

Supporting a Candidate for Local Elections in B.C. 2022

VOTE



This brochure answers questions about how you can support candidates in local government elections in British Columbia. Local government is government at the community level – government that affects British Columbians, every day.

LOCAL ELECTIONS

What are local elections?

Local elections are the foundation of democratic local governments in British Columbia. Through general local elections, resident electors and non-resident property electors determine the individuals who will collectively make decisions and govern on their behalf following general voting day. Electors do this by voting – casting their ballots in favour of one or more candidate(s).

General local elections will be held on Saturday October 15, 2022.

For general information about local elections and the key participants (e.g., electors, candidates, financial agents, official agents, scrutineers, elector organizations and third party sponsors) in local elections, please refer to the **General Local Elections 101 brochure.**

What is a candidate?

A candidate is an individual seeking election as a mayor, councillor, electoral area director, school trustee, specified parks board commissioner, local community commissioner or Islands Trust local trustee, within a municipality, regional district electoral area, school district, specified parks board jurisdiction, local community commission area or Islands Trust trust area.

A candidate must be nominated by eligible electors and declared a candidate by the Chief Election Officer.

Refer to the *Candidates Guide to Local Government Elections in B.C.* for more detailed information about being a candidate for local office.

What should you expect from people who run for elected office?

People who demonstrate *integrity, accountability, respect, leadership* and *collaboration* with other locally elected officials and local government staff are essential to the effectiveness and success of a local government.

What is responsible conduct of locally elected officials?

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 can play a significant role in helping councils and regional district boards carry out their collective responsibilities as decision-makers for their communities.

Refer to the ***Foundational Principles of Responsible Conduct*** and ***Forging the Path to Responsible Conduct*** guides for more information about responsible conduct and expectations for B.C.'s locally elected officials.

What is an election campaign?

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 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 (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube);
- newspapers and magazines;
- brochures, signs, posters and billboards;
- mail inserts and newsletters; and,
- bumper stickers, buttons and displays and/or exhibitions.

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 you have about campaign financing and/or election advertising rules under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

SUPPORTING A CANDIDATE

Some of the ways you can support a candidate include:

- voting;
- making campaign contributions;
- nominating a candidate;
- promoting a candidate by advertising and/or posting signs;
- volunteering by canvassing door-to-door;
- participating on telephone banks;
- organizing an event;
- participating in an elector organization; and/or,
- becoming a candidate representative (e.g., financial agent, official agent, scrutineer).

BALLOT	
JOHN DOE	<input type="radio"/>
JANE SMITH	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
SUNNY ZOÛLS	<input type="radio"/>
JENS ROBSON	<input type="radio"/>
VON FORTIÈR	<input type="radio"/>

When can I vote?

Advance Voting

An advance voting opportunity must be held 10 days prior to general voting day.

The required advance voting opportunity for the 2022 general local elections is **October 5**.

This required advance voting day allows eligible electors who may not otherwise be able to vote on general voting day to cast their ballot.

General Voting

General voting day is the primary opportunity for eligible electors to cast their ballot. Voting places are open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. local time on general voting day.

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.

Mail Ballot Voting

Mail ballot voting provides all eligible electors the opportunity to vote prior to general voting day. Mail ballot voting must be permitted through a local government's election bylaw.

Supporting a candidate may trigger some campaign financing and/or advertising rules and requirements on your part.

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Campaign Contributions

How do I contribute to an election campaign?

You can help a candidate and/or an elector organization finance their election campaign by making a campaign contribution. You must be a resident of British Columbia; and, a Canadian citizen or permanent resident in order to make a campaign contribution.

Refer to the **Local Government Act, s.67** for the rules for determining B.C. residency.

There are several ways that you can contribute to an election campaign, including:

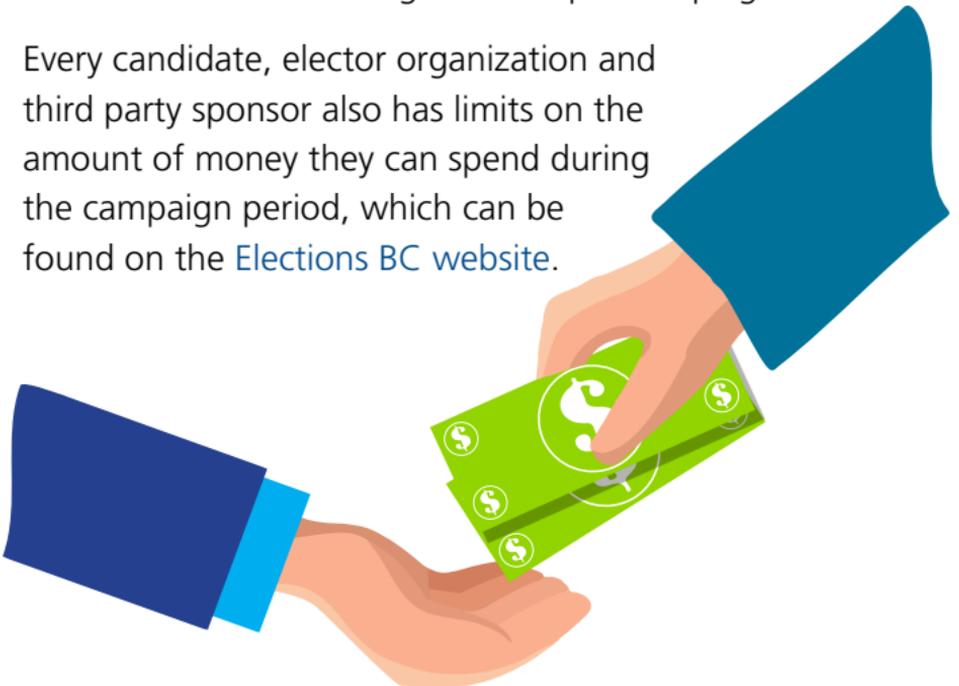
- providing a monetary contribution to a candidate or an elector organization;
- providing property or services less than market value;
- purchasing services or property above market value;
- selling fundraising function tickets over \$50; and,
- paying membership fees to an elector organization.

Individuals can contribute up to **\$1,250** to any election campaign for the **2022 general local elections**.

When you are making a campaign contribution, be aware that there are restrictions that apply, such as **campaign contribution limits** that regulate how much you can contribute to

a candidate or elector organization per campaign.

Every candidate, elector organization and third party sponsor also has limits on the amount of money they can spend during the campaign period, which can be found on the [Elections BC website](#).



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 you have about making campaign contributions to a candidate or an elector organization.

Candidate Nominations

How do I nominate a candidate for local elections?

Nominating an individual for office is a meaningful way you can show support for a prospective candidate and their election platform in an election campaign. The individual being nominated must consent to the nomination.

If you want to nominate a candidate for local office, you must:

- be 18 years of age or older when you register to vote or will be 18 years of age or older on general voting day;
- 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-property resident property elector, own real property in the municipality or electoral area, for 30 days immediately before the day of registration; and,

TYPES OF ELECTORS WHO CAN NOMINATE

Resident Elector: the person must be a resident of the municipality or electoral area, as determined in accordance with section 67 of the *Local Government Act*.

Non-resident Property Elector: the person must have been a registered owner of real property in the municipality or electoral area for at least 30 days immediately before the day of registration.

- not be disqualified under the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment from voting in an election or be otherwise disqualified by law.

Prospective candidates generally approach possible nominators to support their candidacy. Two (or more) nominators must sign the candidate's nomination form.

Candidate nominators must be qualified under the *Local Government Act* or *Vancouver Charter* (in the City of Vancouver) to nominate a candidate for office.

Signing candidate nomination documents will involve you providing your name and residential address and declaring that, to the best of your knowledge, the candidate is qualified to run for office. Non-resident property electors will also be required to provide the address of their property.

Nomination papers are available at your local government office and must be submitted to the Chief Election Officer or their designate during the nomination period.

The candidate's nomination documents are available for public inspection after the end of the nomination period until 30 days after the declaration of election results. Local governments must make the documents available for viewing during regular business hours, and they may also make the documents available by other means – including on the Internet.

You must be prepared for your name and address to be publicly available if you nominate a candidate.

Refer to the *Candidates Guide to Local Elections in B.C.* for more detailed information about nominating a candidate for mayor, councillor, or electoral area director.

PROMOTING A CANDIDATE

How can I promote a candidate?

You can promote a candidate by: advertising; posting signs; volunteering; canvassing; organizing events; and/or, participating in an elector organization.

Advertising

What are the rules around advertising?

Advertising is a key component in most local election campaigns.

Subject to the campaign financing and election advertising rules set out 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 (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) 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.

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

What is third party advertising?

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

Third party sponsors must register with Elections BC before conducting advertising during the pre-campaign and campaign periods. Third party sponsors are also subject to contribution limits.

Third party advertising includes advertising for or against a candidate and/or an elector organization. In the campaign period, it also includes advertising on an issue with which a candidate or elector organization is associated.

If you are a third party sponsor, you 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 activities may trigger rules under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* – you must be aware of and follow these rules. If you fail to follow these requirements, you may have committed an offence and may be subject to penalties.

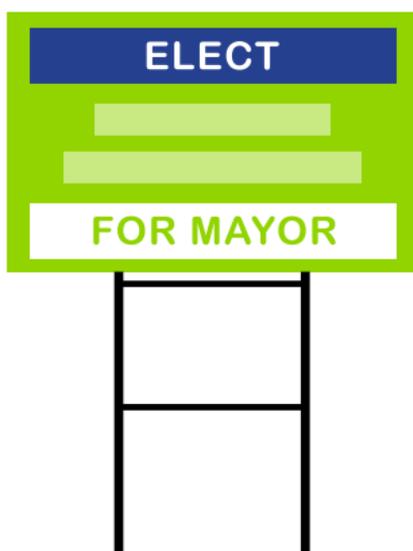
**Contact Elections BC by phone at:
250 387-5305 or elsewhere in B.C.
call: 1 800 661-8683 (Toll-free) or by email
at: electoral.finance@elections.bc.ca for
detailed information about campaign
financing and advertising rules.**

Posting Signs

What are the rules around posting signs?

Signs play a significant role in election advertising. Candidates may have their 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



Infrastructure regulates sign placement along Provincial highways, medians, bridges and along major roadways.

Contact your local government or local [Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure office](#) before placing election campaign signs on medians, bridges or along major roads.

SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION

There are rules with respect to sponsorship information on election advertising in the pre-campaign period and campaign period. During this time, election advertising, such as billboards, commercials, and mailing material must include sponsorship information.

Refer to Elections BC's *Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Candidates and their Financial Agents* for more information about third party sponsors and election advertising requirements.

The pre-campaign period is from July 18, 2022 to September 16, 2022.

The campaign period begins September 17, 2022 and ends October 15, 2022.

Volunteering

Can I volunteer for a candidate?

Yes. You can provide services, such as preparing and distributing flyers, canvassing, calling eligible voters, handling logistics and taking on other election campaign-related activities for a candidate or an elector organization.

Third party sponsors may also use volunteers to undertake their advertising activities independent of an election campaign.

If you volunteer for an election campaign, you must not receive any payment or remuneration for your 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.

Canvassing

What is the role of a canvasser?

As a campaign volunteer, you may canvass door-to-door throughout the community in order to raise awareness of the candidate or elector organization and their election platform, identify issues of importance to electors and determine the level of elector support for a given candidate.



Cooperatives, strata and rental properties are required to grant you reasonable access to the building for canvassing purposes 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 you are canvassing in a cooperative, strata or rental property.

Candidates and canvassers must be granted reasonable access between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. local time during the campaign period.

Organizing In-person Events

Can I organize an event where my candidate speaks?

Yes. Candidates may hold “meet and greet” events (e.g., luncheons or fundraising dinners) where the community can listen to the candidate’s 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.

Participating in an Elector Organization

Another way you can support a candidate is by creating, joining or becoming one of the responsible principal officials for an elector organization.

An elector organization may endorse candidates on the ballot by allowing its name, abbreviation or acronym to appear on the ballot beside its endorsed candidate(s) name and/or promoting the candidate(s) and the organization’s viewpoints during an election campaign. Elector organizations may also be known as “civic political parties.”

If you are interested in creating or becoming one of the responsible principal officials for an elector organization, please refer to the *Elector Organization Guide to Local Elections in B.C.*

ELECTOR ORGANIZATIONS MUST BE REGISTERED

Only elector organizations registered with Elections BC can file endorsement documents, receive campaign contributions and incur election expenses. For more information, read Elections BC’s *Guide to Elector Organization Registration*.

BEING A CANDIDATE REPRESENTATIVE

What is a financial agent?

You may be appointed as a financial agent, an official agent or scrutineer to assist with a candidate’s election campaign and to take on campaign activities.

A financial agent is a representative that candidates and elector organizations are legally required to have during an election campaign. **A candidate is their own financial agent unless they appoint another individual to the position.**

As a financial agent, you are responsible for administering campaign finances in compliance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, including:

- 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 election-related transactions; and,
- filing required campaign financing disclosure statements with Elections BC.

If you are acting as a candidate's financial agent, you must be appointed in writing by the candidate and consent in writing to be their financial agent.

Refer to Elections BC's ***Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Candidates and their Financial Agents*** for more information about the financial agent's role and responsibilities.

What is an official agent?

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

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

What does a scrutineer do?

Scrutineers observe voting procedures during advance, special and general voting opportunities and scrutinize the ballot-counting process after the close of voting on general voting day.

The role of the scrutineer is critical to protect the integrity of the vote for their community and the candidate they represent.

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

Further information about scrutineers is available in the *Scrutineers Guide to General Local Elections*.

How can I become a candidate representative?

You must be appointed as the financial agent or the official agent for an election campaign by the candidate. The official agent or the candidate may appoint you as a scrutineer.

The financial agent, official agent and scrutineer appointments must be made in writing, be signed by the candidate and submitted to the Chief Election Officer as soon as practicable after the appointment has been made.

If you are a candidate representative, you must carry copies of your appointment papers whenever you represent a candidate at an election proceeding.

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.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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

Ministry of 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 **volunteering, canvassing, elector organization registration, election advertising, third party sponsors or campaign financing disclosure.**

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>

**GET OUT
AND VOTE**



Refer to the **General Local Elections 101** brochure for detailed information about general local elections in B.C.

Disclaimer

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