

Asphodel  Norwood

MUNICIPAL ELECTION

2  26

INFORMATION FOR **CANDIDATES**

April 24, 2026

antownship.ca/elections

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Introduction

This guide has been prepared for individuals seeking nomination in the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election. It provides an overview of key processes and requirements for the upcoming election.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to review the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (MEA), as amended, along with applicable regulations (www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/96m32), to ensure a full understanding of the legislative framework. Candidates are responsible for satisfying themselves – through their own research or with the assistance of legal counsel – of all legal and financial obligations related to their candidacy.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) reviews the MEA following each municipal election to ensure it continues to meet the needs of Ontario communities. While no new legislative amendments have been passed since the 2022 Municipal Election, a previously approved change under Bill 204 (*Helping Tenants and Small Businesses Act, 2020*) is now in effect. This change transfers responsibility for preparing the preliminary voters' list from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) to the Chief Electoral Officer.

MMAH has developed guides for voters, candidates, and third-party advertisers, which are available online at: www.ontario.ca/municipalelections.

In the months leading up to the election, additional information will be provided by the Township Clerk's Department. Candidates are encouraged to check the Township's website regularly for updates: www.antownship.ca/elections.

Nomination packages will be available both online and in person prior to May 1, 2026. Nomination forms and other prescribed documents can also be accessed through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing at: www.ontario.ca/municipalelections.

Contact Information: Township of Asphodel-Norwood

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 29
Norwood, ON, K0L 2V0

Municipal Office Location:

2357 County Road 45, Norwood, ON

Election Staff:

Melanie Hudson
Clerk/Returning Officer
705-639-5343
mhudson@antownship.ca

Pam Quinlan
Deputy Returning Officer
705-639-5343
pquinlan@antownship.ca

Additional staff will be added as needed during the election period.

Summary – 2026 Municipal Election Highlights

Nominations may be filed by candidates from Friday, May 1, 2026, to Thursday, August 20, 2026, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. On Friday, August 21, 2026, nominations may be filed between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. at the Township Office. Candidates are strongly encouraged to contact the Clerk's Department in advance to schedule an appointment.

Candidates wishing to withdraw their nomination must do so in person in writing by 2:00 p.m. Friday, August 21, 2026.

Voting day is Monday, October 26, 2026.

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood 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 8:00 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 local board. Contributors who exceed this limit may be subject to penalties under the *Municipal Elections Act*.

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.

Expenses incurred by a candidate with a disability, or by a registered third-party who is an individual with a disability, that are directly related to the disability and would not have been incurred but for the election, are not subject to the general spending limit, in accordance with sections 88.19(3), 88.20(8), and 88.21(8) of the MEA.

The candidate's spending limit formula is a base amount, which varies by office, plus \$0.85 cents per elector entitled to vote for the office. 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 2:00 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.

A candidate is entitled to receive a refund of the nomination fee if they file their financial statement and auditor's report (if required), on or before 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2027.

A candidate who has a deficit may extend their campaign to Wednesday, 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 (4) and (5).

All surplus funds must be turned over to the Clerk to be held in trust. A candidate may access their surplus if they subsequently incur expenses related to a compliance audit, the Clerk shall return the surplus, with interest to the candidate. MEA s. 88.31 and 32. 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.

Financial filing forms have been updated for the 2026 Municipal Election. All candidates are required to use the current version of **Form 4 (Financial Statement – Auditor’s Report – Candidate)**. All prescribed forms are available through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing:

<https://forms.mgcs.gov.on.ca/en/organization/ministry-of-municipal-affairs-and-housing>

The MEA establishes a framework for third-party advertising. Eligible third-party advertisers include:

- individuals who normally reside in Ontario;
- corporations that carry on business in Ontario; and
- trade unions that hold bargaining rights in Ontario.

Third-party advertisers must register with the Clerk prior to incurring any expenses. There is no registration fee. Third-party advertising includes any advertisement in any medium that promotes, supports, or opposes a candidate.

Candidates are permitted to campaign in apartment buildings, condominiums, non-profit housing co-operatives, and gated communities between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Landlords and condominium corporations cannot prohibit tenants or owners from displaying campaign signs in their units. MEA s. 88.2

Key Dates

2026

Monday, May 1

- First day to file a nomination paper for the offices of Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillor and School Board Trustee.
 - Once the nomination paper is filed with the Clerk, the candidate can start raising and spending money on their campaign.
 - Preliminary spending limit provided to candidates.
 - Preliminary contribution limit provided to candidates running for Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillor (does not apply to School Board Trustee candidates).
- First day to register as a third-party advertiser, a third-party advertiser cannot raise or spend money on their campaign or begin advertising until their registration is certified by the Clerk.
 - Preliminary spending limit provided to third-party advertiser upon certification.

Friday, August 21 at 2:00 p.m.

- Deadline for candidates to:
 - File a nomination
 - Withdraw a nomination in writing
 - Change office

Monday, August 24

- Clerk to certify candidate nomination papers by 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, September 1

- Voters List can be made available to candidates upon written request.

Sunday, September 20 to Wednesday, September 30

- A copy of the interim list of the changes to the Voters' List to each person who received a copy of the Voters' List.

Wednesday, September 30

- Final spending limits are provided to candidates and registered third-party advertisers.
- Final self-contribution limit provided to candidates running for Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor (does not apply to School Board Trustee candidates).

Tuesday, October 13 to Monday, October 26

- Voting Period begins Tuesday, October 13 at 10:00 a.m. until Election Day Monday, October 26 at 8:00 p.m.

Friday, October 23

- Last day to register as a third-party advertiser.

Sunday, October 25

- Last day for Clerk to provide candidates with a notice of penalties related to campaign finances and refund of nomination filing fees.

Monday, October 26

- Election Day

Thursday, December 31

- Election campaign period ends for candidates and third-party advertisers
- Last day for candidates and registered third-party advertisers to provide written notice of a deficit and the continuation of their campaign period.
- Deadline for persons provided with a copy of the Voters List to destroy it.

2027**Tuesday, March 30 at 2:00 p.m.**

- Deadline for candidates and third-party advertisers to file the initial financial statement.

Thursday, April 29 at 2:00 p.m.

- Candidates and third-party advertisers who did not file their financial statement by Tuesday, March 30, 2027 may file it within the 30-day grace period provided they pay a \$500 late filing fee. Any candidate who files within the 30-day grace period is not entitled to receive their refund of nomination filing fee.

Monday, June 28

- Last day for an eligible elector in the Township of Asphodel-Norwood to file a compliance audit application.

Wednesday, June 30

- End of extended campaign period.

Friday, September 24 at 2:00 p.m.

- Deadline for candidates and third-party advertisers to file the supplementary financial statement (applies only to those who extended their campaign period).

Monday, October 25 at 2:00 p.m.

- Candidates and third-party advertisers who did not file their financial statement by Friday, September 24, 2027 may file the statement within the 30-day grace period if they pay a \$500 late filing fee.

Thursday, December 23

- Last day for an eligible elector in the Township of Asphodel-Norwood to file a compliance audit application.

What voting method will be used by the Township?

The Township 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 8:00 p.m. for internet and telephone voting.

Eligible voters will receive a personalized voting instruction letter by mail before Election Day. The letter will provide details on how to vote online or by phone. The information will also include a secret personal identification number (PIN) that electors use to access the voting system. The PIN, in conjunction with proof of identity, as prescribed in Ontario Regulation 304/13: Voter Identification, will be required for voters to vote. By combining the PIN and proof of identity, 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.

What are the Offices for the Township of Asphodel-Norwood Council?

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood has a five (5) member Council consisting of:

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

All offices are elected by general vote (at large).

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. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will each have one vote on County Council.

Council members will also be appointed to various Boards and Committees.

What are the Offices for School Board Trustee?

The following School Board Trustee positions are open for the 2026 Municipal Election. Please note that nominations must be filed with the designated municipality as indicated below.

Public School Board

Trustee (1) – Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board

- Jurisdiction: Townships of Asphodel-Norwood, Cavan Monaghan, Douro-Dummer, and Otonabee-South Monaghan
- Nominations accepted by: Township of Cavan Monaghan
- Website: <http://www.kprschoools.ca>

Catholic School Board

Trustee (1) – Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board

- Jurisdiction: Townships of Asphodel-Norwood, Cavan Monaghan, Douro-Dummer, Trent Lakes, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, Otonabee-South Monaghan, North Kawartha, and Selwyn
- Nominations accepted by: Township of Selwyn
- Website: <http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/>

French Language Public School Board

Trustee (1) – Conseil Scolaire Viamonde (Secteur 1)

- Jurisdiction: Counties of Northumberland, Peterborough, and Haliburton; City of Kawartha Lakes; City of Peterborough; City of Quinte West; and Durham Region
- Nominations accepted by: City of Oshawa
- Website: <https://csviamonde.ca/>

French Language Catholic School Board

Trustee (1) – Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir (Region 11)

- Jurisdiction: Durham Region, Peterborough County, Northumberland County, Hastings County, City of Kawartha Lakes, City of Peterborough, and City of Quinte West
- Nominations accepted by: City of Oshawa
- Website: <https://www.cscmonavenir.ca>

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 sections 256 and 258 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and sections 17, 29, and 30 of the MEA.

To be eligible to run for municipal office, a person must:

1. be a Canadian citizen;
2. be at least 18 years of age;
3. reside in the municipality, or be the owner or tenant of land in the municipality, or the spouse of such owner or tenant;
4. not be prohibited from voting under section 17(3) of the MEA or otherwise by law; and
5. not be disqualified by any other Act from holding office.

Examples of persons who are not eligible to be candidates include:

- individuals who did not file the required financial statements for the 2022 Municipal Election;
- employees of the municipality (unless a leave of absence is taken effective the date of nomination);
- the Clerk, Treasurer, Integrity Commissioner, Ombudsman, or registrar of the municipality (even if not an employee);
- public servants within the meaning of the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006*, except in accordance with that Act;
- judges of any court;
- Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), Members of Parliament (MPs), or Senators (unless they resign prior to Nomination Day);
- corporations;
- individuals serving a sentence of imprisonment;
- individuals acting in a representative capacity (e.g., executor or trustee).

How do I know if I am eligible to hold office as a School Board Trustee?

Eligibility for school board trustees is set out in section 219 of the *Education Act, 1990*.

To be eligible, a person must:

- be qualified to vote for members of the school board; and
- reside within the board's area of jurisdiction.

A person is not eligible if they are:

- an employee of a district school board or school authority (unless a leave of absence is taken effective the date of nomination);
- a Clerk, Treasurer, or deputy Clerk or Treasurer of a municipality within the board's jurisdiction (unless a leave of absence is taken effective the date of nomination);
- a Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP), Member of Parliament (MP), or Senator;
- otherwise disqualified under the Education Act or any other Act.

Who Can Vote in a Municipal Election?

A person is entitled to vote in a municipal election if, on voting day, they meet all of the following requirements (MEA s. 17(2)):

- a) they reside in the municipality, or are the owner or tenant of land in the municipality, or the spouse of such owner or tenant;
- b) they are a Canadian citizen;
- c) they are at least 18 years of age; and
- d) they are not prohibited from voting under section 17(3) of the MEA or otherwise by law.

Eligibility to vote in a municipal election is based on a person's relationship to property (ownership and/or occupancy). A person may be eligible to vote in more than one municipality and school board jurisdiction if they own or occupy property in multiple locations.

This differs from provincial and federal elections, where an individual may vote only once, based on their primary residence.

How many electors are there in the Township of Asphodel-Norwood?

The approximate number of electors is as follows, based on the 2022 List of Electors:

Asphodel-Norwood	3,940
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What was the voter turn-out from past elections?

40.9% in 2022
51.5% in 2018
57.0% in 2014
46.0% in 2010
51.0% in 2006

Nomination Process

Candidates must complete and sign the **Nomination Paper (Form 1)** and submit it in person, either by the candidate or by an agent acting on the candidate's behalf.

Where a Nomination Paper is filed by an agent, it must be accompanied by a completed and commissioned **authorization form (Form LC47)** confirming the candidate's consent. Form LC47 is available through the Clerk's Department. The agent must provide both the candidate's identification and their own identification at the time of filing.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring they meet all qualifications for the office for which they are seeking nomination.

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood has fewer than 4,000 electors, therefore 25 endorsement signatures are not required.

Filing Fee

A filing fee is required at the time of submission:

- Mayor (Head of Council): \$200
- All other offices (including School Board Trustee): \$100

Payment must be made by cash, certified cheque (payable to the Township of Asphodel-Norwood), or Interac. E-transfers, online payments, and credit card payments are not accepted.

Key Dates

- Nomination Deadline: August 21, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.
- Withdrawal Deadline: August 21, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.
- Certification of Nominations: August 24, 2026 (by the Clerk)
Note: Nominations are not official until certified by the Clerk.

Identification Requirements

All candidates (including incumbents) and agents filing on behalf of a candidate must provide identification. Acceptable identification must be an original document showing the individual's name, qualifying address, and signature, such as:

- 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. A passport must be accompanied by one of the above noted documents to verify the qualifying address.

Additional Resources

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) offers a range of free resources for individuals considering running in the 2026 Municipal Election, including *Lead Where You Live*, a comprehensive guide for candidates.

AMO also provides workshops and leadership programs designed to support both prospective candidates and returning elected officials. Additional information is available at: www.amo.on.ca/amo-education-workshops/election-resources-supporting-your-run-municipal-office-2026

Withdrawal of Nominations

A candidate may withdraw their nomination by filing a written withdrawal with the Clerk's Department no later than 2:00 p.m. on August 21, 2026.

Examination and Certification of Nominations

The Clerk will examine all nominations filed by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026. Any additional nominations filed under section 33(5) of the MEA will be examined by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2026.

Additional Nominations

If the number of certified nominations for an office is fewer than the number of positions to be filled, additional nominations may be filed between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2026.

Acclamations

If, at 4:00 p.m. on August 24, 2026, the number of certified candidates for an office is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, the Clerk will declare the candidate(s) elected by acclamation.

Refund of Nomination Deposit

A candidate is entitled to a refund of the nomination filing fee if they file their financial statements by the prescribed deadline.

For the 2026 Municipal Election, the filing deadline is 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2027.

Candidates – Nomination Checklist

- Nomination Paper (Form 1)** is completed clearly (printed or typed).
Note: The name on the form will appear on the ballot. First names may be adjusted with the Clerk's approval (e.g., "Tony" for "Anthony"); last names cannot be changed.
- You are a **Canadian citizen**.
- You are **at least 18 years of age**.
- You meet the **qualifying address requirement** (you reside in the municipality, or own or rent property there, or are the spouse of such owner or tenant).
- You have confirmed the **office** you are seeking (e.g., Mayor, Councillor, School Board Trustee).
- You have reviewed the **Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Candidates' or Third Party Advertisers' Guide** and understand your obligations.
- You can provide **acceptable identification** showing your name, qualifying address, and signature.
If an agent is filing on your behalf, they must provide both your identification and their own. Copies will be retained by the Clerk's Office.
- You have identified the **contact information** you wish to be made public (e.g., email address, phone number).
- You have the **required filing fee**, payable by cash, certified cheque (to the Township of Asphodel-Norwood), or Interac.

What are the regulations governing Election Signs and Corporate Resources?

Township of Asphodel-Norwood

By-law 2018-25 – A full version of the Election Sign By-law is available on the Township website: www.antownship.ca/electionsigns

Before You Place a Sign

- No permit is required; however, a deposit must be paid to the Township before placing any election signs.
- All election signs must comply with applicable federal, provincial, and municipal legislation.
- Municipal election signs can be placed starting the day after Nomination Day

Deposits (Required Before Placement)

- Mayor/Deputy Mayor, Councillor, Trustee: \$100
- Registered Third Parties: \$200

Where Signs Are Allowed

- On private property, with the permission of the owner or occupant.
- One sign per candidate per property at any one time.

Where Signs Are Not Allowed

- On any Township-owned, leased, or maintained property, including buildings;
- On utility poles, light poles, trees, benches, waste receptacles, mailboxes;
- On or over sidewalks, or attached to traffic signs, signals, guardrails;
- Within 3 metres of the roadway;
- In a way that obstructs visibility or creates a safety hazard;
- At or near voting locations, including on vehicles parked at those locations if visible;
- If they display the Township logo (in whole or in part).

Sign Requirements

- Maximum size: 3 m² (32 sq. ft.) (*except billboards and vehicle signs*)
- Signs must not be illuminated and cannot have flashing lights or moving parts

Removal & Fees

- All signs must be removed within 72 hours after Voting Day
- Non-compliant signs may be removed by the Township and stored up to seven (7) days after the Election day
- \$20 removal fee per sign (deducted from deposit)
- Deposits (less any fees) refunded within 60 days after Election Day
- Additional costs may apply if removal costs exceed the deposit

Additional Rules

- Candidates are responsible for their signs and all related costs
- The Township is not responsible for lost or damaged signs
- Signs on County or Provincial roads must follow those authorities' rules

County of Peterborough **Sign By-law No. 2022-29**

It is the candidate's responsibility to familiarize themselves with Peterborough County and Provincial regulations. As an additional resource, the County of Peterborough Election Sign by-law is available on the County website:

<https://peterboroughcounty.civicweb.net/document/278258/>

Province of Ontario (MTO)

Election signs placed on Provincial highways are subject to the requirements of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO). Candidates are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable provincial regulations.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-transportation>

Candidates access to Apartment Buildings, Condominiums etc.

Candidates and their authorized representatives are permitted to campaign at the doors of apartments, condominium units, non-profit housing co-operatives, and gated communities between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Landlords and condominium corporations cannot prohibit tenants or owners from displaying campaign signs in their units. MEA s. 88.2

Use of Corporate Resources Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for the use of corporate resources during an election period, in accordance with the MEA, and other applicable legislation. This policy is intended to:

- a. Protect the integrity, fairness, and transparency of the municipal election process.
- b. Ensure Candidates and Registered Third Parties are treated fairly and consistently within the Township of Asphodel-Norwood.
- c. Establish rules for the appropriate use of resources during an election period, to:
 - Protect the interests of Members of Council, Candidates, Registered Third Parties, Township Staff, and the Corporation; and
 - Ensure accountable and transparent practices.
- d. Maintain non-partisanship and demonstrate impartiality in all political activities during an Election.

The policy applies to Members of Council (including acclaimed members and those not seeking re-election), Local Board and Committee members, Candidates, Registered Third Parties, and Township staff. A full version of the *Use of Corporate Resources for Elections Policy* is available on the Township website www.antownship.ca/elections and is included in the Candidate Information Package.

What kind of remuneration is paid to a Township Councillor?

Council remuneration is established by by-law for each term of Council. Candidates are encouraged to review the Council Remuneration By-law, which is available on the Township website: www.antownship.ca/bylaws

Meeting Schedule and Responsibilities

Regular Council meetings are generally held at 1:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, with exceptions in July, August, October, and December. Additional special or emergency meetings may be scheduled as required.

Members of Council are also appointed to various committees and boards, which may require attendance at additional meetings and community events.

Candidates' Financial Responsibilities

Campaign Spending Limits

Candidates are encouraged to review the 2026 Candidates' Guide for detailed information on campaign contributions, fundraising, and expenses. The guide is available through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing:

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/2026-candidates-guide-ontario-municipal-council-and-school-board-elections>

Candidates should also review sections 88.1 to 88.32 of the MEA. Candidates are responsible for ensuring they understand and comply with all legal and financial requirements related to their candidacy. This may require independent research or consultation with professional advisors.

A candidate must file their Nomination Paper (Form 1) before incurring any campaign expenses or accepting contributions. Candidates who intend to receive contributions or incur expenses (other than the nomination filing fee) are required to open a campaign bank account prior to doing so.

The maximum amount a candidate may spend on their campaign is determined by a base amount plus an amount per elector eligible to vote for the office being contested.

At the time of filing, candidates will be provided with an estimated spending limit. The Clerk will calculate the final spending limit based on the number of electors on the Voters' List as of September 20, 2026, and will issue a certificate confirming the final amount by September 30, 2026.

Post-Election Expenses (Expressions of Appreciation)

Candidates may incur expenses related to post-election parties or expressions of appreciation after Voting Day.

These expenses are subject to a separate spending limit of 10% of the candidate's final campaign spending limit, as determined by the Clerk and provided by September 30, 2026. MEA s. 88.20(9); O. Reg. 101/97, s. 6

Candidate Contributions to Their Own Campaign

A candidate and their spouse may contribute to the candidate's own campaign, subject to a maximum limit set out in the MEA.

The maximum contribution is the lesser of:

- the amount calculated using the formula in the Act; or
- \$25,000

The Clerk will provide candidates with a certificate confirming their self-contribution limit by September 30, 2026.

Contributions made by a candidate or their spouse to the candidate's own campaign are not subject to the general individual contribution limits under section 88.9 of the MEA.

Note: This self-contribution limit does not apply to school board trustee candidates.

Contributions MEA s. 88.15

Campaign contributions include any money, goods, or services given to and accepted by a candidate (or someone acting under the candidate's direction) for use in the campaign.

Examples of contributions include:

- Admission fees to fundraising events;
- The difference between the amount paid and the market value of goods or services (e.g., discounted campaign materials)
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 as a personal contribution*
- Any unpaid but guaranteed portion of a campaign loan;
- Reused campaign materials (e.g., election signs from a previous campaign), valued at current market cost
Example: What it would cost you to buy those signs today is considered a contribution that you make to your campaign.

*Note: Businesses and organizations are not permitted to make contributions. Any "in-kind" contribution must come from an eligible individual.

Candidates should inform contributors that their name, address, and contribution amount will be publicly disclosed.

What Is Not a Contribution

The following are **not considered contributions**:

- Voluntary unpaid labour;
- Services provided by employees volunteering their time (without additional compensation);
- Contributions of \$25 or less made at a fundraising event;
- Proceeds from goods/services sold for \$25 or less at a fundraising event;
- Free political advertising provided in accordance with the *Broadcasting Act (Canada)* and made available to all candidates;
- Campaign loans from a bank or recognized lending institution (for candidates or their spouse).

Timing of Contributions

- Contributions may only be accepted after a candidate has filed a nomination.
- Contributions may only be accepted during the campaign period (generally from nomination filing to December 31, 2026, unless extended).
- Contributions received outside this period, or that cannot be returned, must be remitted to the Clerk.

Candidates must make reasonable efforts to ensure that all contributors are eligible to contribute.

Eligible Contributors MEA s. 88.8 (3)

Only the following may contribute:

- An individual who is normally a resident of Ontario;
- The candidate and their spouse.

Ineligible contributors include:

- Corporations and trade unions;
- A federal political party registered under the *Canada Elections Act (Canada)* or any federal constituency association or registered candidate at a federal election endorsed by that party;
- A provincial political party, constituency association, registered candidate or leadership contestant registered under the *Election Finances Act*;
- The Government of Canada or Ontario, municipalities, or local boards.

Contribution Limits

- Maximum of \$1,200 per contributor per candidate;
- Maximum of \$5,000 total to multiple candidates on the same council or local board;
- Only contributions of \$25 or less may be made in cash. Contributions over \$25 must be traceable to the contributor.

Candidates are responsible for informing contributors of these limits.

Candidate's Own Contributions

There is a limit on the total amount a candidate and their spouse may contribute to the candidate's own campaign. This limit applies to all contributions made by the candidate and/or their spouse, including:

- monetary contributions;
- contributions of goods and services; and
- the replacement value of any materials from a previous campaign that are reused in the current campaign.

This self-contribution limit does **not apply** to school board trustee candidates.

School Board Trustee Candidates

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 and Compliance

If a contribution is received in contravention of the Act, the candidate must return it immediately. If this is not possible, it must be paid to the Clerk.

This includes contributions that are:

- Received outside the campaign period;
- From anonymous sources (subject to limited exceptions);
- From ineligible contributors;
- In excess of contribution limits;
- Cash contributions over \$25;
- Funds not belonging to the contributor.

Frequently Asked Questions – Campaign Contributions

Contributions

How can contributions be made?

- Cash contributions are limited to **\$25 or less**.
- Contributions over \$25 must be made in a traceable form (e.g., cheque, money order, or other method linking the contributor to the payment).

What are contributions of goods and services?

Goods or services provided free of charge or at a discount are considered contributions and must be recorded at fair market value.

- Must come from eligible contributors only (individuals residing in Ontario).
- Must be recorded as both a contribution and an expense.
- Discounts must be recorded as the difference between the fair market value of the goods or services and the amount paid. As corporations are not permitted to make contributions, any such discount must be treated as a personal contribution from an eligible individual (e.g., the vendor, if applicable).

Who can accept campaign contributions?

Only the candidate or an authorized representative may accept contributions, and only during the campaign period.

How are anonymous contributions handled?

An anonymous contribution cannot be accepted. The only exception to this rule is a donation received at a fundraising function held on behalf of a candidate (e.g. "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 remitted to the Clerk.

Are contributions income tax-deductible?

No. Contributions to municipal and school board campaigns **are not** income tax-deductible.

Can signs, brochures, and any other election materials from a previous campaign be reused?

Yes. Campaign materials from a previous election may be reused; however, they must be recorded at their current market value. The value of reused materials is considered both:

- a campaign contribution (from the candidate), and
- a campaign expense.

Any reusable campaign materials remaining at the end of a campaign become the property of the candidate and must be valued and reported as closing inventory on the financial statement.

Fundraising

What is a fundraising event?

A fundraising event is held for the **primary purpose of raising funds** for a campaign.

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

The MEA defines a fundraising 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 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 fund-raising 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 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 fund-raising 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 fund-raising brochure since its primary purpose is to promote their campaign, not to raise money.

Expenses

What are campaign expenses?

Any cost incurred for goods or services used for the campaign, including donated or discounted items.

- Expenses may only be incurred during the campaign period
- Exception: 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.

Note: The nomination fee is a personal expense and is not reported as a campaign expense.

Campaign Materials & Inventory

Can materials from a previous campaign be reused?

Yes, but they must be recorded at their current market value and reported as both:

- a contribution, and
- a campaign expense.

Unused materials at the end of a campaign must be reported as closing inventory.

Financial Statements

When are financial statements due?

All candidates must file a financial statement (Form 4) by 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2027, including those who withdrew or were not elected.

Is an auditor required?

An auditor's report is required if total contributions or expenses exceed \$10,000.

What if I miss the filing deadline?

A 30-day grace period is available with a \$500 late fee. 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 2030 election.

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

What happens if my campaign has a surplus?

- After reimbursing yourself and your spouse, any remaining surplus must be paid to the Clerk
- Surplus funds may be held in trust for specific post-election expenses

Record Keeping

What records must I keep?

Candidates are encouraged to consult with an auditor – particularly one with experience in campaign financing – to establish an appropriate accounting system. Candidates should also review section 88.22 of the MEA. At a minimum, candidates must:

- open a campaign bank account before accepting contributions or incurring expenses
- deposit all contributions into the account
- pay all expenses from the account
- issue receipts and retain documentation for all transactions
- maintain detailed records of contributions, expenses, and loans

All records must be retained for the full term of office and until a successor is elected and the new council or board is organized.

Compliance and Penalties

What is a Compliance Audit Committee?

Under the MEA, municipalities are required to establish a Compliance Audit Committee.

The Committee is responsible for reviewing applications from eligible electors requesting an audit of a candidate's financial statement. Its key functions include:

- reviewing and approving or rejecting audit requests;
- appointing an independent auditor where an audit is granted; and
- determining whether legal proceedings should be commenced, where appropriate.

The Committee's term is the same as that of Council. A Terms of Reference, outlining its roles and procedures, will be established by the Clerk.

What happens if I do not comply with the rules?

Non-compliance may result in:

- forfeiture of office;
- ineligibility to run in the next election; and
- fines or other penalties related to election campaign finances (see MEA, s. 88.23(2) and s. 92(1)).

Accessibility Provisions within the Municipal Elections Act

Pursuant to section 12.1 of the MEA, the Clerk is required to have regard for the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities.

The Clerk shall:

- prepare an Accessibility Plan that identifies, removes, and prevents barriers to participation in the election; and
- make the plan available to the public prior to Voting Day.

Within 90 days after Voting Day, the Clerk shall submit a report to Council outlining measures taken to identify, remove, and prevent barriers affecting electors and candidates with disabilities.

Accessibility Resources for Candidates

Candidates are also encouraged to consider accessibility in all aspects of their campaign.

This includes ensuring that:

- campaign offices are accessible;
- election materials are available in accessible formats, where possible; and
- canvassing and campaign activities are conducted in a manner that is inclusive of all electors.

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood has a **Municipal Election Accessibility Plan** and maintains accessibility standards for customer service. For more information, please visit the Township website www.antownship.ca/elections or contact the Clerk's Department.

Third Party Advertising

Third party advertising is regulated under the MEA. For detailed information, refer to the Act and the Province's 2026 Third Party Advertisers' Guide:

- *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/96m32>
- 2026 Third Party Advertisers' Guide: <https://www.ontario.ca/document/2026-third-party-advertisers-guide>

What is Third Party Advertising?

A third party advertisement is any message in a broadcast, print, electronic, or other medium that promotes, supports, or opposes:

- a candidate; or
- a "yes" or "no" answer to a ballot question.

This does not include:

- advertising conducted by a candidate;
- messages where no expenses are incurred; or
- internal communications within organizations (e.g., to employees or members).

Note: Unpaid social media posts are not considered advertising. Paid or "boosted" posts are considered advertisements.

Who Can Register as a Third Party Advertiser? MEA s.88.6

Eligible third parties include:

- individuals who normally reside in Ontario;
- corporations that carry on business in Ontario; and
- trade unions that hold bargaining rights in Ontario.

Ineligible to register:

- candidates;
- federal or provincial political parties and related entities;
- governments, municipalities, and local boards.

Registration Requirements

- Must register with the Clerk or designate before incurring any advertising expenses. 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)
- Registration period: May 1 to October 23, 2026
- No registration fee applies

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.

Contributions and Limits

Eligible contributors:

- individuals (Ontario residents);
- corporations and trade unions;
- the registered third party (and their spouse, if applicable).

Contribution limits:

- \$1,200 per contributor to a single third party
- \$5,000 total to multiple third parties in the same municipality

There is no limit on contributions made by the registered third party (or their spouse, if applicable) to their own campaign.

Expenses and Campaign Period

- Expenses may only be incurred during the campaign period
- Campaign period:
 - begins once registration is certified (not before May 1, 2026); and
 - ends December 31, 2026
- Spending is subject to a maximum expense limit

Advertising Requirements

All third-party advertisements must include:

- the name of the registered third party;
- the municipality of registration; and
- contact information (phone, address, or email).

Third parties must be registered at the time the advertisement appears.

Record Keeping and Broadcaster Requirements

Broadcasters and publishers must retain records of:

- the advertisement and required identifying information;
- the cost of the advertisement.

These records must be kept for four (4) years and made available for inspection.

Financial Filing Requirements

All registered third parties must file a financial statement (Form 8) by: 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2027

- An auditor's report is required if contributions or expenses exceed \$10,000
- A 30-day grace period is available with a \$500 late filing fee

Financial statements are public documents and will be made available on the Township website. The Clerk will review statements for possible contraventions and may refer matters to the Compliance Audit Committee. The Clerk is required to publicly identify those who have or have not filed. Failure to comply with the MEA may result in penalties, including fines and other enforcement actions.