



2026 Municipal Election

Information for Candidates

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Introduction

This guide has been prepared for the purpose of supplying information to persons intending to stand for elected office.

This Guide is only intended to provide candidates with information on running for office. Candidates are responsible for ensuring they are familiar with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act* and should consult the Act for complete information and legislative requirements. A copy of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 is available for candidates from the Clerks Department and it is also available online at www.e-laws.gov.on.ca

Candidates must comply with all the requirements relating to election campaign financing. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs produces a guide for candidates that outlines the financial reporting requirements under the Act. This guide is available online from the Ministry website.

This guide will be updated periodically. Please notify the Clerks Department of any changes to your mailing and/or email address.

It is the responsibility of prospective candidates to ensure through their own determination that they have complied with the election financing regulations and that they are in fact qualified and not disqualified by law. In all cases of filing times (i.e.: 2:00 pm), the time displayed by the Clerks Department clock shall prevail.

KEY CONTACTS:

Angela Loney, Clerk Administrator 705-386-7741

Teresa Coombs, Deputy Clerk 705-386-7741

Important Dates

The following are legislative dates as set out in the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

2026

Friday, May 1

- First day for candidates to file a nomination paper for the office of mayor, councillor or school board trustee
- First day for an individual or entity to file a notice of registration as a third party advertiser
- Campaign period begins once a nomination paper or notice of registration is filed
- Preliminary expense limit and other legislative documentation provided to candidates and third party advertisers on the day they file

Friday, August 21

- Nomination Day — last day to file nomination papers
- 9:00 am to 2:00 pm — nominations or withdrawal cannot be accepted beyond 2:00 pm

Monday, August 24

- Certification of nomination papers to be completed by 4:00 pm
- Declaration of acclamation provided after 4:00 pm

Tuesday, September 1

- Voters' List available to certified candidates

Wednesday, September 30

- Final expense limits provided to candidates and third party advertisers

Friday, October 23

- Last day for an individual or entity to file a notice of registration as a third party advertiser

Monday, October 26

- Voting Day, 10:00 am to 8:00 pm

Sunday, November 15

- Term of Office commences

Thursday, December 31

- Campaign period ends for candidates and registered third parties
- Last day for candidate or registered third parties to file an Extension of campaign period (Form 6)

2027**Monday, March 1**

- Last day for Clerk to provide notice of financial filing requirements and penalties to candidates and registered third parties

Thursday, March 25

- Last day for candidate or registered third party to apply to Superior Court of Justice to extend the time to file the financial statement

Tuesday, March 30

2:00 pm:

- Last day to file financial statement for reporting period ending December 31, 2026 — applies to all candidates and registered third parties
- Last day for candidate or registered third party to notify Clerk of filing extension received from the Superior Court of Justice

After 2:00 pm;

- 90 day compliance audit period begins
- Start of 30 day period in which a candidate or registered third party may file the primary financial statement and pay a \$500 late filing fee

Thursday, April 29

- Last day (by 2:00 pm) for candidate or registered third party to file a primary financial statement and pay \$500 late filing fee
- Penalties take affect at 2:01 pm

Wednesday, June 30

- End of extended campaign period

Wednesday, August 25

- Last day for Clerk to provide notice of supplementary filing requirements and penalties to candidates or registered third parties

Thursday, September 23

- Last day for candidate or registered third party to apply to Superior Court of Justice to extend the time to file the financial statement

Friday, September 24

By 2:00 pm:

- Last day to file financial statement for reporting period ending June 30, 2027 — *only applies to those who filed a Form 6 to extend the campaign period*
- Last day for candidate or registered third party to notify Clerk of filing extension received from the Superior Court of Justice

After 2:00 pm:

- 90 day compliance audit period begins
- Start of 30 day period in which a candidate or registered third party may file the supplementary financial statement and pay a \$500 late filing fee

Monday, October 25

- Last day (by 2:00 pm) for candidate or registered third party to file a supplementary financial statement and pay \$500 late filing fee
- Penalties take affect at 2:01 pm

Thursday, December 23

- Last day to request a compliance audit on a supplementary financial statement

Municipal Office to Be Elected

On Monday, October 26, 2026, voters in the (municipality) will elect members for the following offices:

Mayor (One to be elected by all electors of the municipality)

Councillor (Four to be elected at large by all electors in the municipality)

District Public School Board (English)

(XX to be elected by public school board electors of the municipality)

District Separate School Board

(XX to be elected by separate school electors of the municipality)

French Language Public District School Board

(XX to be elected by French language electors of the municipality)

French Language District Separate School Board

(XX to be elected by French language separate school electors of the municipality)

Qualification of Candidates

Member of Council

Qualifications for members of Council are set out in Section 256 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and Section 17 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

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

1. A Canadian citizen;

2. At least 18 years old;
3. A resident of (municipality) or the owner or tenant of land here, or the spouse of such owner or tenant; and
4. Who is not disqualified by any legislation from holding office.

Ineligibility

The following are ineligible to be elected as members of Council:

- (a) An employee of the (municipality) except during an authorized leave of absence (the leave of absence must begin upon filing the Nomination Form);
- (b) A person who is not an employee of the municipality but who is the clerk, treasurer, Integrity Commissioner, Auditor General, Ombudsman or registrar, or who holds any administrative position of the municipality.
- (c) A judge of any court.
- (d) A member of the Assembly as provided in the *Legislative Assembly Act* or of the Senate or House of Commons of Canada.

Nomination Procedures

Filing Nomination Papers

Every person who proposes to be a candidate must file nomination papers prior to receiving any campaign contributions and/or expending any funds on a campaign. A candidate may file his or her nomination papers as of May 1, 2026 during regular business hours. Nomination papers will be available from the Clerks Department.

Please note that Nomination Papers submitted by facsimile transmissions or mail will not be accepted. Forms must be completed in person at the Clerks Department, 73 Municipal Rd N. Candidates are required to complete the Nomination Paper, which includes a declaration of qualification, taken before a Commissioner of Oaths. Commissioners of Oaths in the Clerks Department can administer this declaration for you. Photo identification containing the candidate's signature is also required.

The nomination of a 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. (Not applicable to Machar in 2026)

The final day for filing for the 2026 municipal election is Nomination Day, Friday, August 21, 2026 — 9 am to 2 pm. The nomination must be accompanied by the prescribed nomination filing fee. The prescribed fee is \$200 for the head of council and \$100 for all other offices and can be paid by cash, certified cheque or money order payable to the Township of Machar.

If an agent is filing the nomination on behalf of a candidate, the Candidate's Nomination paper must be commissioned before the agent files the nomination form with the Township and the agent must provide a copy of the Candidate's identification as well as providing their own identification.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring that they meet all the qualifications and have followed the procedures with respect to the filing of Nomination Papers.

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 am and 2 pm on the Wednesday following Nomination Day—August 26, 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 pm on March 30, 2027.

Examination and Certification of Nominations by Clerk

The Clerk shall examine each nomination that has been filed before 4 pm on the Monday following Nomination Day — August 24, 2026. Any additional nominations filed under MEA, s.33(5) shall be examined before 4 pm on the Thursday following Nomination Day — August 27, 2026.

If the Clerk rejects a nomination, he or she will provide notice as soon as possible to the individual seeking nomination and to all candidates. The Clerks decision to certify or reject a nomination is final.

Withdrawal of Nominations

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

Acclamations

If, at 4 pm 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.

Campaign Information

Candidates are advised to refer to the Province of Ontario's 2022 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 and from the Clerks Department.

The candidate must have filed their nomination form before spending any money on advertising, and the amount they spend on their campaign is regulated as explained in the restrictions below.

Campaign Expense Limits

There are limits on the amount that a registered candidate may spend on a campaign. The campaign period begins the day the candidate files a Nomination Paper and ends on December 31, 2026. The limit on campaign expenses is based on a formula related to the number of electors entitled to vote for the office.

Once an individual files their nomination paper, they will be given a Preliminary Certificate of Maximum Campaign Expense Limit based on the Voters' List from the 2022 municipal election. Each candidate will be provided a Final Certificate on or before October 1, 2026 which is calculated based on the Voters' List on September 15, 2026. The higher of the two calculations (preliminary and secondary) shall be the final spending limit for the office.

The following is the formula used to calculate the limits:

Head of Council \$7,500. plus .85 cents for each elector entitled to vote for the office

Candidate for another office \$5,000. plus .85 cents for each elector entitled to vote for the office.

If you are running for municipal council, there is a limit on the total amount that you and your spouse may collectively contribute to your own campaign. There are contribution limits for contributions from other people, etc. Please refer to the Province of Ontario's 2022 Candidates Guide for information on Campaign Contributions and Fund Raising and on Campaign Expenses.

Bank Account

You must open a bank account exclusively for your campaign if you accept any contributions of money (including contributions from yourself or your spouse) or incur any expenses.

Filing Financial Statements

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 pm 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 Form 4.
- Candidates must have their financial statement audited and submit the auditor's report to the Clerk along with their financial statement if expenses are over \$10,000.

A candidate must file a separate financial statement for each office he or she was nominated during the election period, unless the offices are all on the same council and are elected by a general vote of all electors of a municipality. Each campaign for an office for which the election is conducted by ward is a separate campaign.

The financial statement must be filed by March 30, 2027. 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 (municipality) website. The Clerk will advise at least 30 days prior to March 30, 2027 filing deadline of all the filing requirements of the Act. The Clerk is not required to give additional notice for each supplementary filing date.

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

Please refer to the Provincial Municipal Elections guide or the Municipal Elections Act for detailed information with respect to:

- Extending a campaign in order to eliminate a deficit;
- Supplementary financial statement information;
- Surplus and deficit information; and
- Enforcement and penalties.

Scrutineers (Candidates' Agents)

Each candidate may appoint, in writing, any number of persons necessary to act as scrutineers to represent them at the polls, and to be present during the counting of the votes.

Scrutineers must show proof of his or her appointment to the election upon request.

Only one scrutineer per candidate may be in the voting place for each ballot box. If a candidate enters the voting place they are considered to be a scrutineer.

Candidates and scrutineers have the following rights:

- to be present when ballot boxes, materials related to the advance polls and the ballot boxes, and statement of the results are being delivered to the Clerk;
- to enter the voting place 15 minutes before it opens and to inspect the ballot boxes and the ballots, and all other election documents but not to delay the opening of the voting place;
- to place their own seal on the ballot box before the opening of the voting place;
- to sign the statement of the results of an election;
- to place their own seal on the ballot box after the counting of the votes so that ballots cannot be taken out or deposited.

If you are appointing scrutineers, please note the following:

- the appointment must be made in writing;
- limit of one (1) scrutineer per ballot box;
- scrutineers must take an oath of secrecy;

- scrutineers may not interfere with the activity of the vote or the counting of the ballots (may look but can not touch);
 - candidates are entitled to be represented at the voting places either personally or by a scrutineer. It should be noted that acclaimed candidates are not entitled to be at a voting place unless appointed a scrutineer by another candidate;
 - campaigning is not permitted within the voting location.
- Scrutineers and candidates are prohibited from the following:
- engaging electors in conversation while in a voting place or location;
 - attempting directly or indirectly, to interfere with how an elector votes;
 - attempting to campaign or persuade an elector to vote for a particular candidate;
 - displaying a candidate's election campaign material in a voting place;
 - compromising the secrecy of the voting;
 - interfering or attempting to interfere with an elector who is marking a ballot;
 - obtaining or attempting to obtain, in a voting place, any information about how an elector intends to vote or has voted;
 - communicating any information obtained at a voting place about how an elector intends to vote or has vote

Election Signs

The Township of Machar regulates the placement of election signs on municipal roads and intersections. No campaign material will be allowed within or adjacent to municipal facilities.

Use of Corporate Resources

The Township of Machar has a Use of Corporate Resources Policy. There will be no candidate use of the municipality's:

- Technology (e.g. computers, phones, websites),
- Communication systems (e.g. email broadcasts, brochures, print and digital media, social media, logo usage, corporate email accounts, business cards),
- Facilities or buildings owned by the municipality,
- Municipal staff,
- Member's of Council budget (for those seeking re-election).

Prohibition of Canvassing in Voting Places

The Clerk, as the Returning Officer, is the lessee of the premises used as voting locations. As the lessee, the Returning Officer does not permit campaigning of any nature in or on the premises used as a voting location during the campaign period or on Voting Day. The premises are deemed to include the entire building and the property on which it is located, which includes all municipal facilities.

Section 48 of the Act provides as follows:

'While an elector is in a voting place, no person shall attempt, directly or indirectly, to influence how the elector votes. No person shall display a candidate's election campaign material or literature in a voting place. For the purpose of this section, 'Voting Place' includes any place in the immediate vicinity of the voting place designated by the Clerk.'

Election Officials are instructed to immediately remove from any voting place material or literature of any nature which may be deposited in and around a voting place. Candidates or their agents and scrutineers must not engage electors in conversations at voting places and they may not wear campaign buttons or distribute material of any kind in and around a voting place. We ask for your cooperation in this regard.

In view of the number of school buildings used for voting purposes, the attention of candidates is also drawn to the policies of the School Boards and provisions of the Education Act as follows:

1. No agent or representative may canvass in the schools, nor exhibit advertising material in the schools or on the school property, without the approval in writing of the Director of Education.
2. All visitors to a school must report to the office.
3. It is the duty of a principal of a school, in addition to his/her duties as a teacher, to maintain a visitor's book in the school when so determined by the Board.

Therefore, in connection with municipal elections, only persons attending a school building for the purpose of casting their ballot, duly qualified election officials, candidates for their authorized agents in, or going to or from the voting place, may be present at the school premises.

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

Campaign provisions have been clarified through recent amendments to the Act to allow candidates to campaign in apartment buildings, condominiums, non-profit housing co-ops or gated communities from 9 am until 9 pm. Landlords and condominium corporations may not prohibit tenants or owners from displaying campaign signs in their windows.

When the building is being used as a voting location, canvassing in the building during voting hours is not permitted.

General Voter Information

Voter Qualifications

A person is qualified to be a voter in (municipality) if on Voting Day, he or she,

- a) resides in (municipality) or is the owner or tenant of land in (municipality), or the spouse of such owner or tenant;
- b) is a Canadian citizen;
- c) is at least 18 years old; and
- d) is not prohibited from voting as outlined in the *Municipal Elections Act* or any other law.

Persons Prohibited from Voting

The following persons are prohibited from voting:

- a) a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution;
- b) a corporation;
- c) a person acting as executor or trustee or in any other representative capacity, except as a voting proxy (see section on Voting Proxies);
- d) a person who was convicted of the corrupt practice described in subsection 90(3) of the *Municipal Elections Act*, if voting day in the current election is less than five years after voting day in the election in respect of which he or she was convicted.

Definition of Residence

For the purpose of the *Municipal Elections Act*, a person's residence is the permanent lodging place to which, whenever absent, he or she intends to return. These provisions exist to allow for the homeless to be enumerated and to vote. The following rules apply in determining a person's residence:

1. A person may only have one residence at a time;
2. The place where a person's family resides is also his or her residence, unless he or she moves elsewhere with the intention of changing his or her permanent lodging place;
3. If a person has no other permanent lodging place, the place where he or she occupies a room or part of a room as a regular lodger or to which he or she habitually returns is his or her residence.

(2.1) Despite paragraph 1 of subsection (2), a person may have residences in two local municipalities at the same time if,
a) the person lives in one of the local municipalities in order to attend an educational institution but not with the intention of changing his or her permanent lodging place; and
b) the person's permanent lodging place is in the other local municipality.

Voter's List

The 2026 Voters' List for the Township of Machar is initially prepared by Elections Ontario (previous 2022 Voters' List was prepared by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC)). The Voters' List contains the names, addresses and school support of each person who meets the qualifications of a voter.

The information contained on the Voters' List is to be used for election purposes only. The use and sale of the Voters' List for commercial purposes is prohibited.

Candidates are entitled to receive a copy of the list for their use and candidates may request either an electric or paper copy of the list by completing Form EL14- Candidate's Declaration — Proper Use of Voters' List. There is a charge of \$40 for a paper copy, or an electronic copy. It is the responsibility of the Candidate to ensure that any copy of the Voters' List provided is destroyed after the Election.

Revision of the Voters' List

The Voters' List will be available by Tuesday, September 1, 2026. Applications for amendments to the list will be accepted by the Clerk from Tuesday, September 1, 2026 to the close of voting on Voting Day — October 26, 2026.

Individuals will be able to confirm if their information on the Voters' List at the following locations during regular operating hours:

- Municipal Office

Voter Notification and Voting Places

In addition to using Canada Post Mail, the Ballot Return Station will be established for those electors wishing to deposit or have deposited their Return Voting Envelope directly to the Municipal Office on the following dates & times: Monday, October 19, 2026 to Friday, October 23, 2026 from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm and Monday, October 26, 2026 from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm.

Voting Method

The Township of Machar uses Vote by Mail.

Voter's Absence from Work

A voter is entitled to have three consecutive hours to vote on Voting Day (October 26, 2026). If a voter's normal hours of employment are such that he or she would not have three consecutive hours to vote, the employer must allow the voter to be absent to attend the polls. The absence shall be timed to suit the employer's convenience as much as possible.

Reminder to Candidates

1. Must be an eligible elector for the office being sought.
2. Must file their Nomination Paper in person or by agent. Photo ID is required.
3. Cannot be nominated for more than one office.

4. Must pay a filling fee of \$100 or \$200 cash, certified cheque or money order payable to the Township of Machar.
5. Cannot accept donations or spend funds on a campaign until such time as you have filed a Nomination Paper with the Clerk.
6. You are responsible for keeping records of the financial activities related to your campaign. Remember to issue receipts for all donations, including donations of goods or services; obtain receipts for expenses incurred; keep copies of all receipts.
7. Keep receipts for all expenditures and a record of the value of all contributions which are not money (ie sign stakes, paper, printing services, etc.)
8. It is the responsibility of the candidate to file a complete and accurate financial statement on time. Candidates should completely familiarize themselves with the appropriate sections of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

E.&O.E.