

# Candidate Information Package

**Your City. Your Vote.**  
2026 Municipal Election

— *City of* —  
**PICKERING**

**Note:** The information presented below provides general information about the rules contained in the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996 (the “Act”). For additional guidance, please refer to the Act or seek independent financial or legal advice.

## Contents

- 1. Introduction**
  - a. Greetings from City Clerk
  - b. Election Team
- 2. Key Election Dates**
- 3. Information on Nominations**
  - a. Call for Nominations
  - b. 2026 Candidates’ Guide – Ontario Municipal Council and School Board Elections
  - c. Prescribed Provincial Form – Nomination Paper (Form 1)
  - d. Prescribed Provincial Form - Endorsement of Nomination (Form 2)
  - e. City of Pickering Freedom of Information (FOI) Release & Candidate Contact Information Form
  - f. City of Pickering Voters’ List Request Form – EL 14
  - g. City of Pickering Appointment of Agent to File a Nomination Form
  - h. City of Pickering Withdrawal of Nomination Form – EL 19
- 4. Campaign Finances Information**
  - a. Campaign Finance Information for Candidates - Information Sheet
  - b. Election Contributions and Expenses Information for Candidates – Information Sheet
  - c. Letter to Financial Institutions
  - d. Prescribed Financial Statement – Auditor’s Report - Candidate (Form 4)
  - e. Notice of Penalties
  - f. Preliminary Certificate of Maximum Amounts (**provided during filing of Nomination**)
- 5. Campaign Advertisements, Election Signs and Canvassing**
  - a. Campaign Advertisements Information for Candidates – Information Sheet
  - b. Notice of Rules for Broadcasters and Publishers
  - c. Municipal Election Sign Information
  - d. City of Pickering Election Sign By-law (Consolidated Version)
  - e. Region of Durham Sign By-law 52-2020
  - f. Durham Region - Procedure for Complaints regarding Election Signs
  - g. Letter to Landlords, Property Managers and Housing Co-op Representatives – Access for Canvassers
- 6. Procedures for Voting and Vote Counting Equipment**
- 7. Voting Information**
  - a. 2026 Voters’ Guide – Ontario Municipal Council and School Board Elections
- 8. Accessible Elections**
  - a. City of Pickering’s 2026 Accessible Election Plan
  - b. Candidate’s Guide to Accessible Elections – AMCTO
- 9. Ward Boundary, Voting Subdivisions, Street Names with Ward References Listing**

- a. Ward Boundary By-law 8196/25
- b. Interactive Ward Map
- c. Voting Subdivisions (**provided during filing of Nomination**)
- d. Street Names (**provided during filing of Nomination**)

**10. Additional Resources**

- a. Procedures for the Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes
- b. Council Remuneration – Mayor and Councillor Salary and Benefits
- c. ADM 190 - Council Compensation Policy
- d. Strong Mayor Powers and Duties Guide

Dear Candidate,

I am pleased to present the 2026 Municipal Election Candidate Information Package which has been prepared by the City Clerk's Office and provides you with guidance on the Municipal Election process.

As the City Clerk, I am responsible for the proper legislative and administrative conduct of Municipal Elections in Pickering. In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the City Clerk is authorized to establish election procedures and ensure the successful delivery of election services. This package has been prepared in accordance with this mandate.

Before beginning your campaign, you must open a separate campaign bank account to accept any contributions of money or incur any expenses. You cannot use your own personal bank account for campaign finances, even if you are planning a small campaign. If you require a letter for your financial institution, one is provided in this candidate package.

Please ensure you issue receipts for all contributions received and obtain receipts for every expense. You cannot solicit contributions or incur expenses until you have filed your Nomination Forms with the City Clerk and paid the legislated filing fee.

While this candidate package provides important guidance, it is not a substitute for legal or financial advice. If you have specific questions with respect to meeting your campaign finance obligations, please contact the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing or seek independent financial or legal advice. As a candidate, you are responsible for ensuring all legislative requirements are met with respect to your campaign.

The City's website provides additional election resources at [www.pickering.ca/vote](http://www.pickering.ca/vote), and it will continue to be updated throughout the election period, so please check back regularly. Any updates to the information contained in this package will also be shared with all registered candidates by email. On behalf of the City, I would like to thank you for your interest in serving the citizens of Pickering.

For additional information or questions, please contact the City Clerk's Office:

**Email:** [elections@pickering.ca](mailto:elections@pickering.ca)

**Phone:** 905.420.4660 ext. VOTE (8683)

Sincerely,



Susan Cassel  
City Clerk, City of Pickering

## 2026 Municipal Elections Contact List

<b>Susan Cassel, City Clerk</b>	905.420.4660 ext. 2019 <a href="mailto:scassel@pickering.ca">scassel@pickering.ca</a>
<b>Rumali Perera, Deputy Clerk</b>	905.420.4660 ext. 2047 <a href="mailto:rperera@pickering.ca">rperera@pickering.ca</a>
<b>Keith Hearst, Records, Privacy &amp; Elections Coordinator</b>	905.420.4660 ext. 1119 <a href="mailto:khearst@pickering.ca">khearst@pickering.ca</a>
<b>Janean Currie, Legislative Coordinator</b>	905.420.4660 ext. 2097 <a href="mailto:jcurrie@pickering.ca">jcurrie@pickering.ca</a>
<b>General Contact Information</b>	905.420.4660 ext. 8683 (VOTE) <a href="mailto:elections@pickering.ca">elections@pickering.ca</a> The Office of the City Clerk Civic Complex One The Esplanade Pickering, ON L1V 6K7
<b>Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing</b>	Bridget Foster, Senior Municipal Advisor 437.928.3890 <a href="mailto:bridget.foster@ontario.ca">bridget.foster@ontario.ca</a>  Colin Johnston, Municipal Advisor 437.829.4781 <a href="mailto:colin.johnston@ontario.ca">colin.johnston@ontario.ca</a>
<b>Election Signs</b>	<b>Inquiries:</b> Jennifer Hayden, Manager, Municipal Law Enforcement Services 905.420.4660 ext. 3504 <a href="mailto:bylaw@pickering.ca">bylaw@pickering.ca</a>  <b>Complaints:</b> 905.683.7575 <a href="mailto:Customercare@pickering.ca">Customercare@pickering.ca</a>

## Key Election Dates

▶ <b>Friday, May 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First day to file a nomination paper for the Offices of Mayor, Councillor, and School Board Trustee</li><li>• First day third party advertisers can file a notice of registration</li><li>• Campaign period begins once a nomination is filed</li></ul>
▶ <b>Friday, Aug 21</b> (9 a.m. – 2 p.m.)	Last day for a candidate to file a nomination, withdraw a nomination or change office
▶ <b>Monday, Aug 24</b>	Last day for the City Clerk to certify nomination papers
▶ <b>Tuesday, Sept 1</b>	Voters' List available to candidates
▶ <b>Tuesday, Sept 1 to Monday, Oct 26</b>	Revision Period to the Voters' List
▶ <b>Wednesday, Sept 30</b>	Final Spending Limits provided to candidates and registered third party advertisers
▶ <b>Monday, Oct 19 to 26</b>	Voting Period (Internet Voting available during entire Voting Period) (Paper ballot on Election Day Only)
▶ <b>Monday, Oct 26</b> (10 a.m. – 8 p.m.)	<b>Election Day (Final Day of Voting Period)</b> (Internet Voting and Paper Ballot options available)
▶ <b>Monday, Nov 16</b> (7 p.m.)	Inaugural Meeting of Council
▶ <b>Thursday, Nov 19</b> <b>Friday, Nov 20</b> <b>Tuesday, Dec 1</b>	Council Orientation (Mandatory Education & Training Session for Members of Council)

For more information, please email [elections@pickering.ca](mailto:elections@pickering.ca), call **905.420.4660 ext. VOTE (8683)**, or visit [pickering.ca/vote](http://pickering.ca/vote)

# 2026 City of Pickering Municipal Election Call for Nominations

## Are You Interested in Running for Pickering City Council?

The next Municipal Election will be held on October 26, 2026. Individuals interested in filing their nomination must do so in accordance with the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#) (the “Act”). Notice is hereby given of the following offices that a person may be nominated for and the nomination procedure:

- Office of Mayor
- Office of Regional Councillor, Ward 1
- Office of Regional Councillor, Ward 2
- Office of Regional Councillor, Ward 3
- Office of City Councillor, Ward 1
- Office of City Councillor, Ward 2
- Office of City Councillor, Ward 3
- Office of Trustee, Durham District School Board
- Office of Trustee, Durham Catholic District School Board

Nominations must be filed in person by the candidate or their agent, beginning Friday, May 1, 2026, until Friday, August 21, 2026, during regular business hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm), and on Nomination Day, Friday, August 21, 2026, between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm.

### **Nominations must be filed in person at:**

The Office of the City Clerk  
Pickering Civic Complex, One The Esplanade  
Pickering, ON L1V 6K7

### **Nominations must include:**

- Prescribed Nomination Paper (Form 1);
- Prescribed Endorsement of Nomination (Form 2);
- Identification showing the nominee’s name, qualifying address, and photo; and,
- Prescribed Filing Fee (\$200 for Office of the Mayor and \$100 for all other Offices).  
Fee is payable by cash, Debit, Visa, MasterCard, certified cheque or money order.

The prescribed Forms noted above and information on the nomination process, including qualifications required to become a candidate, are available at [www.pickering.ca/vote](http://www.pickering.ca/vote), or by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at [elections@pickering.ca](mailto:elections@pickering.ca) or 905.420.4660 ext. 8683 (VOTE).

If a nomination is being filed by an agent, a letter must be submitted at the time of filing which authorizes the agent to file on behalf of the candidate. For further information on this process, please contact the Clerk’s Office.

**The deadline to file a nomination is Friday, August 21, 2026, at 2:00 pm.**

No person who proposes to be a candidate may solicit or accept contributions for election purposes or incur campaign expenses until a Nomination Paper has been filed.

Nomination Papers and information for the Office of Regional Chair, Regional Municipality of Durham, must be obtained and filed in the Office of the Regional Clerk, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby. Please visit [www.durham.ca/elections](http://www.durham.ca/elections) for more details. **(Note: subject to change due to [Bill 100](#))**

Nomination Papers and information for the Office of Conseiller(ère), Conseil scolaire Viamonde (French-Language Public School Board) or the Office of Conseiller(ère), Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir (French-Language Catholic School Board), must be obtained and filed in the Office of the City Clerk, City of Oshawa, 50 Centre Street South, Oshawa. Please visit [www.voteoshawa.ca](http://www.voteoshawa.ca) for more details.

# 2026 candidates' guide

Ontario municipal council and  
school board elections

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

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

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

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

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

## New election rules for 2026

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

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

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

## Contact us

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

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

# Table of Contents

General information .....	1
Eligibility to run for election.....	2
Nominations.....	4
The voters' list.....	9
Campaigning .....	10
Third-party advertising.....	11
On voting day .....	12
After voting day .....	14
Campaign finance .....	15
Compliance and enforcement .....	27
Completing the financial statement .....	29
Forms referred to in this guide.....	35

## General information

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

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

Your municipality may have specific rules on issues such as:

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

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

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

## The municipal clerk

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

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

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

## Emergency declaration by the clerk

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

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

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

## Eligibility to run for election

### Running for municipal council

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

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

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

### Municipal employees

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

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

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

## Who is not eligible?

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

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

## Running for school board trustee

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

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

## School board employees

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

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

## Municipal officials

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

## Who is not eligible?

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

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

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

## Note for MPs, MPPs and senators

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

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

# Nominations

## Filing your nomination

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## The nomination fee

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

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

## Endorsement signatures

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Deadline to file your nomination

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

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

## Where to file

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

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

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

## Changing your mind – withdrawal

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

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

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

## Changing your mind – running for a different office

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

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

### **Example:**

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

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

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

### **Example:**

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

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

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

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

**Example:**

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

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

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

## Acclamations

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

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

## Additional nominations

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

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

## The voters' list

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

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

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

## Restrictions on handling the voters' list

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

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

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

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

## Written acknowledgements

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

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

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

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

## Campaigning

### Signs

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

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

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

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

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

## Getting information out

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

## All candidates' debates

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

## Joint campaigns / running on a slate

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

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

## Third-party advertising

### General information

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

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

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

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

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

## On voting day

### Campaigning on voting day

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

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

### Remaining in a voting place

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

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

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

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

## Scrutineers

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

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

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

Scrutineers may be required to take an oath of secrecy.

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

## Counting votes

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

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

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

## Results

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

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

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

## After voting day

### Recounts

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

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

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

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

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

### Tied votes

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

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

## Wrapping up your campaign

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

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

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

## Term of office

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

# Campaign finance

## General information

### Record keeping

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

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

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

You must keep the following campaign records:

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

## Campaign period

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Bank account

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

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

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

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

## Contributions and campaign income

### Contributions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Things that are not contributions

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

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

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

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

### Who can make a contribution

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

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

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

### Who cannot make a contribution

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

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

### When you can receive contributions

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

## Contribution limits – contributions from yourself and your spouse

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

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

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

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

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

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

This limit does not apply to school board trustee candidates.

## Contribution limits – contributions from other people

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

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

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

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

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

## Contribution receipts

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

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

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

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

## Returning ineligible contributions

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

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

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

## Unused contributions

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

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

## Contribution rebates

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

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

## Fundraising

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

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

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

## Campaign income

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

## Campaign expenses

### Expenses

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

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

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

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

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

## Goods and services

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

## Spending limits

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

### General spending limit

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

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

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

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

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

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

- expenses related to holding a fundraising event or activity

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

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

### When the general spending limit applies

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

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

### Spending limit for parties and expressions of appreciation

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

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

### Leftover campaign inventory

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

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

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

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

## Surplus and deficit

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

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

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

## Campaign advertisements

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

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

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

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

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

## Campaign financial statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Filing early

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

### Applying for an extension

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

## Grace period for filing

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

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

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

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

## Separate statement for each office

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

## Extended campaigns

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

Your campaign may be extended until June 30, 2027.

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

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

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

## Auditor's report

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

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

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

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

## Compliance and enforcement

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

### Automatic penalties

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

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

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

### Compliance audits

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Penalties

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

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

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

# Completing the financial statement

## General information

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

Candidates must use [Form 4](#).

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

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

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

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

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

## Tips for completing Form 4

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

### Box A: Name of candidate and office

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

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

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

## Box B: Declaration

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

## Box C: Statement of campaign income and expenses

### Loan

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

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

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

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

### Income

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

### Example

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

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

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

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

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

## Sign deposit

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

## Expenses

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

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

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

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

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

## Box D: Calculation of surplus or deficit

### Campaign deficit

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

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

### Campaign surplus

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

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

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

## Schedule 1: Contributions

Schedule 1 includes a summary of contributions from your campaign.

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

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

### Contributions from yourself and/or your spouse

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

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

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

### Contributions totalling \$100 or less

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

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

### Goods and services from candidate or spouse

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

### Inventory from previous campaign

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

### Contributions totalling more than \$100

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

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

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

### Goods and services from individuals other than candidate or spouse

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

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

### Example:

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

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

**Example:**

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

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

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

## Schedule 2: Fundraising events and activities

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

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

Contributions received at a fundraising event may include:

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

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

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

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

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

### Anonymous contributions

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

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

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

### Schedule 3: Broadcasters and publishers

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

### Auditor's report

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

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

## Forms referred to in this guide

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Prescribed Forms – Candidate Nomination Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Copies of prescribed Forms are available for pick up at the Clerk's Office and are also available on the Government of Ontario's Central Form Repository. Please see the links below to Form 1 and Form 2, which must be completed to file your nomination as a candidate in the 2026 Municipal Election:

- [Nomination Paper - Form 1](#)
- [Endorsement of Nomination - Form 2](#)

## Freedom of Information (FOI) Release & Candidate Contact Information Form

### Notice:

In accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, a Nomination paper, which contains some contact information, is a document that may be inspected by any person in the Office of the City Clerk at a time when the office is open until such a time as the form is legally destroyed.

Please select one of the following:  New  Change; or  Remove Information

<b>Mandatory Candidate Information</b> <i>(to be displayed on the City's website)</i>	
First Name:	Last Name or Single Name:
Candidate for the Office Of:	
<b>Optional Candidate Information</b> <i>(to be displayed on the City's website upon authorization)</i>	
In accordance with the <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990</i> , as amended, I hereby authorize the City Clerk and/or a designate to include the following information with respect to my candidacy for elected office on the City of Pickering's election website, and made available to the public:	
Qualifying Address:	
Campaign Website:	
Email:	Phone:
<b>Social Media Information</b> <i>(to be displayed on the City's website upon authorization)</i>	
X Hyperlink:	Facebook Hyperlink:
Instagram Hyperlink:	LinkedIn Hyperlink:
TikTok Hyperlink:	Other Social Media Hyperlink:
<b>NOTE:</b> Inclusion of website or social media hyperlink(s) on the City of Pickering's election website is at the discretion of the City Clerk. Social media hyperlinks must be specific to an individual's social media page (i.e. <a href="http://www.instagram.com/johndoe">www.instagram.com/johndoe</a> )	

Personal Information contained on this form is collected pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and will be used for the purpose of the 2026 City of Pickering Municipal Election. It will be available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office. Questions about this collection should be directed to the City Clerk, One The Esplanade, Pickering, ON L1V 6K7, 905.420.4611.

## Candidate Contact Information for Official Election Correspondence

(This information will **not** be posted publicly. It will be used solely by the Office of the City Clerk to communicate with candidates regarding the 2026 Municipal Election.)

Primary Email:	Primary Phone Number:
Alternate Email (optional):	Alternate Phone (optional):
I certify that the information provided is accurate. I understand which information will be posted publicly and which information will be used only for internal election-related communication.	
Candidate's Signature	Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

**Voters' List Request Form – EL 14**  
s. 23(4) and s.88(10), *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*

<b>Candidate Information</b>	
First Name:	Last Name or Single Name:
Phone:	Email:
Candidate for the Office of:	
<b>Candidate Request</b>	
<p>I, _____, being a candidate for the Office of _____, hereby request the City Clerk to provide me with the following information when it becomes available:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> An electronic copy of the Voters' List including a copy of all revisions made to the Voters' List*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Access to strike-off information showing the name of each person who has voted during the Voting Period*</p> <p>*Electronic copy will be provided via access to an online Candidate's portal.</p>	
<b>Candidate Declaration</b>	
<p>I, the undersigned, do hereby acknowledge that I will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use the Voters' list for electoral purposes only;</li> <li>• not copy, distribute and/or resell in any format the Voters' List or use it for commercial purposes; and,</li> <li>• securely destroy the electronic Voter's List on completion of the election activities for which I received them.</li> </ul>	
Candidate Signature:	Date: (yyyy/mm/dd)
<p><b>NOTE:</b> In accordance with Section 23 of the <i>Municipal Elections Act, 1996</i>, <b>access to the online portal will be provided to candidates on or before September 1, 2026.</b> Registered candidates will be provided with individual credentials to access the online portal.</p>	

Personal Information contained on this form is collected pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and will be used for the purpose of the 2026 City of Pickering Municipal Election. It will be available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office. Questions about this collection should be directed to the City Clerk, One The Esplanade, Pickering, ON L1V 6K7, 905.420.4611.

## Appointment of Agent to File a Nomination

### Important Information

The Agent must provide the City Clerk with the following documents for a Candidate's Nomination to be accepted under s.33 the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*:

- The Candidate's original and complete Nomination Form (Form 1) with original signatures.
- An original and complete Endorsement of Nomination Form (Form 2) with the required 25 endorsements.
- The Candidate's original photo identification showing name, signature and qualifying address as they appear on Form 1 **and** the Agent's own original government issued photo ID showing name, address and signature.
- The Nomination filing fee (\$200 for Mayor and \$100 for all other Offices), payable by cash, debit, Visa, MasterCard, certified cheque or money order.

**Note:** For this form to be accepted, it must be commissioned or notarized by a person authorized under the *Commissioner for Taking Affidavits or Notaries Act, 1990* (see below).

### Appointed Agent Information *(information must match the Agent's government issued photo ID)*

First Name:		Last Name or Single Name:	
Address:	Phone:	Email:	

### Appointment of Agent *(candidate must complete this section)*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby appoint \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ (City) to submit my Nomination Paper (Form 1) and Endorsement of Nomination (Form 2), for the 2026 Municipal Election, pursuant to sections 33 and 35 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended.

Sworn/Affirmed before me at \_\_\_\_\_  
*municipality*

in \_\_\_\_\_  
*province, state, or country*

on \_\_\_\_\_  
*date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Commissioner for taking affidavits, lawyer, etc.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Candidate*

*(this form is to be signed in front of lawyer,  
Justice of the Peace, Notary Public  
or Commissioner for taking affidavits)*

Personal Information contained on this form is collected pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and will be used for the purpose of the 2026 City of Pickering Municipal Election. It will be available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office. Questions about this collection should be directed to the City Clerk, One The Esplanade, Pickering, ON L1V 6K7, 905.420.4611.

**Withdrawal of Nomination – EL 19**  
**s.36 Municipal Elections Act, 1996**

<b>Important Information</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Withdrawal of Nomination form must be submitted in person, by the candidate or their agent at Office of the City Clerk, One The Esplanade, Pickering, ON, L1V 6K7, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., or by 2 p.m. on August 21, 2026.</li> <li>The candidate and, if applicable, the agent, must present their identification with this form.</li> </ul>			
<b>Candidate Information</b>			
First Name:		Last Name or Single name:	
Candidate for the Office of:			
Email:		Phone:	
<b>Qualifying address (in Pickering or qualifying address within school board jurisdiction)</b>			
Street Address	Unit	City	Postal Code
<b>Statement of Withdrawal</b>			
In accordance with section 36 of the <i>Municipal Elections Act, 1996</i> , I hereby withdraw my nomination for the above mentioned office. I shall file a Financial Statement and Auditor’s Report, Form 4, on or before 2:00 p.m. on the filing date as per section 88.25 of the <i>Municipal Elections Act, 1996</i> . If applicable, I have appointed the above named agent to file this notice on my behalf.			
Candidate’s Signature		Date: (yyyy/mm/dd)	
<b>INTERNAL USE ONLY (to be completed by Clerk or Designate)</b>			
Date:	Time	Name	Signature

Personal Information contained on this form is collected pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and will be used for the purpose of the 2026 City of Pickering Municipal Election. It will be available for public inspection in the City Clerk’s Office. Questions about this collection should be directed to the City Clerk, One The Esplanade, Pickering, ON L1V 6K7, 905.420.4611.

# Campaign Finance Information for Candidates

## *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*

**Note:** The information presented below provides general information about the rules contained in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (the “Act”). For additional guidance, please refer to the Act or seek independent financial or legal advice.

### **Duties of a Candidate (Act reference, s.88.22)**

As the candidate, your duties are significant. You are strongly advised to review section 88.22 of the Act to ensure you understand your duties.

### **Campaign Account – Financial Institution**

Before accepting any contributions of money or incurring any expenses, you must open one or more campaign accounts at a financial institution. These accounts must be used exclusively for your election campaign.

All contributions of money must be deposited into the campaign account(s), and all campaign expenses must be paid from those same accounts. All funds in the campaign account(s) must be used exclusively for the purposes of the election campaign.

You may provide your financial institution with the *Letter to Financial Institutions* included in this package.

### **Recording of Financial Activities**

You are responsible for maintaining complete and accurate records of all financial activities related to your campaign. Records that you must keep include, but are not limited to:

- the receipts issued for every contribution;
- the value of every contribution;
- whether a contribution is in the form of money, goods or services;
- the contributor’s name and address;
- every expense including the receipts obtained for each expense;
- any claim for payment of an expense that the candidate disputes or refuses to pay;
- the gross income from a fund-raising function and the gross amount of money received at a fund-raising function by donations of \$25 or less or by the sale of goods or services for \$25 or less; and,
- any loan and its terms under section 88.17.

To help ensure compliance with the record-keeping requirements of the Act, candidates are strongly encouraged to use a campaign contribution receipt book to record all contributions received.

An example of a candidate campaign contribution receipt book is available from Municipal World:  
<https://www.municipalworld.com/product/item-1429-1-candidate-campaign-contribution-receipts/>

A sample image of a campaign contribution receipt book is included below for reference.

©Municipal World\* – Form 1429/1  
\* Reg. T.M. in Canada, Municipal World Inc. Municipal Elections Act, 1996, c. 32, Schedule, s. 88.8, 88.9, 88.15, 88.22

**RECEIPT — CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION**

Receipt No.

Date accepted\* Date issued Amount received

Day	Month	Year	Day	Month	Year				

\* Date deposited to campaign account

**Received from:** **Method of Payment:**

Individual   
  Candidate or Spouse   
  Cash (not exceeding \$25)   
  Cheque / Money order / Credit card   
  Goods / Services

Full Name of Contributor	Name of office for which candidate is nominated
Mailing Address of Contributor	Name of candidate (print)
	Name of municipality, school board or other board (print)
	Signature of candidate or candidate's agent accepting contribution

**Maximum contribution** – A contributor shall not make contributions exceeding a total of \$1,200 to any one candidate in an election. Subsection 88.9 (1).  
**More than one office** – If a person is a candidate for more than one office, a contributor's total contributions to him or her in respect of all the offices shall not exceed \$1,200. Subsection 88.9 (2).  
**Exception – Toronto** – The maximum total contribution that a contributor may make to a candidate for the office of mayor of the City of Toronto is \$2,500. Subsection 88.9 (3).  
**Multiple candidates** – A contributor shall not make contributions exceeding a total of \$5,000 to two or more candidates for office on the same council or local board. Subsection 88.9 (4).  
**Candidates and spouses** – The maximum contribution limits above do not apply to contributions made to a candidate's own election campaign by the candidate or his or her spouse but are governed by the provisions of section 88.9.1 of the Act. Subsection 88.9 (5).

ORIGINAL – to be given to contributor    COPY – to be retained by candidate as campaign finance record

### Retention of Records

You must retain the records described in clauses (g) to (k) of subsection 88.22(1) for the term of office of the members of the council or local board or until their successors are elected and the newly elected council or local board is organized. (The term of office for 2026-2030 ends November 14, 2030.)

### Requirement to file a financial statement (Act reference, s.88.25)

On or before 2 p.m., on the filing date, a candidate shall file with the Clerk with whom the nomination was filed, a financial statement and auditor's report using the Ministry prescribed form ([Financial Statement – Auditor's Report Form 4](#)).

At least 30 days before the filing date, the Clerk shall give notice to every candidate whose nomination was filed with the Clerk's Office regarding all the filing requirements, the candidate's entitlement to receive a refund of the nomination filing fee, and penalties set out in subsections 88.23(2) and 92(1).

Candidates whose campaign contributions exceed \$10,000 or whose total campaign expenses exceed \$10,000, are required to file an auditor's report with the financial statement.

### **Compliance Audit Applications**

Any eligible elector who believes on reasonable grounds that a candidate has contravened a provision of the campaign finance rules under the Act, may apply for a compliance audit. Applications are considered by the Compliance Audit Committee (CAC), who may appoint an auditor, review reports, and decide whether to commence legal proceedings if a contravention under the Act is found.

## **Election Contributions and Expenses Information for Candidates**

### ***Municipal Elections Act, 1996***

**Note:** The information presented below provides general information about the rules contained in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (the “Act”). For additional guidance, please refer to the Act or seek independent financial or legal advice.

The Act requires candidates to report on all contributions received and expenses incurred during the campaign period. In addition, the Act imposes campaign spending limits for candidates in municipal elections.

### **Campaign Contributions**

#### **What is considered a campaign contribution? (Act reference, s.88.15)**

A contribution is money, goods and services given to and accepted by a candidate, or a person who is acting under the candidate’s directions for their election campaign. Contributions include, but are not limited to:

- An amount charged for admission to a fund-raising function;
- If goods and services are sold for more than their market value at a fund-raising function, the difference between the amount paid and the market value. However, if the amount received for the goods or services is \$25 or less, the amount is not a contribution;
- If goods and services used in the person’s election campaign or in relation to third party advertisements are purchased for less than their market value, the difference between the market value and the amount paid; and,
- Any unpaid but guaranteed balance in respect of a loan under section 88.17.

#### **What is not considered a campaign contribution? (Act reference, s. 88.15(4))**

The following list provides examples of amounts that are not considered contributions under the Act. This list is not exhaustive and candidates should obtain their own financial and/or legal advice when confirming what constitutes a contribution and what does not:

- The value of services provided by voluntary unpaid labour;
- The value of services provided voluntarily, under the direction of the person or the individual, corporation or trade union, by an employee whose compensation from all sources for providing the services does not exceed the compensation the employee would normally receive for the period the services are provided;
- An amount of \$25 or less that is donated at a fund-raising function;
- The amount received for goods and services sold at a fund-raising function, if the amount is \$25 or less;
- The amount of a loan under section 88.17;

- For a person referred to in subsection (1), the value of political advertising provided without charge on a broadcasting undertaking as defined in section 2 of the Broadcasting Act (Canada), if,
  - it is provided in accordance with that Act and the regulations and guidelines made under it, and,
  - it is provided equally to all candidates for office on the particular council or local board.

### **Who can contribute? (Act reference, s.88.8(3) and (5))**

Contributions to a candidate's campaign may only be made by individuals normally resident in Ontario, or by the candidate or their spouse. If the candidate or their spouse is not normally resident in Ontario, they may make contributions only to the candidate's election campaign.

### **Who cannot contribute? (Act reference, s.88.8(4))**

- A federal political party registered under the *Canada Elections Act* or any federal constituency association or registered candidate at a federal election endorsed by that party;
- A provincial political party, constituency association, registered candidate or leadership contestant registered under the *Election Finances Act*;
- A corporation that carries on business in Ontario;
- A trade union that holds bargaining rights for employees in Ontario; and, The Crown in right of Canada or Ontario, a municipality or a local board.

### **Contribution Limits (Act reference, s.88.9, 88.8(8), 88.15(4)3, 88.22 (1)(q))**

A contributor shall not make contributions exceeding a total of \$1,200 to any one candidate in an election or, exceed a total of \$5,000 to two or more candidates for office on the same council or local board. It is the candidate's and contributor's responsibility to make sure they do not exceed these limits.

A candidate for an office on a council and their spouse may contribute to their own election campaign. The City Clerk will provide you with the maximum contribution limits. These limits are determined by a formula outlined in the Act.

Contributions greater than \$25.00 may not be made in cash. All contributions above \$25.00 must be made by cheque, money order, or by a method that clearly shows who the funds came from and a receipt must be issued.

A candidate cannot accept contributions from an anonymous source (except for donations of \$25.00 or less at a fundraising event).

### **Returning Ineligible Contributions (Act reference 88.22 (1)(o) and (p))**

A contribution of money made or received in contravention of this Act or a by-law passed under the Act is returned to the contributor as soon as possible after the candidate becomes aware of the contravention.

Contributions made in contravention of the Act, that cannot be returned to the contributor, shall be paid to the City Clerk with whom the candidate's nomination was filed.

**Recording of Contributions (Act reference, s.88.22)**

You must ensure records are kept of the receipt issued for every contribution, the value of every contribution, whether a contribution is in the form of money, goods or services, and the contributor's name and address.

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

**Campaign Expenses**

**What are considered campaign expenses? (Act reference, s.88.19, 88.20(13))**

Expenses are costs incurred for goods or services by or under the direction of a person wholly or partly for use in their election campaign.

The City Clerk shall calculate the maximum expense limits for each office for which nominations were filed. At the time of filing your Nomination Paper, the City Clerk will provide you with an estimate of your general spending limit based on the number of electors in the previous election. On or before September 30, 2026, the City Clerk will provide you with a final general spending limit based on the number of electors on the voters' list for the current election.

## Letter to Financial Institutions 2026 Municipal Election

May 1, 2026

**To: Financial Institutions**

**Re: Municipal Election Campaign Account**

A candidate, running in the 2026 Municipal Election, is required under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (“the Act”), to open one or more campaign accounts at a financial institution exclusively for the purposes of the election campaign.

The Act does not prohibit a municipal candidate from being a signing officer on the campaign account, nor does it require the candidates to have a chief financial officer, as is the case with provincial or federal candidates.

Section 88.22(1) of the Act, states:

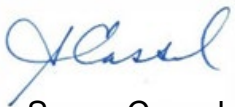
A candidate shall ensure that:

- a) No contributions of money are accepted or expenses are incurred unless one or more campaign accounts are first opened at a financial institution exclusively for the purposes of the election campaign;
- b) all contributions of money are deposited into the campaign accounts;
- c) all funds in the campaign accounts are used exclusively for the purposes of the election campaign; and,
- d) all payments for expenses are made from the campaign accounts.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

**Email:** [elections@pickering.ca](mailto:elections@pickering.ca)  
**Phone:** 905.420.4660 ext. VOTE (8683)

Sincerely,



Susan Cassel  
City Clerk, City of Pickering

## Prescribed Forms – Financial Statements Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Copies of prescribed Forms are available for pick up at the Clerk's Office and are also available on the Government of Ontario's Central Form Repository. Please see the link below to Form 4 which must be completed to meet your financial obligations as outlined in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*:

- [Financial Statement - Auditor's Report Candidate - Form 4](#)

## **City of Pickering 2026 Municipal Election**

### **Notice of Penalties**

*Municipal Elections Act, 1996*

#### **S. 33.1 Campaign finances – penalties and nomination filing fee refund – notice by clerk**

The clerk shall, before voting day, give to each person nominated for an office notice of the penalties under subsections 88.23(2) and 92(1) related to election campaign finances; and the refund of the nomination filing fee that the candidate is entitled to receive in the circumstances described in section 34.

#### **S. 34 Refunds**

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

#### **88.23(1) Default – where penalties apply**

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

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

#### **88.23(2) Default - penalties**

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

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

#### **88.23(3) Default – notice by clerk**

In the case of a default described in subsection (1), the clerk shall,

- (a) notify the candidate in writing that the default has occurred;
- (b) if the candidate was elected, notify the council or the board to which he or she was elected in writing that the default has occurred; and
- (c) make available to the public the name of the candidate and a description of the nature of the default.

**88.23(4) Compliance – clerk’s report – filing**

The clerk shall make available to the public a report setting out all candidates in an election and indicating whether each candidate complied with section 88.25.

**88.23(6) Application to court – for extension**

The candidate may, before the last day for filing a document under section 88.25 or 88.32, apply to the Superior Court of Justice to extend the time for filing the document under that section and, if the court is satisfied there are mitigating circumstances justifying a later date for filing the document, the court may grant an extension for the minimum period of time necessary to enable the candidate to file the document but the court shall not grant an extension of more than 90 days.

**88.23(7) Application to court – for extension – notice to clerk**

If a candidate makes an application under subsection (6), the candidate shall notify the clerk in writing before 2 p.m. on the last day for filing a document under section 88.25 or 88.32 that the application has been made.

**88.23(8) Application to court – for extension – effect**

If the court grants an extension under subsection (6), the penalties set out in subsection (2) apply only if the candidate has not filed the document before the end of the extension.

**88.23(9) Default – cessation of penalty – late filing fee**

The penalties set out in subsection (2) for a default described in clause (1)(a) do not take effect if, no later than 2 p.m. on the day that is 30 days after the applicable day for filing the document, the candidate files the relevant document as required under section 88.25 or 88.32 and pays the clerk a late filing fee of \$500.

**88.23(10) Default – late filing fee**

The late filing fee is the property of the municipality.

**92(1) Offences re: campaign finances**

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

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

**92(2) Exception**

However, if the presiding judge finds that the candidate, acting in good faith, committed the offence inadvertently or because of an error in judgement, the penalties described in subsection 88.23(2) do not apply.

# Campaign Advertisements Information for Candidates

## *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*

**Note:** The information presented below provides general information about the rules contained in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (the “Act”). For additional guidance, please refer to the Act or seek independent financial or legal advice.

### **Election campaign advertisements (Act reference, s.88.3(1))**

An election campaign advertisement is an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic or other medium that has the purpose of promoting or supporting the election of a candidate.

### **Authorization on political advertising (Act reference, s.88.3(2))**

An election campaign advertisement purchased by or under the direction of a candidate shall identify the candidate.

### **Information for the broadcaster or publisher (Act reference, s.88.3(3) and (4))**

**A candidate must provide the following information to the broadcaster or publisher in writing:**

1. The name of the candidate.
2. The name, business address and telephone number of the individual who deals with the broadcaster or publisher under the direction of the candidate.

No broadcaster or publisher shall cause an election campaign advertisement to appear if the information noted above has not been provided by the candidate. Please refer to the Notice of Rules for Broadcasters and Publishers in this package.

### **Retention of records by the broadcaster or publisher (Act reference, s.88.3(5))**

The broadcaster or publisher of an election campaign advertisement shall maintain records containing the following information for a period of four years after the date the advertisement appears and shall permit the public to inspect the records during normal business hours:

1. The information provided by the candidate (name and contact information as noted above).
2. A copy of the advertisement, or the means of reproducing it for inspection.
3. A statement of the charge made for its appearance.

### **Municipal authority to remove advertisements (Act reference, s.88.7)**

If a municipality is satisfied that there has been a contravention of section 88.3, 88.4 or 88.5, the municipality may require a person who the municipality reasonably believes contravened the section or caused or permitted the contravention, or the owner or occupier of the land on which the contravention occurred, to remove the advertisement or discontinue the advertising.



February 12, 2026

Region of Durham Area Broadcasters and Publishers



**Re: Notice of Rules for Broadcasters and Publishers under the Municipal Elections Act**

On behalf of the Municipal Clerks in the Region of Durham, I am writing to advise you of rules in effect for the 2026 municipal election respecting election campaign advertising and requirements imposed upon broadcasters and publishers in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act.



Candidates and third-party advertisers must follow certain campaign advertising rules. Broadcasters and publishers who publish election campaign advertising must also comply with requirements, such as the requirement to collect mandatory information before permitting an election campaign advertisement to appear and to maintain records for a period of at least four years.



These requirements are in effect during the campaign period which runs from May 1, 2026, until the close of voting on Voting Day, Monday, October 26, 2026. Attached, please find a notice to help clarify these regulations and assist you in complying with the applicable election law.



If you require further information or have questions, please contact the Municipal Clerk of your area municipality using the information included in the attached notice.



Chris Harris  
Clerk, Town of Whitby



Encl.

- cc: A. Harras, Regional Clerk, Region of Durham  
J. Grossi, Clerk, Town of Ajax  
F. Lamanna, Clerk/Deputy CAO, Township of Brock  
J. Gallagher, Clerk, Municipality of Clarington  
S. Cassel, Clerk, City of Pickering  
B. Labelle, Clerk, Township of Scugog  
D. Leroux, Clerk, Township of Uxbridge  
M. Medeiros, Clerk, City of Oshawa

## **Notice to Broadcasters and Publishers Municipal Elections Act Campaign Advertising Rules**

Municipal elections in the Region of Durham will take place on Monday, October 26, 2026 to elect a Regional Chair, and a Mayor, Councillors, and School Board Trustees in each of the 8 area municipalities.

The [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#) (the Act) establishes rules for election campaign advertising. This notice provides information intended to assist broadcasters and publishers in understanding their obligations under the Act. The information contained in this notice does not and is not intended to constitute legal advice. The content of this notice is provided for informational purposes only. Broadcasters and publishers should seek their own advice with respect to any legal matter.

### **Candidate Campaign Contributions Prohibited**

For the purposes of the Act, money, goods and services given to and accepted by a person for their election campaign, or given to and accepted by another person who is acting under the person's direction, are contributions to the campaign of a candidate. For more information, see [Section 88.15](#) of the Act.

For the purposes of the Act, money, goods and services given to and accepted by an individual, corporation or trade union in relation to third party advertisements, or given to and accepted by another person who is acting under the direction of the individual, corporation or trade union, are contributions to the third party advertising campaign. For more information, see [Section 88.15](#) of the Act.

Only individuals who are normally residents in Ontario, or the candidate and their spouse may make contributions to a campaign. Corporations and trade unions shall not make contributions. For more information, see [Section 88.8](#) of the Act. Broadcasters and publishers should consider how this prohibition may affect their activities as it relates to municipal elections.

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

## Candidate Election Campaign Advertisement

An election campaign advertisement means an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic, or other medium that has the purpose of promoting or supporting the election of a candidate.

In accordance with the Act, an election campaign advertisement purchased by, or under the direction of, a candidate shall identify the candidate. For more information, see [Section 88.3](#) of the Act.

An expense shall not be incurred by, or under the direction of, a person unless they are a registered candidate. Additionally, an expense shall not be incurred by, or under the direction of, a candidate outside their election campaign period. For more information, see [Section 88.20](#) of the Act. Candidates file their nomination with the appropriate Municipal Clerk in each area municipality within Durham Region. Each municipality in Durham Region will include and regularly update a list of registered candidates on their respective election website.

## Third Party Advertisement

A third party advertisement means an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic, or other medium that has the purpose of promoting, supporting, or opposing a candidate in the election, or a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot. Individuals, corporations or trade unions who wish to undertake third party advertising between May 1, 2026 and October 26, 2026 in a municipality in Durham Region must:

- Register between May 1 and October 23 with the Municipal Clerk in each municipality where they intend to conduct third party advertising; and,
- Ensure third party advertising contains:
  - The name of the registered third party advertiser;
  - The municipality where the third party advertiser is registered; and,
  - A telephone number, mailing address, or email address at which the registered third party may be contacted regarding the advertisement.

For more information, see [Section 88.4](#), [Section 88.5](#), and [Section 88.6](#) of the Act.

Each municipality in Durham Region will include and regularly update a list of registered third party advertisers on their respective election website. As noted above, third party advertisers have to register in every municipality that they intend to advertise in.

## Broadcaster and Publisher Obligations

Broadcasters and publishers must comply with the following obligations under the Act:

### Broadcaster or Publisher as a Third Party Advertiser

Broadcasters or publishers who wish to conduct third party advertising must register as a third party advertiser and follow the requirements of the Act. Requirements include specific responsibilities relating to campaign contributions and expenses, spending limits and financial reporting. For more information on these requirements, please see [Section 88.5](#) of the Act, consult with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, or consult with the Municipal Clerk of your area municipality.

### Mandatory Information for Broadcasters

Broadcasters and publishers are required to collect certain mandatory information from a candidate or third party advertiser before an advertisement can appear.

#### For Candidate Advertisements:

The candidate must provide the following information to a broadcaster or publisher, **in writing**:

- Name of the candidate; and,
- Name, business address, and telephone number of the individual who deals with the broadcaster or publisher under the candidate's direction (Note: this individual may be the candidate themselves).

For more information, please see [Section 88.3](#) of the Act.

#### For Third Party Advertisements:

The third party advertiser must provide the following information to a broadcaster or publisher, **in writing**:

- Name of the third party advertiser (Note: this may be the name of an individual, a corporation, or a trade union);
- Municipality where the third party advertiser is registered; and,
- Name, business address, and telephone number of the individual who deals with the broadcaster or publisher under the direction of a registered third party advertiser.

For more information, please see [Section 88.5](#) of the Act.

## Maintaining Records

Broadcasters and publishers shall maintain records of candidate advertisements and third party advertisements for a period of 4 years after the date the advertisement appears. The public must be allowed to inspect these records during normal business hours.

Records maintained must include:

- The mandatory information collected in writing, as described above;
- A copy of the advertisement, or a means of reproducing it for inspection; and,
- A statement of the charge made for the appearance of the advertisement.

For more information, please see [Section 88.3](#) and [Section 88.5](#) of the Act.

## Ongoing Obligations

Broadcasters and publishers should be mindful of other requirements under the Act, including any rules that may apply if they contribute money, goods, or services to the campaign of a third party advertiser.

## Additional Resources

Broadcasters or publishers who have additional questions are invited to contact the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing or Municipal Clerk of their respective area municipality using the contact information provided below.

### Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Central Municipal Services Office

- Website: [www.ontario.ca/municipalelections](http://www.ontario.ca/municipalelections)
- Phone: 416.585.6226 or 1.800.668.0230
- Email: [mea.info@ontario.ca](mailto:mea.info@ontario.ca)

### Region of Durham

- Elections Website: [www.durham.ca/elections](http://www.durham.ca/elections)
- Phone: 905.668.7711
- Email: [clerks@durham.ca](mailto:clerks@durham.ca)

## **Town of Ajax**

- Elections Website: [www.ajax.ca/vote](http://www.ajax.ca/vote)
- Phone: 365.282.VOTE(8683)
- Email: [election@ajax.ca](mailto:election@ajax.ca)

## **Township of Brock**

- Elections Website: [www.townshipofbrock.ca/election](http://www.townshipofbrock.ca/election)
- Phone: 705.432.2355
- Email: [clerks@brock.ca](mailto:clerks@brock.ca)

## **Municipality of Clarington**

- Elections Website: [www.clarington.net/votes](http://www.clarington.net/votes)
- Phone: 905.697.4747
- Email: [votes@clarington.net](mailto:votes@clarington.net)

## **City of Oshawa**

- Elections Website: [www.voteoshawa.ca](http://www.voteoshawa.ca)
- Phone: 905.436.3311
- Email: [vote@oshawa.ca](mailto:vote@oshawa.ca)

## **City of Pickering**

- Elections Website: [www.pickering.ca/vote](http://www.pickering.ca/vote)
- Phone: 905.420.4660 ext. VOTE (8683)
- Email: [elections@pickering.ca](mailto:elections@pickering.ca)

## **Township of Scugog**

- Elections Website: [www.scugog.ca/election](http://www.scugog.ca/election)
- Phone: 905.985.7346
- Email: [election@scugog.ca](mailto:election@scugog.ca)

## **Township of Uxbridge**

- Elections Website: [www.uxbridge.ca/elections](http://www.uxbridge.ca/elections)
- Phone: 905.852.9181
- Email: [election@uxbridge.ca](mailto:election@uxbridge.ca)

## Town of Whitby

- Elections Website: [www.whitby.ca/Vote](http://www.whitby.ca/Vote)
- Phone: 905.430.4300
- Email: [elections@whitby.ca](mailto:elections@whitby.ca)

All Municipal Election candidates are requested to review the regulations governing the placement of election signage outlined below and to ensure that any signage erected on their behalf complies with the provisions of the City of Pickering Election Sign By-law 7591/17, as amended.

### **City of Pickering Election Sign By-law Definitions & Regulations**

In the City of Pickering Election Sign By-law 7591/17, "Election Sign" means any image, words, sign, picture, device notice or visual medium, or any combination thereof, including, without limitation, any poster, placard, bulletin, banner or vehicle wrap, which: (a) identifies, depicts, promotes, advertises or provides information about (i) an individual who is a candidate; or (ii) a question or by-law submitted to electors; or (b) promotes recognition of or influences persons to vote for or against any candidate or any question or by-law submitted to electors. An Election Sign does not include any election campaign literature. For the purpose of clarification, "Election Sign" includes "Vehicle Sign" and "Campaign Office Sign".

An "Election Sign Owner" is defined as any person who places or permits the placing of an Election Sign, or any person described on the sign, whose name, address or telephone number is on the sign or who benefits from the message on the sign. For the purposes of this By-law there may be more than one owner of an Election sign. A person is not an Election Sign Owner by reason of being an owner of private property on which an Election Sign is displayed.

A Regional Road includes Altona Road, Whites Road, Liverpool Road, Brock Road, Bayly Street, Taunton Road, Kingston Road/Highway 2, Finch Avenue, Westney Road north of the 5th Concession and south of the 7th Concession, and Durham Road 5 (Central St. Claremont/9th Concession). (By-law No. 7868/21)

"Vehicle Sign" means any form of Election Sign displayed in or on a vehicle or trailer.

The City of Pickering's Election Sign By-law 7591/17 contains the following requirements:

- a) No Election Sign shall exceed 1.5 m<sup>2</sup> in area
- b) Election Signs must be located entirely on private property, with the permission of the property owner, or on a Regional road as defined above and in accordance with the provisions outlined further in this document.
- c) Election Signs cannot be erected until 25 days in advance of the last Voting Day (October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026).
- d) Election Signs must be removed within 3 days of election day (Signs must be removed before end of day, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2026)
- e) Election Signs must contain the name and contact information of the Election Sign Owner on it.

If a candidate's full name, or name as it will appear on the ballot, is on the election sign, the only additional information required for the sign is contact information for the candidate. (This can be in the form of a phone number, email or street address)

Third Party Signs must include:

- i) Name of the registered third party;
- ii) The municipality where the third party is registered; and
- iii) Telephone number, mailing address or email address at which the registered third party may be contacted.

Election Signs may only be placed on private property, with the consent of the property owner. The front property line will be behind any utilities, cable boxes, hydrants, etc. Water shut-offs in driveways are also a good indicator of where the property line starts. In most cases, properties with a sidewalk in front have a front property line inset 0.6 m (2 feet) from the sidewalk. Properties without a sidewalk have a municipal boulevard of approximately 5.0 m (16 feet) in width, so signage should be placed behind this.

Municipal Election Signs may only be erected within the candidate's ward boundary. Where a road serves as a boundary between wards, candidates may only place signs on private property on the side of the road within their ward boundary.

### **Election Signs on Regional Roads (as per amending By-law No. 7868/21):**

No person shall display an Election Sign on a Regional Road:

- a) on a sidewalk, median, traffic island, or on any official sign erected and maintained by the Region;
- b) closer than one (1.0) meter from the curb, on the shoulder, or within two (2.0) metres of the travelled portion of the roadway;
- c) that exceeds 1.2 metres in height or is greater than .8 metres in width;
- d) within 500 metres of any other sign being used to attract attention to the same candidate;
- e) with a height exceeding 0.6 metres within 20 metres of any intersecting Highway, private road, driveway or Regional Road;
- f) which, by reason of its size, location, content, or colouring, obstructs the vision of drivers entering or leaving the road, detracts from or interferes with the visibility or effectiveness of any traffic sign or traffic signal light; and,
- g) longer than 3 days after the last Voting Day of any Election.

### **Vehicle Signs**

The total area of the Vehicles Sign(s) displayed on any one vehicle shall not exceed 1.5m<sup>2</sup>. (This equals a total of 16 sq feet, which permits, for example, a sign size of 2 feet by 4 feet on each side of the vehicle, etc.)

Vehicle Signs must be parked on private property and cannot be parked on City streets or at City Facilities. However, a Vehicle Sign can be displayed by a Candidate on or in a vehicle owned by the Candidate while such vehicle is in use on any highway in accordance with all applicable laws and by-laws.

## **Enforcement of Election Signs**

City of Pickering Municipal Law Enforcement Officers will remove any Election Signs which pose a sightline or safety issue, as well as Election Signs on City property, municipal boulevards, City road allowances or on Regional Roads erected in contravention of the provisions of the City's Election Sign By-law. All Election Signs removed by City of Pickering Municipal Law Enforcement Services will be subject to a retrieval fee of \$31.00 per sign. Please note that the City shall not be obliged to store Election Signs made entirely of paper material and may dispose of such Election Signs immediately upon removal.

Signs erected in contravention of the Election Sign By-law may be removed without notice. In addition to fees for return of the signs, charges may be laid for contraventions of by-law requirements.

## **Questions**

A complete copy of the City of Pickering's Election Sign By-law 7591/17 can be found at <https://www.pickering.ca/media/hxhhdouv/consolidated-7591-17-election-sign-by-law.pdf>

If you have any questions regarding election sign regulations, please contact Jennifer Hayden, Manager, Municipal Law Enforcement Services at 905.420.4660 ext. 3504, or email [bylaw@pickering.ca](mailto:bylaw@pickering.ca).



# Office Consolidation Election Sign By-law No. 7591/17

Passed by Council on December 11, 2017

Last Update: August 18, 2022

## Amendments:

Notice of Motion (Resolution #419/18)	March 12, 2018	Amend Section 07 and 7.03
By-Law 7868/21	August 30, 2021	Amend Section 01 and Repeal and Replace Section 06.04 and 06.14
By-law 7959/22	August 18, 2022	Repeal and Replace Section 6.14 c)

## The Corporation of the City of Pickering

### By-law No. 7591/17

Being a by-law to Regulate Election Signs.

**Whereas** paragraph 7 of subsection 11(3) of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25 states that a municipality may pass by-laws respecting signs;

**And Whereas** Council deems it desirable to repeal section 63 of Sign By-law No. 6999/09 regarding Election Signs and to replace it with an Election Sign By-law to effectively regulate signs which create a nuisance, affect public safety and detract from the character of the community during an election period.

**Now Therefore be it Resolved That** the Council of The Corporation of the City of Pickering enacts as follows:

#### 01 Definitions

- 01.01 **Campaign Office Sign** - means an Election Sign displayed on a building or portion of a building which is used by a candidate or an agent of a candidate as an election campaign headquarters.
- 01.02 **Candidate** - has the meaning ascribed to it in the *Canada Elections Act*, the *Election Act*, or the *Municipal Elections Act*, as applicable, and shall be deemed to include a person registered pursuant to any of the above-noted statutes or an agent for a registered person seeking to influence anyone to vote for or against a question or by-law submitted to the electors.
- 01.03 **City** - means The Corporation of the City of Pickering or the geographical area of Pickering, as the context requires.
- 01.04 **City Clerk** - means the City Clerk of the City of Pickering or a person delegated by the City Clerk for the purpose of this By-law.
- 01.05 **display** – means, but is not limited to, display, erect, affix, attach, place or maintain or cause or permit to be erected, affixed, attached, placed or maintained.
- 01.06 **Election** - means any federal, provincial or municipal election and any question or by-law submitted to the electors and includes an election to a local board or commission.
- 01.07 **Election Sign** - means any image, words, sign, picture, device, notice or visual medium, or any combination thereof, including, without limitation, any poster, placard, bulletin, banner or vehicle wrap, which: (a) identifies, depicts, promotes, advertises or provides information about (i) an individual who is a candidate; or (ii) a question or by-law submitted to

electors; or (b) promotes recognition of or influences persons to vote for or against any candidate or any question or by-law submitted to electors. An Election Sign does not include any election campaign literature. For the purpose of clarification, "Election Sign" includes "Vehicle Sign" and "Campaign Office Sign".

- 01.08 **Election Sign Owner** – any person who places or permits the placing of an Election Sign, or any person described on the sign, or whose name, address or telephone number is on the sign or who benefits from the message on the sign. For the purposes of this By-law there may be more than one owner of an Election Sign. A person is not an Election Sign Owner by reason of being an owner of private property on which an Election Sign is displayed.
- 01.09 **Highway** - has the same meaning as in subsection 1(1) of the *Highway Traffic Act* and includes unopened and unassumed road allowances.
- 01.10 **Vehicle Sign** - means any form of Election Sign displayed in or on a vehicle or trailer.
- 01.11 **person** – includes, but is not limited to, a corporation and the heirs, executors, administrators, or other legal representatives of an individual person.
- 01.12 **private property** - does not include the side of a fence located on a property boundary which faces public property.
- 01.13 **Regional Road** – means a road forming part of the regional road system and includes Altona Road, Whites Road, Liverpool Road, Brock Road, Bayly Street, Taunton Road, Kingston Road/Highway 2, Finch Avenue, Westney Road north of the 5<sup>th</sup> Concession and south of the 7<sup>th</sup> Concession, and Durham Road 5 (Central St. Claremont/9<sup>th</sup> Concession). (By-law No. 7868/21)
- 01.14 **Voting Day** - means any day on which voting takes place or on which voting by internet or telephone is permitted within the City.
- 01.15 **Voting Place** - means any public building or property, including parking lot, where voting takes place, and includes 100 metres on either side of such building or property.

## 02 References

- 02.01 In this By-law, any reference to any Act or By-law is a reference to that Act or By-law as it is amended or re-enacted from time to time.
- 02.02 Unless otherwise specified, references in this By-law to sections or schedules are references to sections or schedules in this By-law.

## 03 Word Usage

03.01 This By-law shall be read with all changes in gender or number as the context requires.

03.02 In this By-law, a grammatical variation of a word or expression defined has a corresponding meaning.

#### **04 Severability**

04.01 Each section of this By-law is an independent section, and the holding of any section or part of any section of this By-law to be void or ineffective for any reason shall not be deemed to affect the validity of any other sections of this By-law.

#### **05 Application**

05.01 This By-law applies to all Election Signs displayed within the City.

#### **06 General**

06.01 No person shall display an Election Sign within the City except in accordance with the provisions of this By-law and all applicable legislation.

06.02 This By-law shall not apply to signs displayed by the City to provide information concerning an Election or any part of an Election process.

06.03 No person shall display an Election Sign without the name and contact information of the Election Sign Owner on it.

06.04 No person shall display an Election Sign at any location other than entirely on private property or on a Regional road in accordance with the provisions of this by-law, provided, however, that a Vehicle Sign can be displayed by a Candidate on or in a vehicle owned by the Candidate while such vehicle is in use on any Highway in accordance with all applicable laws and by-laws. (By-law No. 7868/21)

06.05 No person shall display an Election Sign that is more than 1.5 m<sup>2</sup> in area.

06.06 No person shall display an Election Sign on private property without permission or consent of the owner or occupant of the property.

06.07 No person shall display an Election Sign that:

- a) Is painted on, attached to or supported by a tree, stone or other natural object;
- b) Incorporates flashing lights or rotating parts;
- c) Is illuminated;
- d) Simulates any traffic control device;

- e) Is affixed to public utility poles;
- f) Is displayed so as to obstruct, impede or interfere with any fire escape, fire exit door, window, skylight, flue, air intake or exhaust, or any means of access by firefighter to any part of a building or fire hydrant;
- g) Is displayed so as to impede, hinder or prevent parking by vehicles on private or public lands or on a highway; or
- h) Includes the City of Pickering's logo, crest or seal in whole or in part, however, official City of Pickering portable magnet signs issued to the sitting Mayor and Councillors are exempt from this paragraph.
- i) Is in contravention of the *Election Act*, *Canada Elections Act*, or the *Municipal Elections Act*, as applicable.

06.08 No person shall remove, deface or willfully cause damage to a lawfully displayed Election Sign.

06.09 No person shall, at any time on any Voting Day, display an Election Sign on any property used as a Voting Place or where the administration of Election processes are conducted.

06.10 No person shall display a municipal Election Sign except within the boundaries of the Ward(s) to which the Election Sign relates.

06.11 No person shall display a provincial and/or federal Election Sign except within the Candidate's riding boundary.

06.12 Notwithstanding any other provision of this By-law, where a road serves as a boundary between Wards, no person shall display an Election Sign except on private property on the side of the road within the boundaries of the Ward/Riding to which the Election Sign relates.

06.13 Notwithstanding any other provision of this By-law, where a Regional road is a municipal boundary road, no person shall display an Election Sign except on the side of the road within the City of Pickering.

06.14 No person shall display an Election Sign on a Regional Road (By-law No. 7868/21):

- a) on a sidewalk, median, traffic island, or on any official sign erected and maintained by the Region;
- b) closer than one (1.0) meter from the curb, on the shoulder, or within two (2.0) metres of the travelled portion of the roadway.
- c) that has dimensions exceeding 1.2 meters by 0.8 meters;

- d) within 500 metres of any other sign being used to attract attention to the same candidate;
- e) with a height exceeding 0.6 metres within 20 metres of any intersecting Highway, private road, driveway or Regional Road;
- f) which, by reason of its size, location, content, or colouring, obstructs the vision of drivers entering or leaving the road, detracts from or interferes with the visibility or effectiveness of any traffic sign or traffic signal light; and,
- g) longer than 3 days after the last Voting Day of any Election.

**07 Vehicle Signs and Businesses (Resolution #419/18)**

07.01 No person shall display a Vehicle Sign except in accordance with all provisions of this By-law.

07.02 The total area of the Vehicle Sign(s) displayed on any one vehicle shall not exceed 1.5 m<sup>2</sup>.

07.03 Notwithstanding anything else contained in this By-law, no person shall be prohibited from displaying a business-related sign on a vehicle or in any other location provided that: (Resolution #419/18)

- a) such business operation is duly registered or incorporated as required by all applicable laws and has filed a Federal income tax return for the preceding two years and/or has met the requirements of the Canada Revenue Agency as a self-employed person;
- b) such sign is limited to providing only information related to the business;
- c) such sign is not used in the course of campaigning or advocacy in relation to any Election or otherwise for the purpose of, or with the intent of promoting such person in an Election; and
- d) such sign complies with the provisions of By-law 6999/09.

For the purposes of this section, “campaigning or advocacy in relation to any Election” includes but is not limited to:

- a) door-to-door visits to electors;
- b) distribution of any printed matter, Election Signs or paraphernalia; and
- c) public appearances,

related to any Election.

## **08 Campaign Office Signs**

08.01 Paragraphs 06.04, 06.05 and 06.07(c) of this By-law do not apply to Campaign Office Signs.

08.02 A Campaign Office Sign may be displayed on a Campaign Office as soon as the Candidate has filed his or her nomination papers.

08.03 Campaign Office Signs must comply with all applicable provisions of Sign By-law 6999/09.

## **09 Timing**

09.01 No person shall display an Election Sign for a federal or provincial Election prior to the day the writ of Election is issued.

09.02 No person shall display an Election Sign, including a Vehicle Sign, until 25 days in advance of the last Voting Day for the Election to which the sign relates.

09.03 No person shall display an Election Sign more than 3 days after the last Voting Day for the Election.

09.04 Portable magnet signs issued by the City to the sitting Mayor and Councillors must not be displayed at any time after commencement of the 25 day period referred to in section 09.02.

## **10 Removal of Unlawful Election Signs**

10.01 Where an Election Sign has been displayed contrary to this By-law, the City may remove such sign immediately, without notice or compensation.

10.02 Election Signs that have been removed under section 10.01 shall be stored by the City for a period of 30 days, during which time the Candidate or Candidate's agent may retrieve the sign upon payment of a fee of \$25.00 per sign.

10.03 Any Election Sign that has been removed by the City and stored for more than 30 days may be destroyed or otherwise disposed of by the City without notice and without compensation.

10.04 Despite section 10.02, the City shall not be obliged to store Election Signs made entirely of paper material, and may dispose of such Election Signs immediately upon removal.

**11 Offence**

- 11.01 Any person who contravenes any provision of this By-law is guilty of an offence and upon conviction pursuant to the provisions of the *Provincial Offences Act* is liable to a fine of not more than \$10,000.00.
- 11.02 No person shall make a false or intentionally misleading recital of fact, statement or representation in any application or other document required by this By-law.
- 11.03 No person shall prevent, hinder or interfere or attempt to prevent, hinder or interfere with an officer enforcing the provisions of this By-law.
- 11.04 Where an officer has reasonable grounds to believe that an offence has been committed by a person under this By-law, the officer may require the name, address and proof of identity of that person, and the person shall supply the requested information.

**12 Liability for Damages**

- 12.01 The provisions of this By-law shall not be construed as relieving or limiting the responsibility or liability of any person displaying or owning any Election Sign for personal injury or property damage resulting from the placing of such signs or resulting from the negligence or willful acts of such person, or his or her agents or employees, in the construction, erection, display, maintenance, repair or removal of such signs.

**13 Conflict**

- 13.01 If a provision of this By-law conflicts with a provision of any applicable Act, regulation or other by-law, the provision that establishes the higher or more restrictive standard shall prevail.

**14 Repeal**

- 14.01 Section 63.(1) to 63.(6) and Schedule "A" – Redemption Fee – Election Signs of Sign By-law No. 6999/09 is repealed.

**15 Short Title**

- 15.01 The short title of this By-law is the "Election Sign By-law".

**16 Effective Date**

16.01 This By-law shall take effect on the date that it is passed.

By-law passed this 11<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2017.

**By-law Number 52-2020**

**of The Regional Municipality of Durham**

Being a by-law to adopt and delegate the authority for enforcement of sign by-laws enacted by area municipalities, to those area municipalities, on Regional Roads within their jurisdiction; and to repeal By-law #76-2017, as amended, being a by-law to regulate temporary signs and banners and devices on or adjacent to Regional roads.

Whereas the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 provides in paragraph 11(3)7. that a lower tier and upper tier municipality may pass by-laws, subject to rules set out in subsection (4) within the following spheres of jurisdiction: Structures, including fences and signs;

And Whereas the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 provides in subsection 27(1) that a municipality may pass by-laws in respect of a highway only if it has jurisdiction over the highway.

Now therefore, the Council of The Regional Municipality of Durham hereby enacts as follows:

1. For the purposes of this by-law:
  - a. "Area Municipality" means the Town of Ajax, the Township of Brock, the Municipality of Clarington, the City of Oshawa, the City of Pickering, the Township of Scugog, the Town of Whitby, and the Township of Uxbridge;
  - b. "Highway and Road" has the same meaning as in the Highway Traffic Act, R.S.O. 1990 c. H.8;
  - c. "Region" means The Regional Municipality of Durham;
  - d. "Regional Road" means a Road forming part of the Regional road system. By virtue of the regional municipality passing a by-law to include it as part of the Regional Road system in accordance to the provisions of Sections 31(2) and 52(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001 S.O. c. 25. where an upper tier municipality may pass by-laws adding or removing roads to its Regional road system; and
  - e. "Temporary Sign By-law" means a by-law to regulate any device, including its structure or other component parts, which is used or is capable of being used to attract attention to a specific subject matter for identification, information or advertising purposes and includes, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, all banners, banner display systems and will include election signs and Third Party Advertisements.
2. Where an Area Municipality has enacted a temporary sign and/or election sign by-law, the Region adopts those provisions of the Area Municipality by-law which apply to Regional Roads within the geographic jurisdiction of that Area Municipality.
3. Where an Area Municipality has enacted a temporary sign or election sign by-law the Region delegates the authority to enforce the provisions of that by-law on Regional Roads in the Area Municipality to the Municipal Law Enforcement Officers of that Area Municipality.
4. Nothing in this by-law precludes the Region from enforcement of area municipal sign

by-law provisions on Regional Roads.

5. That Paragraph 2 of Schedule "B" of By-law Number 12-92 is hereby deleted.
6. By-laws 76-2017 and 21-2018 are hereby repealed.

This By-law shall come into force on the day it is approved by the Council of the Region.

This By-law Read and Passed on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2020.

---

J. Henry, Regional Chair and CEO

---

R. Walton, Regional Clerk



## LEGISLATIVE SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Municipal Election Procedures Policy 1.2	Date Originated: December 2013 Revision Date: April 2014, December 2017, April 2022, March 2026
Authority/Reference: (MEA 12(1)) Corporate Services Department – Legislative Services and Legal Division Works Department – Traffic Engineering and Operations Division	
Subject: <b>PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS REGARDING ELECTION SIGNS</b>	

### 1.0 Purpose:

- 1.1 To provide a procedure for complaints regarding election signs on local area municipal roads, Regional Roads and private property.

### 2.0 Policy:

- 2.1 In accordance with Regional Sign By-law 52-2020 the enforcement of local sign by-laws on Regional Roads has been delegated to the area municipalities.
- 2.2 Notwithstanding the delegated authority, Regional Traffic Engineering and Operations staff reserve the right to remove signs on Regional Roads or intersections that are deemed to pose a traffic safety hazard.

### 3.0 Complaints Regarding Election Signs:

- 3.1 All complaints relating to election signs, including on area municipal roads, Regional roads or private property, will be referred to the applicable [Area Municipal contact](#) for appropriate action.
- 3.2 As such, area municipal employees will respond to any inquiries from candidates with respect to sign placement/removal.

### 4.0 Procedure for Regional Employees

- 4.1 Should Regional Traffic Engineering and Operations employees remove election signs due to a perceived safety hazard, they must:
  1. Inform the appropriate [area municipal contact](#);
  2. Keep a record of the signs that have been removed. The record shall include:
    - the name of the candidate or registered third-party advertiser (as it appears on the sign(s)),



## ***LEGISLATIVE SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL***

- the number of signs that were removed,
  - the location the sign(s) were removed from, and
  - why the sign(s) constituted a safety hazard.
3. Store the signs appropriately for pick-up by the candidate.



## **LEGISLATIVE SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

### **Area Municipal - Contact Information**

#### Town of Ajax:

By-law Services  
Town of Ajax  
65 Harwood Ave. S.  
Ajax, ON L1S 2H9  
Phone: 905-619-2529 ext. 3370  
Email: [bylawservices@ajax.ca](mailto:bylawservices@ajax.ca)  
Web: [www.ajax.ca](http://www.ajax.ca)

#### Township of Brock:

Sarah Jones, Supervisor By-law and Animal Services  
Township of Brock  
1 Cameron St. E., P.O. Box 10  
Cannington, ON L0E 1E0  
Phone: 705-432-2355  
Toll-free: 1-866-223-7668  
Email: [sarah.jones@brock.ca](mailto:sarah.jones@brock.ca)  
Or the general email: [bylaws@brock.ca](mailto:bylaws@brock.ca)  
Web: [www.townshipofbrock.ca](http://www.townshipofbrock.ca)

#### Municipality of Clarington:

Municipal Law Enforcement Division  
Municipality of Clarington  
40 Temperance St.  
Bowmanville, ON L1C 3A6  
Phone: 905-623-3379 extension 2105  
Toll-free: 1-800-563-1195  
Email: [bylawenforcement@clarington.net](mailto:bylawenforcement@clarington.net)  
Web: [www.clarington.net](http://www.clarington.net)

#### City of Oshawa:

By-law Enforcement  
City of Oshawa  
50 Centre St. S.  
Oshawa, ON L1H 3Z7  
Phone: 905-436-3311



## **LEGISLATIVE SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Toll-free: 1-800-667-4292  
Email: [service@oshawa.ca](mailto:service@oshawa.ca)  
Web: [www.oshawa.ca](http://www.oshawa.ca)

### City of Pickering:

By-law Enforcement Section  
City of Pickering  
One The Esplanade  
Pickering, ON L1V 6K7  
Phone: 905-683-7575  
Toll-free: 1-866-683-2760  
Email: [customercare@pickering.ca](mailto:customercare@pickering.ca)  
Web: [www.pickering.ca](http://www.pickering.ca)

### Township of Scugog:

By-law Enforcement  
Township of Scugog  
181 Perry St., Box 780  
Port Perry, ON L9L 1A7  
Phone: 905-985-7346 extension 121 or 142  
Email: [bylaw@scugog.ca](mailto:bylaw@scugog.ca)  
Web: [www.scugog.ca](http://www.scugog.ca)

### Township of Uxbridge:

By-law Enforcement  
Township of Uxbridge  
51 Toronto St. S., P.O. Box 190  
Uxbridge, ON L9P 1T1  
Phone: 905-852-9181 extension 205  
Email: [bylaw@uxbridge.ca](mailto:bylaw@uxbridge.ca)  
Web: [www.uxbridge.ca](http://www.uxbridge.ca)

### Town of Whitby:

Enforcement Services Division  
Town of Whitby  
3050 Garden St., Unit #102  
Whitby, ON L1R 2G7  
Phone: 905-430-4345  
Email: [bylaw@whitby.ca](mailto:bylaw@whitby.ca)  
Web: [www.whitby.ca](http://www.whitby.ca)

# Letter to Landlords, Property Managers and Housing Co-op Representatives Access for Canvassers

May 1, 2026

## **To: Landlords, Property Managers and Housing Co-op Representatives**

Candidates and their representatives are allowed full access to rented premises, condominiums and co-operative housing for the purpose of canvassing and distributing election material in accordance with the following provincial legislation:

### ***Municipal Elections Act, 1996***

#### **s.88.1 Access to residential premises**

No person who is in control of an apartment building, condominium building, non-profit housing cooperative or gated community may prevent a candidate or his or her representative from campaigning between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. at the doors to the apartments, units or houses, as the case may be.

#### **88.2(1) and (2) Display of signs at residential premises and condominiums**

No landlord or person acting on a landlord's behalf may prohibit a tenant from displaying signs in relation to an election on the premises to which the lease relates. Similarly, no condominium corporation or any of its agents may prohibit the owner or tenant of a condominium unit from displaying signs in relation to an election on the premises of his or her unit.

#### **88.2(3) Exception to signs – residential premises**

A landlord, person, condominium corporation or agent may set reasonable conditions relating to the size or type of signs in relation to an election that may be displayed on the premises and may prohibit the display of signs in relation to an election in common areas of the building in which the premises are found.

### ***Residential Tenancies Act, 2006***

#### **s.28 Entry for Canvassers**

No landlord shall restrict reasonable access to a residential complex by candidates for election to any office at the federal, provincial or municipal level, or their authorized representatives, if they are seeking access for the purpose of canvassing or distributing election material.

***Condominium Act, 1998***

**s.118 Entry for Canvassers**

No corporation or employee or agent of a corporation shall restrict reasonable access to the property by candidates, or their authorized representatives, for election to the House of Commons, the Legislative Assembly or an office in a municipal government or school board if access is necessary for the purpose of canvassing or distributing election material.

***Co-operative Corporations Act, 1990***

**s.171.24 Entry for Canvassers**

No non-profit housing co-operative or servant or agent of such a co-operative shall restrict reasonable access to the housing units of the co-operative by candidates, or their authorized representatives, for election to the House of Commons, the Legislative Assembly, any office in a municipal government or a school board for the purpose of canvassing or distributing election material.

For additional information or questions, please contact the City Clerk's Office:

**Email:** [elections@pickering.ca](mailto:elections@pickering.ca)

**Phone:** 905.420.4660 ext. VOTE (8683)

Sincerely,



Susan Cassel  
City Clerk, City of Pickering

# City of Pickering Municipal Election Procedures

Internet Voting & Paper Ballot Voting  
Using Vote Tabulators

**Your City. Your Vote.**

2026 Municipal Election

— *City of* —  
**PICKERING**

## Index

### [Authority](#)

- 01 [Definitions](#)
- 02 [Application](#)
- 03 [Secrecy](#)
- 04 [Notice of Election Information](#)
- 05 [Filing a Nomination or Third Party Advertiser Registration](#)
- 06 [Unofficial List of Registered Candidates and RTPAs](#)
- 07 [Election Officials](#)
- 08 [Voter Help Line](#)
- 09 [Voter Qualifications](#)
- 10 [Voters' List](#)
- 11 [Ballots](#)
- 12 [Voter Assistance Centres and Voting Locations](#)
- 13 [Special Voting Locations – Retirement Home or Institution](#)
- 14 [Internet Voting](#)
- 15 [Paper Ballots using Vote Tabulators](#)
- 16 [Voter Information Package](#)
- 17 [Candidates and Scrutineers](#)
- 18 [Vote Aggregation Centre and Processing the Vote Totals on Voting Day – Internet Voting](#)
- 19 [Vote Aggregation Centre and Processing the Vote Totals on Voting Day – Paper Ballots using Vote Tabulators](#)
- 20 [Emergencies](#)
- 21 [Recounts](#)
- 22 [Election Records](#)
- 23 [Corrupt Election Practices, Offences, Mail Tampering and Prosecution](#)
- 24 [Forms](#)

## **Authority - *Municipal Elections Act, 1996***

On May 26, 2025, Pickering City Council enacted By-law Number 8182/25 authorizing the use of Internet Voting, Paper Ballots and Vote Tabulators for the 2026 Municipal Election.

Section 42(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, (the “Act”) states:

(3) The Clerk shall,

- (a) establish procedures and forms for the use of,
  - (i) any voting and vote-counting equipment authorized by by-law, and
  - (ii) any alternative voting method authorized by by-law; and,
- (b) provide a copy of the procedures and forms to each Candidate.

Section 11 of the Act, states that the Clerk of a local municipality is responsible for conducting elections within that municipality, and such responsibility includes:

- (a) preparing for the election;
- (b) preparing for and conducting a recount in the election;
- (c) maintaining peace and order in connection with the election; and,
- (d) in a regular election, preparing and submitting the report described in Section 12.1(2) (a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers affecting Electors and Candidates with disabilities).

Section 12(1) of the Act states:

A Clerk who is responsible for conducting an election may provide for any matter or procedure that,

- (a) is not otherwise provided for in an Act or regulation; and,
- (b) in the Clerk’s opinion, is necessary or desirable for conducting the election.

The power conferred by Section 12(1) includes the power to establish forms, including forms of oaths and statutory declarations, and the power to require their use. It also includes the power to require a person, as a condition of doing anything, or having an Election Official do anything under the Act, to furnish proof that is satisfactory to the Election Official of the person’s identity or qualifications, including citizenship or residency, or of any other matter.

Section 13 of the Act states:

Any notice or other information that the Act requires the Clerk to give, shall be given in a form and manner and at a time that the Clerk considers adequate to give reasonable notice or to convey the information, as the case may be.

The Clerk shall provide Electors, Candidates and persons who are eligible to be Electors with information to enable them to exercise their rights under the Act.

Section 42(4)2 of the Act states:

The procedures and forms, if they are consistent with the principles of the Act, prevail over anything in the Act and the regulations made under it.

Section 53 of the Act also provides that the Clerk may declare an emergency if they are of the opinion that circumstances have arisen that are likely to prevent the election being conducted in accordance with the Act and provides the authority to the Clerk to make arrangements that they consider advisable for the conduct of the election. Any arrangements made by the Clerk, if they are consistent with the principles of the Act, prevail over anything in the Act and the regulations made under it.

Therefore, as City Clerk for The Corporation of the City of Pickering, and Returning Officer for the 2026 Municipal Election, I do hereby certify and approve the following Procedures, and declare that such Procedures shall be followed for conducting the 2026 Municipal and School Board Elections. I further declare that in accordance with the authority provided under the Act that the Forms listed within these Procedures are permitted to be used during the election process. Notwithstanding the included list of Forms, the Clerk reserves the right to use additional forms or amend the forms enclosed in these Procedures as may be necessary for the conduct of the election.



Susan Cassel  
City Clerk/Returning Officer

APRIL 30, 2026

Date

---

**Amendments:**

Any amendments to these Procedures shall be listed here including the date in which the amendment was made. Such amendments shall be provided to all Candidates.

<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature of the City Clerk</b>

## 01 Definitions

- 01.01 **Act** - the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O., 1996, c. 32*, as amended.
- 01.02 **Administrative Site** – the part of the Internet Voting System used by the Returning Officer or designated Election Official(s) to manage the system functions as required.
- 01.03 **Ballot** – either an image on a computer screen of a Ballot card containing spaces in which an Elector marks their vote; or when voting in-person, a Paper Ballot in which an Elector marks their vote on Voting Day using a Ballot marking pen.
- 01.04 **Candidate** – a person who has been nominated in accordance with Section 33 of the Act.
- 01.05 **Captcha Challenge** – a type of challenge test used to ensure that the response is not generated by a computer.
- 01.06 **Certified Candidate** – a Candidate whose nomination has been certified by the Clerk under Section 35 of the Act.
- 01.07 **Clerk** - the City Clerk of the City of Pickering who is responsible for conducting the Election under the authority of the Act. All references to the “Clerk”, for the purposes of these Procedures, shall also mean the Returning Officer for the 2026 Municipal Election.
- 01.08 **Election Official** – any individual who has been appointed in writing by the Clerk and given the authority to carry out duties pertaining to the election in accordance with the Act.
- 01.09 **Elector** – synonymous with Voter, means a person who is qualified to vote in the City of Pickering in accordance with the requirements of the Act.
- 01.10 **Friend** – a person who has been requested by an Elector to assist them in the voting process in accordance with the Act.
- 01.11 **Internet Voting System** – an alternative voting method authorized by By-law 8182/25 whereby Electors shall be entitled to vote over the internet using a secure voting system to cast their vote.
- 01.12 **Neuvote Systems Inc.** – the supplier for the City of Pickering’s 2026 Municipal Election voting methods, being Internet Voting and Paper Ballots using Vote Tabulators.
- 01.13 **Nomination Day** - the last day for submitting nominations in accordance with Section 31 of the Act.
- 01.14 **Personal Identification Number (PIN)** – a unique multiple digit number assigned by Neuvote Systems Inc. to each Elector that provides secure access to the Internet Voting System.

- 01.15 **Preliminary List of Electors (PLE)** – a list of eligible Electors for the City of Pickering compiled by the Chief Electoral Officer (Elections Ontario) as required under Section 19 of the Act.
- 01.16 **Proof of Identification** – acceptable forms of ID that will validate an Elector’s name and qualifying address as prescribed in O. Reg. 304/13.
- 01.17 **Registered Third Party Advertiser (RTPA)** - an individual who is normally resident in Ontario, a corporation that carries on business in Ontario or a trade union that holds bargaining rights for employees in Ontario, registered under Section 88.6 of the Act.
- 01.18 **Regular Office Hours** – Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays) from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.
- 01.19 **Revision Centre** - the locations and times established by the Clerk where members of the public can apply to make additions, deletions and corrections to the Voters’ List.
- 01.20 **Scrutineer** – an individual, appointed in writing by a Certified Candidate, using the Form prescribed by the Clerk, to represent them at a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location during the Voting Period.
- 01.21 **Special Voting Location** - a Voting Location held on Voting Day at an institution or a retirement home in accordance with Section 45(7) of the Act.
- 01.22 **Systems Auditor** - an Election Official(s) appointed by the Clerk who shall provide technical guidance and assistance in the setup of the Internet Voting System and any other hardware or software necessary for the Election, and who shall verify and replicate the checks and testing of the Internet Voting System and the Vote Tabulators under the direction of the Clerk.
- 01.23 **Vote Aggregation Centre** – the location designated by the Clerk for receiving Vote Tabulators from the Voting Locations at the end of Voting Day, and aggregating the unofficial election results from the Internet Voting System and any paper Ballots cast at designated Voting Locations.
- 01.24 **Vote Tabulator** - a device that optically scans a specified area on a paper Ballot to read the mark(s) and tabulate the results.
- 01.25 **Voter Assistance Centre (VAC)** – a designated physical location, to be open on specified dates and times as established by the Clerk, where Electors can attend to be added to or correct their information on the Voters’ List, obtain a Voter Information Package or assistance with casting their Ballot using the Internet Voting System during the first 7 days of the Voting Period. The VAC shall include the physical building and the entire property on which the VAC is situated and shall be treated as such place identified in accordance with Section 48 of the Act.
- 01.26 **Voter Help Line** - a telephone help line staffed by Election Officials to provide Electors with general election information or information pertaining to the

Internet Voting process or in-person voting options. The Voter Help Line will be staffed and open during dates and times as established by the Clerk.

- 01.27 **Voter Information Package (VIP)** – a sealed envelope mailed directly to an Elector on the Voters' List which shall contain information necessary for the Elector to exercise their right to vote.
- 01.28 **Voters' List** – the list of Electors, as amended and prepared by the Clerk in accordance with the Act, for an election held in the City of Pickering.
- 01.29 **Voting Day** – the final day on which Ballots may be cast in an election in the City of Pickering in accordance with the Act.
- 01.30 **Voting Kiosk Machine** - a physical internet-enabled device at a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location which permits Electors to cast a Ballot on the Internet Voting System during the Voting Period.
- 01.31 **Voting Location** - locations designated by the Clerk where Electors can cast a Ballot on Voting Day, either through the use of the Internet Voting System, or by way of a Paper Ballot and Vote Tabulator. The Voting Location shall include the physical building and the entire property on which the Voting Location is situated and shall be treated as such place identified in accordance with Section 48 of the Act.
- 01.32 **Voting Period** – the defined period of time that Electors may cast their vote, using the approved voting methods for the 2026 Election. The Voting Period shall commence at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, October 19, 2026 and end at 8:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026.

## **02 Application**

- 02.01 These Procedures apply to the 2026 Municipal and School Board Elections in the City of Pickering, including French School Board Trustees which the City of Pickering collects a vote on behalf of another Returning Officer for which the election spans municipal boundaries.
- 02.02 These Procedures shall be provided to every Candidate and RTPA who has filed their nomination/registration for the 2026 Municipal Election with the City of Pickering at the time of filing or at such time to be determined by the Clerk.
- 02.03 The procedures and Forms established by this document prevail over anything in the Act and its regulations, provided that they are consistent with the principles of the Act as per Section 42(4)2 of the Act.
- 02.04 Where these Procedures do not provide for any matter, the election shall be conducted in a manner that is both practicable and consistent with the principles of the Act, with the same being determined and established by the Clerk. These principles are generally recognized to include the following (as articulated in judicial reviews such as *Di Biase v. Vaughan* (2007), *Montgomery v. Balkissoon* (1998), and *Haig v. Canada* (1993)):
- a) The secrecy and confidentiality of individual votes is paramount;
  - b) The election should be fair and non-biased;
  - c) The election should be accessible to the Voters;
  - d) The integrity of the process should be maintained throughout the election;
  - e) There is to be certainty that the results of the election reflect the votes cast;
  - f) Voters and Candidates should be treated fairly and consistently; and,
  - g) Ensuring, so far as reasonably possible, that valid votes be counted and invalid votes be rejected.
- 02.05 The Clerk may provide for interpretation of these Procedures in accordance with the principles of the Act and such ruling on any interpretation of this document is final.
- 02.06 These Procedures may be amended, as necessary and deemed appropriate, by the Clerk. Any amendment to these procedures shall be signed and dated by the Clerk and a copy of the amended document shall be provided forthwith to all Candidates and RTPA's who have registered with the City of Pickering.

## **03 Secrecy**

- 03.01 The Clerk shall require all Election Official(s) and/or other persons working in connection with the municipal elections to swear or affirm an oath of secrecy, committing to upholding the secrecy provisions established under Section 49 of the Act.

- 03.02 No person may interfere, or attempt to interfere, with an Elector while they are voting. An Elector may receive assistance only if they request it, and such assistance may only be provided by a Friend or an Election Official.
- 03.03 No person shall obtain or attempt to obtain information about how an Elector intends to vote or has voted. A Friend, as defined in these Procedures, is required to maintain the secrecy of the vote(s) cast by the Elector and, if marking the Ballot on behalf of the Elector, shall vote according to the instructions and wishes of the Elector.
- 03.04 No person shall communicate any information that might have been inadvertently obtained about how an Elector intends to vote or has voted.
- 03.05 No Elector shall reveal how they intend to vote while in a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location, except for the purposes of obtaining assistance in voting from either a Friend or an Election Official.
- 03.06 All Electors voting at a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location may vote with the assistance of a Friend. However, prior to providing such assistance, the Friend shall be required to take the appropriate oath, and such oath is to be administered by an Election Official.
- 03.07 No Elector shall take a photograph or video recording during or after the voting process of their marked Ballot to post or reveal how the Elector voted.
- 03.08 No Certified Candidate or person working for a Certified Candidate shall assist an Elector in the voting process at the Elector's home, at any campaign event, at any campaign office, or at any other location or event during the Voting Period. Candidates shall refer the Elector to the Clerk's Office, a Voter Assistance Centre, or a Voting Location should they require any assistance in the voting process.
- 03.09 All complaints regarding breaches of secrecy may be investigated by the proper authorities and may be prosecuted according to the provisions of "Corrupt Practices and Other Offences - Penalties and Enforcement" under Sections 89 through 94 of the Act.

#### **04 Notice of Election Information**

- 04.01 The Clerk shall provide notice to Electors, using any of the following methods: social media, the City's website, direct mail-outs, or any other communication method the Clerk considers appropriate. The Clerk may determine the timing and combination of these methods to ensure reasonable and adequate notice is given for the following:
- a) that a municipal election is being held in Pickering and that the municipality has approved alternative voting methods;
  - b) the offices for which persons may be nominated and the nomination process;

- c) the opportunity to register as a Third Party Advertiser and the registration process;
  - d) the times and dates of the Voting Period, as well as in-person voting assistance and voting opportunities;
  - e) who is eligible to vote in the Election;
  - f) information regarding how eligible Electors can check to see if their name is on the Voters' List or if their information is correct; and,
  - g) information regarding the mailing of VIPs and how to cast a vote.
- 04.02 The Clerk reserves the right to publish additional advertisements and notices as deemed appropriate including cooperative advertising with other municipalities if desirable.
- 04.03 Each Elector shall receive a VIP, addressed to each individual Elector by standard letter mail, and such Package shall include all the necessary information to inform the Elector of the voting process and all voting opportunities.

## **05 Filing a Nomination or Third Party Advertiser Registration**

- 05.01 Nomination Papers may be filed at the Clerk's Office, Civic Complex, One The Esplanade, Pickering, from Friday, May 1, 2026 to Friday, August 21, 2026 during Regular Office Hours, and between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026 (Nomination Day). On Nomination Day, the Clerk's work mobile phone shall be used to verify when the 2:00 p.m. deadline has occurred.
- 05.02 Nominations must be filed with the Clerk's Office in accordance with the Act, must contain original signatures, and be carried out in the following manner:
- a) in person by the Candidate or through an agent of the Candidate, using the Forms prescribed by the Minister in accordance with Ontario Regulation 101/97;
  - b) with the required endorsement of at least 25 persons. Persons endorsing a nomination may endorse more than one nomination and must be eligible to vote in an election in the City of Pickering on the day they sign the endorsement;
  - c) with proof of identity and residence as prescribed in Ontario Regulation 304/13 as well as a photo ID and ID bearing a signature. An agent who is filing on behalf of a Candidate must provide a letter signed by the Candidate authorizing them to act as their agent, identification for both the agent and the Candidate, and any other information required by the Clerk; and,

- d) with the prescribed nomination filing fee as stated in the Act. The filing fee shall be paid by cash, Debit, Visa, MasterCard, certified cheque or money order payable to the City of Pickering.
- 05.03 If the Candidate is not qualified to be nominated, or the nomination does not comply with the Act, the Clerk shall reject the nomination. Notice of a rejected nomination shall be given as soon as possible to the person seeking nomination and to all Candidates for that office. The Clerk's decision to certify or reject a nomination is final.
- 05.04 Notice of Registration – Third Party Registration Forms must be filed at the Clerk's Office, Civic Complex, One The Esplanade, Pickering, from Friday, May 1, 2026 to Friday, October 23, 2026, during Regular Office Hours in accordance with the Act and in the following manner:
- a) in person by an individual or official representative of a Corporation or Trade Union, or an agent of either of them, using the Form prescribed by the Minister in accordance with Ontario Regulation 101/97;
  - b) with proof of identity and residence as prescribed in Ontario Regulation 304/13, as well as a photo ID and ID bearing a signature. An agent who is filing on behalf of a RTPA must provide written authorization to act as an agent, identification for both the agent and the Registrant and any other information required by the Clerk; and,
  - c) the Clerk shall confirm the certification of the registration of a Third Party Advertiser as soon as possible after the registration has been filed and such confirmation (or rejection of the registration), shall be provided by way of the email address provided at the time of filing the registration. The Clerk's decision to certify or reject a notice of registration is final.
- 05.05 The Clerk shall provide each individual who files a Nomination or Notice of Registration with the required notices and information in accordance with the Act.

## **06 Unofficial List of Registered Candidates and RTPA's**

- 06.01 The Clerk shall provide the unofficial list of Candidates and RTPA's on the City's Election webpages which will be posted as soon as possible, after each nomination/registration is filed.
- 06.02 The Unofficial List of Candidates/RTPAs will provide the name of the Candidate/Registrant, the date the nomination/registration was filed, and the Candidate's/Registrant's contact and campaign information subject to the information that the Candidate has consented to be publicly disclosed and that has been included on the prescribed Form approved by the Clerk.
- 06.03 If the linked campaign content contains inappropriate material, misinformation, or any content that contravenes the Act or other applicable legislation, the Clerk may remove the link from the City's Election webpages. The Clerk's

decision in this regard is final, and the Candidate or RTPA will be notified in writing. If the Candidate or RTPA corrects the information, it is not guaranteed that the links to their campaign content will be reinstated. This decision will be solely within the Clerk's discretion.

## **07 Election Officials**

- 07.01 The Clerk may appoint in writing Election Officials as required to assist in the administration, management, security and control of the Election, and may delegate to an Election Official any of the Clerk's powers and duties related to the Election under the Act.
- 07.02 The Clerk shall establish the roles and responsibilities of Election Officials as well as the number of Election Officials required to organize and operate a Voter Assistance Centre, Voting Location, or Special Voting Location for the Election.
- 07.03 As part of the appointment of an Election Official, each individual shall be required to take an Oath of Secrecy, related to their election duties and responsibilities, and each Election Official shall be required to sign a declaration attesting to same.

## **08 Voter Help Line**

- 08.01 Electors who have questions regarding the voting process or other election-related questions may contact the Clerk's Office or the Voter Help Line established by the Clerk. The dates and times outside Regular Office Hours that such Voter Help Line may be available shall be determined and communicated by the Clerk.

## **09 Voter Qualifications**

- 09.01 An Elector is eligible to vote in the 2026 City of Pickering Municipal Election if on Voting Day they are:
- a) a Canadian citizen;
  - b) at least 18 years old;
  - c) a resident of the City of Pickering or the owner or tenant of land there, or the spouse of such owner or tenant; and,
  - d) not prohibited from voting under the Act or otherwise by law.

## **10 Voters' List**

- 10.01 The Preliminary List of Electors shall be provided by the Chief Electoral Officer (Elections Ontario) in an electronic format, by August 14, 2026, or such other date agreed upon by the Clerk and the Chief Electoral Officer. The List shall be reviewed by the Clerk and obvious errors shall be corrected as permitted

under Section 22 of the Act, and the List shall be approved for use as the Voters' List on or before September 1, 2026.

- 10.02 The Voters' List shall contain the name and address of each person who is entitled to be an Elector in the City of Pickering as well as additional information needed by the Clerk to determine the offices each Elector is entitled to vote for. The Clerk shall, to the best of their ability and legislative authority, ensure that an Elector's name appears on the Voters' List for the municipality only once.
- 10.03 In accordance with Section 23 of the Act, and if the Candidate has submitted a written request to receive the Voters' List on the Form established by the Clerk, access to the List shall be provided to Candidates by way of an online Candidate Portal. Any other parties under the Act, who are entitled to receive a copy of the List, shall receive it by way of a secure, electronic file as determined by the Clerk, and only if the List is requested in writing by such parties.
- 10.04 All Certified Candidates shall be entitled to receive only the portion of the Voters' List they are entitled to. Candidates may produce paper copies of the electronic file at their own effort and cost, should they choose to do so, and must ensure that any copies of the List, either electronic or paper, are securely destroyed at the conclusion of the Election and not used for any other purpose than the 2026 Municipal Election in accordance with the Act.
- 10.05 In accordance with Section 27 of the Act, Certified Candidates may access the Candidate Portal to view the interim list of changes to the Voters' List. Candidates may also view the name of each person who has voted, during the Voting Period, in accordance with Section 43 of the Act, by way of the Candidate Portal. The City will not produce a physical or electronic excerpt of the Voters' List indicating Electors that have voted; it is expected that Candidates will use the Candidate Portal should they wish to obtain this information. This capability does not and cannot provide Candidates, their designate(s), or Election Staff with information on how an Elector has voted; only whether or not the Elector has voted in the Election. Candidate Portal access to the Voter's List will expire on October 27, 2026 at 1:00 a.m.
- 10.06 The Voters' List may be amended by Electors who submit the prescribed Application to Amend Voters' List from September 1, 2026 up to the close of voting on Voting Day, October 26, 2026. Such Application to Amend the Voters' List may be facilitated using an online portal approved by the Clerk, and/or in-person at specific locations established by the Clerk, including a Revision Centre, a Voter Assistance Centre, Special Voting Location, and/or a Voting Location on Voting Day.
- 10.07 A person filing an Application to Amend the Voters' List shall be required to furnish Proof of Identification in accordance with Ontario Regulation 304/13. When using the online portal, the applicant's ID shall be uploaded electronically as part of their application and will be reviewed by an Election Official who must be satisfied with the identification prior to adding or amending the Elector's information on the Voters' List.

- 10.08 The Voters' List can only be used for election purposes and shall not be placed or posted in a public area. The Voters' List will be maintained electronically to reflect any amendments and Electors shall be struck from the Voters' List at such time that they vote using the Internet Voting System or when they are issued a Paper Ballot at a Voting Location. All updates to the electronic Voters' List are in real time.

## **11 Ballots**

- 11.01 A Ballot accessed using the Internet Voting System will be an image on a computer screen or smart device of a Ballot card, or a composite paper Ballot provided at a Special Voting Location or a Voting Location on Voting Day.
- 11.02 In addition to the Ballots described above, Electors with disabilities may mark their Ballot using an accessible voting, ballot marking device, with an audio set of instructions, which describes all applicable Ballot choices available to an Elector, and instructions to mark their selection. Such equipment will be available at all Voting Locations on Voting Day only. In addition to offering accessible ballot marking devices at all Voting Locations, the Internet Voting System provides enhanced accessibility through visual and audio features and is compatible with screen readers to meet the needs of Electors with disabilities allowing them to vote independently and from a location of their choosing.
- 11.03 The Clerk shall provide Ballots in accordance with the Act where the Certified Candidates' names shall appear on the Ballot in alphabetical order, based on surname and in the case of identical surnames, forenames. A space suitable for marking an Elector's selections on the Ballot shall appear on the Ballot to the right of each Certified Candidate's name.
- 11.04 All Certified Candidates are to provide to the Clerk the proper pronunciation of their name for the accessible audio voting equipment, at a time and manner set out by the Clerk and each Candidate will be advised of same.
- 11.05 In-person voting, by way of a Paper Ballot using Vote Tabulators, for the 2026 Municipal Election, will be a vote anywhere election whereby Electors may cast their Ballot at any designated Voting Location and are not limited to voting at a Location within their specific ward or polling subdivision. All Voting Locations will have all Ballot faces for all Wards and contests in the City.

## **12 Voter Assistance Centres (VACs) and Voting Locations**

- 12.01 Voter Assistance Centres (VAC) will be available to Electors to receive assistance and clarification on the election process including access to the internet should they wish to cast their vote at the VAC using the Internet Voting System.
- 12.02 VACs will be available beginning Monday, October 19, 2026 until Sunday, October 25, 2026, at various dates and times as established by the Clerk.

- 12.03 On Voting Day, Monday, October 26, 2026, all Voter Assistance Centres shall be expanded and deemed Voting Locations whereby Electors may cast their Ballot using the Internet Voting System or by way of a Paper Ballot using Vote Tabulators. The Clerk may provide for any other additional Voting Location(s) on Voting Day as deemed appropriate.
- 12.04 The Clerk shall establish and provide notice of the dates, times, and locations of all Voter Assistance Centres and Voting Locations that will be available during the Voting Period before September 1, 2026.
- 12.05 All Electors who require assistance at a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location have the option of voting with the assistance of a Friend. However, the Friend shall be required to take the appropriate oath prior to providing assistance, with such oath being administered by an Election Official. In the absence of a Friend, the Elector may request the assistance of an Election Official.
- 12.06 The Clerk reserves the right to relocate, close or designate a place as a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location in order to accommodate unforeseen circumstances. The Clerk shall communicate any changes to such Voter Assistance Centres or Voting Locations, made after September 1, 2026, by email to Certified Candidates, on the City's website, and if time permitting, through any other means as determined by the Clerk.

### **13 Special Voting Locations – Retirement Home or Institution**

- 13.01 A Special Voting Location shall be provided at the following premises on Voting Day in accordance with the Act, and shall be open only to Electors who are residents of such premise:
- an institution for the reception, treatment or vocational training of members or former members of the Canadian Forces;
  - an institution in which, on September 1, 2026 has 20 or more beds that are occupied by persons who are disabled, chronically ill or infirm; and,
  - a retirement home in which, on September 1, 2026 has 50 or more beds that are occupied.
- 13.02 Election Officials will attend Special Voting Locations on Voting Day, at the dates and times established by the Clerk which will be coordinated with the Facility Administrator. Special Voting Locations may have reduced voting hours or be open on Voting Day at a specified time before 10:00 a.m. as established by the Clerk. Such dates and times shall be provided to the Facility Administrator and all Certified Candidates.
- 13.03 Prior to attending a Special Voting Location, the Clerk shall work with the Facility Administrator to compile and coordinate updates to the Voters' List in an effort to provide an efficient voting experience for the residents of each Special Voting Location on their designated date and time.

- 13.04 At a Special Voting Location, where a resident does not have identification readily available, any document issued by the institution or retirement home can be accepted as identification, including the patient's chart or name on their bed or room, a wrist-bracelet and/or a list of residents provided by the Administrator of the institution or retirement home. If an Administrator, or other Facility staff person working under the direction of the Facility Administrator, is present at the time of voting, they can also confirm the identity of the resident verbally to an Election Official.
- 13.05 Residents at Special Voting Locations will have the option to vote using the Internet Voting System or by casting a Paper Ballot on Voting Day. Nothing prohibits an Elector at an institution from voting independently during the Voting Period, before the date/time of the Special Voting Location, however they can only vote once.
- 13.06 Should a resident of a Special Voting Location require assistance with the voting process, including the ability to cast their ballot, the designated City of Pickering Election Official on site at that time are authorized to provide such assistance.
- 13.07 Paper Ballots issued and marked by an Elector at a Special Voting Location will be collected and secured in a Ballot box and returned to the Vote Aggregation Centre for processing through a Central Vote Tabulator after the close of polls on Voting Day as outlined in Section 19 of these Procedures.

## **14 Internet Voting**

### **System Integrity**

The integrity of the voting process shall be the responsibility of the Clerk and shall be preserved by:

- 14.01 Ensuring that every Elector on the Voters' List is mailed, using standard letter mail, a sealed VIP which contains the Voter's unique voting credentials, as well as the designated internet URL address to access the Internet Voting System.
- 14.02 Ensuring that no one except authorized Election Officials and election service providers have access to a comprehensive list of Personal Identification Numbers that matches each Elector's name and address.
- 14.03 Providing opportunities for Electors to be added to the Voters' List or to make amendments to the List, up until the close of voting on Voting Day.
- 14.04 Establishing proper procedures to ensure that no person is added to the Voters' List or issued a PIN unless an Election Official is completely satisfied of their identity and qualification as an Elector in the City of Pickering.
- 14.05 Establishing proper procedures for the issuing and re-issuing of VIPs and PINs that are lost, misplaced or not delivered to an Elector.

## **Voting Process**

- 14.06 Internet Voting shall be used for the entire Voting Period for the 2026 Municipal Election and will commence on October 19, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. and continue through to October 26, 2026 at 8:00 p.m.
- 14.07 The Internet Voting System, provided by Neuvote Systems Inc., shall allow Electors to vote using the internet. Electors shall be required to access a designated internet address (URL) in order to cast their Ballot.
- 14.08 Every Elector shall be limited to only one vote through the use of a PIN distributed by standard addressed letter mail, in a sealed and personalized VIP, or issued in person by an Election Official as necessary.
- 14.09 Once the Voter PIN has been used by an Elector to complete and submit their Ballot, it cannot be used again to vote.
- 14.10 Prior to making selections and casting a Ballot using Internet Voting, Electors will be required to enter their unique voting credentials including a Voter PIN, and full date of birth (including year), Captcha Challenge confirmation, and read and accept a declaration and offences statement.
- 14.11 Following the Elector's selections for all offices, the Internet Voting System shall identify the Elector's choices and provide the Elector with the option of changing or confirming their vote selections prior to submitting the Ballot.
- 14.12 The Internet Voting System shall enable the Elector to under-vote a contest or contests, or decline from voting the Ballot in its entirety, if they wish to do so, and the Internet Voting System will alert and confirm the Elector's intentions.
- 14.13 For the purposes of reporting declined Ballots in accordance with Section 55(4.1) 2. of the Act, an under-voted Ballot shall be considered an abstention from voting for one or more races on the Ballot or voting for fewer Candidates than is permitted within a single race, whereas a declined Ballot shall be considered a deliberate choice by the Elector to decline the entire Ballot by not selecting any Candidates and casting the Ballot. A declined Ballot shall not include votes cast for any race. A declined Ballot is separate and distinct from an under-voted Ballot which may or may not include votes for all races, one race, or some races on the Ballot.
- 14.14 The Internet Voting System shall not permit an Elector to overvote, or to spoil a Ballot.
- 14.15 Voting will commence on October 19, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. and close on October 26, 2026 at 8:00 p.m. Due to the closure of the public Internet Voting System at 8:00 p.m. on the final day of the Voting Period, Electors present at a designated Voting Location on October 26, 2026, who have not yet started the internet voting process prior to 8:00 p.m., will be required to vote by way of a paper ballot. Electors who have gained access to the public Internet Voting System, through their own device prior to 8:00 p.m. on October 26, 2026, will

be permitted to complete the voting process and cast their ballot, provided they do so within 15 minutes of logging in and starting the voting process.

- 14.16 Where an Elector has more than one qualifying address in the City of Pickering, the Elector may vote only once and the qualifying address to determine eligibility for voting shall be at the place of residence of the Elector, as defined under the Act. Should an Elector receive more than one VIP, the Elector may only vote once and must return the other VIP to the Clerk's Office. All Electors that vote more than once in the City of Pickering election, or who improperly use the VIP, are in violation of the Act and therefore subject to the penalty provisions under the Act.
- 14.17 Section 42(5) of the Act states that when a by-law authorizing the use of an alternative voting method is in effect, Section 44 (voting proxies) applies only if the by-law so specifies. By-law Number 8182/25 provides that there will be no proxy votes for the 2026 Municipal Election. Therefore, with respect to proxies, a person cannot give their VIP to another Elector or other individual for the purpose of voting. Acceptance or theft of another person's VIP, including the actual voting thereof, will be considered an illegal and corrupt practice and therefore subject to the penalty provisions under the Act.
- 14.18 Where an Elector has tried to use their PIN and it appears that it has already been used, the Elector can attend City Hall, a Voter Assistance Centre (VAC), or a Voting Location, with Proof of Identification, and have an authorized Election Official, the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, or the Election Coordinator, confirm whether the Elector's PIN has been used by an unauthorized individual.
- 14.19 Prior to the issuance of a new VIP and PIN, the Elector shall be required to complete the Form prescribed by the Clerk and satisfactorily answer all questions posed by the Election Official, Clerk, Deputy Clerk, or Election Coordinator, in accordance with the Procedures for Issuing or Reissuing Voter Information Packages (VIPs) and Personal Identification Numbers (PINs).
- 14.20 If the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, or Election Coordinator believes that all questions have been answered truthfully and satisfactorily, they may provide the Elector with a new PIN in accordance with the City's established Procedures for the Issuing and Reissuing of VIPs and PINs.
- 14.21 The Elector will be added to the Voters' List and a note will be entered on the Voters' List to indicate that the Elector's PIN was already used and that the Elector has completed the required oath and declaration to receive a new VIP, allowing the Elector to cast their Ballot with their new PIN. The original Ballot that was cast by the unauthorized individual will remain in the Internet Voting System, as Ballots are disassociated from their PINs once they are cast and cannot be retrieved.
- 14.22 Where an Elector's PIN is assigned an incorrect ward and/or school board, the Elector can attend any Revision Centre, VAC, or Voting Location, to have their information updated on the Voters' List by completing an Application to Amend the Voters' List. Once the information is updated, the Elector will receive a new VIP with a new PIN to allow them to cast their ballot using the internet.

The original PIN will be automatically disabled and the Elector will be advised of such.

The Elector must apply to have their information updated on the Voters' List before casting their Ballot. If the Elector has already cast their Ballot and exhausted their PIN, they cannot make any further changes to their eligibility or re-cast any part of their Ballot.

- 14.23 New PIN(s) shall not be given out by anyone other than a City of Pickering Election Official who has been appointed in writing by the Clerk to do so, and must only be done in accordance with the City's established Procedures for Issuing and Reissuing Voter Information Packages (VIPs) and Personal Identification Numbers (PINs).
- 14.24 A VIP containing the PIN shall not be given to any person at City Hall, a Voter Assistance Centre, or Voting Location, unless the Election Official is satisfied of the Elector's identity and the Elector has completed the prescribed Form(s).
- 14.25 Electors may vote by using the designated internet address (URL) provided in the VIP, or through accessing a link to the voting site on the City's Election webpages, by using a viable internet connection, or by attending a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location, during the dates and times and at the locations established by the Clerk. Electors may attend either by themselves or with a Friend, who may assist the Elector in voting using the internet access provided after taking the appropriate oath(s). In the absence of a Friend, the Elector may request the assistance of an Election Official, who may provide assistance only after the appropriate oath has been taken.
- 14.26 No Elector shall use a cell phone, electronic communication device, recording device, or camera in a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location.

### **Logic and Accuracy Testing**

- 14.27 Prior to the start of the Voting Period, the Internet Voting System shall be tested by the Systems Auditor and any other Election Officials appointed by the Clerk. All Logic & Accuracy testing shall be documented and retained until the destruction of Election Records occurs in accordance with Section 88 of the Act.
- 14.28 Such testing will include but is not limited to:
- a) verifying that the total of votes cast for all Candidates are "0" prior to the Internet Voting System being activated;
  - b) opening Voting using the Administrative Site;
  - c) creating test Electors in the Voters' List Management System;
  - d) creating test Voting PINs for the test Electors;
  - e) attempting to use Elector PINs more than once;

- f) voting a predetermined number of votes and ensuring that the Internet Voting System compiles the results accurately;
  - g) attempting to match PINs to names and addresses;
  - h) verifying that the Internet Voting System accepts Ballots from PINs that previously 'timed out' or were abandoned before the vote was cast;
  - i) verifying that the Internet Voting System acknowledges under-voted/declined Ballots and prompts Elector if they wish to complete all races on the Ballot;
  - j) verifying that the Internet Voting System does not accept over-voted Ballots;
  - k) verifying that the Internet Voting System 'times out' after a period of voter inactivity;
  - l) verifying that when a revision to an elector's data is completed that the old PIN is disabled and a new PIN generated;
  - m) closing Voting and tabulating the votes using the Administrative Site;
  - n) generating reports using the Administrative Site;
  - o) testing Neuvote results reporting in the Results Management System (RMS); and,
  - p) attempting to vote once the polls have been closed to simulate the process that will occur after 8:00 p.m. on October 26, 2026.
- 14.29 The testing shall include at least one "mock election" using the names of all Certified Candidates. The Returning Officer will verify the results of the mock election using a pre-determined test file.
- 14.30 Testing will also ensure that the Internet Voting System accepts Ballots from specifically authorized Voting Kiosk Machines to be used at Voter Assistance Centres and Voting Locations..
- 14.31 All Voting Kiosk Machines and associated information technology infrastructure used at Voter Assistance Centres and Voting Locations, will be tested for internet access, network security, proper configuration, and device security, and such tests shall include:
- a) resistance to tampering or modifications to the underlying operating system;
  - b) network equipment ensures only authorized devices are granted network access at Voter Assistance Centres and Voting Locations;
  - c) network equipment only allows access from network devices to approved websites; and,

- d) redundant network connectivity is operational if the primary network connection fails or is disrupted.
- 14.32 A third party will perform an independent vulnerability test of the City's Internet Voting System to identify any security deficiencies which will be mitigated in coordination with Neuvote Systems Inc. to ensure the deficiencies are addressed. Such testing may be carried out through a collaboration of other municipalities using Neuvote Systems Inc.

### **Opening of Internet Voting at the Start of the Voting Period**

- 14.33 Prior to the activation of the Internet Voting System on Monday, October 19, 2026 at 10:00 a.m., Neuvote Systems Inc. shall allow access by the Clerk, the Systems Auditor, and other authorized Election Official(s) as determined by the Clerk, to the Internet Voting System by secure ID and password, for the purpose of viewing a list of all of the Certified Candidates' names, including the sum total of votes cast, to ensure that all totals for all selections indicate "0" (Zero). The system will not be activated until confirmation that all the counts associated with each of the selections indicate a zero total.
- 14.34 Candidates or their Scrutineer may be present in the Council Chambers located at One The Esplanade, Pickering, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on October 19, 2026, to verify and ensure that the total votes cast are at "0" and those Candidates or Scrutineers present shall be requested to sign a document that attests to this fact. Only the Candidate or their Scrutineer may be present at the opening of the Voting Period, not both at the same time.

## **15 Paper Ballots using Vote Tabulators**

### **System Integrity**

- 15.01 In accordance with By-law Number 8182/25, Vote Tabulators shall be used to tabulate the results of any Paper Ballots cast on Voting Day for the 2026 Municipal Election. Neuvote Systems Inc. will supply the Vote Tabulators and all associated hardware and software required to scan and tabulate the Ballots for the 2026 Municipal Election.
- 15.02 Each Vote Tabulator will be programmed to accept all Ballot faces and so that a printed record can be produced of the number of votes cast for each Certified Candidate.
- 15.03 The Clerk will provide one Vote Tabulator at each Voting Location with the exception of Special Voting Locations which will be handled as per Sections 13 and 19 of these Procedures.
- 15.04 Each Vote Tabulator will be programmed to notify the Vote Tabulator Operator of the following issues:
- Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) Error (missing DRO initials)

- Misread Ballot
- Ambiguous Mark
- Blank Ballot
- Over-Voted Ballot

15.05 DRO Error – If a Ballot is returned by the Vote Tabulator because the Vote Tabulator has detected that the Ballot is missing the initials of the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) who issued the Ballot, the Vote Tabulator Operator shall advise the Elector that the initials of the DRO are missing and that the Ballot cannot be processed. The Vote Tabulator Operator will place the Ballot in the secrecy folder, with only the Section for the DRO initials showing, and direct the Elector to return to the DRO who issued the Ballot to obtain the required initials. Once the DRO has initialed the Ballot in the appropriate field, the Elector shall return the Ballot to the Vote Tabulator Operator for processing through the Vote Tabulator. If a DRO at the Voting Location did not issue the Ballot, the Elector shall be notified that the Ballot cannot be processed and the Ballot will be stored in a folder labeled “Rejected Ballots”.

15.06 Misread Ballot – If a Ballot cannot be properly scanned by the Vote Tabulator, either due to the Ballot being damaged or for some other reason, the Vote Tabulator Operator will notify the Elector and will reinsert the Ballot into the Vote Tabulator. If on the third attempt the Ballot is still identified as misread, the Vote Tabulator Operator will return the misread Ballot to the Elector and request the Elector obtain a new Ballot from the DRO who originally issued the Ballot. The DRO will place the misread Ballot into a folder labelled “Cancelled Ballots”.

15.07 Ambiguous Mark – If a Ballot is identified by the Vote Tabulator as having an ambiguous mark, the Vote Tabulator Operator will notify the Elector that their intent cannot be determined and provide the Elector with an opportunity to review their Ballot, describing the Ballot marking process and noting that an ambiguous mark is a mark that is too light or too small to determine the Elector’s intent. Upon reviewing their Ballot, the Elector shall have the following two options:

- take the Ballot behind a privacy screen and darken the marks on their Ballot; or,
- obtain a new Ballot from the DRO who originally issued the Ballot. The DRO will place the Ballot with an ambiguous mark into a folder labelled “Cancelled Ballots”.

15.08 Blank Ballot – If a Ballot is identified by the Vote Tabulator as blank, the Vote Tabulator Operator will notify the Elector and provide the Elector with the following two options:

- return the blank Ballot to the Elector and instruct the Elector on the Ballot marking process; or,
  - have the Vote Tabulator Operator override the system and cast the blank Ballot with the understanding that the Elector is declining their Ballot and vote.
- 15.09 Over-Voted Ballot – If a Ballot is identified by the Vote Tabulator as over-voted, the Vote Tabulator Operator will notify the Elector and provide the Elector with the following two options:
- return the over-voted Ballot to the Elector and request the Elector obtain a new Ballot from the DRO who originally issued the Ballot. The DRO will place the over-voted Ballot into a folder labelled “Cancelled Ballots”; or,
  - have the Vote Tabulator Operator override the system and cast the over-voted Ballot. Only the Candidate races correctly marked on an over-voted Ballot will be counted as part of the election results.
- 15.10 Where the Vote Tabulator Operator is notified of a Ballot identified under this Section of the Procedures, and the Elector has left the Voting Location or refuses to provide further instructions, the Vote Tabulator Operator will:
- in the case of an over-voted or blank Ballot, have the Vote Tabulator override the system and cast the over-voted or blank Ballot;
  - in the case of a misread or ambiguously marked Ballot, reinsert the Ballot. If on the third attempt the Ballot is still identified as misread or as having an ambiguous mark, store the Ballot in a folder labelled “Rejected Ballots”; or,
  - in the case of a DRO Error, confirm the absence of the DRO’s initials and store the Ballot in a folder labelled “Rejected Ballots”.
- 15.11 Paper jam – In the event a Ballot becomes stuck or jammed in the Vote Tabulator, the Vote Tabulator will display an error message to alert the Voter Tabulator Operator. When a paper jam occurs, no votes are read or recorded. The Vote Tabulator Operator will gently remove the Ballot from the Vote Tabulator to clear the jam and attempt to reinsert the Ballot. If on the second attempt the Ballot becomes stuck or jammed, the Vote Tabulator Operator will return the Ballot to the Elector and request the Elector obtain a new Ballot from the DRO who originally issued the Ballot. The DRO will place the defective Ballot into a folder labelled “Cancelled Ballots”. If paper jams repeatedly occur for Ballots that do not appear to be visibly damaged, or if any resistance is felt while removing the jammed Ballot from the Vote Tabulator, the Vote Tabulator Operator shall immediately notify the Clerk and conduct the vote using the auxiliary compartment of the Ballot box until further direction is received from the Clerk.

## Voting Process

- 15.12 The Paper Ballot and Vote Tabulator voting method for the 2026 Municipal Election will be a vote anywhere election, meaning, Electors who choose to cast a Paper Ballot on Voting Day, can do so at any designated Voting Location and are not restricted to voting in the physical polling subdivision or Ward in which they reside. All Voting Locations will have all Ballot faces for all Wards and will operate a live Voters' List so that each Elector is struck from the Voters' List in real time once they have been issued a Ballot. **Note:** Vote anywhere does not apply to Special Voting Locations which shall be reserved for only those Electors who reside at the Special Voting Location.
- 15.13 Electors attending a Voting Location shall be indicated as having voted on the Voters' List by the Poll Clerk subject to presenting Proof of Identification in accordance with Section 52(1) of the Act and O. Reg. 304/13. The Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) will initial and provide the Elector with a Ballot that includes the appropriate school support and Candidate races based on the Elector's information on the Voters' List.
- 15.14 The DRO shall be permitted to attend to an Elector anywhere at the Voting Location in order to issue a Ballot and provide the Ballot to the Vote Tabulator Operator for the purpose of assisting an Elector with mobility restrictions or any other disability in accordance with Section 45(9) of the Act.
- 15.15 In addition to a Ballot, the DRO will provide a secrecy folder and Ballot marking pen to each Elector and briefly instruct the Elector on the Ballot marking process.
- 15.16 Upon receiving the Ballot and secrecy folder, the Elector shall:
- a) immediately proceed to a Ballot marking station behind a privacy screen; and,
  - b) using the Ballot marking pen, mark the Ballot in the designated space beside the Certified Candidate(s) of their choice.
- 15.17 After marking the Ballot at the Ballot marking station, the Elector shall:
- a) insert the Ballot into the secrecy folder with the DRO's initials showing; and,
  - b) deliver the secrecy folder containing the Ballot and the Ballot marking pen to the Vote Tabulator Operator.
- 15.18 The Vote Tabulator Operator shall, in the presence of the Elector and without removing the Ballot from the secrecy folder, verify the DRO's initials and insert the Ballot, into the feed area of the Vote Tabulator until the Vote Tabulator draws the Ballot from the secrecy folder in full view of the Elector.

- 15.19 If a Vote Tabulator fails to function properly, the Vote Tabulator Operator will:
- a) immediately notify the Clerk;
  - b) insert all marked Ballots into the auxiliary compartment of the Ballot box in full view of Electors; and,
  - c) resume using the Vote Tabulator upon instruction by the Clerk. Ballots placed in the auxiliary compartment shall be processed in accordance with Section 15.30 of these Procedures.
- 15.20 No Elector shall use a cell phone, electronic communication device, recording device, or camera in a Voting Location.
- 15.21 Where an Elector has more than one qualifying address in the City of Pickering, the Elector may vote only once and the qualifying address to determine eligibility for voting shall be at the place of residence of the Elector, as defined under the Act. Should an Elector receive more than one VIP, the Elector may only vote once and must return the other VIP to the Clerk's Office. All Electors that vote more than once in the City of Pickering Municipal Election or who improperly use the VIP, shall be reported to the appropriate authorities for further investigation as to possible corrupt practices under the Act.
- 15.22 Section 42(5) of the Act states that when a by-law authorizing the use of an alternative voting method is in effect, Section 44 (voting proxies) applies only if the by-law so specifies. By-law Number 8182/25 provides that there will be no proxy votes for the 2026 Municipal Election.

### **Logic and Accuracy Testing**

- 15.23 Prior to the start of the Voting Period, the Clerk, Systems Auditor, and a designated Election Official(s), shall conduct logic and accuracy testing of all Vote Tabulators to be used in the Election, including standby Vote Tabulators and accessible Ballot marking devices, to ensure that the Vote Tabulators accurately tabulate results based on the votes cast and otherwise operate as programmed.
- 15.24 When testing the Vote Tabulators, adequate safeguards shall be taken to ensure that the system, or any part of it, that is used for processing and tabulating votes is isolated from all other applications or programs, and that no remote devices are capable of gaining access to the Vote Tabulator.
- 15.25 Neuvote Systems Inc. will calibrate Vote Tabulators to identify marks that are under the threshold value but within a defined range of pixels as an ambiguous mark, and marks above the threshold value counted as votes. The Clerk shall verify the suitability of this calibration through the logic and accuracy testing.

- 15.26 If the Clerk or designated Election Official detects any error in the test, the cause of the error will be ascertained and corrected and the test shall be repeated until an errorless count is made and certified by the Clerk, Systems Auditor, and/or designated Election Official.
- 15.27 The logic and accuracy results and records shall be retained in accordance with Section 88 of the Act.
- 15.28 The logic and accuracy test shall be conducted as follows:
- a) open the Vote Tabulator to accept Ballots following the same steps that would be taken at a Voting Location;
  - b) scan and tabulate a pre-audited group of Ballots marked with a variety of marking tools, including Ballots that fall into each of the following categories:
    - Ballots on which are recorded a pre-determined number of votes for each Candidate
    - Ballots that have over-voted races
    - Ballots that have under-voted races
    - Ballots that have no votes recorded
    - Ballots that have an ambiguous mark
  - c) close the Vote Tabulator and print the results report tape, following the same steps that would be taken at a Voting Location;
  - d) read the memory cards and test the Neuvote Results Management System (RMS); and,
  - e) compare the output of the tabulation with the pre-audited results.

### **Opening Voting on Voting Day**

- 15.29 Prior to the start of voting at a Voting Location on Voting Day, where a Vote Tabulator is first being used, the Vote Tabulator Operator shall complete the following:
- a) Check the identification tag located on the Vote Tabulator to verify it has been assigned to the correct Voting Location.
  - b) In the presence of any Candidates or Scrutineers, inspect the Ballot box to ensure it is empty and then seal the Ballot box to ensure Ballots may only enter the Ballot box through the Vote Tabulator and sign the seal(s). In accordance with Section 47(5) of the Act, a Candidate or

Scrutineer may place their own seal on the Ballot box or choose to sign the seal(s) placed on the Ballot box by the Vote Tabulator Operator.

- c) The Vote Tabulator Operator will power on the Vote Tabulator and print two (2) copies of all totals in its memory card on a report tape confirming zero (0) totals for all Certified Candidates on the Ballot.
- d) The Vote Tabulator Operator will verify that the heading at the top of the report tape notes the correct Voting Location and lists all Certified Candidates and Candidate races on the Ballot.
- e) The Vote Tabulator Operator will check the Ballot counter on the operator screen of the Vote Tabulator to ensure it displays zero Ballots processed.
- f) The Vote Tabulator Operator, along with any Candidates or Scrutineers who are present and choose to do so, will sign the zero report tape. The Vote Tabulator Operator will display a copy of the zero report tape in an area where it may be publicly viewed. The second copy of the zero report tape shall remain attached to the Vote Tabulator.
- g) If the report tape heading or offices are incorrect, or the report tape totals are not zero for all Certified Candidates on the Ballot, or the counter showing the number of Ballots processed does not display zero, the Vote Tabulator Operator shall immediately notify the Clerk and conduct the vote using the auxiliary compartment of the Ballot box until further direction is received from the Clerk.

### **Closing Voting on Voting Day**

15.30 The Vote Tabulator Operator will, after the close of voting at the end of Voting Day:

- a) Process any Ballots in the auxiliary compartment through the Vote Tabulator and handle any Ballot issues in accordance with Section 15.04 to 15.11 of these Procedures.
- b) Secure the Vote Tabulator against receiving any more Ballots and seal the Ballot box in such a manner that it cannot be opened or any Ballots be deposited in it without breaking the seal and sign the seals. In accordance with Section 47(5) of the Act, a Candidate or Scrutineer may place their own seal on the Ballot box or choose to sign the seal(s) placed on the Ballot box by the Vote Tabulator Operator. Ballot boxes will be labelled to indicate the Voting Location and stored in accordance with the statutory retention period.
- c) Cause the Vote Tabulator to print the two result report tapes indicating the total votes for each Candidate.

- d) Sign the two result report tapes. Candidates or Scrutineers who are present and who wish to sign the printed results report will also be able to do so at this time. Display a copy of the results report tape in an area where it may be publicly viewed. Place the other report tape in the Election Results Envelope assigned to the Vote Tabulator along with a copy of the zero report that was printed prior to the opening of voting.
- e) The Vote Tabulator Operator will then package and transport the Vote Tabulator to the Vote Aggregation Centre to upload the results in accordance with Section 19 of these Procedures.

## **16 Voter Information Package (VIP)**

- 16.01 VIPs will be mailed via Canada Post to all Electors who are included on the Voters' List on a date to be coordinated with Neuvote Systems Inc., the City's Voters' List Management Provider, and the Clerk.
- 16.02 Each VIP shall contain at a minimum:
  - a) the Voter's election credentials including a unique PIN and the designated internet address (URL) to cast a vote using the Internet;
  - b) instructions on how to vote by either Internet or Paper Ballot;
  - c) dates and hours of the Voting Period and available Voter Assistance Centres and Voting Locations; and,
  - d) the Voter Help Line telephone number and the City website address.
- 16.03 The duplication of names on the Preliminary List of Electors shall be identified by the Clerk with the intent of removing duplicate names prior to the final preparation of the Voters' List. However, should an Elector receive more than one VIP, they may only vote once, and must return the second and unused VIP to the Clerk's Office.
- 16.04 Where an Elector qualifies at more than one qualifying address as a result of owning or renting more than one property in the City of Pickering, the Elector shall vote only once and the qualifying address to determine eligibility for voting shall be at the place of the residence of the Elector, as defined by the Act.
- 16.05 All Electors that vote more than once in the Election or who improperly use the VIP shall be reported to the appropriate authorities for further investigation as to possible corrupt practices under the Act.
- 16.06 VIPs returned, either by mail or by an individual, will be opened and the PIN status disabled so it can no longer be used to vote. The opened VIPs will then be marked "unused" and maintained in a secure fashion and will be destroyed at the same time as other election material as provided for under Section 88 of the Act.

- 16.07 The Clerk, in partnership with Neuvote Systems Inc., shall ensure a complete audit trail is maintained of all VIPs:
- a) that were sent or issued to Electors;
  - b) that were returned by mail or personally returned by an Elector or another individual either opened or unopened but unused for voting purposes; and,
  - c) that were re-issued to an Elector.
- 16.08 If an Elector does not receive their VIP, or if the VIP is lost or destroyed, a new VIP may be issued by attending City Hall, a Revision Centre, a Voter Assistance Centre, or a Voting Location in accordance with the Procedures for the Issuing and Re-issuing of Voter Information Packages (VIPs) and Personal Identification Numbers (PINs). The Clerk or designated Election Official will confirm that the Elector is qualified and have the Elector complete the prescribed Form to obtain a VIP, and a new PIN shall be issued.
- 16.09 Should an Elector be added to the Voters' List after the date in which the VIPs were mailed, the Elector shall receive their VIP via Email from the Clerk's Office. Beginning on October 1, 2026, the Elector shall be provided a VIP at the time they add their name to the List if they do so in person at City Hall, a Revision Centre, Voter Assistance Centre, or Voting Location.
- 16.10 Electors who add their name to the Voters' List through the online portal after the date in which the VIPs were mailed, shall receive their VIP via Email from the Clerk's Office to the email address provided at the time they are added to the List. The online portal will be available until 4:00 pm on October 23, 2026. After this date and time, Electors will be required to attend a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location in person, during the Voting Period, to receive their VIP.

## **17 Candidates and Scrutineers**

- 17.01 Unless otherwise specified in the Act, correspondence from the Clerk to Candidates shall be by email, using the email address provided by the Candidate at the time of filing their nomination or as subsequently provided to the Clerk in writing. Where an email address has not been provided by the Candidate, correspondence will be sent by regular mail.
- 17.02 Any inquiries made by a Candidate to the Clerk will be responded to as soon as practically possible depending on the timing of other pressing priorities pertaining to the administration of the Election. The Clerk may delegate the response to the Candidate to another member of the Election Team if deemed appropriate and necessary.
- 17.03 Scrutineers may be appointed, in writing by the Candidate, on the Form prescribed by the Clerk, and as provided for in Section 16 of the Act. One appointed Scrutineer presenting their appointment, or the Candidate, will be entitled to attend each of the following:

- a) Pickering City Hall, located at One The Esplanade, on Monday, October 19, 2026, between 9:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., prior to the activation of the Internet Voting System for the purpose of viewing a list of the Certified Candidates' names and confirmation of zero totals;
- b) a Voter Assistance Centre during the hours of operation to observe the process; and,
- c) a Voting Location on Voting Day to observe the opening of voting, the voting process, and the close of voting. At the close of voting, no more than one scrutineer for each vote tabulator (vote counting equipment) may be present at each Voting Location.

17.04 Scrutineers or Candidates who do not follow the instructions of the Election Official(s) or who attempt to interfere, influence and to determine how an Elector is voting, will be requested to leave the Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location immediately. If a Scrutineer/Candidate is asked to leave a VAC or Voting Location, their appointment will be revoked, and the Scrutineer or Candidate will not be permitted to re-enter any VAC or Voting Location during the voting process.

17.05 Use of mobile communication devices or recording devices shall not be permitted within any Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location by any Certified Candidate or Scrutineer.

**18 Vote Aggregation Centre and Processing the Vote Totals on Voting Day – Internet Voting**

18.01 The Vote Aggregation Centre shall be located within Election Headquarters at City Hall, One The Esplanade, Pickering, in a secure location determined by the Clerk.

18.02 The public Internet Voting System shall be open and available for access until October 26, 2026 at 8:00 p.m.

18.03 Prior to the generation of the results, and following the close of voting, the appointed Systems Auditor will attempt to vote and confirm that it is not possible to access the Internet Voting System.

18.04 The Clerk shall report the unofficial results as soon as possible after 8:00 p.m. on October 26, 2026 and the results will be posted on the City of Pickering website. Such reporting is dependant on all results, from all voting methods being extracted and compiled by the Systems Auditor and the Neuvote Systems Inc. representative under the direction of the Clerk.

18.05 The Clerk shall, at the completion of the tallying of the results, retain all programs, test materials and Ballots in the same manner as is provided for in the Act for the keeping of election records.

**19 Vote Aggregation Centre and Processing the Vote Totals on Voting Day – Paper Ballots using Vote Tabulators**

- 19.01 Beginning at 4:00 p.m. on Voting Day, the Election Official designated by the Clerk, in witness of the Clerk, shall open each Special Voting Location (SVL) Ballot box, and manually insert each Ballot into the Vote Tabulator. For any Ballots that are rejected by the Vote Tabulator, the following process shall be followed:
- if the Vote Tabulator rejects a Ballot for any reason other than the Ballot being Damaged, Defective, or having an Ambiguous Mark, the Election Official shall, using the Vote Tabulator override procedure cause the Vote Tabulator to accept the Ballot and record any valid votes that may appear; or,
  - if the Vote Tabulator rejects a Ballot for being a Damaged, Defective, for having an Ambiguous Mark, or missing DRO initials, the Clerk and/or Election Official will follow the requirements of Section 15.10 of these Procedures.
- 19.02 After all SVL Ballots have been scanned through the Central Tabulator, no results shall be accessed until 8:00 p.m. on Voting Day. At 8:00 p.m., the Memory Cards from the Central Tabulator will be extracted at the Vote Aggregation Centre. The Memory Cards will be inserted into the Memory Card reader and unofficial results uploaded into a software program to be aggregated and published with all other election results, as directed by the Clerk.
- 19.03 As Voting Day Vote Tabulators are delivered to the Vote Aggregation Centre from designated Voting Locations, the Memory Cards will be removed by a designated Election Official, and unofficial results uploaded into a software program to be aggregated and published on the City's website as directed by the Clerk.
- 19.04 Once the cumulative results from both the Internet Voting Systems and Vote Tabulators have been certified by the Clerk, they will become the official results and will be posted on the City's website as soon as possible after the close of voting.

## **20 Emergencies**

- 20.01 In the event that any circumstances arise that are likely to prevent the election from being conducted in accordance with the Act, the City Clerk has the discretion to declare an emergency and make any arrangements they deem necessary for the conduct of the election.
- 20.02 In the event of an emergency, the Clerk shall advertise on radio, social media, and television stations if possible, and post notices to the extent possible, that the Election has been delayed or extended as the case may be.
- 20.03 In the event of an emergency, and a decision by the Clerk, Neuvote Systems Inc., under direction from the Clerk, may be directed to stop the Internet

Voting System from accepting connections from the Internet. Alternatively, Neuvote Systems Inc. may also be directed to extend the Voting Period depending on the nature of such emergency.

- 20.04 Given the options available to Electors to vote from any personal device with an internet connection, any event that results in one or more Voter Assistance Centres becoming unavailable for use during the Voting Period (e.g. power failure, flooding) shall not be sufficient to cause the Clerk to declare an emergency, delay the vote, open a new Voter Assistance Centre, or extend the Voting Period unless otherwise determined by the Clerk.
- 20.05 In the event the Clerk is unable to be present to conduct these Procedures at any point during the Voting Period, the Clerk's powers are delegated to the Deputy Clerk and/or any other Election Official the Clerk deems appropriate.
- 20.06 In the event that an emergency is declared, or if regional, provincial, or federal health regulations prohibit Electors from attending City Hall, a Voter Assistance Centre, or Voting Location to obtain their Voter credentials and PIN to access the Internet Voting System, the designated Election Officials who are authorized to provide this information may do so over the telephone or by email. In such instance, should an Elector not be able to furnish the prescribed Form to obtain their PIN, the Election Official may ask the Elector any questions necessary to satisfy the Election Official prior to the Elector credentials and PIN being provided. Such decision of whether to provide the PIN to the Elector resides with the Election Official under the direction of the City Clerk.
- 20.07 Should any emergency arise that prohibits Voting Locations from being open on the dates and times established by the Clerk, and paper Ballots cannot be processed using Vote Tabulators, the Clerk shall advise Electors and Certified Candidates that all voting must be done using the Internet Voting System.
- 20.08 Should any emergency arise that prohibits the use of the Internet Voting System for a prolonged period of time, the Clerk may set up in-person Voting Locations and revert to using paper Ballots using Vote Tabulators to facilitate the voting process where possible.
- 20.09 Should any public health restrictions be in place to prevent an individual from filing their Nomination in person for a period of more than 3 consecutive days during the Nomination Period and up to Nomination Day, the Clerk may provide for the electronic filing of the Nomination and shall communicate such process on the City's website and by way of any other appropriate media determined by the Clerk.
- 20.10 If deemed necessary, the Clerk may require public health screening of individuals entering a Voter Assistance Centre or Voting Location, the use of personal protective equipment, social distancing, and/or regular sanitization of surfaces at Voter Assistance Centres and Voting Locations as needed.

20.11 Notwithstanding any provisions in this Section, the Clerk shall have authority to implement any contingency necessary even if no formal emergency has been declared.

## **21 Recounts**

21.01 Pursuant to Section 56(1) of the Act, a recount is required when:

- a) there is a tie vote where both or all Candidates cannot be declared elected (automatic recount);
- b) by resolution of Council (for Offices on Council only);
- c) by order of the Superior Court of Justice.

21.02 Pursuant to Section 60(1) of the Act, a recount shall be conducted in the same manner as the original count whether manually or by vote-counting equipment unless otherwise ordered by a judge.

21.03 Pursuant to Section 62(3) of the Act, if the recount indicates a tie vote, the Clerk shall choose the successful Candidate or Candidates by lot.

21.04 The City Clerk shall attend the recount and bring the casted ballots, vote tabulators, results envelopes and all documents that, in the opinion of the Clerk, are relevant to the recount;

21.05 For paper Ballot recounts, the same vote tabulators and Ballots cast from each Voting Location will be paired up for the recount and processed in the same manner they were on Election Day. Any issues arising with processing the Ballots through the vote tabulator will be handled in accordance with Section 15 of these Procedures.

21.06 Neuvote Systems Inc. shall provide new memory cards for the vote tabulators which shall be programmed in the exact same manner they were programmed for use on Election Day.

21.07 Results will be tabulated in accordance with Section 19 of these Procedures.

21.08 Recounts for ballots cast using internet voting will be conducted in coordination with Neuvote Systems Inc.

21.09 A recount shall not be conducted in any other manner or using any other Procedure unless otherwise ordered and specified by a judge.

21.10 In accordance with Section 61(1) of the Act, Certified Candidates for the office in which the recount is taking place, and one Scrutineer for each recount station established by the Clerk, may be present at the recount and may examine paper Ballots however they may not touch the Ballots.

## **22 Election Records**

- 22.01 Despite any provisions of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, documents and materials filed with or prepared by the Clerk or any other Election Official under this Act are public records and, until their destruction, may be inspected by any person at the Clerk's office during Regular Office Hours. Such viewing of any election documentation may not be done after the 120-day retention period has elapsed. Despite the ability to view/inspect election documents, no individual is permitted to take a photo or receive a copy of any election documents.
- 22.02 At no time after Voting Day shall any information regarding the Elector, PINs and Ballots be matched in a manner that would allow any person to know how an Elector has voted.
- 22.03 All election materials shall be destroyed in accordance with Section 88 of the Act.

### **23 Corrupt Election Practices, Offences, Mail Tampering and Prosecution**

- 23.01 The Act provides that a person who contravenes any provision of the Act or a regulation under the Act or a by-law passed by a municipality under the Act, is guilty of an offence. Although the City will be using an alternative-voting method, being Internet Voting, and the use of Vote Tabulators on Voting Day, the principles and the integrity of the election process shall remain and are enforceable.
- 23.02 An individual who is convicted of an offence under the Act is liable to the following penalties in addition to any other penalty provided for in the Act:
- a) for any offence, a fine of not more than \$25,000;
  - b) for any offence other than a corrupt practice, the penalties described in Sections 88.23(2) and 88.27(1);
  - c) for an offence under Section 90, imprisonment for a term of not more than 6 months;
  - d) for any offence that the judge finds the individual committed knowingly, imprisonment for a term of not more than 6 months.
- 23.03 A corporation or trade union that is convicted of an offence under the Act is liable to a fine of not more than \$50,000 in addition to any other penalty provided for in this Act.
- 23.04 The Criminal Code of Canada outlines offences pertaining to mail theft and states that a person who commits such an offence is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than 10 years, or is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction. The 2026 City of Pickering Election will rely on the delivery of VIPs to Electors in order to allow those Electors to exercise their right to vote, and any instance or substantiated

account of mail tampering will be taken seriously and reported to the appropriate authorities.

## 24 Forms

24.01 In addition to any prescribed Forms as set out in Ontario Regulation 101/97, the following is a general list of other Forms that may be used during the 2026 Municipal Election. The Clerk reserves the right to use additional forms or amend the Forms listed below as may be necessary for the conduct of the election.

- Activation of Internet Voting System
- Additional Ballots Receipts
- Application to Amend Voters' List
- Application for a Compliance Audit
- Application to Re-Issue a Voter Information Package
- Delegated Authority and Appointment of Deputy Returning Officer
- Delegated Authority and Appointment of Election Official
- Delegated Authority and Appointment of Election Official (IT Related)
- Delegated Authority and Appointment of Election Official and Systems Auditor
- Appointment of Agent to File a Nomination for Candidate or RTPA
- Appointment of Scrutineer by Candidate
- Ballot Account and Reconciliation
- Candidate and RTPA Freedom of Information (FOI) Release & Candidate Contact Information
- Certificate of Election Results for all Races
- Certificate of the Voters' List
- Certificates of Maximum Campaign Expenses for Candidates and Third Party Advertisers
- Declaration of Acclamation to Office
- Declaration of Compliance Financial Reporting Requirements - Candidates and Registered Third Party Advertisers
- Declaration of Elected Candidate(s)
- Declaration of Identity (For electors not on the Voters' List and do not have ID)
- Notice of Recounts
- List of Certified Candidates for all Races
- Notice of Additional Nominations
- Notice of Financial Filing Requirements (Candidate and Registered Third Party Advertisers)
- Notice of Supplementary Financial Filing Requirements (Candidate and Registered Third Party Advertisers)
- Notice of Default (Candidate and Registered Third Party Advertisers)
- Number of AVT Sessions Conducted by VTO
- Numerical Record of Paper Ballots Successfully Issued

- Oral Oath of Friend or Interpreter/Assistance
- Oral Oath of Qualification
- Oral Oath of Secrecy
- Recount Results
- Residence of a Candidate (where no permanent lodging place)
- Statement of Qualified Elector to Obtain a Voter Information Package
- Voting Location Manager
- Voters' List Request Form
- Voting Place Agreement
- Voting Location Manager Ballot Allotment Record
- Withdrawal of Nomination
- Destruction of Ballots (Witness Statements)

# 2026 voters' guide

Ontario municipal council and  
school board elections

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

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

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

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

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

## General information

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

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

## Municipal clerk

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

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

If your municipality does not have a website, you could visit or contact your municipal office for more information.

## Emergency declaration by the clerk

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

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

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

## Accessibility

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

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

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

## Contact us

If you have additional questions or would like to give feedback on this guide, please contact us at [mea.info@ontario.ca](mailto:mea.info@ontario.ca).

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

# Table of Contents

Eligibility to vote .....	1
How to vote in your municipality.....	4
Voters' list and identification .....	6
Questions on the ballot .....	7
Supporting a candidate's campaign.....	8
After the election .....	9
Contributions to candidates and third-party advertisers .....	11
Enforcement and penalties .....	13
By-elections .....	14
Acceptable documents for voter identification .....	16
Forms referred to in this guide .....	17

# Eligibility to vote

## Municipal council election

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Students

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

## Voting in more than one municipality

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

## Wards

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

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

## School board elections

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Voting in more than one school board election

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

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

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

## Choosing a school board

There are four different kinds of school boards in Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## How to vote in your municipality

### Taking time off work to vote

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

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

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

### Voting from your home

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

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

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

## Appointing a voting proxy

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

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

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

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

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

## Being a voting proxy

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

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

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

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

## Power of attorney or executors

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

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

## Voters' list and identification

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

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

### Adding your name to the voters' list

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

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

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

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

### Removing a name from the voters' list

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

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

### Redacting information from the voters' list

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

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

To request a redaction of information, please email [priv@elections.on.ca](mailto:priv@elections.on.ca) or write to:

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

## Showing identification before you vote in person

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

Examples of identification include:

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

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

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

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

## Questions on the ballot

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## The results of a question on the ballot

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

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

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

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

## Supporting a candidate’s campaign

### Nomination endorsement signatures

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Signs

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

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

## Inside a voting place

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

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

## After the election

### Election results

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

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

## Recounts

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

Your municipal council or school board may have a policy that sets out other reasons for an automatic recount.

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

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

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

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

## Compliance audits

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Contributions to candidates and third-party advertisers

### General information

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

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

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

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

### Who can make contributions

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

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

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

## Contribution limit

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

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

## Other rules regarding contributions

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

Contributions greater than \$25 may not be made in cash. All contributions above \$25 must be made by cheque, money order, or by a method that clearly shows where the funds came from.

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

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

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

## Review of contributions

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

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

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

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

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

## Enforcement and penalties

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## General penalties

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

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

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

These penalties would be determined by the court.

## By-elections

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

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

## Vacancies

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

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

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

## Appointment

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

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

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

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

## By-election for an office

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

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

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

Voting day will be 45 days after nomination day.

## By-election for a question on the ballot

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

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

## Acceptable documents for voter identification

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

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

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

## Forms referred to in this guide

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

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

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

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

# 2026 Municipal Elections Accessibility Plan

**Your City. Your Vote.**  
2026 Municipal Election

— *City of* —  
**PICKERING**

# Table of Contents

<b>Overview</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Objectives</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Development of the Plan</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Definitions</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Voting Locations and Voter Assistance Centres</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Voting Methods</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Accessible Customer Service</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Election Officials</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Election Communication to Electors</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Election Communication to Candidates and Registered Third Party Advertisers</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Post-Election Reporting Requirement</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Contact Information</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Declaration</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>10</b>

## Overview

This Plan will address specific accessibility provisions in relation to the 2026 City of Pickering Municipal Election.

Under the *Municipal Elections Act* (the "Act"), the City Clerk is responsible for conducting the municipal elections and preparing a plan to ensure a fair and accessible election for electors and candidates with disabilities.

Section 12.1 of the Act states:

- (1) A Clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities.
- (2) The Clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election.

The City of Pickering's 2026 Accessible Elections Plan is an acknowledgement of the City's commitment to create an accessible and inclusive environment for electors and candidates with disabilities and to continuously identify and eliminate barriers.

## Objectives

The objectives of the City of Pickering's 2026 Accessible Elections Plan are to ensure that the election process is inclusive, barrier-free, and provides equitable access for all electors and candidates. This Plan supports the Clerk's obligations under the Act to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that may affect persons with disabilities. The objectives of the Plan are as follows:

1. Ensure full and equal access to election information for electors and candidates with disabilities.
2. Enable electors with disabilities to independently cast their vote.
3. Provide fully accessible Voter Assistance Centres and Voting Locations.
4. Support inclusive participation of electors, candidates, election officials, and third-party advertisers with disabilities.
5. Ensure all election information is available in accessible and alternative formats.
6. Increase public awareness of accessible voting options and election services available to electors with disabilities.
7. Provide comprehensive accessibility and customer service training to all election officials.
8. Identify, remove, and prevent barriers throughout all stages of the election administration process.
9. Meet all legislative requirements for pre-election accessibility planning and post-election accessibility reporting.

## Development of the Plan

The City of Pickering's 2026 Accessible Elections Plan is developed as a living document that reflects the City's commitment to deliver an inclusive, barrier-free election for all electors, candidates, election officials, and third-party advertisers. In accordance with the Act, this Plan will identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility and will be made available to the public in advance of Voting Day.

To prepare the Plan, the City will undertake the following steps:

1. Review of Legislative Requirements, Accessibility Standards, and Best Practices

City staff will begin by reviewing all applicable legislative requirements, including the accessibility provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act*, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, the City's ADM 090 Accessibility Policy, current accessibility practices, and available guidance from provincial and professional bodies.

2. Consultation with Accessibility Stakeholders and Community Partners

The City will consult with key accessibility stakeholders to ensure the Plan accurately reflects the needs of individuals with disabilities. These consultations will include engagement with the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee and feedback gathered through this process will inform the actions and commitments outlined in the Plan.

3. Evaluation of Voting Locations and Voter Assistance Centres

Prior to finalizing the Plan, staff will conduct site assessments of potential Voter Assistance Centres and Voting Locations. These assessments will evaluate each location's physical accessibility, including entrances, routes of travel, signage, parking, lighting, and interior accessibility features. Any required modifications or supports will be identified and addressed before the Voting Period begins.

4. Review of Accessible Voting Methods and Supportive Technologies

Staff will review the City's selected voting methods, Internet Voting and paper ballot voting with tabulators, to confirm that these methods continue to meet current accessibility standards and support independent voting for electors with disabilities. This review will also include an assessment of supplementary accessibility supports, such as ballot marking devices, magnifiers, tactile interfaces, and other assistive tools that facilitate casting ballots. Any additional devices or aids required to enhance accessibility will be selected and implemented to ensure a fully inclusive voting experience.

## 5. Development of Accessibility Training for Election Officials

The City will develop and deliver accessibility training for all Election Officials. Training will include accessible customer service practices, interactions with persons with disabilities, the operation of assistive voting technologies, and guidance on providing accommodations during the Voting Period and on Voting Day.

## 6. Integration of Accessible Information and Communication Practices

Staff will review all planned election communications to ensure they will be accessible and available in alternative formats upon request. This includes web content, notices, forms, and any informational materials intended for electors or candidates. All digital content will be prepared to meet applicable accessibility standards.

## 7. Ongoing Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

Throughout the election administration process, staff will monitor the implementation of accessibility measures and identify opportunities for improvement. Any feedback received prior to Voting Day will inform adjustments to services and will support the preparation of the legislated post-election accessibility report. This approach will ensure the Plan remains responsive, current, and aligned with evolving accessibility needs.

## Definitions

### Disability

*The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, defines "disability" as:*

1. Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
2. A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
3. A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;

4. A mental disorder; or,
5. An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

## **Barrier**

The AODA defines “barrier” as:

Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

## **Voting Locations and Voter Assistance Centres**

The City of Pickering will ensure that all Voter Assistance Centres (VACs) and Voting Locations (VLs) selected for the 2026 Municipal Election are fully accessible and barrier-free for electors with disabilities. Electors may attend a VAC during the Voting Period to access a tablet for Internet Voting, to obtain Internet Voting credentials, or to update their information on the Voters' List. Paper ballot voting will be offered only on Voting Day, and electors will be supported by trained Election Officials at every site.

City staff have prepared and used a comprehensive accessibility checklist to guide the inspection and selection of all voting locations. This checklist examines numerous physical and environmental elements, including but not limited to:

- accessible entrances;
- functioning automatic door openers;
- availability of accessible parking spaces;
- presence of curb cuts and level pathways;
- barrier-free interior routes of travel;
- clearly identifiable signage; and,
- adequate interior and exterior lighting.

All required accessibility modifications identified through this process will be completed before the start of the Voting Period to ensure compliance and safe, dignified access for all electors.

Clear and understandable signage will be posted both externally and internally at each VAC and VL to support wayfinding. In addition, greeters will be stationed at entrances to welcome electors and provide assistance, as needed.

The Clerk's Office will establish special voting places at long-term care facilities and retirement homes to allow eligible residents of the facility with an opportunity to vote on Election Day as per the requirements of the Act. Prior to Voting Day, Election staff will work with the facility administrators to provide opportunities for the residents of these

facilities to ensure they are included on the Voter's list. On Voting Day, if requested, Election staff may administer bedside voting for electors who may not be able to physically attend the voting place.

In accordance with Section 45(9) of the Act, Election Officials may attend to the elector anywhere within the area designated as the voting place, to allow an elector with a disability to vote.

## **Voting Methods**

The City of Pickering will offer two accessible voting methods for the 2026 Municipal Election: Internet Voting available throughout the entire Voting Period, and paper ballot voting available on Voting Day only.

### **1. Internet Voting**

Internet Voting will be available from Monday October 19 to Monday, October 26, 2026, giving electors the opportunity to vote from their home, workplace, a Voter Assistance Centre, or any other location with access to the internet. The Internet Voting system meets WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility standards and uses standard HTML and JavaScript to ensure compatibility with screen readers, keyboard navigation, and personal assistive technologies. Electors will be able to vote on a variety of devices, including computers, tablets, and smartphones, using any major web browser.

### **2. Paper Ballot Voting on Election Day**

Paper ballot voting will be available only on October 26, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. To ensure electors with disabilities can participate independently and privately, Assistive Voting Technology will be available at all Voting Locations.

- i. Assistive Voting Technology allows electors to utilize an audio ballot while making their voting selections by choosing between three options:
  - a. Audio Tactile Interface: the handheld controller has audio directions and features large, raised buttons, bright colours, and braille inscriptions.
  - b. Paddle Buttons: the paddles can be pressed using hands, feet, or elbows.
  - c. Sip 'n' Puff: the device allows voters to mark their ballot by "sipping" (inhaling) or "puffing" (exhaling) into a straw.

The City will provide additional assistive tools at all Voting Locations to enhance accessibility, including magnifying sheets for electors with visual impairments, and notepads with slip-grip pens to all election officials to facilitate communication with electors who have hearing impairments.

## **Accessible Customer Service**

The City is committed to providing accessible customer service that upholds the principles of independence, dignity, and equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities. These principles will guide the delivery of all services related to the 2026 Municipal Election.

All Election Officials will receive accessibility training prior to the start of the Voting Period. Training will cover:

- Requirements under the AODA;
- The City's 2026 Accessible Elections Plan;
- Corporate Accessibility Policy (ADM 090);
- Customer Service Standards (ADM 090-001);
- Hidden Disabilities Sunflower program;
- Best practices for interacting with electors with various disabilities;
- Protocols for assistive devices, service animals, and support persons.

Dedicated Clerk's Office staff will be available by mail, email or telephone to respond to accommodation requests, accessibility-related inquiries, and feedback before and on Voting Day. Electors will be able to contact staff using the City's established election communication channels during regular business hours.

**Email:** [elections@pickering.ca](mailto:elections@pickering.ca)  
**Phone:** 905.420.4600 ext. 8683 (VOTE)  
**Address:** Office of the City Clerk, Pickering Civic Complex,  
One the Esplanade, Pickering, ON L1V 6K7  
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Electors with disabilities may be accompanied by support persons or service animals at all VACs and Voting Locations. Support persons who assist an elector in casting their ballot will be required to take an oath of secrecy administered by an Election Official.

## **Election Officials**

All Election Officials will receive comprehensive accessibility and customer service training to ensure they can effectively support electors with disabilities during the Voting Period and on Election Day. Training will include guidance on:

- interacting with persons with disabilities;
- operating assistive voting technology;
- recognizing and responding to accommodation needs; and,
- following established accessibility protocols.

Election Officials will be on-site at all VACs and Voting Locations to answer questions, provide information, and offer assistance upon request. Election Officials will support electors in accessing Internet Voting kiosks, using assistive tools, completing updates to their voter information, and navigating the voting area.

## **Election Communication to Electors**

### 1. Ensure Election Information is Available Online in Clear and Simple Language:

The content on the City of Pickering's 2026 Municipal Election website will be available in plain language wherever possible to make information easier to understand. The election website will clearly communicate information about any legislative changes, key election dates, and provide users with accessible links to important resources.

### 2. Update Election Information on the City's Website to Reflect Most Recent Developments:

Staff will monitor and update the City's Election webpages with timely election information as required. In the event of disruptions to service or unforeseen circumstances that affect the accessibility of voting places during the Voting Period or on Voting Day, notices of disruption will be posted in real time on:

- i. The City's Website (main election page) and homepage
- ii. Facebook: [City of Pickering](#)
- iii. X: [@CityofPickering](#)
- iv. Instagram: [City of Pickering](#)
- v. At the affected Voting Location or Voter Assistance Centre

### 3. Website and Posted Documents are Accessible:

The City's website is compliant with legislative requirements of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). The website is W3C Consortium and WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant. The City's website font can also be adjusted within the browser's functionality to aid users when reading information. All files on the website are available for download as an accessible PDF.

### 4. Information Available in Alternative Formats upon Request:

Persons with disabilities can request information and copies of election documents in a format that takes into account their disability. Alternate formats can include, but are not limited to web access, large print documents, or a text only electronic file that can be read by a computer or printed in Braille. Staff will consult with the requestor to determine the most appropriate format, and will make every effort to provide the documentation in the preferred format as soon as possible.

## **Election Communication to Candidates and Registered Third Party Advertisers**

The Clerk's Office will provide candidates and registered third-party advertisers with accessible resources to support inclusive campaign practices. These resources will include the City of Pickering's 2026 Accessible Elections Plan, the AMCTO Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections, and any other accessibility guides published by the Province of Ontario throughout the election.

Candidates and registered third party advertisers who are individuals with disabilities may incur disability-related campaign expenses that would not otherwise have been required but for the election. These expenses will be excluded from permitted campaign spending limits in accordance with provincial legislation.

## Post-Election Reporting Requirement

In accordance with the Act, the City Clerk shall submit a post-election accessibility report to Council within 90 days after Voting Day. This report will be posted on the City's website and available to the public.

Section 12.1(3) of the Act states:

Within 90 days after Voting Day in a regular election, the Clerk shall prepare a report about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the report available to the public.

## Contact Information

Staff in the City Clerk's Office are available to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free accessible election.

Contacts
Susan Cassel, City Clerk/Returning Officer
Rumali Perera, Deputy Clerk/Deputy Returning Officer
Keith Hearst, Records, Privacy & Elections Coordinator

**Email:** [elections@pickering.ca](mailto:elections@pickering.ca)  
**Phone:** 905.420.4600 ext. 8683 (VOTE)  
**Address:** Office of the City Clerk, Pickering Civic Complex,  
One the Esplanade, Pickering, ON L1V 6K7  
8:30 am to 4:30 pm

## Declaration

In accordance with Section 12.1 the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended, I hereby certify that this Plan shall be followed in conducting the 2026 Municipal Elections in the City of Pickering.

Signed and dated at the City of Pickering, in the Regional Municipality of Durham, this  
1<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2026.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Susan Cassel".

Susan Cassel, City Clerk  
The Corporation of the City of Pickering

## **References**

[\*Municipal Elections Act, 1996\*](#)

[\*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005\*](#)

[AMCTO Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections](#)

[City of Pickering's Accessible Policy](#)

[City of Pickering's Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy](#)

# Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections

---

# Table of Contents

<b>Preamble</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Campaign Literature</b> .....	<b>6</b>
1. Print Media .....	6
2. Audio/Video Media .....	7
3. One-on-One Communication .....	8
<b>Campaign Office</b> .....	<b>8</b>
4. Choosing a Location .....	8
Accessible Campaign Office Checklist .....	9
5. Inside the Office .....	10
6. Make Provisions for Service Animals .....	11
7. Telephone Access.....	11
8. Accessible Washrooms .....	11
9. Training.....	12
10. Other.....	12
<b>Budgeting</b> .....	<b>12</b>

11. Sign Language Interpreting.....	12
<b>Understanding Disability: Know Your Electors' Needs And Communicate Your Solutions .....</b>	<b>13</b>
12. Examples of Barriers to People with Disabilities: .....	13
13. Types of Disabilities.....	14
Physical Disabilities: .....	14
Vision Loss: .....	14
Deaf, Deafened or Hard of Hearing: .....	14
Deaf-Blindness: .....	15
Speech Impairments:.....	15
Cognitive Disabilities:.....	15
Mental Illness:.....	16

This guide was developed in partnership with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario



## Preamble

This guide is intended to draw your attention to the measures candidates should include: literature through print media, audio and video messages, and access to your campaign office (if you are intending to campaign from an office that is separate from your home).

Be sure that all of your campaign activities are accessible to everyone!

## Campaign Literature

### 1. Print Media

Printed campaign materials are one of the most common methods of communicating with your candidates during your campaign. Consider the following when preparing your campaign literature:

- What is the font size on your material? It should be between 12 and 18 points, except when producing brochures where space can be an issue. Having a message at bottom of brochure saying “Alternative Formats Available Upon Request” allows an individual to request it in a format that works for them.
- Use a sans serif fonts (sans means “without” and serif are the small projecting features at the end of strokes; arms and legs). The extra serifs make text difficult to read. Choose a font without serifs like Arial or Verdana.)
- Use upper and lower case, avoid italics and avoid underlining (underlining is perceived to mean a website or email link.)
- If you are using a filled box, “bold” the font.
- Use good colour contrast – black and white is easiest to see and read.
- Avoid using watermarks and text as not very readable.
- Will you have separate large print copies available?
- Do you have magnifying sheets available to help a person with low vision to read your materials? Could the material be offered in an alternate format, if requested?

- Can you have key pieces of your literature in alternative formats (e.g. Braille, large print, e-text versions)?
- All printed material should have a statement “alternative formats available upon request.”
- Ensure that your print materials provide details on whether your campaign office (if you have a campaign office) is accessible.
- If sending printed material electronically, ensure that it has been designed to be accessible. If for instance you have created a document in word, then you would need to use headings and styles to enable an assistive device to read the material easily. Pictures and links need to be tagged appropriately so that the images are picked up and described.
- Consider accessibility provisions for your website. Do you have scalable print? Is the font size large enough? Is there sufficient contrast between the colour of the background and any text? Has alternative text been provided to describe any images, link and tables, used on your website?
- If you elect to provide a TTY number in your campaign office/home, be sure to include TTY number in all advertising and promotional materials.
- Consider the services offered through VoicePrint, a division of The National Broadcast Reading Service, which broadcasts readings of full-text articles from more than 600 Canadian newspapers and magazines. They also provide advertising opportunities through a fee-for-service program.

## 2. Audio/Video Media

Radio and Video campaign messages also often form part of a candidate’s campaign portfolio. Consider the following when preparing your campaign literature:

- Recorded messages provide consistent information and access for individuals after-hours.
- Will you offer these messages in alternative formats? Advertise that these formats are available and how they can be accessed.
- You may wish to consider providing subtitles for video communications.
- Consider captioning for live video presentation of electoral debates.

### 3. One-on-One Communication

Will you consider offering Sign Language Interpreting?

Sign Language Interpreters are knowledgeable in the language and culture of both hearing impaired and hearing people. They provide communication in both sign language and a spoken language and are bound by a professional Code of Ethics.

A Sign Language Interpreter may need to be booked two to three weeks in advance. If a meeting or event is longer than two hours then two Sign Language Interpreters will be required. One person will sign for 15 to 20 minutes and then they will switch. If the information they are interpreting is difficult then they may ask for materials in advance to be better prepared.

The websites below provides a directory of interpreters, as well as tips on finding an interpreter, negotiating terms for agreements, etc. Link to the Ontario Association of Sign Language Interpreters' (OASLI) website: <http://www.oasli.on.ca>. As well as a link to their online directory:

---

[Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada's online directory:](http://www.oasli.on.ca/contact/directory-of-oasli-interpreters)  
(<http://www.oasli.on.ca/contact/directory-of-oasli-interpreters>)

At candidate meetings, you may wish to consider providing a recording secretary and have a screen available to broadcast information for the hearing impaired.

## Campaign Office

### 4. Choosing a Location

Many candidates campaign from their homes, however, if you are thinking of establishing a campaign office separate from your home, your campaign office may be your primary venue for meeting one-on-one with the electorate. You will want to be sure that the location is suitable to accept any elector who wishes to attend your office. The following is a recommended checklist to consider:

## Accessible Campaign Office Checklist

- Is the office located on a route that is served by accessible public transportation?
- Is the name and address of the building clearly visible from the street and sidewalk?
- If needed, is there a pedestrian crosswalk close by? Crosswalks served by an audible and visual traffic-crossing signal are preferred. Where there is a change in level, for example where the sidewalk meets the street, curb cuts are necessary.
- Is accessible parking available for electors? At least one accessible parking space should be provided on the shortest, safest accessible route to the accessible building entrance.
- Is the accessible parking space clearly marked with the international symbol of accessibility?



- Is the parking space firm and level?
- Are curb cuts provided? All sidewalks should have curb cuts at locations near parking and along the route to the primary entrance.
- Is the space large enough to meet the needs of an elector who uses a van equipped with a wheelchair lift?
- Are the parking spaces and route of travel properly maintained? Snow and ice should be removed and uneven surfaces repaired as soon as possible.
- Is the route to the entrance accessible? Accessible routes should be unobstructed and have continuous, smooth, hard surfaces with no abrupt changes in level and should not require the use of stairs. Plan to have routine checks made throughout the day.

- Is the route wide enough so someone using a wheelchair, scooter, or service animal can travel safely?
- Is the campaign office easily identified by signage? Is the sign easy to read and understand?
- Is the entrance accessible? If there are steps, there needs to be a ramp so people using mobility aids or who have mobility impairments can get in. Steps, even a small single step, can make the campaign office inaccessible to many people with disabilities and seniors.
- Is the ramp well designed and safe? Does it have handrails on both sides? Does it have a suitable slope? If the ramp is temporary, is it securely attached to the steps so it cannot slip or wobble?
- Is the door hardware accessible? Are there lever or pull handles? Be sure the door hardware passes the “fist test”. This means it can be operated by a person using a closed fist.
- Is the doorway wide enough for a person using a wheelchair or scooter to pass through?
- Is the door easy to open? If the doors are heavy, awkward to open or have handles that may be out of reach, can you prop them open in a safe manner? If you do prop them open, make sure you don't obstruct the entrance and nearby floor space.
- Is the entrance easy to see?
- Is the entrance well lit?

## 5. Inside the Office

- Is there level access from the entrance to the office area? Internal stairs are just as much of a problem as external ones. It may be necessary to install ramps.
- Are doormats level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards? If not, you may consider removing them, provided of course this does not create further hazards. Beveled edges on doormats helpful.
- Is the voting location on a ground floor unless elevator available?

- Is the flooring non-slip, even and level? Highly polished surfaces can be slippery for some users, while thick carpeting and loose rugs or mats can cause people to trip or get stuck. Glare from polished surfaces can be a problem for people with visual impairments.
- Is the office area well lit?
- Are there seats available for people to rest if needed?
- Are corridors inside the office facility spacious enough for a wheelchair or scooter to pass through comfortably? Obstructions such as stacked furniture or piles of boxes can cause problems for visually impaired people, as well as people with limited mobility.
- Is there enough space inside the office area for a wheelchair or scooter to move about easily?

## **6. Make Provisions for Service Animals**

It is prohibited to deny a person access to a place or service because a guide dog accompanies them. Be sure that the facility use agreement does not prohibit service animals. Service animals must be allowed to remain with the person with a disability. Service animals are allowed to go anywhere the public is allowed.

## **7. Telephone Access**

Consider providing a TTY number.

## **8. Accessible Washrooms**

- Does your office have washrooms that are large enough to accommodate scooter and power wheelchair users and are equipped with at least one accessible stall? A unisex washroom is preferred.
- Are the accessible washrooms located on the same floor and in close proximity to the office?
- Do the doors to the washroom have a raised (tactile) male or female sign or Braille lettering?
- Are there L shaped grab bars or a rear bar?
- Are taps operable with a closed fist?

- Are hot water pipes under the sink recessed or covered to prevent burning one's knees if in a wheelchair?

## **9. Training**

Are your staff/volunteers trained as it relates to Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation so that you are providing appropriate services for persons with disabilities?

## **10. Other**

Are you providing refreshments to visitors? If so, provide bendable straws and lightweight cups and an option for sugar free beverages.

## **Budgeting**

Costs associated with ensuring your campaign is accessible to your electors must be reported as per the legislated requirements. Make sure you budget for possible accessibility requests like Sign Language Interpreters, Braille copies, other alternative formats and website accessibility.

## **11. Sign Language Interpreting**

For sign language interpreting, the cost will be based on how long the service is needed and whether one or more interpreters will be required. Currently, the base rate for interpreting service is \$110 per interpreter for up to two hours of service. After that, \$55 is charged for every hour or part thereof.

# Understanding Disability: Know Your Electors' Needs And Communicate Your Solutions

## 12. Examples of Barriers to People with Disabilities:

<b>Barrier Type</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Physical</b>	A doorknob that cannot be operated by an elderly person with limited upper-body mobility and strength.
<b>Architectural</b>	A hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter.
<b>Informational</b>	Typefaces which are too small to be read by a person with low-vision.
<b>Communicational</b>	A speaker at a meeting who talks loudly when addressing a deaf participant.
<b>Attitudinal</b>	A campaign event that discourages persons with developmental disabilities from participating.
<b>Technological</b>	Information on a web site, which cannot be accessed by a person who is blind or visually impaired and who has reading software on a computer.
<b>Policy/Practice</b>	A practice of announcing important messages over an intercom that people with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly.

Disabilities can take many forms and can range from temporary to permanent. Often disabilities are non-visible and no one should ever make assumptions. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. There are physical, mental and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, drug and alcohol dependencies, environmental sensitivities, and other conditions –

### 13. Types of Disabilities

Listed below is a brief description of types of disabilities. Understanding people's needs and challenges may help you better communicate with them. Always remember if you are not sure what to do, ask the person, "May I help you?" This gives a person with disabilities an opportunity to let you know how you can assist them if they wish you too.

#### **Physical Disabilities:**

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities, and while people who use mobility aids like wheelchairs, scooters, crutches or canes are most recognizable, it is important to consider that not all people with physical disabilities require a mobility device. People who have arthritis, heart or lung conditions or amputations may also have difficulty with stamina, moving, standing, sitting or the ability to reach or grasp. It may be difficult to identify a person with a physical disability. If you're not sure what to do, ask the person, "May I help you?" People with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it.

#### **Vision Loss:**

There are varying degrees of vision loss and a distinction between blindness and low vision. In some cases, it may be difficult to tell if a person has a vision loss. The majority of people living with a vision disability have some vision, only some are totally blind. Vision disabilities can reduce one's ability to see clearly or can affect the range of visual field. Some people can distinguish between light and dark, or between contrasting colours, or read large print, but have difficulty with small print or low-light situations. Others may have a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which impacts a person's ability to distinguish details, like recognizing faces or reading. Vision disabilities can restrict a person's ability to read print and signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. They may use a white cane or service animal to help with orientation and movement in an environment. There are specific things you can do to communicate with a voter with vision loss – for e.g. identify yourself when you approach the person and speak directly to him or her, even if he/she is accompanied by a companion.

#### **Deaf, Deafened or Hard of Hearing:**

Hearing loss ranges from mild to profound. **Hard of hearing** people generally have a hearing loss ranging from mild to severe, although it is sometimes profound, and use their voice and residual hearing for communication. Hearing aids and cochlear implants are often used, augmented by assistive listening devices, other technology, and speech reading.

**Late deafened persons**, sometimes referred to as deafened or oral deaf, have lost all hearing at some point after learning to speak, usually as adults. Growing up either hearing or hard of hearing, late deafened people continue to use voice

to communicate and rely strongly on visual forms of communication such as speech reading, text, and occasionally sign language.

Many **Deaf** or profoundly hard of hearing people identify with the society and language of Deaf Culture and use sign language as their basis of communication.

Deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing individuals may use hearing aids, pen and paper, personal amplification devices, hearing aid dog or other assistive-listening and communication methods. Attract the person's attention before speaking. Generally, the best way is by a gentle touch on the shoulder or with a gentle wave of your hand. Look at and speak directly to the person. Address them, not the interpreter or support person.

### **Deaf-Blindness:**

A person who is Deaf-Blind has some degree of both vision and hearing loss. This results in greater difficulties in accessing information and managing daily activities. Most people who are deaf-blind will be accompanied by an Intervenor, a professional who helps with communicating. An Intervenor is trained in many adaptive communication methods, depending upon the preferences of the person who is deaf-blind. The Intervenor may guide and interpret for their client. Identify yourself to the Intervenor when you approach a person who is Deaf-Blind, but then speak directly to the person as you normally would, not to the Intervenor.

### **Speech Impairments:**

People with speech disabilities may have difficulty communicating. For many reasons, people may have difficulty speaking clearly – for example, as a result of a stroke or cerebral palsy – which may result in difficulties with verbal communication. Some people may use communication boards or other assistive devices to help communicate. A speech disability often has no impact on a person's ability to understand. Ask them to repeat the information if you don't understand. Ask questions that can be answered "yes" or "no" if possible.

### **Cognitive Disabilities:**

Cognitive disabilities may affect understanding, communication, or behavior and can be attributed to brain injuries, developmental or learning disabilities. It is not always easy to identify someone who has a cognitive disability. Some conditions, such as Down's syndrome exhibit physical characteristics, but there are others that are not apparent. People with a cognitive disability may have difficulties recognizing, understanding and remembering information. Don't assume what a person can or cannot do. And always speak directly to the person, not to their companion or support person.

**Mental Illness:**

Mental illness is a disturbance in thoughts and emotions that may decrease a person's capacity to cope with the challenges of everyday life. Mental illness can take many forms, just as physical illness does. Mental illnesses include schizophrenia, mood disorders (such as depression and bipolar disorder), anxiety disorders, personality disorders, and eating disorders. Treat a person with a mental health disability with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else. Be patient, confident and reassuring. Listen carefully and work with them to try to meet their needs. If someone appears to be in a crisis, ask him or her to tell you the best way to help.

During your campaign planning process, consider contacting your local organizations, such as the CNIB, Canadian Hearing Society, etc and discuss with them your campaign plans. This will assist you to better understand the needs of people in your electorate with disabilities. They are a valuable resource in providing input and feedback.

The Corporation of the City of Pickering

By-law No. 8196/25

Being a by-law to change the ward boundaries in the City of Pickering

Whereas Section 222(1) of the *Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, c. 25*, as amended (the “Act”), provides authority for a municipality to divide or redivide the municipality into wards or to dissolve the existing wards;

And Whereas at its Special Meeting held on July 15, 2025, the Council of The Corporation of the City of Pickering approved changes to the ward boundaries in the City of Pickering;

Now therefore the Council of The Corporation of the City of Pickering hereby enacts as follows:

1. That the ward boundaries, as shown and described in Schedule “A”, attached hereto and forming part of this by-law are hereby approved;
2. That pursuant to Section 222(8) of the Act, the new ward boundaries shall come into force on the day the new Council of The Corporation of the City of Pickering is organized following the 2026 Municipal Election provided that:
  - (i) no notices of appeal are filed;
  - (ii) notices of appeal are filed and are all withdrawn before January 1, 2026; or,
  - (iii) notices of appeal are filed, and the Ontario Land Tribunal issues an order to affirm or amend the by-law before January 1, 2026;
3. That pursuant to Section 222(9) of the Act, the 2026 Municipal Election shall be conducted as if the by-law was already in force; and,
4. That By-law 7875/21 is hereby repealed.

By-law passed this 15<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2025.

Original Singed By

---

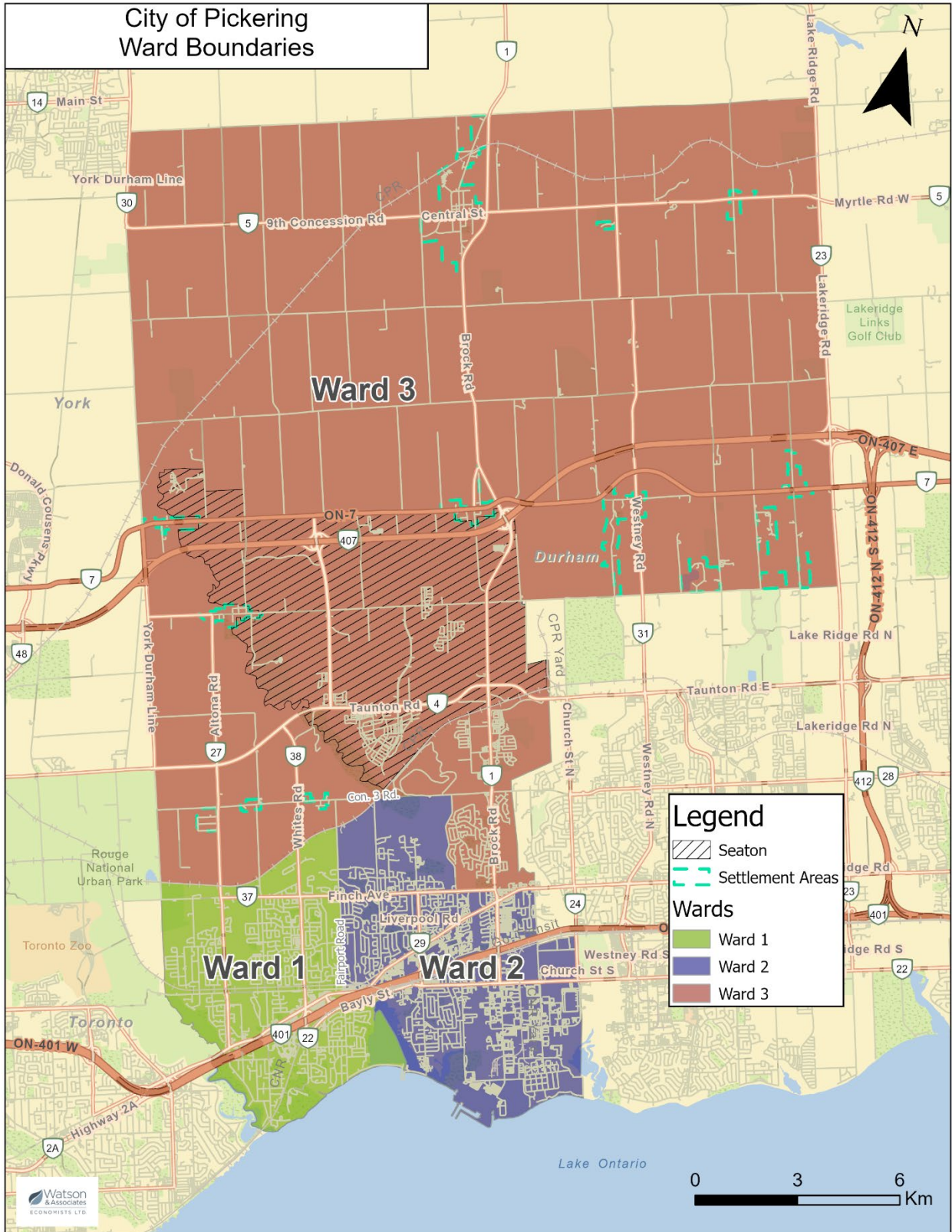
Kevin Ashe, Mayor

Original Singed By

---

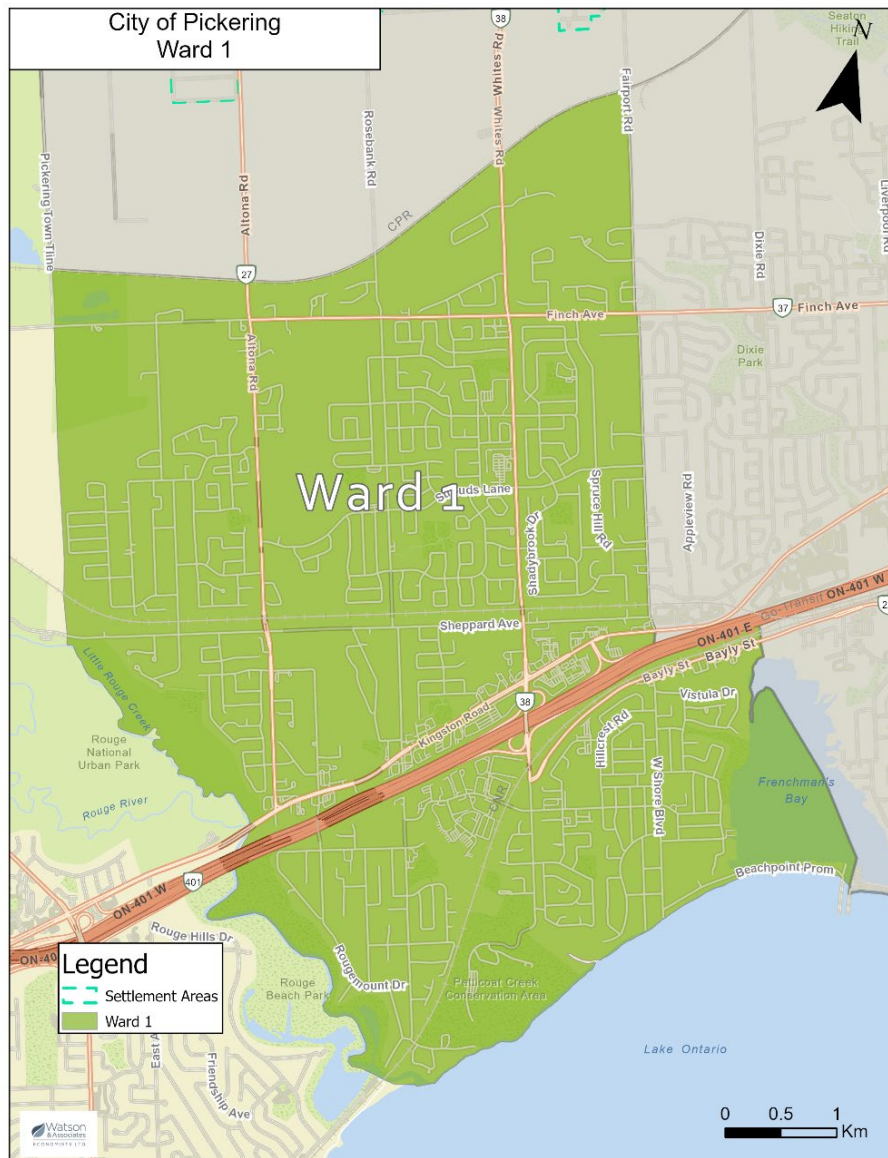
Susan Cassel, City Clerk

# Schedule "A" to By-law 8196/25 - Ward Boundary Descriptions



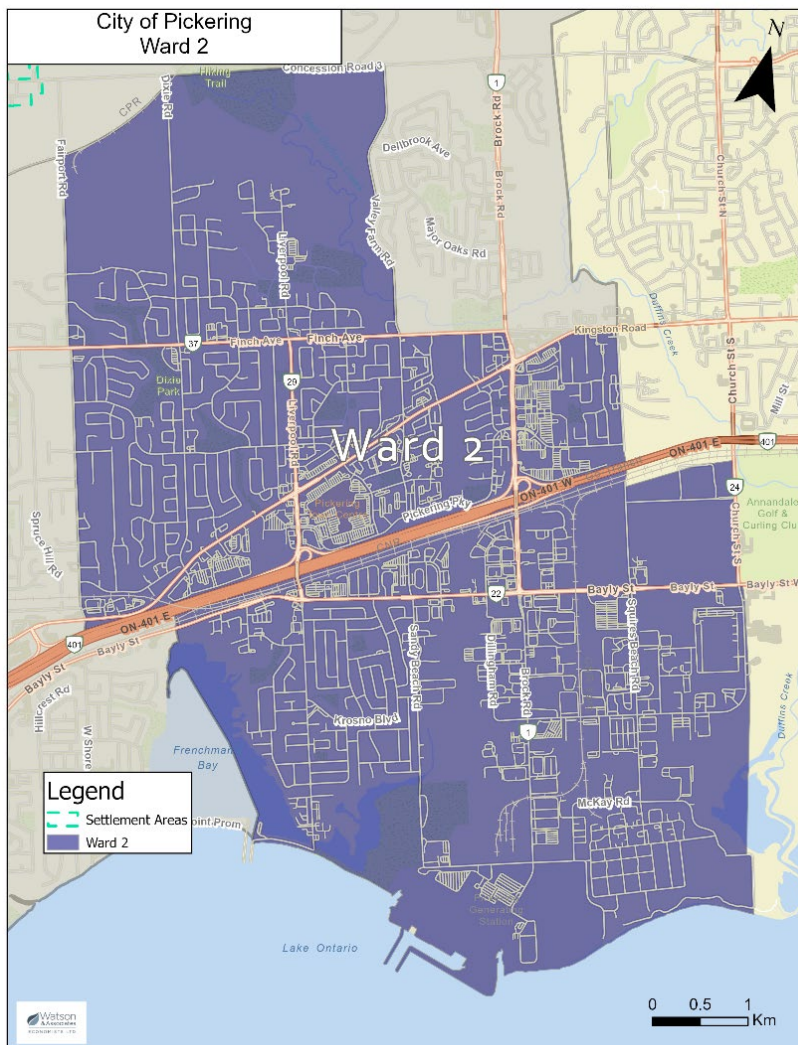
## Ward 1

Beginning where the centre line of the Canadian Pacific rail line crosses the centre line of York-Durham Line (that is, where the City of Pickering municipal boundary meets the municipal boundary of the City of Toronto), then in an easterly direction along the centre line of the Canadian Pacific rail line to the centre line of Fairport Road, then in a southerly direction along the centre line of Fairport Road to Highway 401, then in an easterly direction along the centre line of Highway 401 to the intersection of where the CNR crosses the 401. From this point, in a southeasterly direction along a line drawn to Frenchman's Bay and across Frenchman's Bay to the gap in the sandspit that separates the Bay from Lake Ontario, then in a westerly direction along the City of Pickering municipal boundary in Lake Ontario to the Rouge River (the municipal boundary with the City of Toronto), then in a northwestern direction along the Rouge River (the municipal boundary with the City of Toronto) to Twyn Rivers Drive then in a northern direction along the centre line of Scarborough-Pickering Townline to the point of origin.



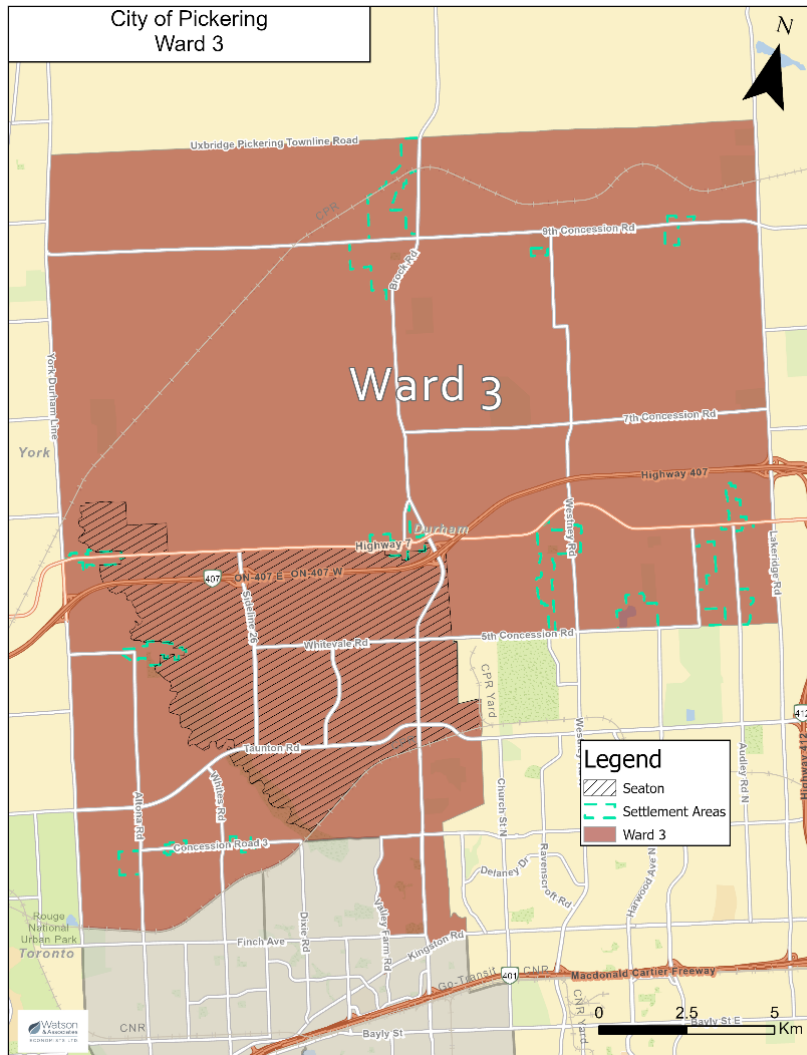
## Ward 2

Beginning where the centre line of the Canadian Pacific rail line crosses the centre line of Fairport Road, then in a northeasterly direction along the centre line of the Canadian Pacific rail line to the centre line of Third Concession Road east, then in an easterly direction along the centre line of Third Concession Road to the centre line of Valley Farm Road. Following the centre line of Valley Farm Road in a southerly direction to the centre line of Finch Avenue, then in an easterly direction along the centre line of Finch Avenue to the centre line of Brock Road, then in a southerly direction along the centre line of Brock Road to the centre line of Kingston Road (Highway 2), then in an easterly direction along the centre line of Kingston Road (Highway 2) to the municipal boundary between City of Pickering and the Town of Ajax, then in a southerly and easterly direction along the City of Pickering municipal boundary with the Town of Ajax to the City of Pickering municipal boundary in Lake Ontario, then westerly along the City of Pickering municipal boundary in Lake Ontario to the gap in the sandspit that separates the Frenchman's Bay from Lake Ontario, then in a northwesterly direction along a line drawn from that point to the end of a line drawn from Frenchman's Bay to Highway 401, where the CNR intersect. Following in a westerly direction along Highway 401 to the centre line of Fairport Road, then in a northerly direction along the centre line of Fairport Road to the point of origin at the Canadian Pacific rail line.



### Ward 3

Beginning where the centre line of Uxbridge Pickering Townline Road meets the centre line of Regional Road 30 (York Durham Line), then in an easterly direction along the centre line of Uxbridge Pickering Townline Road (the municipal boundary of the City of Pickering with the Township of Uxbridge) to where it meets the centre line of Lake Ridge Road (the eastern municipal boundary of the City of Pickering with the Township of Scugog), then in a southerly direction along municipal boundary of the City of Pickering with the Town of Whitby to the northern municipal boundary of the Town of Ajax, then in a westerly and southerly direction along the municipal boundary with the Town of Ajax to the centre line of Kingston Road (Highway 2), then in a westerly direction along the centre line of Kingston Road (Highway 2) the centre line of Brock Road, then in a northerly direction along the centre line of Brock Road to the centre line of Finch Avenue, then in a westerly direction along the centre line of Finch Avenue to the centre line of Valley Farm Road, then in a northerly direction along the centre line of Valley Farm Road to the line of Third Concession Road, then in a westerly direction along the centre line of Third Concession Road to the centre line of the Canadian Pacific rail line, then in a southwesterly direction along the centre line of the Canadian Pacific rail line to the centre line of Scarborough-Pickering Townline, then in a northerly direction along the centre line of Regional Road 30 (York Durham Line) to the point of origin.




## Ward Boundaries, Voting Subdivisions, and Street Name Listings

An interactive map has been created for candidates to use for the 2026 Municipal Election. To access the City of Pickering Interactive Ward Map, go to:

[www.pickering.ca](https://www.pickering.ca) > Select Business, Building & Development > Select Maps and Open Data > Click on the Map Portal > Select Ward Comparison App.

For more information, please contact the Pickering Municipal Elections Team:

**Email:** [elections@pickering.ca](mailto:elections@pickering.ca)  
**Phone:** 905-420-4660 ext. VOTE (8683)  
**Address:** City Clerk's Office  
1 The Esplanade (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
Pickering, ON L1V 6K7

<b>Procedure Title:</b> Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes		<b>Procedure Number</b> ADM 170-001	
<b>Reference</b> <i>Municipal Elections Act</i> City of Pickering Code of Conduct Council Compensation Policy Election Sign By-law Resolution #299/17	<b>Date Originated (m/d/y)</b>  December 2016	<b>Date Revised (m/d/y)</b>  May 15, 2017 March 1, 2022 Feb 27, 2026	<b>Pages</b>  8
<b>Approval:</b> Chief Administrative Officer  		<b>Point of Contact:</b> City Clerk	

## Procedure Objective

In accordance with Section 88.18 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (the “Act”) before May 1<sup>st</sup> in the year of a regular election, municipalities and local boards shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal or board resources during the election Campaign Period.

Section 88.8 and 88.12 of the Act, states that a municipality or local board shall not make a contribution to the election campaign of a Candidate. The Act also prohibits a Candidate, or someone acting on the Candidate’s behalf, from accepting a contribution from a person who is not entitled to make a contribution. Section 88.15(1) states that, “money, goods and services given to and accepted by a person for his or her election campaign, or given to and accepted by another person who is acting under the person’s direction, are contributions”.

The use of the City’s Corporate Resources for any election campaign, or campaign-related activity, are viewed as a contribution by the municipality to the Candidate, and are therefore a violation of the Act.

The intent of this Procedure is to provide clarification regarding the provisions of the Act relating to contributions to election campaigns. It should be noted that the establishment of guidelines for the appropriate use of Corporate Resources during an election period is undertaken to protect the interests of Candidates, Members of Council, City Staff and the City.

In addition to local elections, a municipality or local board is also prohibited from contributing to a Provincial or Federal election campaign under the *Election Finances Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.7* and *Canada Elections Act (S.C. 2000, c.9)*, respectively.

## Index

- 01 Definitions
- 02 General
- 03 Staff Involvement in Elections
- 04 City Facilities
- 05 Technology-Related Provisions
- 06 Communications
- 07 Mobile Phones
- 08 All Candidates Meetings
- 09 Discontinued Activities for Members of Council During an Election Year
- 10 Limitations
- 11 Exceptions to this Procedure

### 01 Definitions

- 01.01 **All Candidates Meeting** – a public meeting held to provide an opportunity for all Candidates to explain their election platform and to answer questions from attendees.
- 01.02 **Campaign Period** – the official Campaign Period of an election for:
  - a) a municipal or school board election where the Campaign Period begins on the first prescribed day for the filing of nominations by Candidates and the first prescribed day for the filing of a registration by a Third Party Advertiser in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act* and ends at 11:59 pm on voting day;
  - b) a provincial or federal election where the Campaign Period begins the day the writ for the election is issued and ends at 11:59 pm on voting day;
  - c) a question on the ballot where the Campaign Period begins the day Council passes a by-law to put a question on a ballot to the electorate and ends at 11:59 pm on voting day; and,
  - d) a by-election where the Campaign Period begins the first day for the filing of nominations/registrations in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act* and ends at 11:59 pm on voting day.

- 01.03 **Candidate** – a person who has filed a nomination to run in a municipal, school board, provincial, federal election or by-election, or anyone acting on their behalf. Where referred to herein, the term Candidate shall also mean a Registered Third Party Advertiser or a person or group supporting or opposing a question on a ballot.
- 01.04 **City** – The Corporation of the City of Pickering.
- 01.05 **Clerk** – the City Clerk for the City, or their designate, who is responsible for conducting municipal elections under the Act as the Returning Officer.
- 01.06 **Corporate Resources** – includes any physical or technological resource that supports the operation of City programs and services including but not limited to the City crest, City logo, images/photos/videos, Facilities, land, vehicles, Staff, infrastructure, equipment, supplies, services, computers, networks, databases, hardware, software, intellectual property, photocopiers, fax machines, email, voicemail, wireless equipment, internet, intranet, smart phones, tablets, and consumables related to the above equipment such as paper or toner or any other resource that belongs to or is funded by the City.
- 01.07 **Election Sign** – for the purposes of this Procedure, any sign that is intended to influence individuals to vote for or against any Candidate or any question on a ballot, including but not limited to, an Election Sign as defined in the City’s Election Sign By-law or other election material such as buttons, t-shirts, hats, pens, stationary, calendars, fridge magnets, car magnets/car wraps, or any other materials used to promote or oppose a Candidate.
- 01.08 **Employees or Staff** – includes full-time, part-time, temporary and contract Employees paid by the City as well as volunteers that are working for/providing support to the City.
- 01.09 **Facility or Facilities** – any building, property, park, room or other space that is owned, leased, operated or controlled by the City.
- 01.10 **Member of Council** – the Mayor and all Members of Council for The Corporation of the City of Pickering.

## 02 General

These Procedures apply to all Candidates, including an acclaimed Member of Council or a Member of Council not seeking re-election, any individual acting on behalf of such Candidate, and all City Staff.

- 02.01 As provided for in Sections 11 and 12 of the Act, the Clerk is responsible for conducting elections and may provide for any matter or procedure that is not otherwise provided for in an Act or regulation and, in the Clerk’s opinion, is necessary or desirable for conducting the election. Accordingly, any decision regarding the conduct of an election, including the interpretation and

application of this Procedure, shall fall under the authority of the Clerk and the Clerk's determination is final.

- 02.02 Should a complaint arise regarding the alleged use of Corporate Resources in contravention of this Procedure, the Clerk shall have the authority to investigate and address the complaint. If the Clerk determines that the complaint is legitimate, it will be addressed in accordance with the process outlined below:
- a) Notify the Candidate: Upon receipt of a complaint under this Procedure, the Clerk shall communicate the nature of the complaint to the Candidate and inform them to cease and/or correct the action that led to the complaint.
  - b) Provide a Second Warning (if necessary): Should the Candidate not comply after receiving the first notice, the Clerk shall follow up and request the Candidate to cease and/or correct the action a second time.
  - c) Escalation: Should the Candidate continue to violate this Procedure and not comply with the Clerk's direction, the Clerk may give the matter over to the appropriate authorities or the Compliance Audit Committee for their determination of the violation as it relates to contributions to the Candidate's campaign under Section 88.8(7) of the Act.
- 02.03 City Staff who observe or are made aware of an apparent contravention of this Procedure shall address the individual or Candidate and shall report the apparent contravention to the Clerk as soon as possible. Corporate Security may be relied upon to support enforcement of this Procedure.
- 02.04 No Member of Council may use their position on Council to obtain, garner or take advantage of any offer of special pricing or betterment that is obtained due to their association with the City that would provide an unfair advantage to that Member of Council over that of other Candidates.
- 02.05 No Member of Council may use information obtained through their position on Council in a manner that provides any real or perceived campaign advantage.

### **03 Staff Involvement in Elections**

City Staff are expected to preserve the public trust and confidence in the City. With respect to elections, Employees are expected to promote the principles of transparency, impartiality, respect, and accountability as follows:

- 03.01 Employees engaged in political activities must take care to separate those personal activities from their official positions. Employees may participate in political activity at the federal, provincial and municipal levels providing that such activity does not take place during work hours or utilize City Corporate Resources. Notices, posters or similar material in support of a particular

Candidate or political party are not to be displayed or distributed by Employees on City work sites or on City property.

- 03.02 Staff shall not canvass or actively work in support of a Candidate or political party during normal working hours unless they are away from work on a leave of absence without pay, maternity/parental leave, lieu time, flex day or vacation.
- 03.03 Staff shall not canvass or actively work in support of a Candidate or political party while wearing a uniform, badge, logo or any other item identifying them as an Employee of the City, or while using a vehicle owned or leased by the City.
- 03.04 Staff who are relatives of any Member of Council or Candidate are prohibited from being appointed as an Election Official, and cannot work on or assist with any part of the election process.
- 03.05 Staff are advised to be especially mindful of public perception during elections, and to ensure that their activities neither conflict with, nor adversely affect, their duties as City Staff. Moreover, Staff have a responsibility to ensure that Corporate Resources are not used for campaigning by any Candidate.
- 03.06 Candidates, including municipal incumbents, have the same right of access to information as a member of the public. Requests for information that are not typically publicly available or may contain sensitive Corporate or personal information must be coordinated through the Clerk's Office so that the Clerk can determine whether the information can be routinely disclosed or whether the Candidate must go through the FOI process.

#### **04 City Facilities**

- 04.01 Campaigning, distribution or display of campaign material or an Election Sign will not be permitted at any City Facility, City event or City meeting whether on municipal property or not. (**Exception:** All Candidates Meetings – refer to Section 08 of this Procedure).
- 04.02 Candidates who have filed their nomination can rent rooms at City Facilities to hold election-related meetings or to solicit/receive campaign funds, subject to the usual rental charges and permit procedures. Such permitted space must be confined to a room and not an open space.
- 04.03 A Candidate may not rent a City Facility to serve as a campaign office.
- 04.04 Election Signs or election campaign material can only be displayed within the rented room at a City Facility. No campaign material (signs, brochures, sign-in tables) can be anywhere other than inside the rented room.

- 04.05 Facility rentals for campaign related activities are not permitted from the first day of the voting period or the advance voting period, up to and including Voting Day.
- 04.06 The City reserves the right to refuse or cancel a rental contract at any time should it conflict with the City's established policies and procedures or legislated requirements pertaining to an election.
- 04.07 Nothing in this section prohibits a Candidate from erecting an Election Sign in accordance with the provisions of the City's Election Sign By-law.
- 04.08 Vehicle Signs, as defined in the City's Election Sign By-law, may be displayed by a Candidate, on or in a vehicle owned by the Candidate, while such vehicle is in use on any Highway in accordance with the City's Election Sign By-law and all other applicable laws and by-laws.
- 04.09 In addition to the provisions of the Election Sign By-law, vehicles that contain an Election Sign are prohibited from parking on City property, in a City owned or operated parking lot, or on a highway within 100 metres of a voting location.

## **05 Technology-Related Provisions**

- 05.01 The City's computer systems (hardware, software and network) may not be used to record, distribute or store election-related material or for any campaign related activity.
- 05.02 Websites or domain names that are funded, owned, or operated by the City shall not include any election-related material, including advocating for a political party, or Candidate in any election and may not be used for any campaign-related purpose.  
  
**Exception:** The City's official election webpages will provide Candidate contact information to inform the electorate and may include a link to a Candidate's website or social media but will in no way endorse any Candidate.
- 05.03 A Member of Council may not convert a constituent website, or social media page or account to an election campaign site, if either has been funded by the City in any way, or the content of such sites would violate the provisions of this Procedure. Websites or social media platforms cannot be simultaneously used by a Member of Council for constituency and election purposes.
- 05.04 On May 1<sup>st</sup> of an election year, the link from the City's website to any Member of Council's constituent website or social media platform, will be severed until after the election. All expenses related to a constituent website, or social media platform, will not be reimbursed from May 1<sup>st</sup> to the end of the Term of Council.

## 06 Communications

- 06.01 In any material printed or distributed by the City, Members of Council are not permitted to:
- a) explain or illustrate that an individual (either a Member of Council or any other individual) is a Candidate registered in any election;
  - b) identify where they will be running for office; or
  - c) profile or make reference to Candidates in any election.
- 06.02 Members of Council cannot use the City's telephone system to make or receive election-related calls.
- 06.03 The City's voicemail system may not be used to record or store election-related messages.
- 06.04 No Candidate shall wear, display, or otherwise have on their person any City of Pickering logo attire or other City-branded item in any campaign-related photograph, video, social media, or any other type of media, or during any campaign-related activities.
- 06.05 The following may not be used, printed or distributed in any election-related materials or included in or at any election campaign-related website, social media platform or other election-related activities:
- a) reference to any of the City's email addresses, telephone numbers, Facility addresses, or municipally-funded Facility addresses unless the Facility has been rented for a campaign event in accordance with Section 04 of this Procedure;
  - b) the City's municipal signs, logo, crest, coat of arms, or slogans;
  - c) City's business cards, letterhead, envelopes; and
  - d) photographs, images and videos produced for and owned by the City.

### **Exceptions:**

- a link to the City's official election webpages is permitted on a Candidate's election website or social media platform for the purpose of providing general information about the election and voting process, provided that such information is not modified in any way; and,

- a Candidate may take their own photo of City property for use in campaign material provided the photo is not taken while on or over the City property, and does not contain a municipal sign, logo, crest, coat of arms or slogan.

- 06.06 Candidates may link publicly accessible City resources such as staff reports, agendas, minutes, policies, etc. from their Candidate webpages or platforms.
- 06.07 Distribution lists or contact lists compiled utilizing Corporate Resources or through contact in a Member of Council's role as an elected official shall not be utilized for election campaign-related purposes.
- 06.08 Messages posted to the City's social media accounts, regarding Municipal Elections, may be shared by a Candidate on their campaign website or social media platform if the messaging is not altered in any way.

## 07 Mobile Phones

- 07.01 Mobile phones provided to Members of Council, and paid for by the City, cannot be used for campaigning purposes. It is recognized that carrying two phones is cumbersome and awkward. Members of Council utilizing a mobile phone, paid for by the City, can assume 50% of the total operating costs of the cell phone during a Campaign Period, in order for the phone to be used for campaign purposes. Assumption of 50% of the phone costs is effective from the date the Member files their nomination to register as a Candidate for the Municipal Election to the end of the Term of Council.

## 08 All Candidates Meetings

- 08.01 Organizations conducting All Candidates Meetings will be required to abide by the following:
- a) All Candidates Meetings may be held in a City Facility with the approval of the Clerk, subject to the usual rental charges and permit procedures for such use;  
  
**Exception:** Registered Ratepayers Associations have access to one free City Facility meeting space in an election year to hold an All Candidates Meeting in accordance with Policy ADM 270)
  - b) City Staff will not provide any services or assistance for All Candidates Meetings;
  - c) the organization conducting the event must invite all registered Candidates that have registered for the position that the All Candidates Meeting relates to (for example, Mayor, all Candidates registered for Mayor or a particular Ward, all Candidates registered for that Ward);

- d) the organization conducting the event will not allow Candidates to set up Election Signs, election literature, or campaign material at the Facility sooner than four hours before the event;
- e) the organization conducting the event will make sure all Election Signs and campaign materials are removed from the Facility by no later than midnight the day of the event; and
- f) any Election Signs, election literature, or campaign material must be contained within the rented room as per Section 04.04 of this Procedure.

08.02 In order to qualify as an All Candidates Meeting, the meeting must be held by an organization not affiliated with any particular Candidate(s) and will be subject to the City's policies and procedures. An all Candidates Meeting cannot include the support of any City Employee.

## **09 Discontinued Activities for Members of Council during an Election Year**

09.01 In addition to the parameters contained in this Procedure, in accordance with Policy ADM 190, Council Compensation Policy, in an election year the following conditions shall apply to Members of Council effective May 1<sup>st</sup>:

- a) no mailing or distribution of constituent communications where the costs are borne by the City;
- b) no mailing or distribution of generic neighbourhood letters or cooperative letters where the costs are borne by the City;
- c) no community events can be organized by a Member of Council where the costs are borne by the City unless the event has been approved by the Clerk and organized by City Staff; and,
- d) limited amounts of stationary and business cards for Members of Council can be ordered to maintain a sufficient supply for day-to-day operations up until the end of the Term of Council.

## **10 Limitations**

10.01 Nothing in this Procedure shall prohibit a Member of Council from performing their role as a Member of Council, nor impede them from representing the interests of constituents. It is, however, important to recognize that as incumbents, Members of Council's actions and activities will be subject to increased scrutiny. Members of Council are typically held to a higher standard and, as a result, the perception of their actions may be more important than the action itself.

10.02 Nothing in this Procedure shall preclude a Staff member from exercising their civic right and duty to participate in the election process as a private citizen.

- 10.03 Nothing in this Procedure shall prevent Staff from conducting an election in accordance with the Act or providing non-partisan election information material on behalf of the City to inform the public about the election and the election process.

**11 Exceptions to this Procedure**

- 11.01 Municipal election information prepared, posted and maintained by Legislative Services.
- 11.02 Names, photographs and contact information for Members of Council to conduct municipal business.

## 2026 City of Pickering Municipal Election Council Remuneration

### Mayor and Councillor Salary and Benefits

#### Salary

- Mayor: \$136,037/annum\*
- Council: \$58,912/annum\*\*

Note: The Mayor and Regional Councillors also receive a salary from the Region of Durham

- Remuneration payable to the Mayor and Members of Council shall be based on an annual rate and paid bi-weekly. Remuneration to Members of Council shall cease on the last day that the Member remains on the Council of the City of Pickering.

Rates are based on 2026 rates and subject to change in accordance with the Council Compensation Policy (enclosed with this information sheet below).

\* The annual salary of the Mayor shall be increased at the higher rate of either the same rate/percentage provided to those employees covered by the Collective Agreement for CUPE Local 129 on April 1st of the immediate preceding year.

\*\* The annual salary of a Councillor shall be increased at the higher rate of either same rate/percentage provided to those employees covered by the Collective Agreement for CUPE Local 129 on April 1st of the immediate preceding year or the salary increase percentage given to the Chief Administrative Officer in the prior year.

#### Benefits

##### Health Plan

- Mayor and Members of Council
  - An Extended Health Plan shall be available to all Members of Council and their families..
  - Members shall have access to a health care spending account for \$7,500 per year with no carry over provision or unused amount paid out.

##### Life Insurance

- Mayor and Members of Council, shall be provided a Term Life Insurance Policy paid to the designated beneficiary as follows:
  - Mayor - \$200,000;
  - Councillor - \$100,000;
  - accidental death and dismemberment insurance coverage (ceases at age 70); and,
  - current sitting Members of Council will be eligible for an additional \$100,000.00 (after tax) payment to their designated beneficiary at the time of their death.


##### Vehicle Allowance

- The vehicle allowance is provided on a monthly basis to Mayors and Members of Council.

- Includes all travel and travel-related expenses less than 50 km one way from the Civic Complex and shall include but not be limited to fuel, parking, highway tolls, taxi fares, public transportation fares and valet services.
- Travel of more than 50 km one way from the Civic Complex shall be paid for the outgoing and return trip in excess of 100 km at the per kilometre of rate of reimbursement approved by Council or economy class air fare between Toronto and the destination, whichever is the lesser.

### **Council Expenses**

- Members of Council are permitted to incur various expenses in the performance of their duties in accordance with the Council Compensation Policy, and the approved amounts contained therein.

<b>Policy Title: Council Compensation Policy</b>			<b>Policy Number</b> ADM 190	
<b>Reference</b> Resolution #73/05 Resolution #12/07 Resolution #214/07 Resolution #54/11 Resolution #152/11 Resolution #48/15 Resolution #299/17 Resolution #48/19 Resolution #240/20 Resolution #546/21 Resolution #160/23 Resolution #440/24	<b>Date Originated (m/d/y)</b> May 2, 2005	<b>Date Revised (m/d/y)</b> January 15, 2007 November 19, 2007 March 21, 2011 September 19, 2011 May 19, 2015 May 15, 2017 March 25, 2019 February 24, 2020 March 22, 2021 April 24, 2023 March 25, 2024	<b>Pages</b> 15	
<b>Approval: Chief Administrative Officer</b>  		<b>Point of Contact</b> Director, Corporate Services & City Solicitor Director, Finance & Treasurer		

**Policy Objective**

The objective of this Policy is to:

1. Provide consistent rules and guidelines for the Mayor and Members of Council with respect to salary, expenses and communications of elected officials; and,
2. Provide guidelines to staff to ensure all expenses are submitted and approved in accordance with the established parameters of the Policy.

**Index**

- 01 Definitions
- 02 Principles
- 03 Responsibilities
- 04 General
- 05 Accounting Procedures
- 06 Salary

- 07 Benefits
- 08 Vehicle Allowance
- 09 Professional and Business Development
- 10 Councillors Stationary and Office Supply Budget
- 11 Meals, Receptions, Promotions & Special/Community Events
- 12 Communications
- 13 Constituent Communications
- 14 Websites
- 15 In an Election Year

**01 Definitions**

- 01.01 **Allowable or Eligible Expense** - shall mean an expense that is provided for in this Policy.
- 01.02 **Cooperative Letter** - shall mean a letter or other printed document that contains information of interest to residents in more than one ward and which shall be mailed or distributed beyond a ward boundary.
- 01.03 **Councillor** - shall mean all Members of Council, excluding the Mayor.
- 01.04 **Ineligible Expense** - shall mean an expense that is not provided for in this Policy.
- 01.05 **Members of Council** - shall include the Mayor and all Members of Council.
- 01.06 **Neighbourhood Letter** - shall mean a document that is prepared on letterhead and/or signed by a Member of Council and sent to a defined neighbourhood or community of interest within the constituency of a Member of Council.
- 01.07 **Newsletter** - shall mean a document that is printed on both sides and shall contain information of interest to the constituents of a Member of Council.
- 01.08 **Social Media** – shall mean any social media platform used by a Member of Council to communicate or share information with constituents.
- 01.09 **Telecommunications Equipment** - shall include all equipment capable of transmitting over landlines and/or wireless modes.
- 01.10 **Website** - shall mean a site on the World Wide Web that contains information of interest to the constituents of a Member of Council.

## 02 Principles

When interpreting this Policy, the following principles should be kept in mind:

- 02.01 **Autonomy of Council** - City Council, as the decision-making body of the City, is separate and distinct from City administration.
- 02.02 **Integrity of Council** - The integrity of City Council as a whole and the Office of the Members of Council must be protected. The interest of City Council as a whole takes precedence over the personal interests of individual Members of Council.
- 02.03 **Accountability** - Since Members of Council use public funds when they perform their duties, the public expects public funds to be used prudently. Members of Council are the stewards of City resources and are ultimately accountable to the public and their constituents for the type and level of expenses they incur. Members of Council expenses must be reasonable and reflect what the public expects of an elected official.
- 02.04 **Transparency** - The public has a right to know how public funds allocated to Members of Council are spent. The public's right to Council expense information must be balanced against the need to protect privacy and personal information, and allow time for proper accounting and reconciliation of expenses.

## 03 Responsibilities

03.01 Members of Council to:

- a) adhere to and support the Council Compensation Policy;
- b) consider amendments as presented by the Chief Administrative Officer;
- c) meet all financial, legal, and income tax obligations; and,
- d) stay within budget guidelines and expenditure categories.

03.02 Chief Administrative Officer to:

- a) support the Council Compensation Policy.

03.03 City Clerk to:

- a) approve any expenditures in accordance with the Policy;
- b) advise Members of Council if any item appears to breach the Council Compensation Policy; and,

- c) make sure that supporting documentation is in place, and that expenditures conform with the Policy.

#### **04 General**

- 04.01 This Policy shall be reviewed every four years prior to the budget meetings that follow the general municipal election, or as directed by Council.
- 04.02 When a vacancy occurs and is subsequently filled, or upon the commencement of a new Term of Council and after the Inaugural Meeting of Council has occurred, compensation, benefits and allowances outlined in this Policy shall be pro-rated to the Term of Office for each Member of Council.
- 04.03 Items purchased for and expense reimbursements by the City and provided to a Member of Council will be charged to the Member's budget.
- 04.04 Reimbursement or payment by the City will not be made if it is not specifically provided for in this Policy.
- 04.05 No remaining current budget allocations or allowances can be carried forward into future years unless otherwise provided for in this Policy.
- 04.06 Individual Members of Council shall not use City funds to make individual grants or donations to organizations or persons for any form of sponsorship or fundraising.
- 04.07 Members of Council will not be reimbursed for expenditures purchased through the use of rewards or point programs or gift cards.
- 04.08 Detailed listings of Council expenses are prepared on a monthly basis for each Member of Council and publicly disclosed on the City's website as soon as practicably possible.
- 04.09 Consistent with the Municipal Act and applicable laws, Councillors do not have the legal authority to bind the Corporation.
- 04.10 Any expenses that violate, or are not in keeping with City Policies, will not be reimbursed.

#### **05 Accounting Procedures**

- 05.01 Member of Council claims for expenses must follow basic accounting and audit principles:
  - a) expenses must relate to the business of the City of Pickering;
  - b) complete backup of all documentation pertinent to the expenditure

must be attached to the expense reimbursement;

- c) Members of Council must incur the expenses. Expenses incurred by third parties cannot be claimed;
- d) Members of Council must provide proper documentation, including detailed receipts, invoices or e-bills, for all expense claims. Credit card receipts or statements alone are not sufficient and will not be accepted. In the case of any online purchases, a copy of the confirmation is not enough for reimbursement, and the credit card statement must also accompany the backup documentation;
- e) invoices must include a description of the goods purchased or services rendered, the cost, applicable taxes and HST Registration Number;
- f) original or digital signatures are required on all invoices;
- g) expenses must be submitted for reimbursement within 60 days of the expenditure; and,
- h) Members of Council who charge for goods against the current year must have received the goods and or services from the vendor before December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year.

05.02 Reimbursement of expenses must be completed through the City's automated Travel and Expense process within the City's portal. Supporting documentation needs to be provided for each expense.

05.03 External Service Providers - payment shall be made directly by the City to the service provider upon submission of an original detailed invoice. An invoice for external services must contain, the business name, address, date and additional details of services provided such as itemizing hours by day, HST business registration number and description of work provided. All invoices require sign off by the Councillor to indicate that services were received prior to authorization, and before payment can be processed.

## **06 Salary**

06.01 The remuneration payable to the Mayor shall be:

- a) \$120,703.00 per annum effective January 1, 2023; and,
- b) Thereafter, the annual salary of the Mayor shall be increased at the higher rate of either the same rate/percentage provided to those employees covered by the Collective Agreement for CUPE Local 129 on April 1<sup>st</sup> of the immediate preceding year.

06.02 The remuneration payable to a Councillor shall be:

- a) \$50,293.00 per annum effective January 1, 2023;
- b) Thereafter, the annual salary of a Councillor shall be increased at the higher rate of either same rate/percentage provided to those employees covered by the Collective Agreement for CUPE Local 129 on April 1<sup>st</sup> of the immediate preceding year or the salary increase percentage given to the Chief Administrative Officer in the prior year ;
- c) a Councillor shall be paid a per diem rate of 1.0 percent of their annual salary for a total of 10 days for attending a full day meeting, workshop, seminar or convention; and,
- d) per diem payments payable to Councillors shall be paid monthly. Per diem payments shall cease on the last day that the Councillors remain in office and shall be pro-rated accordingly.

06.03 Remuneration payable to Members of Council shall be based on an annual rate and paid bi-weekly. Remuneration to Members of Council shall cease on the last day that the Member remains on the Council of the City of Pickering.

## **07 Benefits:**

### 07.01 Health Plan

- a) An Extended Health Plan shall be available to all Members of Council and their families;
- b) Members shall have access to a health care spending account for \$7,500 per year with no carry over provision or unused amount paid out;
- c) For a Member of Council who has completed more than 8 years of continuous service and ceases to be a Member for the reasons set out in Section 07.04.a), the Corporation shall pay 100 percent of the premium cost of the Extended Health, Dental and Vision Care Benefit Plans, including health care spending account referenced in 7.01b), for the number of years of service or until the Member attains the age of 85;
- d) Following a Council Member's death while in service, the Corporation shall continue to pay 100 percent of the premium costs of the Extended Health, Dental and Vision Care Benefit Plans in respect of a Member's surviving spouse and dependents for up to 24 calendar months.

07.02 Current sitting Members of Council, shall be provided a Term Life Insurance Policy paid to the designated beneficiary as follows:

- a) Mayor \$200,000.00;
- b) Councillor \$100,000.00;
- c) accidental death and dismemberment insurance coverage (ceases at age 70); and,
- d) Members of Council will be eligible for an additional \$100,000.00 (after tax) payment to their designated beneficiary at the time of their death.

07.03 A Member of Council may maintain a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), either own or spousal as permitted, under current Federal legislation to which the Corporation shall contribute a maximum of 13 percent of the Member's earned salary each year;

- a) To have the City make the contribution or reimburse for the contribution, the Member of Council must provide:
  - i) written confirmation that a member has sufficient contribution room, as provided by the Canada Revenue Agency on their notice of assessment, to accommodate the City's contribution, shall be provided to the Treasurer no later than December 31<sup>st</sup> in any given year and the City's contribution shall be made directly to the RRSP no later than January 31<sup>st</sup> of the next calendar year;
  - OR**
  - ii) evidence of a contribution by a Member towards an RRSP shall be provided to the Treasurer no later than December 31<sup>st</sup> in any given year. The member will then be reimbursed for the contribution, to a maximum of 13 percent of the Member's earned salary, no later than January 31<sup>st</sup> of the next calendar year.
- b) For the purpose of calculating the 13 percent RRSP contribution amount, the word "salary" shall mean the annual salary plus the per diem rate, pro-rated for a Member not holding office for an entire calendar year, of the Mayor and Councillors and it excludes all taxable benefits and allowances.
- c) The contribution to an RRSP is a taxable benefit regardless of whether it is paid to the Member of Council or the financial institution.
- d) The City shall make its contribution only in the month of January of the next calendar year regardless of when the Member of Council made a contribution, except when a Member of Council ceases to hold office during the year, in which case a whole or partial contribution will be made in that year.
- e) An elected official has the option to have the City contribute directly to a Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA), rather than an RRSP. The contribution amount would be net of taxes but all other requirements, noted above would apply.

07.04 a) A Member of Council, who has completed a term, may, upon

written application to the Treasurer by the Member, receive severance remuneration upon ceasing to be a Member by reason of:

- i) election defeat;
  - ii) resignation;
  - iii) election to another government body.
- b) No Member of Council shall be entitled to receive severance remuneration if he or she ceases to be a Member by reason of resignation which is a result of or given in anticipation of:
- i) removal from office by judicial process; or,
  - ii) notwithstanding the above, disqualification under or by operation of any Act of the Parliament of Canada or the Legislature of the Province of Ontario.
- c) Severance remuneration shall be equal to: one month of salary for the Mayor or one month of salary that includes the per diem for Councillors, times the number of years of consecutive, uninterrupted full service of the Member, to a maximum amount payable of 36 months remuneration. Severance remuneration shall be calculated from the day the Member took office to the last day that the Member ceases to hold office.
- d) A written application for severance remuneration must be received by the Treasurer within 6 calendar months of a Member of Council ceasing to be a Member; otherwise any entitlement to severance remuneration shall be forfeited. Upon approval of the application by the Treasurer, a payment arrangement shall be agreed to that does not extend beyond four years. Interest is not earned on the severance remuneration if a payment arrangement is agreed on.

## **08 Vehicle Allowance**

08.01 A vehicle allowance is provided for in the annual Current Budget on a monthly basis to each Member of Council.

- a) The vehicle allowance shall be deemed to provide for all travel and travel-related expenses less than 50 km one way from the Civic Complex and shall include but not be limited to fuel, parking, highway tolls, taxi fares, public transportation fares and valet services.
- b) Travel of more than 50 km one way from the Civic Complex shall be paid for the outgoing and return trip in excess of 100 kilometres at the per kilometre rate of reimbursement approved by Council or economy class return air fare between Toronto and the destination, whichever is the lesser.

## 09 Professional and Business Development

- 09.01 A budget of \$16,000 per term for each Member of Council shall be provided. This will be an allocation of approximately \$4,000 per Member of Council in each annual budget for professional and business development related to City business, however, a Member of Council may use funds from future years as long as the budget does not exceed \$16,000 for the Term of Council. Any spending above the \$16,000 allocated for the term must be paid back by the Member of Council within one month.
- 09.02 Members of Council may attend the following programs that are relevant to a Member of Council's role/duties and relates to City business:
- a) conferences and seminars;
  - b) professional education and development programs;
  - c) skills development programs;
  - d) research/study trips; and,
  - e) other City business or other travel requested by City Council.
- 09.03 Expenses shall include actual accommodation costs, registration costs, travel if applicable, hotel internet/telephone charges and meals if not provided by conference event and where such expenses are not otherwise claimed or paid for by another person or body.
- 09.04 Accommodation expenses shall be at the event headquarters and if not available, then at the nearest suitable hotel, motel, etc. and at a single occupancy room rate. All expenses over a single occupancy room rate will be the responsibility of the Member of Council.
- 09.05 Travel necessary for professional and business development in excess of 50 kilometres one way, 100 kilometres return from the Civic Complex, shall be paid at the per kilometre rate of reimbursement approved in the Current Budget or economy class return air fare between Toronto and destination whichever is the lesser. Economy plus standard is permitted for air travel over five hours. Other travel related expenses such as parking, vehicle rentals, taxi fares, public transportation fares and highway tolls incurred for travel beyond 50 kilometres one way, 100 kilometres return shall also be reimbursed upon presentation of receipts.
- 09.06 Lost receipts will not be reimbursed.
- 09.07 Councillors must have Council approval in order for expenses to be reimbursed for any event outside of North America unless the Mayor has delegated his authority under section 226.1 of the *Municipal Act* to

represent the City in his place to the Deputy Mayor or a Councillor, if the Deputy Mayor cannot attend.

## **10 Councillors Economic Development Initiatives**

- 10.01 Councillors will be provided an annual budget, in the amount of \$10,000 per year in an account entitled Councillors Economic Initiatives (with no carryover provision) to undertake key economic initiatives for business attraction that includes business development and trade shows and the costs related to this activity including items such as travel, accommodation, food and registration fees shall be charged to this account.
- 10.02 Council approval is not required for international air travel, accommodations, registration fees and meals for Councillors economic development initiatives.

## **11 Councillors Stationery and Office Supply Budget**

- 11.01 An annual budget of \$750.00 is provided for each Councillor for office supplies used for City business such as; personalized letterhead, business cards, toner cartridges, Commissioner Stamps, publications/books relating to City business.
- 11.02 All letterhead and business cards must comply with the City's template guidelines.

## **12 Meals, Receptions, Promotions & Special/Community Events**

- 12.01 An annual budget of \$5,000.00 is provided for each Councillor for meals, individual ads, receptions, promotions and special events where the Member of Council is required to attend in an official capacity and the event relates to City/constituent business.
- 12.02 Where an invitation is extended to a Member of Council to attend a function in his or her capacity as an elected official, the Member may request reimbursement for one additional ticket for a spouse or guest, where appropriate and reasonable.
- 12.03 Members of Council may hold Ward Town Hall Meetings with their constituents and may use City Facilities for this purpose at no charge. Facility availability is based on current City programming needs that may already be scheduled and an alternative space may be offered to the Member of Council if required. Town Hall Meetings shall be limited to one per month and where possible should be combined with the other Member of Council elected to that Ward. A Council Member's request for staff participation at a Town Hall Meeting shall be directed to the CAO a minimum of 2 weeks in advance of the Town Hall and is subject to CAO pre-approval.

### **13 Meal Reimbursement**

- 13.01 Reimbursement shall be provided to Members of Council for the cost of meals attended for the purpose of discussing matters of City business as follows:
- a) reimbursement shall only be provided for reasonable food and alcohol expenses upon submission of the original restaurant bill providing details of the purchase and the HST number. The attendees and the purpose of the meeting is to be noted on the reverse side of the bill;
  - b) reimbursement for alcohol alone is not allowed; and,
  - c) Members of Council will not be reimbursed for any food, drink or alcohol for any social meal/event when taking City/Regional staff or Advisory Committee/Board members out (i.e. lunches, retirement functions, holiday lunches).

### **14 Communications**

- 14.01 A Capital Budget of \$15,000 per term, per Member of Council, shall be provided for the acquisition of computer hardware/software, television (to be only located in the City provided office), telecommunications equipment and home security system (for primary Pickering residence).
- a) Expenditures of this allocation shall only be made in the first 40 months of office following a general election.
  - b) No replacement computer hardware/software, telecommunications equipment or smart phones shall be purchased or leased for Members of Council unless it is lost or stolen, or no longer operates and cannot be repaired to its initial operating specifications. The old equipment must be returned, and/or affidavit that the equipment has been lost or stolen must be submitted. Any replacement equipment purchased under this Section will be charged to the Councillor's budget.
  - c) Following a general municipal election, by-election or appointment, the new Member(s) of Council shall be contacted by staff to determine their needs. Members of Council may choose to be supplied with equipment recommended by City staff or they may choose to be supplied with equipment of their choice. The Division Head, Information Technology must be consulted to verify compatibility and to clarify IT support opportunities before purchase. At the point of delivery of the equipment, Members of Council shall be required to sign a Home Equipment Agreement which shall set out the equipment that has been supplied to the Member and the

conditions under which it has been supplied.

- d) Expenditure for Television to be capped at \$1,000.00 and to include full installation and all applicable taxes.
- e) Expenditure for home security hardware system to be capped at \$5,000.00 and to include full installation and all applicable taxes.

14.02 Returning of equipment by Members of Council:

- a) the equipment issued to Members of Council remains the property of the City and shall be returned on completion of the Term of Office;
- b) every Member of Council who does not continue to hold municipal office shall return all computer hardware/software telecommunications equipment and any other equipment purchased or leased on their behalf to the City by November 30th following a general municipal election or within 21 days of ceasing to hold office;
- c) notwithstanding section 14.02 b), an outgoing Member may request the purchase of such equipment. The Treasurer shall consider each request when submitted, taking into consideration the age of the equipment, its market value as determined by the City's Information Technology Division and any licensed software on the equipment;
- d) a Member of Council will be provided with the opportunity to purchase City owned equipment if he or she:
  - i) has held office for at least one full term;
  - ii) is not standing for re-election; or
  - iii) has been unsuccessful in seeking re-election;
- e) the opportunity to purchase will not be available to a Member of Council who is disqualified or dismissed from holding office; and,
- f) in the event the above-noted items are not returned or purchased by the said date, the matter shall be referred to the Director, Corporate Services & City Solicitor to pursue recovery.

14.03 The City will reimburse each Member of Council for phone/internet and home security monitoring as follows:

- a) smart phone plans, iPad plans,
- b) A budget of \$1,800 per year will be provided for internet usage costs on a reimbursement basis only;
- c) Members of Council who are planning to travel out-of-province or

out-of-country must contact the City's IT staff or the provider to determine the appropriate voice and data roaming plan. Roaming charges will not be reimbursed by the City for usage costs for electronic devices that are accidentally turned on or left on; and,

- d) The City will reimburse costs to Members of Council for a home security monitoring system only on a monthly basis and the contract shall be in the name of the Member of Council and the contract shall **not** exceed the term of office.

## 15 Constituent Communications

It is recognized that there are many communications media available to Members of Council to communicate with their constituents, including newsletters, neighbourhood letters, cooperative letters, websites, town hall meetings and social media accounts.

15.01 An annual budget of \$16,000 for the first, second and third calendar years and an annual budget of \$4,000 for the fourth year for website expenditures will be provided to each Councillor for constituent communications. The City shall cover the cost of preparing, printing and mailing newsletters, neighbourhood letters and cooperative letters, as well as the cost of creating and maintaining a website and/or social media account as follows:

- a) a newsletter shall not be mailed or otherwise distributed beyond the boundaries of the constituency of a Member of Council except where postal walks cross beyond the boundaries of his/her ward;
- b) in instances where Members of Council are assigned or appointed to additional duties, or where it is determined that the same information is being sent out by another Member, and combining information is fiscally responsible, cross-ward boundary communication exceptions may be permitted at the discretion of the City Clerk;
- c) a newsletter, neighbourhood letter, cooperative letter, City-funded website or other communications media shall not contain information that would promote any candidate in an election;
- d) a newsletter, neighbourhood letter, cooperative letter, City-funded website or other communications media shall not contain advertising that would promote a product or service of a company, organization or individual;
- e) in the fourth year of a term of office, all communications must be delivered to the mailing address by April 30<sup>th</sup> in order to be reimbursed by the City.

- f) Any costs associated with video production or related costs will not be covered;

## 16 Websites

The City will reimburse Members of Council for the cost associated with development, licensing and maintaining a website as follows:

- 16.01 a link to the Councillor's City-funded constituent website will only be provided from the City of Pickering website under the Councillor's profile link;
- 16.02 Members of Council cannot convert an existing Councillor's City-funded constituent website to an election campaign website;
- 16.03 the City will reimburse for the purchase of one domain name registration, web hosting fees and website maintenance fees;
- 16.04 Members of Council's City-funded constituent websites will be hosted outside of the City's internet URL address and are entirely the responsibility of Members of Council;
- 16.05 City staff cannot provide any advice related to these external sites, including wording for disclaimers;
- 16.06 the City recommends that Members of Council choose a web-hosting company operating in Canada to reduce the risk of breaching the privacy of constituents under conditions of the *United States Patriot Act*;
- 16.07 use of the City logo and symbols must comply with all applicable City policies;
- 16.08 Members of Council's City-funded constituent websites cannot advocate for a political party, other levels of government, for-profit organizations or individuals not related to the business of the City, or for candidates in any municipal, provincial, federal election or by-election, or promote consent or rejection of a question on a ballot that has been submitted to electors; and,
- 16.09 Members of Council's City-funded constituent websites cannot contain advertising that would promote a product or service of any company, organization or individual.
- 16.10 Members of Council's City-funded constituent websites cannot intake or collect funds from any company, organization or individual.

## 17 In an Election Year

- 17.01 The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* states that the City cannot make a

contribution to any candidate or their campaign in a municipal election. Therefore, special conditions for expense reimbursement for Members of Council apply during an election year.

17.02 In an election year the following conditions shall apply effective May 1<sup>st</sup>:

- a) no Member of Council shall use the facilities, equipment, supplies, services, staff or other resources of the municipality for any election campaign or campaign-related activities;
- b) no Member of Council shall undertake any campaign-related activities on any municipal property;
- c) no mailing or distribution of constituent communications where the costs are borne by the City;
- d) no mailing or distribution of generic neighbourhood letters or cooperative letters shall occur where the costs are borne by the City;
- e) no community events can be organized by a Member of Council where the costs are borne by the City (i.e. Ward Town Hall Meetings, safety meetings, government info meetings, etc.).

Please refer to all associated Procedures and Standard Operating Procedures, if applicable, for detailed processes regarding this Policy.

**Previous** (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/9-fiscal-context>)

**Next** (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/11-land-use-planning>)

## 10. Strong mayor powers and duties

---

### Overview

In some municipalities, the head of council has additional powers and duties, known as strong mayor powers and duties. This section of the guide outlines differences in the role of head of council and the municipal council, the municipal budget process, accountability and transparency rules for the head of council, and the rules for filling a vacant head of council seat in these municipalities where strong mayor rules apply.

These additional strong mayor powers and duties apply to the head of council in any designated municipality, regardless of whether they are called “mayor” or another term, such as “warden”.

---

### Designated municipalities

Additional strong mayor powers and duties for the head of council apply only to designated municipalities. A designated municipality includes a municipality designated under this regulation (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/220530>) and the City of Toronto.

## Provincial priorities

Some strong mayor powers are related to provincial priorities that are identified in the following regulation (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/220580>).

Provincial priorities include the following:

- building 1.5 million new homes by December 31, 2031
- constructing and maintaining infrastructure to support housing, including:
  - transit
  - roads
  - utilities
  - servicing

---

## Powers and duties for the head of council and council in strong mayor municipalities

### Appoint a chief administrative officer

The head of council can choose to appoint their municipality's chief administrative officer.

### Hire municipal division heads and change organizational structure

The head of council can hire certain municipal division heads — excluding statutory positions. Positions that are excluded from this power include:

- the clerk or deputy clerk
- a treasurer or deputy treasurer
- an Integrity Commissioner
- an Ombudsman
- an Auditor General

- a registrar, as described in section 223.11 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK263>) of the Act
- a chief building official, as defined in the *Building Code Act, 1992* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/92b23>)
- a chief of police, as defined in the *Police Services Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p15>)
- a fire chief, as defined in the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97f04>)
- a medical officer of health, as defined in the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h07>).
- other officers or heads of divisions required to be appointed under *the Municipal Act, 2001* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25>), *the City of Toronto Act, 2006* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/06c11>), or any other Act
- any other persons identified in regulation (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r22530>)

The head of council can also choose to create and re-organize the structure of the municipality.

When making any changes to the organizational structure of the municipality, the head of council and municipality are subject to legal requirements including any terms in existing collective agreements or contracts that may apply.

### **Create, assign functions and appoint chairs of committees**

The head of council can create new committees of council made under the *Municipal Act, 2001* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25>) and *City of Toronto Act, 2006* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/06c11>), where all members are council members, and assign their functions. The head of council is also able to appoint the chairs and vice-chairs of such committees of council.

### **Bring forward matters for council consideration related to provincial priority**

The head of council can bring forward matters for council consideration if they are of the opinion that considering the matter could potentially advance a

provincial priority in regulation (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/220580>).

### **By-law power related to provincial priorities**

The head of council can propose certain municipal by-laws if they are of the opinion that the proposed by-law could potentially advance a prescribed provincial priority in regulation (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/220580>). When using this power, the head of council can only propose by-laws made under:

- the *Municipal Act, 2001* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25>)
- the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/06c11>)
- the *Planning Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>)
- section 2 of the *Development Charges Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97d27>)

When proposing the by-law, the head of council must provide a copy of the proposed by-law and their reasons for the proposal to the clerk and each member of council. The head of council can require council to consider and vote on the proposed by-law at a meeting (despite any rules in a local procedure by-law). By-laws proposed by the head of council using this power are passed if more than one third of members of council vote in favour of the by-law. The head of council is also able to vote on passing the by-law.

Note: municipal procedure by-laws and by-laws related to filling a vacancy on council are excluded from this power. There is also a separate process related to proposing the municipal budget. Read “Municipal budget process” in this section for more information.

### **Veto power and council override**

The head of council can choose to veto certain by-laws if they are of the opinion that all or part of the by-law could potentially interfere with a provincial priority in regulation (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/220580>). Only by-laws made under the *Municipal Act, 2001* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25>), the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/06c11>), the *Planning Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>), and section 2 of the *Development*

*Charges Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97d27>) may be vetoed by the head of council.

Note: there is a separate veto process related to the municipal budget. Read “Municipal budget process” in this section for more information.

The head of council must provide written notice to council of their intent to consider vetoing the by-law on or before two days after council voted in favour of the by-law.

Note: municipalities may wish to work with their head of council to develop local practices and procedures that could shorten the two-day period before by-laws are deemed to be passed. For example, heads of council may wish to explore providing written approval of certain by-laws the day council votes in favour of the by-law, in order to facilitate faster passage.

If the head of council decides to use their veto within 14 days after the day council voted in favour of the by-law, the head of council must provide a written veto document (which includes the veto and reasons for the veto) to the clerk on the day they use the veto power. The clerk must then share the written document with each member of council by the next business day and also make the written document available to the public.

### **Council override**

If the head of council uses their veto power, council then has the ability to override the veto. Within 21 days after the clerk provides the written veto document to the members of council, council may override the veto if two thirds of council members vote to override the veto. During this process, the head of council remains as a member of council for council decision-making with one vote.

### **Direct staff**

The head of council can direct staff to do certain things related to their additional powers and duties. Direction from the head of council to staff under this authority must be provided in writing. For example, the head of council could direct staff to undertake research and provide advice on policies and programs or to implement any decisions related to their additional powers and duties.

For more information on written documentation requirements for the head of council, please see Accountability and transparency rules for head of council in this section.

For more information about these powers and duties for the head of council, see the legislation and in particular, the following sections:

- 284.3 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK361>)
  - 284.5 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK363>)
  - 284.6 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK364>)
  - 284.8 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK366>)
  - 284.10 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK368>)
  - 284.11 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK369>)
  - 284.16 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK374>)
- 

## Delegating certain powers

The head of council may delegate certain strong mayor powers to council. These include the following:

- appointing a chief administrative officer
- creating, assigning functions and appointing chairs of committees of council

The head of council may also delegate certain strong mayor powers to either council or the municipality's chief administrative officer (if one is appointed). These include the following:

- hiring certain municipal division heads
  - changing the organizational structure of a municipality
- 

## Municipal budget process

Municipal budgets help define priorities for service delivery and projects each year. The budget process for designated municipalities is outlined in regulation (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r22530>) .

### **Annual budget process**

The head of council is required to propose the budget for the municipality each year by February 1. The head of council must share the proposed budget with each member of council and the municipal clerk, and make it available to the public. If the head of council does not propose the budget by February 1, council must prepare and adopt the budget.

After receiving the proposed budget from the head of council, council can amend the proposed budget by passing a resolution within a 30-day review period. The head of council then has 10 days from the end of the council review period to veto any council amendment. To veto a council amendment, the head of council must provide written documentation of the veto and rationale to each member of council and the municipal clerk on the day of the veto. Council then can override a head of council's veto of a council amendment with a two-thirds majority vote, within a 15-day period, after the head of council's veto period.

There are mechanisms in place to enable council and the head of council to shorten their respective review, veto and override periods. For example, council could pass a resolution to shorten their review and override period, and the head of council could provide written documentation to members of council and the municipal clerk to shorten the veto period.

At the end of this process, the resulting budget is adopted by the municipality.

### **In-year budget amendments**

The head of council is also able to initiate and prepare in-year budget amendments to raise additional amounts from property tax. The head of council may propose the budget amendment by sharing the proposed budget amendment with each member of council and the municipal clerk, and making it available to the public.

After receiving the proposed budget amendment from the head of council, council can amend the proposed budget amendment by passing a resolution

within a 21-day review period. The head of council then has 5 days from the end of the council review period to veto any council amendment. To veto a council amendment, the head of council must provide written documentation of the veto and rationale to each member of council and the municipal clerk on the day of the veto. Council then can override a head of council's veto of a council amendment to the proposed budget amendment, with a two-thirds majority vote, within a 10-day period, after the head of council veto period.

There are mechanisms in place to enable council and the head of council to shorten their respective review, veto and override periods. For example, council could pass a resolution to shorten their review and override period, and the head of council could provide written documentation to members of council and the municipal clerk to shorten the veto period.

At the end of this process, the resulting budget amendment is adopted by the municipality.

---

## **Accountability and transparency rules for head of council**

Section 2 of the guide outlines the legislated accountability and transparency framework (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/2-accountability-and-transparency>) for all members of council in Ontario, including the head of council. In municipalities with strong mayor powers, the head of council is also subject to additional rules.

For example, when the head of council uses any of these additional powers or duties, they are required to provide written documentation to the municipal clerk and members of council by the next business day. They must also make this written documentation available to the public. It is up to the municipality to work with their head of council to establish a process for making this documentation available to the public. For example, a municipality may wish to consider creating an online repository for written documentation.

Note: there are separate written documentation requirements for the head of council when using the veto power and by-law power related to provincial priorities, and for the municipal budget process.

Additionally, when a head of council directs municipal staff to do certain things related to these additional strong mayor powers and duties, they must do so in writing and are required to provide written documentation to the municipal clerk and chief administrative officer (if one is appointed) by the next business day.

The head of council is also subject to rules in the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m50>) that limit the use of their strong mayor powers or duties when they have certain pecuniary (financial) interests in a municipal matter. If the head of council is prohibited from preparing aspects of the budget due to a financial interest, the council can pass a resolution to amend the budget to address the matter. The head of council cannot veto these amendments. See the Accountability and Transparency (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/2-accountability-and-transparency#section-4>) section of this guide for more information on *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* matters.

---

## Filling a vacant head of council seat

At times, a head of council's seat may become vacant. Municipalities that have strong mayor powers are required to fill the head of council's seat through a by-election (see section 284.12 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK370>) of the Act).

Note: in the event of a dual vacancy where a lower-tier head of council also sits as a member on the upper-tier council, the lower-tier municipality (not the upper-tier) is required to fill the vacancy (see section 263(2) (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK333>) of the Act).

A vacant head of council seat must be declared vacant at the next council meeting after the seat becomes vacant (except in situations where the vacancy is due to death of the head of council).

The rules for municipal by-elections would apply. For example, after declaring the vacancy, council has 60 days to pass a subsequent by-law to initiate the by-election. Nominations can be filed once the by-law has been passed. Municipalities continue to have flexibility within these timelines. For example,

they could wait the full 60 days to pass the by-law if municipal staff need time to plan and prepare for the by-election.

Additionally, a municipality is not required to fill the position if a head of council's seat becomes vacant within 90 days before voting day in the year of a regular election.

If a head of council's seat becomes vacant after March 31 in the year of a regular municipal election, the municipality is required to appoint a head of council. This appointed head of council would not have these additional powers and duties outlined in this section of the guide.

These rules are specific to the head of council and do not impact the flexibility designated municipalities have in deciding how to fill other vacant council seats (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/6-changes-council-composition#section-1>).

Strong mayor powers and duties do not transfer to an interim or acting head of council. Once a new head of council has been elected pursuant to a by-election, that person will be the head of council and will be able to exercise the strong mayor powers and duties. The head of council may choose to delegate certain strong mayor powers. If the head of council chooses to delegate certain powers, these powers can still be exercised by the individual(s) to whom the powers were delegated to, in the event that head of council's seat becomes vacant.

## Helpful considerations: section 10

- Be aware of the legal framework within which your municipality must operate and whether your municipality is a designated municipality.
- Familiarize yourself with the provincial priorities as the use of certain strong mayor powers is related to them.
- Familiarize yourself with the roles of the head of council and council in a designated municipality.
- Familiarize yourself with the municipality's policies and procedures (for example, procedure by-law, council-staff relations policy) and

consider whether updates are necessary.

- Remember that if you are the head of council of a designated municipality it is your duty to prepare and propose the municipal budget by February 1 (if you do not, council must prepare and adopt the budget).
- If you are the head of council of a designated municipality, consider whether to delegate certain strong mayor powers that could continue to be exercised when you are away.
- Familiarize yourself with the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, which sets out a primary set of ethical rules for council and local board members regarding pecuniary (financial) conflicts of interest.

**Previous** (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/9-fiscal-context>)

**Next** (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/11-land-use-planning>)

Updated: July 21, 2023  
Published: July 07, 2023