



CANDIDATE'S GUIDE

TO LOCAL ELECTIONS IN B.C.
2026



Land Acknowledgment

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

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Key Contacts

Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Contact the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs (Ministry) for answers to questions about the material contained in this guide. Ministry staff can also provide additional information about local elections legislation in British Columbia.

Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Governance and Structure Branch

Phone: 250 387-4020

Email: LGgovernance@gov.bc.ca

Website: www.gov.bc.ca/localelections

Elections BC

Contact Elections BC for answers to questions about elector organization registration, election advertising, third party sponsors or campaign financing (including campaign contribution and expense limits).

Elections BC

Phone: 250 387-5305

Toll-free: 1 800 661 8683 / TTY 1 888 456-5448

Fax: 250 387-3578

Toll-free Fax: 1 866 466-0665

Email: electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca

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

Ministry of Education and Child Care

Contact the Ministry of Education and Child Care for answers to questions about school trustee elections and the *School Act*.

Ministry of Education and Child Care

Governance and Legislation Branch

Email: EDUC.Governance.Legislation@gov.bc.ca

Website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/school-trustee-election-procedures>

Service BC Contact Centre (Enquiry BC)

Contact the Service BC Contact Centre for answers to questions about Provincial Government programs and services.

Service BC Contact Centre (Enquiry BC)

In Victoria call: 250 387-6121

In Vancouver call: 604 660-2421

Elsewhere in B.C. call: 1 800 663-7867

Outside B.C.: 604 660-2421

Email: EnquiryBC@gov.bc.ca

Website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/home/get-help-with-government-services>

Municipal and Regional District Information

Contact CivicInfo BC for local elections statistics, election results and local government mailing addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses and websites.

CivicInfoBC

Phone: 250 383-4898

Email: info@civicinfo.bc.ca

Website: www.civicinfo.bc.ca/directories

Other Resources

BC Laws

BC Laws provides free public online access to the current laws of British Columbia. This unofficial current consolidation of B.C. Statutes and Regulations is updated continually as new and amended laws come into force.

Electronic versions of the *Local Government Act*, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, the *Vancouver Charter*, the *Community Charter*, the *School Act* and the *Offence Act* are available online at: www.bclaws.ca

NOTE: The Province of British Columbia does not warrant the accuracy or the completeness of the electronic version of the B.C. Statutes and Regulations available online at BC Laws.

Elections Legislation

Printed versions of local elections legislation including the *Local Government Act*, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, the *Vancouver Charter*, the *Community Charter*, the *School Act* and the *Offence Act* are available at public libraries in communities throughout British Columbia. Printed versions of the Acts are also available from Crown Publications, King's Printer for British Columbia at:

Crown Publications: King's Printer for British Columbia

563 Superior Street

Victoria, BC V8V 0C5

Phone: 250 387-6409

Toll Free: 1 800 663-6105

Fax: 250 387-1120

E-mail address: crownpub@gov.bc.ca

Website: www.crownpub.bc.ca/

Educational Materials

The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs, Elections BC, the Local Government Management Association, the Ministry of Education and Child Care, and the BC School Trustees Association collaborated to produce educational materials and guides for the 2026 general local elections.

Candidates in elections conducted by the City of Vancouver must refer to the *Vancouver Charter* and its regulations for specific provisions regarding the City of Vancouver general local election.

The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs' educational materials are available online at: www.gov.bc.ca/localelections

- Candidate's Guide to Local Elections in B.C.
- General Local Elections 101
- Scrutineer's Guide to General Local Elections in B.C.
- Supporting a Candidate for Local Elections in B.C.
- Thinking About Running for Local Office?
- Voter's Guide for Electors Living on Reserve
- Voter's Guide to Local Elections in B.C. (Available in: Chinese-Simplified; Chinese-Traditional; English; Farsi; French; Korean; and, Punjabi)
- What Every Candidate Needs to Know (Brochure)

Educational materials developed by Elections BC are available online at: <https://elections.bc.ca/local-elections/2026-general-local-elections/>

Local Guides

- Candidate Handbook
- Elector Organization Annual Financial Report Completion Guide
- Guide for Local Chief Election Officers
- Guide for Local Third Party Advertising Sponsors in B.C.
- Guide for Local Non-election Assent Voting Advertising Sponsors in B.C.
- Guide to Elector Organization Registration and Deregistration
- Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Candidates and their Financial Agents
- Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Elector Organizations and their Financial Agents
- Disclosure Statement Completion Guide for Local Candidates and their Financial Agents
- Disclosure Statement Completion Guide for Elector Organizations and their Financial Agents
- Disclosure Statement Completion Guide for Local Third Party Sponsors

Local Quick Reference Sheets

- Candidate campaign accounts
- Local campaign contributions
- Local election advertising
- Local election expense limits
- Self-funding rules
- Sponsorship contributions
- What to know before you start campaigning
- Fundraising functions

Online Learning

- Financial Agent Training for 2026 General Local Elections – Elector Organizations course
- Financial Agent Training for 2026 General Local Elections – Candidates course
- Online Learning for Third Party Sponsors

Educational materials developed by the Ministry of Education and Child Care are available online at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/school-trustee-election-procedures>

- School Trustee Election Procedures in British Columbia

Information about running for the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique is available online at:

- <https://www.csf.bc.ca/en/board-of-directors/school-trustee-elections-2026/>

Educational materials developed by the BC School Trustees Association are available online at: <https://bcsta.org/elections/>

- BC School Trustee Candidates Guide
- Guide à l'intention des candidats aux postes de conseillers scolaires de la Colombie-Britannique

Disclaimer

The information contained in the *Candidate's Guide to Local Elections in B.C.* (guide) is provided as general reference and all attempts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the material. In the event that there is inconsistency between the guide and the *Local Government Act*, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, or any other Act, the legislation shall prevail.

Please refer directly to the latest consolidation of provincial statutes at BC Laws (www.bclaws.ca) for specific election-related provisions and requirements within the *Local Government Act*, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, the *Vancouver Charter*, the *Community Charter*, the *School Act* and the *Offence Act*.

NOTE: The *Candidate's Guide to Local Elections in B.C.* was prepared to help candidates understand the electoral process and legislation regarding local elections in British Columbia. Each candidate must refer to the *Local Government Act*, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, the *Vancouver Charter*, the *Community Charter*, the *School Act*, and the *Offence Act* for specific provisions related to local elections.

Terms in **boldface** font are further explained in the Glossary.

Notable Legislative Changes and Updates for 2026

The *Miscellaneous Statute Amendments Act, 2025* (Bill 13) changed some local elections rules for the *Local Government Act*, *Local Election Campaign Financing Act*, *Vancouver Charter*, *School Act*, and the *Islands Trust Act* in 2025.

Key changes include:

- Candidates may submit their nomination documents to the Chief Election Officer in-person, by mail, or electronically, such as by email or fax, so long as they are received by the end of the nomination period.
 - There is no longer a requirement for nomination document “originals” to be submitted if the nomination documents were initially submitted to the Chief Election Officer electronically.
- Candidate personal information, such as a residential address and phone number, can no longer be published online or in public notices. The name of the jurisdiction where the candidates reside will be included in public notices and in online nomination documents.
 - Unredacted nomination documents are still viewable by electors at local government offices; however, electors must first sign a declaration that they will not use the information for purposes other than those permitted under the *Local Government Act*.
- Elector organizations are no longer required to submit separate candidate endorsement documents. Candidates and the authorized principal official for the elector organization must now work together and complete the endorsement section of the nomination documents if a candidate plans on accepting the endorsement.
 - **NOTE:** As part of this process, both parties will also need to provide signed consent statements for the endorsement.
- Chief Election Officers may choose to identify **authorized drop-off locations** where electors may return their mail ballot packages if mail ballot voting has been authorized in the local government election bylaw. Chief Election Officers must include the location and office hours for each drop-off location in the notice of an opportunity to vote by mail Issued by the local government.

The [Local Government Elections Regulation](#) was also amended to expand the list of acceptable identity documents to be more inclusive of Indigenous voters and adds certainty that the following documents can be used as forms of identification when registering to vote in local elections, a:

- document, issued by the government of Canada, that certifies that the applicant is registered as an Indian under the *Indian Act* (Canada), such as a status card;
- citizenship or membership card issued by a First Nation; and,
- citizenship card issued by Métis Nation British Columbia.

Additionally, the [Eligibility to Hold Public Office Act](#) came into force in 2025 and prevents elected officials from simultaneously holding an elected position with the provincial government and an elected position in a local government or as a trustee on a board of education.

Introduction

Local elections are the foundation of democratic local governments in British Columbia (B.C.).

Locally elected officials are charged with making decisions that affect the daily lives of citizens, families, and the business community – **municipal councils, regional district boards, boards of education, Islands Trust, local community commissions, specified parks boards** and other local bodies influence jobs, create safe communities for British Columbians and shape the long-term vision for their community.

Local elections enable residents and property owners to determine the body of individuals who will make decisions and govern on their behalf following **general voting day**.

Local governments (**municipalities** and **regional districts**) have roles that include:

- acting as a political forum through which citizens, families and business owners within the local community express their collective vision; and,
- providing services and programs to the community.

General local elections for **mayors, councillors, electoral area directors, school trustees, Islands Trust local trustees, local community commissioners** and **specified parks board commissioners** in B.C. are held every four years.

Local governments hold **by-elections** to fill council and regional district board vacancies that occur between **general local elections**.

This guide provides those considering running for elected office, **candidates**, election officials, **financial agents** and the general public with comprehensive, detailed information about the local elections process. Including:

- the key participants in local elections (e.g., electors, candidates, candidate representatives, **third party sponsors** and **elector organizations**);
- the key administrators in local elections (e.g., local government election officials and **Elections BC**);
- elected officials' responsibilities;
- qualifications for office;
- the nomination process;
- election campaigns and candidate representatives;

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

The [*School Trustee Election Procedures in British Columbia, for School Trustees*](#) has been published by the Ministry of Education and Child Care and is available online.

- general voting day; and,
- taking office.

The guide focuses primarily on candidates for **municipal councils** and **regional district boards**; however, the information in the guide may also be applicable to candidates for the **Islands Trust Council, local community commissions** and **specified parks boards**.

Candidates must be familiar with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* and its requirements. The *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* is available online at BC Laws (www.bclaws.ca).

Elections BC has published several guides to support candidates, financial agents, elector organizations and third party sponsors. The guides are available online at: <https://elections.bc.ca/local-elections/local-guides/>

Local Elections Generally

Local Government Act – sections 59, 65, 66, 92 and 104–110
Local Elections Campaign Financing Act – sections 17, 31–41 and 73–79

Each local government (**municipality** and **regional district**) is responsible for running its own **local election**. Local governments may also run school trustee elections on behalf of **boards of education**.

Municipal councils and regional district boards appoint a **Chief Election Officer** to run the local election in accordance with the *Local Government Act*, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, the *Vancouver Charter*, the *Community Charter*, the *School Act*, the *Offence Act* and the local government's **election bylaw**.

An election bylaw enables a municipal council or regional district board to make decisions about election administration, such as whether: voting machines will be used; mail ballot voting will be available; additional advance voting opportunities will be offered; voter registration will be conducted in advance or on voting day only; and/or, nomination deposits will be required.

Elections BC administers, investigates and enforces the campaign financing disclosure requirements including elector organization registration, candidate expense limits, campaign contribution limits and the election advertising rules under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

[See Appendix A](#) for more information about local election partner roles and responsibilities

The elections legislation contains provisions that must be consistently applied to all local elections; however, the legislation is also flexible enough that local governments are able to make choices about how to conduct elections in a manner that suits local circumstances (e.g., using the Provincial Voters List, and/or drawing by lot to break a tie between two or more candidates).

Voting Opportunities

General voting day is usually the most publicized or widely known voting opportunity **resident electors** and **non-resident property electors** have to cast their ballot in local elections.

Generally, at least two **advance voting opportunities** must be available whereby eligible **electors** may cast their ballot in local elections. Local

	governments have the authority to increase elector access to the voting process by offering mail ballot voting (to all electors) and holding additional voting opportunities for their citizens, including special voting opportunities.
General voting day for the 2026 general local elections is Saturday, October 17 .	General Voting Day General voting day is the primary opportunity for candidates seeking office as mayor, councillor, electoral area director, Islands Trust local trustee, local community commissioner or specified parks board commissioner to be elected to office by eligible electors. Voting places are open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. local time on general voting day.
	Advance Voting An advance voting opportunity must be held 10 days prior to general voting day.
The required advance voting opportunity for the 2026 general local election is Wednesday, October 7 .	This required advance voting day allows eligible electors who may not otherwise be able to vote on general voting day to cast their ballot. Local governments with populations greater than 5,000 are required to hold at least two advance voting opportunities.
	Local governments may set out in their election bylaws whether additional advance voting opportunities will be offered, or in communities of less than 5,000, whether the required additional advance voting opportunity will be waived.
Electors may not cast their ballot on the Internet or by telephone.	<i>See Appendix B for other key dates in the 2026 general local elections.</i>
	Special Voting Special voting opportunities may be held in any location – inside or outside the local government boundary – to provide eligible electors who may not otherwise be able to attend a voting place an opportunity to cast their ballots during local elections.
	Special voting opportunities are generally held in hospitals, long-term care facilities or other locations where electors' mobility may be impaired. Only designated electors are eligible to vote at special voting opportunities – for example, a local government may decide only patients and staff would be entitled to vote during a special voting opportunity held at a hospital.
New or amended election bylaws must be adopted by Monday, July 6 in order to be in effect for the 2026 general local elections.	Mail Ballot Voting Mail ballot voting provides <i>all</i> electors who are unable to attend a special, advance or general voting opportunity the ability to vote in local elections. Local governments must have provided for mail ballot voting in their election bylaw.
	If mail ballot voting has been authorized in the election bylaw, Chief Election Officers may now identify authorized drop-off locations for mail ballots.

Key Participants

Electors, candidates, financial agents, official agents, scrutineers, **volunteers**, **third party sponsors** and **elector organizations** are the key participants in the local elections process.

Electors

The right to vote in local elections is conferred on **resident electors** and **non- resident property electors**.

Resident electors are those people that may be eligible to vote in local elections based on where they reside. Non-resident property electors are those people that reside in one **jurisdiction** and own property in a different jurisdiction where they can also vote if they are eligible.

A resident elector must:

- be 18 years of age or older when registering to vote or will be 18 years of age on general voting day;
- be a Canadian citizen;
- have been a resident of British Columbia for at least six months immediately before registering to vote;
- be a resident of the **jurisdiction** when registering to vote; and,
- not be disqualified under the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment from voting in a local election or be otherwise disqualified by law.

A non-resident property elector must:

- be 18 years of age or older when registering to vote or will be 18 years of age on general voting day;
- be a Canadian citizen;
- have been a resident of British Columbia for at least six months immediately before registering to vote;
- have owned real property in the **jurisdiction** for at least 30 days before registering to vote; and,
- not be disqualified under the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment from voting in a local election or be otherwise disqualified by law.

Refer to the [Local Government Act, s.67](#) or [Vancouver Charter, s.25](#) (if you live in Vancouver) for the rules for determining B.C. residency.

An elector must have been a B.C. resident prior to **Thursday, April 16** to register to vote on general voting day for the 2026 general local elections.

ELECTORS LIVING ON RESERVE

Eligible Indigenous and non-Indigenous electors living on Reserve are entitled to vote in local government elections. Where they vote will depend on whether the Reserve they live on is included in the Letters Patent of a municipality or regional district. Letters Patent establish the legal boundaries of local governments. Contact the nearest municipality or regional district to determine where to vote.

Refer to the [*Voter's Guide for Electors Living on Reserve*](#) brochure for more information about voter eligibility when living on Reserve.

Candidates

A candidate in the context of this guide is an individual seeking election as **mayor, councillor, electoral area director, Islands Trust local trustee, local community commissioner or specified parks board commissioner**. School trustee candidates should refer to guidance materials produced by the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the BC School Trustees Association.

A candidate must have been nominated by eligible electors and have been declared a candidate by the **Chief Election Officer** in order to run for elected office.

A nominator **MUST** be a qualified elector of the municipality or electoral area (or neighbourhood constituency, if applicable) where the candidate is running. Elector qualifications are listed in sections 65 and 66 of the *Local Government Act* and sections 23 and 24 of the *Vancouver Charter*.

Financial Agents

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

Financial agents have several obligations under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, including:

- opening and depositing contributions to, and paying election-related expenses from, a candidate's campaign account;
- keeping complete and accurate campaign financing records of all transfers, campaign contributions, election expenses, and other financial transactions;

- filing the candidate's required disclosure statement with Elections BC within 90 days following general voting day; and,
- ensuring the campaign is in compliance with contribution rules and campaign period expense limits.

A candidate **must** have a financial agent. *A candidate is their own financial agent unless they appoint another individual* to the position. The appointment of a financial agent by a candidate must be made in writing and the person must consent to the appointment.

Official Agents

Candidates may appoint an official agent to represent them during the election process. The official agent may act as a campaign manager or spokesperson or be the point of contact for the people helping on a candidate's election campaign.

Scrutineers

Scrutineers represent candidates at advance, special and general voting opportunities and observe voting procedures and scrutinize the ballot-counting process after the close of voting on general voting day. Scrutineers are also known as "candidate representatives" in provincial legislation.

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

Volunteers

Volunteers are individuals who provide services, such as preparing and distributing flyers, canvassing, phoning eligible voters, handling logistics and taking on other election campaign-related activities. Candidates and elector organizations may enlist volunteer services. A volunteer must not receive any payment or remuneration for their services.

Contact Elections BC by phone at: 250 387-5305 or elsewhere in B.C. call: 1 800 661-8683 (Toll-free) or by email at: electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca for answers to questions about being a volunteer for an election campaign.

Third Party Sponsors

A third party sponsor is an individual or organization that sponsors election advertising independently from candidates and elector organizations.

In general, third party election advertising includes any transmission of a communication to the public by anyone other than a candidate or elector organization that directly or indirectly promotes or opposes a candidate or an elector organization during the pre-campaign and campaign periods. In the **campaign period**, it also includes advertising on an issue with which a candidate or elector organization is associated.

Third party sponsors must be independent from candidates and/or elector organizations and must not coordinate, or sponsor advertising

together with, or on behalf of a candidate and/or elector organization. Third party sponsors must register with Elections BC before conducting advertising during the **pre-campaign** and campaign periods.

Refer to Elections BC's [Sponsorship Contributions – Quick Reference Sheet](#) for more information about third party sponsors.

Elector Organizations

Elector organizations are organizations that endorse or intend to endorse a candidate(s) in local elections. Elector organizations may be referred to as “civic political parties.”

Elector organizations may have their name, abbreviation or acronym shown on the ballot beside their endorsed candidate(s) name and generally promote their endorsed candidate(s) or the organization's viewpoints during an election campaign.

Elector organizations must register with Elections BC prior to endorsing candidates or conducting any financial activity, including accepting contributions or incurring election expenses. The elector organization's financial agent is responsible for ensuring compliance with the contribution and expense limits as well as the campaign financing disclosure requirements under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. Elector organizations must also file annual financial reports about their financial activities outside of elections years with Elections BC.

Refer to the [Guide to Elector Organization Registration and Deregistration](#) and the [Guide to Campaign Financing for Elector Organizations and their Financial Agents in B.C.](#) for more information about elector organizations.

Key Election Administrators

Unlike provincial elections, local elections are not managed by one organization. Each local government is responsible for running its own local elections, including voting, counting, reporting results, and accepting candidate nominations. Elections BC is responsible for administering the campaign financing and election advertising rules in the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

Election Officials

Municipal councils and **regional district boards** appoint a **Chief Election Officer** to administer local elections. The Chief Election Officer may be a senior local government employee (e.g., **Corporate Officer**) or a private contractor hired to conduct the election on the local government's behalf.

Generally, Chief Election Officers are responsible for overseeing all local election administration activities, including: receiving nomination documents; declaring candidates; administering voting opportunities; counting ballots; and, declaring election results. The Chief Election Officer

The *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* refers to local Chief Election Officers as “local election officers.”

is also responsible for training the Deputy Chief Election Officer and Presiding Election Officials.

The Chief Election Officer must conduct the election in accordance with the *Local Government Act*, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, the *Vancouver Charter*, the *Community Charter*, the *School Act*, the *Offence Act* and the local government's **election bylaw**.

Elections BC

Elections BC is the non-partisan and independent Office of the Legislature responsible for the administration of the provincial electoral process in B.C. and the campaign financing and advertising rules for local elections and non-election assent voting events under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

Elections BC administers, investigates and enforces the campaign financing disclosure requirements including expense limits, campaign contribution limits and election advertising rules under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

Elections BC also has the authority to conduct investigations of any matter that might contravene the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* and levy administrative monetary penalties for non-compliance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

For more information about campaign financing and third party advertising rules, please visit Elections BC's homepage for local elections: <https://elections.bc.ca/local-elections/2026-general-local-elections/>

B.C. CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

The B.C. Chief Electoral Officer's role is different from the Chief Election Officer's role. The *B.C. Chief Electoral Officer* is an independent officer of the Legislature who oversees the provincial electoral process in B.C. The *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* gives the B.C. Chief Electoral Officer the additional role of overseeing campaign financing and election advertising in local elections and ensuring compliance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

About Being an Elected Official

Local Government Act – sections 198-199, 204 and 207
Community Charter – sections 81, 119, 123 and 125
Vancouver Charter – sections 9, 139 and 145.1

Regional districts are a federation of municipalities, electoral areas, and in some cases, Treaty First Nations, each of which have representation on the regional district board.

Candidates elected as **electoral area directors** and municipal council members who are appointed as **municipal directors** serve together on the regional district board. In some instances, they may also serve with Treaty First Nation directors appointed from the governing body of the Treaty First Nation.

There are responsibilities and restrictions prospective **candidates** may wish to consider before they decide to run for elected office – these include the term of office, time commitment, remuneration, voting, financial disclosure, privacy, ethics, responsible conduct and the respective roles of elected officials and local government staff.

Term of Office

Candidates elected in **general local elections** serve a four-year term. This term begins at the first **municipal council** or **regional district board** meeting following general local elections. The term for sitting councillors ends immediately before the first council meeting following the general local elections four years later. Regional district electoral area director terms end when their successor takes office following a general local election.

Time Commitment

Holding local office can represent a significant time commitment. Councils usually hold one meeting every week or two and regional district boards generally hold one meeting each month. A municipal council appoints members to the regional district board based on who they believe best represents the municipality's regional interests.

Councillors and regional district board members may also sit on special committees, boards or commissions that may require additional meetings and time commitment, along with attending public hearings and community engagement activities.

Elected officials are expected to be prepared for meetings so they can participate in an informed way and contribute to collective decision-making.

Absences from Meetings (Disqualification)

An elected official who is absent from meetings for 60 consecutive days or four consecutive regularly scheduled council or board meetings (whichever is longer) may be disqualified from office. This does not apply when the elected official is:

- absent because of illness or injury;
- provided permission by the municipal council or regional district board to be absent;
- on parental leave;

- on mandatory leave of absence; or,
- temporarily suspended as a result of a sanction imposed after a code of conduct investigation.

Attending a council or board meeting remotely is not considered an absence where the local government has electronic meeting provisions in its meeting procedure bylaw.

Remuneration

Elected officials generally receive honouraria or other financial compensation while in elected office. Remuneration varies from community to community – in some communities, elected officials may be compensated for part-time hours and find they sometimes work full-time hours. Local governments have the legislative authority and are responsible for setting the remuneration for elected officials.

Prospective candidates may wish to contact the local government to determine the remuneration elected officials receive in a given community.

Obligation to Vote

Every elected official present at a municipal council and regional district board meeting must vote “*for*” or “*against*” a motion. Those councillors or board members that did not expressly vote “*yes*” or “*no*” on a particular matter are deemed to have voted in favour of the motion.

The only exceptions to the obligation to vote would be when an elected official has declared a conflict of interest related to the matter being voted upon or an elected official is a respondent or complainant in a code of conduct investigation and the matter to be voted on is whether to impose recommended sanctions – the elected official would then be prohibited from voting and must leave the meeting until after the vote is taken.

Ongoing Financial Disclosure

Elected officials are required under the *Financial Disclosure Act* to file a **financial disclosure statement** at the time they submit nomination documents, each year while holding office and shortly after leaving office.

The *Financial Disclosure Act* disclosure statement details an elected official’s corporate and personal holdings and must be available for public inspection.

The *Financial Disclosure Act* is administered by the Ministry of Attorney General. Refer to [Municipal officials – financial disclosure](#) for more information about ongoing financial disclosure.

Prospective candidates are required to file a financial disclosure statement at the time they submit nomination documents to the Chief Election Officer. An elected official must file a financial disclosure statement annually with the local government **Corporate Officer** while in office. Failure to file a financial disclosure statement carries a penalty of up to \$10,000.

The *Financial Disclosure Act* disclosure statement is not the same as the candidate campaign financing disclosure statement required under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* that each candidate must file after general local elections.

Privacy

Elected officials perform many of their duties in the public eye and as such are subject to increased public interest and exposure – while campaigning for elected office, in the course of conducting their official duties on council or a regional district board, or while simply engaging in personal activities.

Election Campaigns

Legislative changes implemented for the 2026 general local elections have been made to better safeguard candidates' personal information while still providing electors with necessary information about candidate(s).

Public notices and the online publication of nomination documents will no longer include candidate personal information, such as personal telephone numbers and their residential addresses. Electors will instead see the name of the jurisdiction in which the candidate is a resident in public notices and online nomination documents – for example, the name of the municipality, electoral area, or treaty lands where the candidate resides.

Unredacted copies of the nomination documents for a candidate can still be viewed at the local government office. Prior to viewing nomination documents a person must sign a statement that they will only use the information included in them for the purposes authorized by the *Local Government Act* or the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

If a candidate, acting as their own financial agent, or an appointed financial agent has concerns about privacy, they can create an election campaign-specific email address or temporarily rent a P.O. Box for the duration of the local election to engage with electors, receive notices, and complete post-election reporting.

Social Media

Social media has increased the amount of exposure and feedback elected officials receive in the course of their duties. As such, aspects of an elected official's life may become a matter of public interest and may result in a loss of privacy to a lesser or greater degree.

Some steps a candidate could take to protect their privacy before starting an election campaign, include:

- familiarizing themselves with the privacy settings and moderation tools available on the social media platforms they are using;
- making social media accounts that provide a clear separation between public communications and private life optimized using each platform's settings; or,
- making a plan for responding to different kinds of behaviour or messages from users of those platforms.

If you believe you are experiencing what could be considered [criminal harassment](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/victimlinkbc) contact your local police department or VictimlinkBC for information and support: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/victimlinkbc>

The Ethics of Elected Office

Elected officials are entrusted with significant decision-making authority. Mayors, councillors and regional district board members are the stewards of their community's public assets and have a great deal of influence over, and responsibility for, the services and programs that citizens receive.

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

Elected officials must also conduct themselves in an open, transparent and accountable manner and avoid situations that may bring their integrity or the integrity of the municipal council or the regional district board into question.

Responsible Conduct

Responsible conduct is how locally elected officials conduct themselves in their relationships with elected colleagues, local government staff and the public – and is directly connected to how a community is governed. An elected official's relationships with their colleagues, local government staff and the public play a significant role in helping carry out their responsibilities.

Further information about [responsible conduct](#) and expectations for B.C.'s locally elected officials is available online.

Responsible conduct involves locally elected officials acting with integrity, accountability, respect, leadership and collaboration. Many local governments across B.C. utilize various tools to support responsible conduct including procedure bylaws and local government harassment and anti-bullying policies.

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

- **Integrity** means being honest and demonstrating strong ethical principles.
 - Upholding the public interest, serving citizens diligently to make decisions in the best interests of the community, and behaving in a manner that promotes public confidence in local government.
- **Accountability** means an obligation and willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions.
 - Being transparent in how an elected official individually, and a council/ board collectively, conducts business and carries out their duties; listening to and considering the opinions and needs of the community in all decision-making; and, allowing for discourse and feedback.
- **Respect** means having due regard for others' perspectives, wishes, and rights; displaying deference to the offices of local government, and the role of local government in community decision-making.
 - Treating every person, including other members of the council/ board, staff and the public, with dignity, understanding and respect, and valuing the role of diverse perspectives and debate in decision-making.
- **Leadership and Collaboration** means an ability to lead, listen to and positively influence others; coming together to pursue a common goal through collective efforts.
 - Calmly facing challenges and providing considered direction on the issues of the day, while empowering colleagues and staff to do the same; creating space for open expression by others; taking responsibility for one's own actions and reactions; and, accepting the decisions of the majority.

Codes of Conduct

Responsible conduct is grounded in local government practices that include strong orientation on roles and responsibilities, local government policies and procedures and information on local government legislation. Many local governments have created codes of conduct to assist locally elected officials to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

A code of conduct is a set of rules outlining how locally elected officials must behave when carrying out their elected duties. Codes of conduct can also promote a positive, ethics-focused organizational culture and create a shared understanding about the roles and responsibilities of locally elected officials and local government staff, and what they can and cannot do.

It is anticipated that a new provincial code of conduct framework will be in place after the 2026 general local elections that will replace existing local codes of conduct. This framework will set a standard of behaviour for locally elected officials to follow that supports good community governance and a standard code of conduct complaint, investigation, and sanction process for all local governments to follow.

The guide [*Forging the Path to Responsible Conduct in Your Local Government*](#) provides further information about responsible conduct and codes of conduct.

Conflict of Interest and Other Ethical Standards

Disclosure of Conflict

The *Community Charter* conflict of interest rules set out that local elected officials who have a financial (pecuniary) interest in a matter that will be discussed or voted upon at a municipal council or regional district board meeting must declare a conflict of interest. Following their declaration, they may not participate in discussions, vote or exercise influence on that matter.

Elected officials must not vote on, or participate in discussions about, any matters where they have a direct or indirect financial interest that is not shared with the broader community.

Municipal councils or regional district board members who believe they have a financial interest in a matter under discussion, must:

- declare their interest in the matter;
- withdraw from the meeting;
- not participate in the discussion or vote; and,
- not attempt to influence, in any way, the voting of other elected officials on the matter.

An elected official who has a direct or indirect financial interest in a matter and has participated in discussions or attempted to influence the vote or votes on the matter, may be disqualified from office.

Given that conflict of interest is complex and dependent on the particular facts in a given circumstance, conflict of interest can only be decided by the courts; ultimately the courts have the expertise to apply the law to the facts of a specific situation.

Locally elected officials are expected to comply with their local code of conduct and related policies and procedures.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Local Government Act,
section 205

Community Charter,
sections 100-109

Vancouver Charter,
sections 145.2-145.92

It would be best for that elected official to seek independent legal advice if they were unsure about whether they were in a conflict of interest.

SCENARIO – CONTRACTUAL CONFLICT?

Aaron Michaels owns Arrow Landscaping, a local gardening and landscaping company – they are also a municipal councillor.

Arrow Landscaping holds a contract with a nearby municipality and does not currently have a contract with the municipality where Aaron is a councillor – although the company did submit a bid the last time there was a request for tenders.

The current municipal landscaping contract is about to expire, and council is considering whether to extend the current contract or put the contract out to tender.

Councillor Michaels has a *direct and/or indirect financial interest* in this matter and is likely to be in a conflict of interest if they participate in any discussions or votes related to the landscaping contract.

Councillor Michaels would have a *direct financial interest* if Arrow Landscaping submitted a bid for the municipal landscaping contract. If only a small number of landscaping companies operate in the region, Councillor Michaels also has an *indirect financial interest* in decisions that affect the companies that compete with Arrow Landscaping for business – even if Arrow Landscaping did not submit a bid to provide services to the municipality.

Councillor Michaels must inform council about their connection to the contract and excuse themselves from further debate and discussion by leaving the room until the council moves on to another topic, to avoid any perception of influencing or affecting council's decision.

Inside Influence

An elected official who has a monetary interest in a matter must not use their office to attempt to influence a decision, recommendation, or action to be made or taken on a matter at a council or committee meeting, or by officers and employees of the local government. For example, a councillor would likely be in contravention of the inside influence restriction if they lobbied the municipal approving officer regarding an application to subdivide land owned by that councillor.

Outside Influence

An elected official who has a monetary interest in a matter must not use their office to attempt to influence a decision, recommendation, or other action to be made or taken on a matter by any other person or body. For example, a councillor would likely be in contravention of the outside

influence restriction if they lobbied a provincial regulator on behalf of a business partner using the municipality's letterhead in correspondence with the provincial regulator.

Accepting Gifts

Elected officials must not accept a fee, gift or other personal benefit that is directly connected to the performance of their duties as a municipal council or regional district board member. Elected officials may, however, accept gifts or other personal benefits received as a matter of social obligations or protocol related to their position (such as a gift from a visiting delegation from another government) and compensation authorized by law.

An elected official who received such a gift must file a disclosure statement with the local government **Corporate Officer**. The statement must include: the nature of the gift; its source; when it was received; and, the circumstances under which it was given and received. The statement must be filed as soon as possible after the gift was received.

Disclosure of Contracts

Elected officials must publicly disclose any contract in which they have a monetary interest. This requirement applies to contracts between the local government and elected official, as well as to contracts between the local government and persons or companies with whom the elected official is connected. For example, this would include contracts with a company in which the elected official is a director, officer, significant shareholder or senior employee.

Use of Insider Information

An elected official must not use information that is not otherwise available to the general public for gaining or furthering a monetary interest. The *Community Charter* does not specify a time limit for this restriction. As such, the restriction applies indefinitely – or until the information is made available by the municipal council or regional district board to the general public.

Voting for an Illegal Expenditure

Elected officials must not vote for a bylaw or resolution authorizing the expenditure, investment, or other use of money contrary to the *Community Charter*, *Local Government Act*, or the *Vancouver Charter*.

Consequences

Elected officials who contravene any of the conflict-of-interest provisions may be disqualified from holding office and may be required to pay the local government for any financial gain as a result of the contravention.

Elected officials are not authorized to fulfill local government staff roles or duties.

Confidentiality

Past and present elected officials are required to keep confidential information private until such time as that information is made publicly available by the municipal council or regional district board.

Information discussed in closed meetings and information contained in records that have not been released to the public must be kept confidential until that information is released in an open meeting.

A local government may recover any damages that result from an elected official, or former elected official, who intentionally disclosed confidential information.

Elected Officials and Local Government Staff

Elected officials perform a role that is distinct from the role of the Chief Administrative Officer, or **Corporate Officer**, and other local government staff.

Role of Elected Officials

Elected officials are decision-makers and set strategic policies and priorities for the municipality or regional district – they do not implement policies and decisions or otherwise administer the local government.

Elected officials do not have regular contact with local government staff, nor do elected officials perform, or supervise, the roles or duties assigned to local government staff. An elected official must not interfere with, hinder, or obstruct the work of local government officers or employees.

Role of the Mayor or Board Chair

In addition to the responsibilities of a councillor or board member, the mayor and regional district board chair provides leadership by:

- recommending bylaws and resolutions that may assist in good governance;
- chairing meetings and maintaining the order and conduct of debate;
- attending ceremonies and meetings on behalf of the council/board;
- communicating information from the Chief Administrative Officer or outside meetings to council/board;
- establishing standing committees; and,
- communicating council or board decisions to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and/or City Manager so staff may implement policies, programs and other decisions.

Role of Local Government Staff

Local government staff (e.g., Chief Administrative Officer and Corporate Officer) are responsible for implementing municipal council or regional district board decisions and providing advice to elected officials.

The Chief Administrative Officer or Corporate Officer is the primary point of contact between elected officials and local government staff (e.g., bylaw enforcement officers, public works staff) employed by the municipality or regional district.

Prospective candidates must have been a B.C. resident prior to **Tuesday, March 10** to be eligible to run in the 2026 general local elections.

Local government employees must take a leave of absence to run for elected office and must resign from their position if elected.

Who May Run For Office

To run for local office (e.g. **mayor, councillor, or electoral area director**), **you** must:

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

Prospective candidates for local office must be nominated by at least two eligible electors from the jurisdiction where the person is seeking election. Local governments may require up to 10 or 25 nominators for each prospective candidate. Specific details about local nomination requirements are available by contacting the Chief Election Officer.

Local Government Employees

Local government staff (e.g., officers and employees), who wish to run for office in the local government where they work must take a leave of absence in order to run and they must resign if elected.

The requirement for a salaried employee to take a leave of absence and resign if successfully elected may apply in the following circumstances, a:

- municipal employee running for elected office in the municipality in which they are employed;
- municipal employee seeking to be elected as an electoral area director for the regional district of which their municipal employer is a member;
- regional district employee seeking to be elected as a member of the board of the regional district in which they are employed; and,
- regional district employee seeking to be elected as the mayor or councillor of a municipality that is a member of the regional district.

An employee who was not successful in their bid for local elected office would then return to the job from which they took the required leave of absence.

Local Government Volunteers

Generally, volunteers who do not receive monetary compensation for services provided to a local government are not “employees” for election purposes and would not be required to take a leave of absence or resign if elected.

A person may still be considered a volunteer if they are compensated for the requirements set out in the [Volunteer Eligibility for Office Regulation](#).

If a volunteer receives monetary compensation from the local government (e.g., some volunteer firefighters) and their role is not covered by the *Volunteer Eligibility for Office Regulation*, they may be considered an ‘employee’ and would need to take a leave of absence and resign if successfully elected to office.

B.C. Public Service Employees

B.C. Public Service employees may seek nomination as a candidate in local elections. The duties of elected office must not affect the employee’s normal working hours and there must not be a conflict of interest between the employee’s duties as an elected official and their duties as a B.C. Public Service employee.

Federal Employees

Federal public service employees may seek nomination as a candidate in local elections after they obtain permission from the Public Service Commission of Canada (PSC).

Federal employees must not be declared as candidates or undertake any candidacy-related activities unless they have first obtained permission from the PSC. The PSC may grant permission, with or without conditions, when it is satisfied that seeking nomination as, or being, a candidate will not impair or be perceived as impairing an employee’s ability to perform their job-related duties in a politically impartial manner.

Visit: [Political Activities - Canada.ca](https://politicalactivities-canada.ca), or contact the PSC at 1 866 707-7152 (Toll-free), or by e-mail at cfp.activitespolitiques-politicalactivities.psc@canada.ca for further information.

Members of the B.C Legislative Assembly

Members of the Legislative Assembly of B.C. may not hold office both provincially and locally at the same time and will be deemed to have resigned from any elected local office when accepting provincial office.

Further information about local government employees, local government volunteers, B.C. Public Service employees and Federal Government employees eligibility to run for office is [available online](#).

Who May Not Run for Office

A person is not eligible to run as a candidate for any local government office if they:

- have been convicted of an indictable offence and are disqualified from the date of the conviction until the date on which they are sentenced;
- have been convicted of and sentenced for an indictable offence and are in custody;
- have been found guilty of an election offence, such as intimidation or vote- buying or other election offence, and are prohibited from holding office;
- are judges of the Provincial Court, Supreme Court or Court of Appeal;
- are involuntarily confined to a psychiatric facility or other institution;
- have been disqualified for specified reasons such as, failing to:
 - file a campaign financing disclosure statement in a previous election;
 - make an oath of office; or,
 - attend local government meetings in the manner and frequency required by legislation; or,
- have been disqualified under the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment from voting in an election in British Columbia or from being nominated for, being elected to or holding the office, or be otherwise disqualified by law.

Nomination Period and Declaration of Candidates

The nomination period is the only time during which the **Chief Election Officer** is permitted to accept nomination documents and deposits (where applicable) from nominees for office. The nomination period begins at 9:00 a.m. local time on the 46th day before general voting day and ends at 4:00 p.m. local time on the 36th day before general voting day.

The Chief Election Officer is required to publish notice about the nomination period that includes: the offices for which candidates are to be elected; the dates, times and places at which nominations will be received; and, how interested individuals can obtain information about the requirements and procedures for making a nomination.

It is the nominee's responsibility to ensure all the required information in the nomination documents are submitted to the Chief Election Officer (or designate) by the deadline and that the information is accurate and complete. A nominee officially becomes a **candidate** when they have submitted all the required information in the nomination documents and have been subsequently declared a candidate by the Chief Election Officer.

The Chief Election Officer officially declares the nominees who have met the candidacy requirements and have become candidates for the local government election immediately following the end of the nomination period.

The Chief Election Officer may extend the nomination period until 4:00 p.m. local time on the third day after the end of the nomination period when there are fewer candidates than positions to be elected. Any subsequent nominees would be declared candidates at that time.

Who May Nominate

Prospective candidates for local office must be nominated by at least two eligible electors from the municipality or electoral area where the person is seeking election. Local governments have the ability in their election bylaw to require two, 10, or, in **jurisdictions** with populations greater than 5,000, 25 nominators for each prospective candidate.

A nominator must be eligible to vote in the jurisdiction as a **resident elector** or as a **non-resident property elector**. To nominate a candidate for local office, the nominator must:

- be 18 years of age or older when they register to vote or will be 18 years of age or older on general voting day;

The nomination period for the 2026 general local elections begins at 9:00 a.m. local time on **Tuesday, September 1** and ends at 4:00 p.m. local time on **Friday, September 11**.

The declaration of candidates for the 2026 general local elections takes place at 4:00 p.m. local time on **Friday, September 11**.

The nomination period for the 2026 general local elections may be extended until 4:00 p.m. local time on **Monday, September 14** if there are insufficient candidates.

Contact the Chief Election Officer to determine the number of nominators required by the local government. Local government contact information is available from [CivicInfo BC](#)

A nominator **MUST** be an elector of the municipality or electoral area (or neighbourhood constituency, if applicable). Elector qualifications are listed in sections 65 and 66 of the *Local Government Act* and sections 23 and 24 of the *Vancouver Charter*.

- be a Canadian citizen;
- have been a resident of B.C. for at least six months before registering to vote;
- be a resident in the municipality or electoral area for which the nomination is being made, or in the case of a non- resident property elector, own real property in the municipality or electoral area, for 30 days immediately before the day of registration; and,
- not be disqualified under the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment from voting in an election or be otherwise disqualified by law.

Endorsement by an Elector Organization

Only elector organizations registered with Elections BC can complete the endorsement section of the candidate's nomination documents, receive campaign contributions, and incur election expenses. The elector organization must have a membership of at least 50 eligible electors (either resident electors or non-resident property electors) at the time it submits registration information to Elections BC.

An **elector organization** endorses a candidate on the ballot by working with the candidate to complete the endorsement section of the candidate's nomination documents. Candidates endorsed by elector organizations must indicate their consent to the endorsement by providing their signature as part of the nomination documents submitted to the Chief Election Officer.

An elector organization cannot endorse more candidates in an election than there are offices to be filled, and a candidate can only be endorsed by one elector organization.

Refer to the [Guide to Elector Organization Registration and Deregistration](#) and the [Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Elector Organizations and their Financial Agents](#) for more information about elector organization endorsements.

Nomination Documents

Nomination documents are generally available from local government offices during regular business hours – two to four weeks before the nomination period begins and remain available until the nomination period ends.

Nomination documents must include the following:

- the person's full name (first, middle, last);

Elections BC's deadline for elector organizations to register to endorse candidates in the 2026 general local elections is **Sunday, July 31**.

- the person's usual name, if it is different from their full name and they would rather have that name appear on the ballot – e.g., Cathy instead of Catherine;
- the office for which the person is nominated (e.g., mayor, councillor, or electoral area director);
- the person's residential address;
- the person's mailing address, if different from their residential address;
- the names and residential addresses of nominators, and, if one or more of the nominators is a non-resident property elector, the address of the property owned by the nominator(s) in the jurisdiction;
- a statement signed by each nominator that, to the best of their knowledge, the person is qualified to hold local government office in British Columbia; and,
- signed statements by the candidate and the authorized principal official of an elector organization agreeing to an endorsement, if applicable.

The nomination documents must also include supporting information that demonstrates the person's consent and preparedness to run in general local elections, including:

- the person's written consent to the nomination;
- the person's financial disclosure statement, as required by section 2(1) of the *Financial Disclosure Act*;
- a signed declaration that either the person is acting as their own financial agent, or identifying the individual they have appointed as their financial agent;
- the person's **solemn declaration** that:
 - they are qualified to be nominated for office;
 - the information provided in the nomination documents is true;
 - they fully intend to accept the office if elected; and,
 - they are aware of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, understand the requirements and restrictions under that Act and intend to comply with those requirements.

An individual that is not submitting nomination documents in-person to the Chief Election Officer must make arrangements for completing the solemn declaration prior to the close of the nomination period.

Nomination documents can be submitted to the Chief Election Officer, or other person designated for that purpose, in-person, by mail, fax or email before 4:00 p.m. local time at the end of the nomination period.

Do not include additional information on nomination documents that is not required by legislation (e.g., personal telephone number).

Prospective candidates must be aware of, understand and intend to comply with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

The nomination is not valid if all nomination documents are not received by the end of the nomination period.

Any changes to the nomination document information that takes place after the election results have been declared must be sent directly to Elections BC.

Standardized nomination forms are available from local governments across B.C.

SOLEMN DECLARATIONS

Candidates must make a “solemn declaration” as part of the nomination process. **Solemn declarations** require the person making the declaration to attest to the truthfulness of a given statement – such as that a candidate is aware of certain legislative requirements or intends to take office if elected.

Solemn declarations are legal statements and the person making the declaration is responsible for ensuring that they are making true and accurate solemn declarations. A person who made a false or misleading solemn declaration has committed an election offence and is subject to penalties including fines of up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment for up to one year.

Prospective candidates can make the required solemn declarations with a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits for B.C. (e.g., lawyer, notary public) or make a declaration before the Chief Election Officer when the prospective candidate submits their nomination documents.

Nomination Deposits

Local governments may require prospective candidates to pay a refundable nomination deposit of up to \$100 when they submit their nomination documents – the deposits are fully refunded when candidates file their campaign financing disclosure statement with Elections BC within 90 days following local elections.

The nomination deposit is refunded by the local government when a nominee withdraws their candidacy before the nomination period ends.

Contact the Chief Election Officer to determine if a nomination deposit is required by the local government.

Challenge of Nomination

Nomination documents are available for public inspection in local government offices during regular office hours from the time they have been submitted until 30 days after the election results have

been declared. A person must sign a statement that they will only use the information included in nomination documents for the purposes authorized by the *Local Government Act* or the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* prior to viewing the nomination documents.

Local governments may, by bylaw, choose to make all or part of the documents publicly available (e.g. on the Internet or by other electronic means) during all or part of the public inspection period. A candidate's residential address cannot be included in nomination documents available outside the local government office to enhance candidate privacy.

A person who inspects or accesses nomination documents must only use the information they contain for purposes related to:

- local election activities;
- the conflict-of-interest provisions in the *Community Charter*, *Vancouver Charter*, and/or *School Act*;
- the disqualification provisions in the *Local Government Act*, *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, *Community Charter* and/or *Vancouver Charter*; and/or,
- provisions in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

An eligible **elector**, another nominee for office or the Chief Election Officer can challenge a prospective candidate's nomination when they believe the nomination documents are incorrect or the person is not eligible to be nominated for office. Nomination challenges must be made through an application to the Provincial Court.

The Provincial Court accepts challenges to nominations from the time the nomination documents were submitted to the Chief Election Officer until 4:00 p.m. local time on the fourth day after the nomination period ends. The application must briefly set out the facts upon which the challenge is based and be supported by an affidavit signed by the challenger. The Provincial Court is required to hear the challenge and make a ruling within 72 hours of the challenge period ending.

A prospective candidate whose nomination has been challenged is entitled to immediate notification of the challenge. They must receive a copy of the challenge of nomination application and the date and time of the Provincial Court hearing within 24 hours of the application being submitted to the Provincial Court. The prospective candidate is also entitled to an opportunity to prove their eligibility to be nominated for elected office. The Provincial Court decision on the challenge of nomination is final and may not be appealed.

Nomination documents for the 2026 general local elections are available for public inspection until **Friday, November 20** if the official election results were declared on **Wednesday, October 21**.

Challenges to nominations for the 2026 general local elections can be submitted until 4:00 p.m. local time on **Tuesday, September 15**. The Provincial Court is required to hear the challenge and make a ruling by 4:00 p.m. local time on **Friday, September 18**.

Nominees for the 2026 general local elections may withdraw their candidacy until 4:00 p.m. local time on Friday, September 18.	Withdrawing a Nomination Prospective candidates may reconsider and withdraw their candidacy during the nomination period and for seven days following the close of nominations. The prospective candidate must provide written notice of their withdrawal to the Chief Election Officer, and the Chief Election Officer must then remove the prospective candidate's name from the ballot. In some situations, a prospective candidate may still withdraw their candidacy after the deadline by giving written notice to the Chief Election Officer. The Minister responsible for local government must approve the withdrawal before the Chief Election Officer can remove the prospective candidate's name from the ballot. It is unlikely a candidate withdrawal will be approved by the Minister if the withdrawal request is received after ballots are printed. <i>The Minister is not obligated to approve a prospective candidate's withdrawal.</i> Candidates no longer wishing to be elected are responsible for communicating this to electors. Any candidates who have withdrawn from general local elections after candidates have been declared by the Chief Election Officer at the end of the nomination period are required to file a campaign financing disclosure statement with Elections BC – even if they received no campaign contributions and incurred no election expenses. Candidates who fail to file a campaign financing disclosure statement, or do not obtain a Supreme Court order for relief from the obligation to file, forfeit their nomination deposit to the local government, are automatically disqualified from being nominated for, elected to or holding office anywhere in B.C. until after the next general local elections and potentially face additional penalties. A candidate declared elected also loses their seat and the seat then becomes vacant. Campaign financing disclosure statements are not required when a prospective candidate withdraws before the declaration of candidates. Any nomination deposit paid by the prospective candidate is returned after the nomination period ends. Refer to Elections BC's Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Candidates and their Financial Agents for more information about campaign financing disclosure.
Prospective candidates are not required to file candidate campaign financing disclosure documents for the 2026 general local elections if they withdraw before candidates are declared.	

What are Election Campaigns?

An **election campaign** is a connected series of actions (e.g., advertising, canvassing, meetings and speeches) for the purpose of electing a **candidate** or a group of candidates.

Typically, an election campaign involves candidates and/or elector organizations communicating with the electorate, through:

- public appearances and speeches;
- advertisements on television, radio, the Internet and social media (e.g., Instagram, Bluesky, YouTube), in newspapers and in magazines;
- brochures, signs, posters and billboards;
- mail inserts and newsletters; and,
- bumper stickers, buttons and displays and/or exhibitions.

An election campaign may be undertaken by a candidate or an elector organization during local elections. In some cases, candidates and elector organizations may work together on an election campaign where the elector organization has endorsed the candidate; in other cases, a group of candidates who are not endorsed by an elector organization may choose to work together to share costs.

ELECTION PERIOD, PRE-CAMPAIGN PERIOD AND CAMPAIGN PERIOD

The **election period** for general local elections begins at the start of the calendar year (January 1) in which the general local elections will be held and ends at the start of the campaign period (28 days before general voting day).

The **pre-campaign period** for general local elections begins on the 89th day before general voting and ends on the 29th day before general voting day.

The **campaign period** for general local elections begins on the 28th day before general voting day and ends on the close of general voting day.

There are a number of election financing rules, including recording and disclosure requirements that apply to candidates, elector organizations and third party sponsors during the election, pre-campaign and campaign periods.

The election period for the 2026 general local elections begins on **Thursday, January 1** and ends at midnight on **Friday, September 18**.

The pre-campaign period for the 2026 general local elections begins on **Monday, July 20** and ends on **Friday, September 18**.

The campaign period for the 2026 general local elections begins on **Saturday, September 19** and ends on **Saturday, October 17**.

Elector Organizations Must be Registered

Only elector organizations registered with Elections BC can endorse candidates on their nomination documents, receive campaign contributions and incur election expenses.

Candidate Election Campaigns

Candidates generally direct their own election campaigns during local elections. Candidates may retain an election campaign manager and campaign **volunteers** to prepare and distribute flyers, call eligible voters, handle logistics and take on other election campaign-related activities. Candidates have considerable flexibility in organizing their election campaigns, provided they avoid committing election and/or campaign financing offences.

Refer to Elections BC's [Candidate Information webpage](#) for more information about the campaign financing and election advertising rules that apply to candidates.

Elector Organization Election Campaigns

Fundamentally, elector organizations endorse candidates. Elector organizations may have their name, abbreviation or acronym shown on the ballot beside their endorsed candidate(s) name and generally promote their endorsed candidate(s) or the organization's viewpoints during an election campaign.

Elector organizations and candidates each direct their own separate election campaign; however, an endorsed candidate may decide not to run their own election campaign and instead rely solely on the elector organization to run campaign activities on the candidate's behalf.

Alternatively, a candidate and an elector organization may agree to run complementary campaigns in which both the candidate and the elector organization undertake election campaign activities designed to elect that candidate within a specific jurisdiction.

Campaign financing and election advertising rules apply to elector organization election campaigns. Every elector organization must appoint a **financial agent** to ensure the financial aspects of the election campaign are run in accordance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

All candidates endorsed by an elector organization must include the endorsement on their nomination documents and have a written campaign financing arrangement with the elector organization.

Refer to Elections BC's [Elector Organizations webpage](#) for more information about the campaign financing and election advertising rules that apply to elector organizations.

Third Party Sponsor Advertising

A **third party sponsor** is an individual or organization that conducts election advertising independently from a candidate or elector organization campaign. Third party sponsors must be independent from

candidates and/or elector organizations and must not coordinate, or sponsor advertising together with, or on behalf of a candidate and/or elector organization.

Third party sponsors are required to register with Elections BC before undertaking election advertising during the **pre-campaign** and **campaign periods**.

Refer to Elections BC's [Local Third Party Advertising Sponsors webpage](#) for more information about contribution and expense limits and election advertising rules that apply to third party sponsors.

Key Election Campaign Activities

Key campaign activities may include canvassing, telephone banks, events and advertising designed to promote a candidate or a group of candidates and communicate their election platform to the electorate during an election campaign.

Campaign activities usually trigger campaign financing rules and candidates must ensure they are aware of and follow the rules. A candidate that has failed to follow campaign financing requirements may have committed an offence and may be subject to penalties.

Visit Elections BC's [website](#) or contact Elections BC staff by phone at: 250 387-5305, or elsewhere in B.C. call: 1 800 661-8683 (Toll-free), or by email at: electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca for detailed information about campaign financing rules.

Advertising Rules

There are limits placed on sponsorship contributions made by eligible individuals to third party sponsors.

LIST OF REGISTERED ELECTORS (VOTER'S LIST)

Each candidate is entitled to one free copy of a list of registered electors (voter's list) if one is used by the local government to register electors in advance. Additional copies may be available to candidates at a cost determined by the local government. A list of registered electors is not available if the local government only permits registration on voting day (same day registration).

The list of registered electors must only be used by candidates for election campaign- related purposes – such as door-knocking, canvassing voters, flyer distribution, and/or calling eligible voters to remind them to “get out and vote.”

A candidate must agree, in writing, that the information provided on the list of registered electors will only be used for election purposes before receiving a copy of the list. Contact the local government for more information about how to obtain a copy of the list of registered electors, if it is available.

A candidate using the list of registered electors must treat the personal information it contains carefully. The list must be returned to the local government or otherwise destroyed following the local elections.

It is an election offence to transmit election advertising on general voting day.

Canvassing

Candidates and campaign **volunteers** may canvass door-to-door throughout the community in order to raise awareness about the candidate or elector organization and their election platform, identify which issues are important to electors and determine elector support for a given candidate.

Candidates and their canvassers must have reasonable access to distribute candidate information at cooperative, strata and rental properties from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. local time during the **campaign period**.

Government-issued photo ID and proof of candidacy, or written authorization to canvass on behalf of a candidate, must be made available upon request when a candidate and/or their canvassers are canvassing in a cooperative, strata or rental property.

Telephone Banks

Candidates may establish telephone banks as one aspect of their election campaign. Campaign volunteers may use the telephone bank to contact eligible **electors** to raise awareness about the candidate or elector organization, determine the level of support for their candidate and identify which issues are important to electors.

In-person telephone banks (as opposed to autodialing robocalls) may also be used by candidates or their representatives during advance and general voting opportunities to contact and remind eligible electors to “get out and vote.” Election advertising, including phone calls, encouraging electors to vote for a particular candidate is not permitted on general voting day.

In-person Events

Candidates may hold “meet and greet” events (e.g., luncheons or fundraising dinners) where the electorate can listen to their platform or position on specific issues and ask questions.

Local governments, community groups and local media often provide opportunities for candidates to communicate their platform or position on specific issues to the electorate at “all-candidate forums.” Local governments are not obligated to organize, supervise or inform candidates of these events.

Advertising

Advertising is a key component in most local election campaigns. Subject to the campaign financing and election advertising rules in the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, candidates, registered elector organizations and registered **third party sponsors** may use print, radio, television, the Internet and/or social media advertising to promote or oppose candidates, elector organizations or points of view during an election campaign.

Election advertising and campaigning of any sort is prohibited within 100 metres of a voting place during voting proceedings. This includes displaying signs, posters, flyers, bumper stickers on vehicles parked outside the voting place, badges worn by supporters, canvassing or soliciting votes, or otherwise trying to influence electors to vote for a particular candidate.

Refer to Elections BC's [*Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Elector Organizations and their Financial Agents*](#) for more information about election advertising.

Signs

Signs play a significant role in election advertising. Candidates may have supporters display signs on their behalf in windows, on lawns, or post signs in other public places throughout the **jurisdiction**.

Local governments have the authority to regulate the size, placement, maintenance and removal of signs and other forms of public advertising – the rules may be quite different between local governments.

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit regulates sign placement along Provincial highways, medians, bridges and along major roadways. Contact the local government or local [*Ministry of Transportation and Transit office*](#) before placing election campaign signs on medians, bridges or along major roads.

Sponsorship Information

Sponsorship information, also known as an authorization statement, is required on most election advertising during the pre-campaign and campaign periods. Sponsorship information must include: the name of the financial agent, an indication that it was authorized by the identified financial agent, a B.C. phone number, or B.C. mailing address or email address at which the financial agent can be contacted.

Refer to Election BC's [*Guide to Campaign Financing for Local Candidates and Financial Agents in B.C.*](#) for more details about sponsorship information.

Local government contact information is available from CivicInfo BC online at: <https://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/directories>.

Local Election Offences and Penalties

Local Government Act – sections 161-166

Candidates and campaign workers convicted of vote-buying, intimidation, campaigning near a voting place during voting proceedings, providing or distributing false information, or conducting other activities contrary to the *Local Government Act* or *Vancouver Charter* may be subject to penalties.

Election Offences

Vote-buying

It is an election offence to offer inducements to an elector to vote or not to vote, or to vote or not vote for a particular candidate. Inducements include money, gifts, valuable consideration, refreshments, entertainment, office, placement, employment and any other benefit of any kind. It is also an offence for an elector to accept inducements for refraining from voting or voting in a particular way.

Examples of vote-buying include buying coffee for an elector or volunteering to drive an elector to a voting place in exchange for their vote for a particular candidate. These activities would be permitted provided there is no subjective intent to influence another person's voting behaviour.

Intimidation

It is an election offence to intimidate an elector, by action or threat, to compel the elector to vote, to vote for a particular candidate, or to refrain from voting. It is also an election offence to punish an elector for voting or refraining from voting generally, or for voting for a particular candidate(s).

Intimidation means to use force, violence or restraint against a person; inflict injury, harm, damage or loss on a person or property; or to threaten to do any of those actions.

Other Election Offences

Other election offences under the *Local Government Act* and *Vancouver Charter* include, and are not limited to:

- falsely withdrawing a candidate from an election, distributing a false statement that a candidate has withdrawn or falsely withdrawing an elector organization's candidate endorsement, or consenting to nomination knowing they are not qualified to be nominated;
- participating in fraudulently voting, including voting when not entitled to do so, voting more than once in an election, obtaining a ballot in the name of another person, or failing to preserve the secrecy of a ballot;

- interfering with the secrecy of the ballot, tampering with ballots or ballot boxes, or printing, reproducing, giving out or destroying ballots without authorization;
- campaigning and engaging in other activities that show support for one candidate over another, or for an elector organization, within 100 metres of a voting place during voting proceedings;
- providing false or misleading information or statements/declarations when the *Local Government Act* or *Vancouver Charter* requires or authorizes individuals to provide it;
- inspecting or accessing election materials or using the information for purposes not authorized under the *Local Government Act* or *Vancouver Charter*; and,
- interfering, hindering or obstructing an election official or other person in the performance of their duties under the *Local Government Act*, *Vancouver Charter*, or *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

Election Offences Under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*

Under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* an individual or organization must not transmit election advertising to the public on General Voting Day except advertising:

- on the internet for the sole purpose of encouraging voters to vote;
- on the internet that was not changed during general voting day; and/or,
- by means of signs, posters, banners, distributing pamphlets.

In addition, individuals and organizations could be penalized for:

- failing to file a disclosure statement or financial report;
- filing a false or misleading disclosure statement;
- exceeding the expense limit;
- failing to return prohibited campaign / sponsorship contributions;
- failing to include sponsorship information on election advertising; and/or,
- making or accepting prohibited loans.

Election offences are generally dealt with by the Supreme Court of B.C. Generally, local election offences are prosecuted if Crown counsel chooses to proceed with laying charges after the police have undertaken an investigation and made a recommendation to Crown counsel.

Reporting and Enforcement of Local Election Offences

The police are responsible for conducting an investigation and recommending to Crown counsel whether charges could be laid for serious election offences such as vote buying or intimidation. Crown counsel makes the determination as to whether to proceed with a prosecution. Election offences are prosecuted through the courts.

An individual can contact their local Chief Election Officer and/or police if they believe someone has committed an election offence. In some cases, the local Chief Election Officer will be able to deal with the offence immediately (e.g. covering up a sign placed within 100 metres of a voting location), and in others the police may need to be involved.

The Chief Election Officer may refer matters to the police and may also submit an application to the court about the validity of the election if the Chief Election Officer becomes aware that vote buying, intimidation or voting when not entitled occurred during the election.

An officer, director, employee or agent who authorizes, permits, or acquiesces in the offence commits the same offence when an organization commits an offence.

The time limit for initiating the prosecution of an offence under Part 3 of the *Local Government Act* or Part 1 of the *Vancouver Charter* is one year after the date on which the act or omission that is alleged to constitute the offence occurred.

Prosecution of an offence under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* may only commence with the approval of the BC Chief Electoral Officer. If the BC Chief Electoral Officer believes there are reasonable grounds that an individual or organization has contravened the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* or its regulations, the BC Chief Electoral Officer may refer the matter to the Criminal Justice Branch of the Ministry of Attorney General for a determination of whether to approve a prosecution.

Contraventions of campaign financing rules that result in an offence are determined by the Supreme Court of B.C. A person that believes that a person or organization has committed a campaign financing election offence can notify Elections BC.

Local Election Penalties

A person who commits vote buying or intimidation is liable to a fine of up to \$10,000, imprisonment of up to two years, and/or disqualification from holding office for up to seven years, in addition to any other penalty under legislation.

A person or unincorporated organization that commits any other election offence under the *Local Government Act* or the *Vancouver Charter* is liable to a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment of up to one year.

The *Local Government Act* and *Vancouver Charter* provide that a person or unincorporated organization is not guilty of an offence if the person or organization exercised due diligence to prevent the commission of the offence.

Offences in the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* are separated into higher penalty offences and lower penalty offences. Higher penalty offences include offences for failure to file by compliance deadline and general offence in relation to false or misleading information. An individual who commits a higher penalty offence may face a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment of up to two years. An organization that commits a higher penalty offence may face a fine of up to \$20,000.

Lower penalty offences apply to all other offences under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. A person who commits a lower penalty offence may face a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment of up to one year. An organization that commits a lower penalty offence may face a fine of up to \$10,000.

Role of Local Election Officials

The Chief Election Officer and Presiding Election Officials are responsible for maintaining the integrity and secrecy of the voting process. This includes: restricting or regulating the number of people admitted to a voting place; removing or covering election advertising within 100 metres of a voting place during voting proceedings; requiring a person to show identification when they believe the person is at a voting place when not permitted to be present, disturbing the peace and order of voting, interfering with voting proceedings or contravening elections legislation.

The Chief Election Officer or Presiding Election Officials may order anyone engaged in these activities, including **scrutineers**, to leave a voting place and remove, or have a peace officer remove, the person. Election officials also have the authority to challenge an elector's ability to vote on the basis that they are not entitled to vote or that they accepted an inducement to vote.

In extreme cases the Chief Election Officer or Presiding Election Official may adjourn voting proceedings when they believe people's health or safety at the voting place or the integrity of the vote is at risk.

Elections BC can delegate authority to Chief Election Officers during the **campaign period** to enter onto property and remove, cover or destroy election advertising that contravenes the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

[See Appendix A](#) for information about local elections partner roles and responsibilities.

[See Appendix C](#) for questions and answers about the Chief Election Officer's role and responsibilities.

Candidate Representatives

Local Government Act – sections 102 and 103
Vancouver Charter – sections 53 and 54
Local Elections Campaign Financing Act – section 17

Contact the local government for information about how candidate representatives make their **solemn declaration**.

A **candidate** may appoint an individual or individuals to assist running an **election campaign** and to otherwise represent the candidate when the candidate is unable to appear in person. Each candidate may choose to appoint an official agent and/or **scrutineers**. Every candidate must have a **financial agent** – they are their own financial agent unless they appoint another individual to the position.

Each candidate representative who attends a voting place must have made a solemn declaration to preserve the secrecy of the ballot and not interfere with an elector marking a ballot. Official agents and scrutineers may attend a voting place once they have made their solemn declaration – financial agents must have permission from the Presiding Election Official to be present at a voting place. A candidate representative present at election proceedings must carry a copy of their appointment document.

Financial Agent

A financial agent is a representative that candidates and elector organizations are legally required to have during an election campaign. Financial agents are responsible for administering campaign finances in accordance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. This includes:

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

A candidate is their own financial agent unless they appoint another individual to the position. A candidate who chooses to appoint another person to act as their financial agent must make that appointment in writing. The appointment must include the:

- person's full name;
- effective date of the appointment;
- mailing address, **address for service**, telephone number and email address (if available) for the person appointed; and,
- person's signed consent to act as the financial agent.

A candidate is their own financial agent unless they appoint another individual to be their financial agent.

The appointment must be signed by the candidate and submitted to the Chief Election Officer as part of the nomination package. The financial agent appointment information is then forwarded by the Chief Election Officer to Elections BC as soon as practicable.

A person may act as a financial agent for more than one election campaign. A person may act as the financial agent for an elector organization and all candidates the elector organization has endorsed. However, each election campaign may have only one financial agent at a time.

Refer to Elections BC's [Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Candidates and their Financial Agents](#) for information about the financial agent's role and responsibilities.

Official Agent

Candidates may appoint an official agent to represent them during the election process. The official agent can act as the campaign manager or spokesperson or be the point of contact for the people helping on the candidate's election campaign. Official agents can appoint scrutineers to represent the candidate during voting proceedings.

A candidate must appoint their official agent in writing and deliver the appointment (including name and address) to the Chief Election Officer as soon as practicable after the appointment has been made.

Scrutineers

Scrutineers represent candidates at voting opportunities by observing voting procedures and scrutinizing the ballot-counting process at the close of voting on general voting day. A candidate and/or their official agent may appoint scrutineers.

Each candidate is permitted under the *Local Government Act* or *Vancouver Charter* to appoint one scrutineer for each ballot box used at a voting place. A local government may pass a bylaw to permit each candidate to have more than one scrutineer present for each ballot box used at a voting place and establish specific restrictions and conditions in the bylaw as deemed necessary.

The scrutineer appointment must be made in writing and must include the person's full name and mailing address. The appointment must be signed by the candidate and submitted to the Chief Election Officer as soon as practicable after the appointment has been made.

Refer to the [Scrutineer's Guide to Local Elections in B.C.](#) for further information about scrutineers.

Candidate representatives (e.g., scrutineers) must carry copies of their appointment documents whenever they represent the candidate at an election proceeding.

Voting places must be open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. local time on general voting day and the required advance voting opportunities.

Voting Times

Voting places must be open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. local time on **general voting day**, the required **advance voting opportunity** and another advance voting opportunity (date can be determined by the local government) for local governments with populations greater than 5,000.

Local governments may set specific hours for any special voting opportunities or additional advance voting opportunities held during local elections.

All voting places must close by 8:00 p.m. local time on general voting day.

Conduct at Voting Places

The Chief Election Officer has the authority to establish the process and standards of conduct that voters, candidates and candidate representatives (e.g., scrutineers) must abide by at voting places during advance, special and general voting day opportunities.

Candidate Conduct

Candidates must not be present at a voting place during an advance or special voting opportunity or on general voting day except to cast their ballot. Candidates must not campaign within 100 metres of a voting place on general voting day – it is an election offence to do so. Candidates may wish to cast their ballot at an advance voting opportunity to avoid the appearance of campaigning on general voting day.

Scrutineer Conduct

Candidates (and/or their official agent) may appoint scrutineers to observe the voting and ballot counting process at voting places during advance, special and general voting opportunities.

Scrutineers must follow the legislation, the local government's election bylaw and the direction of the Chief Election Officer and Presiding Election Official at the voting place and during voting proceedings and the ballot counting process. Scrutineers must not interfere with the voting place routines and/or the election officials' duties. Scrutineers are not permitted to handle election documents.

While scrutineers are appointed to represent candidates at a voting opportunity, they are not there to campaign for the candidates. Scrutineers are there to neutrally observe the voting process and are not permitted to wear anything that shows support for a particular candidate (e.g., shirt, hat, button) while they are in or near the voting place.

Local governments, by bylaw, and Chief Election Officers have the authority to establish specific rules governing scrutineer conduct and responsibilities.

Scrutineers and election officials generally only communicate during times when no voters are present at the voting place – unless the scrutineer has challenged a voter’s eligibility to receive a ballot. A scrutineer may challenge a voter’s right to receive a ballot based on their belief that the elector is not entitled to vote or has accepted an inducement to vote. Challenges to a voter’s eligibility to receive a ballot must be raised before the ballot is issued to the elector.

Counting Ballots

Ballot counting begins after voting places close at 8:00 p.m. local time on general voting day. No one is permitted to enter or leave a voting place while the ballot count is in progress.

Candidates are entitled to be present during the ballot count and may assign one representative (e.g. scrutineer or official agent) to each location where ballot counting takes place. Candidates or candidate representatives must not touch the ballots or ballot boxes or otherwise interfere with election officials during the counting process – except to object to a ballot’s acceptance or rejection by an election official.

Candidates or candidate representatives must raise their objection to a ballot’s acceptance or rejection with the Presiding Election Official supervising the ballot counting process. Objections to a ballot’s acceptance or rejection must be raised while the ballot is being considered during the count.

The Presiding Election Official’s decision to reject or accept a ballot can only be overturned by the Chief Election Officer – or by the Provincial Court following a judicial recount.

Ballot accounts, that outline individual voting place results and reconcile the number of ballots distributed with the number of ballots cast in the local government election, are prepared at each voting place. Ballots are then packaged and returned to the Chief Election Officer at the local government office, where the official election results are then determined. Objections to the Presiding Election Official’s decision relative to the ballot in question are recorded and submitted with the ballot account for that voting place to the Chief Election Officer.

Each candidate is notified by the Chief Election Officer as to the time and location for the final ballot count and when the official election results will be declared. The official election results may not necessarily be announced on general voting day.

Ballot counting for the 2026 general local elections begins after 8:00 p.m. local time on **Saturday, October 17.**

After General Voting Day

Local Government Act – sections 144–157 and 202
Community Charter – sections 120 and 124
Vancouver Charter – sections 140 and 143

Official election results for the 2026 general local elections must be declared by 4:00 p.m. local time on **Wednesday, October 21**.

The *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter* and *Vancouver Charter* provide for several legislated procedures (e.g., breaking tie votes, taking the oath of office) that may or must be completed following **general voting day**.

Announcing Results

The official election results may not immediately be announced after the close of voting on general voting day – the **Chief Election Officer** may announce preliminary results after the ballot count on general voting day and announce the official results at a later date.

The official election results must be declared within four days after the close of voting on general voting day. The Chief Election Officer must state the number of ballots cast in favour of each **candidate** for each position. Those candidates with the most votes would then be declared elected.

Judicial Recount

A Chief Election Officer must refer an election for judicial recount if two or more candidates have the same number of votes following the determination of official election results.

An eligible elector, candidate, candidate representative (e.g., scrutineer or official agent), or the Chief Election Officer may apply to the Provincial Court for a judicial recount. An application for a judicial recount can only be made on the basis that the:

- ballots were incorrectly accepted or rejected;
- ballot account does not accurately record the number of valid votes for a candidate; or,
- final determination of results did not correctly calculate the total number of valid votes for a candidate.

The period to apply for a judicial recount begins as soon as the official election results have been declared and ends nine days after the close of general voting.

The applicant must notify candidates and the Chief Election Officer about the judicial recount application. The applicant, the Chief Election Officer, candidates and their official agents and legal counsel are entitled to be present during a judicial recount. The Provincial Court has the authority to determine any other people permitted to attend the recount.

A judicial recount for the 2026 general local elections must be completed by **Friday, October 30**.

The period to apply for a judicial recount for the 2026 general local elections ends on **Monday, October 26**.

Judicial recounts are based on the ballots and ballot boxes used in the local elections. The Provincial Court declares the election results at the completion of the ballot recount.

A tie between two or more candidates must be broken in accordance with the *Local Government Act* or *Vancouver Charter* and the local government **election bylaw**. The judicial recount must be completed within 13 days after the close of general voting.

Breaking Ties

There are two methods for breaking ties in a local election when two or more candidates have an equal number of votes after a judicial recount – drawing by lot (a random draw) or by runoff election.

A local government must have passed an **election bylaw** that specifies that drawing by lot will be used as the method for breaking a tie. Otherwise, a runoff election must be held to break the tie.

A local government election bylaw that states ties will be broken by lot means that the names of the *tied candidates* are written on pieces of paper, placed into a container, and one name is drawn by a Provincial Court-appointed person. The Provincial Court then declares the candidate whose name was drawn to be elected to office.

A runoff election means that *all unsuccessful candidates* from the original election may run in a second election.

The **Chief Election Officer** is required to notify candidates that a runoff election has been called to break the tie. Candidates then have three days to notify the Chief Election Officer if they do not intend to run in the runoff election.

The Chief Election Officer must set a date for the runoff election for a Saturday no later than 50 days after the judicial recount was completed. Generally, runoff elections are conducted under the same rules as the original local election.

Invalid Election

A candidate, the Chief Election Officer or at least four eligible electors of the jurisdiction, may petition the Supreme Court to invalidate a local election.

A petition to invalidate a local government election may only be made on the basis that:

- an elected candidate was not qualified to hold office or has ceased to be qualified (e.g. no longer a resident of B.C.);
- the election was not conducted in accordance with elections legislation; or,

A petition to invalidate a 2026 general local election must be made by **Friday, November 20** if the official election results were declared on **Wednesday, October 21**.

Candidates elected in the 2026 general local elections must make an oath or solemn affirmation by **Saturday, December 5** if the official election results were declared on **Wednesday, October 21**.

- the rules around vote-buying, intimidation or voting when not entitled were contravened.

A petition to invalidate a local election must be made within 30 days after the official election results were declared. The Supreme Court must set a date for the petition to be heard between 10 and 21 days after the petition was filed. The petitioner(s) must serve the local government with notice of the petition to declare the election invalid.

Oath of Office

Every **municipal councillor** must make an oath of office or solemn affirmation before they can assume their position on **municipal council**. Every **electoral area director** must also make an oath of office or solemn affirmation before they can assume their position on the **regional district board**.

The [default oath of office](#) requires elected officials to affirm:

- I am qualified to hold the office of[*office*]..... for the [*jurisdiction*]... to which I have been [elected] [appointed];
- I have complied with the provisions of the[*applicable Act*]...in relation to my election to this office; [*omit this point for persons who have been appointed*];
- I will abide by all rules related to conflicts of interest under the.... [*applicable Act*]....;
- I will carry out my duties with integrity;
- I will be accountable for the decisions that I make, and the actions that I take, in the course of my duties;
- I will be respectful of others;
- I will demonstrate leadership and collaboration; and,
- I will perform the duties of my office in accordance with the law.

Municipal councillors appointed to the regional district board must make a second oath of office or solemn affirmation in addition to the oath of office or solemn affirmation they made before they assumed their position on the municipal council.

Candidates elected in general local elections must make their oath of office or solemn affirmation within 45 days after the official election results were declared. Acclaimed candidates must make an oath of office or solemn affirmation within 50 days of the date set for general voting – had voting been required.

The oath of office or solemn affirmation may be made before a judge, justice of the peace, Commissioner for Taking Affidavits for B.C. or the local government **Corporate Officer**. Candidates who fail to

make an oath or affirmation of office within the legislated timeframe are disqualified from holding office until after the next general local elections.

Taking Office

A candidate may take the oath of office or make a solemn affirmation as soon as they are declared elected by the Chief Election Officer; however, elected candidates do not take office immediately.

The inaugural municipal council meeting after the 2026 general local elections must be held by **Tuesday, November 10**.

Municipal council members formally take office at the first regularly scheduled council meeting following general local elections as long as they have completed their oath of office.

The term of office for a municipal council member appointed to a regional district board begins when the person has made an oath of office or solemn affirmation as a regional district director.

The term of office for regional district **electoral area directors** begins on the first Monday after November 1 following the general local election – or when the person has made their oath of office, whichever is later.

The inaugural municipal council meeting after the 2026 general local elections must be held by **Tuesday, November 10**.

The term of office for regional district electoral area directors elected in the 2026 general local elections begins on **Monday, November 2** – or when the director has made their oath of office or solemn affirmation – whichever is later.

The campaign period for the 2026 general local elections begins on **Saturday, September 19** and ends on **Saturday, October 17**.

Campaign financing rules under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* were established to create accountability and transparency around campaign financing.

Campaign Period Expense Limits

All candidates have expense limits that apply during the campaign period. Expense limits are determined using a consistent formula for all candidates and are generally based on the population of the election area where the elections are being held.

Campaign Contribution Limits

Individuals who wish to contribute to a local elections candidate or elector organization are legally obligated to follow the rules outlined in the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

Refer to Elections BC's [Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Candidates and their Financial Agents](#) and [Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Elector Organizations and their Financial Agents](#) for detailed information regarding campaign financing rules.

Elections BC's Authority

Elections BC administers, investigates and enforces campaign financing, **third party sponsor** and election advertising rules under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

Elections BC is responsible for reviewing candidate, elector organization and third party sponsor campaign financing disclosure statements to ensure compliance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. Elections BC also publishes campaign contribution data and the campaign financing disclosure statements and the lists of disqualified candidates and third party sponsors [online](#).

Elections BC has the authority to conduct audits and investigations related to non-compliance with campaign financing, election advertising and third party sponsor provisions – it can also delegate certain powers (e.g., removing non-compliant advertising) to other individuals, such as Chief Election Officers to act on its behalf. Elections BC works with Chief Election Officers to determine the most effective approach to dealing with non-compliant election advertising.

Elections BC also has the authority to impose administrative monetary penalties on candidates, elector organizations (and their authorized principal officials) and third party sponsors for failing to comply with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

[See Appendix A](#) for information about local election partner roles and responsibilities.

[See Appendix C](#) for questions and answers about Elections BC's role and responsibilities.

Glossary

Section 96 of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*

address for service

A mailing address or email address provided by an individual or organization at which notices and other communications are accepted as served on or otherwise delivered to the individual or organization.

Sections 107-108 of the *Local Government Act*

Sections 69-70 of the *Vancouver Charter*

advance voting opportunity

A voting day, prior to general voting day, for electors who choose to vote on that day for any reason. Typically, electors who vote at that time do so because they:

- expect to be absent on general voting day from the jurisdiction for which the election is to be held;
- will be unable to vote on general voting day for reasons of conscience;
- will not be able to attend a voting place on general voting day for reasons beyond the elector's control;
- have a physical disability or are mobility impaired which would make it difficult to reach or navigate within a busy voting place on general voting day;
- are candidates or candidate representatives; or,
- are election officials.

Sections 169-171 of the *Local Government Act*

Sections 129-131 of the *Vancouver Charter*

assent voting

Voting on a bylaw or other matter for which a local government is required to obtain elector assent under Part 4 of the *Local Government Act* or Part 2 of the *Vancouver Charter*. Elector assent is obtained when a majority of the votes counted are in favour of the bylaw or question. Assent voting events were formerly referred to as a "referendum."

Section 110 of the *Local Government Act*

authorized drop-off location

A location specified by the Chief Election Officer that electors can return mail ballot packages (other than the address printed on the outer envelope of the mail ballot package).

B.C. Chief Electoral Officer (Elections BC)

The B.C. Chief Electoral Officer is an independent officer of the Legislature who oversees the provincial electoral process in B.C. The *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* provides the B.C. Chief Electoral Officer the additional role of overseeing campaign financing and election advertising in local elections and assent voting and ensuring compliance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

board

See entry for “regional district board.”

board of education

A school district’s governing body as constituted under the *School Act*. A board of education is comprised of three, five, seven or nine trustees, or as otherwise determined by the Minister of Education and Child Care.

by-election

An election held between general local elections to fill a vacancy that occurred due to the death, disqualification or resignation of a municipal council or regional district board member, school trustee, specified parks board commissioner or Islands Trust local trustee.

Municipal councils are not required to hold a by-election when the vacancy occurs in the same calendar year as a general local election as long as the vacancy is not in an office representing a neighbourhood constituency and council can maintain quorum. Regional district boards and the Islands Trust Council are not required to hold a by-election to fill a vacancy that occurs after June 1 in the same calendar year as general local elections.

campaign account

An account opened at a financial institution by a financial agent to be used exclusively for a candidate or elector organization’s election campaign purposes. The account must be opened in the candidate or elector organization’s name and be separate and distinct from any personal or business accounts.

campaign contribution limit

The total amount an eligible individual may contribute to a candidate or elector organization and its endorsed candidates for each calendar year as established under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

campaign period

During the campaign period, election advertising, such as billboards or commercials must include sponsorship information. The campaign period starts on the 28th day before general voting day and ends when voting closes at 8:00 p.m. local time on general voting day. Expenses used in this period are subject to an expense limit and must be reported on the campaign financing disclosure statement.

candidate

A candidate is a person seeking election as a mayor, councillor, electoral area director, school trustee, Islands Trust local trustee, local community commissioner or specified parks board commissioner within

Section 1 of the *School Act*

Section 30(2) of the *School Act*

Section 54 of the *Local Government Act*

Section 10 of the *Vancouver Charter*

Sections 18 and 20 of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*

Section 30.01 of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*

Section 10(2) of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*

Section 47 of the *Local Government Act*

Section 7 of the *Vancouver Charter*

- carry out other duties assigned by the council; and,
- carry out other duties assigned under the *Community Charter* or any other Act.

election bylaw

A bylaw that enables a municipal council or regional district board to make decisions about election administration, including whether:

- voting machines will be used, and if so, the procedures that will govern their use;
- mail ballot voting will be used, and if so, what procedures will govern its use;
- additional advance voting opportunities will be offered, or, in communities of less than 5,000, whether the required additional advance voting opportunity will be waived;
- voter registration will be conducted both on voting day and in advance or on voting day only; and/or,
- nomination deposits (not to exceed \$100) will be required.

An election bylaw must be adopted at least 56 days before the first day of the nomination period in a general local election or 42 days before the first day of the nomination period in a by-election.

election campaign

An election campaign is a connected series of actions (e.g., advertising, meetings and speeches) for the purpose of electing a candidate or a group of candidates to a municipal council or regional district board.

Typically, an election campaign involves candidates and/or elector organizations communicating with the electorate, through:

- public appearances and speeches;
- advertisements on television, radio, the Internet and social media;
- in newspapers and magazines;
- brochures, signs, posters and billboards;
- mail inserts and newsletters; and/or,
- bumper stickers, buttons and displays and/or exhibitions.

election period

The election period for general local elections begins at the start of the calendar year (January 1) in which the election is held and ends at the beginning of the campaign period for general local elections.

Section 56 of the
Local Government Act

Sections 12 of the
Vancouver Charter

Section 10(1) of the
*Local Elections Campaign
Financing Act*

Sections 64-66 of the <i>Local Government Act</i> Sections 22-24 of the <i>Vancouver Charter</i> Section 92 of the <i>Local Government Act</i> Section 45.3 of the <i>Vancouver Charter</i> Sections 19-23 and 25 of the <i>Local Elections Campaign Financing Act</i> Section 199(2) of the <i>Local Government Act</i> Section 87(1)(g) and 92 of the <i>Local Government Act</i> Section 44(1)(g) & 45.3 of the <i>Vancouver Charter</i> Section 63.05 of the <i>Local Elections Campaign Financing Act</i>	<i>Elections BC</i> The non-partisan and independent Office of the Legislature responsible for the administration and enforcement of the provincial electoral process in B.C. and the campaign financing and advertising rules for local elections and non-election assent voting events under the <i>Local Elections Campaign Financing Act</i>. <i>elector</i> An individual who is a resident elector or non-resident property elector and who is qualified to vote in municipal, regional district, board of education, Islands Trust, community commission or specified parks board elections <i>elector organization</i> An elector organization is an organization that endorses or intends to endorse a candidate(s) in local elections and that endorses a candidate on their nomination documents. Elector organizations are required to register with Elections BC to endorse a candidate in an election, receive a campaign contribution or incur an election expense. Only those elector organizations registered with Elections BC can endorse candidates, receive campaign contributions and incur election expenses. <i>electoral area director</i> A regional district board member who has been elected to that position by electoral area electors. <i>endorsement</i> The process by which an elector organization can formalize its relationship with one or more candidates running in local elections. Elector organizations must work with a candidate to complete the endorsement section of the candidate's nomination documents in order to endorse that candidate. An endorsement allows the elector organization's name, abbreviation or acronym to appear on the ballot beside the candidate's name. An elector organization may endorse more than one candidate – a candidate may only be endorsed by one elector organization at a given time. <i>expense limits</i> The maximum value of campaign period expenses that a candidate may use in a campaign period as established under the <i>Local Elections Campaign Financing Act</i>.
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financial agent

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

A candidate must have a financial agent. A candidate is their own financial agent unless they appoint another individual to that position.

Financial agents have several obligations under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, including opening and depositing contributions to, and paying election-related expenses from, a candidate's campaign account; keeping complete and accurate campaign financing records of all transfers, campaign contributions, election expenses, and other financial transactions; filing the candidate's required disclosure statement with Elections BC within 90 days following general voting day; and ensuring the campaign is in compliance with contribution rules and campaign period expense limits.

financial disclosure statement

A corporate and personal holdings statement made public by all nominated, elected and appointed public officials required under the *Financial Disclosure Act*.

The financial disclosure statement is intended to help public officials avoid conflict-of-interest situations by identifying their financial interests. Financial disclosure statements must be filed with the designated local government officer at the time of nomination, annually while holding elected office, and shortly after leaving elected office.

general local elections

A collective reference to the elections conducted throughout the province every four years for the:

- mayor and councillors of a municipality;
- electoral area directors of each regional district;
- school trustees of each board of education;
- commissioners of each specified parks board;
- commissioners of each local community commission that uses a four-year term; and,
- local trustees of each area in the Islands Trust.

Sections 17 and 19 of the
*Local Elections Campaign
Financing Act*

Section 2(1) of the
Financial Disclosure Act

Section 52(2) and 54(5) of
the *Local Government Act*

Section 9(2) and 10(5) of
the *Vancouver Charter*

Section 5 of the <i>Islands Trust Act</i>	<i>general voting day</i> The final voting day in general local elections or a by-election. General voting day is held on the third Saturday in October for general local elections, and a Saturday chosen by the Chief Election Officer for a by-election.
Section 6 of the <i>Islands Trust Act</i>	<i>Islands Trust</i> A federation of local island governments with a mandate to make land use decisions that preserve and protect the Islands Trust area.
Section 1(2) of the <i>Local Elections Campaign Financing Act</i>	<i>Islands Trust Council</i> The Islands Trust governing body composed of two elected trustees (local trustees) from each local Trust area and two appointed trustees from each municipal council in the Trust area (municipal trustees).
Section 243 of the <i>Local Government Act</i>	<i>Islands Trust local trustee</i> An individual elected to serve on a Local Trust Committee for each local Trust area within the Islands Trust. Two candidates are elected from each local Trust area. The local trustees are also members of the Islands Trust Council.
<i>jurisdiction</i>	The applicable municipality, regional district, board of education or Trust council in which general local elections, by-elections or assent voting is being held.
<i>local community commission</i>	A body established by regional district bylaw in an electoral area to provide advice in relation to, or management of, one or more regional district services provided within the “local community.” Between four and six elected commissioners and the electoral area director generally comprise a local community commission.
Commissioners may be elected for a four-year term during general local elections or for a one-year term, as specified in the regional district establishing bylaw.	Commissioners may be elected for a four-year term during general local elections or for a one-year term, as specified in the regional district establishing bylaw.
<i>local community commissioner</i>	See entry for “local community commission.”

local elections

A collective term referring to general local elections or by-elections that may be conducted by municipalities, regional districts, boards of education, specified parks boards, local community commissions, or the Islands Trust.

mayor

An individual elected to head the municipal council. The mayor has responsibilities under the *Community Charter* (Charter) in addition to their councillor responsibilities, including to:

- provide leadership to the council, including recommending bylaws, resolutions and other measures that, in the mayor's opinion, may assist the peace, order and good government of the municipality;
- communicate information to the council;
- preside at council meetings when in attendance;
- provide, on behalf of the council, general direction to municipal officers respecting implementation of municipal policies, programs and other directions of the council;
- establish standing committees in accordance with section 141 of the Charter;
- reflect the will of council and to carry out other duties on behalf of the council; and,
- carry out other duties assigned by or under the Charter or any other Act.

municipal council

The governing body of a municipality composed of a mayor and several councillors.

A municipal council may consist of between five and 11 members – the number of councillors depends on the population of the municipality. All municipal council members are elected during general local elections unless elected in a by-election held to fill a council vacancy between general local elections.

The municipal council is a decision-making body and is responsible for setting the strategic policies and priorities for the local government – municipal councils do not implement policies and decisions.

municipal director

A council member appointed to the regional district board from a municipality within the regional district jurisdiction. A municipal director may be a mayor or councillor.

Section 116 of the
Community Charter

Sections 114-121 of the
Community Charter

Section 198(2) of the
Local Government Act

resident elector

An individual qualified to vote in an election by virtue of living in the jurisdiction.

On the day of registration, a resident elector must:

- be 18 years of age or older when registering to vote or will be 18 years of age or older on general voting day;
- be a Canadian citizen;
- have been a resident of British Columbia for at least six months immediately before registering to vote;
- be a resident of the municipality or electoral area on the day of registration; and,
- not be disqualified under the *Local Government Act*, or any other enactment from voting in a local election or be otherwise disqualified by law.

school board

See entry for “board of education.”

school trustee

A member of the board of education for a school district.

scrutineer

An individual appointed in writing by a candidate (and/or their official agent) who may observe voting procedures at voting places during advance, special and general voting opportunities and the ballot-counting process.

specified parks board

A board of commissioners having responsibility for the governance of a public park system and its attendant services, such as recreational operations. Commissioners of specified parks boards are elected to a four-year term during general local elections.

specified parks board commissioners

See entry for “specified parks board.”

solemn declaration

A written oath or solemn affirmation of a signed statement witnessed by the Chief Election Officer or their delegate, or a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits for B.C. (e.g., lawyer or notary public).

Sections 65 and 67 of the
Local Government Act

Section 23 of the
Vancouver Charter

Section 1 of the *School Act*

Section 102(1)(b) of the
Local Government Act

Section 53(1)(b) of the
Vancouver Charter

Sections 485-497A of the
Vancouver Charter

Sections 3, 7 and 14 of
the *Cultus Lake Park Act*

Section 97 of the *Local
Elections Campaign
Financing Act*

Section 11 of the *Local
Elections Campaign
Financing Act*

third party advertising

In general, third party election advertising includes any transmission of a communication to the public by anyone other than a candidate or elector organization that directly or indirectly promotes or opposes a candidate or an elector organization during the pre-campaign and campaign periods. In the campaign period, it also includes advertising on an issue with which a candidate or elector organization is associated.

third party sponsor

A third party sponsor is an individual or organization that sponsors election advertising independently from candidates and elector organizations. Third party sponsors must register with Elections BC before conducting election advertising during the pre-campaign and campaign periods.

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

volunteer

An individual who provides services, such as canvassing, preparing and distributing flyers, calling eligible voters, handling logistics and taking on other election campaign-related activities. A volunteer must not receive any remuneration or material benefit for their services.

A self-employed individual who provides services they normally sell or charge for is not a volunteer. Likewise, an individual whose employer continues to pay them while they are working on a campaign is not considered to be a volunteer.

Section 9 of the *Local
Elections Campaign
Financing Act*

Appendix A: Local Election Partner Roles and Responsibilities

LOCAL ELECTION PARTNER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
WHO	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES
BC School Trustees Association	Produce and distribute elections educational material about school trustee elections and boards of education roles and responsibilities.
Chief Election Officers	Provide and receive candidate nomination packages.
	Collect nomination deposits (if applicable).
	Oversee all local elections administration activities (e.g., declare candidates, set up voting opportunities, count votes and declare the election results).
	The Chief Election Officer is responsible for maintaining the integrity and secrecy of the voting process and peace and order at election proceedings along with Presiding Election Officials.
Elections BC	Provide local elections campaign financing and election advertising-related educational guides, online resources and presentations to local government staff, candidates, elector organizations, and third party sponsors.
	Provide information and support by telephone and email to candidates, elector organizations, third party sponsors, local government staff, other local elections participants and the general public about the campaign financing (including election expense limits and campaign contribution limits) and election advertising rules.
	Receive nomination and candidate representative documents from local election officials.
	Receive updates to information in nomination and candidate representative documents.
	Register elector organizations and third party sponsors.
	Investigate non-compliant local elections advertising.
	Enforce local elections campaign financing and election advertising rules, including election expense limits, campaign contribution limits and third party advertising rules.

Appendix A: Local Election Partner Roles and Responsibilities

LOCAL ELECTION PARTNER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
WHO	ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES
Elections BC	Review and publish disclosure statements, annual financial reports and supplementary reports.
	Collect \$500 late filing fee.
	Investigate local elections campaign financing irregularities.
	Maintain disqualification lists.
	Report on the administration of compliance with the <i>Local Elections Campaign Financing Act</i> .
Local Government Management Association	Provide election education manuals and workshops to local government election officials.
	Provide information and support by telephone and email to local government election officials about local elections administration.
Ministry of Attorney General	Is responsible for the <i>Financial Disclosure Act</i> and provides guidance related to the disclosure of assets, debts and sources of income by candidates and elected officials (who must file a disclosure statement annually).
Ministry of Education and Child Care	Prepare school trustee election procedures guide for boards of education, school district administrators, and election officials.
	Provide information about provisions in the <i>School Act</i> regarding board of education elections.
Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs	Prepare election education guides, webpages, videos and presentations for candidates, local government staff, other election participants, and the general public.
	Provide information and support by telephone or email to candidates, local government staff, other election participants and the general public about provisions in the <i>Local Government Act</i> and <i>Vancouver Charter</i> regarding local elections.
Union of B.C. Municipalities	Develop election educational material for locally elected officials.

Appendix B: 2026 General Local Elections Key Dates

2022 GENERAL LOCAL ELECTIONS KEY DATES		
ACTION OR DEADLINE	DATE	ACT/S.#
Start of Election Period	January 1, 2026	LECFA: s.10(1)(a)(i)
Candidate B.C. Residency Deadline	March 10, 2026	LGA: s.81(1)(c)
Candidate B.C. Residency Deadline (extended nomination period)	March 13, 2026	LGA: s. 81(1)(c) & s. 97(2)
Election Bylaw Adoption Deadline	July 6, 2026	LGA: s.56
Start of Pre-Campaign Period	July 20, 2026	LECFA: s. 10
Start of Nomination Period	September 1, 2026	LGA: s.84(1)
End of Nomination Period	September 11, 2026	LGA: s.84(1) & s.89(5)
Declaration of Candidates (after close of nomination period)	September 11, 2026	LGA: s.97(1) & s.97(2)
End of Extended Nomination Period and Declaration of Candidates	September 14, 2026	LGA: s.97(2)
End of Challenge to Nomination and Endorsement Period	September 15, 2026	LGA: s.91 & s.96
Court Decision on Challenge of Nomination	September 18, 2026	LGA: s. 91(9)
Candidate Nomination Withdrawal Deadline	September 18, 2026	LGA: s.101(1)
End of Pre-Campaign Period	September 18, 2026	LECFA: s.10
Start of Campaign Period (12:01 am)	September 19, 2026	LECFA: s.10(2)
Required Advance Voting Opportunity	October 7, 2026	LGA: s.107(1)
General Voting Day	October 17, 2026	LGA: s.52
End of Campaign Period	October 17, 2026	LECFA: s.10(2)
Last Day for Declaration of Official Election Results by Voting	October 21, 2026	LGA: s.146(1)
End of Period to Apply for Judicial Recount	October 26, 2026	LGA: s.148(3)
Deadline for Completion of Judicial Recount	October 30, 2026	LGA: s.149(1)
End of Period for Public Inspection of Nomination Documents*	November 20, 2026	LGA: s.89(7)

Appendix B: 2026 General Local Elections Key Dates

2022 GENERAL LOCAL ELECTIONS KEY DATES		
ACTION OR DEADLINE	DATE	ACT/S.#
End of Period for Application to the Supreme Court to Invalidate Election*	November 20, 2026	LGA: s.153(3)
End of Period to Make Oath of Office (by Voting)*	December 5, 2026 (if election results declared on October 21, 2026)	LGA: s.202(1)(a) & s.202(1)(b); CC: s.120(1)(a) & s.120(1)(b)
End of Period to Make Oath of Office (by Acclamation)	December 7, 2026	LGA: s.202(1)(a) CC: s.120(1)(a) SA: s.50(1)(a)
End of Period to File Campaign Financing Disclosure Statement with Elections BC	January 15, 2027	LECFA: s.47(1), s.56 & s.90
End of Period for Late Filing of Campaign Financing Disclosure Statement with Elections BC (with late filing fee)	February 16, 2027	LECFA: s.47(2) & s.56

*This date will vary depending on when official election results declared

Definitions:

CC – means *Community Charter*

LGA – means *Local Government Act*

LECFA – means *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*

SA – means *School Act*

Appendix C: Chief Election Officer and Elections BC Questions and Answers

CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER AND ELECTIONS BC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	
QUESTION	ANSWER
Who do I get nomination documents from?	Chief Election Officer
Who do I give my completed nomination documents to?	Chief Election Officer
Who do I pay my nomination deposit to (if required)?	Chief Election Officer
Who do I make my solemn declaration to?	Chief Election Officer or Commissioner for Taking Affidavits (e.g., Lawyer, Notary)
Who declares candidates?	Chief Election Officer
Who oversees the administration of local elections (e.g., designing ballots, setting up voting opportunities, counting votes)?	Chief Election Officer
Who declares the election results?	Chief Election Officer
Who do I contact about election expense limits and campaign contribution limits?	Elections BC
Who do I contact for information about campaign financing?	Elections BC
Who do I contact for information about election advertising rules?	Elections BC
Who do elector organizations register with?	Elections BC
Who do I register with as a third party sponsor?	Elections BC
Who do I send updates to any information in my nomination package?	Elections BC and Chief Election Officer
Who do I file campaign financing disclosure statements and supplementary reports with?	Elections BC
Who do I pay the \$500 campaign financing disclosure statement late filing fee to?	Elections BC
Who maintains the disqualification lists?	Elections BC
Who do I submit prohibited contributions to?	Elections BC
Who addresses instances of non-compliant advertising?	Elections BC and/or Chief Election Officer

