

Information for Candidates

Campaign Contributions & Expenses

A candidate cannot raise or spend money on their election campaign until such time as their nomination papers have been filed and a bank account has been opened exclusively for the purposes of their election campaign. A candidate is responsible for keeping records of their financial activities related to the election campaign and is required to retain those records until such time as the next council or school board takes office (i.e. until November 15, 2022).

The following is a brief summary of key information respecting a candidate's campaign finances. For more detailed information, please refer to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs "Campaign Finance Information for Municipal Council Candidates" (click on the link on this page).

Campaign Period

A candidate's campaign period begins once their nomination papers have been filed and ends on December 31, 2018 when the campaign automatically closes. A candidate cannot accept any election contributions or incur any election expense after that date (please see section below on Campaign Deficit).

Campaign Contributions

Campaign contributions are any money, goods or services that are given to a candidate to use in their campaign, including money and goods that a candidate contributes to their own campaign. Contributions greater than \$25 may not be made in cash. All contributions greater than \$25 must be made by cheque, money order or by a method that clearly shows where the funds come from.

Candidates **must**:

- issue a receipt for every contribution received that shows who made the contribution, the date and the value of the contribution; and
- inform each of their contributors about contribution limits.

Please refer to the "Campaign Finance Information for Municipal Council Candidates" for information on who can and cannot contribute to a candidate's election campaign.

Campaign Contribution Limits

Individuals may contribute a maximum of \$1,200 to a single candidate. This includes the value of any goods or services donated to the campaign. Individuals may not contribute more than \$5,000 in total to candidates running for offices on the same council or school board. Any contribution must come directly from the contributor.

A **candidate and/or their spouse** may contribute to the candidate's own campaign. There is a contribution limit that is based on the number of eligible electors in the previous regular election plus a base rate for each office as follows:

Mayor - \$7,500 plus 20 cents per elector to a maximum of \$25,000; and

District Councillor - \$5,000 plus 20 cents per elector to a maximum of \$25,000.

Candidates will be provided with an estimate of their contribution limit when they file their nomination papers.

Campaign Expense Limits

Campaign expenses are costs incurred for goods and services used in a candidate's campaign. The expense limit covers costs incurred between the beginning of a candidate's campaign and Voting Day (October 22, 2018). Expenses incurred between the day after Voting Day (October 23, 2018) and the end of the campaign (December 31, 2018) are not subject to the campaign expense limit. Please refer to the "Campaign Finance Information for Municipal Council Candidates" for further information on expenses that are not subject to the spending limit.

A candidate's expense limit is based on the number of electors who are eligible to vote for each office and the following formula:

Mayor - \$7,500 plus 85 cents per eligible elector; and

District Councillor or School Board Trustee - \$5,000 plus 85 cents per eligible elector.

Candidates will be provided with an estimate of their expense limit when they file their nomination papers.

There is a separate spending limit for expenses related to the holding of **parties and other expressions of appreciation** after the close of voting. This spending limit is calculated as 10% of a candidate's general spending limit.

Financial Statements / Auditor's Report

Candidates are responsible for filing a complete and accurate Financial Statement by **Friday, March 29, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.** The Financial Statement must cover the period from the day the candidate filed their nomination papers until December 31, 2018.

Any candidate that filed a nomination form must file a Financial Statement. This includes candidates who withdrew their nomination, candidates who were not certified, and candidates who were acclaimed.

If a candidate's campaign contributions or expenses total more than \$10,000, the candidate must have an auditor review their Financial Statement and provide an Auditor's Report.

A candidate who extends their campaign (see Campaign Deficit below) must file their Supplementary Financial Statement by **Friday, September 27, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.** The Supplementary Financial Statement must cover the period from the day the candidate filed their nomination papers until June 30, 2019.

A candidate may apply to the Superior Court of Justice to extend the time for the filing of the required Financial Statement(s). The candidate must notify the City Clerk in writing of any application for a Court extension by 2:00 p.m. on the last day for filing the Financial Statement.

NOTE: A candidate will NOT receive a refund of their nomination fee unless they file their financial statement(s) by the deadline(s).

Campaign Surplus

If at the end of the election campaign a candidate's election contributions exceed their election expenses, their campaign will be in a surplus. Any surplus **must** be paid to the City Clerk when the candidate files their Financial Statement.

Campaign Deficit

If at the end of the election campaign a candidate's election expenses exceed their election contributions, their campaign will be in a deficit. The candidate may apply to extend their campaign period for an additional six months to try to erase the deficit. To extend the campaign period, the candidate must file the appropriate notice in person with the City Clerk **before December 31, 2018**. The campaign period will continue until the **earliest** of the following:

- the deficit is erased;
- the candidate runs for another office in a subsequent election or by-election;
- the candidate notifies the City Clerk they are no longer accepting any contributions;
- June 30, 2019 in the case of a regular election; and
- six months from the 45th day after Voting Day in the case of a by-election.

Candidates that extend their election campaign must submit two Financial Statements by the statutory deadline dates:

- Filing of Financial Statements – **Friday, March 29, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.**; and
- Filing of Supplementary Financial Statements – **Friday, September 27, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.**

Penalties

The Municipal Elections Act includes provisions for penalties for candidates for offences related to campaign finances that include fines, imprisonment, ineligibility to vote or run for office in the next regular election and forfeiture of office. Please refer to the "Campaign Finance Information for Municipal Council Candidates" for further information with respect to the penalties that may apply if a candidate is convicted of an offence.