

THE CORPORATION OF THE **TOWN OF COBALT**

Clerk's Introduction Letter

Dear Candidate,

Welcome to the world of municipal politics! If you are a first-time candidate, you will find running for office to be an exciting, challenging and worthwhile experience.

Serving the public as an elected official requires a considerable commitment of time and energy.

The *Municipal Elections Act* sets out in detail the requirements to be met by candidates for office. These requirements have been summarized for your convenience. We urge you to obtain your own copy of the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996, which can be downloaded from the Ministry's website at www.e-laws.gov.on.ca or purchased from the Ontario Government Bookstore.

The Candidate's Information Guide has been prepared for the purpose of providing information that will be of assistance to persons intending to stand for elected office. The contents of this Guide are intended to provide information on certain provisions of relevant legislation and do not intend to recite all applicable statutory references.

As this election progresses, additional information will be available regarding the specifics of the election process. We will be providing you with this information as soon as it becomes available, or at the appropriate time in the process.

Please ensure that you read the enclosed material carefully. It is important that you are aware of your responsibilities as a candidate.

The Municipal Administration staff are available to respond to any questions you may have about the election process.

Best wishes for your successful campaign!



THE CORPORATION OF THE **TOWN OF COBALT**

Checklist for Nomination:

An original and fully complete and accurate Nomination Form ("Form 1"). Form 1 must include an original signature that matches identification.

A photo identification showing name, signature, and qualifying address as appears on Form 1 (photocopies shall not be accepted).

The \$100.00/\$200.00 Nomination Filing Fee (payable in debit, cash, certified cheque or money order, payable to the Town of Cobalt).

EL18A - An original and fully complete Declaration of Qualification

TD02 - An original and fully complete Consent to Release Personal Information

Appointment of an Agent to file a Nomination – Optional



Key Election Dates

Friday, May 1, 2026	<p>First day to file a nomination paper for the offices of Mayor, Councillor and School Board Trustee</p> <p>Once the nomination paper is filed with the Town Clerk, the candidate can start raising and spending money on their campaign</p>
Friday, August 21, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.	<p>Deadline for candidates to (in writing):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• File a nomination• Withdraw a nomination• Change office
Monday, August 24, 2026	<p>Last day for the Town Clerk to certify candidate nomination papers</p>
Tuesday , September 1, 2026	<p>Voters' List will be available to candidates</p>
Saturday, October 17, 2026	<p>Advance Vote at Golden Age Club, 22 Argentite Street, Cobalt from 10am to 6pm</p>
Monday, October 26, 2026	<p>Election Day at Golden Age Club, 22 Argentite Street, Cobalt from 10am to 8pm</p>
March 31, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.	<p>Deadline for candidates to file the initial financial statement</p>
May 1, 2026	<p>Candidates who did not file their financial statement by March 31, 2026 may file it within the 30 days grace period if they pay a \$500 late filing fee. Any candidates who file within the 30 day grace period is not entitled to receive their refund of nomination file fee.</p>

Term of Office: November 15, 2026 to November 14, 2030

Acceptable Identification

One piece of ID: showing Name and Qualifying Address

- Ontario driver's licence
- Ontario Health Card (photo card, showing name and address)
- Ontario Photo Card
- Ontario motor vehicle permit (vehicle portion)
- cancelled personalized cheque
- Mortgage statement, lease or rental agreement relating to property in Ontario
- Insurance policy or insurance statement
- Loan agreement or other financial agreement with a financial institution
- Document issued or certified by a court in Ontario
- Any other document from the government of Canada, Ontario or a municipality in Ontario or from an agency or such a government
- Any document from a Band Council in Ontario established under the *Indian Act* (Canada)
- Income tax assessment notice
- Child Tax Benefit Statement
- Statement of Employment Insurance Benefits Paid T4E
- Statement of Old Age Security T4A (OAS)
- Statement of Canada Pension Plan Benefits T4A (P)
- Canada Pension Plan Statement of Contributions
- Statement of Direct Deposit for Ontario Works
- Statement of Direct Deposit for Ontario Disability Support Program
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Statement of Benefits T5007
- Property tax assessment
- Credit card statement, bank account statement, or RRSP, RRIF, RHOSP or T5 statement
- CNIB card or a card from another registered charitable organization that provides services to persons with disabilities
- Hospital card or record
- Document showing campus residence, issued by the office or officials responsible for student residence at a post-secondary institution
- document showing residence at a long-term care home under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*, issued by the Administrator for the home
- Utility bill for hydro, water, gas, telephone or cable TV or a bill from a public utilities commission
- Cheque stub, T4 statement or pay receipt issued by an employer
- Transcript or report card from a post-secondary school

NOTICE OF NOMINATION FOR OFFICE

Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (s. 32)

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICE?

2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS - NOTICE TO MUNICIPAL ELECTORS

NOMINATIONS

Nominations for the positions listed below must be made on the prescribed form available at your Municipal Office. Nomination forms must be filed, either in person or by your agent, with the Returning Officer of the appropriate Municipality during Normal office hours between the first business day of May in 2026 to Thursday, August 20, 2026.

On Nomination Day, forms must be filed between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026 (Nomination Day). Candidates for municipal council in municipalities with more than 4,000 electors, must submit original endorsement signatures from 25 people who are eligible to vote in the municipality, made on the prescribed form available at your Municipal Office. Candidates for municipal council in municipalities with 4,000 or fewer electors do not have to submit endorsement signatures.

The required filing fee for the Head of Council is \$200.00 and all other offices are \$100.00 (cash, debit) certified cheque or money order made payable to the municipality must accompany the signed form. Full details on the procedures to be followed may be obtained from the appropriate Municipal Clerk.

MUNICIPAL OFFICES FOR WHICH PERSONS MAY BE NOMINATED:

TOWN OF COBALT	
MAYOR	(1)
COUNCILLOR	(6)
Returning Officer-Jaime Allen 18 Silver Street, Cobalt ON P0J 1C0 www.cobalt.ca	

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 Returning Officer for the vacant positions only. Additional nomination papers would then be accepted between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2026.

For further information contact the appropriate Returning Officer above.

Dated this 1st day of May, 2026

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](#).

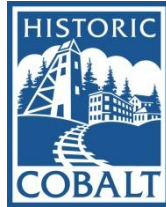
[Nomination Paper \(Form 1\)](#)

[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 \(Form 6\)](#)



**THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWN OF COBALT**

BY-LAW NO. 2026-11

**Being a By-Law to establish a Use of Corporation Resources during an Election Policy
for the Town of Cobalt**


WHEREAS Subsection 88.18 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c.32, as amended, states “Before May 1 in the year of a regular election, municipalities and local boards shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal or board resources, as the case may be, during the election campaign period”;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt deems it expedient to adopt the aforementioned policy;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt hereby enacts as follows:

1. The Council adopts a “Corporate Resources during an Election Policy” for the Town of Cobalt, identified as Schedule “A”, attached hereto and forming part of this By-Law;
2. That By-Law 2022-11, as amended, being a By-Law to provide for an Use of Corporate Resources during an Election Policy for the Town of Cobalt is hereby repealed;
3. That the Clerk of the Town of Cobalt is hereby authorized to make any minor modifications or corrections of an administrative, numerical, grammatical, semantically or descriptive nature or kind to the By-Law and Schedule as may be deemed necessary after the passage of this By-Law, where such modifications or corrections do not alter the intent of the By-Law.
4. That this By-Law shall come into force and take effect on the date of its final passing.

Read a first, second and third time and finally passed this 3rd day of March 2026.

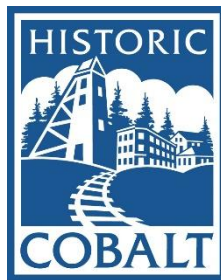


Angela Adshead, Mayor



Jaime Allen, Interim Clerk

**Schedule “A”
To By-Law 2026-11**



**Use of Corporate Resources
During an Election Policy**

In accordance with
Municipal Elections Act, 1996

PART 1 POLICY STATEMENT

In compliance with Section 88.18 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, Chapter 32, as amended (hereinafter the Act), before May 1 in the year of a regulation election, municipalities and local boards shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal or board resources, during the election campaign period.

PART 2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

- a) to establish guidelines for Municipal Candidates, Members of Council and Municipal Employees on the appropriate use of corporate resources during a municipal election campaign period to protect the interest of both the Members of Council and the Town of Cobalt; and
- b) to ensure transparent, accountable and equitable practices during municipal elections.

PART 3 SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all Municipal Candidates, Members of Council and Municipal Employees. This policy shall be in effect during all municipal election campaign periods, including by-elections.

PART 4 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy.

- a) "The Act" means the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, Chapter 32, as amended and includes any regulations made under;
- b) "Campaign Related Materials" means those materials that promote or oppose the candidacy of a person for elected office;
- c) "Candidate" means a person who is running for office in a Town of Cobalt municipal election, nominated under Section 33 of the Act;
- d) "Corporate Resources" means The Corporation of the Town of Cobalt employees, events, services, facilities, supplies, funds, information and assets;
- e) "Election Campaign Period" begins the date a Candidate files their nomination through to Voting Day in a municipal election year;
- f) "Municipal Employees" includes full-time, part-time, and contract employees, paid by the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt;
- g) "Town" means the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt.

PART 5 POLICY APPLICATIONS

Technical Related Resources

Candidates, Members of Council or Municipal Employees shall not use the following Town's corporate resources as applicable, for the creation of campaign related material, recording of election campaign-related messages or to link to web site that features campaign related material:

- a) Computer;
- b) Cell phones;
- c) Tablets;
- d) Printers;
- e) Scanners;
- f) Photocopiers;
- g) Electronic or other signage that can be used to display messages;
- h) Email or social media accounts;
- i) Web site or domain names;
- j) Telephone system including the voice mail system; or
- k) Any other technology resources.

Town Facilities/Properties

Candidates, Members of Council or Municipal Employees shall not:

- a) Campaign and/or distribute campaign related materials during any function being hosted by the Town, whether on municipal property or not; or
- b) Use/rent a municipal facility/property for any election-related purpose.

Communications

Candidates, Members of Council or Municipal Employees shall not:

- a) Print or distribute, through electronic or non-electronic means, any election campaign related material using corporate resources;
- b) Print or distribute the Town logo on any election campaign related materials, except in the case of a link to the Town's website to obtain information about the municipal election;
- c) Use photographs produced for and/or owned by the Town for any election campaign related purpose; or
- d) Take personal photos outside of Town facilities or on Town property for any campaign related purpose.

Town Corporate Resources

- a) The Town is prohibited from making contribution in any form, using corporate resources, towards, the promotion of or opposition to the candidacy of a person for elected office.
- b) Municipal employees shall not actively work in support of a candidate's municipal election campaign during work hours.

**PART 6
LIMITATIONS**

Nothing in this policy shall preclude any Member of Council from performing their duties as a Member of Council, nor inhibit them from representing the interest of their constituents.

**PART 7
ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY**

Individuals who have questions about this policy are encouraged to contact the Town Clerk. Should a written complaint be received alleging contravention of this policy, the Town Clerk, or their designate, shall have the delegated authority to investigate it. If a breach of this policy is confirmed, the person may be required to personally repay any of the costs associated with the breach and/or issue a public letter of apology to Council.

**PART 8
REVIEW PERIOD**

This policy shall be reviewed once during the fourth year of the term of Council.

TOWN OF COBALT

APPOINTMENT OF AN AGENT TO FILE A NOMINATION

Candidate:

Name of Candidate as it appears on Nomination Form (please print):
Candidate's Qualifying Address:

Candidate for the Office of:

Agent Appointed: (information must match the Agent's government issued photo ID)

Name of Agent:	Agents Telephone:
Agent's Address:	Agent's Signature:

Declaration

1. I, the above-named Candidate, appoint the above-named individual as my Agent for the purpose of filing a nomination for election to the above-named office in the 2026 election.
2. I acknowledge and understand that my Agent shall only be permitted to file my Nomination if he or she is able to provide the Clerk (or designate) with the following:
 - a) An original and fully complete and accurate Nomination Form ("Form 1"). Form 1 must include an original 'wet' signature that matches my identification and this appointment form.
 - b) In the case of a nomination for an office on a council that must be endorsed by at least 25 persons, An original and fully complete Endorsement of Nomination Form ("Form 2") with the required 25 endorsements.
 - c) My original photo identification showing my name, signature and qualifying address as appears on Form 1 (photocopies shall not be accepted).
 - d) The Nomination Filing Fee (payable in cash, cheque or money order made payable to the appropriate municipality or debit or credit if available).
 - e) An original and fully complete Declaration of Qualification, signed by me in front of a witness. The Declaration of Qualification must include an original 'wet' signature of both the witnessing individual and I.
 - f) The Agents original photo identification showing their name, address and signature as it appears on this form.
 - g) Any other things that the Clerk may, by written policy, require.
3. I acknowledge and understand that I and my Agent are required to comply with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and those things referred to in paragraph 3 on or before **2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day (Friday, August 21st, 2026)**.

4. I acknowledge and understand that it is my sole responsibility to comply with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and any policy or procedure established by the Clerk, and to ensure that my Agent does the same.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2026

Candidate's Signature

The personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the <i>Municipal Elections Act, 1996</i> , and will be available for public inspection in the Office of the Clerk, Town of Cobalt until the next municipal elections. Questions about this collection can be directed to the Clerk, 18 Silver Street, Cobalt ON P0J 1C0 705-679-8877
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TOWN OF COBALT
DECLARATION OF QUALIFICATIONS
MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES
Municipal Elections Act, 1996

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

- 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:
 Mayor
 Councillor
2. Without limiting the generality of paragraph 1, I am at least eighteen (18) years of age, a Canadian citizen, a resident of the Town of Cobalt or the owner or tenant of land in the Town of Cobalt or the spouse of such owner or tenant.
3. I am not ineligible, disqualified or prohibited 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 Cobalt, or if I am an employee of the Town of Cobalt, I am on an unpaid leave of absence as provided for by section 30 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
 I am not a person who is not an employee of the Town of Cobalt but who is the Clerk, Treasurer, Integrity Commissioner, Auditor General, Ombudsman or registrar referred to in section 223.11 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* or an investigator referred to in subsection 239.2 (1) of Town of Cobalt or a person who is not an employee of the Town of Cobalt but who holds an administrative position of the Town of Cobalt.
 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 Cobalt prior to 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day, August 21, 2026. I understand that the Clerk of the Town of Cobalt will reject my nomination for the above-mentioned office if I fail to provide proof of resignation by this deadline.
- I am not a public servant within the meaning of the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006*, or if I am a public servant, I have followed and will continue to follow all the relevant provisions of 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 5 of such *Act*.

5. I am not prohibited from voting at the municipal election under section 17 (3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

- I am not a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution.
- I am not a corporation.
- I am not a person acting as executor or trustee or in any other representative capacity.
- I am not prohibited because of a conviction of a corrupt practice described in subsection 90 (3), if voting day in the current election is less than five years after voting day in the election in respect of which I was convicted

6. I am not a person 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 that relates to an election to which this *Act* applies and I am not a person who is ineligible to be nominated for, any office until the next two regular elections have taken place after the election to which the offence relates (Section 91 (1)).

7. I am not ineligible from being elected to or holding office by reason of any violations of the election campaign financial requirements, violations for not filing the financial statement or any other violations pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. (Section 88.23)

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*.

Declared before me at the Town of Cobalt

This _____ day of _____, 2026 _____
 (Signature of Candidate)

 (Signature of Municipal Clerk or designate)

Personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and will be used for the nomination process for office in the municipal election and will be available for public inspection in the office of the Clerk, Town of Cobalt until the next municipal election. Questions about this collection of personal information should be directed to the Clerk, 18 Silver Street, Cobalt ON P0J 1C0

TOWN OF COBALT

CONSENT TO RELEASE PERSONAL INFORMATION

(Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act)

Personal information on the Nomination Paper is collected under the authority of the *Municipal Elections Act* and will be used to assist the Clerk in the administration of the 2026 Municipal Election. Questions regarding this collection should be forwarded to the Clerk, 18 Silver Street Cobalt ON P0J 1C0 (705) 679-8877

Name of Candidate: _____

Candidate for the office of:

- Mayor
- Councillor
- Trustee English Public
- Trustee English Separate
- Trustee French Public
- Trustee French Separate

I acknowledge that the Nomination Form filed by me contains personal information and I am aware that the Clerk will disclose all or part of it to the general public.

Candidate Signature: _____

Municipal Clerk Or Designate: _____

Dated at _____, this _____ day of _____, 2026.

TOWN OF COBALT

WITHDRAWAL OF NOMINATION

Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (s. 36)

I, _____, hereby withdraw my name as a candidate
(Name of Candidate)

for the office of _____.
(Name of Elected Office)

Date

Signature of Candidate

This withdrawal delivered to me at _____ this _____ day of _____, 2026.
(time)

Municipal Clerk or designate

A person who has been nominated may withdraw his or her nomination by filing a written withdrawal in the Clerk's office by 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day (August 21, 2026) if the nomination was filed under section 33 (4) and by 2:00 p.m. on August 26, 2026, if the nomination was filed under section 33(5).

2026 voters' guide

Ontario municipal council and
school board elections

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

Find out who is eligible to vote, how to vote and how you can support candidates in Ontario municipal council and school board elections.

This guide provides information to voters for the 2026 municipal council 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](#)

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 voters and candidates 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 vote.

Municipal clerk

Every municipality has a municipal clerk who is in charge of conducting the election. Contact your municipal clerk or [visit your municipality's website](#) if you have questions about the election, such as:

- how or where to vote
- how to apply for election jobs
- whether or not you are eligible to vote in the municipality

If your municipality does not have a website, you could visit or contact your municipal office 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 proceed appropriately. 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.

Accessibility

Municipal clerks must keep in mind the needs of all voters when they are planning and running the election. The clerk must also ensure that voting places are accessible.

The municipal clerk must prepare a plan for identifying, removing and preventing barriers that affect persons with disabilities. This plan must be available to the public before voting day.

The municipal clerk must also issue a public report on their accessibility plan within 90 days after voting day.

Contact us

If you have additional 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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Eligibility to vote

Municipal council election

You are eligible to vote in the election for municipal council if you meet all of the following requirements:

- you are a Canadian citizen
- you are aged 18 or older
- you qualify to vote in the municipality

There are three ways that you can qualify to vote in a municipality:

1. As a **resident elector** if you live in the municipality. You may own, rent, live in shared accommodation where you do not pay rent or live in the municipality but do not have a fixed address. Being a resident elector is the most common type of eligibility.
2. As a **non-resident elector** if you own or rent property in a municipality, but it's not the one where you live. While you can be a resident elector in only one municipality (with the exception of students), you can be a non-resident elector in any other municipality (or municipalities) where you own or rent property.
3. As the **spouse of a non-resident elector** if your spouse owns or rents property in the municipality or municipalities other than the one where you live.

Neither you nor your spouse qualify as a non-resident elector if you do not personally own or rent the property in the municipality. For example, if the property is owned by your business or your cottage is owned by a trust, you would not qualify as a non-resident elector.

If you are not certain whether you qualify as a non-resident elector, you should check with the municipal clerk. Under the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), municipal clerks are responsible for conducting elections, and must be satisfied that a person is eligible to vote before adding their name to the voters' list. Municipal clerks may seek legal advice if they are not certain of a person's eligibility to vote.

Students

There is a special rule for students who may be living away from home while they attend school. If you are a student and consider your "home" to be the place where you live when you are not attending school (that is, you plan on returning there), then you are eligible to vote in both your "home" municipality and in the municipality where you live while attending school.

Voting in more than one municipality

If you qualify to vote in more than one municipality, you can vote in all of those municipal elections. For example, if you qualify as a resident elector in one municipality, and a non-resident elector in three other municipalities, you can vote in all four of those municipal elections.

Wards

If your municipality has wards, you must vote in the ward where you live. If you are also the owner or tenant of a property in another ward or your spouse owns or rents a property in another ward, you are not permitted to vote in that ward instead.

If you are a non-resident elector and you own or rent properties in more than one ward in the municipality, you must choose one ward to vote in. Make sure that you are on the voters' list for that qualifying address.

School board elections

School board elections are held at the same time as municipal elections. You are permitted to vote in the same school board election only once.

You are eligible to vote in the election for a school board if you meet all of the following requirements:

- you are a Canadian citizen
- you are aged 18 or older
- you qualify to vote for that particular school board

School boards can cover large geographic areas that may include several municipalities. School boards are responsible for establishing the geographic areas within the board that one or more trustee positions will be elected to represent.

If you are a resident elector in a municipality, you are eligible to vote for the school trustee(s) that represents the geographic area of the board where you live.

If you live in an unorganized area (instead of a municipality), you may qualify to vote for a school board that has jurisdiction over the unorganized area.

Voting in more than one school board election

You may be eligible to vote in other school board elections in addition to the one where you live.

For example, if you (or your spouse) own or rent residential property in a municipality or an unorganized area different than where you live, you are eligible to vote for a school trustee in this municipality or unorganized area if the trustee sits on a different schoolboard.

Your property must be residential in order for you to qualify to vote. If you (or your spouse) own or rent commercial property in a municipality or unorganized area different than where you live, you are not eligible to vote for school trustee.

Choosing a school board

There are four different kinds of school boards in Ontario:

1. English-language public school board
2. English-language separate school board
3. French-language public school board
4. French-language separate school board

No matter which school your children go to, you are automatically eligible to vote for the English-language public school board unless you take steps to change your school support and become a supporter of a different kind of board.

The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) keeps the provincial record of school support. To learn more about school support or how to change your school support, please visit [MPAC's website](#).

You can also contact the school board in which you wish to vote to get information about changing your school support.

If you want to vote for an English-language separate school board, you must meet both of the following requirements:

1. you must be a Roman Catholic
2. you or your spouse must be an English-language separate school board supporter

If you want to vote for a French-language public school board, you must meet both of the following requirements:

1. you must be a French-language rights holder
2. you or your spouse must be a French-language public school board supporter

If you want to vote for a French-language separate school board, you must meet all of the following requirements:

1. you must be a Roman Catholic
2. you must be a French-language rights holder

3. you or your spouse must be a French-language separate school board supporter

A French-language rights holder is defined in the *Education Act*, and refers to the rights of citizens whose first language is French, or who received their primary school instruction in French, to have their children receive educational instruction in French.

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

If you voted for a French-language board or an English-language separate board in the last election and you wish to change your school support and vote for an English-language public board in the current election, you must contact MPAC **before voting day** to change your school support.

Note: You cannot change your school support when you go to vote on voting day.

How to vote in your municipality

Taking time off work to vote

You are entitled to three hours in which to vote on voting day. This does not mean you can take three hours off work. It means you're allowed to be absent to give yourself three hours of voting time.

Typically, this is at the start or end of your working hours. For example, voting hours are normally from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. If your working hours are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., you are entitled to leave one hour early so that you would have from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. to vote.

Your employer may decide when it would be most convenient for you to be absent in order to vote. For example, if you work from noon to 6 p.m., your employer may decide that you should come in at 1 p.m., rather than leave work at 5 p.m.

Voting from your home

Your municipality may provide opportunities for you to vote without having to go to a voting place:

- municipalities may offer voting options such as vote by mail or vote by internet
- municipalities are required to provide a voting place in certain retirement homes and long-term care facilities

Contact your clerk for more information about how you can vote in your municipality.

Appointing a voting proxy

If, for any reason, you will be unable to personally cast your ballot, you may appoint someone to go to the voting place and cast a ballot on your behalf. This person is called your voting proxy.

Note: Voting by proxy may not be available if your municipality offers voting options such as vote by mail, telephone or internet.

To appoint a voting proxy, you must fill out two copies of the [Appointment for Voting Proxy Form \(Form 3\)](#) and give the copies to the person that you are appointing as your proxy. Both copies must have your original signature on them. You cannot sign one form and then photocopy it.

You must know who you want to appoint as your proxy when you fill out and sign the form. The person you want to appoint must be eligible to vote in the election, and should be someone you trust to mark the ballot in the way you have instructed them to.

You can appoint a proxy after the nominations have been certified. In most municipalities, this will be done by 4 p.m. on August 24, 2026. Contact your clerk to find out the deadline for appointing a voting proxy.

Being a voting proxy

If someone has appointed you as their voting proxy, you must take the completed forms to the municipal clerk to get them certified. Once the forms have been certified, you may cast a vote on behalf of the person who appointed you.

If you are appointed as the proxy for one family member, you may also be appointed as the proxy for additional family members.

Family member refers to a spouse, sibling, parent, child, grandparent or grandchild. There is no limit to the number of times you may be appointed, but it must only be for family members. You cannot be appointed as a proxy for a non-family member and a family member at the same time.

If you are appointed as the proxy for a person who is not a family member, you can act as the proxy for this one person only. You cannot be a proxy for anyone else.

Power of attorney or executors

The only way to vote on someone else's behalf is to be appointed as their voting proxy.

You cannot vote on someone's behalf if you have legal or medical power of attorney, are acting as a person's executor, or in any other representative capacity.

Voters' list and identification

Your name must be on the voters' list in order for you to cast a ballot.

The voters' list for each municipal election is prepared using data from the Permanent Register of Electors maintained by Elections Ontario.

Adding your name to the voters' list

Visit RegisterToVoteON.ca for information on eligibility, registration and how to check, update or add your information to the voters' list. For questions related to voter registration, email info@registertovoteon.ca or call 1.866.242.3025.

On or after September 1, 2026, you must apply to your municipal clerk to update or add your information to the voters' list. You have until the close of voting on October 26, 2026, to apply for any changes. If you are applying to add your name to the voters' list, you will be asked to provide proof that you are eligible to vote.

MPAC remains responsible for collecting school support information for municipal elections. To learn more about school support or to change your school support designation, please visit the [MPAC website](#).

If a by-election has been called in your municipality, you should contact your municipal clerk for information about adding your name to the voters' list or correcting your information.

Removing a name from the voters' list

The voters' list is a public document. If you do not want your name to appear on the voters' list, you can apply to the clerk to have your name removed. Removing your name from the voters' list means you will not be able to vote. If you change your mind and wish to vote, you will have to apply to have your name added to the voters' list again.

You can also apply to the clerk to remove the name of someone who is deceased. You cannot ask for someone else's name to be removed from the list for any other reason.

Redacting information from the voters' list

If having your name and address available on the voters' list would endanger your life, health or security, you can request that the Chief Electoral Officer redact your information.

If the Chief Electoral Officer grants your request, your name remains on the voters list, allowing you to vote, but your information will not be included in copies of the voters' list that are given to candidates or are available for public inspection. The redaction applies to voters lists for municipal and provincial elections.

To request a redaction of information, please email priv@elections.on.ca or write to:

Elections Ontario
Attn: Chief Privacy Officer
26 Prince Andrew Place
Toronto, Ontario
M3C 2H4

Showing identification before you vote in person

When you arrive to vote in person, you must show identification to prove that you are the person whose name appears on the voters' list. The identification must show your name and address. Photo identification is not required.

Examples of identification include:

- Ontario driver's licence
- Ontario health card (if your name and address are printed on the card)
- mortgage, lease or rental agreement
- insurance policy
- credit card statement
- bill for hydro, water, gas, telephone, cable TV

A Canadian passport is not an acceptable identification document because you write your address inside your passport yourself.

See [the full list of acceptable documents](#).

If your name is on the voters' list and you do not have identification, you may fill out and sign a [Declaration of Identity \(Form 9\)](#) that you are the person whose name appears on the list.

Questions on the ballot

A municipal council may pass a bylaw to put a question on the ballot.

There are conditions on the kind of questions that may be asked:

- it must be about a matter that the municipality has authority for, and that the municipality can implement
- it can't be a matter of Provincial interest
- the wording of the question must be clear, concise and neutral
- the possible answers to the question must be “yes” or “no”
- multiple choice or multi-part questions are not permitted

If council wants to put a question on the ballot for the 2026 election, it must pass a bylaw by March 1, 2026.

Any person may appeal the wording of the question to the Chief Electoral Officer of Elections Ontario. This appeal must be filed with the municipal clerk within 20 days after the clerk gives notice to the public of the bylaw being passed.

Members of the public cannot make a council put a question on the ballot.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing may also place a question on the ballot. The question may be about any matter.

The results of a question on the ballot

If more than 50% of the eligible voters in a municipality vote on the question, the result is binding on the municipal council. This means:

- if “yes” receives more than 50% of the votes, the municipality must implement the results of the question in a timely manner
- if “no” receives more than 50% of the votes, the municipality cannot implement the matter in question until four years have passed since voting day

If less than 50% of the eligible voters in the municipality vote on the question, the results are not binding. Council may consider the results, but it is not required to act or not act on whatever the question was about.

The results of a minister’s question can provide advice to the minister or to the government, but the results are not binding.

Supporting a candidate’s campaign

Nomination endorsement signatures

If your municipality has 4,000 or more electors, candidates running for municipal council must submit at least 25 original endorsement signatures when they file their nomination.

In order to endorse a candidate, you must be eligible to vote on the day that you sign the endorsement. For example, a person who is 17 cannot sign an endorsement even if they will be 18 by voting day and able to vote in the election.

You can endorse as many people as you like — there is no limit on the number of nominations you can endorse, and you can endorse more than one person running for the same office.

Candidates must use the [Endorsement of Nomination Form \(Form 2\)](#) to collect endorsement signatures.

When you provide your endorsement signature you must also provide your complete address including your postal code.

The Endorsement of Nomination form is a public document. You cannot revoke your endorsement of a candidate after the document has been filed with the clerk.

Signs

The [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#) does not regulate the size or placement of signs. Your municipality may have rules regarding where signs may be placed and when they may be displayed. Contact your municipal clerk for more information.

If you are a tenant, or own or rent a condominium, your landlord or condominium corporation cannot prohibit you from displaying signs within your unit. However, your landlord or condominium corporation may set reasonable conditions about the size or type of signs that can be displayed within your unit and may prohibit the display of election signs in the common areas of the building.

Inside a voting place

Campaign materials, including pamphlets, signs, or buttons supporting or opposing a candidate are not permitted inside a voting place.

You are not permitted to show your marked ballot to anyone. This includes taking a picture or video of your marked ballot. The exception to this rule is if someone in the voting place is assisting you to mark your ballot.

After the election

Election results

Many municipalities will report unofficial voting results on the night of the election.

The results of a municipal election are not official until the clerk makes the declaration. This usually happens a few days after voting day, after the clerk has had time to check the results and make sure that all of the votes have been counted properly.

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 that sets out other reasons for an automatic recount.

If you feel there should be a recount, and the rules for an automatic recount do not apply, you can ask the municipal council or school board to order a recount. Any recounts must be ordered within 30 days after the clerk has declared the results of the election.

If you are an eligible voter, you can also apply to the Superior Court of Justice to ask a judge to order a recount.

Recounts must be done 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 a 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.

Compliance audits

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

Every candidate and every third-party advertiser must file a financial statement which reports their contributions and expenses.

If you are an eligible voter and you believe, on reasonable grounds, that a candidate or a third-party advertiser has contravened the election finance rules, you may apply for a compliance audit of the candidate's or the third-party advertiser's finances.

The application must be in writing and must set out the reasons why you believe that the candidate or third-party advertiser has contravened the rules.

An application for a compliance audit must be submitted to the municipal clerk within 90 days of the filing deadline. The deadline for candidates and third-party advertisers to file their financial statements is 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.

The deadline for a candidate to file a supplementary financial statement is the last Friday in September (September 24, 2027). If a candidate files a supplementary financial statement, an application for a compliance audit may be submitted within 90 days of the supplementary filing deadline.

Contributions to candidates and third-party advertisers

General information

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

The meaning of “third-party” in this context is 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 not be done under the direction of a candidate.

If you want to spend money on third-party advertisements during the election, you must register first with the municipal clerk, and must file a financial statement.

For more information on third-party advertising, please see the [third-party advertisers’ guide](#).

Who can make contributions

Any person who is a resident of Ontario can make a contribution to a candidate’s campaign or contribute to a third-party advertiser to help fund their advertisements.

Corporations carrying on business in Ontario, and trade unions that hold bargaining rights for employees in Ontario, are not permitted to make contributions to candidates in municipal elections in Ontario. However, they may contribute to third party advertisers.

Entities that are not corporations such as neighbourhood associations, clubs or professional associations, such as fire or police associations, are not eligible to make financial contributions to candidates or third-party advertisers. Members may contribute individually.

Contribution limit

You may contribute a maximum of \$1,200 to a single candidate (\$2,500 to a mayoral candidate in the City of Toronto). You may also contribute a maximum of \$1,200 to a third-party advertiser. These amounts include the value of any goods or services donated to the campaign. You may not contribute more than \$5,000 in total to candidates running for offices on the same council or school board, or to third-party advertisers who are registered in the same municipality.

If you buy a ticket to a candidate's or third-party advertiser's fundraiser, the cost of the ticket is a contribution.

Other rules regarding contributions

Any contribution of money must come directly from the contributor. You are not permitted to pool contributions from others and then forward that money to a candidate's campaign or to a third-party advertiser. If a contribution is made from a joint account, it must be clear which person is making the contribution.

Contributions greater than \$25 may not 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.

If the total value of the contributions you've made to a candidate or to a third-party advertiser is greater than \$100, your name and address will be recorded in the candidate's or third-party advertiser's financial statement. The financial statement is a public document.

Contributions to municipal council and school board candidates, and third-party advertisers are not tax deductible. Your municipality may have a contribution rebate program in place if you contribute to a candidate. However, municipal contribution rebate programs do not apply to contributions to third-party advertisers. You should contact your municipal clerk for more information.

Candidates and third-party advertisers are not permitted to return unused contributions to contributors. If the candidate or third-party advertiser has a surplus at the end of their campaign, they must turn that money over to the municipality.

Review of contributions

Contributions that are reported on candidates' or third-party advertisers' financial statements will be reviewed by the municipal clerk to check that they comply with the rules.

If a candidate's financial statements show that a contributor gave more than \$1,200 to a candidate (\$2,500 to a mayoral candidate in Toronto), or if they show that a contributor gave more than \$5,000 total to candidates running for the same municipality or school board, the clerk will report this to the compliance audit committee.

If the financial statements show that a contributor gave more than \$1,200 to a third-party advertiser, or if they show that a contributor gave more than \$5,000 total to third-party advertisers registered in the same municipality, the clerk will also report this to the compliance audit committee.

The compliance audit committee will meet and determine whether the municipality (or school board) should begin court proceedings against the contributor.

If you want to contribute to a candidate or third-party advertiser, you should make sure that you know what the contribution limits are and keep track of your donations to ensure that you don't end up giving more than is permitted.

Enforcement and penalties

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.

If you are an eligible voter and you feel that the election was not valid (either the election of a specific candidate or candidates, or the entire election), you can apply to the Superior Court of Justice to determine whether the election was valid. The application must be made within 90 days after voting day.

Any person can begin court proceedings against a person, trade union or corporation who they believe committed an offence in relation to an election. Only the court can decide whether the person, trade union or corporation is guilty of committing an offence, and only the court may determine the penalty.

It is an offence to do, or attempt to do, any of the following:

- vote if you are not an eligible elector
- vote more times than you are permitted to vote
- vote in a voting place where you are not entitled to vote
- persuade a person who is not an eligible elector to vote
- cast a vote yourself after you have appointed a proxy

- vote as a proxy if the person who appointed you has cancelled the appointment, become ineligible to vote or died
- give a ballot to someone if you are not authorized to do so
- switch the ballot you were given with a different piece of paper to be placed in the ballot box
- take a ballot away from the voting place
- handle a ballot box or ballots if you are not authorized to do so
- bribe a person (using money, valuables, or offers of office or employment) to vote a certain way or to not vote at all, or give someone else money so that they can bribe the person
- accept a bribe to vote a certain way or to not vote at all
- bribe a person to become a candidate, decide to not become a candidate, or withdraw from being a candidate

It is also an offence to break the rules relating to campaign finances. For example, you cannot make a contribution without being eligible to do so, contribute more than the limit, or contribute money that is not yours.

General penalties

If a person is convicted of committing an offence, they may be subject to the following penalties:

- a fine of up to \$25,000
- ineligibility to vote or run in the next regular election
- up to six months in prison

If a corporation or trade union is convicted of committing an offence, they may be subject to a fine of up to \$50,000.

These penalties would be determined by the court.

By-elections

A by-election is an election that happens during the council or school board term. It may occur because:

- a seat becomes vacant on a council or school board (by-election for office)
- the municipality wants to put a question to voters before the next regular election (by-election for a question on the ballot)

Vacancies

If a member of a municipal council or school board resigns, loses their eligibility (for example, by moving away) or dies during the term, their seat becomes vacant.

A vacancy on a council must be filled unless the vacancy occurs within 90 days before voting day in the next regular election. A vacancy on a school board must be filled unless the vacancy occurs within one month before voting day in the next regular election.

A vacant seat can be filled either by appointing someone who is qualified or by holding a by-election. Different rules apply if the head of council office becomes vacant in a municipality that has strong mayor powers. For more information please see the [Ontario municipal councillor's guide](#).

Appointment

If a council or school board decides to fill a vacancy by appointment, they must appoint a person who is eligible to serve on the council or school board and who is willing to accept the appointment.

The legislation does not set out a process for making the appointment. It is up to the council or school board to determine how they will decide who to appoint. Different approaches include:

- appointing the candidate who came second in the regular election
- inviting interested persons to apply for the position
- offering the appointment to a member of the community

Sometimes councils or school boards want to put additional restrictions on appointees, such as requiring that an appointee agree not to run in the next regular election. While a council or school board may set this as a condition for appointment, there is nothing in provincial legislation that would prevent someone who was appointed from running in the next election.

By-election for an office

Once the council or school board has decided to hold a by-election, the municipal clerk is in charge of conducting it. The council or school board does not decide when the last day to file nominations or voting day will be. These dates are determined by the clerk.

Nominations open when the council has passed the bylaw ordering the by-election, or when the school board has passed a resolution ordering the by-election and sent it to the clerk who will conduct it. Nominations close at 2 p.m. on nomination day.

The clerk must set nomination day within 60 days after the by-election was ordered by council, the board or the court.

Voting day will be 45 days after nomination day.

By-election for a question on the ballot

If a council or board wants to put a question on the ballot, they do not have to wait until the next regular election to do so. They could hold a by-election specifically to allow electors to vote on the question.

Voting day for a by-election to put a question on the ballot must be at least 180 days after the bylaw or resolution to hold the by-election has been passed.

Acceptable documents for voter identification

You must present one of the following documents showing your name and address:

- Ontario driver's licence
- Ontario Health Card (photo card)
- Ontario Photo Card
- Ontario motor vehicle permit (vehicle portion)
- cancelled personalized cheque
- mortgage statement, lease or rental agreement relating to property in Ontario
- insurance policy or insurance statement
- loan agreement or other financial agreement with a financial institution
- document issued or certified by a court in Ontario
- any other document from the government of Canada, Ontario or a municipality in Ontario or from an agency or such a government
- any document from a Band Council in Ontario established under the *Indian Act* (Canada)
- income tax assessment notice
- child tax benefit statement
- statement of employment insurance benefits paid T4E
- statement of old age security T4A (OAS)
- statement of Canada Pension Plan benefits T4A(P)
- Canada Pension Plan statement of contributions
- statement of direct deposit for Ontario Works
- statement of direct deposit for Ontario Disability Support Program

- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board statement of benefits T5007
- property tax assessment
- credit card statement, bank account statement, or RRSP, RRIF, RHOSP or T5 statement
- CNIB Card or a card from another registered charitable organization that provide services to persons with disabilities
- hospital card or record
- document showing campus residence, issued by the office or officials responsible for student residence at a post-secondary institution
- document showing residence at a long-term care home under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*, issued by the Administrator for the home
- utility bill for hydro, water, gas, telephone or cable TV or a bill from a public utilities commission
- cheque stub, T4 statement or pay receipt issued by an employer
- transcript or report card from a post-secondary school

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](#).

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

[Appointment for Voting Proxy \(Form 3\)](#)

[Declaration of Identity \(Form 9\)](#)