88.8 (4)) or a Registered Third Party (Section 88.12 (4)). The Act also prohibits a candidate, or someone acting on the candidate's behalf, from accepting a contribution from a person who is not entitled to make a contribution.

As a contribution may take the form of money, goods or services, any use by a member of Council of the Corporation's resources for his or her election campaign would be



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an Election Campaign Policy
Policy Number P-CS-26-02

viewed as a contribution by the Municipality to the member, which is a violation of the Act.

11. Contacts

Please direct any questions regarding this policy to:

OFFICE	PHONE	EMAIL
Clerks	905-468-3266	clerks@notl.com

**THE CORPORATION
OF THE
TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE
BY-LAW NO. 4586A-18**

A BY-LAW TO AMEND BY-LAW 4586-12 BEING A BY-LAW TO
REGULATE THE SIZE, USE, LOCATION AND MAINTENANCE
OF SIGNS WITHIN THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

WHEREAS, section 11 of the Municipal Act authorizes a municipality to pass by-laws respecting structures including signs

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED AS A BY-LAW OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE as follows:

1. That By-law 4586-12, being a by-law to regulate the size, use, location and maintenance of signs within The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, be amended by removing Section 4.01.(2)(i), and replacing it with the following:
 - (2)(i) **Election Signs- Municipal**

Nothing herein shall be deemed to prevent the posting of any election proclamation in regard to any municipal election, or any voter's list under the statute in that behalf, nor the display of election Signs by candidates or registered third party advertisers during any municipal election, provided that such election Signs are erected in accordance with the following provisions:

 - (a) Election Signs shall not be erected on private property without the Owner's consent;
 - (b) All election Signs shall be set back a minimum of 1.0 metres (3.28 feet) from the Property Line;
 - (c) Election Signs shall not be erected on public property;
 - (d) All municipal election Signs shall have a maximum Sign Display Area of 1 square metre (10.76 square feet);
 - (e) No candidate shall erect or display, or cause to be erected or displayed, any municipal election Signs more than sixty (60) days before the date fixed for the election; and
 - (f) All election Signs must be removed within seven (7) days of the date of the election, by the Owner, Occupant, candidate, registered third party advertiser, or an authorized representative.
2. That By-law 4586-12, being a by-law to regulate the size, use, location and maintenance of signs within The Corporation of the Town of

Niagara-on-the-Lake, be amended by removing Section 4.01.(2)(ii), and replacing it with the following:

(2)(ii) Election Signs- Provincial and Federal

Nothing herein shall be deemed to prevent the posting of any election proclamation or notice under any Elections Act or any Voter's List under the Statute in that behalf, nor the display of election Signs on private property during any provincial, or federal election. Such election Signs shall be erected in accordance with the following provisions:

- (a) Election Signs shall not be erected on private property without the Owner's consent;
- (b) All election Signs shall be set back a minimum of 1.0 metres (3.28feet) from the Property Line;
- (c) Election Signs shall not be erected on public property
- (d) Election Signs shall have a maximum size of 3.0 square metres (32.29 square feet) in area;
- (e) No candidate shall erect or display, or cause to be erected or displayed, any election Signs more than sixty (60) days before the date fixed for the election; and
- (f) All election Signs must be removed within seven (7) days after the date of the election, by the Owner, Occupant, candidate, or the candidate's representative.

3. That By-law 4586-12, being a by-law to regulate the size, use, location and maintenance of signs within The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, be amended by removing Schedule 'C'; and
4. That the Lord Mayor and Clerk be authorized to affix their hands and the Corporate Seal; and
5. That this by-law shall come into force and take effect immediately upon the passing thereof.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND PASSED THIS 16th DAY OF APRIL 2018.



LORD MAYOR PAT DARTE



TOWN CLERK PETER TODD

2026 candidates' guide

Ontario municipal council and
school board elections

2026 candidates' guide – Ontario municipal council and school board elections

Find out how to run as a candidate in Ontario municipal council and school board elections.

This guide provides information to candidates for the 2026 municipal and school board elections. The information also applies to any by-elections that may be held during the 2026–2030 council and school board term.

This guide is not meant to replace provincial legislation. It provides general information about the rules contained in the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), and other legislation and regulations, such as:

- [Municipal Act, 2001](#)
- [City of Toronto Act, 2006](#)
- [Education Act](#)

New election rules for 2026

There are new requirements regarding how copies of the voters' list are to be handled. These include:

- written acknowledgements to receive a copy of the voters' list
- limits to sharing copies
- requirements to destroy copies after the campaign has ended

For more information regarding these requirements please see [the voters' list](#).

Contact us

If you have further questions or would like to give feedback on this guide, please contact us at mea.info@ontario.ca.

You can also contact your regional [Municipal Services Office](#) at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

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General information

Every four years, voters across Ontario elect municipal councillors and school board trustees.

The Province of Ontario sets out common rules that all candidates and voters must follow. However, municipalities are responsible for conducting elections to their council and for conducting the election of school trustees to Ontario's school boards. This guide contains information about the rules that are the same for all municipal elections, such as who is eligible to run for office, and rules about campaign spending.

Your municipality may have specific rules on issues such as:

- where and when election signs may be displayed
- whether campaign activities may occur on municipal property
- whether those who make contributions to candidates may receive a rebate

Contact your municipal clerk if you have questions about the election in your municipality.

To learn more about the duties of municipal councillors and the role of council, please see the [Ontario municipal councillor's guide](#).

The municipal clerk

Every municipality has a municipal clerk who is in charge of running the election.

Contact the municipal clerk if you are interested in becoming a candidate. You must file any election forms, such as the nomination form and campaign financial statements, with your municipal clerk. The clerk is also responsible for providing information about spending limits and filing deadlines to candidates.

If your municipality does not have a website, you could visit or contact your municipality's offices for more information.

Emergency declaration by the clerk

If the municipal clerk believes that circumstances have arisen that prevent the election from being conducted in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, they may declare an emergency. This declaration is specific to the election and separate from an emergency that may be declared by the municipality or the province.

Once the clerk has declared an emergency, they can decide what arrangements to make to allow the election to appropriately proceed. The arrangements that the clerk makes will depend on the nature of the emergency.

If your municipal clerk has declared an emergency in relation to an election or by-election in your municipality, you should contact the clerk for information about the arrangements that they have put in place and how those arrangements may affect voting and campaigning.

Eligibility to run for election

Running for municipal council

To run for a position on council, you must be eligible to vote in that municipality. On the day you file your nomination, you must be a Canadian citizen aged 18 or older, and qualify as a resident or non-resident elector. For more information about eligibility to vote, please see the [2026 voters' guide](#).

You must be eligible to hold office on the day you file your nomination. For example, a person who is 17 years old but will turn 18 before nomination day must wait until they have turned 18 to file their nomination.

If your municipality has wards, you can run in any ward — you do not have to live in a particular ward to be its councillor. However, if you run in a ward where you do not live, you will not be able to vote for yourself. Having a campaign office or a business in a ward where you would not otherwise be eligible to vote does not make you eligible to vote in that ward.

Municipal employees

You cannot work for a municipality and be on its council at the same time. If you are an employee of a municipality and you want to run for office on that municipality's council, you must take a leave of absence that begins the day you are nominated. If you are elected, you must resign from your job.

If you are an employee of a municipality and you want to run for office in a different municipality, you do not have to take a leave of absence or resign. However, you should check with your employer to see if there are any policies in place that could affect you.

If you are an employee of an upper-tier municipality, you can run for office in a lower-tier municipality without taking a leave of absence or resigning unless being elected to the lower-tier council means that you would also be a member of the upper-tier council.

Who is not eligible?

The following people are not eligible to be elected to municipal office:

- any person who is not eligible to vote in the municipality
- an employee of a municipality who has not taken an unpaid leave of absence and resigned (see above)
- a judge of any court
- an MP, an MPP or a senator
- an inmate serving a sentence in a penal or correctional institution

Running for school board trustee

To run for a trustee position on a school board, you must be a resident within the jurisdiction of the board and you must be eligible to vote in a school board election. On the day you file your nomination, you must be a Canadian citizen aged 18 or older and you must meet any other qualifications to vote for the school board (for example, being a Roman Catholic, or holding French language rights). For more information about eligibility to vote, please see the [2026 voters' guide](#).

Additional information about [French-language rights](#) is available from the Ministry of Education.

School board employees

You cannot work for a school board and be a trustee in Ontario at the same time.

If you are an employee of any Ontario school board and you want to run for a trustee position on any school board in the province, you must take an unpaid leave of absence that begins the day you are nominated. If you are elected, you must resign from your job.

Municipal officials

If you are a clerk, deputy clerk, treasurer or deputy treasurer of a municipality within the jurisdiction of a school board, you are not permitted to run for office as a trustee of that board unless you take a leave of absence. If you are elected, you must resign from your job.

Who is not eligible?

The following people are not eligible to be elected as a school trustee:

- any person who is not eligible to vote in the school board election
- an employee of a school board or a municipal official who has not taken an unpaid leave of absence and resigned (see above)

- a judge of any court
- an MP, an MPP or a senator
- an inmate serving a sentence in a penal or correctional institution

Note for MPs, MPPs and senators

If you are an MP, MPP or senator, you may file your nomination for municipal or school board office without resigning your current seat in parliament, the legislature or the senate. However, you must resign your seat by the close of nominations (2 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026). If you are a federal or provincial cabinet minister, you must step down from cabinet prior to filing your nomination and must resign your seat by the close of nominations.

If you have not resigned by nomination day, your nomination will be rejected and your name will not appear on the ballot.

Nominations

Filing your nomination

To file your nomination, you must give the following to your municipal clerk:

- a [nomination form \(Form 1\)](#)
- the nomination fee
- completed [endorsement of nomination forms \(Form 2\)](#)

Note: Candidates for municipal council in municipalities with fewer than 4,000 electors and candidates for school board trustee do not have to submit endorsement signatures. Your municipal clerk will be able to tell you if you need to submit endorsement signatures.

When you fill out the nomination form, write down your name as you want it to appear on the ballot. If you normally go by a different name than your legal first name, you may use that name provided that the clerk agrees.

You do not have to provide all of your names under the box entitled “Given Name(s)” on the form. Only provide the one(s) that you want to appear on the ballot. If your legal name is a single name, you do not have to provide any given names.

Clerks can decide to allow nominations to be filed electronically. If your municipality allows electronic filing, contact the clerk for more information about how to file your nomination.

If electronic filing is not allowed in your municipality, you must file the nomination form that you have signed — the form may not be a copy and may not be scanned and submitted electronically. You must file the nomination form in person or have an agent file it on your behalf.

The clerk may require you to show identification or fill in an additional form to prove that you are eligible to be nominated. If an agent is going to file the form on your behalf, you should check with the clerk to see if you are required to provide identification or additional paperwork.

Your campaign period begins when the clerk has received your nomination. If you file your nomination electronically at a time when the clerk's office is not open, you may have to wait to begin your campaign. You should contact the clerk for more information.

The nomination fee

The fee to file a nomination is \$200 to run for head of council and \$100 for all other positions. This fee must be paid to the clerk at the time you submit your nomination form.

Your nomination fee will be refunded if you file your campaign financial statement by the deadline.

Endorsement signatures

If you are running for municipal council in a municipality that has 4,000 or more electors, you must submit 25 original signatures endorsing your nomination.

You do not have to submit endorsement signatures if you are running for:

- municipal council in a municipality that has fewer than 4,000 electors
- school trustee

You must use [Form 2](#) to collect the endorsement signatures.

Anyone providing an endorsement signature must also fill in their name and address, including the postal code.

Anyone providing an endorsement signature must be eligible to vote in the municipality on the day that they signed the endorsement. In addition to their endorsement, they will also be required to sign a declaration that they are eligible to vote in the municipality.

A person who is eligible to vote in the municipality may provide endorsements to as many candidates as they would like and may endorse candidates for any office on the municipal

council. A person who is running for a ward councillor office may submit signatures from voters who do not live in that ward.

If you submit 25 original endorsement signatures and find out later that a person (or persons) was not eligible to vote on the day that they signed the endorsement, you will not lose your nomination. The person who supplied false information (by declaring that they were eligible to endorse your nomination when they were not eligible) could be subject to prosecution.

If the clerk has allowed electronic filing, you must still collect original endorsement signatures. You can submit an electronic copy of the forms when you file your nomination. You must keep the forms with the original signatures as part of your campaign records.

The [Endorsement of Nomination Form \(Form 2\)](#) is a public document. Endorsements of candidates cannot be revoked if the document has already been filed with the clerk.

Deadline to file your nomination

The nomination period begins on May 1, 2026. The last day to file a nomination is Friday, August 21, 2026, by 2 p.m.

The clerk has until 4 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026, to certify or reject your nomination. The clerk must be satisfied that you are eligible to run in order to certify your nomination. If your nomination is not certified, your name will not appear on the ballot.

Where to file

If you are running for council office in a single-tier or lower-tier municipality (city, town, township, village, etc.), you must file your nomination with the clerk of that municipality.

If you are running for an office in an upper-tier municipality that does not also sit on a lower-tier council, you must file your nomination with the clerk of the upper-tier municipality. For example, a person running for county councillor in Wellington County would file their nomination with the clerk of Wellington County rather than the clerk of a lower-tier municipality such as the Town of Minto.

If you are running for a school trustee position that represents more than one municipality, contact your municipal clerk for information about where to file your nomination.

Changing your mind – withdrawal

If you decide to withdraw your nomination, you must notify the clerk in writing by the close of nominations (2 p.m. August 21, 2026).

If you withdraw your nomination, you are still required to file a campaign financial statement covering all the financial transactions you made in your campaign.

If your campaign did not have any financial transactions, you must file a financial statement reporting this. Your nomination fee will be refunded by the clerk if you file your financial statement by the deadline.

Changing your mind – running for a different office

You can only run for one office at a time. If you decide to run for a different office, your first nomination is deemed to be withdrawn when you file your second nomination.

If you decide to run for a different office on the same council or school board, and both offices are elected at large (for example, an office such as the mayor, which everyone in the municipality may vote for), everything (contributions, expenses, etc.) from your first campaign is simply transferred to your second campaign.

Example:

You file your nomination to run for deputy mayor on May 12, 2026. During the summer you decide to run for mayor instead, and file your second nomination form on June 29, 2026.

- Your first nomination for deputy mayor is deemed to be withdrawn.
- The nomination fee you paid on May 12 is transferred to your second nomination (in this case, you would have to pay an additional \$100 to make up the \$200 fee to run for head of council).
- You do not have to submit new endorsement signatures. Your initial 25 original endorsement signatures still qualify since you withdrew and filed a nomination for a different office on the same municipal council.
- Your campaign for mayor is deemed to have started on May 12.
- Any campaign contributions or expenses that occurred prior to June 29 are transferred to your mayoral campaign.
- You must file one campaign financial statement covering your campaign finances from May 12 until December 31, 2026.
- Your nomination fee will be refunded if you file your campaign financial statement by the filing deadline.

If you decide to run for a different office on the same council or school board, and one or both of the offices is elected by ward, then you must keep the two campaigns separate.

Example:

You file your nomination to run for mayor on May 12, 2026. During the summer you decide to run for councillor in ward 1 instead and file your second nomination form on June 29, 2026.

Your first nomination for mayor is deemed to be withdrawn, and your campaign for mayor ends. You may not transfer any contributions or expenses from your mayoral campaign to your ward councillor campaign.

- You must pay a separate nomination fee when you file your nomination for ward councillor.
- You do not have to submit new endorsement signatures. Your initial 25 original endorsement signatures still qualify since you withdrew and filed a nomination for a different office on the same municipal council.
- You must file a campaign financial statement covering your campaign for mayor (May 12 to June 29) – your first nomination fee will be refunded if you file this financial statement by the filing deadline.
- You must file a separate campaign financial statement covering your campaign forward councillor (June 29 to December 31) — your second nomination fee will be refunded if you file this financial statement by the filing deadline.

If you decide to run for office on a different council or school board, then you must keep the two campaigns separate. If you decide to run for council in a municipality that has more than 4,000 electors, you will need to submit original endorsement signatures from electors eligible to vote in that municipality. If you are unsure if the municipality has more than 4,000 electors, you should contact the municipal clerk.

Example:

You file your nomination to run for school board trustee on May 12. During the summer you decide to run for councillor instead, and file your second nomination form on June 29, 2026.

- Your first nomination for school board trustee is deemed to be withdrawn.
- You are required to pay a nomination fee when you file your nomination for ward councillor.
- If the municipality where you are running for ward councillor has 4,000 or more electors, you must submit 25 endorsement signatures.
- Your campaign for school board trustee ends. You may not transfer any contributions or expenses from your trustee campaign to your ward councillor campaign.

- You must file a campaign financial statement covering your campaign for schoolboard trustee (May 12 to June 29) — your first nomination fee will be refunded if you file this financial statement by the filing deadline.
- You must file a separate campaign financial statement covering your campaign forward councillor (June 29 to December 31) — your second nomination fee will be refunded if you file this financial statement by the filing deadline.

Acclamations

If there is only one certified candidate running for an office at 4 p.m. on Monday, August 24, that candidate will be declared elected by acclamation. Similarly, in a municipality where multiple candidates are elected at large, if the number of certified candidates is the same as or less than the number of offices, those candidates will be declared elected by acclamation.

If you are elected by acclamation, you must still file a campaign financial statement.

Additional nominations

If there are positions with no candidates or positions that are still vacant after the candidates who did run have been acclaimed, the clerk will call for additional nominations.

Additional nominations for the remaining vacant seats must be filed between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2026. The clerk must either certify or reject each nomination by 4 p.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2026.

The voters' list

The voters' list becomes a public document on September 1, 2026. As a candidate, you can request that the municipal clerk give you the part of the voters' list that relates to the office that you are running for. This request must be in writing.

To receive the voters' list from the municipal clerk, you must give the clerk a written acknowledgement confirming that you will:

- only use the list for electoral purposes, not for commercial purposes
- follow the restrictions set out in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, for handling the voters' list
- only share the list with others (such as campaign workers) after obtaining a similar written acknowledgement from them

Restrictions on handling the voters' list

You are the only person who may share the voters' list. If you have given someone a copy, they are not allowed to share it further.

You must keep track of who you have shared the voters' list with. If you give someone a physical copy of the list, they must return that copy to you. If you share an electronic copy, they must destroy the copy and provide you with a written acknowledgement that the copy has been destroyed.

You cannot keep copies of the voters' list after your campaign had ended. On or before the day your campaign ends, you must:

- destroy the copy of the voters' list that you received from the clerk
- have any print copies that you shared with others returned to you and destroy them
- ensure you have received written acknowledgements from anyone who received an electronic copy confirming that the electronic copy has been destroyed

Written acknowledgements

Before you share the voters' list with someone, you must obtain a written acknowledgement from that person. That written acknowledgement must confirm that:

- they will only use the list for electoral purposes, not for commercial purposes
- they will not share or give copies to anyone else
- if they receive a physical copy, they will return it to you
- if they receive an electronic copy, they will destroy the copy and give you written confirmation that the electronic copy has been destroyed

The written acknowledgement should include the dates by which physical copies must be returned and written confirmations of destroyed electronic copies must be provided.

You must keep all written acknowledgements you have received until November 15, 2030, when the next council or school board takes office. You must also keep any written confirmations that electronic copies of the list have been destroyed.

Campaigning

Signs

Your municipality may have rules about when you can put up campaign signs and how signs may be displayed on both private and public property.

All of your campaign signs and other advertising must identify that you are responsible for the sign. This is so that people seeing the sign or advertisement can tell that it is from your campaign, rather than from a third-party advertiser.

Please see [leftover campaign inventory](#) if you plan to reuse signs from the last election.

You are responsible for ensuring that your campaign signs are removed after voting day in accordance with municipal by-laws. Your municipality may require a sign deposit or have penalties for failing to remove your signs. Contact your local clerk for more information.

You are entitled to have your nomination fee refunded if you file your campaign financial statement by the filing deadline. The clerk cannot make removing your signs a condition for receiving your refund.

Getting information out

It is up to you to provide voters with information about you as a candidate and about your campaign. The municipal clerk is not responsible for providing your contact information to voters.

All candidates' debates

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, does not require candidate debates to be held, and the municipal clerk is not responsible for organizing meetings or debates. Debates can be organized by community groups, media outlets, candidates or any other interested persons.

Joint campaigns / running on a slate

There is nothing in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, that would prevent like-minded candidates from campaigning on the same platform or identifying themselves as a group or slate. However, each candidate must keep their campaign finances separate and any joint expenses (for example, signs with two candidates' names on them) must be divided between the campaigns.

For information on campaign finance rules please see [campaign finance](#).

Third-party advertising

General information

There are rules for third-party advertising in Ontario's municipal council and school board elections.

A third-party advertisement is an ad that supports, promotes or opposes a candidate or a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot.

The meaning of “third-party” in this context means a person or entity who is not a candidate. Eligible individuals, corporations and trade unions can register to be third-party advertisers. Third-party advertising is separate from any candidate’s campaign and must be done independently from a candidate.

Third-party advertisers who want to spend money on advertisements during the election must register with the municipal clerk and must file a financial statement.

For more information about third-party advertising rules, including eligibility, spending limits and enforcement, see the [2026 third-party advertisers’ guide](#).

On voting day

Campaigning on voting day

The [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), does not prohibit campaigning on voting day. While there are restrictions on advertising for federal and provincial elections on voting day, these “blackouts” do not exist for municipal council and school board elections.

The Act prohibits the display of campaign material inside a voting place. The “voting place” could include the entire property of a building that has a voting place inside it, including the parking lot. You are not allowed to have campaign brochures, campaign buttons, signs or any other material inside the voting place.

Remaining in a voting place

As a candidate, you are allowed to stay in a voting place to observe, but you are not allowed to interfere with voters, attempt to influence how they vote, or ask a voter how they voted. Scrutineers may also stay in the voting place.

You and your scrutineers are entitled to be in the voting place 15 minutes before it opens and to inspect the ballot boxes, the ballots and any other papers or forms relating to the vote. However, you may not delay the opening of the voting place.

You and your scrutineers are entitled to place a seal on the ballot box so that ballots put in the box cannot be removed without breaking your seal.

Note: If you have been acclaimed, you are not allowed to be in the voting place or to appoint scrutineers.

Scrutineers

You may appoint a scrutineer for each ballot box in a voting place. You do not have to appoint that many scrutineers, or any scrutineers at all. If you have appointed one scrutineer for each ballot box, a scrutineer must leave while you are in the voting place.

Scrutineers may observe but they are not allowed to interfere with voters, attempt to influence how they vote, or ask a voter how they voted.

You must provide each of your scrutineers with an appointment in writing. Scrutineers may be required to show their appointment document to election officials at the voting place.

Scrutineers may be required to take an oath of secrecy.

There are no general restrictions on who you can appoint as a scrutineer (for example, a scrutineer can be any age and does not have to be a citizen). However, an acclaimed candidate cannot be appointed as a scrutineer for another candidate.

Counting votes

If your municipality is using voting machines or vote counting equipment, the clerk must have the processes and procedures for use of this equipment in place by June 1, 2026. If vote counting equipment is used, the clerk will be able to provide you with information on how the votes will be counted and how many scrutineers may be present.

The vote count begins immediately after the close of voting at 8 p.m. on October 26, 2026.

If the votes are counted manually, you and your scrutineers are entitled to view the ballots as they are counted, but you cannot touch the ballots. You and your scrutineers may object to a ballot or how it is counted (for example, if it is unclear who the vote is for or if the ballot has extra markings on it). The deputy returning officer is responsible for deciding whether to accept the objection and must keep a list of all the objections raised.

Results

After the votes have been counted, the deputy returning officer will prepare a statement showing the results and seal all the other election documents, including the ballots, inside the ballot box. You and your scrutineers are entitled to put your or their own seal on the ballot box at this time and are entitled to sign the statement showing the results.

The sealed ballot box and the statement of the results will then be delivered to the municipal clerk, who will compile the results and declare who has been elected.

Note: results announced on voting night are unofficial. It may take the clerk a few days or more to make the official declaration.

After voting day

Recounts

The [*Municipal Elections Act, 1996*](#), requires an automatic recount only if the votes are tied.

Your municipal council or school board may have a policy in place that sets out other specific circumstances under which the clerk must conduct an automatic recount. For example, a council may decide that if two candidates are within 10 votes of each other, an automatic recount will be held. The policy must be adopted on or before May 1, 2026.

A municipal council or school board may also order a recount within 30 days after the clerk has officially declared the results of the election. If you feel there should be a recount, you must either persuade council (or the school board) to order one or you may apply to the Superior Court of Justice to request that a judge order a recount. This application may be made by any eligible elector, and must be made within 30 days of the clerk declaring the results of the election.

Recounts must be conducted in the same way that the votes were originally counted, unless the recount is ordered by the court. For example, if the votes were counted by a vote tabulator, they may not be counted by hand during the recount.

If the recount is ordered by the court, the judge may order that the votes be counted in a different manner if the judge believes that the way the votes were counted the first time was an issue.

Tied votes

If two or more candidates get the same number of votes and they cannot all be elected, there is an automatic recount. The recount must be held within 15 days of the clerk declaring the results of the election. If you are one of the candidates in the tie, you are entitled to be present at the recount.

If the recount shows that there is still a tie, then the legislation states that the clerk will choose the winner by lot. This means putting the names of the tied candidates into a hat (or other suitable container) and drawing the name of the winner.

Wrapping up your campaign

After voting day, remove any election signs that have been put up and take down your campaign website, if you have one. If you would like to keep using your website, remove any references to the campaign. Websites that say “Vote for me” which are left up for years after the election can make it look like you are attempting to campaign for the next election early.

Your campaign must end on December 31, 2026, unless you have a deficit and inform the clerk in writing that you are going to extend your campaign. Once your campaign has ended, you should close your campaign bank account and prepare your campaign financial statement.

The deadline to file financial statements is the last Friday in March. Since March 26, 2027, falls on Good Friday, and March 29 is Easter Monday, financial statements **may be filed with the clerk until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2027.**

Term of office

The council and school board term of office will run from November 15, 2026, to November 14, 2030.

Campaign finance

General information

Record keeping

You are responsible for keeping records of the financial activities related to your campaign. The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, does not require you to use any specific accounting system. You may want to consult with an auditor or an accountant early in your campaign to make sure that you are using a bookkeeping and accounting system that will suit your needs.

You should also look through the [campaign financial statement \(Form 4\)](#) that you will be required to file to make sure that you are keeping records of all the information that must be included on the statement.

You are required to keep all of your campaign financial records until November 15, 2030, when the next council or school board takes office.

You must keep the following campaign records:

- receipts issued for every contribution including when you accepted the contribution and the date you issued the receipt (remember to issue receipts to yourself for any contributions you make)
- the value of every contribution, whether it is in the form of money or goods or services, and the contributor's name and address
- all expenses, including the receipts obtained for each expense
- any claim for payment of an expense that the campaign disputes or refuses to pay
- the funds raised and expenses incurred from each separate fundraising event or activity
- the terms of any loan received from a bank or other recognized lending institution

Campaign period

You may accept contributions or incur campaign expenses during your campaign period only.

Your campaign period begins on the day the clerk receives your nomination.

In most cases, your campaign will end on December 31, 2026. Exceptions are if you:

- withdrew your nomination, your campaign ends on the date you informed the clerk in writing that you wanted to withdraw
- were not certified as a candidate and your name did not appear on the ballot, your campaign ends on nomination day (August 21, 2026)
- know you will not have any more financial activity, you can end your campaign at anytime after voting day and before December 31, 2026

If you have extended your campaign to pay down a deficit, the end date for the extended campaign period will be the earliest of:

- the day you notify the clerk in writing that you will be ending your campaign and not accepting any more contributions
- June 30, 2027

Bank account

You must open a bank account exclusively for your campaign if you accept any contributions of money (including contributions from yourself or your spouse) or incur any expenses. You do not have to open a campaign bank account if you do not spend any money and do not receive any contributions of money. If you receive contributions of goods or services, but no contributions of money, you do not have to open a campaign bank account.

You cannot use your personal bank account for campaign finances, even if you are planning a very small campaign.

All contributions — including contributions you make to yourself — must be deposited into the campaign bank account. All expenses must be paid from the campaign account.

The nomination fee is considered to be a personal expense, not a campaign expense. You do not need to have a campaign bank account in order to pay the nomination fee.

Contributions and campaign income

Contributions

Campaign contributions are any money, goods or services that are given to you for use in your campaign, including money and goods that you contribute to yourself.

If you are given a special discount on a good or service that you are purchasing for your campaign, the difference between what you were charged and what the market value would be is considered to be a contribution.

Corporations and other businesses are not permitted to make contributions to candidates. If you are being offered a discount, you should make sure that whoever is offering the discount is entitled to make a personal contribution to your campaign.

If a professional who would normally charge for a service gives you that service for free, the market value of the service is considered to be a contribution.

If you sell tickets to a fundraising event, the cost of the ticket is considered to be a contribution. If you sell goods at a fundraising event for more than their market value, the difference between what the person attending the fundraising event paid you and what they would have normally paid for the item is considered to be a contribution.

If you have inventory such as signs left over from a previous campaign and you use them again, the current market value of the signs (what it would cost you to buy those signs today) is considered to be a contribution that you make to your campaign.

If you or your spouse guarantees your campaign loan and the campaign is unable to repay the full amount, any unpaid balance is considered to be a contribution by the guarantor.

Things that are not contributions

If you have volunteers working for your campaign, the value of their volunteer labour is not considered to be a contribution.

A cash donation of \$25 or less received at a fundraising event is not considered to be a contribution, and you may accept such donations without keeping track of who gave them to you. You will have to report the total amount of money that you received from these donations on your financial statement.

The value of free political advertising, provided that such advertising is made available to all candidates and is in accordance with the *Broadcasting Act (Canada)* is not considered to be a contribution.

If you obtain a campaign loan from a bank or a recognized lending institution, the amount of the loan is not considered to be a contribution.

Who can make a contribution

You can accept contributions only from individuals who are residents of Ontario. Corporations and trade unions are not permitted to make contributions to candidates.

If your spouse is not a resident of Ontario, they can still make contributions to your campaign. They may not make contributions to any other candidate.

Groups such as clubs, associations or ratepayer's groups are not eligible to make contributions. The members of these groups may make individual contributions from their personal funds (as long as they are residents of Ontario).

Who cannot make a contribution

The following individuals and organizations are not permitted to make contributions to municipal council and school board campaigns:

- a corporation
- a trade union
- an individual who is not normally a resident in Ontario
- a federal political party, constituency association, or a registered candidate in a federal election
- a provincial political party, constituency association, or a registered candidate or leadership contestant
- a federal or provincial government, a municipality or a school board

When you can receive contributions

You can only accept contributions after the clerk has received your nomination, and you cannot accept contributions after your campaign period has finished. Any contributions received outside the campaign period must be returned to the contributor. If you cannot return the contribution to the contributor, you must turn it over to the clerk.

Contribution limits – contributions from yourself and your spouse

If you are running for municipal council, there is a limit on the total amount that you and your spouse may collectively contribute to your own campaign. The contribution limit is calculated based on the number of electors who are eligible to vote for the office that you are running for. The formula to calculate the limit is:

- for head of council: \$7,500 plus \$0.20 per eligible elector
- for council member: \$5,000 plus \$0.20 per eligible elector

There is a cap of \$25,000. If the formula results in a number greater than \$25,000, the limit will still be \$25,000.

The clerk will tell you what your self-funding limit is.

All of the contributions that you and your spouse make to your own campaign count towards this limit, including:

- contributions of money
- the value of goods or services that you or your spouse donate to the campaign
- the value of any inventory from the previous election that you use again in this campaign

This limit does not apply to school board trustee candidates.

Contribution limits – contributions from other people

There is a \$1,200 limit that applies to contributions from other individuals. If a person makes more than one contribution (for example, contributes money, contributes goods, and purchases a ticket to a fundraising event), the total value of all the contributions cannot exceed \$1,200.

If you are running for mayor in the City of Toronto, the limit is \$2,500.

The maximum total amount that a contributor can give to candidates in the same jurisdiction (for example, running for the same council or for the same school board) is \$5,000.

You are required to inform every contributor of the contribution limits. An easy way to ensure compliance is to include the contribution limits on the receipt that you provide for each contribution.

Only a contribution that is \$25 or less can be made in cash. All contributions above \$25 must be made by cheque, money order, or by a method that clearly shows where the funds came from (such as certain debit, credit or electronic transfer transactions).

Contribution receipts

You must issue a receipt for every contribution you receive. The receipt should show who made the contribution, the date, and the value. If the contribution was in goods or services, you must determine the value of the goods or services and issue a receipt for the full value.

If you receive a contribution from a joint account, the contribution can only come from one person. You must determine who is making the contribution and issue the receipt to that person.

You are required to list the names and addresses of every contributor who gives more than \$100 total to your campaign in your financial statement. You should keep a record of the names and addresses of every contributor, regardless of the value of their contribution, because the same contributor may make multiple contributions that end up totalling more than \$100.

Note: Contribution receipts are not tax receipts. Contributions to municipal council and school board campaigns cannot be credited against provincial or federal income taxes.

Returning ineligible contributions

You are required to return any contribution that was made or accepted in contravention of the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), as soon as you learn that it was an ineligible contribution. If you cannot return the contribution, you must turn it over to the clerk.

Contributions should be returned or paid to the clerk if the contribution is:

- made outside your campaign period
- from an anonymous source (except for donations of \$25 or less at a fundraising event)
- from an ineligible source (someone who doesn't live in Ontario, a corporation, etc.)
- greater than the individual \$1,200 limit or the \$5,000 total limit per jurisdiction
- a cash contribution greater than \$25
- from funds that do not belong to the contributor who gave them to you

Unused contributions

If your campaign ends with a surplus, you can withdraw the value of contributions that you and your spouse made from the surplus. If you still have a surplus once you have withdrawn your contributions, the remaining surplus must be turned over to the clerk.

You are not permitted to refund eligible contributions made by anyone other than yourself or your spouse.

Contribution rebates

Your municipality may have a contribution rebate program. Contact your clerk for more information.

Contributions to municipal council and school board campaigns are not tax deductible.

Fundraising

Fundraising functions are events or activities held by you, or on your behalf, for the primary purpose of raising money for your campaign. If you hold an event to promote your campaign and you happen to receive some contributions or ask people to consider contributing to your campaign, this would not qualify as a fundraising event.

Similarly, if you have a sentence in your campaign brochure asking people to make a contribution or giving them information about how to contribute, this would not make the production of the brochure a fundraising expense since its primary purpose is to promote your campaign, not to raise money. Fundraisers can only be held during your campaign period. You must record the gross income (including ticket revenue and other revenue) and the expenses related to each event and activity on your campaign financial statement.

If you sell tickets to an event, the ticket price is considered to be a contribution to your campaign and you must issue a receipt to each person who purchases tickets. If the ticket price is higher than \$25, tickets cannot be paid for in cash.

Campaign income

If you raise funds by selling goods or services for more than fair market value, the difference between the fair market value and the amount paid is considered to be a contribution. If the good or service is sold for \$25 or less, the amount paid is considered to be campaign income that is not a contribution.

Campaign expenses

Expenses

Campaign expenses are the costs that you incur (or that a person such as your campaign manager incurs under your direction) during your campaign.

Reminder: the nomination fee is a personal expense rather than a campaign expense. It should not be reported on your campaign financial statement.

Expenses must be paid from your campaign bank account. If you use a credit card to pay for purchases, you should make sure that you keep clear records showing that the expense on the credit card was reimbursed from the campaign account.

Any taxes such as HST paid on purchases should be included in the amount of the expense.

You can incur expenses only during your campaign period, except for expenses related to the preparation of an auditor's report. If you are required to include an auditor's report with your financial statement, you may incur these expenses after the campaign period has ended. These expenses must also be reported on your financial statement.

Goods and services

Goods or services that are contributed to your campaign are also expenses. They should be treated as if the contributor gave you money and you went out and purchased the goods and services. You must record both the contribution and the expense.

Spending limits

Candidates are subject to two spending limits — a general limit, and a separate limit for expenses relating to parties and expressions of appreciation after voting day.

General spending limit

The general spending limit for your campaign is calculated based on the number of electors who are eligible to vote for the office that you are running for. The formula to calculate the limit is:

- for head of council: \$7,500 plus \$0.85 per eligible elector
- for council member or trustee: \$5,000 plus \$0.85 per eligible elector

When you file your nomination, the clerk will give you an estimate of your general spending limit. This estimate will be based on the number of electors in the previous election.

On or before September 30, 2026, the clerk must give you a final general spending limit which is based on the number of electors on the voters' list for the current election.

If the spending limit estimate that you received when you filed your nomination is higher than the final spending limit you receive in September, the estimate becomes your official spending limit.

While most of your expenses will be subject to the general spending limit, the following expenses are not:

- expenses related to holding a fundraising event or activity

- expenses relating to a recount
- expenses relating to a court action for a controverted election
- expenses relating to a compliance audit
- expenses incurred by a candidate with a disability that are directly related to the candidate's disability and would not have been incurred if not for the election
- audit and accounting fees

Note: Any materials, events or activities must have fundraising as the primary purpose in order to be exempt from the spending limit. An incidental mention of contributions is not enough to qualify as fundraising.

When the general spending limit applies

Your spending limit covers expenses that you incur between the beginning of your campaign and voting day. Expenses that you incur between the day after voting day and the end of your campaign are not subject to the spending limit.

Note: If you incur an expense before voting day, but don't get around to paying for it until after voting day, it would still be subject to the spending limit.

Spending limit for parties and expressions of appreciation

The spending limit for expenses related to holding parties and other expressions of appreciation after the close of voting is calculated as 10% of the amount of your general spending limit.

Expenses related to parties and expressions of appreciation are subject to the specific spending limit regardless of whether they are incurred before or after voting day.

Leftover campaign inventory

If you ran in the last municipal council or school board election and you want to reuse leftover goods such as signs or office supplies, you must establish the current market value of the goods – what it would cost you to purchase them today. You must record the current market value as an expense.

If you have inventory left at the end of your campaign it becomes your personal property. If you want to store materials such as signs for use in another election, any costs related to storage are personal costs, not campaign expenses.

Note to accountants: The value of all goods must be recorded as an expense regardless of whether the campaign ends with used or unused goods in inventory. Do not deduct the

value of unused goods from the campaign expenses, as this will result in the campaign having a surplus on paper that the candidate does not actually have.

Surplus and deficit

If your campaign has a surplus after you have refunded contributions made by yourself or your spouse, you must pay the surplus over to the clerk when you file your financial statement. The surplus will be held in trust, and you can use it if you incur expenses related to a compliance audit. If the surplus is not needed for these expenses, it becomes the property of the municipality or the school board.

If your campaign expenses are greater than your campaign income, your campaign will be in deficit.

Note: Ending your campaign with a deficit may result in questions being raised about how expenses were paid for, and whether you contributed more than your self-funding limit by paying outstanding expenses with personal funds.

Campaign advertisements

When campaign advertising appears in broadcast, print, electronic or other media, the broadcaster or publisher of the advertising must keep certain records:

- a written copy of the candidate's name, as well as the name, business address and telephone number of the individual who deals with the broadcaster or publisher under the direction of the candidate (this could be the candidate themselves)
- a copy of the advertisement (or the means of reproducing the advertisement for inspection)
- a statement of the charge made for its appearance

These records will be kept for four years after the date the advertisement appears.

Broadcasters and publishers must allow the public to inspect the records during this time.

If your campaign includes advertising that is broadcast or published, you must record the name of the broadcaster or publisher as well as their contact information in Schedule 3 of the campaign financial statement (Form 4).

Campaign financial statement

It is your responsibility as a candidate to file a **complete and accurate financial statement on time**.

The filing deadline is 2 p.m. on the last Friday in March following the election. Since March 26, 2027, falls on Good Friday and March 29, 2027, is Easter Monday, financial statements may be filed with the clerk until **2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2027**.

If you have a bookkeeper or accountant complete the financial statement for you, you are still responsible for ensuring that it is complete and accurate and filed on time.

Financial statements are not required to have original signatures. You should contact your clerk for information about whether you can file your financial statement electronically if you are not able to file your statement in person.

If you filed a nomination form, you must file a financial statement. This includes candidates who withdrew their nomination, candidates who were not certified and did not appear on the ballot, and candidates who were acclaimed.

If you did not receive any contributions (including contributions from yourself) or incur any expenses, you are only required to fill out the first page of the financial statement and sign it.

If you received contributions or incurred any expenses you must complete the relevant parts of the financial statement.

If your campaign contributions (including contributions from yourself) or campaign expenses are greater than \$10,000, you must have your financial statement audited and include the auditor's report when you submit your financial statement to the clerk.

Filing early

You can file your campaign financial statement after you have ended your campaign. If you file your statement early and then discover an error, you can submit a corrected statement at any time before the filing deadline on March 30, 2027. Your original statement is deemed to be withdrawn when you file the corrected statement. You cannot withdraw a financial statement without submitting a corrected one.

Applying for an extension

If you think that you will be unable to file your financial statement by the deadline, you may apply **before March 30, 2027**, to the Superior Court of Justice for an extension. If the court grants the extension, you will receive the refund of your nomination fee if you file by the deadline given to you by the court.

Grace period for filing

If you have not filed your financial statement by the deadline, you may file your financial statement within 30 days after the deadline if you pay the municipality a \$500 late filing fee. This grace period ends at 2 p.m. on Thursday, April 29, 2027. You will not receive a refund of your nomination fee if you file during the 30-day grace period.

If you have not filed your financial statement by the end of the 30-day grace period and you did not apply to the court for an extension prior to the deadline, automatic penalties apply:

- you will forfeit your elected office (if you won the election)
- you will be ineligible to run for office or be appointed to fill a vacancy until after the 2030 election

If you did not file your financial statement by the end of the grace period, you may still file it for the purposes of having your finances on the record. The clerk will accept the financial statement and make it available to the public. The penalties will still apply.

Separate statement for each office

If you filed a nomination and then changed your mind and filed a nomination for a different office, you may be required to file a separate financial statement for each campaign.

Extended campaigns

Your campaign period ends on December 31, 2026. However, if your campaign has a deficit, you can extend your campaign in order to do some additional fundraising. If you want to extend your campaign, you must notify the clerk on or before December 31, 2026, using the [Notice of Extension of Campaign Period form \(Form 6\)](#).

Your campaign may be extended until June 30, 2027.

If you extend your campaign, you must file two financial statements:

- a financial statement reflecting your campaign until December 31, 2026, (due March 30, 2027)
- a supplementary financial statement that includes the information from your initial statement and adds financial information from your extended campaign

The supplementary financial statement must be filed with the clerk by 2 p.m. on Friday, September 24, 2027.

Auditor's report

You must have an auditor review your financial statement and provide a report if any of the following are true:

- your campaign expenses exceed \$10,000
- the contributions you received (including contributions from yourself) exceed a total of \$10,000
- both your expenses and your contributions exceed \$10,000 each

The auditor's report must be prepared by an auditor licensed under the [Public Accounting Act, 2004](#). Before you hire someone to prepare the report, ensure that they are properly qualified.

You can incur expenses relating to the auditor's report after December 31, 2026. These expenses do not count toward your spending limit. Include these expenses on the financial statement that you are filing.

Compliance and enforcement

Enforcement of the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), is done through the courts. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing does not have a role in investigating elections or in determining penalties.

Automatic penalties

There are three contraventions of the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), where penalties apply automatically:

1. if you fail to file a financial statement by the end of the 30-day grace period or fail to apply to the court before March 30, 2027, for an extension by the filing deadline
2. if your financial statement shows that you exceeded your spending limit
3. if you fail to turn over your surplus to the clerk when you file your financial statement

The penalty is that you forfeit your office (if you won the election) and you become ineligible to run or be appointed to fill a vacancy until after the 2030 election.

Compliance audits

Each municipality and school board must establish a compliance audit committee.

If an eligible elector believes that you have contravened the election finance rules, they may apply for a compliance audit of your campaign finances. The application must be in writing and must set out the reasons why they believe you contravened the rules.

An application for a compliance audit must be submitted to the municipal clerk who conducted the election within 90 days of the deadline to file the campaign financial statement.

The compliance audit committee will consider the application and decide whether to grant or reject the application. You may appeal the committee's decision to the Superior Court of Justice within 15 days after the decision is made.

If the committee grants the application, it will appoint an auditor to conduct a compliance audit of your campaign finances. The auditor is entitled to have access to all of the financial records related to your campaign. The auditor will produce a report, which you are entitled to receive.

The compliance audit committee will meet to consider the auditor's report. If the report concludes that there is an apparent contravention of the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), the committee will decide whether to commence legal action.

The compliance audit committee does not have any authority to set penalties. Only the court can decide if you contravened the Act and, if so, which penalties should apply.

A person who does not want or who is not able to apply for a compliance audit may decide to commence legal action on their own. A prosecution related to the 2026 election must be commenced by November 15, 2030.

Penalties

If you are convicted of an offence, you may be subject to the following penalties:

- a fine of up to \$25,000
- ineligibility to vote or run in the next general election
- up to six months in prison
- forfeiture of your elected office, if the judge finds that you committed the offence knowingly

If you are convicted of exceeding the spending limit, you may also be fined the amount by which you exceeded the limit.

Completing the financial statement

General information

All candidates must file a financial statement. This includes candidates who withdrew their nomination, candidates who were not certified and did not appear on the ballot, and candidates who were acclaimed.

Candidates must use [Form 4](#).

All candidates must complete Box A: Name of Candidate and Office and Box B: Declaration.

- **If you did not receive any contributions** (including contributions from yourself) or incur any expenses, check the box indicating this, and complete the Declaration in Box B. No further information is required.
- **If you did receive contributions** (including contributions from yourself) or incur expenses, you must fill in the information in Box C, Box D, Schedule 1 and Schedule 2, as appropriate. You may find it easier to fill out the form if you start with the more detailed sections such as the tables in Schedule 1 before filling in Box C (Statement of Campaign Income and Expenses).

If you received contributions or incurred expenses in excess of \$10,000, you must include an auditor's report with your financial statement.

Your completed financial statement must be submitted to the clerk by **2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2027**.

Supplementary financial statements must be submitted to the clerk by **2 p.m. on September 24, 2027**.

Tips for completing Form 4

Learn more about how to correctly fill out the campaign financial statement.

Box A: Name of candidate and office

Record your general spending limit and your spending limit for parties and other expressions of appreciation.

Note: automatic penalties will apply if the form reports that either of the spending limits have been exceeded.

If you are running for a council position, record your self-funding limit.

Box B: Declaration

By signing the form, you are declaring that the information recorded in the financial statement is true and accurate. If your financial statement was prepared by someone else, you as the candidate are still responsible for its accuracy.

Box C: Statement of campaign income and expenses

Loan

If you obtained a loan for your campaign, you must record the name of the bank or recognized lending institution and the amount borrowed.

You are permitted to get a loan only from a bank or other recognized lending institution in Ontario, and it must be paid directly into your campaign bank account. You may not receive a loan from family members or from any corporate accounts that you may have access to.

The loan is not considered to be campaign income, and paying it back is not a campaign expense. However, if you or your spouse guarantee the loan and the campaign does not repay all of it, the remaining balance is considered to be a contribution (since the guarantor is basically providing the campaign the means to repay the loan). This amount counts towards your self-funding limit.

Any interest that the campaign pays on the loan is a campaign expense.

Income

Your campaign income includes all contributions received from yourself, your spouse and other eligible contributors. This includes the value of contributions of goods and services. Income also includes any refunds of deposits, interest earned by your campaign bank account, and revenue from fundraising events or activities that is not deemed a contribution (for example, if you sold refreshments at market value).

Example

You have 100 t-shirts printed to sell at a fundraiser. The cost to the campaign is \$10 per shirt, and you sell them for \$25 each.

The \$25 is not a contribution. You do not have to collect names and contact information, or issue a contribution receipt to anyone who buys a shirt.

The \$1,000 that you spent on the shirts must be recorded as a campaign expense.

The \$2,500 that you raised by selling the shirts must be recorded as revenue from fundraising events not deemed a contribution.

If you sell goods (such as food and drink) at market value, the revenue is not considered to be a contribution and must be recorded as revenue from fundraising events not deemed a contribution.

Sign deposit

If your municipality requires a deposit for election signs, this should be recorded as a campaign expense and paid for using campaign funds. If your deposit is refunded, record the amount under Income.

Expenses

Your campaign expenses include the value of any goods or services that have been contributed to your campaign (it is as if the contributor gave money to the campaign, which the campaign then spent on acquiring the goods or services).

The general spending limit applies only to expenses incurred until the end of voting day. Expenses incurred after voting day are not subject to the spending limit.

Note: An expense subject to the general spending limit that was incurred prior to voting day but not paid for until after voting day is still subject to the limit.

Some types of expenses are not subject to the general spending limit even if they are incurred prior to voting day.

Expenses related to parties and expressions of appreciation after voting day are subject to that spending limit regardless of when they are incurred.

Box D: Calculation of surplus or deficit

Campaign deficit

At the top of Box D, you must subtract the total amount of your campaign expenses from the total amount of your campaign income. If your expenses are greater than your income, your campaign is in deficit.

If you have extended your campaign in order to fundraise, you must still file a financial statement reflecting your campaign finances to December 31, 2026.

Campaign surplus

At the top of Box D, you must subtract the total amount of your campaign expenses from the total amount of your campaign income. If your income is greater than your expenses, your campaign has a surplus.

You are entitled to reimburse contributions made by yourself or your spouse out of the surplus. For example, if the surplus was \$500 and you contributed \$400 to your campaign, you may deduct that \$400, leaving your campaign with a surplus of \$100. If the surplus was \$500 and you contributed \$600, you may deduct \$500 of your contribution, leaving your campaign with \$0. You may not deduct more than the value of the surplus.

If, after deducting contributions made by yourself or your spouse, the campaign still has a surplus, these funds must be turned over to the clerk.

Schedule 1: Contributions

Schedule 1 includes a summary of contributions from your campaign.

The following tables are included in Schedule 1 and need to be filled in, if applicable:

- Table 1: Contributions in goods or services from candidate or spouse
- Table 2: Inventory of campaign goods and materials from previous municipal campaign used in this campaign
- Table 3: Monetary contributions from individuals other than candidate or spouse where contributions exceed \$100 per contributor
- Table 4: Contributions in goods or services from individuals other than candidate or spouse where contributions exceed \$100 per contributor

Contributions from yourself and/or your spouse

If you are running for municipal council, you and your spouse are subject to limits on how much you can contribute to your campaign. This limit applies to contributions of money, goods and services, as well as the value of any inventory from a previous campaign that you have used in your current campaign.

Record these amounts on the lines provided in Schedule 1. Do not include them in the tables of contributions (Table 1 or Table 2). The other reason to identify the contributions from you and your spouse is because those contributions can be reimbursed by you and your spouse if the campaign ends with a surplus.

Note: you must report the full amount of the contributions made by you and your spouse, including any amounts that have been reimbursed from a surplus.

Contributions totalling \$100 or less

If the total amount contributed (including the value of goods and services) from a single contributor is \$100 or less, you do not need to provide details on the form. Simply indicate the total value of all such contributions on the line provided at the top of Schedule 1.

If an anonymous contribution is \$100 or less, include it in the total value of contributions not exceeding \$100 per contributor. Any anonymous contribution that is greater than \$25 must be turned over to the clerk.

Goods and services from candidate or spouse

If you or your spouse contribute goods and services to your campaign, this must be recorded as a contribution. Record any contributions in Table 1 of Schedule 1.

Inventory from previous campaign

Any inventory from a previous campaign that you are using again is a contribution in goods that you make to your campaign and counts towards your self-funding limit. You must calculate the current market value (for example, if you have 100 signs left over from 2022 and use them again, you must calculate how much it would cost to purchase those same signs in 2026) and record it in Table 2. This inventory must also be recorded as a campaign expense.

Contributions totalling more than \$100

If a contributor makes 1 or more contributions totalling more than \$100 (including the value of goods and services and the cost of tickets to fundraising events), you must record all of these contributions in the tables provided in Schedule 1 (Tables 3 and 4).

If an anonymous contribution is more than \$100, include it in the total value of contributions exceeding \$100 per contributor, and include it in Table 3 (listing “anonymous” as the name of the contributor). Any anonymous contribution that is greater than \$25 must be turned over to the clerk.

Note: it is the total amount contributed that matters — if an individual buys a ticket to a fundraising event for \$50, and then later in the campaign contributes \$75, each of these contributions must be recorded in Table 3 because the total exceeds \$100.

Goods and services from individuals other than candidate or spouse

Eligible contributors may donate goods and services to the campaign. These must be recorded as a contribution and as an expense (as if the contributor donated money, which the campaign then spent on the goods and services).

Corporations and trade unions are not permitted to make contributions to candidates. This includes contributions of goods and services.

Example:

Your friend spends \$150 on coffee and baked goods which they donate for a campaign event. You should record a contribution of \$150 in goods or services from your friend and record an expense of \$150.

If you are given a special discount on a good or service that you are purchasing for your campaign, you should record the expense as if you were not given the discount (since the value of the discount is considered to be a contribution of the good or service to your campaign).

Example:

Your order for campaign signs would normally cost \$500, but the vendor lets you have them for \$300 because he wants to help your campaign. You should record an expense of \$500 for the signs and record a contribution of \$200 in goods or services from the vendor.

Note: As businesses are not permitted to make contributions, the contribution would have to be a personal contribution from the vendor.

Contributions in goods or services from individuals other than the candidate or spouse must be recorded in Table 4 of Schedule 1.

Schedule 2: Fundraising events and activities

The cost of holding fundraising events or activities is not subject to the spending limit. However, in order to be considered a fundraising cost, the primary purpose for the expense must be related to fundraising rather than promoting the candidate. Incidental fundraising that happens to occur during a promotional event is not sufficient to make it a fundraising event. Similarly, a line at the bottom of a campaign brochure asking people to donate does not make the production of the brochure a fundraising expense.

If you have included costs of fundraising events/activities as an expense in Box C, you must provide details of these events and activities in Schedule 2.

Contributions received at a fundraising event may include:

- the price of the ticket
- if goods or services are offered for sale, any amount of money paid that exceeds their market value (for example, if a \$100 item is sold for \$175, the purchaser has made a \$75 contribution to the campaign)
- personal cheques collected from contributors at the event

If contributors have donated goods or services for the fundraising event, these must be recorded as contributions and as expenses.

These contributions must be recorded in Schedule 1, and where the total from a contributor exceeds \$100, be detailed in the appropriate tables. Refer to the section above [Schedule 1: Contributions](#) for more information.

The fundraising event may also generate revenue that is not considered to be a contribution:

- donations of \$25 or less
- if goods or services are offered for sale, the market value of those goods and services sold (for example, if a \$100 item is sold for \$175, \$100 is revenue)
- the amount paid for goods or services offered for sale for \$25 or less

Anonymous contributions

You may keep anonymous contributions that do not exceed \$25 each that are received at a fundraiser (such as those collected by passing the hat or having a tip jar). Report the total amount of money received from these donations in Schedule 2 for that fundraiser.

All other anonymous contributions must be turned over to the clerk.

You will then subtract the contribution as paid or payable to the clerk to arrive at the Total for Part II Contributions in Schedule 2.

Schedule 3: Broadcasters and publishers

If your campaign had any advertising that was broadcast or published, you must record the name of each broadcaster and publisher, along with their contact information.

Auditor's report

If your campaign expenses or the contributions you received total more than \$10,000, you must have an auditor review your financial statement and provide a report.

The auditor's report must be prepared by an auditor licensed under the [Public Accounting Act, 2004](#). Before you hire someone to prepare the report, you should ensure that they are properly qualified.

Forms referred to in this guide

You can get copies of forms from your municipal clerk, or you can download them from the [Government of Ontario's Central Form Repository](#).

[Nomination Paper \(Form 1\)](#)

[Endorsement of Nomination \(Form 2\)](#)

[Financial Statement – Auditor’s Report – Candidate \(Form 4\)](#)

[Financial Statement – Subsequent Expenses \(Form 5\)](#)

[Notice of Extension of Campaign Period \(Form 6\)](#)