

# 2026 Municipal Election Information for Candidates

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Township of  
Havelock-Belmont-Methuen



Revision date(s): April 2026

Note: this guide may be amended as needed  
(revision date will be noted)

## Index

<b>Item</b>	<b>Page #</b>
✓ Introduction	<b>3</b>
✓ Contact Information	<b>4</b>
✓ Summary – Municipal Election Act Highlights	<b>5</b>
✓ Key Dates	<b>7</b>
✓ What voting method is used by the Township?	<b>12</b>
✓ What are the Offices for HBM Council?	<b>12</b>
✓ What are the Offices for School Board Trustee?	<b>12</b>
✓ The Role of Council and the Head of Council	<b>14</b>
✓ How do I know if I am eligible to hold an office as a member of Council?	<b>16</b>
✓ How do I know if I am an eligible elector?	<b>16</b>
✓ How many electors are there in the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen?	<b>17</b>
✓ What was the voter turn-out from past elections?	<b>17</b>
✓ Nomination Process	<b>18</b>
✓ Candidates – Helpful Checklist for Nominations	<b>20</b>
✓ As a candidate, how much may I spend to run a campaign?	<b>21</b>
✓ What are the regulations governing election signs?	<b>22</b>
✓ Use of Corporate (Township) Resources During Municipal Election	<b>25</b>
✓ What kind of remuneration is paid to a Township Councillor?	<b>27</b>
✓ What are my financial responsibilities as a candidate?	<b>28</b>
✓ Accessibility Provisions within the Municipal Elections Act	<b>39</b>
✓ Third Party Advertising	<b>40</b>

Note: This guide is provided as a general overview. If any information in this guide conflicts with provincial legislation, the provincial legislation shall prevail. Candidates are encouraged to review all the provincial regulations pertaining to the municipal election. Information can be found at the provincial government website found at the following internet address:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/municipal-elections>

## Introduction

This guide is prepared for candidates running in the 2026 Municipal and School Board election and will highlight some of the processes pertaining to the upcoming election. For a comprehensive overview, candidates are urged to visit the Municipal Election Page of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing website at the following website address - (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/municipal-elections>) to fully understand all the legislative requirements. It is imperative that candidates satisfy themselves, through their own research or with the assistance of legal counsel, of the various legal and financial requirements related to their candidacy. The Municipal Elections Act (MEA) can be found at the website: (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/96m32#BK105>) and is referenced throughout this HBM Municipal Candidates' Election Guide.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMAH) has prepared three guides for candidates, voters and third-party advertisers which are all available online at the following internet address: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/municipal-elections>

Over the course of the next few months, candidates will receive information from the Township Clerk's office. Please ensure that you are checking the Township's website ([www.hbmtwp.ca](http://www.hbmtwp.ca)) regularly for the most current information.

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) has online information that is geared to individuals who are planning to run for municipal council. Resources can be found on AMO's website <https://www.amo.on.ca/amo-education-workshops/election-resources-supporting-your-run-municipal-office-2026> or at [Election Resources: Supporting your Run for Municipal Office in 2026 | AMO](#). If you are thinking of running for election in 2026, this guide will introduce you to some of the key steps in that process and give you a sense of what life is like as an elected member of a municipal council. It includes information such as:

- How municipal government works, including the role of council and structure of government
- Key things to know about managing a campaign, including key dates and eligibility requirements
- Rules related to campaigning, including campaign finance rules
- Tips for dealing with media/social media
- Election day and information about voting
- Key resources for after the election

## Contact Information: Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen

Phone: 705-778-2308  
Toll Free: 1-877-767-2795  
Fax: 705-778-5248

Email:  
[elections@hbmtwp.ca](mailto:elections@hbmtwp.ca)

### Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 10  
Havelock ON K0L 1Z0

### Office Location:

1 Ottawa Street East, Havelock

## Contact Information: Election Staff

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## Summary – 2026 Municipal Election Highlights

- Nominations may be filed by candidates from May 1, 2026, to August 20, 2026, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on August 21, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Municipal Office.
- Candidates are encouraged to make an appointment to schedule their registration by contacting the Clerk's Department at 705-778-2308 to avoid potential delays.
- Candidates running for municipal council must obtain 25 endorsement signatures from eligible voters in the municipality in which the office is being sought. Signatures must be submitted in conjunction with the candidate's nomination papers. MEA, s 33(1)(1.1) and MEA, s 33(2)(a.1)(b)(c).
- Candidates running for municipal council must pay the prescribed nomination filing fee. MEA, s 33(2)(c). Ontario Regulation 101/97, s (2)(1).
- Nominations filed for the School Board do not require the endorsement of 25 persons
- Candidates are encouraged to pre-populate Form 1 (Nomination Paper) and Form 2 (Endorsement of Nomination) as found on the Election page of the Township website by typing in all the applicable information.
- Candidates wishing to withdraw their nomination must do so by 2 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026.
- **Voting day is Monday, October 26, 2026.**
- For the 2026 election, the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen will be using internet and telephone voting allowing electors to vote from anywhere within the defined voting period. **For the 2026 election, internet and telephone voting will be open from October 13, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. to October 26, 2026, until 8 p.m.**
- The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen will also offer a traditional paper ballot voting option. The traditional, walk-in, paper-ballot, in-person voting option will only be available at the Municipal Office located at 1 Ottawa Street East in Havelock on Voting Day (Monday, October 26, 2026) from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- A contributor shall not make contributions exceeding a total of \$1,200 to any one candidate in an election. Additionally, a contributor is limited to a maximum of \$5,000 in total contributions to candidates running for office on the same Council or Board jurisdiction. Contributors who exceed this limit

may be liable to penalties under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, s 88.9(1)(4)*.

- Penalties for contravening the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, s 94.1(1)(2)* are as follows; An individual who contravenes the contribution rules may face a fine of up to \$25,000 (\$50,000 for corporations and trade unions) and/or up to six months in prison if the offence was committed knowingly. Candidates who are convicted of contravening certain provisions of the Act also forfeit any office to which they were elected and are ineligible to run until after the next regular election has taken place.
- A candidate is entitled to receive a refund of the nomination filing fee if they file their financial statement and auditor's report on or before 2 p.m. on March 30, 2027.
- Expenses that are incurred by a candidate with a disability or a registered third party who is an individual with a disability, are directly related to the disability, and would not have been incurred but for the election to which the expenses relate are subject to the spending limit. *MEA, s 88.19(3)9*.
- The candidate's spending limit formula is a base amount, which varies by office, plus \$0.85 per eligible elector. For head of council: \$7,500 plus \$0.85 per eligible elector. For council member or trustee: \$5,000 plus \$0.85 per eligible elector.
- A candidate will receive a preliminary spending limit estimate when filing their nomination and will receive a final spending limit after the close of nominations. Whichever of these two amounts is higher becomes the candidate's official spending limit.
- The deadline for filing financial statements is 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2027. If a candidate does not file by this deadline and has not applied to the courts for an extension, the candidate forfeits any office won in the election, is ineligible to be elected and may not be appointed to any office until after the next regular election. *MEA, s 88.30(1)*.
- Your campaign period ends on December 31, 2026. However, if your campaign has a deficit, you can extend your campaign in order to do some additional fundraising. If you want to extend your campaign, you must notify the clerk on or before December 31, 2026, using the Notice of Extension of Campaign Period form (Form 6) *MEA, s 88.24(1)2*. Your campaign may be extended until June 30, 2027. *MEA, s 88.24(1)4*.
- A candidate who has a deficit may extend their campaign to June 30, 2027. A candidate who incurs expenses related to a recount, controverted election or

compliance audit after their campaign has ended on December 31, 2026, may re-open their campaign. *MEA*, s 88.24(1)5.

- All surplus funds must be turned over to the Clerk to be held in trust. A candidate may access his or her surplus if he or she subsequently incurs expenses related to a compliance audit, the Clerk shall return the surplus with interest to the candidate. *MEA*, s 88.31.
- Surplus funds not required for such expenses become the property of the municipality or school board. Surplus funds may not be carried forward for use by the candidate in a subsequent election. *MEA*, s 88.31(8).
- The Municipal Elections Act, as amended, includes a framework for third party advertising. Individuals, corporations or trade unions must formally register with the Clerk as a third-party advertiser. Third party advertising is an advertisement in any medium that has the purpose of supporting or opposing a candidate(s).
- **Access to Apartment Buildings, Condominiums etc. by Candidates (or their Authorized Representative)** - Candidates can campaign in apartment buildings, condominium buildings, non-profit housing co-ops or gated communities from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. Landlords and condominium corporations may not prohibit tenants or owners from displaying campaign signs in their windows. *MEA*, s 88.1, s 88.2.

## Key Dates

### **Nomination Period: May 1, 2026 – August 21, 2026**

- ✓ Nominations may be filed by candidates between Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Municipal Office from May 1, 2026, to August 20, 2026, and on August 21, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. excluding holidays.

### **Registration for Third Party Advertisers – May 1, 2026 – October 23, 2026**

- ✓ Individuals or entities may file notice of registration as a third-party advertiser starting May 1, 2026, to October 23, 2026. Notice is to be filed at the Municipal Office. *MEA*, s 88.6(7).

### **Campaign Period: When Nomination is Filed to December 31, 2026**

- ✓ The campaign period begins whenever a candidate files a nomination paper and ends on December 31, 2026 (unless the candidate withdraws the nomination, the Clerk rejects the nomination, or the candidate files to extend his or her campaign to address a deficit). Candidates shall not receive contributions outside of their campaign period. *MEA*, s 88.24(1).

### **Certificate of Maximum Campaign Spending Limits: Nomination Filing**

- ✓ The Clerk will provide preliminary notice of the maximum campaign spending limits to all certified candidates based on the number of electors in the previous election.
- ✓ For Head of Council = \$7,500 + \$0.85 per eligible elector.
- ✓ For all other offices = \$5,000 + \$0.85 per eligible elector.
- ✓ On or before September 30, 2026, the Clerk will determine a final limit by applying this formula to the number of voters on the voters' list for the current election. The greater of the two limits shall apply. *MEA, s 88.20(6)(7). Ontario Regulation 101/97 Article 5 Subsections 1 and 2.*

### **Issuance of Final Expense Limits – On or before September 30, 2026, MEA, s 88.20(13) for candidates and MEA, s 88.21(14) for third party advertisers**

- ✓ Final expense limits provided to candidates and third party advertisers

### **Nomination Day: August 21, 2026, MEA, s 31**

- ✓ This is the last day on which nominations may be filed by candidates at the Clerk's Office (between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.).

### **Withdrawal of Nomination: August 21, 2026, MEA, s 36**

- ✓ Last day to withdraw nominations. The prescribed form must be submitted to the Clerk's Department in writing before 2:00 p.m. on August 21, 2026.

### **Certification of Nomination: August 24, 2026**

- ✓ The Clerk will certify nomination papers before 4:00 p.m. and notify, as soon as practicable, any candidate deemed ineligible for office.

### **Acclamation of Candidates: August 24, 2026**

- ✓ The Clerk will declare, after 4:00 p.m., all candidates to be duly elected if they are the only qualified individuals seeking candidacy for a respective office. *MEA, s 37(1).*

### **Voters' List: September 1, 2026**

- ✓ The interim voters list can be made available to all registered candidates upon written request. *MEA s 22(4)(5).*

**Voter's List Revision Period: September 1, 2026 - October 26, 2026**

- ✓ Eligible voters whose names do not appear on the voters' list or are identified incorrectly may file a revision application with the Clerk's office using the prescribed form.

**Final Certificate of Maximum Campaign Spending Limits: Nomination Filing – On or before September 30, 2026**

- ✓ The Clerk will provide preliminary notice of the maximum campaign spending limits to all candidates at the time of the filing of their nomination paper. The calculation is as follows:
  - ✓ For Head of Council = \$7,500 + \$0.85 per eligible elector.
  - ✓ For all other offices = \$5,000 + \$0.85 per eligible elector.
- ✓ On or before September 30, 2026, the Clerk will determine a final limit by applying this formula to the number of voters appearing on the voters' list for the current election. The greater of the two limits shall apply. MEA, s 88.20(11) and (13).

**Voting Period – Tuesday, October 13, 2026 to Monday, October 26, 2026**

- ✓ Voting Period (telephone and internet voting) begins Tuesday, October 13 at 10:00 a.m. and runs until Election Day on Monday, October 26 at 8:00 p.m. Paper ballot voting will be available on Monday, October 26, 2026 until 8:00 p.m.

**Voting Day: Monday, October 26, 2026 until 8:00 p.m.**

**Term of new Council Commences: November 15, 2026**

**Campaign Period: Begins when Nomination is Filed and Ends on December 31, 2026**

- ✓ The campaign period begins whenever a candidate files a nomination paper. The campaign period ends on December 31, 2026 (unless the candidate withdraws the nomination, the Clerk rejects the nomination, or the candidate files to extend her or his campaign to address a deficit). Candidates shall not receive contributions outside of their campaign period. MEA, s 88.24(1).

**End of Campaign Period: December 31, 2026**

- ✓ This is the last day a candidate or third-party advertiser can raise funds for his or her campaign unless an extension is granted. The campaign period begins when nomination is filed. The end of a campaign period can also occur on the date in which a candidate withdraws his or her nomination or on the day it is rejected by the Clerk. MEA, s 88.24(3).

### **Notification to Extend a Campaign Period: December 31, 2026**

- ✓ Your campaign period ends on December 31, 2026. However, if your campaign has a deficit, you can extend your campaign in order to do some additional fundraising. If you want to extend your campaign, you must notify the Clerk on or before December 31, 2026 using the Notice of Extension of Campaign Period form (Form 6). MEA, s 88.24(4).

### **Deadline for Financial Statement Filing Extension: March 30, 2027**

- ✓ Last day for a candidate or registered third party to apply to the Superior Court of Justice to extend the time to file the financial statement for the reporting period ending December 31, 2026. The court may grant an extension of no more than 90 days *MEA, s 88.23(6)*. The Clerk must also be notified of the application to the Courts for the extension by 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2027, *MEA, s 88.23(7)*.

### **Deadline for Filing Financial Statements: March 30, 2027\* by 2:00 p.m., *MEA, s 88.30(1)***

- ✓ Candidates or third-party advertisers must file their financial statements and auditor's report for the reporting period ending December 31, 2026 in person at the Clerk's Office no later than 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2027. The penalties for non-compliance will apply unless the candidate files within 30 days and pays a \$500 penalty or unless a court-ordered extension has been granted.
- ✓ Notice of default, if applicable, shall be issued by the Clerk as soon as practicable after the filing deadline.
- ✓ If you have not filed your financial statement by the deadline, you may file your financial statement within 30 days after the deadline if you pay the Township a \$500 late filing fee. This grace period ends at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 29, 2027. You will not receive a refund of your nomination fee if you file during the thirty-day grace period.
- ✓ If you have not filed your financial statement by the end of the thirty-day grace period and you did not apply to the court for an extension prior to the deadline, you will forfeit your elected office (if you were victorious in the election) and you will be ineligible to run for office or be appointed to fill a vacancy until after the next municipal election.

\* Legislation notes the last Friday in March. This date has been adjusted to the last Tuesday in March due to the Easter Holiday period of March 26 (Good Friday) to March 29 (Easter Monday) 2027.

**Deadline for Compliance Audit Requests: June 28, 2027, MEA, s 88.33(3)**

- ✓ Last day for a compliance audit request to be submitted with respect to a reporting period that ended on December 31, 2026.

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**Extensions and Supplementary Reporting**

**Notification to Extend a Campaign Period: On or Before December 31, 2026, MEA, s 88.24**

- ✓ Last day for candidates to provide notification, using the prescribed form (Form 6), in order to extend their campaign to address a deficit.

**Supplementary Reporting Period: January 1 to June 30, 2027, MEA, s 88.30(3)**

- ✓ If a request to extend the campaign to address a deficit is permitted, the supplementary extension is 6 months beginning on January 1, 2027, to June 30, 2027.

**Deadline for Filing Financial Statements for the Supplementary Reporting Period: September 24, 2027, MEA, s 80.30(2)**

- ✓ Candidates who were granted an extension to their campaign (supplementary reporting period of January 1 to June 30, 2027) must file their financial statements in person at the Clerk's Office no later than 2:00 p.m. on September 24, 2027.

**Deadline for Compliance Audit Requests for Supplementary Reporting Period: December 23, 2027, MEA s 88.35(3)**

- ✓ December 23, 2027, is the last day for a compliance audit request to come forward with respect to a reporting period that ended on June 30, 2027.

## **What voting method will be used by the Township?**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen will offer internet and telephone voting for the 2026 election. Both of these methods allow electors to vote from anywhere within the defined voting period using a telephone or the internet. **For the 2026 elections, the voting period will be from October 13, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. to October 26, 2026, until 8 p.m.** Eligible voters will receive a personalized voting instruction package by mail before Election Day. The voting package will provide details on how to vote online or by phone. The information package will also include a secret PIN number that electors will use to access the voting system. The PIN number, in conjunction with a personal piece of information would be required for voters to vote. By combining these two pieces of information, the integrity of the vote is maintained.

Electronic voting stations will also be available at the Municipal office during the defined voting period for public use.

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen will also offer a traditional paper ballot voting option. The traditional, walk-in, paper-ballot, in-person voting option will only be available at the Municipal Office (Council Chamber) located at 1 Ottawa Street East in Havelock on Voting Day (Monday, October 26, 2026) from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

## **Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen Council Offices:**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen has a five (5) member Council consisting of the following positions:

Election by General Vote:

- Mayor (1)
- Deputy Mayor (1)
- Councillor (3)

Council will serve a term of four (4) years commencing November 15, 2026, until November 14, 2030. The Mayor and the Deputy Mayor will also serve on the upper tier County of Peterborough Council. Council members will also be appointed to various Boards and Committees as determined by Council.

## **What are the Offices for School Board Trustee?**

Trustee (1), Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board representing the Municipality of Trent Lakes, and the Townships of North Kawartha and Havelock-Belmont-Methuen and Selwyn.

<http://www.kprschoools.ca>

Trustee(1), Peterborough, Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board for the Municipality of Trent Lakes and the Townships of Asphodel-Norwood, Douro-Dummer, Cavan- Monaghan, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, Otonabee-South Monaghan, North Kawartha, and Selwyn.

<http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/>

Trustee(1), Conseil scolaire Viamonde (French Public School Board) for the following counties/regions/single tier municipalities:

- Durham
- Haliburton
- Northumberland
- Peterborough
- Peterborough (City)
- Kawartha Lakes (City)
- Quinte West (City)

<https://csviamonde.ca>

Trustee(1), Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir (French Separate School Board – formerly the Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud) for the following counties/regions/single tier municipalities:

- Durham
- Northumberland
- Hastings
- Peterborough
- Kawartha Lakes (City)
- Peterborough (City)
- Quinte West (City)

<https://www.cscmonavenir.ca>

**Candidates who wish to register for English Language School Board Elections in Havelock-Belmont-Methuen should contact the Township of Selwyn at the following:**

Phone: 705-292-9507  
Toll Free: 1-877-213-7419

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 270,  
Bridgenorth, Ontario, K0L 1H0

Office Location:  
1310 Centre Line, Selwyn

General Selwyn Elections: [elections@selwyntownship.ca](mailto:elections@selwyntownship.ca)

## **Candidates who wish to register for French Language School Board Elections in Havelock-Belmont-Methuen should contact the City of Oshawa at the following:**

Phone: 905-436-3311 ext. 2476  
Toll Free: 1-800-667-4292

Mailing Address:  
50 Centre Street South  
Oshawa, Ontario, L1H 3Z7

Office Location:  
50 Centre Street South, Oshawa

General Oshawa Elections: [vote@oshawa.ca](mailto:vote@oshawa.ca)

In accordance with Section 11(2) of Ontario Regulation 412/00, the Clerk of the City of Oshawa is the school board election clerk responsible for accepting nominations for the positions of Conseiller(ère), Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir and Conseiller(ère), Conseil scolaire Viamonde.

## **What is the Role of Council?**

### **As per Section 224 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25**

It is the role of council,

- (a) to represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality;
- (b) to develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the municipality;
- (c) to determine which services the municipality provides;
- (d) to ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of council;
  - (d.1) to ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, including the activities of the senior management of the municipality;
- (e) to maintain the financial integrity of the municipality; and
- (f) to carry out the duties of council under this or any other Act. 2001, c. 25, s. 224; 2006, c. 32, Sched. A, s. 99.

## **As per Section 225 of the Municipal Act**

It is the role of the head of council,

- (a) to act as chief executive officer of the municipality;
- (b) to preside over council meetings so that its business can be carried out efficiently and effectively;
- (c) to provide leadership to the council;
- (c.1) without limiting clause (c), to provide information and recommendations to the council with respect to the role of council described in clauses 224 (d) and (d.1);
- (d) to represent the municipality at official functions; and
- (e) to carry out the duties of the head of council under this or any other Act. 2001, c. 25, s. 225; 2006, c. 32, Sched. A, s. 100.

## How do I know if I am eligible to hold an office as a member of Council?

Qualifications for members of Council are set out in Section 256 of the Municipal Act. Every person who is entitled to be an elector in the local municipality under section 17 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 and who is not disqualified by any Act from holding office is qualified to be elected.

In order to run for office in a municipality, a person must be:

1. A Canadian citizen;
2. At least 18 years old;
3. A resident of the municipality or owner or tenant of land there, or the spouse of such owner or tenant; and
4. Who is not disqualified by any legislation from holding office.
5. Is not prohibited from voting under subsection (3) or otherwise by law.

Examples of those ineligible to seek candidacy include:

- Individuals that did not file their financial statements from the 2026 Election
- Employees of the municipality (Council position) *\*\* Exception – leave of absence effective the date of nomination*
- Employees of the school board (School Board position) *\*\* Exception – leave of absence effective the date of nomination*
- Judge of any court
- Senator *\*\* Exception – must resign as of Nomination Day, August 21, 2026*
- MP *\*\* Exception – must resign as of Nomination Day, August 21, 2026*
- MPP *\*\* Exception – must resign as of Nomination Day, August 21, 2026*
- A corporation
- A person serving a sentence of imprisonment
- A person acting as executor or trustee

## Who Can Vote in a Municipal Election?

A person is entitled to vote if, on voting day, he or she (MEA s.17 (2), as amended),

- a) resides in the local municipality or is the owner or tenant of land there, or the spouse of such owner or tenant;
- b) is a Canadian citizen; and
- c) is at least 18 years old
- d) is not prohibited from voting under subsection (3) or otherwise by law.

Eligibility is determined by a person's relationship to property, specifically ownership and/or occupancy. In other words, a person is entitled to one vote in every municipality and school board jurisdiction in which they own or occupy property. This is not the case in a provincial or federal election where, irrespective of the number of properties owned

in different municipalities, a person is entitled to only one vote, based on the location of their primary residence.

## How many electors are there in the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen?

The approximate number of electors is as follows (based on the 2022 number of eligible electors on Election Day):

Belmont-Methuen	Township Ward	6,531
Havelock	Village Ward	967
<b>Total</b>	<b>All Wards</b>	<b>7,498</b>

Public School Trustee (HBM only) Trustee (1), Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board for the Municipality of Trent Lakes, and the Townships of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, North Kawartha, and Selwyn.	3,639
Separate School Trustee (HBM only) Trustee(1), Peterborough, Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board for the Municipality of Trent Lakes and the Townships of Asphodel-Norwood, Douro-Dummer, Cavan- Monaghan, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, Otonabee-South Monaghan, North Kawartha, and Selwyn.	192
French Public School Trustee (HBM only)	13
French Separate School Trustee (HBM only)	21

## What was the voter turn-out from past elections?

29% in 2022  
 40% in 2018  
 38% in 2014  
 39% in 2010  
 30% in 2006

## Nomination Process

Candidates must complete the Nomination Form 1 in full and sign before an authorized Election Official or Commissioner of Oaths. Selected municipal staff are authorized Commissioners of Oaths and may commission the required Nomination papers. Nominations must be **submitted in person** by either the candidate or an agent filing on behalf of a candidate. If the Nomination Form is filed by an agent on behalf of the candidate, the form which includes the candidate's declaration must already be commissioned (if the form is not signed by an authorized commissioner, it cannot be accepted). The agent must provide a copy of the candidate's identification as well as providing their own identification. *It is the responsibility of the candidate to satisfy himself or herself that he or she is qualified to be nominated for an office.*

The nomination of the person for an office on council must be endorsed by at least 25 persons and the person endorsing the nomination must be eligible to vote in an election for an office within the municipality if a regular election was held on the day that the person endorses the nomination. Candidates must use prescribed Form 2 for their endorsement of nomination. **Nominations filed for the School Board do not require the endorsement of 25 persons.**

Identification will be required to be produced by all candidates (including incumbents) and agents filing on behalf of a candidate. Examples of acceptable identification:

An original copy of a document listed below if the document shows the person's name, qualifying address and signature:

- Ontario driver's licence (photo card).
- Ontario health card (photo card).
- Ontario motor vehicle permit (plate portion).
- A mortgage, lease or rental agreement.
- An insurance policy.
- A loan or financial agreement with a financial institution.

Note: a passport alone is not considered acceptable identification as the address is added by hand. A passport must be accompanied by one of the above noted documents to verify the qualifying address.

A fee is required at the time the Nomination Form is filed. Filing fees are \$200 for the Head of Council (Mayor) and \$100 for all other offices, including School Board Trustee positions and must be paid by cash, certified cheque (payable to the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen), money order or interac.

- ✓ The deadline for submission of a nomination is August 21, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
- ✓ The deadline for the withdrawal of a nomination is August 21, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
- ✓ Nominations are unofficial until formal certification by the Clerk on August 24, 2026.

### **Withdrawal of Nominations**

A person may withdraw his or her nomination by filing a written withdrawal at/with the Clerks Department before 2:00 p.m. on August 21, 2026

### **Acclamations**

If, at 4:00 p.m. on August 24, 2026, the number of certified candidates for an office is the same as or less than the number to be elected, the Clerk shall immediately declare the candidate or candidates elected by acclamation.

### **Exception for Additional Nominations**

If the number of nominations filed for an office is less than the number of persons to be elected to an office, additional nominations may be filed between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on the Wednesday following Nomination Day – August 26, 2026.

### **Examination and Certification of Additional Nominations by Clerk**

Any additional nominations filed under the Municipal Elections Act Section 33(5) shall be examined before 4:00 p.m. on the Thursday following Nomination Day – August 27, 2026.

### **Refund of Nomination Deposit**

A candidate is entitled to receive a refund of the nomination filing fee if he or she files their financial statements with the Clerk by the filing date. For the 2026 municipal election, the filing date is before 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2027.

## Candidates – Helpful Checklist for Nominations

- ✓ Neatly print or type out the on-line Nomination Form 1. The name that appears on the Nomination Form is the name that will appear on the ballot. With the agreement of the Clerk some flexibility can be allowed for first names e.g. Tony for Anthony. Last names cannot be amended.
- ✓ Are you a Canadian citizen?
- ✓ Are you at least 18 years old?
- ✓ Verify your qualifying address. Do you own, or are the tenant of land, or the spouse of an owner or tenant of land, in the municipality?
- ✓ Confirm office being nominated for. e.g. Mayor.
- ✓ Confirm that you have the endorsement of 25 persons whom are eligible to vote in the election in the municipality in which the office is being sought.
- ✓ Have you read the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Municipal Candidates Guide or the applicable School Board Guide to ensure that you understand your obligations as a candidate?
- ✓ Can you produce the appropriate identification? If an agent is filing on your behalf you must provide a certified copy of your identification and ensure that the agent can produce appropriate identification for themselves. Copies of identification, including the agent's will be retained on file.
- ✓ Provide confirmation to the Clerk's Office of the contact information you wish to be made public (e.g. email address? business phone?).
- ✓ Can you provide the appropriate filing fee in the form of cash, certified cheque (payable to the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen), money order or debit?

## As a candidate, how much may I spend to run a campaign?

Candidates are advised to refer to the Province of Ontario 2026 Candidates Guide for information on Campaign Contributions and Fund Raising and on Campaign Expenses. The provincial guide is available online from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

The candidate must have filed their nomination form before spending any money on advertising. The maximum spending limit for candidates to run their election campaign is based on a base amount plus the number of electors eligible to vote for the particular office for which the candidate is running.

Below represents the **preliminary spending limit**:

<b>Preliminary Election Spending Limits (Base amount plus \$0.85/elector) - Base Amount Mayor - \$7,500 - Base Amount all other offices - \$5,000</b>	<b>Number of Electors</b>	<b>* Preliminary Maximum</b>
Mayor	7,428	<b>\$13,813.80</b>
Deputy Mayor	7,428	<b>\$11,313.80</b>
Councillor	7,428	<b>\$11,313.80</b>

The Clerk shall, after determining from the Voters' List the number of electors eligible to vote for each office as of September 20 in the 2026 election calculate the maximum amount of campaign expenses that may be incurred by a candidate and prepare a certificate of this amount. A copy of this secondary **certificate confirming the final maximum spending limit will be provided on or before September 30, 2026, to candidates.** MEA, s 88.20(11).

Note: The higher of the two calculations (preliminary (noted above) and secondary) shall be the final spending limit for the office.

### **Post Election Parties/Expressions of Appreciation (s 88.20 (9) and O. Reg. 101/97 as amended s 5.1)**

All candidates have limits on the amount they may spend towards the cost of holding parties and making other expressions of appreciation after Election Day. The maximum post-election appreciation cost is a maximum of 10% of the spending limit. A preliminary campaign appreciation limit will be provided based on the preliminary calculation (noted above) at the time a candidate files their nomination. Final campaign appreciation limits will be calculated based on the final campaign spending expense limits and provided to candidates by September 30, 2026.

## **What are the regulations governing election signs?**

It is important that a Candidate, and anyone working on their behalf, understand the rules regarding election signage and specifically where they can and cannot be placed. Remember that rules are different on Township roads vs County roads vs Ministry of Transportation roads.

**Section 88.3 of the Municipal Elections Act defines what is a campaign advertisement.** It is important to note that Candidates who purchase an advertisement must identify themselves, for example “This ad has been authorized by Candidate XWZ”. This is so that people seeing the sign or advertisement can very clearly tell who is responsible for the campaign advertisement. It may also be wise to follow the same principle when creating social media/website accounts and identify them as official campaign accounts.

### **Election Sign Regulation by Jurisdiction:**

#### **Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen: Sign By-law 2018-022**

Election Signs for Federal, Provincial, Municipal, or School Board elections shall be subject to the following:

- a) Election signs must be removed within one (1) week after election day;
- b) Election signs are not permitted within any municipal road allowance;
- c) No election sign shall be located as to interfere with the safe operation of vehicle and pedestrian traffic and any sign improperly located may be removed by municipal staff;
- d) No election sign shall be erected on any property or building that is owned, leased, maintained or operated by the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen;
- e) No election sign shall be erected any premises used as a Voting Station or Help Centre for elections. Municipal staff have the authority to immediately remove any election sign that is not in compliance with the requirement of this By-law.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to place election signs on private property with the permission of the property owner. The Township has the authority to remove any signs deemed to cause a safety hazard.

## **County of Peterborough:**

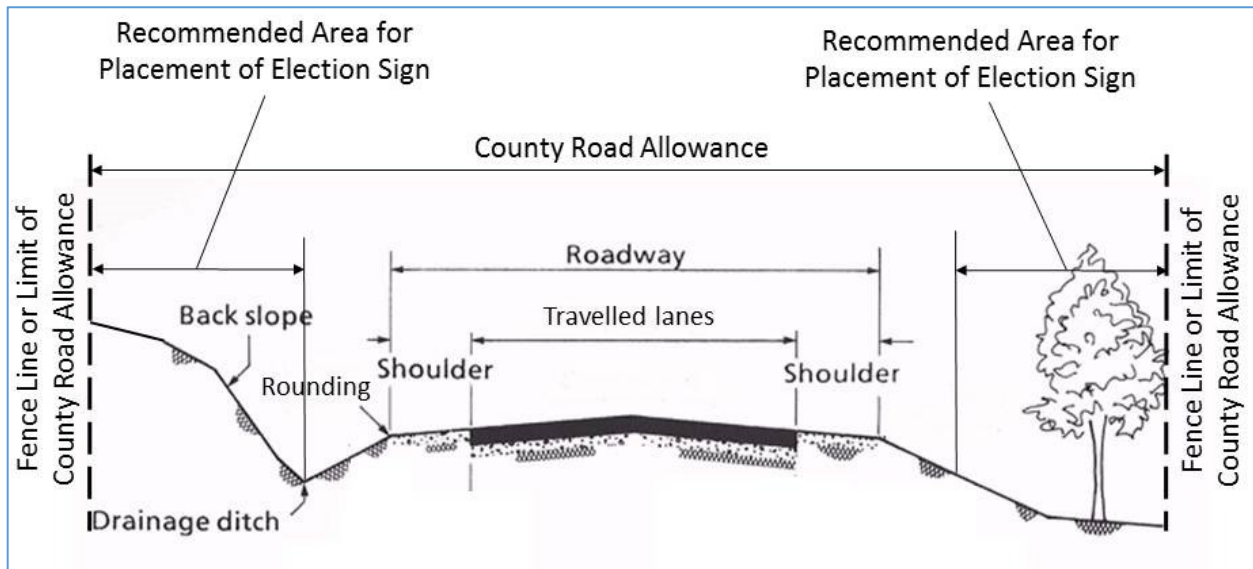
### **Sign By-law No. 2022-29**

Election Signs placed within a County Road Allowance:

- Elections signs will not exceed a maximum size of 0.5574 sq. metres (6 sq. ft)
- Place as close to the fence line/property line as possible
- Not closer than 30 metres (100 ft) to an intersection, fire route, trail or railway crossing
- May be placed in road allowance after issuance of writ of Election for Federal/Provincial elections and for municipal elections, no earlier than the date a nomination has been filed with the Clerk
- Election Signs are to be removed by candidates 48 hours after voting day

The County reserves the right to remove non-compliant Election Signs from County road allowances.

Sample – Adjacent to County Roadways



It is the candidate's responsibility to familiarize themselves with Peterborough County and Provincial regulations. As an additional resource please see the attached County of Peterborough website:

<https://peterboroughcounty.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/278242/?preview=278258>

## **Province of Ontario (MTO): MTO Corridor - Election Signs**

### Sign permit

You may require a sign permit if you are planning to erect or alter a sign or advertising device (for example, billboard or digital display) on a property within 400 metres of any provincial highway right-of-way. Setback (distance from the right-of-way limit), size and location are all considered when issuing sign permits. Please visit the Ministry of Transportation website by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.ontario.ca/business/permits-licences/sign-permit#permit-contact>

**You may also call or email the East Region MTO office as per the information below:**

### East Region

Kingston Office  
Ministry of Transportation  
Highway Corridor Management Section  
1355 John Counter Boulevard  
Kingston, ON K7L 5A3  
Phone: [613-745-6841](tel:613-745-6841)  
Toll free: [1-888-362-1770](tel:1-888-362-1770)  
Email: [CorridorEast@ontario.ca](mailto:CorridorEast@ontario.ca)

### **Access to Apartment Buildings, Condominiums etc. by Candidates (or their Authorized Representative)**

Campaign provisions have been clarified through recent amendments to the MEA to allow candidates to campaign in apartment buildings, condominiums, non-profit housing co-ops or gated communities from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. Landlords and condominium corporations may not prohibit tenants or owners from displaying campaign signs in their windows. *MEA, s 88.1.*

## **Use of Corporate Resources Policy**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen places the highest priority in ensuring the integrity of the electoral process with a fair and unbiased municipal election.

### **PURPOSE:**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen's policy regarding the use of municipal resources during the municipal election outlines for employees and elected officials, the corporate standards for the use of municipal resources during the municipal election campaign. This policy has been developed to ensure the integrity of the electoral process through a fair and unbiased municipal election campaign.

### **APPLICATION:**

It is important that all candidates receive fair and consistent treatment to ensure the integrity of the electoral process and a fair and unbiased election. All candidates are to receive equal treatment. Municipal staff members are expected to be extra vigilant in order to ensure that they are viewed by residents, current members of council, and candidates and their supporters, as being impartial, fair, and unbiased.

### **POLICY COMMUNICATION:**

This policy will be communicated to employees, elected officials, and candidates via the official election information that will be provided by the Clerk's office in the candidate's package and via the Township website.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES (CANDIDATES):**

It is important that all candidates receive fair and consistent treatment to ensure the integrity of the electoral process and a fair and unbiased election. There must be equal treatment for all candidates.

No Township resources are to be used for, or by, any candidate for their campaign activities, including, but not limited to, the use of:

- The Township's corporate identity (logo, tag line),
- Township Information Technology (IT) resources including those resources of affiliated organizations (e.g. library), the Township's website or affiliated websites (e.g. municipal library) social media sites, cell phones, laptops, office telephones etc.
- Candidates are not permitted to link election websites from the Township website. The only exception to this rule applies to current members of Council who have an existing, functional website or social media platform that is used exclusively for Council-related business and was established prior to the commencement of the nomination period in the year of the election.

- Current members of Council who are also Candidates must keep separate websites, social media platforms, (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) and email accounts etc., related to their candidacy that is not supported or linked in any manner to the Township's website or IT resources,
- Any Township facility or property (that is not specifically booked as a rental with payment), is not to be used for campaign purposes including the displaying of campaign posters, signs and flyers.
- Candidates are not permitted to campaign as a Candidate at an official Township function, regardless of the location of that function.
- Photographs or videos owned by the Township are not to be used as campaign material.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES (STAFF):**

- Official election information will be made available to all candidates through the Township's website and the Clerk's Office.
- Staff may supply department specific information and services to Candidates in the same manner as would be available to the public.
- Staff may not campaign or actively work in support of a Candidate during their paid hours of work (or their official/volunteer duties with the Township). Staff wanting to work in support of a Candidate during the election must do so outside of paid working hours (and/or their official/volunteer duties with the Township). Staff must also clearly separate that support from their role as Township staff/volunteer and must not be identifiable as Township staff/volunteers (e.g. cannot wear Township-issued clothing to canvass or to a campaign event).
- Staff may be prohibited from participating in campaign activities where there is a potential for a conflict of interest or the perception that the integrity of the election may be compromised.
- No Township communications, whether for internal or public distribution, are to include any reference to or identification of any Candidate except where prescribed by legislation (e.g. Official Campaign Results).
- Staff are asked to have regard for these issues and make every effort to remain impartial throughout the election process.
- Candidates will also be advised of these matters so that they are aware of staff's role related to the election campaign.
- Staff and Candidates who have questions regarding these guidelines are encouraged to consult the Clerk's Department.

## **What kind of remuneration is paid to a Township Councillor?**

Council meetings are generally held on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Council remuneration covers all Regular and Special Council Meetings.

The current remuneration for Council members is as follows:

Mayor	\$35,167.17
Deputy Mayor	\$29,482.07
Councillors	\$27,542.70

Remuneration for any member of Council sitting on a local board or committee of Council is included in the salary

## What are my Financial Responsibilities as a Candidate?

All candidates are urged to review the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, ([www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)) and the Municipal Affairs and Housing's Candidates Guide available on their website ([www.mah.gov.on.ca](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca)) or at the Clerk's office to fully understand all the legislative requirements. The onus of responsibility is on candidates to satisfy themselves, through their own determination, or with professional assistance, of the various legal and financial requirements relating to their candidacy. It is important to fully reference Sections 88(1) – 88(32), *MEA*, as well as other relevant sections within the Act. Although this guide provides a summary of the provisions, it does not account for all of the financial responsibilities associated with the candidacy.

All nominated candidates, including those not elected, those who withdrew their nomination and whose nomination was rejected by the Clerk, must disclose and report on or before March 30, 2027, by 2:00 p.m. their contributions and expenses as of December 31, 2026, in accordance with the following:

- All candidates are required to file a detailed financial statement on the prescribed form – Financial Statement, Form 4
- Candidates must have their financial statement audited and submit the auditor's report to the Clerk along with their financial statements if expenses are over \$10,000.

Candidates' financial statements are filed with the Clerk and are public documents, which are to be available at no charge for viewing by the public on the Township website. The Clerk will advise at least 30 days prior to March 30, 2027, filing deadline of all the filing requirements of the Act.

**It is the responsibility of the candidate to file a complete and accurate financial statement by the filing date.**

## Contributions *MEA, s 88.15*

Campaign contributions are any money, goods or services that are given to a candidate for his or her campaign (including money and goods that a candidate contributes themselves to their own campaign) which include:

- ✓ The amount charged for admission to a fund-raising function
- ✓ The difference between the amount paid and the market value of a good or service sold at a fund-raising function
- ✓ The difference between the amount paid and the market value of a good or service purchased for the campaign
  - Example: Your order for campaign signs would normally cost \$500, but the vendor agrees to sell them to you for \$300. You must record a contribution of \$200 in goods or services from the vendor. Note: as businesses are not permitted to make contributions, the contribution would have to be a personal contribution from the vendor.
- ✓ Any unpaid but guaranteed balance of a campaign loan
- ✓ Election signs from previous municipal campaigns that are reused – the current market value of the sign (i.e. what it would cost you to buy those signs today) is considered a contribution that you make to your campaign

Candidates should advise contributors to their campaign that the contributor's name, address and contribution amount will be posted as public information electronically (i.e. posted on the Township website) and **that every contribution made will be posted.**

## Goods & Services Donated and Deemed Not to be Contributions

The following are deemed not to be contributions:

- ✓ The value of services provided by voluntary unpaid labour
- ✓ The value of services provided voluntarily by employees of an entity as long as they do not receive extra compensation from their employer
- ✓ An amount of \$25 or less that is donated at a fund-raising function
- ✓ The value of free political advertising provided it is in accordance with the Broadcasting Act (Canada) and is made available to all candidates
- ✓ A campaign loan from a bank or a recognized lending institution is not considered to be a contribution.

## Timing of Contributions

Contributions can be solicited by, or accepted on behalf, of a person seeking local municipal office, if that person has been duly nominated as a candidate. Contributions may only be accepted during a candidate's campaign period (in the event of a campaign that was not extended this occurs from the time the nomination is filed up until December 31, 2026). Any contributions received outside the campaign period that cannot be returned to the contributor, including any anonymous contributions must be turned over to the Clerk. Candidates must make reasonable efforts to satisfy themselves that a contributor is entitled to make contributions.

## **Eligible Contributors** *MEA, s 88.8 (3)*

Only the following may make contributions:

- ✓ An individual who is normally a resident in Ontario.
- ✓ You and your spouse.

## **Ineligible Contributors** *MEA, s 88.8 (4)*

The following shall **not** contribute to a campaign:

- ✓ A federal political party registered under the *Canada Elections Act* or any federal constituency association or registered candidate in a federal election.
- ✓ A provincial political party, constituency association, registered candidate or leadership contestant registered under the *Election Finances Act*.
- ✓ The Crown in right of Canada or Ontario, a municipality or local board.
- ✓ A trade union.
- ✓ A corporation.

Note: See separate guide for third party contributions.

## **Contribution Limits** *MEA, s 88.9*

A contributor shall not make contributions exceeding a total of \$1,200 to any one candidate in an election. This limit is never to be exceeded regardless of the number of offices a candidate may have been nominated for during an election period. In addition to this, a contributor shall not make contributions exceeding a total of \$5,000 to multiple candidates for office on the same council or local board. Candidates are required to inform each of their contributors of their contribution limits. *MEA s 88.9(4)*.

**Only a contribution that is \$25 or less can be made in cash. All contributions above \$25 must be made by cheque, money order, or by a method that clearly shows where the funds came from.** *MEA s 88.8(8)*.

## **Candidate's Own Funds** *MEA, s 88.9.1(1)*

There is a limit on how much a candidate and their spouse can contribute to their campaign. The contribution limit applies to the total amount of contributions made by the candidate and/or their spouse to their campaign. This includes any contributions of goods and the replacement value of any inventory from a previous campaign that is being using in the current campaign.

The contribution limit is calculated based on the number of electors who are eligible to vote for the office that the candidate is running for. The formula to calculate the limit is based on the lesser of:

- ✓ for head of council candidates: \$7,500 plus 20 cents per elector entitled to vote for the office to a maximum of \$25,000;
- ✓ for other council offices: \$5,000 plus 20 cents per elector entitled to vote for the office to a maximum of \$25,000.

The number of electors is determined from the voters' list from the 2022 election.

<b>Preliminary Contribution Limits to your own campaign (Base amount plus \$0.20/elector)</b> - Base Amount Mayor - \$7,500 - Base Amount all other offices - \$5,000	<b>Number of Electors</b>	<b>* Preliminary Maximum</b>
Mayor	7,428	<b>\$8,985.80</b>
Deputy Mayor	7,428	<b>\$6,485.80</b>
Councillor	7,428	<b>\$6,485.80</b>

The Clerk will, after determining from the Voters' List the number of electors eligible to vote for each office as of September 20 in the 2026 election, calculate the maximum contribution amount by a candidate and/or their spouse to their own campaign and provide the candidate with a copy of this amount. The maximum limit will be provided by September 30, 2026. *MEA, s 88.9.1(2)*.

Note: The higher of the two calculations (preliminary (noted above) and secondary) shall be the final contribution limit for the office.

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

**For school trustees:**

There are no limits on how much a school trustee candidate and their spouse can contribute to their campaign. Contributions that the candidate and their spouse make to their campaign do not count toward the \$5,000 limit.

If the school trustee candidates campaign ends with a surplus, they can withdraw the value of contributions that they and their spouse made from the surplus. If there is still a surplus once they have withdrawn their contributions, the surplus remaining must be turned over to the clerk.

School trustee candidates are not permitted to refund contributions made by anyone other than themselves or their spouse.

## Contribution Refunds

Where the candidate learns a contribution has been made or accepted in contravention to any provision of the Act, the candidate must immediately return the contribution. If this is not possible, any such contribution should be paid to the Clerk. The following are examples of a contribution which must be returned or paid to the Clerk:

- ✓ Issued/received outside a candidate's campaign period.
- ✓ Issued/received from anonymous sources (except for cash donations less than \$25 received as part of the fundraising event e.g. "pass-the-hat").
- ✓ Issued/received from ineligible sources (e.g. individuals not residents of Ontario).
- ✓ Issued/received in excess of the \$1,200 per contributor limit or the \$5,000 total limit.
- ✓ Issued/received a **cash** contribution in excess of \$25.
- ✓ Issued/received from funds not belonging to the contributor.

## **Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Campaign Contributions**

### **How can contributions of cash be made?**

Cash contributions may only be accepted up to \$25; contributions more than \$25 must be made by cheque, money order, credit card or by a method that clearly shows where the funds came from.

### **What is the definition of contributions of goods and services?**

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

All contributions of goods or services the candidate receives are considered contributions and should be supported by an invoice from the contributor of the good or service. The contribution must be recorded just as if it were money.

If a vendor is willing to sell goods and services to the campaign at less than market value, the difference between market value and what the campaign paid must be recorded as a contribution. When you record the expense, you should record what you paid plus the value of the discount. As businesses are not permitted to make contributions, the discount would have to be a personal contribution from the vendor.

### **Who can accept campaign contributions?**

Only the candidate and those persons authorized by the candidate can accept campaign contributions. Contributions can only be accepted during the campaign period and only from a person or entity entitled to make a contribution.

### **How are anonymous contributions handled?**

An anonymous contribution cannot be accepted. The only exception to this rule is a donation received at a fund-raising function held on behalf of a candidate (eg. "pass-the-hat" donations). Each of these donations must be \$25 or less. However, the total revenue from any such donation source must be reported as part of the candidate's financial statement. Any anonymous contribution received that cannot be returned must be paid to the Clerk.

### **Are contribution income tax-deductible?**

Contributions to municipal and school board campaigns **are not** income tax-deductible.

## **Fundraising**

Fundraising activities are to only be held for a candidate and must occur within his or her campaign period.

The *MEA* defines a fund-raising function as an event or activity,

- a) held by a candidate or under a candidate's direction for the purpose of raising funds for his or her election campaign, or
- b) held by a registered third party or under its direction for the purpose of raising funds in relation to third party advertisements

Candidates/Third Parties must record the gross income (including ticket revenue and other revenue) and the expenses related to each event and activity on their campaign financial statement. The price of admission to a fundraising function and/or any amount paid for a good or service (offered for sale in excess of fair market value) is to be considered and treated as a campaign contribution.

If a Candidate/Third Party holds an event to promote their campaign and they happen to receive some contributions or ask people to consider contributing to their campaign, this would not qualify as a fundraising event. Similarly, if a candidate has a sentence in their campaign brochure asking people to make a contribution or giving them information about how to contribute, this would not be a fundraising brochure since its primary purpose is to promote their campaign, not to raise money.

## **Expenses**

Any costs incurred for goods or services by or on behalf of a person wholly or partly for use in his or her election campaign are considered expenses.

The nomination fee is a personal expense. It is not considered to be a campaign expense and should not be reported on the campaign financial statement.

Candidates can only incur expenses during the campaign period, except for expenses related to the preparation of an auditor's report. If a candidate is required to include an auditor's report with their financial statement, they may incur these expenses after the campaign period has ended and report them on their financial statement.

Goods and services that are contributed to a campaign are also expenses. They should be treated as if the contributor gave the candidate money and the candidate went out and purchased the goods and services – candidates must record both the contribution and the expense. Most expenses are subject to a maximum campaign expense limit.

## **Campaign Inventory**

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

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

## **Deadline for Claiming Expenses**

The 2026 Municipal Election campaign period ends on December 31, 2026 (a campaign is also deemed to end on August 21, 2026, if a nomination is rejected by the Clerk or on the date a candidate submits his or her withdrawal).

## **Financial Statements and Disclosure**

It is the responsibility of the candidate to file a complete and accurate Form 4 Financial Statement in person at Township Office by the deadline applicable to their respective campaign. All nominated candidates for the 2026 Municipal Election (including those who have withdrawn or were not elected) must disclose their contributions and expenses, using the prescribed form, no later than 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2027.

If campaign contributions (including contributions from the candidate) or campaign expenses are greater than \$10,000, the candidate must have their financial statement audited and include the auditor's report when submitting the financial statement to the Clerk.

If a candidate is unable to file their financial statement by the deadline, they may apply to the Superior Court of Justice for an extension before the filing deadline. If the financial statement is not filed by the deadline, the candidate may file their financial statement within 30 days after the deadline, if they pay the municipality a \$500 late filing fee.

Candidates will not receive a refund of their nomination fee if they file during the 30-day grace period.

If the financial statement is not filed by the end of the 30-day grace period, and the candidate did not apply to the court for an extension prior to the deadline, the candidate will forfeit their elected office and they will be ineligible to run for office or be appointed to fill a vacancy until after the next municipal election.

Note: Candidate's financial statements are deemed to be public documents and will be posted to the Township's website in their entirety.

## Campaign Surplus and Deficits

If the candidate's campaign has a surplus after they have refunded contributions made by themselves or their spouse, the candidate must pay the surplus over to the Clerk when they file their financial statement. The surplus will be held in trust and can be used if the candidate incurs expenses related to a recount, an application for a controverted election, or a compliance audit. If the surplus is not needed for these expenses, it becomes the property of the municipality or the school board.

## Record Keeping/Accounting System

Consulting with an auditor (specifically one with experience in campaign financing) on an election campaign accounting system is advisable. This will ensure that a candidate's record keeping and accounting procedures are followed in a satisfactory manner, allowing any necessary audits to be carried out at minimal cost. The auditor is required to examine and to report as to whether the financial statement presents fairly the information contained in the accounting records on which the financial statement is based. Further information regarding campaign accounting requirements can be found in the MEA.

The following is an excerpt from Section 88.22(1), *MEA*:

(1) A candidate shall ensure that,

- a) no contributions of money are accepted, or expenses are incurred unless one or more campaign accounts are first opened at a financial institution exclusively for the purposes of the election campaign;
- b) all contributions of money are deposited into the campaign accounts;
- c) all funds in the campaign accounts are used exclusively for the purposes of the election campaign;
- d) all payments for expenses are made from the campaign accounts;
- e) contributions of goods or services are valued;
- f) receipts are issued for every contribution and obtained for every expense;
- g) records are kept of,
  - (i) the receipts issued for every contribution,
  - (ii) the value of every contribution,
  - (iii) whether a contribution is in the form of money, goods or services, and
  - (iv) the contributor's name and address;
- h) records are kept of every expense including the receipts obtained for each expense;
- i) records are kept of any claim for payment of an expense that the candidate disputes or refuses to pay;
- j) records are kept of the gross income from a fund-raising function and the gross amount of money received at a fund-raising function by donations of \$25 or less or by the sale of goods or services for \$25 or less;
- k) records are kept of any loan and its terms under section 88.17;

- l) the records described in clauses (g), (h), (i), (j) and (k) are retained by the candidate for the term of office of the members of the council or local board and until their successors are elected and the newly elected council or local board is organized;
- m) financial filings are made in accordance with sections 88.25 and 88.32;
- n) proper direction is given to the persons who are authorized to incur expenses and accept or solicit contributions under the direction of the candidate;
- o) a contribution of money made or received in contravention of this Act or a by-law passed under this Act is returned to the contributor as soon as possible after the candidate becomes aware of the contravention;
- p) a contribution not returned to the contributor under clause (o) is paid to the clerk with whom the candidate's nomination was filed;
- q) an anonymous contribution is paid to the clerk with whom the candidate's nomination was filed; and
- r) each contributor is informed that a contributor shall not make contributions exceeding,
  - (i) subject to subsection (2), a total of \$1,200 to any one candidate in an election, and
  - (ii) a total of \$5,000 to two or more candidates for offices on the same council or local board. 2016, c. 15, s. 60; 2017, c. 10, Sched. 4, s. 8 (13).

### **Compliance Audits** *MEA, s 88.33*

As per the *MEA*, a Compliance Audit Committee will be constituted and delegated full authority to address applications requesting an audit of a candidate's financial statement. The Committee's term will be equal to that of the elected council. A Terms of Reference will be established by the Clerk. The central role of the Committee will be to review applications and grant or reject audit requests. Where granted, the Committee will appoint an auditor to review the final statement and, where indicated, the Committee will decide whether legal proceedings shall be commenced.

### **Notice of Penalties**

Further to *MEA*, s 33.1, the Clerk shall, before Voting Day, give notice of the penalties under section 88.23(2) and section 92(1) related to election campaign finances and the refund of the nomination filing fee that the candidate is entitled to receive as per *MEA* s. 34.

*MEA*, s 88.23,

- (1) A candidate is subject to the penalties listed in subsection (2), in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed under this Act,
  - a. if the candidate fails to file a document as required under section 88.25 or 88.32 by the relevant date;
  - b. if a document filed under section 88.25 shows on its face a surplus, as described in section 88.31, and the candidate fails to pay the amount required by subsection 88.31 (4) to the clerk by the relevant date;

- c. if a document filed under section 88.25 shows on its face that the candidate has incurred expenses exceeding what is permitted under section 88.20; or
  - d. if a document filed under section 88.32 shows on its face a surplus and the candidate fails to pay the amount required by that section by the relevant date.
- (2) Subject to subsection (7), in the case of a default described in subsection (1),
- a. the candidate forfeits any office to which he or she was elected, and the office is deemed to be vacant; and
  - b. until the next regular election has taken place, the candidate is ineligible to be elected or appointed to any office to which this Act applies.
- (3) In the case of a default described in subsection (1), the clerk shall,
- a. notify the candidate in writing that the default has occurred;
  - b. if the candidate was elected, notify the council or board to which he or she was elected in writing that the default has occurred; and
  - c. make available to the public the name of the candidate and a description of the nature of the default.

## Section 92

- (1) A candidate is guilty of an offence and, on conviction, in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed under this Act, is subject to the penalties described in subsection 88.23 (2),
- a. if the candidate incurs expenses that exceed the amount determined for the office under section 88.20; or
  - b. if the candidate files a document under section 88.25 or 88.32 that is incorrect or otherwise does not comply with that section. 2016, c. 15, s. 68 (1).

## **Accessibility Provisions within the Municipal Elections Act**

Pursuant to *MEA*, s 12.1 in providing for matters and procedures not otherwise covered by the Act, the Clerk shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities. The clerk shall also prepare an accessibility plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day.

Within 90 days after voting day, the Clerk shall submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

## **Accessibility Resources for Candidates**

Candidates must also have regard for the needs of electors with disabilities. Campaign offices, election materials and canvassing should all be reviewed in order ensure that accessibility has been considered for all electors, including those with disabilities.

Accessibility Ontario has a number of great resources that will assist with planning for an accessible election. <https://accessforward.ca/>

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen has adopted an Accessibility Plan. For more information on the provision of service to persons with disabilities please visit the Township's website [Accessibility | Township of Havelock Belmont Methuen](#)

## Third Party Advertising

For full details on the responsibilities of Third Party Advertisers refer to the *MEA*, as amended or use the link below:

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/2026-third-party-advertisers-guide/registration>

### **Third Party Advertising Definition:**

An advertisement is any broadcast, print, electronic or other medium that has the purpose of promoting, supporting or opposing,

- (a) a candidate, or
- (b) a “yes” or “no” to a question on a ballot.

Does not include:

- An advertisement by and under the direction of a candidate;
- Where no expenses are incurred by the person /entity in relation to the advertisement;
- When given or transmitted by an individual to employees, by a corporation to its shareholders, directors, members or employees or by a trade union to its members or employees.

Advertising that does not cost money to post or to broadcast, such as comments made on social media will not be considered to be third party advertising.

## **Registration of Third Party Advertisers – *MEA*, s 88.6**

Individuals, corporations or trade unions are eligible to register as a third party advertiser provided that they have formally registered with the local Clerk as a third party advertiser. Registration allows a third party advertiser to promote or oppose any candidate that the electors in the municipality can vote for.

Registrations can be accepted by the Clerk, or designate, from May 1, 2026 to October 23, 2026. There is no registration fee for third party advertising. The Clerk will review the registration and then certify the notice of registration if deemed compliant or reject the registration (*MEA*, s 88.6 (13)).

The following are not permitted to register:

- Municipal election candidates;
- Federal and Provincial political parties, constituency associations, registered candidates and leadership contestants;
- Federal and Provincial government, a municipality or local board.

If third party advertisers want to advertise in more than one municipality, they are required to register in each municipality. This also means that each registration is a separate campaign with its own spending limits.

### **Third Party Advertising Requirements – MEA, s 88.4, s 88.21**

No individual, corporation or trade union is permitted to incur expenses for a third party advertisement that appears during the restricted period unless they are a registered third party. The restricted period is the date registration is filed and ends at the close of voting on Voting Day. *Restricted period – earliest day is May 1, 2026, last day is October 23, 2026.*

Contributions by corporations and trade unions to candidates are banned, however, corporations and trade unions can contribute to third party advertisers. Money goods and services are considered contributions.

The following are permitted to contribute to a Third Party Advertiser:

- An individual who is normally resident in Ontario.
- A corporation that carries on business in Ontario.
- A trade union that holds bargaining rights for employees in Ontario.
- The registered third party and in the case of an individual, his or her spouse (subject to *MEA, s 88.12(5)*).

Contributions:

- cannot be made or accepted unless a third party has registered;
- maximum contribution from a single contributor is \$1,200 to a registered third party and \$5,000 to two or more registered third parties in a municipality.
- there is no limit on how much a registered third party (and, if the third party is an individual, their spouse) can contribute to their own advertising campaign.

Expenses:

- subject to maximum expense limit;
- required to record expenses and file a financial statement.

### **Mandatory Information to be included in Third Party Advertisements**

*MEA, s 88.5(1)*

The third party advertiser must be registered at the time of the advertisement.

The ad **must** contain the following:

- ✓ name of the registered third party;
- ✓ municipality where the third party is registered;
- ✓ a telephone number, mailing address or email address at which the third party may be contacted regarding the advertisement.

A registered third party is not permitted to allow third party advertisement to appear during the restricted period unless the broadcaster/publisher has been provided with the ad requirements as noted above in writing.

Third party advertisers are required to identify themselves on campaign advertisements and signs, so that it is clear who is responsible for each sign and advertisement that appears or is broadcast.

The broadcaster/publisher retains records with respect to the third party advertisement – *MEA*, s 88.5 (4). They must retain the record for four (4) years after the date of the appearance of the advertisement and permit inspection during normal business hours.

### **Municipal Authority to Remove Advertisements – *MEA*, s 88.7**

A municipality may require the following to remove or discontinue the advertising:

- ✓ a person who has contravened the provisions for third party advertisers or caused/permitted the contravention;
- ✓ the owner or occupier of the land on which the contravention occurred.

### **Campaign Period – *MEA*, s 88.28**

Contributions can only be made to a registered third party for third party advertisements, and can only be made during the campaign period - *MEA* s 88.12. A third party advertiser that is registered can only incur expenses during the campaign period. The campaign period is determined by the application of the following rules.

The 2026 election campaign:

- ✓ begins on the day, but not before May 1, 2026, the third party registers for the election (registration must be certified by the Clerk); and
- ✓ ends on December 31, 2026.

### **Filing Requirements – *MEA*, s 88.29, s 88.30**

All registered third parties are required to file a financial statement using the prescribed form. Candidates, whose campaign contribution and total expenses are each equal to or less than \$10,000, are not required to file an auditor's report with the financial statement. *MEA*, s 88.29(6)

A registered third party whose campaign contributions in the municipality exceed \$10,000 or whose total campaign expenses exceed \$10,000 is required to file an auditor's report with the financial statement.

The registered third party must file their financial statements and auditors report using the prescribed forms by 2:00 PM on March 30, 2027 for the filing period ending December 31, 2026.

**Notice of Default – MEA, s 88.27(2)**

The Clerk is required to notify the registered third party in writing that a default has occurred and the nature of the default. The Clerk also has to make this information public.

**Electronic Versions of Financial Statements – MEA, s 88(9.1)**

The Clerk shall make the financial statements filed under *MEA*, s 88.25, s. 88.29 and s. 88.32 available at no charge for viewing by the public on the municipal website or in another electronic format as soon as possible after the documents are filed.

**Penalties – MEA s. 88.23, s. 88.27, s. 88.35**

As with candidates, there is a 30 day grace period for those who missed the deadline to file a financial statement and auditor’s report, provided that the third party advertiser pays a \$500 late filing fee to the municipality.

Third party advertisers are subject to spending limits and must file financial statements with the Clerk and the Clerk must review the statements for possible contraventions and submit any identified contribution to the Compliance Audit Committee. The Clerk is required to publicly identify the third parties who file or did not file a financial statement.