



A Candidate's Guide

Running for Local Elected Office in Alberta

A Candidate's Guide: Running for Elected Office | Municipal Affairs

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This guide cannot anticipate every aspect, circumstance, or situation that municipalities or candidates may encounter while working through their specific election process. If a municipality or candidate needs help finding a lawyer, please visit the Law Society of Alberta website. Should this guide conflict with the *Municipal Government Act*, or the *Local Authorities Election Act* in word or interpretation, the legislation shall prevail.

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Introduction

Local elections are the foundation of democratic local governments in Alberta.

Locally elected officials are charged with making decisions that affect the daily lives of citizens, families, and the business community. The local election process enables residents to determine the small group of individuals who will comprise the **elected authority** (municipal **council** or school **board**), which makes collective decisions and governs on their behalf following a general local election.

General elections for mayors, **councillors**, and school **trustees** in Alberta are held every four years. **Local jurisdictions** (a municipality or school division) hold **by-elections** to fill vacancies that occur between **general elections**.

This guide provides those considering running for elected office, election officials, chief financial officers, and the public with comprehensive, detailed information about the local elections process. It provides general information about local elections in Alberta, including the key participants in local elections, the key administrators in local elections, elected officials' responsibilities, and who is eligible to run for office.

The major elements of the local elections process – the call for nominations, election campaigns, **candidate** representatives, and what happens on **election day** are also described in this guide.

Each **local jurisdiction** is responsible for running its own local election. Municipal governments may run school **trustee** elections on behalf of school divisions. Municipal **councils** and school **boards** appoint a **returning officer** to run the local election in accordance with the *Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA)* and the **local jurisdiction's** election bylaw. The elections legislation contains provisions that must be consistently applied to all local elections; however, the legislation is also flexible enough that **local jurisdictions** are able to make choices about how to conduct elections in a manner that suits local circumstances (e.g. offering special ballots or requiring a nomination deposit)

This guide is not legally binding, and we recommend you obtain a copy of the *LAEA*, and other relevant statutes and regulations.

Terms in **boldface** font are further explained in Appendix B: Glossary of Terms.

Legislation Governing Local Elections

Copies of all legislation can be obtained through the Alberta King's Printer, <https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/>, or 780-427-4952.

Local Authorities Election Act

The *LAEA* is the main legislation that guides the conduct of a local **election** or **by-election**.

All definitions, procedures, and processes outlined in this guide are from the *LAEA*. Should you require further clarification on any definitions, procedures, or processes you are encouraged to review and consult the legislation, ask the **returning officer** in your **local jurisdiction**, or get independent legal advice.

Regulations

All election forms required by legislation can be found in the Local Authorities Election Forms Regulation on the Government of Alberta website, or by contacting your municipality.

The Expense Limits Regulation establishes **campaign expense** limits for **candidates** for municipal **council**, **local political parties**, **slates**, and **third-party** advertisers. Expense limits vary depending on the year in the election cycle.

The Local Political Parties and Slates Regulation creates rules for **local political parties** and **slates** related to eligibility and registration, financial **contributions**, financial disclosures, and surplus and deficit matters. The regulation enabled **local political parties** and **slates** only for the cities of Edmonton and Calgary.

For more information, please review the [Changes to the Local Authorities Election Act \(LAEA\) 2024-2025 | Alberta.ca](#) publications.

Municipal Government Act

The *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* is the primary legislation that empowers municipalities to shape their communities. It regulates how municipalities are funded and how, as local governments, they should govern and plan for growth.

Education Act

The *Education Act* specifies goals for Alberta's Early Childhood Services to Grade 12 (ECS-12) education system and identifies the roles and responsibilities of school **boards** and school **trustees**.

Local Elections Generally

Voting Opportunities

Election Day

Election day is the primary opportunity for **candidates** seeking office as a mayor, **councillor**, or school **board trustee** to be elected to office by eligible **electors**. **Voting stations** for most **local jurisdictions** are open from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. local time on **election day** unless a bylaw has been passed to allow for an earlier opening. In summer villages, **voting stations** are open from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. unless a bylaw has been passed to allow for an earlier opening.

Advance Voting

Local jurisdictions may provide for an advance voting opportunity to be held up to 24 hours prior to **election day**, to allow eligible **electors** who may not otherwise be able to vote on general voting day to cast their ballots. Municipalities with populations greater than 5,000 are required to hold at least one advance voting opportunity.

Special Ballots

Special ballots (mail-in ballots) provide **electors** who are unable to attend an advance or **election day** voting opportunity to vote in local elections. **Local jurisdictions** may provide for special ballot voting in their election bylaw or by passing a resolution.

Other Voting Opportunities

Local jurisdictions may provide other voting opportunities to eligible **electors** who may not otherwise be able to attend a voting place to cast their ballots during local elections. These voting opportunities are generally held in hospitals, long-term care facilities, or other **electors'** residences where **electors'** mobility may be impaired. Only designated **electors** are eligible to vote at these voting opportunities.

Key Participants

Electors

Except for summer villages, the right to vote in local elections in Alberta is conferred on individuals ordinarily resident in the **local jurisdiction**. An **elector** must be at least 18 years of age, a Canadian citizen; reside in Alberta, and the person's place of residence must be located in the **local jurisdiction**, and **ward** if any, on **election day**.

In summer villages, eligible **electors** must be:

- 18 years or older, a Canadian citizen, and a resident in the **local jurisdiction** on **election day**; or
- 18 years or older, a Canadian citizen, and named on a certificate of title as a person who owns property within the summer village; or
- 18 years or older, a Canadian citizen, and the **spouse** or adult interdependent partner of a person who is named on a certificate of title as a person who owns property within the summer village.

NOTE: For information about **elector** eligibility in Métis settlement elections and in Indian reservation band elections in Alberta, please visit [Métis Relations | Alberta.ca](#), and [Indian Band Election Regulations](#) respectively.

NOTE: For information about elector eligibility in Jasper, please visit [Changes to the Local Authorities Election Act \(LAEA\) 2025: Jasper Residency and Eligibility Requirements](#).

Candidates

The term “**candidate**” means, except in Part 5.1 of the *LAEA*, an individual who has been nominated to run for election in a **local jurisdiction** as a **councillor** or school **board trustee**.

In Part 5.1 - Election Finances and **Contributions** Disclosure, the term “**candidate**” means:

- (i) an individual who has been nominated to run for election in a **local jurisdiction** as a **councillor** or school **board trustee**; and
- (ii) an individual who intends to be nominated to run for election in a **local jurisdiction** as a **councillor** or as a school **board trustee** that has given written notice in accordance with Section 147.22 of the *LAEA*.

Chief Financial Officer

A chief financial officer is a representative that **candidates** may engage and a representative that **third-party** advertisers are legally required to have during an election campaign.

This individual ensures that the financial aspects of the **candidate's** election campaign and the **third-party** advertiser's election advertising campaign comply with the *LAEA*.

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 may represent **candidates** at voting opportunities by observing voting procedures and scrutinizing the ballot-counting process after the close of voting on **election day**. **Scrutineers** must meet the eligibility requirements in Section 69 of the *LAEA* and must be appointed by the **candidate** in writing.

Third-Party Advertisers

A **third-party** advertiser is an individual or organization that sponsors election advertising independently from **candidates**. **Third-party** advertising includes election advertising to promote or oppose a **candidate**, and/or on an issue with which a **candidate** may associated, during the **election advertising period**.

Third-party advertisers must be independent from **candidates** when engaging in election advertising. **Third-party** advertisers must register with the **local jurisdiction**, or the Provincial Registrar if engaging in **election advertising** in more than 10 **local jurisdictions**, before conducting advertising during the **election advertising period**, which starts May 1 and ends at the end of **election day**.

Third-parties interested in engaging in **election advertising** in more than 10 **local jurisdictions** can be directed to the appointed Provincial Registrar at:

Executive Director
Municipal Capacity and Sustainability Branch
Municipal Affairs
17th Floor, Commerce Place
10155 - 102 Street
Edmonton AB T5J 4L4
Phone: 780-427-2225 (dial 310-000 first for toll-free)
Email: ma.advisory@gov.ab.ca

See Part 8 of the *LAEA* and Module 4 of the Returning Officer manual for more information on **third-party** advertising and disclosure requirements.

Local Political Parties and Slates

The *LAEA* allows for the creation of local political parties (LPP) and slates only in the cities of Edmonton and Calgary for the 2025 general election, and for a candidate's affiliation with an LPP or slate to be reflected on the ballot.

Candidates, LPPs, and slates must comply with applicable registration, endorsement, interaction rules, and financing rules for contributions, campaign expenses, disclosures, and other provisions set out in the Local Political Parties and Slates Regulation (LPPSR) and the Expense Limits Regulation.

A fact sheet with more information is available at [Changes to the Local Authorities Election Act \(LAEA\) 2024 and 2025: Local Political Parties and Slates](#).

Key Election Roles

Election Officials

Municipal **councils** and school **boards** appoint a **returning officer** to administer local elections. If a **council** does not appoint a **returning officer**, the duty falls to the **chief administrative officer (CAO)** of the municipality or the **secretary** of a school division by default. A senior local government employee or a private contractor hired to conduct the election on the local government's behalf may be appointed to be the **returning officer**.

Generally, **returning officers** are responsible for overseeing all local election administration activities, including receiving nomination documents, administering voting opportunities, counting ballots, and declaring election results.

The **returning officer** is also responsible for appointing and training **deputy returning officers** and any additional election officials required to conduct local elections. The **returning officer** must conduct the election in accordance with the *LAEA* and the **local jurisdiction's** election bylaw.

Election officials must complete an oath or statement confirming they will be independent and impartial when performing their duties.

Alberta Municipal Affairs

Alberta Municipal Affairs oversees the *MGA*, *LAEA*, and associated regulations. Contact the ministry for answers to questions about the material contained in this guide. Ministry staff can also provide additional information about local elections administration in Alberta.

Alberta Municipal Affairs
Municipal Capacity and Sustainability Branch
Phone: 780-427-2225 (in Alberta, toll-free dial 310-0000 first)
Email: ma.advisory@gov.ab.ca
Website: <https://www.alberta.ca/municipal-elections-overview>

Alberta Education

Contact Alberta Education to answer questions or provide clarification on the provisions in the *Education Act* or the *LAEA* as they relate to elections for school **board trustees**,

Alberta Education
Business Operations and Stakeholder Support Branch
Phone: 780-427-2055 (in Alberta, toll-free dial 310-0000 first)
Website: <https://www.alberta.ca/school-board-elections-guide>

Elections Alberta

Elections Alberta is the non-partisan and independent Office of the Legislature responsible for the administration of the provincial electoral process in Alberta and the campaign financing and **third-party** advertising rules for local elections under the *LAEA*.

Elections Alberta administers, investigates, and enforces the campaign financing and **third-party** advertisers' disclosure requirements including expense and **contribution** limits, and election advertising rules under the *LAEA*. Elections Alberta also has the authority to conduct investigations of any matter that might contravene the legislation and levy administrative monetary penalties for non-compliance with the *LAEA*. Please refer to Part 5.1 and Part 8 of the *LAEA* for more information about campaign financing and **third-party** advertising rules.

Elections Alberta
Phone: 780-427-7191
Email: info@elections.ab.ca

About Being an Elected Official

Term of Office

A person elected under the *LAEA*, unless otherwise disqualified from remaining in office or resigning, holds office from the beginning of the organizational meeting of the **elected authority** following the **general election** to immediately before the beginning of the organizational meeting of the **elected authority** after the next **general election**.

A person elected to an **elected authority** to fill a vacancy caused other than by the passage of time holds office from when the person takes the oath of office for the remainder of the period the person's predecessor would have held office had that predecessor continued in office.

Time Commitment

Holding local office can represent a significant time commitment. During the term of office, elected officials will be required to attend:

- regular and special meetings of the **council** or school **board**;
- **council** or **board** committee meetings;
- meetings of other **boards** and agencies to which they are appointed as a **council** or school **board** representative;
- conferences, conventions, seminars, and workshops for training and discussion (legislation requires mandatory **councillor** orientation training and emergency management training to be completed shortly after taking office – see the What Every Councillor Needs to Know resource at Alberta.ca for more information); and
- other events promoting your municipality or school division.

Time should also be spent reading agenda material and talking with residents, the **CAO** or **board secretary** and other relevant stakeholders. This work will all be part of the necessary preparation for meetings so elected officials can participate in an informed way and contribute to collective decision-making.

Remuneration

Elected officials generally receive remuneration or other financial compensation for the time and energy they have devoted to their community. Check with your **local jurisdiction** office to find out about remuneration for elected officials, as remuneration amounts are set by each **elected authority**.

Roles and Responsibilities of a Municipal Elected Official

As a member of **council**, you will have the opportunity to significantly influence the future of your community. Your effectiveness as a member of **council** depends on your ability to be an active member of the team and to respectfully persuade the other members of **council** to adopt and support your view. Decisions of **council** may only be made by resolution or bylaw and must be made at public meetings, at which a quorum is present. As an elected official, you will also have to find the balance between representing the views of those who elected you and considering the best interests of the municipality as a whole.

As an individual member of **council**, you will not have the power to commit your municipality to any expenditure or to direct the activities of the municipal employees. Any promise you make as a part of your election campaign that involves municipal expenditures or the activities of the **CAO** can only be carried out if you can obtain the support of your fellow **council** members to carry out that promise by passing a resolution or bylaw at a duly called **council** meeting.

The Canadian Constitution grants responsibility for municipal institutions to provincial governments. Through legislation, the Alberta Legislative Assembly has delegated some of its authority to municipal **councils**. The legislation you will refer to most often is the *MGA* as this is the legislation that allows for many decisions that **council** can make.

In accordance with Section 7 of the *MGA*, a municipal **council** may pass legislation in the form of municipal bylaws. These bylaws remain in effect until they are amended or repealed. You will not be starting with a blank slate and creating your ideal municipality from scratch. If you are running with some kind of reform in mind, you will have to become familiar with what exists, how it has been created – by bylaw, resolution, or policy – and why it exists before you will be able to start discussing proposed changes.

Municipalities often make local bylaws available to the public through their municipal websites. Otherwise, you can ask for copies at the municipal office.

Administration of a Municipality

Elected officials perform a role that is distinct from the role of the **CAO** and other local government staff. Elected officials are decision-makers and set strategic policies and priorities for the municipality – they do not implement policies and decisions or otherwise administer the local government.

It is the job of the administration to implement **council's** policy direction. Alberta municipalities have competent and dedicated administrators. The **CAO** is the only direct employee of **council**, and you will rely on the support, advice, and assistance of your **CAO** if you are to be an effective member of **council**. The **CAO's** training, experience, and understanding of how and why things have developed the way they have will be an important resource for you.

At a professional level, elected officials do not have regular contact with local government staff, nor do elected officials perform, or supervise, the roles or duties assigned to members of administration.

How else can I prepare?

The best way to find out what the job of an elected official is all about is to spend some time reading relevant documents of the **local jurisdiction** and talking to current members of the **elected authority**. You may also wish to:

- familiarize yourself with local bylaws and municipal legislation;
- read meeting agendas and minutes;
- observe meetings from the gallery; and
- talk to administrative staff to find out what other information is available.

It is common practice in many **local jurisdictions** to publish a prospective **candidate's** information guide. These guides will provide valuable insight into time commitments, practices, and expectations of holding office in that **local jurisdiction**. Researching in advance will help you in your campaign and prepare you for assuming office.

Are you qualified to become a nominated candidate?

LAEA
s.21(1)

To become a nominated **candidate**, you must be at least 18 years of age on **nomination day**, a Canadian citizen, and you must have been a resident of the **local jurisdiction** for the six consecutive months immediately preceding **nomination day**. Also, you must not be otherwise ineligible or disqualified under Section 22 of the *LAEA*.

NOTE: For eligibility requirements for Jasper candidates, please visit [Changes to the Local Authorities Election Act \(LAEA\) 2025: Jasper Residency and Eligibility Requirements](#).

LAEA
s.21(1)

Qualification Requirements in a Ward System

In a **local jurisdiction** (other than a city) with a **ward** system, you must be a resident of the **ward** or the electoral division in which you intend to run for the six consecutive months immediately preceding **nomination day**.

LAEA
s.21(2)

Qualification Requirements in a City with a Ward System

In a city with a **ward** system, it is required that you have been a resident of the city for six months immediately preceding **nomination day**, not necessarily the **ward** in which you wish to run.

LAEA
s.12(b)
s.12(h)
s.47

Qualification Requirements in a Summer Village

To qualify for nomination as a **councillor** in a summer village, a person is not required to be a resident of the summer village but must be entitled to vote in the summer village election and have been a resident of Alberta for the 12 consecutive months immediately preceding **election day**. Prospective **candidates** must also meet the voter eligibility requirements and be:

- 18 years or older, a Canadian citizen, and a resident in the **local jurisdiction** on **election day**;
- 18 years or older, a Canadian citizen, and named on a certificate of title as a person who owns property within the summer village; or
- 18 years or older, a Canadian citizen, and the **spouse** or adult interdependent partner of a person who is named on a certificate of title as a person who owns property within the summer village.

LAEA
s.22(1)

Ineligibility for Nomination

No one is eligible to become a **candidate** under any of the following circumstances:

- if you are the auditor of the **local jurisdiction**;
- if your property taxes are more than \$50 in arrears (excluding indebtedness on current taxes, and indebtedness for arrears of taxes for which the person has entered into a consolidation agreement with the municipality);
- if you are in default for any other debt to the **local jurisdiction** equal to or exceeding \$500 for more than 90 days;
- if within the previous 10 years, you have been convicted of an offense under the *Local Authorities Election Act*, the *Election Act*, *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act*, or the *Canada Elections Act*;
- if on **nomination day** you are employed by the Office of the Ombudsman (unless you take a leave of absence);
- if you are a judge, Member of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada, or Member of the Legislative Assembly; or
- if you have been convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment for five or more years, or of an offence under Section 123, 124 or 125 of the *Criminal Code of Canada* (an offence related to municipal corruption, influencing a municipal official, or financial abuse of an elected office).

MGA
s.174(1)(c)

MGA
s.174(1)(e)

LAEA
s.22(1.2)

A person will be ineligible for nomination if they have failed to comply with the campaign finance and disclosure requirements of the *LAEA* and:

- the **secretary** or **CAO** transmitted or presented a report in respect to that person; and
- the **court** did not dispense with or extend the time for compliance.

A person is deemed to be ineligible under these circumstances for either an eight-year period following the day that a report was transmitted by the **secretary**, or a three-year period following the day the disclosure statement was filed with the municipality (whichever period expires first).

LAEA
s.22(1.1)
s.22(5)
s.22(5.1)

If you are a municipal employee and you wish to run for local office, or a school **board** employee running for election as **trustee** of a school **board**, you must take a leave of absence without pay as outlined in the *LAEA*. This point does not apply if you perform duties for a jurisdiction in a volunteer capacity. You may notify your employer on or after January 1 in the election year (on or after the day **council** passes a resolution setting **election day** in the case of a **by-election**) but before the last working day prior to **nomination day**. Any employee who requests a leave of absence without pay in accordance with those conditions must be granted that leave.

Nominations

LAEA
s.147.1(1)(b)

What is the Campaign Period?

The term “**campaign period**” means:

- (i) in the case of a **general election**, the period beginning on January 1 of the year immediately following a **general election** and ending on December 31 immediately following the next **general election**; and
- (ii) in the case of a **by-election**, the period beginning on the day after the resolution or bylaw is passed to set the **election day** for the **by-election** and ending 60 days after the **by-election**;

For the 2025 **general election**, the **campaign period** started on October 31, 2024 (with the proclamation of *LAEA* amendments made in spring 2024 via Bill 20) and will end on December 31, 2025. On January 1, 2026, the four-year **campaign period** for the 2029 **general election** will begin.

LAEA
s.147.22

Written Notice of Intent to be Nominated

Individuals who intend to be nominated or who have been nominated to run for election must give written notice to the **local jurisdiction** in which they have been or intend to be nominated. Written notice must include:

- the full name, address, and contact information of the individual;
- the address of the place(s) where records are maintained, and of the place to which communications may be sent;
- the names and addresses of the financial institutions to be used as depositories for campaign **contributions**; and
- the names of the signing authorities for each financial institution to be used for campaign **contributions**.

No individual and no person acting for the individual shall accept a **contribution** or incur a **campaign expense** unless the individual has given written notice. No **candidate** or person acting for a **candidate** may accept a **contribution** for an election outside the **campaign period** for that election.

Local jurisdictions must maintain a register of **candidates** who have given notice under Section 147.22. The register must be made publicly available on the **local jurisdiction's** website until December 31 immediately following a **general election**, or 60 days following a **by-election**.

In accordance with Sections 28(6.1) and (6.2) of the *LAEA*, the register must be made available in a partial or redacted form with the mailing address of the **candidate** and **candidate's** agent, and any personal information that the **returning officer, deputy, or secretary** believes would compromise the personal safety of the **candidate**, removed. If a criminal record check was filed with a **candidate's** nomination papers, the results must not be withheld or redacted.

What is the Nomination Period & When is Nomination Day?

LAEA
s.25(1)
s.25(2)(a)

In the case of **general elections**, **election day** occurs on the third Monday in October every four years. Candidates can begin to file nomination papers on January 1 in the year of the election, up until **nomination day**, four weeks prior to **election day**. If a **local jurisdiction** has passed a bylaw under Section 11(2) of the LAEA, which allows for **election day** to be held on the Saturday immediately before the 3rd Monday in October, the last day to file nomination papers would then fall on the Saturday, four weeks prior to **election day**. **Nomination day** is the last day a person may file a nomination to become a **candidate** in the election.

The nomination period for the 2025 General Election begins on January 1, 2025, and ends at 12:00 noon on nomination day.

Nomination day for the 2025 General Election is Monday, September 22, 2025.

LAEA
s.25(2)(b)

In the case of a **by-election**, **election day** will be set through a resolution of the local **elected authority**. Candidates can begin to file nomination papers the day after the resolution was passed up until **nomination day**, four weeks prior to **election day**.

LAEA
s.12(a)(i)
s.12(d)

In the case of a summer village, **nomination day** must occur in June and/or July and **election day** occurs four weeks following **nomination day**. **Nomination day** is set by **council** resolution.

Form of Nomination

LAEA
s. 27

Nominations must be filed using the required forms (Form 4 – Nomination Paper and Candidate's Acceptance and Form 5 – Candidate Information). Contact the **local jurisdiction** office to determine where to access the nomination form and to seek support with filling out the form accurately. The **returning officer** or a **deputy** may be able to help prospective candidates.

LAEA
s.27(1)

What is included in the Form of Nomination?

Generally, your nomination paper must be signed by at least five (5) voters eligible to vote in the election. The signatures collected must be from people who are residents in the **local jurisdiction** on the date of signing the nomination, and include the voter's name, address (street address or legal description of residence), and signature.

Prospective candidates may begin to collect signatures at any time but cannot file their nomination papers with the **returning officer** until January 1 in the year of the election. In the case of a **by-election**, **candidates** may begin to file their nomination papers the day following when the resolution was made to set the **by-election** date.

In the case of summer villages, the **council** is required to set **election day** and **nomination day** will be four weeks prior to election at the times and location provided for through **council** resolution.

It is often a good idea to obtain more than the required number of signatures in the event that one or more persons were not eligible to sign the nomination form.

LAEA
s.27(2)

Local jurisdictions with a population of at least 10,000 may pass a bylaw increasing the number of voters' signatures required to a maximum of 100. Ensure that you check with the **local jurisdiction** to determine the number of signatures that you require for nomination.

LAEA
s.27(3)

If you are seeking election in a **local jurisdiction** with a division or **ward** system, the voters signing your nomination form must be residents in the **ward** or division in which you are running.

LAEA
s.12(b)

In summer villages, the nominators must be;

- eligible to vote in the election;
- 18 years of age;
- a Canadian citizen; and
- either residents or those named on the certificate of title as the person who owns property within the summer village or is the **spouse** or adult interdependent partner of the person named on the title.

In addition to the signatures, the nomination paper must also be complete with the **candidate's** written acceptance sworn or affirmed in the **prescribed form** by the person nominated and in the presence of a Commissioner for Oaths in Alberta. The **local jurisdiction** office may have information regarding who the Commissioners for Oaths are in the area.

If a **candidate's** information changes, that information must be updated with the **local jurisdiction**, in writing, within 48 hours of that change.

LAEA
s.28(4)

The **returning officer** will not accept the following:

- A nomination that is not completed in the **prescribed form**;
- A nomination that is not signed by at least the minimum number of persons required to sign the nomination;
- A nomination that is not sworn or affirmed by the person nominated;
- A nomination that is not accompanied by a deposit (if required by bylaw); or
- A nomination that is not accompanied with a criminal record check (if required by bylaw).

LAEA
s.68.1

Official Agent

On the nomination form, a **candidate** may choose to appoint an **elector** to be their **official agent**. Eligibility criteria for this role are found in Section 68.1.

This person may act as the signing authority for the campaign bank account and manage aspects of the campaign as directed by the **candidate**. No **candidate** may act as an **official agent** for another **candidate**.

If you have appointed an **official agent**, you must include the information on the **candidate's** nomination form. If, at any time, the information changes or there is a need to appoint a new **official agent**, the **candidate** is required to notify the **returning officer** immediately.

Filing the Nomination

LAEA
s. 27

Once you have completed the nomination form, the next step is to ensure that you file the Nomination Paper and Candidate's Acceptance Form (Form 4), as well as the Candidate Information Form (Form 5) during the **nomination period**, prior to noon on **nomination day**.

LAEA
s.25

How do I file my Nomination Form?

Completed nomination forms can be filed with the **returning officer** at any time beginning on January 1 in the year of the **general election** and until four (4) weeks prior to **election day**. In the case of a **by-election**, the **returning officer** can begin to accept nomination papers the day

following the day when the resolution was made my **council** setting the date for the **by-election**.

LAEA
s. 12(d)

For summer villages, nominations for **councillor** must be received by the **returning officer** in June or July (or both), in the year of the **general election**. The date, time, and location of where nomination papers will be accepted must be established by **council**.

LAEA
s.26

Local jurisdictions will advertise **nomination day** in one of three ways:

- in a newspaper or another publication circulating in the area once a week for two weeks prior to the close of nominations;
- a direct mail-out or delivery of a notice to every residence at least one week prior to the close of nominations; or
- in accordance with a local advertisement bylaw.

The advertisement will indicate where and when the **returning officer** will receive the nominations. It is important to check the advertisement or with your **local jurisdiction** office for the time and location to file your nomination papers.

LAEA
s.28(3)

Do I have to file my Nomination Form in person?

Nominations shall be submitted to the **returning officer**, or their designate, at any time during the **nomination period**. It is best to deliver your nomination form in person; however, anyone may submit your nomination paper on your behalf, or it may be sent by mail. If you are unable to submit your nomination paper in person, ensure that the forms are completed fully prior to it being filed with the **returning officer** because, as the **candidate**, it is your responsibility to ensure that your forms are fully completed and meet the requirements for filing under Section 27 of the LAEA.

LAEA
s.29

Do I have to pay a deposit to file my Nomination Form?

Local jurisdictions may have a bylaw requiring a deposit to accompany nominations. The amount fixed in the bylaw may not exceed:

- \$1,000 in **local jurisdictions** with a population over 10,000; and
- \$100 in any other case.

When you inquire or pick up the nomination form from the **local jurisdiction**, ensure that you seek clarification on whether a deposit is required and if so, the amount of the deposit.

If a deposit is required, it must be paid, in full, at the time you file your nomination form. A deposit must be payable to the **local jurisdiction** and may be paid using:

- cash;
- certified cheque;
- money order;
- e-transfer; or
- debit or credit card.

Confirm in advance which of these payment methods the **local jurisdiction** is equipped to accept.

LAEA
s.30

Will I get my deposit back?

Your deposit will be returned to you if you:

- are elected;
- get at least one-half the number of votes of the person elected to office with the least number of votes; or
- withdraw as a **candidate** within 24 hours of the close of nominations.

LAEA
s.32

Withdrawing Nominations

Candidates may withdraw their nomination form at any time during the **nomination period** and up to 24 hours (48 hours in a summer village) after the close of the **nomination period**.

If **candidates** choose to withdraw, they must provide written notice, in person, to the **returning officer**.

LAEA
s.32

Insufficient Nominations

If the number of nominations filed is less than the number of vacancies in the municipality, the **returning officer** will be available to receive nominations the next day from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. This process must continue for six business days (calendar days in summer villages). If, at the end of the six-day period, insufficient nominations continue, municipalities are required to contact the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

LAEA
s.34

Acclamations

If, 24 hours after the close of nominations, or the completion of the time period described above, the number of **candidates** nominated equals the number of vacancies in the municipality, nominations will be closed and the **returning officer** will declare the **candidates** elected by acclamation (no election will be held).

LAEA
s.35

Requirement for Election

If more than the required nominations are received by 12 noon or the completion of the time period described above, nominations will be closed, and the election will be held according to legislated process.

LAEA
s.12(d)

Summer Villages

In the case of a summer village, the **returning officer** will announce the time and place when further nominations will be received.

Late Filing of Nominations

Unless there are insufficient nominations, the **returning officer** CANNOT accept nominations after 12:00 noon on **nomination day**. Ensure you check with your **local jurisdiction** on the time and location for filing nomination forms and ensure you file your nomination paper well in advance at the location available.

Despite the term “**nomination day**”, it is useful to think of it as a nomination deadline day. There is no need to wait until **nomination day** to file forms and if there is any question of your availability, be sure to file your forms prior to this date.

Campaigning

Once the **campaign period** begins and they have filed the appropriate forms with the **local jurisdiction**, **candidates** generally direct their own election campaigns during local elections.

The purpose of campaigning is to convince the **electors** they are the best **candidate** for the position.

Candidates have used various strategies, such as:

- door-knocking;
- signage;
- brochures or posters;
- participating in local **candidate** debates or forums;
- social media pages or websites; and
- hosting a meet and greet event.

Candidates have considerable flexibility in organizing their election campaigns, provided they avoid committing election or campaign financing offences.

Is there anything I cannot do during a campaign?

It is essential that **candidates** seek clarification from **returning officers** relating to local bylaws that may regulate campaign activities, such as the use and placement of campaign signage throughout the municipality. Candidates are encouraged to contact their **local jurisdiction's** office or speak to the **returning officer** for more information about local election rules.

There are also a variety of offence provisions included in the *LAEA* that **candidates** should review and understand.

If **candidates** require additional interpretation or clarification of provincial legislation or municipal bylaws, they should seek independent legal advice.

LAEA
s.116

Bribery

As a **candidate**, you cannot give, or promise to give, money or any other valuable consideration (such as an office or job) to anyone in return for their vote, or by agreeing to refrain from voting.

In addition, an **elector** or resident of the municipality cannot accept money or any other valuable consideration in return for voting or not voting during an election.

LAEA
s.117

Undue Influence

As a **candidate**, you cannot use, or threaten to use, violence, injury, damage, or intimidation to compel a person to vote or refrain from voting at an election. You cannot obstruct the voting process or obstruct a person from accessing a **voting station** to vote during an election.

LAEA
s. 152
s. 152.1

Canvassing on Election Day

Candidates, **official agents**, or campaign volunteers cannot canvass or solicit votes in a **voting station** or on the property used for a **voting station** on an **advance vote** or **election day**. In addition, campaign materials (posters, pins, signage, etc.) cannot be displayed or distributed inside or on the outside of a building used as a **voting station**.

Campaign Expenses and Contributions

Campaign activities usually trigger campaign financing rules and as such, **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, disqualification, or ineligibility to run in future elections.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to read and understand Part 5.1 of the *LAEA* as it pertains to Election Finance and Contribution Disclosure.

Allowable Campaign Expenses

LAEA
s.147.1(1)(a)

A “**campaign expense**” is an expense a **candidate, local political party, or slate** makes in the course of a campaign for election. Technically, this includes any expense incurred, or non-monetary **contribution** received, by a **candidate, local political party, or slate** to the extent that the property or service that the expense was incurred for, or that was received as a non-monetary **contribution**, is used to directly promote or oppose a **candidate, local political party, or slate** during a **campaign period**.

“**Campaign expense**” includes an expense incurred for, or a non-monetary **contribution** in relation to:

- the production of advertising or promotional material;
- the distribution, broadcast, or publication of advertising or promotional material in any media or by any other means during a **campaign period**, including by the use of a capital asset;
- the payment of remuneration and expenses to or on behalf of a person for the person’s services as a chief financial officer or in any other capacity,
- securing a meeting place; or
- the conduct of opinion polls, surveys, or research during a **campaign period**.

LAEA
s.147.34

Campaign Expense Limits

The *LAEA* allows for the establishment of a regulation that sets out the amount of money that may be spent by **candidates** during the **campaign period**. The Expense Limit Regulation came into force on October 31, 2024.

Campaign Expense Limits for election years

Upon registration, during a local election year in Alberta, the expense limits are described below. These limits do not apply to **candidates** for school **trustee**.

Mayoral **candidates** may spend up to \$1 per person based on the population of the municipality, or \$20,000, whichever is greater.

Councillor candidates will be allowed to spend:

- where there are **wards**, up to \$1 per person based on the average population of the **wards** in the municipality, or \$20,000, whichever is greater; or
- where there are no **wards**, up to \$1 per person based on the population of the municipality, or \$20,000, whichever is greater.

Local political parties (Edmonton and Calgary **candidates** only) will be allowed to spend up to \$1 per person based on the average population of all **wards** in the municipality, for each **ward** in which the party has endorsed **candidates** running.

Third-party advertisers will be allowed to spend \$0.50 per person based on the population of the municipality during the election year advertising period (May 1 – Oct. 20, 2025).

Campaign Expense Limits for non-election years

Upon registration, for the year immediately before the election year, the expense limits are as follows.

Mayoral **candidates** may spend up to \$0.50 per person based on the population of the municipality, or \$10,000, whichever is greater.

Councillor candidates will be allowed to spend:

- where there are **wards**, up to \$0.50 per person based on the average population of the **wards** in the municipality, or \$10,000, whichever is greater, or
- where there are no **wards**, up to \$0.50 per person based on the population of the municipality, or \$10,000, whichever is greater.

Registered local political parties (Edmonton and Calgary **candidates** only) will be allowed to spend up to \$0.50 per person based on the average population of all **wards** in the municipality, for each **ward** in which the party has endorsed **candidates** running.

Candidates and local political parties will not be allowed to incur expenses during the two years following an election year.

LAEA

s.147.1(1)(c)

Campaign Contributions

“**Contribution**” means in respect of a candidate’s election campaign or a local political party, any money, personal property, real property, or service provided without fair market value compensation from that candidate or local political party, but does not include a service provided by an individual who voluntarily performs the service and receives no compensation, directly or indirectly, for the service or time spent providing the service

LAEA

s.147.2 &
Expense
Limit
Regulation

Limitations on Contributions

No prohibited organization, individual ordinarily resident outside Alberta or **trade union** or **employee organization** other than an **Alberta trade union** or **Alberta employee organization** shall contribute to a **candidate**.

In a calendar year during the **campaign period** of a **general election**, **contributions** to a candidate by an individual ordinarily resident in Alberta shall not exceed \$5,000 in the aggregate to all **candidates** in a municipality. This limitation also applies to the **campaign period** for **by-elections**, which is the period beginning on the day after the resolution or bylaw is passed setting the **by-election** and ending 60 days after the **by-election**.

Contributions by a corporation other than a prohibited organization, by an **Alberta trade union** or by an **Alberta employee organization** shall not exceed \$5,000 in the aggregate to all **candidates** for election during the **campaign period**.

Accepting **contributions** in excess of the statutory limits is prohibited.

Soliciting or accepting **contributions** from prohibited organizations and individuals not ordinarily resident in Alberta, as well as from non-Albertan **trade unions** or **employee organizations**, is prohibited.

LAEA

s.147.1(1)(f)

Prohibited organizations include:

- a municipality;
- a corporation that is controlled by a municipality and meets the test set out in Section 1(2) of the *MGA*;
- a non-profit organization that has received since the last **general election** any of the following from the municipality in which the election will be held:
 - (A) a grant;

- (B) real property; or
- (C) personal property;
- a provincial corporation as defined in the *Financial Administration Act*, including a management body within the meaning of the *Alberta Housing Act*;
- a Metis settlement;
- a **board of trustees** under the *Education Act*;
- a public post-secondary institution as defined in the *Post-secondary Learning Act*;
- a corporation that does not carry on business in Alberta;
- a registered party as defined in the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* or the *Canada Elections Act (Canada)*; or
- an organization designated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council as a prohibited organization.

LAEA
s.147.24

Contributions Not Belonging to Contributor

No individual, corporation, **trade union**, or **employee organization** shall contribute to a **candidate** funds not belonging to them, or funds given or furnished to them by another individual, corporation, **trade union**, or **employee organization** or a prohibited organization for the purpose of contributing those funds to a **candidate**.

No individual, corporation, **trade union**, **employee organization**, or prohibited organization shall give or furnish funds to another individual, corporation, **trade union**, or **employee organization** for the purpose of having them make a **contribution** of those funds to a **candidate**.

LAEA
s.147.31(2)

Candidates must ensure they record the gross income from any fundraising function held for their campaign. In addition, if the function is held by the sale of tickets, the amount of the **contribution** is to be determined using the following rules:

LAEA
s.147.31(3)

- if the individual charge is \$50 or less, it is not considered a **contribution** unless the individual who pays the charge specifically requests it to be a **contribution**. If a request is made, half of the amount is allowed for expenses and half is considered a **contribution**. Even if the amount is not considered a **contribution**, the **candidate** may choose to still issue a receipt and keep a record of the transaction;
- if the individual charge is more than \$50 but less than \$100, \$25 is allowed for expenses and the balance is considered to be a **contribution**; and
- if the **contribution** is more than \$100, 25 per cent of the amount is allowed for expenses and the remaining balance is considered to be a **contribution**.

LAEA
s.147.32
LAEA
s.147.4(1)(b)

Receipts

As a part of the **candidate's** responsibilities, they, or a person acting on their behalf, must issue a receipt for every **contribution** received in a form acceptable to the **local jurisdiction**. If a **contribution** is in excess of \$50, the name and address of the contributor and the amount of the **contribution** must be recorded because it is required to be included with the campaign disclosure statements.

Contributions of real property, personal property, goods and services have to be valued. Throughout the duration of the campaign, receipts must be issued for every **contribution** received and be obtained for every expense. Receipts will assist **candidates** in creating itemized expense reports and can be used as proof of **contributions**.

LAEA
s.147.33

Loans

Candidates may borrow money only from a financial institution and shall record all loans and their terms. All loans and their terms must be reported accordingly to the **local jurisdiction**.

Only an individual ordinarily resident in Alberta, a corporation other than a prohibited organization, an **Alberta trade union** or an **Alberta employee organization** may make a payment on behalf of the borrower in respect of a loan.

Payments on loans are considered to be a **contribution** if the borrower does not reimburse the payment before the borrower is next required to file a disclosure statement.

LAEA
s.147.3(1)

Bank Account

A campaign account in the name of the **candidate** or the **candidate's** election campaign must be opened at a financial institution for the purposes of the election campaign at the time the **candidate** gives a written notice under Section 147.22 or as soon as possible after the total amount of **contributions** first exceeds \$1,000 in the aggregate.

Money in that account must then only be used for the payment of **campaign expenses**.

LAEA
s.147.3(1)(f)

Record Keeping

All campaign records of **contributions** and expenses must be kept for a minimum of three (3) years following the day of the election to which they relate.

LAEA
s.147.4

Campaign Disclosure Statements

In the case of a **general election**, on or before September 30 of a year in which a general election is to be held, a **candidate** who received **contributions** in the period beginning on January 1 and ending on July 31 of that year must file a disclosure statement in respect of that period.

Additionally, on or before March 1 of each year, a **candidate** who received **contributions** in the previous year shall file a disclosure statement in respect of the previous year.

Within 120 days of the day on which a **by-election** is held, a **candidate** who has received **contributions** during the **campaign period** for that **by-election** must file a disclosure statement in respect of the campaign period. A disclosure statement referred to above must:

- (a) be in the prescribed form;
- (b) be filed with the secretary of the candidate's local jurisdiction; and
- (c) include the following information for the applicable period:
 - i) the total amount of all **contributions** received that did not exceed \$50 in the aggregate from any single contributor;
 - ii) in respect of each contributor that made **contributions** exceeding \$50 in the aggregate, the total amount contributed and the contributor's name and address;
 - iii) the total amount of all **contributions** received under Section 147.2(4);
 - iv) the total amount received from fundraising functions;
 - v) the total amount of other revenue received;
 - vi) the total amount of **campaign expenses** incurred;
 - vii) an itemized **campaign expense** report setting out the **campaign expenses** incurred by the **candidate**;
 - viii) the total amount paid by the **candidate** out of the **candidate's** own funds and not reimbursed from the **candidate's** campaign fund;
 - ix) in respect of a disclosure statement required annually on March 1, if the previous year was the year in which an election was held:
 - (1) the total amount of any campaign surplus for the **campaign period**, including any surplus from previous campaigns; and
 - (2) the amount of any deficit for the **campaign period**;
 - i) in respect of a disclosure statement required after a **by-election**:

- (1) the total amount of any campaign surplus, including any surplus from previous campaigns; and
- (2) the amount of any deficit.

A **candidate** who incurs **campaign expenses** or receives **contributions** of \$50,000 or more, shall file a **review engagement** with the disclosure statement. **Review engagements** are defined in the *Chartered Professional Accountants Act*.

Within 30 days, a **candidate** must submit a supplementary statement in the **prescribed form** to the **local jurisdiction** if any of the information reported in the disclosure statement has changed or is inaccurate.

LAEA
s.147.5

Campaign Surplus

If a candidate's disclosure statement in respect of the year in which a **general election** was held or in the case of a **by-election** shows a surplus, the candidate, within 60 days after filing the disclosure statement with the **local jurisdiction**:

- (a) shall, with respect to any amount that is \$1000 or more, donate an amount to a **registered charity** that results in the surplus being less than \$1000; and
- (b) may, with respect to any amount that is less than \$1000:
 - (i) retain all or any portion of that amount; and
 - (ii) donate all or any portion of that amount to a **registered charity**.

A candidate who donates an amount to a **registered charity** in accordance with subsection (1)(a) or (b)(ii) shall, within 30 days after the expiration of the 60-day period referred to in subsection (1), file an amended disclosure statement showing that the surplus has been dealt with in accordance with this section.

Campaign Deficit

LAEA
s.147.6(1)

If a candidate's disclosure statement in respect of the year in which a **general election** was held or in the case of a **by-election** shows a deficit, the candidate shall eliminate the deficit within 60 days after filing the disclosure statement with the **local jurisdiction**.

LAEA
s.147.6(2)

For the purpose of eliminating a deficit referred to in subsection (1), a candidate may, notwithstanding Section 147.22(4), accept **contributions** in accordance with the *LAEA* during the period referred to above.

LAEA
s.147.6(3)

Subject to subsection (4), a candidate shall not accept a **contribution** of an amount that exceeds \$5000 from any single contributor for the purpose of this section.

LAEA
s.147.6(4)

A candidate may make a **contribution** from the candidate's own funds that does not exceed \$10,000 to reduce a deficit shown on the candidate's disclosure statement for the purpose of this section.

LAEA
s.147.6(5)

A candidate referred to in subsection (1) shall, within 30 days after the expiration of the 60-day period referred to in subsection (1), file an amended disclosure statement showing that the deficit has been eliminated.

LAEA
s.147.7

Late Filing

A **candidate** who fails to file a campaign disclosure statement within the specified time period is required to pay a \$500 late filing fee to the **local jurisdiction**. If the fee is not paid within 30 days, the **local jurisdiction** must send a notice to the **candidate** indicating the amount of the late filing fee to be paid.

If a **candidate** fails to file a disclosure statement, the **secretary** shall present a report to that effect to council on the day of the first council meeting after the filing deadline, and publish the report or the information in the report on the municipality's website by no later than that day. If a **candidate** files their disclosure statement no later than 10 days after the filing deadline, the **candidate** is not required to form part of the report proceeding to **council**. In the case of a school **board trustee**, the **secretary** of the school **board** shall transmit a report to that effect to the school **board**, which shall on its receipt make the report public.

If a **candidate**, who is sent a notice by the municipality, fails to pay the late filing fee, the municipality may file a copy of the notice with the Court of King's Bench, which then may be enforced by the **court**.

Failure to file a disclosure statement within legislated timelines is a reason for disqualification under Section 174 of the *MGA* and may impact eligibility to become a **candidate** in future elections.

LAEA
Part 8
s.190-205

Elections Alberta/Election Commissioner

As of August 1, 2019, the Alberta Election Commissioner, under Elections Alberta, has authority in local elections across Alberta. The Election Commissioner may investigate any matter that may constitute an offence under Part 5.1, Campaign Finance and Contribution Disclosure, or Part 8, Third-Party Advertising, of the *LAEA*.

For more information regarding the authority of the Election Commissioner, including contact information please visit:

www.elections.ab.ca/compliance-enforcement/complaints/.

Voting Opportunities

Voting Times

Voting stations must be open from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. local time on **election day**, unless the **local jurisdiction** has passed a bylaw allowing an earlier opening.

Local governments may set specific hours for any advance voting opportunities held during local elections, but all **voting stations** must close by 8:00 p.m.

Counting Ballots

Ballot counting begins after **voting stations** close at 8:00 p.m. on **election day**.

Candidates or one of their representatives (e.g., **scrutineer** or **official agent**) are entitled to be present during the ballot count. However, only one person from a **candidate's** team, including the **candidate**, may be present at the **voting station** at the same time.

The **presiding deputy** may designate the place or places at a **voting station** where a **candidate**, an **official agent**, or a **scrutineer** of a **candidate**, may observe the election procedure.

Candidates or their representatives may raise an objection to a ballot's acceptance or rejection with the **presiding deputy returning officer** supervising the ballot counting process.

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 **returning officer** at the **local jurisdiction** office, where the unofficial election results are then determined.

After Election Day

Official Election Results

The **returning officer** must announce the official election results at 12 noon on the 4th day after **election day** by posting a statement of the results of the voting for **candidates**, including a declaration that the **candidate** receiving the highest number of votes for each office to be filled is elected.

Reasons for a Preliminary Recount

LAEA
s.98

The **returning officer** may make a recount of the votes cast at one or more **voting stations** if a **candidate**, **official agent**, or a **scrutineer** of a **candidate** shows grounds that the **returning officer** considers reasonable for alleging that the record of the result of the count of votes at any **voting station** is inaccurate.

A returning officer may also make a recount if they consider the number of valid ballots objected to or rejected ballots other than those on which no vote has been cast by an elector, to be sufficient to affect the result of the election if they had not been objected to or rejected.

If the returning officer is of the opinion that there may have been an administrative or technical error that caused an error in the count of votes, they may make a recount.

If an application for a recount under this circumstance is made, it must be made during the 44 hours immediately following the closing of the **voting stations** but may not be made afterwards.

Recount on Request

The **returning officer** shall make a recount of the votes cast at one or more **voting stations** if the **returning officer** receives an application for a recount from a runner up **candidate** or their **official agent** and the **returning officer** is satisfied that:

- a) where one office is to be filled, the difference between the number of valid ballots marked for the **candidate** with the highest number of votes and the number of valid ballots marked for the **candidate** with the second highest number of votes is within 0.5 per cent of the total number of valid ballots marked at the election for that office; or
- b) where more than one office is to be filled from a pool of **candidates**, the difference between the number of valid ballots marked for the **candidate** with the lowest sufficient number of votes to be declared elected to one of the offices and the number of valid ballots marked for the **candidate** with the highest insufficient number of votes to be declared elected is within 0.5 per cent of the total number of valid ballots marked at the election for those offices.

An application for a recount under these circumstances may only be made, where one office is to be filled, by the **candidate** with the second highest number of votes or the **official agent** for that **candidate**, or, in an election where there is more than one office to be filled, by the **candidate** with the highest insufficient number of votes or the **official agent** for that **candidate**.

If a **candidate** requests a recount under these circumstances, the request must be made within 72 hours after the statement of results is announced or posted in accordance with Section 97(2).

Judicial Recount

At any time within 19 days after the close of the **voting stations** on **election day**, any **elector** may apply to the **court** for a recount. See Part 4 of the *LAEA* for more information.

Controverted Elections

A **candidate**, **elected authority**, or an **elector** may contest the validity of an election of a member of an **elected authority** through the **courts** within 6 weeks of **election day**.

The person raising the issue must show a judge reasonable grounds:

- for supposing that the election was not legal or was not conducted according to law;
- for supposing that an unsuccessful **candidate** was not eligible for nomination and that the results of the election would have been different had that **candidate** not run;
- for contesting the validity of the election of a member of the **elected authority**; or
- for contesting the validity of the result of a vote on a bylaw or question.

More information about this **court** process can be found in Part 5 of the *LAEA*.

Appendix A: 2025 General Election Key Dates

October 31, 2024	First day for individuals to be able to become candidates and begin accepting contribution and incurring expenses by submitting a notice of intent to run with the local jurisdiction in which the individuals intend to be nominated.
January 1, 2025	Start of nomination period .
January 1, 2025	Earliest date a municipal/school employee wishing to be nominated may notify the employer that they are taking an unpaid leave of absence.
March 1, 2025	Deadline to submit campaign finance disclosure statement (for candidates who accepted contributions in 2024).
March 22, 2025	Starting date of the consecutive 6-month period to be a resident of the local jurisdiction and ward , if any, to be eligible for nomination.
May 1, 2025	Start of election advertising period for third-party advertisers.
September 21, 2025	Latest date a municipal/school employee wishing to be nominated may notify the employer that they are taking an unpaid leave of absence.
September 22, 2025	Nomination day (nomination period closes at 12 noon).
September 23, 2025	Candidates may withdraw their nomination in writing, in person, until 12 p.m.
September 30, 2025	Deadline to submit campaign finance disclosure statement (for candidates who accepted contributions between January 1, 2025, and July 31, 2025).
October 20, 2025	Election day *
October 22, 2025	Candidates may request a recount before 4:00 p.m. (See Section 98 in the <i>LAEA</i> for reasons for a preliminary recount).
October 24, 2025	Official election results must be posted by 12 noon.
October 27, 2025	A candidate may request a recount under Section 98.1(3) by 12 noon (applies if the votes between the candidate declared elected and the first runner up are within 0.5 per cent of the total number of votes cast for that office).
November 3, 2025	Last day for a municipal council to hold an organizational meeting.
November 8, 2025	Last day for an elector to request a judicial recount.
December 1, 2025	Last day for a candidate , an elected authority , or an elector to initiate a court process to challenge the validity of an election under <i>LAEA</i> Part 5.
December 31, 2025	End of campaign period .
January 1, 2026	Start of campaign period for 2029 General Election .

March 1, 2026	Deadline to submit campaign finance disclosure statement for candidates who accepted contributions in 2025 and for registered third-party advertisers.
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* For summer villages, elections are held during the months of June, July, and August on a date selected by the municipality.

Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
advance vote	a vote taken in advance of election day
Alberta employee organization	any organization that bargains collectively for employees in Alberta; for the purposes of this Act, all branches in Alberta of an employee organization are deemed to be one employee organization
Alberta trade union	a trade union as defined in the <i>Labour Relations Code</i> , the <i>Public Service Employee Relations Act</i> or the <i>Canada Labour Code (Canada)</i> that holds bargaining rights for employees in Alberta; for the purposes of this Act all locals of a trade union are deemed to be one trade union
board	a board of trustees of a school division
by-election	an election other than a general election or a first election
campaign expense	any expense incurred, or non-monetary contribution received, by a candidate, local political party, or slate to the extent that the property or service that the expense was incurred for, or that was received as a non-monetary contribution, is used to directly promote or oppose a candidate, local political party, or slate during a campaign period, and includes an expense incurred for, or a non-monetary contribution in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the production of advertising or promotional material; (ii) the distribution, broadcast or publication of advertising or promotional material in any media or by any other means during a campaign period, including by the use of a capital asset; (iii) the payment of remuneration and expenses to or on behalf of a person for the person's services as a chief financial officer or in any other capacity; (iv) securing a meeting place, (v) the conduct of election surveys or other surveys or research during a campaign period; or (vi) the production of a review engagement required by the <i>LAEA</i>.
campaign period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) in the case of a general election, the period beginning on January 1 of the year immediately following a general election and ending on December 31 immediately following the next general election; and (ii) in the case of a by-election, the period beginning on the day after the resolution or bylaw is passed to set the election day for the by-election and ending 60 days after the by-election.
candidate	<p>means, except in Part 5.1, an individual who has been nominated to run for election in a local jurisdiction as a councillor or school board trustee</p> <p>In Part 5.1 - Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure, the term "candidate" means:</p>

	<p>(i) an individual who has been nominated to run for election in a local jurisdiction as a councillor or school board trustee; and</p> <p>(ii) an individual who intends to be nominated to run for election in a local jurisdiction as a councillor or as a school board trustee that has given written notice in accordance with Section 147.22 of the <i>LAEA</i>.</p>
CAO	chief administrative officer appointed by a municipal council under Section 205 of the <i>MGA</i>
contribution	in respect of a candidate's election campaign or a local political party, any money, personal property, real property or service provided without fair market value compensation from that candidate or local political party, but does not include a service provided by an individual who voluntarily performs the service and receives no compensation, directly or indirectly, for the service or time spent providing the service
council	the council of a city, town, village, summer village, municipal district or specialized municipality, a town under the <i>Parks Towns Act</i> , or a municipality incorporated by a special Act
councillor	a member of council , which includes the chief elected official
court	Court of King's Bench
deputy	deputy returning officer
elected authority	a council under the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> , or a board of trustees under the <i>Education Act</i>
election	a general election , first election, by-election and a vote on a bylaw or question
election advertising period	<p>In the case of a general election, the period beginning on May 1 in the year in which a general election is held and ending at the end of the election day.</p> <p>In the case of a by-election, the period beginning on the day after the resolution or bylaw is passed to set the election day for the by-election and ending at the end of the election day.</p> <p>In the case of a vote on a bylaw or question, the period beginning on the day the election is set by resolution or bylaw and ending at the end of the election day.</p>
election day	the day fixed for voting at an election
elector	a person eligible to vote at an election
employee organization	an organization, other than a trade union , that bargains collectively for employees

general election	an election held for all the members of an elected authority to fill vacancies caused by the passage of time
local jurisdiction	a municipality as defined in the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> or a school division as defined in the <i>Education Act</i>
local political party (LPP)	an organization one of whose fundamental purposes is to participate in public affairs by endorsing one or more candidates in a local jurisdiction and supporting their election. A local political party shall not be any of the organizations referred to in Section 158.3(2).
nomination day	the day referred to in Section 25(1) of the <i>LAEA</i>
nomination period	the relevant period referred to in Section 25(2) of the <i>LAEA</i>
official agent	a person appointed as an official agent pursuant to Section 68.1 of the <i>LAEA</i>
prescribed form	the appropriate form as set out in the regulations
presiding deputy	a deputy who has been appointed as a presiding deputy pursuant to Section 14, by a returning officer
registered charity	a registered charity within the meaning of subsection 248(1) of the <i>Income Tax Act (Canada)</i>
returning officer	a person appointed under the <i>LAEA</i> as a returning officer and includes a person acting in the returning officer's place
review engagement	a review engagement as defined in the <i>Chartered Professional Accountants Act</i>
scrutineer	a person recognized as a scrutineer pursuant to Section 69 or appointed pursuant to Section 70
secretary	a chief administrative officer or designated officer of a municipality if the council has assigned the functions of the secretary under this Act to the designated officer, or the secretary of a school board
slate	a group of two or more candidates whose fundamental purpose is to support the election of the slate's candidate members
spouse	the spouse of a married person but does not, for the purposes of Section 22(4), include a spouse who is living separate and apart from the person if the person and spouse have separated pursuant to a written separation agreement or if their support obligations and family property have been dealt with by a court order
third-party	an individual, corporation, or group, but does not include a candidate

trade union	an organization of employees that has a written constitution, rules or bylaws and has as one of its objects the regulation of relations between employers and employees
trustee	a member of a board under the <i>Education Act</i>
voting station	the place where an elector votes
ward	a ward under the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> , or a ward or an electoral subdivision under the <i>Education Act</i>