



Notice 8-3

2026 GENERAL LOCAL ELECTION PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF NOMINATION

Public Notice is given to the Electors of the Town of Smithers and School District No. 54, Trustees Zone 2 (Smithers/Glentanna/Driftwood) that nomination for the offices of:

One (1) Mayor for the Town of Smithers

Six (6) Councillors for the Town of Smithers

Three (3) School Trustees for Zone 2 (Smithers/Glentanna/Driftwood)

Nomination documents are available at the Town of Smithers Municipal Hall, 1027 Aldous Street, during regular business hours, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday, excluding statutory holidays, to the close of the nomination period on Friday, September 11, 2026.

Nominations will be received by the Chief Election Officer or a designated person by hand, mail, email or other delivery service to the Town of Smithers Municipal Hall, 1027 Aldous Street, during regular business hours, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday, excluding statutory holidays, from 9:00 am on Tuesday, September 1, to 4:00 pm on Friday, September 11, 2026.

Candidates are encouraged to submit nomination documents in person. In-person submissions allow the Chief Election Officer or a Deputy Chief Election Officer to witness the required statutory declaration and review nomination documents for completeness.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE

A person is qualified to be nominated, elected, and to hold office as a member of local government/ School Trustee if they meet the following criteria:

- Canadian citizen;
- 18 years of age or older on general voting day October 17, 2026;
- resident of British Columbia for at least 6 months immediately before the day nomination papers are filed;
- not disqualified under the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment from being nominated for, being elected to or holding the office, or be otherwise disqualified by law (qualification for Local Government Office).
- not disqualified under the *School Act* or any other enactment from being nominated for, being elected to or holding office as a trustee, or be otherwise disqualified by law (qualification for School Trustee).

CAMPAIGN PERIOD EXPENSE LIMITS

In accordance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, for the 2026 General Local Election, the following expense limits for candidates during the campaign period apply:

MAYOR \$12,323.78	COUNCILLOR \$6,161.89.	TRUSTEE \$6,161.89
-------------------	------------------------	--------------------

THIRD PARTY ADVERTISING LIMITS

In accordance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, for the 2026 General Local Election, the following third-party advertising limits apply:

MAYOR \$924.28	COUNCILLOR \$924.28	TRUSTEE \$924.28
----------------	---------------------	------------------

For further information, please contact: David Schroeter, Chief Election Officer, or Kim Smith, Deputy Chief Election Officer at 250-847-1600.



For further information on campaign period expense limits and third party advertising limits, please contact Elections BC: Toll-free phone: 1-855-952-0280, electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca, [Candidate Expense Limits](#) | [Elections BC](#)



ELECTIONS BC

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

HANDBOOK FOR LOCAL CANDIDATES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

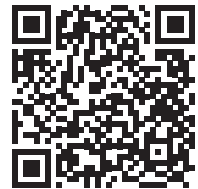
Introduction	1
Timelines	2
Running as a candidate	4
Financial agents.....	4
Financial agent duties	5
Campaign contributions.....	8
Accepting contributions.....	9
Prohibited Contributions	10
Election expenses	11
Incurring election expenses	12
Market Value	12
Volunteering.....	13
Election advertising	14
Campaign financing reports.....	16
Ongoing Education.....	17
Questions.....	17

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed as a day-to-day resource to help local candidates understand their campaign responsibilities under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* (LECFA) and associated regulations. It is the responsibility of candidates to ensure they understand and follow the rules. This guide is based on current interpretation of the legislation and is not considered legal advice by Elections BC.

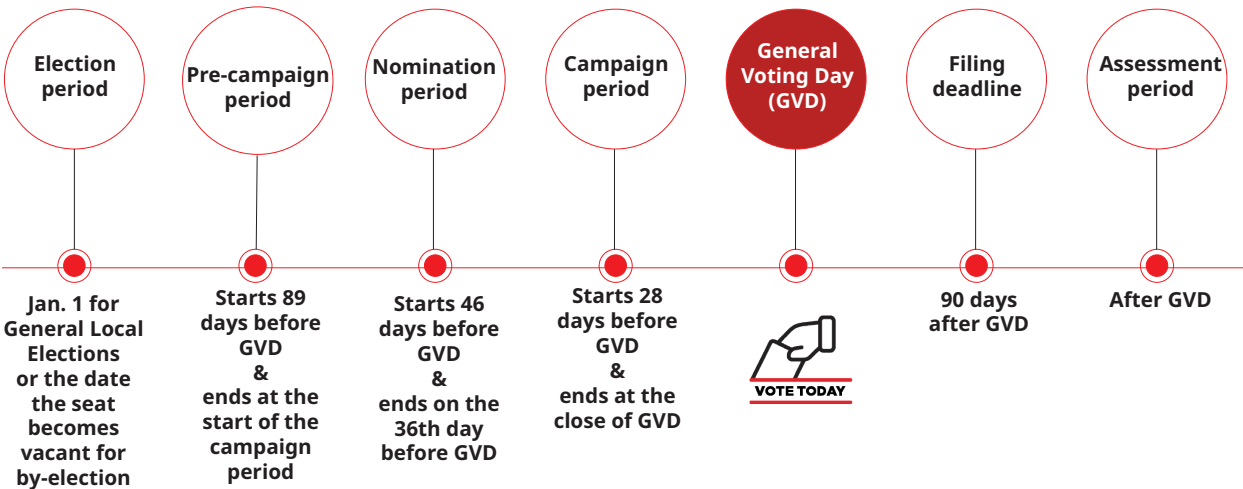
Each section is designed to address common issues candidates may encounter during local elections. We recommend this resource be used in collaboration with other Elections BC resources available on our website (elections.bc.ca/local-candidates), including:

- [Local guides](#)
- [Local forms](#)
- [Online learning](#)
- [Information sessions](#)



Where there is inconsistency between this handbook and the legislation, the legislation will prevail. If an interpretation of specific circumstances is required, you may wish to consider seeking independent legal advice.

TIMELINES



Key dates	Period	Important to know
Election period 	Starts January 1st in the year for General Local Elections, or for a by-election, from the date the seat becomes vacant, until the start of the campaign period	• Candidates are required to appoint a financial agent and open a campaign account. • There are rules for campaign contributions that candidates must follow. • All income and expenses must be recorded and receipts maintained.
Pre-campaign period 	Starts 89 days before General Voting Day (GVD) and ends at the start of campaign period Only applicable for General Local Elections (not applicable for by-elections)	• There are rules for election advertising, including a requirement for an authorization statement on all advertising. • All income and expenses must be recorded and receipts maintained.
Nomination period 	Starts 46 days before GVD and ends on the 36th day before GVD	• Elections BC does not administer candidate nominations for local candidates. • Candidate nominations, including elector organization endorsements, must be filed with Local Chief Election Officers directly.

Campaign period 	Starts 28 days before GVD and ends at the close of general voting	• There are rules for election advertising, which now also include advertising that takes a position on an election issue. • All income and expenses must be recorded and receipts maintained.
General Voting Day (GVD) 		• No election advertising can be transmitted to the public. • During voting, candidates must not post, display, or distribute election advertising or materials identifying a candidate or an elector organization within 100 metres of a voting place.
Filing deadline 	90 days after GVD	• All candidates must file a campaign financing report with Elections BC.
Assessment period 	After GVD	• Elections BC conducts compliance reviews and audits. Issues of non-compliance are forwarded to investigations for possible enforcement. • Candidates must respond to requests from Elections BC for additional information.

RUNNING AS A CANDIDATE



Individuals can run as:

- unendorsed candidates (candidates who are not supported by an electoral organization), or
- endorsed candidates (candidates who are supported by an electoral organization).

There are some important differences if running as an endorsed candidate and they are highlighted through this booklet. Check page 11 for endorsed candidates expense limits.

FINANCIAL AGENTS

All candidates **must** have a financial agent. Candidates may appoint another individual to act as their financial agent.

A candidate is automatically their own financial agent if they do not appoint anyone.



The appointment must be made in writing.

Appointment of financial agent checklist:

- ☐ Full name
- ☐ Start date of the appointment
- ☐ Contact information for financial agent, including service address
- ☐ Signatures of the candidate and financial agent

Appointment forms, including updates, must be sent to the relevant authorities as soon as practicable:

- **before** the voting results are declared, to the **Local Chief Election Officer** for your jurisdiction, or
- **after** voting results are declared, to **Elections BC**.



What to look for in a financial agent?

A background in accounting or finance can be an advantage for financial agents, but it is not a requirement under LECFA.

An individual can be appointed as the financial agent for more than one campaign, however, they should ensure they have the time and resources available to meet the responsibilities they have committed to.

Financial agent duties

Financial agents are legally responsible for managing the campaign's finances.

Failure to manage the campaign finances and follow LECFA can result in significant penalties.

If a candidate does not appoint a financial agent, they are responsible for all the financial agent's duties.

Duties include:

1 Open and manage a separate campaign bank account that is used exclusively for the candidate's election campaign.

The account must be in the name of the candidate's campaign. This means it includes the candidate's name and details about the specific election. A campaign account must be opened prior to incurring election expenses or accepting campaign contributions.

Acceptable account name	Not acceptable account name
- Alex Smith 2026 Vancouver Local Election Campaign Account - Vancouver by-election for Alex Smith	- Vancouver Election Account - Alex's Vancouver account

2 Accept and record all income.*

- Contributions must come from eligible individuals, who are:
 - residents of British Columbia, and
 - Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

Note: Record all required information for contributions and ensure individuals do not exceed the annual contribution limit. Required information listed on page 8.

- Contributions from organizations or individuals residing outside of B.C. cannot be accepted.
- In addition to contributions, all other income must be tracked, deposited into the campaign account and disclosed in the campaign financing report.

If running as an endorsed candidate, contribution limits are shared with the elector organization and all candidates endorsed by the elector organization for the same election campaign. This means an individual can give the maximum amount to the electoral organization and not to each individual candidate.



3 Approve expenses.*

- Approve all expenses incurred by the campaign.
- Ensure all election expenses are paid or reimbursed directly from the campaign account.
- Ensure campaign period election expenses do not exceed the expense limit.
- Maintain accurate and complete records of all campaign expenses.
- Ensure that all campaign expenses are disclosed in the campaign financing report.



What does it mean to incur an election expense?

Expenses are considered to be incurred once the property or service is used in such a manner that the value is an election expense.

Example: Candidate Alex Smith purchases \$1,000 worth of signs during the pre-campaign period. These signs are displayed in the campaign period. The full \$1,000 cost of the signs must be reported as a campaign period expense and will count towards the expense limit.

For more information, please scan this code and review the election expense limit quick reference sheet.

* Financial agents may authorize someone to assist with accepting contributions and incurring expenses. The authorization must be in writing and kept as an official record.



4 File campaign financing reports with Elections BC by the filing deadline.

- The financing report must be submitted within 90 days after GVD.
- Amended reports must be submitted within 30 days of becoming aware of errors or omissions in the report.

5 Maintain financial records in B.C.

- The financial agent must retain the financial records until all required campaign financing reports have been submitted.
- Afterwards, the financial records must be forwarded to the candidate, who must retain them for five years after GVD.

CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions include any amount of money, property, or services provided without compensation to a candidate for campaign use.

For more information about contributions, including the current contribution limit, scan the code and see (elections.bc.ca/local-contributions).



Who can contribute?	Individuals who live in B.C. and are either a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident
What are contribution limits?	\$1,429.70 for 2026 - Updated January 1st each year
What counts as a contribution?	- Cash, cheque, credit card payments, and electronic fund transfers - Property or services provided free of charge which would normally have a cost - Discounts, forgiven loans or unpaid debts
What needs to be recorded when accepting contributions?	- Contributor’s full name - Contributor’s mailing address - If different, contributor’s residential address - Amount of contribution - Date received - How eligibility was confirmed

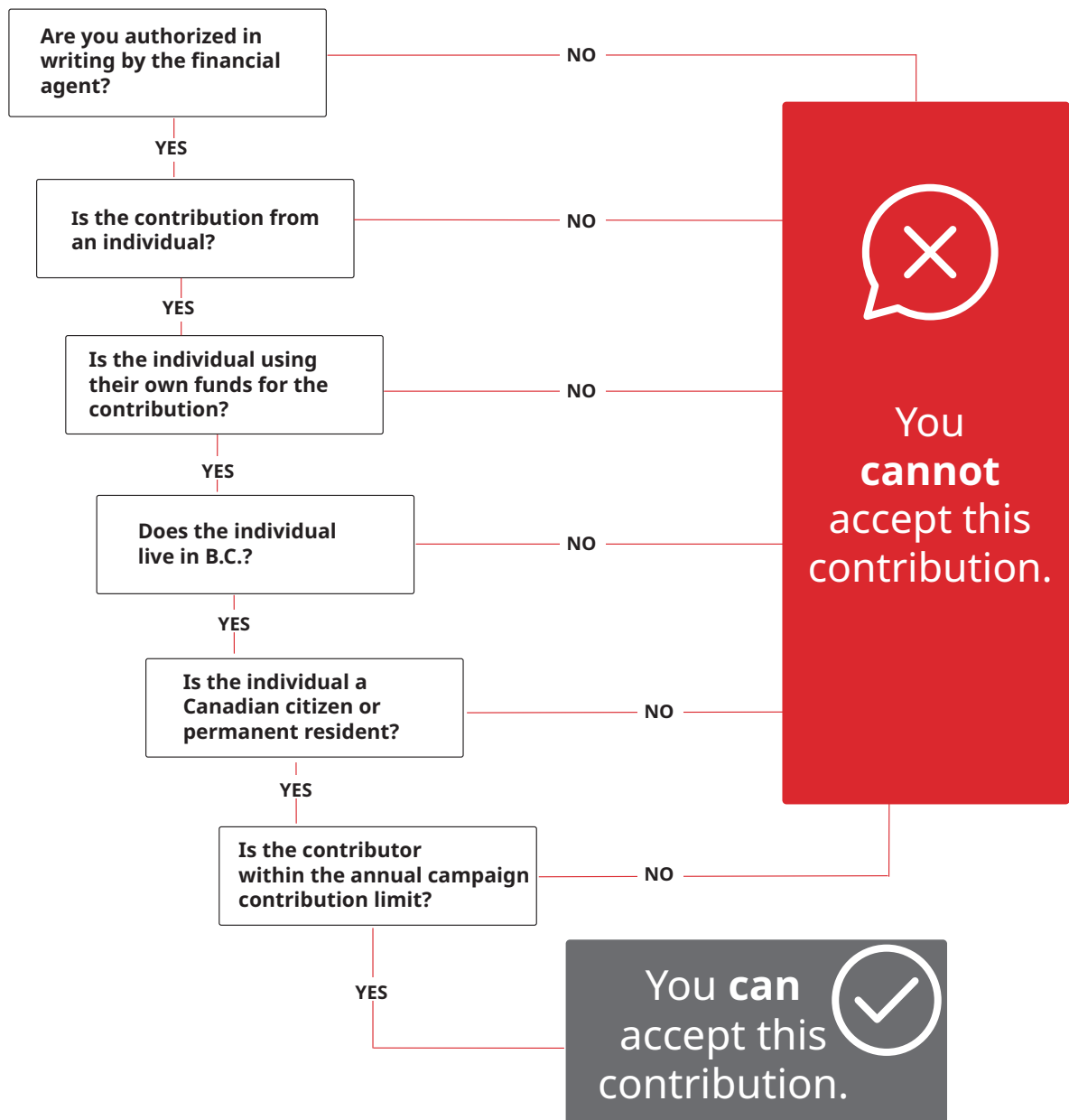
If using an online processing system (such as Stripe, Square, etc), the contribution amount includes any service fees withheld by the processing system.

If an individual contributes \$1,420 and the system retains \$2.50 as a processing fee, the contribution amount is still \$1,420, despite the campaign receiving only \$1,417.50.



Accepting contributions

Candidates, financial agents, and appointed individuals must ensure that a contribution is permitted before accepting it. This flow chart will help to determine when contributions can and cannot be accepted.



Prohibited Contributions

It is an offence to make or accept a prohibited contribution and Elections BC may issue monetary penalties for such contraventions. If you unintentionally accept a prohibited contribution, you must return it as soon as you realize the error. Failing to return a prohibited contribution can result in significant penalties.

Prohibited contribution checklist:

- ☐ Return the contribution to the contributor within 30 days of becoming aware. If the amount cannot be returned, remit it to Elections BC as soon as practicable.
- ☐ Record the details of how the contribution was dealt with as part of the campaign's financial records, including any supporting documentation (i.e. cancelled cheque, etc.).
- ☐ Report the prohibited contribution to Elections BC in your campaign financing report.



When returning a prohibited contribution, you should keep all supporting documentation about the return.

This includes the amount returned and the date it was returned to the contributor. If the contributor does not cash the cheque for the returned contribution, you must remit the contribution to Elections BC.



Individuals must use their own funds to make a political contribution. This means that the bank account or credit card used for the contribution must be in their own name. If the account is in another individual's name, the contribution is an indirect contribution which is prohibited.

Example: A group of three supporters wish to make campaign contributions, but only one person brought their chequebook. That supporter writes one cheque for \$3,000 and writes that it is on behalf of all three of them in the memo line, and the other supporters agree to pay them back. This is a prohibited contribution because the other supporters did not use their own funds for the contribution.

ELECTION EXPENSES

Candidates are limited in the amount of election expense they can use during the campaign period. Current expense limits are posted on our website (elections.bc.ca/local-expense-limits).



Endorsed candidates may have a reduced expense limit if they have chosen to share some of their limit with their elector organization through a Campaign Financing Arrangement (CFA). There are significant penalties for exceeding an election expense limit or amount available under a CFA.

The following election expenses are not subject to the campaign period expense limits:

- Personal expenses
- Legal or accounting services
- Services provided by a financial agent
- Interest on a permissible loan for election expense

There are no expense limits for property or services used exclusively outside of the campaign period.

All election expenses must be tracked. Record keeping must include:

- ☐ Description of the election expense
- ☐ Total value of each election expense
- ☐ Date the election expense was incurred, including when it was used by the campaign



Supporting documents (e.g. receipts, invoices, etc.) must be retained for five years to support campaign record keeping.

Incurring election expenses

Election expenses are incurred based on when the property or services are used. This means that you might pay for an expense before the expense is considered to be incurred.

How to calculate election expenses?

Election expenses must include all production and transmission costs, and applicable taxes.

Example: *Candidate Alex Smith pays \$2,000 to have a video produced during the pre-campaign period. This video is not shared until the campaign period. During the campaign period, Alex Smith pays \$100 to share the video with the public. In this scenario the candidate must report \$2,100 towards their election expense limit.*



It is important to report expenses during the period they are used. Failure to report expenses in the right period may result in unintentionally exceeding the campaign period expense limit and being disqualified from the election.

Apportioning election expenses

Some election expenses can be split between two periods – this is called apportioning expenses. This can only be done when some of the value is used in the campaign period and some of the value is used outside of the campaign period.

For example, if you pay for a monthly phone bill, you can split the cost by month. However, you can't split the usage of campaign signs. If a campaign sign is publicly displayed starting in the pre-campaign period, and remains during the campaign period, the entire value of the sign must be counted against the campaign period expense limit (as the full value was transmitted during the campaign period).



MARKET VALUE

Candidates need to record and report transactions that do not involve money, for example, property or services donated and/or used by the campaign. To do this, they must assign a market value.

Market value is the lowest price charged for an equivalent property or service in the area at the time. This can be determined by obtaining quotes or estimates online or from local vendors for similar products.

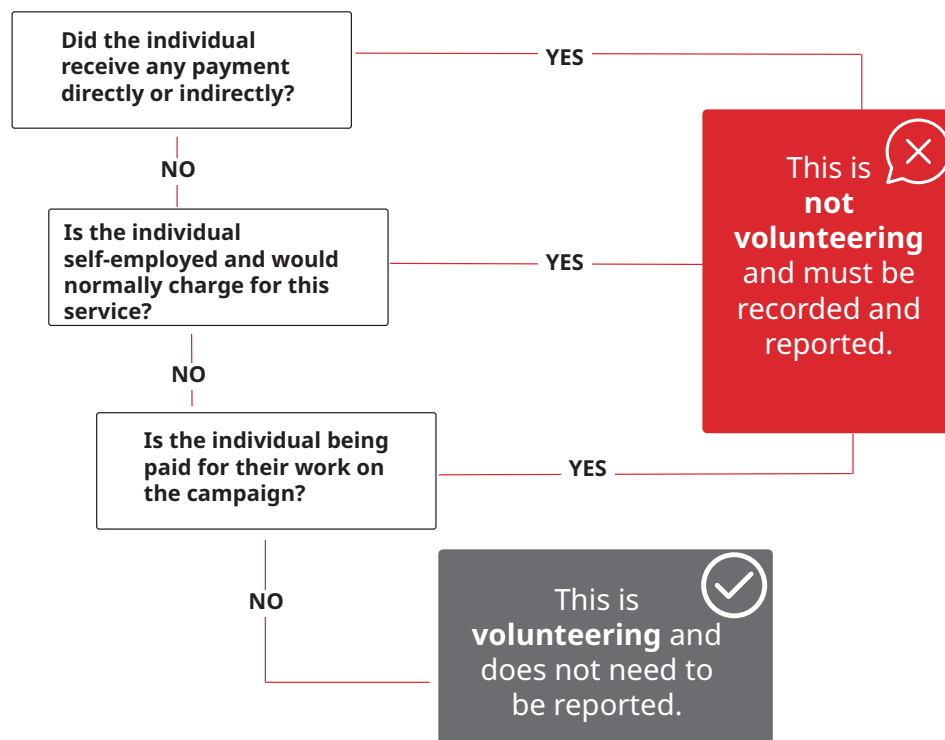


The supporting documentations showing how market value was determined must be retained as part of the financial records.

Example: Eligible individuals can give non-monetary contributions, including services or property, or provide discounts to a candidate. The **difference between market value and the price paid** is a non-monetary contribution. The full market value of the property or services used is the amount of the election expense incurred. This amount must be recorded and disclosed in the same way as contributions of money and election expenses purchased by the campaign.

VOLUNTEERING

Individuals are allowed to volunteer for a campaign, however, in some cases their services may be a contribution and election expense under LECFA. This flow chart helps to determine when an individual's participation must be reported as a contribution and expense.



ELECTION ADVERTISING

Election advertising includes any paid public transmission, including canvassing voters, that promotes or opposes the election of a candidate or an elector organization during the pre-campaign period or campaign period.

- During the campaign period, election advertising also includes messages that take a position on an issue with which a candidate or elector organization are associated.
- LECFA does not regulate when a candidate can start advertising, or where they can place signs. Candidates should contact their local authority as there may be specific by-laws regulating election advertising.
- If someone other than a candidate or elector organization wants to conduct election advertising, they must register as a third party sponsor with Elections BC. They must be independent from the election campaign of any candidate or elector organization.

When candidates are conducting election advertising, the message must include sponsorship information that:

- ☐ indicates the ad is authorized by the financial agent,
- ☐ includes the name of the financial agent, and
- ☐ provides a B.C. phone number, B.C. mailing address or email address where the financial agent can be contacted about the advertising.

Acceptable sponsorship information	Not acceptable sponsorship information
• Authorized by Alex Smith, financial agent, 604-555-1234	• Paid for by Alex Smith’s campaign • Authorized advertising, www.AlexSmith.com

- If multiple candidates conduct advertising together, or with their elector organization, each participant is responsible for paying for their share of the advertising. Furthermore, the advertising authorization statement must identify and provide contact information for all authorized financial agents.

Advertising must not be transmitted on General Voting Day, unless it is one of the following activities and is conducted more than 100 metres from a voting place:

- Signs, posters, and banners
- Distribution of pamphlets
- Internet message posted before GVD, which are not changed before the close of voting
- Message with the sole purpose of encouraging voters to vote

Elections BC does not regulate the placement of election advertising. Candidates are encouraged to contact the local authority to confirm if there are rules for election signs, and to confirm the location of voting places.

If contacting voters by phone, please be aware of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) rules for unsolicited calling, including do not call lists, identification requirements and automatic dialing-announcing device (ADAD) rules. More information is available on the CRTC website (<https://crtc.gc.ca>).

CAMPAIGN FINANCING REPORTS

Every candidate must file a campaign financing report with Elections BC within 90 days of GVD, even if they are acclaimed, withdraw or have no financial activity to report.

The report consists of the following forms which are available on the Elections BC website (elections.bc.ca/local-forms).



- Disclosure Statement Cover Page
- Campaign Financing Summary
- Summary of Campaign Contributions
- Campaign Contributions With a Total Value of \$100 or More
- Permissible Loans Received
- Other Income and Transfers Received
- Prohibited Campaign Contributions and Loans
- Summary of Elections Expenses
- Shared Election Expenses
- Other Expenses and Transfers Given
- Fundraising Functions
- Disbursement of Surplus Funds
- Former Financial Agents
- Campaign Financing Arrangement

If a candidate has no financial activity to report, this can be indicated on the cover page. The remaining forms only need to be filed if there is financial information that needs to be reported.

To be accepted, the campaign financing report must be:

- received by Elections BC by the filing deadline (postmark is not acceptable) – contact information is included in this handbook.
- signed by both the candidate and the financial agent.



Submitting reports

Candidates can submit reports online, by email, mail, fax, courier, or in-person. To meet the deadline, we recommend using the **Secure Online Filing Application (SOFA)**.

Scanned reports or electronically filled forms can be directly uploaded to SOFA through Elections BC Services (<https://services.electionsbc.gov.bc.ca/Portal>).



ONGOING EDUCATION

As you run your campaign, there are a variety of resources available at elections.bc.ca/local-candidates. These materials are designed to guide your campaign, deepen your understanding of the rules, and help you approach your campaign responsibilities with knowledge and confidence.

Be sure to visit the candidate homepage regularly. It serves as a central hub for updates, reminders, announcements, and additional educational materials. Checking in often will ensure you stay informed at every stage of the campaign.

QUESTIONS?

For more information:

Phone toll-free	1-800-661-8683
-----------------	----------------

Or contact Elections BC at:

Mailing address	PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9J6
Phone	250-387-5305
Fax	250-387-3578
Toll-free fax	1-866-466-0665
Email	electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca
Website	elections.bc.ca

NOTES

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal dashed lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no other markings or text on the page.





ELECTIONS BC

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

GUIDE TO CAMPAIGN FINANCING FOR LOCAL CANDIDATES AND FINANCIAL AGENTS IN B.C.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Privacy.....	1
Definitions.....	2
Local elections: shared roles and responsibilities	7
Who does what	8
Local election officers.....	9
Elections BC	9
Campaign financing	10
Campaign financing periods.....	10
Financial agents	12
Appointment requirements	12
Responsibilities of financial agents	13
Campaign accounts.....	15
Volunteers.....	16
Campaign contributions.....	17
Who can make campaign contributions	17
Making and accepting campaign contributions.....	18
Contribution rules	20
Campaign contribution limits.....	21
Contribution limits for unendorsed and endorsed candidates	21
How to determine the value of the contribution	22
Anonymous contributions.....	22
Capital assets	23

Required contributor information and other recording requirements for campaign contributions.....	23
Contributions of \$100 or more	24
Prohibited contributions.....	25
Indirect contributions.....	26
Public Safety Canada	27
Fundraising functions.....	27
Loans and outstanding debts	28
Other income and transfers received.....	29
Expenses and expense limits	31
Valuing election expenses.....	32
Valuing reused materials.....	32
Election period and campaign period expenses.....	33
Examples of expenses.....	35
Expense limits	36
Campaign financing arrangements	36
Shared election expenses	38
Election advertising	39
Determining the value of election advertising	41
Determining the sponsor of election advertising	41
Sponsorship information on election advertising	41
Advertising restrictions.....	43
Where and when signs may be placed.....	43
Campaigning restrictions on General Voting Day.....	43
Authority to remove election advertising.....	44
Surplus campaign funds.....	46

Disclosure statements	47
Submitting the report.....	47
Late filing.....	48
Supplementary reports.....	49
Requirement for retaining records.....	49
Public information.....	50
Penalties, offences and court orders for relief	51
Court orders for relief	51
Resources	52
Election legislation	52
BC Laws	52
Questions.....	53

INTRODUCTION

This guide has been developed to assist local candidates and their financial agents to understand their responsibilities and legal obligations under the [Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#) (LECFA).

It is the responsibility of all local candidates and their financial agents to ensure they understand and follow the rules. This guide is not considered legal advice by Elections BC. It is based on our current understanding of the legislation.

Where there is inconsistency between this guide and LECFA, LECFA will prevail. If an interpretation of specific circumstances is required, you may wish to consider seeking legal advice.

We encourage all local candidates and their financial agents to read this guide and other compliance materials for local elections on our website (elections.bc.ca).

We discourage the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to summarize guidance materials or prepare information required under LECFA. Use of AI will not be considered as a mitigating factor in instances of non-compliance.

A link to the [Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#) is available on the Elections BC website (elections.bc.ca) or a printed copy can be purchased from Crown Publications (crownpub.bc.ca).

PRIVACY

Elections BC has the authority to collect, use, disclose and dispose of personal information under LECFA and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. This information is used to administer provisions of LECFA.

For information about Elections BC's privacy policies, please visit elections.bc.ca/privacy or contact the **Privacy Officer, Elections BC** at 1-800-661-8683 or privacy@elections.bc.ca or PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9J6.

DEFINITIONS

The following key terms have been used throughout this guide. Most of the terms are defined in the [Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#).

Address for service	A mailing address, or email address provided by an individual or organization at which notices and other communications will be accepted as served on or otherwise delivered to the individual or organization. In addition to the required mailing address or email address, an individual or organization may provide an additional address for service. This may include: ▪ an email in addition to the mailing address, ▪ a mailing address in addition to the email address, or ▪ a fax number.
Anonymous contribution	A campaign contribution made by an eligible individual whose identity is unknown. An eligible individual cannot contribute more than \$50 anonymously to a single election campaign.
Assent voting	Voting on a bylaw or other matter for which a local government is required or authorized to obtain the assent of the electors. Assent voting may also be referred to as a “referendum.”
B.C. Chief Electoral Officer	An independent Officer of the Legislature appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. The B.C. Chief Electoral Officer is responsible for the administration of the provincial electoral process in B.C. and the campaign financing and third party advertising provisions for local elections and non-election assent voting events.
Campaign account	An account in a savings institution opened by a financial agent exclusively for the purposes of an election campaign.
Campaign contribution	Generally, a contribution of money, or the value of goods and services provided without compensation to a candidate or elector organization.
Campaign contribution limit	The maximum value of campaign contributions that an eligible individual may provide.
Campaign financing arrangement	A written agreement between an elector organization and each endorsed candidate. The arrangement determines how much of the candidate's campaign period expense limit will be shared with their elector organization.

Campaign financing records	The records maintained to complete financial reports required under LECFA.
Campaign period	The period that begins on the 28th day before General Voting Day and ends at the close of voting on General Voting Day.
Campaign period election advertising	During the campaign period of a general local election, the definition of election advertising expands to include communications that take a position on an issue associated with a candidate or elector organization.
Campaign period expense	An election expense that is used in the campaign period. Most campaign period expenses are subject to an expense limit.
Candidate	In relation to obligations applicable under LECFA, an individual who: (a) intends to become a candidate in an election, (b) is seeking or intends to seek endorsement by an elector organization in relation to an election, or (c) was a candidate.
Disclosure statement	A document that discloses activities related to campaign financing. All disclosure statements must be filed with Elections BC. Disclosure statements are commonly referred to as Campaign Financing Reports. Please note: these are different than a "Statement of Disclosure".
Election advertising	Election advertising is any transmission of a communication to the public during the pre-campaign period or campaign period that directly or indirectly promotes or opposes a candidate or an elector organization.
Election area	The defined geographical area where the election is held.
Election expense	Generally, the value of property or services used in an election campaign by or on behalf of a candidate or elector organization to promote or oppose, directly or indirectly, the election of a candidate, or an elector organization.
Election period	The period that begins on January 1 and ends on the 29th day before General Voting Day for general local elections. For by-elections, the election period starts on the day the office becomes vacant and ends on the 29th day before General Voting Day.
Election period expense	An election expense that is used in the election period.
Elections BC	A non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for the administration of the provincial electoral process in B.C. and the campaign financing and third party advertising provisions for local elections and non-election assent voting events.

Elector organization	An organization that endorses or intends to endorse a candidate in an election. An elector organization must be registered with Elections BC prior to endorsing candidates or conducting any financial activity, including accepting contributions or incurring election expenses.
Eligible individual	An individual who is a resident of British Columbia and a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident.
Expense limit	The maximum value of campaign period expenses that a candidate may use in a campaign period. Endorsed candidates may make all, some or none of their expense limit available to their elector organization.
Filing deadline	The last day (90 days after General Voting Day) a disclosure statement may be filed with Elections BC without a monetary penalty.
Financial agent	A representative that a candidate and elector organization is required to appoint. A candidate may act as their own financial agent or appoint someone else to this position. A candidate or elector organization may not have more than one financial agent at the same time. Financial agents are responsible for understanding and following the rules under LECFA to avoid penalties such as deregistration, disqualifications, paying for administrative monetary penalties, or committing offences.
Fundraising function	Includes a social function held by, or on behalf of, a candidate or elector organization for the purpose of obtaining funds.
General Voting Day	The final voting day in a general local election, by-election or assent voting event.
Incurring an election expense	Using property or services in such a way that their value is an election expense.
Jurisdiction	A separate local authority in which a general local election, by-election or assent voting event is held (e.g., a municipality, school district or regional district). They are considered separate authorities even if they cover the same geographic area.
Late filing deadline	The last day (120 days after General Voting Day) on which a disclosure statement may be filed by a candidate, elector organization or advertising sponsor with the payment of a penalty fee, unless relief is granted by the Supreme Court.
Local authority	The local authority of a jurisdiction for which an election or non-election assent voting can be held.

Local election officer	An individual appointed by a local authority to conduct a general local election, by-election or non-election assent voting. Local election officers are also called chief election officers.
Market value	The lowest price charged for equivalent property or services in the market area at the relevant time.
Member	An individual or organization who is a member of an organization. This does not include persons who are exclusively financial contributors, customers, subscribers, followers or supporters.
Money	Includes cash, a negotiable instrument (cheque or money order), a payment by credit card, any form of electronic payment or funds transfer, or any other form of monetary payment.
Permissible loan	A loan made by an eligible individual or savings institution to a candidate or elector organization.
Personal expenses	Campaign expenses of a candidate that are paid from or reimbursed to a campaign account. All of the following expenses must be reasonable. (a) travel to, within or from the election area in which the candidate is running for office (b) lodging, meals and other travel related expenses (c) child or family care if the candidate is usually responsible for (d) expenses related to a disability of the candidate
Placement cost	The cost of purchasing election advertising space on the internet, including a social media site or website.
Pre-Campaign Period	The period which begins on the 89th day before General Voting Day for a general local election, and which ends on the 29th day before General Voting Day for the election. There is no pre-campaign period for a by-election.
Prohibited contribution or loan	A campaign contribution or loan that is made or accepted in contravention of LECFA. There are monetary penalties for making, accepting or failing to return prohibited contributions or loans.
Production cost	The value of producing election advertising, including fees such as graphic design, video production fees, etc.
Required contribution information	Information that must be recorded for all campaign contributions: (a) value of contribution, (b) date the contribution was made, and (c) full name, residential address of the contributor.

Shared election expense	An election expense agreed to be shared by two or more candidates.
Significant contributor	An eligible individual who makes: (a) a campaign contribution having a value of \$100 or more, or (b) multiple campaign contributions to the same candidate or elector organization such that the total value is \$100 or more.
Sponsorship information	An authorization statement that is required to be on most election advertising. It includes the name of the advertising sponsor and appropriate contact information.
Supplementary report	A report that updates Elections BC of changed, added or corrected information to a disclosure statement or financial report that includes a description of the circumstances leading to its submission.
Surplus campaign funds	The balance of money left in the campaign account after all financial transactions are completed.
Third party sponsor	An individual or organization who sponsors or intends to sponsor election advertising independently from the election campaign of any candidate or elector organization.
Transfer	Movements of money, property or services between a candidate and their elector organization.
Value of election advertising	The value of election advertising is: ▪ the price paid for preparing and transmitting the advertising (including applicable taxes), or ▪ the market value of preparing and transmitting the advertising (including applicable taxes), if no price is paid, or if the price paid is lower than the market value.
Volunteer	An individual who provides services for no remuneration or material benefit, but does not include: (a) an individual whose employer pays them for the time spent performing the services (b) an individual who is self-employed, if they usually sell or otherwise charge for the services provided

LOCAL ELECTIONS: SHARED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

General local elections are held every four years in British Columbia. General local elections include elections for:

- mayors and municipal councillors,
- regional district directors,
- school boards trustees,
- specified parks boards,
- local community commissions, and
- the Islands Trust.

Unlike provincial elections, local elections are not managed by one organization.

Each local government is responsible for running its own local elections, including voting, counting, reporting results, and accepting candidate nominations.

Elections BC is responsible for administering the campaign financing and election advertising rules in the [Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#) (LECFA).

The [Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs](#) and [Ministry of Education and Child Care](#) also have responsibilities in local elections.

Who does what

Area of administration	Who is responsible
Voting and ballots	Local election officers in the local jurisdiction
Nomination process	Local election officers in the local jurisdiction
Financial rules for advertising	Elections BC
Campaign financing and disclosure rules	Elections BC
Registration of elector organizations and third party sponsors	Elections BC
Legislation for local elections	Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs Ministry of Education and Child Care

Contact the jurisdiction or the [Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs](#), if you have questions about voting, responsibilities of elected officials, election proceedings, or the rules in the *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter* or *Vancouver Charter*.

Contact the school district or the [Ministry of Education and Child Care](#) if you have inquiries about the *School Act*.

Local election officers

Local election officers are appointed by local governments to administer local elections in their jurisdiction. They are responsible for:

- receiving nomination and endorsement documents,
- declaring candidates,
- administering voting opportunities,
- counting votes, and
- reporting election results.

Elections BC

Elections BC is a non-partisan, independent Office of the Legislature.

In local elections, Elections BC is responsible for administering campaign financing and election advertising rules under the [Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#) (LECFA).

Elections BC does **not** administer voting, counting or results reporting at the local level, including by-elections and non-election assent voting events (also referred to as referenda) held by local election authorities outside of the general local elections cycle.

Elections BC's responsibilities under LECFA include:

- accepting, reviewing and publishing disclosure statements, annual financial reports and supplementary reports
- assisting participants to understand the rules and requirements under LECFA
- registering local advertising sponsors and elector organizations
- undertaking investigations and audits

CAMPAIGN FINANCING

The [Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#) (LECFA) has rules for candidates, elector organizations and third party sponsors. This includes disclosure and reporting requirements for campaign financing and election advertising.

Campaign financing periods

Election Period	Pre-campaign Period	Campaign Period	Filing Period	Assessment Period
→	→	→	→	→
Start of Election Period	Start of Pre-campaign Period	Start of the Campaign Period	Filing Deadline	Assessment Period
January 1 for general local elections, or the date the seat becomes vacant for by-elections Expenses used in this period must be reported on the campaign financing disclosure statement.	89 days before General Voting Day Election advertising transmitted to the public must include an authorization statement. Expenses used in this period must be reported on the campaign financing disclosure statement.	28 days before General Voting Day Definition of election advertising is expanded to include issue based advertising, and limits apply to the value of election expenses used.	90 days after General Voting Day Campaign financing disclosure statements must be filed with Elections BC.	Elections BC conducts compliance reviews and audits of financial reports, and if non-compliance is identified, the file is forwarded for investigation and possible enforcement.

[s. 10]

Election Period

For General Local Elections, the election period begins at the start of the calendar year in which the general local elections will be held.
For local by-elections, the election period starts the day the seat became vacant.

At the beginning of the calendar year, annual campaign contribution limits are calculated and posted on the Elections BC website.

Pre-campaign period begins (general elections only)

89 days before General Voting Day and ends at the start of the campaigning period. By-elections do not have a pre-campaign period.
Election advertising must contain authorization statements from this date.

Candidate Nomination Applications

Local jurisdictions oversee the nominations process. Prospective candidates should reach out to their local chief election officer to learn more about nomination applications.

Nomination period begins

46 days before General Voting Day.

Before the end of nominations

As soon as practicable after an elector organization endorses a candidate, the candidate must provide the financial agent for the elector organization the details of any contributions accepted.

Nomination period ends

36 days before General Voting Day.

Before the campaign period begins

Endorsed candidates **MUST** enter into a campaign financing arrangement with their elector organization. The candidate, their financial agent and the elector organization's financial agent must all sign and date the campaign financing arrangement. Once completed, the arrangement must be sent to Elections BC.

Campaign period begins

28 days before General Voting Day and ends on General Voting Day.
Election expense limits apply to expenses used in this period.

GENERAL VOTING DAY

Filing deadline for election financing disclosure statements

90 days after General Voting Day.
All candidates and elector organizations are **required** to file even if they had no or financial transactions.

As soon as possible after General Voting Day

Financial agents should have all documents and financial records ready to prepare the required election financing disclosure statement.

Late filing deadline for election financing disclosure statements

120 days after General Voting Day.
Candidates and elector organizations who did not file at the filing deadline may file at the late filing deadline on payment of a late filing penalty of \$500.

All reports are received

Elections BC begins conducting compliance reviews and audits of disclosure statements submitted to our office.
Candidates, elector organizations and financial agents should be prepared for communications with our office. Following a review, disclosure statements may be referred to our Investigations department for consideration of penalties.

Once the disclosure requirements are fulfilled, the candidate must keep all financial records in BC for 5 years.

FINANCIAL AGENTS

The financial agent is legally responsible for administering the candidate's campaign finances in accordance with LECFA. It is the financial agent's responsibility to know, understand and follow the rules under LECFA to avoid penalties such as disqualifications, administrative monetary penalties, or offences.

A candidate may either act as their own financial agent or appoint another person to this position. If a candidate chooses to act as their own financial agent, all financial agent responsibilities and requirements are theirs.

A candidate can only have one financial agent at a time. However, a financial agent can be the financial agent for more than one candidate or elector organization.

The financial agent must keep records and supporting documentation for all election financing activities, income and expenses. The financial agent is also responsible for ensuring disclosure statements are submitted in accordance with LECFA. Elections BC may request this documentation during the review process.

[s. 17, 22]

Appointment requirements

If a candidate is not acting as their own financial agent, **appointments must be made in writing**.

If the appointment or changes are made:

- before the voting results are declared, it must be sent to the local election officer.
- after the results are declared, it must be sent to Elections BC.

Appointment information includes:

- the full name of the financial agent
- the effective date of appointment
- contact information
- address for service
- signatures of the candidate and financial agent

[s. 17]

Responsibilities of financial agents

A financial agent is responsible for ensuring compliance with the rules and requirements of LECFA. It is critical that financial agents understand campaign financing rules. To support financial agents, Elections BC provides education and advice about campaign financing and disclosure statements.

Failure to comply with LECFA can result in a penalty or offence. In some cases, the financial agent may be responsible for paying the administrative monetary penalty, and in those cases, the financial agent's name will be published in information related to the contravention. We encourage all financial agents to engage with Elections BC's educational materials.

Financial agents are responsible for:

- Keeping complete and accurate campaign financing records of all transfers, campaign contributions, election expenses, and other financial transactions.
- Opening a separate campaign account for each campaign to which they are appointed.
 - Failure to open a designated campaign account is an offence under LECFA and can result in penalties.
- Ensuring campaign contributions are only received from eligible individuals and documenting the eligibility of the contributors. Contributions from the candidate are subject to the same rules, recording and reporting requirements as any other contributions.
- Ensuring campaign contributions from eligible individuals do not exceed the contribution limit.
 - Contribution limits can be found on our website: elections.bc.ca/local-contributions
- Ensuring all transactions of money are made through the campaign account(s), including contributions from the candidate to their own campaign.
- Ensuring election advertising contains the required sponsorship information.
- Determining the market value of in-kind contributions and expenses, including from the candidate.
- Accepting and depositing permitted campaign contributions into a correct designated campaign account.
- Incurring, paying, recording and disclosing election expenses.
- Pre-approving all election expenses incurred by others, including the candidate.

- Making and receiving transfers of money between an endorsed candidate's own campaign account and their elector organization.
- Making and receiving in-kind transfers between an endorsed candidate and their elector organization.
- Filing a campaign financing disclosure statement for each campaign the financial agent is appointed for.
- Responding to questions from Elections BC after filing a disclosure statement and filing supplementary reports when required.
- Ensuring all required financial records are given to the candidate after the disclosure requirements are met. Records must be kept by the candidate in BC for 5 years after General Voting Day.

Financial agents may authorize another individual in writing to accept campaign contributions or to pay election expenses if they choose. The authorization **must be in writing** and the authorization kept as a part of the records.

Unless a financial agent provides a personal guarantee, they are not liable for debts or other liabilities of a local candidate or their campaign.

Financial agents may also have other roles, such as campaign manager for a candidate or a responsible principal official for an elector organization.

Elections BC must be notified as soon as possible of changes to the financial agent or their contact information.

[s. 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30]

CAMPAIGN ACCOUNTS

A campaign account is an account in a savings institution such as a bank, credit union or trust company used exclusively for the election campaign. Candidates must have a campaign account if they intend to incur any election expenses. Even if a candidate does not plan to accept campaign contributions from other individuals and will be self-funding their campaign from their own money, they must still have a designated campaign account. The only time a campaign does not have to open a campaign account is if they have no monetary transaction of any sort.

All monetary transactions (e.g. contributions, transfers and expenses) must go through the dedicated campaign account. Financial agents are encouraged to open campaign accounts as early as possible. If a financial agent has difficulty opening a campaign account, there is a letter on the Elections BC website that can be printed and given to the savings institution.

A campaign account is only valid for the election it was opened in. For example, an account for a general election must not be used for a by-election.

Similarly, if a candidate is running in multiple jurisdictions, they must have a separate campaign account for each campaign. For example, if a candidate is running in both a municipal election and a school board election, they must open two separate accounts. Failure to open a dedicated campaign account for each campaign is an offence.

Candidates **cannot** share an account and an endorsed candidate must have a separate account from their elector organization.

Each campaign account must be in the name of the election campaign. Examples of candidate campaign account names include:

“Alex Smith 2026 Vancouver General Local Election Campaign Account”

“Victoria By-Election Campaign Account of Alex Smith”

Campaign accounts must remain open until all financial transactions have been completed, including the disbursement of surplus funds.

Credit Card Purchases

The financial agent or those appointed in writing by the financial agent, may approve the use of a credit card for a purchase. However, receipts from the credit card purchase must be kept and submitted to the campaign for reimbursement from the campaign account.

Credit card purchases which are not reimbursed become a contribution from the individual and count towards the contribution limit.

[s. 18]

VOLUNTEERS

A volunteer is an individual who willingly performs free services for an election campaign. A candidate's campaign may have paid workers and volunteers. Volunteers:

- receive no compensation (directly or indirectly) for their services
- cannot be paid by their employer for working as a volunteer
- can use their vacation time to volunteer
- must be authorized in writing by the financial agent to accept campaign contributions or pay for election expenses
- must not be self-employed and providing services they normally charge for

When volunteering does and does not count as a contribution

A volunteer's services, or the use of their own property for the campaign do not count as a campaign contribution or election expense. These services do not need to be valued.

Example

A volunteer, Miranda, uses their own car to deliver lawn signs and brochures and is not repaid for these expenses from the campaign account. Since the volunteer is using their own property in relation to their volunteer services, the value of using the car and gas is neither a campaign contribution nor an election expense.

If someone is self-employed and provides services for free that they would normally charge for, it is **not** volunteering. That individual is making a campaign contribution, and the value of their services is an election expense. Financial agents must therefore value, record and disclose that contribution and expense. If the value of the services is more than the contribution limit, the balance must be paid for from the campaign account.

Example

Martin is a self-employed communications professional. A candidate wants to prepare for an interview and asks Martin to help as a favour. For a paying client, Martin would normally charge \$150 for three hours of work, but Martin provides the service for free. Martin has made a campaign contribution of \$150, and the candidate has incurred an election expense of \$150. Both the contribution and the expense must be recorded and disclosed by the financial agent.

[s. 13, 14, Schedule s. 1]

CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

A campaign contribution is the value of any money, property or services provided without compensation to a candidate for campaign use. A campaign contribution can be made at any time including after the election, provided that the contribution is related to that election campaign.

A campaign contribution can be a donation of money or goods, services, advance, deposit or discount. Campaign contributions of money can be made by cash, cheque, credit card or electronic funds transfer.

If a candidate gives money to their own campaign, it is a campaign contribution and must be recorded and disclosed in the same way as all other campaign contributions. Campaign contributions made by the candidate are subject to contribution limits.

[s.13-13.02]

Who can make campaign contributions

Campaign contributions can only be made by eligible individuals. It is an offence to make or accept contributions from ineligible contributors.

An eligible individual is:

- a resident of British Columbia, and
- a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident.

Contributions cannot be made by organizations.

Financial agents are responsible for confirming and documenting the eligibility of contributors and maintaining supporting documents with the financial records.

[Schedule s. 1]

Making and accepting campaign contributions

When accepting a campaign contribution, the financial agent or authorized individual, **must** record:

- the value,
- the date the contribution was made, and
- the required contributor information.

Contributions with insufficient information recorded may become prohibited contributions.

The following are rules for making and accepting campaign contributions:

- Campaign contributions must be made to the financial agent or an individual authorized in writing by the financial agent. Individuals who are not authorized in writing by the financial agent must not accept contributions.

Example

A candidate has a large campaign team and is running multiple campaign events on the same day. The financial agent is running the first event, and the candidate asks a campaign volunteer to run the second event. At the second event, several people want to contribute to the campaign and the campaign volunteer accepts the contributions, collecting the necessary contact information, and passes it on to the financial agent later that day. Since the campaign volunteer was not authorized in writing by the financial agent to accept contributions, these contributions are prohibited and need to be returned to the contributors.

- Only eligible individuals may make campaign contributions. Financial agents and authorized individuals may only accept contributions from eligible individuals.
- Contributions from corporate accounts, preferential discounts from a company, or contributions from out of province are prohibited. Making or accepting ineligible contributions is an offence and monetary penalties may apply.
- The financial agent must confirm contributor eligibility. If contributions are accepted online through a website, there should be a declaration that the contributor must complete confirming they are an eligible individual.
- Contribution dates are based on when the contribution was accepted, not when it was deposited.
- Contributors must provide information so that financial agents can meet their legal disclosure requirements. The financial agent must keep records of these details even if the contribution was less than \$100 and those details may not need to be reported.

- Financial agents and authorized individuals must ensure that contributions received from eligible individuals do not exceed the contribution limit.
- Campaign contributions of money must be deposited into the relevant campaign's account. If a contributor wants to contribute to more than one campaign, they must make those contributions separately. A contribution must be deposited into the corresponding campaign account.
- Donated (in-kind) property or services must be assigned a market value, recorded and disclosed in the same way as contributions of money. The value of donated property and services counts towards the individual's contribution limit.
- If property or services are provided by an eligible individual to the candidate at less than market value, the eligible individual is making a campaign contribution. The campaign contribution is the difference between the price paid and the market value.
- The value of a candidate's own property used in their own campaign is not a campaign contribution.
- Crowdfunding, or crowdsourcing, through the internet for campaign contributions is permitted. The crowdfunding system must require the contributor to provide the value, the date the contribution was made and the required contributor information, including their residential address, and proof of their eligibility, so the financial agent can record it.
- Anonymous contributions cannot be collected over the internet.

[s. 16, 20, 27, 29]

Contribution rules

It is important to know which campaign contributions are acceptable, which are prohibited, and which funds, property or services are **not** contributions. All contributions are subject to contributor eligibility requirements and the annual contribution limit.

Acceptable contributions	Prohibited	Not contributions
▪ money given to a financial agent or an individual they have authorized ▪ non-monetary property and services provided to the campaign ▪ money given by a candidate to their own campaign within their allowable limit ▪ anonymous contributions of \$50 or less ▪ a person purchasing goods or services from the candidate for more than market value	▪ contributions made by organizations and ineligible individuals ▪ contributions that exceed the contribution limit ▪ giving a contribution to someone other than the financial agent or someone they have authorized ▪ making or accepting a campaign contribution, other than a permitted anonymous contribution, without providing or recording the required contributor information, including how the individual meets the eligibility requirements ▪ making or accepting indirect campaign contributions ▪ making or accepting an anonymous campaign contribution of more than \$50 ▪ making or accepting a loan from an eligible individual that is over their contribution limit when combined with their contributions ▪ not repaying a loan or bill from an organization and the amount becoming a prohibited contribution	▪ services provided by a volunteer including the use of their own property in that role ▪ transfers of money, property, or services between an elector organization and its endorsed candidates ▪ non-monetary property or services owned by a candidate and provided for use in their own campaign ▪ candidate's surplus campaign funds from the last election returned by the jurisdiction ▪ free transmission of election advertising if offered equitably to all candidates ▪ publishing or broadcasting news, editorials, interviews, columns, letters, debates, speeches or commentaries for free in a periodical, radio or television program ▪ publications intended to be sold whether or not there was an election

Campaign contribution limits

All campaign contributions are subject to annual contributions limits. This limit sets the maximum amount eligible individuals may contribute to each campaign during a calendar year. The combined total of any monetary contribution, loans, or services made by an eligible individual to a candidate cannot exceed the contribution limit in a calendar year.

Purchases by candidates and other self-funding activities which are not reimbursed through the campaign account, are contributions and are counted toward the candidate's contribution limit.

If a contributor has exceeded the contribution limit, the excess amount is a prohibited contribution. There are significant monetary penalties for exceeding a contribution limit. It is also an offence to fail to return or remit the funds in the time specified.

Campaign contribution limits are adjusted either by regulation or by changes to the consumer price index (CPI). Adjusted amounts are published on the [Elections BC website](#) and in the *B.C. Gazette*.

Contribution limits for unendorsed and endorsed candidates

- For **unendorsed** candidates (candidates who are not endorsed by an elector organization) contribution rules change depending on whether it is or is not an election year.
 - In an election year, an unendorsed candidate can contribute up to double the annual campaign contribution limit for their own campaign.
 - In a non-election year, an unendorsed candidate can contribute up to the contribution limit.
- For candidates **endorsed** by an elector organization, the limit applies to the elector organization and all of its endorsed candidates in a jurisdiction as a whole. An eligible individual may not contribute more than the annual limit, **in total**, to the elector organization and its endorsed candidates for each calendar year in each jurisdiction.
- If the eligible individual contributed the full contribution limit to an endorsed candidate's campaign, they would be unable to contribute to the electoral organization. However, the eligible individual could contribute 50% of the contribution limit to the endorsed candidate's campaign and 50% of the contribution limit to the elector organization.

As soon as practicable after an elector organization endorses a candidate in an election, the financial agent for the candidate must provide to the financial agent for the elector organization all campaign contribution information. This is done to ensure contribution limits are maintained.

[s. 30.04-30.05, 35, Regulation s. 70]

How to determine the value of the contribution

The value of a campaign contribution is the amount provided by the contributor, including any fees collected by an online payment system. If an individual contributes the maximum annual contribution amount online, and the payment system charges the contributor an extra \$2, the \$2 is now a prohibited contribution provided in excess of the annual limit.

Financial agents must also determine and report the value of in-kind contributions, such as goods and services. In-kind contributions must be reported at market value. Market value is the lowest price charged for an equivalent amount of property or services in the market area at the time.

As an example of valuing donated items at market value, if signs are donated to the campaign, the financial agent will:

- use the receipt if the signs are new, or
- get a quote from a vendor for the same quantity and quality of the signs given if the signs are old.

This quote, or the receipted value, will be saved for the financial records and the value used to determine the value of the contribution and also the value reported as an expense.

Note: If the campaign is reusing signs purchased by the candidate during a previous election, the market value will need to be determined as in the example above. The value will be used to report the expense only. There is no contribution in this case as the property already belonged to the candidate.

Foreign currency and cryptocurrency contributions must be valued at the market rate on the date of the contribution and are subject to the same contribution rules as other contributions.

[s. 16, 20, 27, 29]

Anonymous contributions

Anonymous contributions of **\$50 or less** are allowed. However, an eligible individual can only give a total of \$50 in anonymous contributions to a campaign. The financial agent must record the value and date of the contribution and how it was received.

An example of an acceptable time to receive anonymous contributions is at a pass-the-hat activity at a fundraiser.

For example, at a fundraising function the financial agent asks Michael, a volunteer for the campaign, to monitor a donation jar at the entrance. As attendees arrive, Michael observes that eight people make anonymous contributions totaling \$112, and no one donates more than \$50.

Anonymous contributions must be truly anonymous. This means that the financial agent or candidate does not know who made the contribution. A contributor cannot ask for a contribution to be anonymous. Anonymous contributions cannot be collected by crowdfunding or crowdsourcing over the internet.

[s. 26, 29]

Capital assets

Capital assets may include buildings, computers, office furniture and equipment. When capital assets are donated by eligible individuals, the contribution is the market value of using the property.

For example, Miriam, an eligible individual, provides office furniture to Anne, a candidate, to use in their campaign office for one month. The furniture is normally rented for \$500 per month. Miriam is making a campaign contribution as an eligible individual to Anne of \$500, the market value of renting the furniture for one month.

[s. 16]

Required contributor information and other recording requirements for campaign contributions

Under LECFA, financial agents must keep accurate and detailed records of all financial transactions. Detailed records are important for election transparency, and they make it easier to complete your campaign financing disclosure statement.

Financial agents must record the following for each campaign contribution:

- the full name and residential address of the contributor (and mailing address, if it is different),
- the value of the contribution,
- the date the contribution was made, and
- the contributor's eligibility.

Note: A residential address is the eligible individual's **home address**. Mailing addresses such as a PO Box, work address or commercial address do not meet the recording requirements. Contributor addresses will be obscured prior to publication of the report.

There are some circumstances where a financial agent must decline the contribution. A contribution must come from an eligible individual. If a contribution appears to come from an ineligible individual, the financial agent must decline it.

If the contribution appears to come from multiple eligible individuals, the financial agent must decline the group contribution and collect one from each individual wishing to contribute. Indirect contributions are prohibited.

Example

A candidate is campaigning door-to-door and a contributor wishes to write a cheque to contribute up to the contribution limit on behalf of each of their three family members, who all live there but are not presently at home. The contributor is not allowed to make contributions on behalf of other individuals and then be reimbursed by those individuals later, as that is an indirect contribution and prohibited.

[s. 29]

Contributions of \$100 or more

Eligible individuals who make campaign contributions of **\$100 or more** to the same campaigns are significant contributors, and will be reported with full details of each contribution in the disclosure report. The contributions could be either a single donation of \$100 or more, or multiple donations that total \$100 or more. This includes in-kind contributions.

Example

If a contributor gives \$50 in total contributions to a campaign, their name and contribution details are not reported in the disclosure statement, even though these details must be collected in the financial records for the campaign.

If a contributor gives \$50 one month and then another \$50 a few months later, the contributor's information for both contributions must be reported on the \$100 and over contributions form.

Information about contributors who give a total of \$100 or more must be disclosed in the candidate's disclosure statement. This includes:

- full name and residential address of contributor,

- value of contribution, and
- date of contribution.

Elections BC will obscure contributor addresses before publishing disclosure statements.

[s. 29, 49]

Prohibited contributions

It is an offence to make or knowingly accept a prohibited contribution and monetary penalties may apply.

If the financial agent becomes aware that a contribution is prohibited, they must return the contribution to the contributor, or an amount equal to its value, within 30 days of becoming aware of the prohibited contribution. Additional monetary penalties may apply if the funds are not returned within 30 days. The return must be from the corresponding campaign account.

If a prohibited contribution cannot be returned, such as an anonymous contribution over \$50, the financial agent must remit it to Elections BC as soon as practicable. Remitted funds can now be paid using the Pay BC Application at (<https://pay.gov.bc.ca>), or by mailing certified cheque or money order.

Examples of prohibited contributions

- Organizations cannot contribute or offer preferential discounts.

Example

A financial agent purchases campaign signs from a local sign shop. The sign shop wants to support the candidate's campaign and gives the candidate a preferential 20% discount. The 20% discount is not available to any other purchaser and would be considered a contribution. As businesses are not eligible contributors, it would be prohibited.

- Contributions over \$50 that are anonymous are prohibited.

Example

A financial agent receives an anonymous contribution of \$75 in an envelope under the door of the campaign office. The full amount is a prohibited contribution and must be remitted to Elections BC.

- Contributions over the annual contribution limit are prohibited.

Example

Carrie, an eligible individual, has already contributed the maximum annual amount during the calendar year and then makes another contribution of \$300. This \$300 over the contribution limit is prohibited and must not be accepted. If accepted in error, the \$300 must be returned to Carrie.

- Contributions over the limit may also include candidates or campaigns which overspend.

Example

If a candidate spends \$8,000 during a campaign but only receives \$3,000 in contributions, the remaining \$5,000 in expenses they pay themselves. The \$5,000 the candidate spent of their own money would be a campaign contribution, and the amount over the contribution limit is a prohibited contribution.

Monetary penalties may be administered for financial agents that accept or fail to return prohibited contributions. These penalties may also be applied to individuals and organizations that make prohibited contributions.

[s. 26, 28, 29, 35, 68.13, 68.14, 68.17, 72.1]

Indirect contributions

Indirect campaign contributions are not allowed. This means that individuals may not give money, property or services to another person to make a campaign contribution. This applies to members of the same family.

Example

After a fundraising function, a group of three supporters wish to make campaign contributions, but only one person brought their chequebook. That supporter writes one cheque for \$3,000 and writes that it is on behalf of all three of them in the memo line, and the other supporters agree to pay them back. This is a prohibited contribution because the other supporters did not use their own funds for the contribution. Indirect contributions are prohibited.

Public Safety Canada

Ensuring that contributions come from eligible individuals is an important measure to help prevent foreign interference in local elections. If you become aware of individuals who may be suspicious actors, or of any incidents that could pose concerns related to national security, you may contact Public Safety Canada for guidance on reporting potential foreign interference. More information is available at: <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrtr/frgn-ntfrnc/hr-en.aspx>.

Fundraising functions

A fundraising function includes a social function held by, or on behalf of, a candidate for the purpose of obtaining funds.

Tickets sold for a fundraiser may **only** be purchased by eligible individuals and they cannot be reimbursed for the purchase of tickets. The purchase of tickets by an eligible individual may or may not be a campaign contribution.

- If an eligible individual purchases more than \$50 worth of tickets, it is a campaign contribution.
- If an eligible individual purchases \$50 or less worth of tickets, it is not a campaign contribution.

For example, if one person purchases five tickets at \$20 dollars each, that individual has made a contribution because the total price of the tickets is \$100. If the same individual only purchased two tickets for a total of \$40, then it would not be a contribution.

All money received at a fundraising function must be deposited into the campaign account and disclosed accordingly. Financial agents are not permitted to use cash received at the function to pay for expenses. They must deposit all income from the function into the corresponding campaign account(s) and pay for costs of the function from the campaign account(s) separately.

For example, if a beer and burger fundraiser is held at a pub which will receive half the proceeds of the ticket sales, the pub may not collect the money and then give the elector organization their share of the profit.

Goods or services donated to be sold to raise funds are contributions from the individual who donated them.

If the item sells for market value or below, the sales income is reported as fundraising income. If the donated item sells for over market value, the amount over market value is a contribution from the purchaser.

Example

If an eligible individual donates a laptop to auction at the fundraiser, and the market value for the laptop is \$600, the individual has made a \$600 contribution. If the laptop sells at the auction for \$500, then the sale amount is not a contribution and is recorded as \$500 in other fundraising income.

However, if the laptop sells for \$750, the \$600 market value, is other fundraising income, and the \$150 over the market value is recorded as a contribution from the eligible individual who bought the laptop at the auction.

Any anonymous contributions received at the fundraiser, for example from a pass-the-hat, will also be reported as contributions on the fundraising function form. The financial agent must ensure they track how many people attend the event so they have a number of individuals to report on the disclosure statement.

Income generated from fundraisers must be deposited into the corresponding campaign account(s), and expenses must be paid from the same campaign account(s).

[s. 13, 13.01,16]

Loans and outstanding debts

Financial agents may receive loans from eligible individuals and savings institutions for campaign use. A loan which remains unpaid becomes a campaign contribution which may lead to a prohibited contribution.

A loan received from an eligible individual **must be counted towards the contribution limit** for that individual in the calendar year the loan was received.

Financial agents must record the following for each loan received.

- if the loan is received from an eligible individual:
 - the full name and residential address of the lender,
 - the date the loan was made,
 - the amount of the loan, and
 - due date of the loan.
- if the loan is received from a savings institution:
 - the name of the savings institution,
 - date the loan was made,

- amount of the loan,
- due date of the loan,
- interest rate of the loan, and
- the prime rate of interest at the time the loan is made.

Loans to campaigns from savings institutions cannot have a preferential interest rate and the interest rate cannot be less than prime at the time of the loan.

If a financial agent becomes aware that a loan has been accepted in contravention of LECFA, they must return the loan or pay the lender an amount equal to the loan within 30 days. There are monetary penalties for making or accepting prohibited loans.

Any loan or debt that remains unpaid for six months after it becomes due converts into a campaign contribution unless the creditor has started legal proceedings to recover it. Creditors keep their rights to collect the loan or debt past the six month period even if no action to collect is taken.

Prohibited contribution rules apply to loans or debts that become campaign contributions.

[s. 13, 13.02, 18, 22, 27.01-27.02, 30.05, 35, 68.15, 68.16]

Other income and transfers received

Other deposits that are not campaign contributions or permissible loans are recorded and reported as other income.

All money received by the campaign must be deposited into the campaign account. The financial agent must record the amount, date and purpose of each deposit that goes into the campaign account.

Such deposits include:

- interest earned on the account,
- dividends of shares of a credit union,
- money earned through product sales,
- fundraising income that is not a campaign contribution,
- surplus campaign funds from a previous election returned by the jurisdiction, and
- transfers of money or goods and services between an endorsed candidate and their elector organization. Transfers can be made at any time, including after General Voting Day

If a candidate sought endorsement from an elector organization but was not endorsed, the recording requirements still apply.

For transfers of money between an endorsed candidate and an elector organization, report:

- the date and dollar amount of the transfer
- the name of the elector organization that made or received the transfer

For in-kind transfers between an endorsed candidate and an elector organization, report:

- the date of the transfer
- the market value and a description of the transferred property or services
- the name of the elector organization that made or received the transfer

For example, if an elector organization provides election signs to its endorsed candidate, then the elector organization will report the market value of the signs as a transfer given, and the endorsed candidate will report the same amount as a transfer received.

Because both the giver and receiver are required to report the transfer, the transaction information should be consistently reported by both the endorsed candidate and their elector organization. The financial agent should ensure the value and date of the each transfer is recorded and reported consistently.

[s. 13, 18, 22, 23, Regulation s. 6, 13]

EXPENSES AND EXPENSE LIMITS

Election expenses

An election expense is the value of property or services used in an election campaign by or on behalf of a candidate or elector organization to promote or oppose, directly or indirectly, the election of a candidate or elector organization. This applies whether the item or service was used in the election period, the campaign period, or both.

Goods produced by a candidate from their own property are not campaign expenses if the materials were already owned prior to their decision to run for office.

All election expenses must:

- be approved by the financial agent before they are incurred,
- be paid for by the financial agent or an individual authorized in writing by the financial agent, and
- be paid or reimbursed from the campaign account, including if a candidate pays for an expense from their personal funds. Receipts must be submitted to the financial agent for reimbursement.

Financial agents must maintain accurate and detailed records of all expenses related to the campaign. The records must be complete and accurate to meet the disclosure requirements in LECFA. These records can be requested by Elections BC at any time.

Details for record keeping include:

- total value and description of each election expense
- when each election expense was used (such as election period, campaign period or both)
- total value and description of each payment made from the campaign account, including fundraising expenses, intended election expenses, thank-you parties, etc.

Valuing election expenses

The value of an election expense is determined using the price paid or market value.

The following rules apply for determining the value of expenses:

- the price paid for the property or services, including any production costs, or
- if no price is paid or if the price paid is lower than the market value, the market value of the property or services. Market value is the lowest price charged for an equivalent amount of property or services in the market area at the time.

Valuing reused materials

- It is common for candidates to reuse signs from previous elections. Although no money has been spent from the current campaign, the signs must be valued and reported as an election expense.
- The market value is the cost of buying new materials of the same quality and quantity. A quote should be obtained to determine the current price of the goods.
- If the reused materials are used during the campaign period, the full value must be reported on the disclosure statement as a campaign period election expense subject to limits.
- If there are additional costs to update old or re-used campaign goods, such as adding the sponsorship information, those costs are included in the value of the election expense.

For example, if a campaign reuses 100 signs owned by the candidate from a previous election, the financial agent should get a quote from a sign maker for the price to create 100 new signs of the same size and materials and use this to value the expense for the reused signs. If the quote says that \$350 is the cost to have new signs printed of the same quality and amount, then \$350 will be reported as an expense subject to the limit.

Note: There is no amount paid on reused items owned by the candidate, this will create a known source of variance in the reporting between total income and expenses of the campaign.

Election period and campaign period expenses

Candidates are subject to expense limits. Exceeding the campaign expense limit carries serious penalties. If an elected candidate exceeds their expense limit, they will lose their seat.

It is important to note that election expenses must be reported for when they are used. Candidates and elector organizations cannot defer payment of expenses to avoid campaign expense limits.

When calculating expenses, financial agents must report the full value of the expense. This includes material used in production of an item. Incorrect calculations of expenses can result in campaigns exceeding their limits, which is an offence.

Election period expenses:

- For **general local elections**, the election period begins on January 1st and ends on the 29th day before General Voting Day.
- For a **by-election**, the election period begins on the day the office becomes vacant and ends on the 29th day before General Voting Day.
- Election expenses used in the election period are election period expenses.

Campaign period expenses:

- The campaign period begins on the 28th day before General Voting Day and ends at the close of voting on General Voting Day.
- Election expenses used in the campaign period are campaign period expenses.

Some expenses are divisible, and can be prorated based on when they are used.

For example, brochures can be apportioned between the election period and the campaign period based on when they were distributed.

Example

If the financial agent buys 200 brochures, and 100 are mailed out in the election period, the value of those 100 brochures are reported in the election period and not subject to the expenses limit. If the remaining 100 are mailed out in the campaign period, the value of those 100 will be campaign period election expenses and subject to the expenses limit.

If only a portion of property or services is used by the campaign, only that portion is an election expense. The unused portion is an intended election expense and is recorded as an other expense.

Example

If a financial agent buys 200 brochures and distributes 100, then half the cost will be reported as an election expense, and the other half as an intended election expense as other expenses.

Campaigns are permitted to incur expenses after the close of voting such as celebration parties and thank-you cards.

These post campaign period expenses are not subject to expense limits but must be recorded and reported in the disclosure statement as other expenses.

[s.10, 14, 15, 22, 30]

Examples of Expenses

The list below is of examples only and does not include every type of campaign expense.

Election expenses	Election expenses that are not subject to the limit	Not election expenses
▪ campaign advertising (such as signs, brochures, newspaper ads, etc.) ▪ signs reused or repurposed from previous elections ▪ costs associated with transmitting election messages to the public (such as postage, website hosting, etc.) ▪ professional photographs, videographers, and any other costs associated with the production of advertising ▪ holding or attending campaign-related meetings, functions or events (such as costs associated with a campaign rally) ▪ paid research and opinion polling and campaigning (such as operating a phone bank) ▪ paid canvassing in person, by phone or over the internet ▪ campaign office costs ▪ bank fees	▪ sign, nomination or damage deposits if they are refunded ▪ candidate's personal expenses if paid or reimbursed from campaign account ▪ legal or accounting services used to comply with LECFA ▪ financial agent services ▪ interest on a permissible loan to a candidate's campaign for election period or campaign period expenses ▪ expenses that were intended to be used as election expenses but were not, for example leftover brochures that were not distributed	▪ services provided or goods produced by a candidate from their own property (such as making brochures with materials already owned) ▪ services provided or goods produced by a volunteer from their own property (such as canvassing, installing signs, running social media campaign from their own computer, etc.) ▪ free media coverage (such as news stories, interviews, current affairs program, etc.) ▪ producing, promoting or distributing a candidate's publication if it was planned to be sold whether or not there was an election

Expense limits

Election expense limits are the maximum amounts of campaign period expenses that a candidate may use in a campaign period.

Elections BC publishes and enforces expense limits but is not responsible for their calculation. The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation calculate the campaign period expense limits for candidates.

All candidates are subject to these expense limits which are based on the office sought and the population of the election area.

Elections BC must publish the expense limits by May 31 in the year of general local elections.

For by-elections, the expense limits for the most recent general local elections apply.

If a candidate exceeds their expense limit:

- Monetary penalties will apply.
- They will lose their seat, if elected.
- They commit an offence.

To find the expense limit for your election area, visit elections.bc.ca/local-expense-limits.

[s. 14, 49, 63.01-63.04, 63.05, 63.06, Regulations s. 72-74]

Campaign financing arrangements

All candidates who are endorsed by an elector organization **must** have a campaign financing arrangement with their elector organization. Campaign financing arrangement forms can be found on the [Local Forms | Elections BC](#) page.

Elector organizations are not allowed to incur campaign period expenses unless the candidate shares their expense limit with the elector organization under a campaign financing arrangement.

A campaign financing arrangement is a written agreement between an elector organization and each endorsed candidate. The arrangement determines how much of the candidate's campaign period expense limit will be shared with their elector organization.

An endorsed candidate can make all, some or none of their expense limit available to their elector organization to spend on their campaign.

A campaign financing arrangement must be:

- filed with Elections BC directly,
- on the regulated form,
- completed before the start of the campaign period, and
- signed by the candidate, the candidate's financial agent (if applicable) and the financial agent of the elector organization.

The amounts listed for the candidate and the elector organization must equal the total expense limit if the expense limit is to be shared.

Amendments or terminations

Campaign financing arrangements may be amended or terminated. Amendments or terminations must be on Elections BC regulated forms.

- An amendment to the amounts of expense limits available to the elector organization must be made **no later than General Voting Day**.
- A termination of a campaign financing arrangement must be done **before the start of the campaign period**.

Important note: A candidate or elector organization must notify their local election officer of a termination of endorsement prior to the start of the campaign period to remove the endorsement from the ballot.

[s. 63.07-63.11, Regulation s. 75-79]

Shared election expenses

A shared election expense is when two or more candidates agree to share in an election expense.

Each candidate's campaign must pay for and report their portion of the shared election expense. If one campaign pays for the expense directly, they must be repaid by the other campaign(s) for their portion of the expense. Candidates are not allowed to incur or pay for expenses on behalf of another candidate, and must be repaid or reimbursed for any shared expenses.

If election advertising is co-sponsored by two or more candidates, the sponsorship information for each candidate's financial agent must be on the advertising.

Example

Two candidates decide to share signs that promote them both equally. The signs cost \$500. Each candidate's financial agent must account for their share (\$250). Each campaign may pay the vendor directly, or one candidate's financial agent may pay the vendor and other candidate's financial agent can pay their \$250 to the financial agent who paid the vendor. All payments and deposits must be made using the candidates' campaign accounts.

Detailed disclosure of shared election expenses is required. In order to meet these requirements, financial agents for candidates who participated in a shared election expense must record the following:

- the total value of the shared expense
- the value of their candidate's portion
- the names of the other participating candidates

They must also record, as applicable:

- the amount paid to the supplier
- the amount of each reimbursement received from other participating candidates
- the amount of each reimbursement paid to other participating candidates

[s. 16, Schedule s. 1, s. 44, Regulation ss. 12-13, 13, 25-26]

ELECTION ADVERTISING

The definition of election advertising is broad and applies to advertising conducted by candidates, elector organizations and third party sponsors during the pre-campaign and campaign periods.

Election advertising may include any public communication that directly or indirectly promotes or opposes a candidate or an elector organization during the pre-campaign period or campaign period for a local election.

In the campaign period, election advertising also includes public communications that take a position on an issue associated with a candidate or elector organization.

Election advertising is only regulated during the pre-campaign period and campaign period. Advertising conducted outside of these periods is not subject to election advertising rules. However, advertising activities during the election period and prior to pre-campaign period are still advertising expenses of the campaign and must be recorded and disclosed.

Examples

Election advertising	Not election advertising
▪ television, radio, newspaper or magazine advertisements ▪ signs, billboards, posters, bumper stickers or branded clothing or objects ▪ newsletters, brochures, mailing inserts or other advertising sent to the public ▪ ads on the internet with a placement cost (such as pay-per-click ads, Facebook ads, promoted posts, banner ads, pop-up ads, etc.) ▪ phone calls made using an automated system (e.g., robocalls) ▪ paid canvassing in person, by telephone or over the internet to attempt to influence how voters vote	▪ personal or private communications ▪ free media coverage (such as a candidate debate on a local news channel, news stories, radio interviews, etc.) ▪ a communication by an individual or group sent directly to their members, employees or shareholders ▪ any free communication on the internet (such as Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, etc.) ▪ free person-to-person phone calls and text messages ▪ websites or blogs that do not have a placement cost ▪ producing, promoting or distributing a publication if it was planned to be sold whether or not there was an election

Who is the sponsor of election advertising

Election advertising must be reported by the advertising sponsor. The sponsor of election advertising is the individual or organization that pays for the communication to be transmitted, unless the cost of transmission is provided as a contribution.

The advertising sponsor must report the value of election advertising which includes all property and services used in preparing and transmitting the advertising to the public (such as materials, transmission fees, design services, taxes, etc.).

For example, if it cost \$500 to produce an advertisement and \$150 to transmit or post the advertisement, then the total cost of the advertisement is \$650.

Election advertising does **not** include:

- messages on the internet that do not, and would not normally, have a placement cost, including free social media posts, websites and videos. Examples of free messages that are not election advertising include personal Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat posts, tweets, YouTube videos and websites
- free personal or private communications (such as private letters, emails, in-person or telephone conversations, etc.)
- free media coverage (such as news stories, editorials, radio interviews, etc.)
- producing, promoting or distributing a publication if it was planned to be sold whether or not there was an election
- a communication by an individual or group sent directly to their members, employees or shareholders
- transmission by an individual, on a non-commercial basis, on the internet, or by telephone or text message, of their personal views

Note: The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunication Commission (CRTC) also provides rules for unsolicited telecommunications made by political entities, including candidates and their campaigns. If your campaign is planning to contact the public through unsolicited communications, please ensure you familiarize yourself with the rules available at: <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/phone/telemarketing/politi.htm>

It is prohibited for candidates and elector organizations to sponsor election advertising in conjunction with a third party sponsor. Furthermore a third party sponsor must not sponsor election advertising on behalf of a candidate or elector organization.

[s. 7, 9, 16, Regulation s. 10]

Determining the value of election advertising

The value of election advertising includes all property and services used in preparing and transmitting the advertising to the public (such as materials, transmission fees, design services and taxes).

The value of election advertising is an election expense. If used during the campaign period, the value is also a campaign period expense and subject to the expense limit.

Election advertising offered free of charge to all individuals and organizations has a market value of zero; however, the value of preparing the advertising is still an election expense.

For example if an advertisement cost \$500 to create but was published on a free platform, then the total cost of the advertising is \$500.

Advertising suppliers are prohibited from giving special discounts to preferred candidates.

Determining the sponsor of election advertising

The sponsor of election advertising is the individual or organization that is conducting the advertising.

The candidate is still the sponsor even if the advertising is paid for as a campaign contribution from an eligible individual and the advertising is conducted at the direction of the financial agent.

Note: A third party sponsor is an individual or organization that creates and pays for their own election advertising promoting or opposing a candidate or elector organization, or promoting or opposing an issue closely associated with a candidate or elector organization.

Sponsorship information on election advertising

Sponsorship information, also known as an authorization statement, is required on most election advertising during the pre-campaign and campaign periods.

Sponsorship information must include:

- the name of the financial agent,
- an indication that it was authorized by the identified financial agent, and
- a B.C. phone number, or B.C. mailing address or email address at which the financial agent can be contacted.

Although there are no size requirements for the sponsorship information, it must be clear and readable.

There are monetary penalties for failing to include sponsorship information. See page 50 for more information.

For example:

- Authorized by Jay Smith, j.smith@email.com
- Authorized by Rae Jones, 250-555-1234

Sponsorship information must be on the election advertising itself and must be in English or understandable to readers of English. If the advertising is in another language, the sponsorship information must also be in that language or understandable to readers of that language.

For example:

Authorized by John Smith, financial agent 604-123-4567

जॉन स्मिथ, वित्तीय एजेंट द्वारा अधिकृत 604-123-4567

For internet advertising that has or would normally have a placement cost, the sponsorship information does not need to be on the ad if there is a link that takes the viewer directly to the website, landing page or profile page that contains it.

If a person is paid to canvass voters, either in person, by telephone or over the internet, the canvasser must provide voters with the required sponsorship information.

One-sided election signs must have sponsorship information on the side that contains the advertising. It cannot be on the back of the sign.

If the election advertising is co-sponsored by two or more candidates, the sponsorship information for each candidate's financial agent must be on the advertising.

For example: Authorized by Jay Smith, j.smith@email.com and Rae Jones, 250-555-1234.

ADVERTISING RESTRICTIONS

Where and when election signs may be placed

Elections BC does not regulate where and when signs may be placed. Contact your local government for more information about election sign bylaws in your area.

The [Ministry of Transportation and Transit](#) regulates sign placement on provincial highways. Please refer to the Ministry's policy at www.Gov.bc.ca/electionsigns.

Important safety note: Placing election signs by digging or driving stakes into the ground can pose a safety hazard to sign installers and to underground infrastructure (such as gas lines and other utilities). Before placing election signs, you may wish to contact BC One Call at 1-800-474-6886 or see the website at www.bc1c.ca to determine if there are risks in your area. This service is free of charge and is not associated with Elections BC.

Campaigning restrictions on General Voting Day

Election advertising is not permitted within 100 metres of a voting place while voting is being conducted.

An individual or organization must not transmit election advertising to the public on General Voting Day except for:

- election advertising on the internet as long as the advertising was transmitted to the public before General Voting Day and was not changed before the close of voting.
 - For example, if advertising purchased on a monthly basis and General Voting Day is included in that purchase and cannot be removed, then the advertising will be permitted.
 - It is not permitted to schedule election advertising for General Voting Day, such as paid Facebook posts.
- advertising on the internet that is for the sole purpose of encouraging voters to vote,
- advertising by means of signs, posters or banners outside of the 100 metre restriction, and
- distributing pamphlets outside of the 100 metre restriction.

Permitted on General Voting Day	Not permitted on General Voting Day
▪ using free social media ▪ free person-to-person interactions, such as phone calls, emails, text messages, etc. ▪ election advertising on the internet as long as the advertising was not changed on General Voting Day or is solely to encourage voters to vote ▪ placing signs or distributing brochures outside of 100 metres of a voting place ▪ campaign meetings or rallies outside of 100 metres of a voting place	▪ scheduling paid ads on the internet including paid social media posts on Facebook, X, Instagram, etc. ▪ automated voice calls (robocalls) and automated text messages ▪ placing signs or distributing brochures within 100 metres of a voting place ▪ television, radio or newspaper ads ▪ campaign meetings or rallies within 100 metres of a voting place ▪ paid canvassing in person, by telephone or over the internet to attempt to influence how voters vote

Note: Under the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunication Commission (CRTC) rules, unsolicited telecommunications made on behalf of political entities can only occur on General Voting Day between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. (<https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/phone/telemarketing/politi.htm>)

[s. 45]

Authority to remove election advertising

If election advertising does not include the required sponsorship information, or is conducted by an unregistered third party sponsor, Elections BC may require that the advertising be:

- corrected
- discontinued
- covered
- obscured
- removed
- destroyed

Certain types of election advertising do not require sponsorship information:

- clothing
- novelty items (such as buttons, badges, pins, stickers, bumper stickers, wristbands)
- small items of nominal value that are intended for personal use (such as pens, mugs, magnets, key chains, notepads, business cards)

[s. 44, Regulation s. 20-21]

SURPLUS CAMPAIGN FUNDS

Surplus campaign funds are the balance of money left in a campaign account after all financial transactions are completed. Financial agents must record the amount of surplus campaign funds remaining and how they deal with them.

If the candidate contributed money to their own campaign, the financial agent can repay the candidate up to the value of those contributions. After the candidate has been reimbursed, any remaining surplus campaign funds must be dealt with as follows:

- **Under \$500:** The financial agent must pay the amount to the candidate or deal with those funds as directed by the candidate.
- **\$500 or more:** The financial agent **must** pay the total amount of the surplus campaign funds (not just the amount over \$500) to the jurisdiction where the candidate ran.

If a candidate who paid surplus funds to a jurisdiction seeks office in the same jurisdiction in the next general local election or an earlier by-election, the jurisdiction must pay the surplus campaign funds, and any accumulated interest, to the candidate's financial agent for use in the new election.

If the candidate does not run for office in the same jurisdiction in the next election, the funds become the jurisdiction's to be used at its discretion.

[s. 24]

DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

Financial agents are responsible for filing disclosure statements with Elections BC, even if the candidate withdrew, was acclaimed, or had few or no financial transactions. Candidates also have a responsibility to ensure that their financial agents file their disclosure statements.

Disclosure statements are commonly referred to as “campaign financing reports”. These are different than the statement of disclosure which would have been submitted with a candidate’s nomination documents.

A disclosure statement includes information on all campaign contributions, election expenses, transfers, surplus campaign funds and other transactions related to the campaign. A disclosure statement must be filed for every campaign.

All disclosure statements must be completed on Elections BC forms, which can be found on our [Local Forms | Elections BC](#) page.

Candidates who were endorsed by an elector organization must include the most recent copy of their campaign financing arrangement with their disclosure statement.

More information on how to complete disclosure statements and supplementary reports can be found on our website at [Local Guides | Elections BC](#).

[s. 46, 49]

Submitting the report

The campaign financing disclosure statement must be received by Elections BC by 90 days after General Voting Day. If the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the filing deadline is moved to the next business day.

The cover page must be signed by the candidate and the appointed financial agent (if relevant) for the report to be accepted as filed. Forms can be found on our website at the [Local Forms | Elections BC](#) page.

Failure to file a campaign financing disclosure statement has significant penalties.

If a candidate fails to file a report, they will be disqualified from running for local office until after the next General Local Elections. If the candidate was elected, they will lose their seat and a by-election will need to be held.

If an elector organization fails to file an election report or supplementary report then their endorsed candidates will also be disqualified and those elected will lose their seats. The elector organization will also be deregistered.

An application to the Supreme Court for relief from disclosure requirements may be made.

It is an offence to fail to file a disclosure statement or supplementary report and a candidate or financial agent who fails to file a report is liable to a fine of up to \$10,000 and/ or imprisonment for up to two years.

Names of late filers and non-filers will be published on our website at elections.bc.ca.

To ensure your report is received by Elections BC before the deadline, you may deliver it by:

- **Secure Online Filing Application (SOFA) - (Preferred):** Scanned reports or forms that are filled electronically can be directly uploaded to SOFA which is accessible through *Elections BC Services*. Please note that an account **must** be set up to use SOFA: <https://services.electionsbc.gov.bc.ca/Portal/>
- **Email:** Scanned reports may be sent to electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca.
- **Fax:** Toll-free to 1-866-466-0665.
- **Mail:** PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC V8W 9J6.
A postmark is not acceptable as proof of delivery by the deadline, so ensure reports are mailed well before the deadline.
- **Courier:** Suite 100 – 1112 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K8
Ensure reports are sent early enough to be received by the deadline.
- **Personal delivery:**
 - Elections BC at Suite 100 - 1112 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K8, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. PST (closed weekends and statutory holidays)

Elections BC will confirm receipt of your report once it have been received. If there are any issues with your submission that prevent it from being accepted, Elections BC may contact you so you can resolve issues before the filing deadline.

[s. 47, 57, 64, 85]

Late filing

If an acceptable campaign financing disclosure statement is not received by the filing deadline, the name of the candidate will be published by Elections BC for failure to file a report by the legislated deadline and the local jurisdiction will be notified.

A report may be filed late provided it is received:

- within 30 days of the filing deadline, and
- is accompanied by a \$500 late filing fee.

The late filing fee is payable by cash, money order or certified cheque to the Minister of Finance. Alternatively, you may pay the late filing fee online using PayBC. There are significant penalties if a financial report is not filed by the late filing deadline.

[s. 47]

Supplementary reports

If Elections BC advises a financial agent that a supplementary report is required, it must be submitted within 30 days of the notification. Elections BC must also inform the local jurisdiction of any supplementary reports required.

A supplementary report must also be filed if a financial agent becomes aware that information previously disclosed has changed or does not completely and accurately disclose the information required.

A supplementary report is a complete filing of all of the reporting forms. A supplementary report must:

- provide details about the addition, change or correction to the original disclosure statement
- include a description of the circumstances that led to filing the supplementary report
- be in a form approved by Elections BC

[s. 54]

Requirement for retaining records

Campaign financing records must be retained in British Columbia until five years after General Voting Day. Failure to keep the records for the legislated time frame is an offence. Elections BC can request these records at any time as a part of their review process.

These records must include:

- copies of the disclosure statements
- records of contributions and required contributor information

- deposit slips
- expense receipts
- cheque registers
- transaction slips
- all other financial records of the campaign

Financial agents must keep all campaign financing records and other material related to the disclosure statement until all disclosure requirements have been fulfilled. After the disclosure requirements are met, the candidate becomes responsible for retaining records and materials.

[s. 22, 86]

Public information

Campaign financing reports are made available on the [Elections BC website](#) after the filing deadline. They may also be viewed at the Elections BC office in Victoria.

Prior to publication, LECFA requires Elections BC to redact from the report any addresses or telephone numbers that have been disclosed for candidates and significant contributors.

This requirement does **not** apply to an address or telephone number provided by a financial agent. Since this information is included on the published campaign financing report, financial agents should be aware that this information is publicly visible.

Local jurisdictions must also provide public access to disclosure statements.

Copies of campaign financing reports may be obtained from either Elections BC or the local authorities for a fee.

[s. 58, 59]

PENALTIES, OFFENCES AND COURT ORDERS FOR RELIEF

Elections BC works closely with participants to help them understand and comply with the local elections campaign financing rules and regulations.

For more information on the investigations process and to see currently posted administrative monetary penalties, see: elections.bc.ca/events-services/investigations/.

Posted monetary penalties can be found here: elections.bc.ca/events-services/investigations/administrative-monetary-penalties/.

A list of disqualified candidates and advertising sponsors is available on the Elections BC website (elections.bc.ca/local-elections/disqualification-lists) and at the Elections BC office in Victoria.

[s. 60]

Court orders for relief

Financial agents can apply to the Supreme Court for a court order for relief from disclosure requirements, expense limit penalties and administrative monetary penalties.

An application to the Supreme Court for relief from a financial penalty must be filed before the compliance deadline.

Candidates and financial agents applying for court relief may want to consult independent legal counsel about the court process.

For details and timelines on filing for a court order for relief, see sections 66-72 of the [Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#) (LECFA).

RESOURCES

Election legislation

Printed versions of local election legislation — including the [Local Government Act](#), the [Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#), the [Vancouver Charter](#), the [Community Charter](#), the [School Act](#) and the [Offence Act](#) — are available at public libraries in communities throughout B.C. Printed versions are also available from Crown Publications, Kings' Printer for British Columbia, at:

Mailing address:

PO Box 9452 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC, V8W 9V7

Phone: 250-387-6409

Toll Free: 1-800-663-6105

Fax: 250-387-1120

Email: crownpub@gov.bc.ca

Website: crownpub.bc.ca

BC Laws

BC Laws provides free public online access to the current laws of British Columbia. This unofficial current consolidation of B.C. statutes and regulations is updated continually as new and amended laws come into force. Electronic versions of the [Local Government Act](#), the [Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#), the [Vancouver Charter](#), the [Community Charter](#), the [School Act](#) and the [Offence Act](#) are available online at bclaws.ca.

QUESTIONS?

For more information:

Phone toll-free	1-800-661-8683
-----------------	----------------

Or contact Elections BC at:

Mailing address	PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9J6
Phone	250-387-5305
Fax	250-387-3578
Toll-free fax	1-866-466-0665
Email	electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca
Website	elections.bc.ca



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA 2026:



Thinking About Running for Local Office?





This brochure is to help prospective candidates answer questions they may have before deciding to run for local government office (municipality or regional district).

This brochure provides information about:

- eligibility for local office;
- what local governments do;
- how local governments are governed;
- roles and responsibilities of locally elected officials; and,
- preparing to be a candidate.

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL OFFICE?

To run for local office, a prospective candidate must be:

- at least 18 years of age or older on general voting day;
- a Canadian citizen;
- have been a resident of British Columbia for at least six months immediately before filing nomination documents; and,

- not be disqualified under the *Local Government Act*, or any other enactment from voting in an election in B.C. or from being nominated for, being elected to, or holding the office or be otherwise disqualified by law.

EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

There are additional requirements and eligibility considerations that people who work or volunteer for a local government must also follow.

For more information, please visit the B.C. government webpage about [Employees and Volunteers](#).

WHAT DO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS DO?

Decision-making

Local government is where community decisions happen – and affects the lives of British Columbians, every day.

As collective decision-making bodies, municipal councils and regional district boards influence jobs, foster healthy, safe and sustainable communities, and have the ability to plan and shape the long-term vision for their communities. Councils and boards make decisions through the adoption of bylaws, policies, and resolutions.

Relationship-building

Municipal councils and regional district boards govern effectively and create benefits for their communities by working together and building relationships with other local governments, the provincial government, First Nations and the federal government.

Engagement by local governments, at both the local and regional levels, with neighbouring First Nation governments is common and can help

achieve matters of mutual interest. Engagement can happen on a broad range of mutual interests including land use, economic development, services and infrastructure, or to simply bring community leaders together for the first time or to renew an existing relationship.

FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT

Engagement is a method of exploring opportunities for cooperation and collaboration between local governments and First Nations – building positive relationships and furthering the goal of reconciliation.

For examples of Local Government-First Nation Governments working together, visit:

[CivicInfo BC | First Nations Relationships & Protocol Agreements](#)

This engagement can also help councils and boards to better understand and serve the members in the community that also identify as Indigenous. Many local governments and First Nations have developed service agreements, protocol agreements and memorandums of understanding to identify opportunities to build relationships, collaborate, and further reconciliation.

Service Provision

Local governments provide a wide range of services to their communities. Locally elected officials may find that much of their time at the council/board table is spent on setting strategic direction and making decisions related to service provision, land use planning, and development for the community. There are a wide range of services that are within local government' scope of responsibility, and these services are different from the services provided by other levels of government:

WHO DOES WHAT?

A Services Snapshot for Candidates

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT – Municipalities (Cities, Towns, Districts, Villages)

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES	WHY IT MATTERS FOR CANDIDATES
• Water quality and supply • Liquid waste (local) • Solid waste (local) • Fire protection • Road maintenance and transit • Zoning and permits • Parks and recreation • Local laws (e.g., bylaws) • Policing/community safety	• Directly shapes neighborhoods, local services, and daily quality of life.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT – Regional Districts (Made up of Electoral areas, member municipalities and Treaty First Nations (if applicable))

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES	WHY IT MATTERS FOR CANDIDATES
• Solid waste (regional) • Regional water and liquid waste services • Regional parks • Emergency management • Rural land use and planning • Local laws (e.g., bylaws) • Policing/community safety	• Provides local governance to the rural areas of the province. • Balances local priorities with region-wide collaboration.

WHO DOES WHAT?

A Services Snapshot for Candidates

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT – First Nations

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES	WHY IT MATTERS FOR CANDIDATES
• First Nation governments may have a treaty, self-government agreement, or operate under federal legislation. As such the authorities and responsibilities of First Nation government can vary. • Some examples of key responsibilities can include: - Community services (e.g., education, health, childcare) - Land management - Cultural preservation - Service provision (direct or by agreement)	• Many local governments and First Nations are geographic neighbours and as such are increasingly discussing common interests, challenges and identifying mutual opportunities for their respective communities. • Local governments and First Nations build and enhance relations by developing partnerships through protocols, service agreements and memorandums of understanding.



WHO DOES WHAT?

A Services Snapshot for Candidates

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT – (British Columbia)

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES	WHY IT MATTERS FOR CANDIDATES
• Health care • Education • Highways • Justice • Provincial laws, including legislation that establishes the local government framework in B.C.	• Provincial laws, grants, and approval processes can influence the scope and process of local decision-making.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT – (Canada)

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES	WHY IT MATTERS FOR CANDIDATES
• Income tax • Banking • Immigration • Military • Federal laws (e.g., <i>Species at Risk Act</i>; <i>Criminal Code</i>; <i>Constitution Act</i>)	• Federal laws and programs can apply to local governments. • Grant contribution programs support local governments to meet their objectives, such as infrastructure and climate change adaptation.

HOW ARE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS GOVERNED?

Municipal councils and regional district boards set the direction for their respective local governments.

The role of a council board is to:

- consider the well-being and interests of the entire community;
- set strategic direction, including the development and evaluation of policies and programs of the local government;
- adopt the local government's financial plan;
- broadly allocate resources to services, capital projects, programs and other priorities;
- engage with the community; and,
- make policies and adopt bylaws.

Collective Decision-making

Council and board powers are collective, not individual, with each member entitled to one vote on matters (unless otherwise set out in legislation) that come before them for decision.

While council and boards may sometimes reach unanimous agreement on a matter, at other times members may disagree with the majority decision of a council or board. Candidates need to be prepared for situations where they may not be aligned with the collective will of the council or board.

Elected officials ability to work together and resolve conflict respectfully are keys to council and board effectiveness and good governance for the community.

Role of Staff

The roles and responsibilities of elected officials and local government staff are interdependent, but distinct. Local government staff provide the council board with information and professional advice to support informed decision-making, implement the collective decisions, policies, and direction of the council board, and communicate those decisions to the public and other orders of government.

All local governments in British Columbia are required to have a corporate officer and financial officer. Local governments also often establish a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) position – although this position is not required by legislation. In many local governments the CAO is the only member of staff directly hired by the council or board. This structure separates political policymaking from administrative implementation, with the CAO responsible for hiring and supervising all other staff.

WHAT ARE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LOCALLY ELECTED OFFICIALS?

Legislative Requirements

Locally elected officials are required to comply with the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act* as well as other provincial legislation, including conduct rules, privacy and employment laws and policies, and local government procedures.

The *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act* set out the roles and responsibilities for municipal councillors and regional district board members. An elected official's responsibilities include:

- considering the well-being and interests of the entire community;
- contributing to the development and evaluation of the policies and programs with respect to local government services;
- participating in council/regional district board and committee meetings; and,
- carrying out other duties assigned (such as chairing committees).

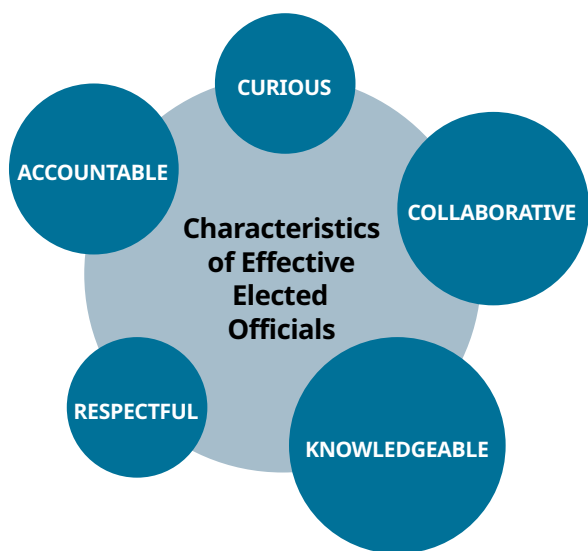
The mayor and regional district board chair have all the same responsibilities as a municipal councillor or regional district board member plus a few additional responsibilities, these include:

- chairing meetings, maintaining the order and conduct of debate, ensuring meeting rules are followed, and encouraging the expression of differing viewpoints;
- creating standing committees, appointing people to these committees, and deciding the committees' mandates;
- communicating council or board decisions to the CAO so staff may implement policies, programs and other decisions; and,
- acting as the spokesperson and communicating the collective decisions of the council or regional district board.

Characteristics of Effective Elected Officials

Effective elected officials are dedicated, ethical, and informed. In practice, this means an effective elected official that is:

- **accountable** in their decisions and conduct;
- **respectful** of others (even when they don't agree) and understands the responsibilities that come with holding local office;
- **knowledgeable** about local government roles and legislative requirements;
- **curious** about the perspectives and experiences of others in order to find solutions and inform decision-making; and,
- **collaborative** with their colleagues, who share the responsibility of representing the interests of their community.



Mayors, councillors and board members work alongside each other to meet the needs of communities across B.C. and uphold local democracy, the law, and the principles of good officials.

Watch the video series "[Being an Effective Elected Official](#)" for direct insights into the role of a locally elected official.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Locally elected officials are subject to conflict-of-interest rules under the *Community Charter* and common law.

As a locally elected official, there may be times where you must not participate or vote on a particular matter due to your personal circumstances. It is your responsibility to determine when you may be in a conflict of interest and recuse yourself from discussing or voting on a matter.

You may be liable to penalties and/or disqualification from holding office until the next general local election if you do not adhere to the conflict-of-interest rules.

Demands of the Job

Being in elected office can be a very rewarding experience. It can also be quite demanding.

Potential candidates do not need to be an expert in governance or finance to run for local office, however, they need to be open minded and willing to learn.

Elected officials can expect a high volume of reading and learning across a variety of topics during their term in office. They will also need to become familiar with the local government's policies and procedures, as well as the legislation that applies to local governments.

Local government orientation sessions, educational resources and opportunities through local government associations or other relevant organizations, and the expertise of staff can support elected officials in fulfilling their duties.

Potential candidates must be prepared for the realities of local office and how their day-to-day life may change if elected to office – whether that is managing time commitments or adjusting to increased public and media scrutiny. Many local governments have policies (such as internal information-sharing protocols and social media policies) in place to support elected officials with this aspect of their role.

The **Local Government Leadership Academy** (LGLA) serves locally elected officials throughout British Columbia by offering training, resources, and a Certificate program. The LGLA aims to improve the competencies needed to effectively manage and lead B.C.'s communities. Visit: <https://lgla.ca/> for more information.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR ELECTED OFFICE?

Contributing as an elected official to the long-term success of the community begins the moment an elected official takes office. Some ways to prepare include:

- reading the local government's key planning documents (e.g., strategic and financial plan), policies (e.g., social media), and the code of conduct (if any) and the procedure bylaws;
- attending council or board meetings to observe meeting procedures and learn about priority issues and projects in your community;
- reviewing the local government's website, meeting agendas, and minutes to understand its key priorities and initiatives;
- attending neighbourhood association meetings or getting to know key groups in the community, such as the Chamber of Commerce, service groups, social agencies or environmental stewardship groups, to better understand the diversity of interests;
- becoming familiar with neighbouring First Nation governments and reviewing any local government policies and agreements that support collaboration and partnerships;
- reading the *Local Government Act* and *Community Charter* to gain an understanding of the legislative requirements that local governments must follow; and,
- researching provincial government webpages to learn more about the local government system generally.

Refer to the [**What Every Candidate Needs to Know**](#) brochure for more information about running as a candidate in general local elections.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Local government mailing addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses and websites are available online from CivicInfo BC at:

www.civicinfo.bc.ca/directories

For answers to legislative **questions about municipal and regional district elections** please contact:

Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Governance and Structure Branch

Phone: 250 387-4020

Email: LGgovernance@gov.bc.ca

Website: www.gov.bc.ca/localelections

For answers to **questions about elector organization registration, election advertising, third party sponsors or campaign financing disclosure** please contact:

Elections BC

Phone: 250 387-5305

Toll-free: 1 800 661-8683

TTY 1 888 456-5448

Email: electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca

Website: <https://elections.bc.ca/local-elections/2026-general-local-elections/>

Full text of the *Local Government Act*, *Local Election Campaign Financing Act*, *Community Charter*, *Vancouver Charter*, *School Act*, and *Offence Act* can be found online at: www.bclaws.ca

DISCLAIMER

In the event that there is inconsistency between this brochure and *the Local Government Act*, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, or any other Act, the legislation shall prevail.



**Scan the QR code to find
information and guidance
materials about the upcoming
general local elections**



www.gov.bc.ca/localelections

Land Acknowledgment

The BC Public Service acknowledges the territories of First Nations around B.C. and is grateful to carry out its work on these lands – it acknowledges the rights, interests, priorities, and concerns of all Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Métis, and Inuit – respecting and acknowledging their distinct cultures, histories, rights, laws, and governments.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN
BRITISH COLUMBIA 2026:



What Every Candidate Needs to Know





General local elections will be held on **Saturday, October 17, 2026.**

This brochure provides candidates with basic information about general local election rules and answers questions about running for local office in British Columbia.

Refer to the *Candidates Guide to Local Government Elections in B.C.*

for more detailed information about being a candidate for mayor, councillor, or electoral area director.

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2026

There have been some notable changes since the 2022 general local elections:

- Candidates may submit their nomination documents to the Chief Election Officer in-person, by mail, or electronically, (e.g., by email or fax), so long as the documents are received by the end of the nomination period. Candidates are no longer required to deliver originals of nomination documents submitted by fax or email.

NEW

NEW

- Public notices and online publications of nomination documents will no longer include candidate personal information, such as personal telephone numbers and residential addresses. Electors will instead see the name of the jurisdiction in which the candidate is a resident (e.g., name of the municipality, electoral area, or treaty lands where the candidate resides) in public notices and online nomination documents.
- A candidate and the authorized principal official of an elector organization must work together to complete the endorsement section of the candidate's nomination documents in order for the candidate to be endorsed by the elector organization. Both parties must provide signed consent to the endorsement. Separate endorsement documents are no longer required (**Elector Organizations must be registered with Elections BC prior to endorsing a candidate(s)**).
- Members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia are disqualified from holding local elected office under the *Eligibility to Hold Public Office Act*. If a mayor, councillor, electoral area director or any other local elected official becomes a Member of the Legislative Assembly, that individual is considered to have resigned their local elected office.

NEWNEW

ROLE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

What is the role of a local elected official?

Local elected officials are the stewards of their community's public assets and collectively responsible for making decisions.

In their role, elected officials are expected to learn about and comply with local government legislation and other Acts, as applicable, including conduct rules, privacy and employment laws and policies, and local government procedures.

Elected officials that develop positive trusted relationships with colleagues, local government staff, and the public, support councils and regional district boards to carry out their collective responsibilities. How elected officials conduct themselves in their role and in these relationships directly impacts successful community governance.

The roles and responsibilities of elected officials and local government staff are distinct and interdependent.

Local government staff provide the

council/regional

district board with information and professional advice to support informed decision-making, implement the collective decisions, policies, and direction of the council/regional district board, and communicate those decisions to the public and other orders of government.

Clarity about the distinct roles and responsibilities of elected officials and local government staff can help create a healthy working relationship during the term of elected office.

Refer to the *[Thinking About Running for Local Office?](#)* brochure for more information on the roles and responsibilities of locally elected officials.

GENERAL LOCAL ELECTIONS

What are general local elections?

Through general local elections, residents and non-resident property electors determine the individuals who will collectively make decisions and govern on their behalf following general voting day. Electors do this by voting – casting their ballots in favour of a candidate(s).

How often are general local elections held?

General local elections are held every **four years on the third Saturday of October**.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Who oversees local elections?

Unlike provincial elections, local elections are not managed by one organization. Each local government is responsible for running its own local elections, including voting, counting, reporting results, and accepting candidate nominations.

Elections BC is responsible for administering the campaign financing and election advertising rules in the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. This includes providing information about



the rules, maintaining the register of elector organizations and advertising sponsors, receiving and publishing financial reports, assessing compliance through reviews and audits, and investigating non-compliance to determine appropriate enforcement.

CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER

The Chief Election Officer is an individual appointed by a municipal council or regional district board to conduct a general local election or a by-election. The Chief Election Officer is responsible for overseeing all local election administration activities, including: issuing statutory public notices; receiving nomination documents; declaring candidates; administering voting opportunities; preparing ballots; reviewing ballot accounts; and, determining and declaring official election results.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Am I eligible to run for office?

To be eligible to run for office you must:

- be 18 years of age or older on general voting day;
- be a Canadian citizen;
- have been a resident of British Columbia for at least six months immediately before filing nomination documents; and,
- not be disqualified under the *Local Government Act*, or any other enactment from voting in an election in B.C. or from being nominated for, being elected to or holding the office, or be otherwise disqualified by law.

EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

There are additional requirements and eligibility considerations that people who work or volunteer for a local government must follow. For more information, please visit the B.C. government webpage about [Employees and volunteers](#).

How do I get nominated?

You must be nominated by at least two eligible electors from the jurisdiction where you are seeking to be elected – some local governments may, by bylaw, require each candidate to have as many as 10 or 25 nominators. You may also be required to pay a refundable nomination deposit (up to a \$100 maximum) as part of the nomination process. You can confirm specific nomination requirements with the Chief Election Officer in your community.

You must have become a B.C. resident by March 10, 2026, or, if the nomination period is extended, by March 13, 2026 in order to meet the B.C. residency requirement to run for local office. Refer to [section 67 of the *Local Government Act*](#), for the rules for determining B.C. residency.

NOMINATORS

A nominator must be a qualified elector of the municipality or electoral area (or neighbourhood constituency, if applicable) where the candidate is running. Elector qualifications are listed in the *Local Government Act* and the *Vancouver Charter*.



Where can I find nomination forms?

Candidate nomination documents are available from your local government during regular business hours, generally, two to four weeks before the nomination period begins. Local government contact information is available online from CivicInfo BC at: www.civicinfo.bc.ca/directories

What are some key nomination requirements?

Nomination documents require you to provide detailed contact about yourself and the people who will work for you during the election (e.g. financial agent, official agent). Information provided on the nomination document also includes the office you are running for, your nominators, your consent to be nominated, any endorsement you are accepting from an elector organization, and the Statement of Financial Disclosure required under the *Financial Disclosure Act*.

You are also required to make a solemn declaration stating that you are qualified to be a candidate and you are aware of, understand, and will comply with the requirements of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

Where do I file my nomination papers?

You must file your nomination documents with the Chief Election Officer where you intend to run for office. The nomination deadline is 4:00 p.m. local time on **Friday, September 11, 2026**. Candidates may submit their nomination documents to the Chief Election Officer by hand, by mail or other delivery service, by fax or by email so long as they are received by the end of the nomination period.

You are required to make a solemn declaration in order for your nomination documents to be accepted for filing. If you are not submitting your documents in-person to the Chief Election Officer, you may make your solemn declaration before a commissioner for taking affidavits for British Columbia, such as a lawyer or notary. The solemn declaration must be signed by you and the person that took the solemn declaration.

Who can help me run my election campaign?

You may appoint a financial agent, an official agent, and scrutineers to help with your election campaign and to take on campaign activities. Your election campaign may also be supported by volunteers.

You may also be endorsed by an elector organization that may undertake certain campaign activities on your behalf (e.g., advertising, canvassing) to help you get elected.

Financial Agents

A financial agent is a representative that a candidate is legally required to have during an election campaign. **You are your own financial agent unless you appoint another individual to the position.**

Financial agents are responsible for administering campaign finances in accordance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing*

Act. This includes opening and depositing contributions to, and paying election-related expenses from, a candidate's campaign account; maintaining records for campaign contributions, election expenses and all other campaign transactions; and, filing the candidate's required campaign financing disclosure statement with Elections BC within 90 days following general voting day.

You must appoint your financial agent in writing and have their written consent to be your financial agent. The written appointment must be submitted to the Chief Election Officer as part of your nomination package and the Chief Election Officer will send all required information to Elections BC.

GUIDANCE FOR FINANCIAL AGENTS

Elections BC will send the financial agent the **Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Candidates and their Financial Agents** shortly after receiving the required candidate information and appointment of financial agent forms from the Chief Election Officer. The required disclosure statement will be sent by Elections BC to the candidate or their financial agent after general voting day. This information will assist you or your financial agent when it is time to disclose your campaign contributions and expenses.

Official Agents

Candidates may appoint an official agent to represent them during the election process. The official agent may act as your campaign manager or spokesperson or be the point of contact for the people helping on your election campaign. You must appoint your official agent in writing and deliver the appointment (including the name and address of the person) to the Chief Election Officer as soon as practicable after you have made the appointment.

Scrutineers

Candidates or their official agent may appoint scrutineers to observe voting procedures and the ballot-counting process. You or your official agent may appoint one scrutineer for each ballot box used at a voting place during general local elections. In some cases, the local government may allow you to have more than one scrutineer for each ballot box.

Further information about scrutineers is available in the [*Scrutineers Guide to General Local Elections in B.C.*](#)

Volunteers

Candidates may retain volunteers to take on election campaign-related activities (such as preparing and distributing flyers, canvassing, calling eligible voters and/or handling logistics).

A volunteer who works on your election campaign **must not receive any payment or remuneration for their services.**

CANVASSING

Authorized canvassers are entitled to access multi-residential buildings (i.e. housing cooperatives, strata corporations and rental properties) between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. local time during the campaign period. You must appoint your canvasser(s) in writing and provide them with written consent to act as your canvasser. A canvasser entering a multi-residential property must produce government-issued photo ID and their written appointment at the request of a resident or an individual acting on behalf of the multi-residential property (e.g., building or property manager).

Elector Organizations

An elector organization is an organization that endorses or intends to endorse a candidate(s) in general local elections. An elector organization may endorse you on the ballot by allowing its name, abbreviation or acronym to appear on the ballot beside your name.

Elector organizations and candidates may each direct their own separate election campaign or run complementary campaigns; you may also decide to rely solely on the elector organization to run campaign activities on your behalf.

An elector organization must provide a signed consent statement that is included in your nomination documents. You must also sign a statement consenting to the endorsement as part of your nomination documents submitted to the Chief Election Officer.

Elector organizations are required to register with Elections BC before endorsing a candidate.

What is a third party sponsor?

Third party sponsors are individuals or organizations that sponsor election advertising independently from candidates and elector organizations.

Third party advertising includes advertising for or against a candidate and/or an elector organization. Third party advertising also includes advertising on an issue with which a

THIRD PARTY ADVERTISING

Third party sponsors must register with Elections BC before conducting advertising during the pre-campaign and campaign periods. Refer to the Elections BC [***Guide for Local Third Party Advertising Sponsors in B.C.***](#) for more information about the responsibilities and legal obligations of third party sponsors.

candidate or elector organization is associated during the campaign period.

Third party sponsors must be independent from candidates and/or elector organizations and must not coordinate, or sponsor advertising together with, or on behalf of a candidate and/or an elector organization.

ELECTION CAMPAIGN FINANCING

What campaign financing and election advertising rules should I be aware of?

Election advertising, such as billboards or commercials, must include sponsorship information during the pre-campaign and campaign period.

Election advertising rules apply to advertising that promotes or opposes the election of a candidate or an elector organization that is endorsing a candidate (e.g., directed advertising) during the pre-campaign and campaign period.

CAMPAIGN PERIODS

The pre-campaign period begins on **Monday, July 20, 2026**, and ends on **Friday, September 18, 2026**.

The campaign period starts on **Saturday, September 19, 2026**, and ends when voting closes at 8:00 p.m. local time on **Saturday, October 17, 2026**.

Elections BC has investigative and enforcement tools to ensure compliance with the campaign financing and advertising rules in the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. Elections BC can issue monetary penalties for a wide

Refer to Elections BC's [website](#) for detailed information regarding campaign financing and election advertising rules.



range of contraventions, including exceeding campaign contribution limits or expense limits for candidates.

ELECTION CAMPAIGNING

What can I do to get my message out to the voting public?

Election campaigns are generally a planned set of actions, events or initiatives designed to raise awareness about you or your election platform with voters.

Key campaign activities you could undertake include:

- making public speeches;
- canvassing by phone or door-to-door to raise awareness about your campaign and/or identifying issues important to voters;
- holding events where voters can listen to your election platform and ask questions;
- advertising in print, on radio, television or social media platforms; and/or,
- putting up signs as a way of “getting your name out there.”

VOTING DAY

Will voters be able to cast their ballots before general voting day?

Yes. Generally, at least two advance voting opportunities must be held in every local government before general voting day.

One voting opportunity must be held 10 days before general voting day (**Wednesday, October 7, 2026**), and in most cases, an additional one on a date established in the local government's bylaw. Local governments may set out in their election bylaw whether additional advance voting opportunities will be offered, or in communities of less than 5,000, whether the second additional advance voting opportunity will be waived.

Voting places are open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. local time **Saturday, October 17, 2026**, for general voting.

Can I campaign on general voting day?

You are allowed to campaign on general voting day by:

- advertising on the Internet, as long as the advertising was transmitted to the public before general voting day and was not changed before being transmitted on general voting day;
- advertising by means of signs, posters, or banners;
- canvassing and/or distributing pamphlets; and/or,
- advertising that exclusively encourages people to “get out and vote.”

It is an election offence to transmit new election advertising on general voting day. It is also an election offence to campaign within 100 metres of a voting place during voting proceedings.

Can I watch the ballot counting process?

Yes. Candidates can be present during the ballot count. The Chief Election Officer can tell you the time and location for the final vote count and when the election results will be declared. Ballot counting starts after 8:00 p.m. local time following the close of voting. Your official agent or a scrutineer may also attend at each location where ballot counting takes place.

When will the election results be announced?

The official election results must be declared by 4:00 p.m. local time on **Wednesday, October 21, 2026**. Candidates with the most votes will be declared elected.

The Chief Election Officer must refer the election for a judicial recount if there is a tie in the number of votes between one or more candidates.

Following a judicial recount, a tie between two or more candidates must be broken in accordance with the *Local Government Act* (or *Vancouver Charter* in the City of Vancouver) and the local government's election bylaw. The judicial recount must be completed by **Friday, October 30, 2026**.

AFTER THE ELECTION

What do I do if I am elected?

All candidates must file a campaign financing disclosure statement with Elections BC within 90 days of general voting day.

You must also make an oath of office or solemn affirmation within 45 days after the official election results are declared, or if you are declared elected by acclamation, within 50 days of general voting day.

Refer to Elections BC's *Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Candidates and their Financial Agents* or contact Elections BC directly for more detailed information about campaign financing disclosure requirements.

A candidate who has been declared elected by the Chief Election Officer may make the oath of office or a solemn affirmation as soon as the time period for making an application for judicial recount has ended. The period to apply for a judicial recount ends nine days after the close of general voting (**Monday, October 26, 2026**).

Elected candidates do not take office immediately after making their oath of office or solemn affirmation. Municipal council members (i.e., mayor and councillors) formally take office at the first regularly scheduled council meeting following general local elections – this meeting must take place before **Tuesday, November 10, 2026**.

The term of office for regional district electoral area directors begins on the first Monday after November 1 following the general local election or when the individual makes their oath or solemn affirmation, whichever is later. The term of office for a municipal council member appointed to a regional district board begins when the person has made an oath of office or solemn affirmation as a regional district director.

Are there things I need to do even if I am not elected?

Yes. You must file a campaign financing disclosure statement with Elections BC by **Tuesday, February 16, 2027**, at the latest – even if you received no campaign contributions and incurred no election expenses. Statements filed after **Friday, January 15, 2027**, are subject to a \$500 late filing penalty fee.

ELECTION OFFENCES AND PENALITIES

What happens if I don't comply with all of the election rules?

You could be disqualified from office if you fail to take the oath of office following local elections.

Candidates who fail to file a campaign financing disclosure statement are automatically disqualified from being nominated for, elected to or holding office anywhere in B.C. until after the next general local elections. A candidate declared elected also loses their seat and the seat then becomes vacant.

Additional monetary and disqualification penalties for contravening campaign financing and advertising rules are set out in the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. Elections BC can be notified when a person believes someone has committed a campaign financing election offence.

You may also be subject to penalties of up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment for up to one year for providing and/or distributing false information, campaigning near a voting place during voting proceedings, falsely withdrawing a candidate or an endorsement, fraudulently voting, interfering with ballots or ballot boxes, or otherwise contravening section 163 of the *Local Government Act*. These penalties could apply whether or not you were elected.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Local government mailing addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses and websites are available online from CivicInfo BC at:

www.civicinfo.bc.ca/directories

For answers to legislative **questions about municipal and regional district elections** please contact:

Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Governance and Structure Branch

Phone: 250 387-4020

Email: LGgovernance@gov.bc.ca

Website: www.gov.bc.ca/localelections

For answers to **questions about elector organization registration, election advertising, third party sponsors or campaign financing disclosure** please contact:

Elections BC

Phone: 250 387-5305

Toll-free: 1 800 661-8683

TTY 1 888 456-5448

Email: electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca

Website: <https://elections.bc.ca/local-elections/2026-general-local-elections/>

Full text of the *Local Government Act*, *Local Election Campaign Financing Act*, *Community Charter*, *Vancouver Charter*, *School Act*, and *Offence Act* can be found online at: www.bclaws.ca

DISCLAIMER

In the event that there is inconsistency between this brochure and *the Local Government Act*, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, or any other Act, the legislation shall prevail.

Land Acknowledgment

The BC Public Service acknowledges the territories of First Nations around B.C. and is grateful to carry out its work on these lands – it acknowledges the rights, interests, priorities, and concerns of all Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Métis, and Inuit – respecting and acknowledging their distinct cultures, histories, rights, laws, and governments.