

Campaign Finance

Frequently Asked Question

1. When am I allowed to accept contributions and spend money on my campaign?

Candidates can begin accepting contributions and accepting money on their campaign as soon as they are registered. Candidates may spend money and collect contributions during the entire campaign period.

- For Mayor and Reeve candidates, the campaign period is between May 2, 2022 and March 31, 2023.
- For councillor candidates, the campaign period is between June 30, 2022 and March 31, 2023.

2. Do I have to set up a campaign account at a bank or credit union?

Candidates must set up a campaign account at a financial institution (e.g., bank, credit union, caisse populaire) if they are going to receive monetary contributions.

The campaign account must be used only for election purposes.

Details of the account, including the name of the financial institution, and the account number need to be provided to the Senior Election Official on your Registration Form.

3. Who can contribute to my campaign?

Only residents of Manitoba can contribute to a municipal campaign. A candidate cannot receive contributions from unions, corporations, or any other organization (e.g., chamber of commerce, rotary club, etc.). Candidates also cannot receive anonymous contributions.

4. What do I do if I receive anonymous or ineligible contributions?

Anonymous contributions must be turned over to the Senior Election Official.

Contributions from non-Manitoba residents, unions, corporations, etc. must be returned to the contributor.

5. Is there a limit to the amount that an individual can contribute to one candidate?

Yes. The maximum amount that any person may contribute to one candidate is set in legislation. Monetary and non-monetary contributions are counted towards the limit.

An individual may contribute up to \$1,500 to a mayor/reeve candidate and councillors to be elected at large, or \$750 to a councillor candidate to be elected by ward.

These contribution limits also apply to candidates and their spouses.

6. Can I hold a fundraiser for my campaign?

Yes. However, if you hold a fundraiser to raise money for your campaign, part of the revenue you raise will be considered a contribution.

Candidates should check with their municipality's Chief Administrative Officer for more information.

7. Am I allowed to receive non-monetary contributions, such as goods or services?

Candidates may receive non-monetary contributions, for example the donation of a good or service.

When the good or service is provided by a person who earns a living providing that good or service (e.g., the design of your campaign pamphlet from a professional graphic designer, etc.), the value of the good or service must be recorded as a non-monetary contribution.

However, not every good or service a candidate receives is a contribution. For example, it is not a contribution if a neighbour bakes muffins for your campaign workers or a friend helps you design a campaign pamphlet.

If you are unsure whether a contribution can be accepted, check with your municipality's Chief Administrative Officer.

8. Can I take out a loan to help pay for my campaign?

Yes. Candidates can borrow money for their campaign however there are certain restrictions, including how loans are to be repaid:

- Only loans from financial institutions (e.g., banks, credit unions, caisse populaires) are permitted;
- Loans can be repaid from a candidate's campaign account, through contributions or fundraising.
- Loans can also be repaid by other persons on the candidate's behalf, those payments are considered contributions and must be recorded as such;
- A registered candidate is not allowed to lend or give money raised for the purpose of the election to another person or organization;

Any loans must be repaid by the time a candidate files their Election Finance Statement.

9. Is there a limit on the expenses that I can incur during my campaign?

Yes. An expense limit has been set by your municipality, by by-law.

Candidates should check with their municipality's Chief Administrative Officer to determine their expense limit. The information is also included in your municipality's Campaign Expenses and Contributions Bylaw.

10. What is considered to be a campaign expense?

Eligible expenses may include but are not limited to:

- Costs for a hall or room rentals for public meetings;
- Fees for printing pamphlets, notices and advertisements or making signs;
- Costs for hiring vehicles and drivers for campaign purposes;
- Costs for food and refreshments for candidates or campaign workers/volunteers served at election meetings;
- Travel expenses such as gas.

Expenses also include campaign-related costs incurred by volunteers.

If you are unsure as to what is an eligible expense, and counted toward your expense limit, check with your municipality's Chief Administrative Officer.

11. Do I have to track of my campaign contributions and expenses? How do I do this?

Yes. You must keep track of any contributions received or money spent on your campaign. You will need this information to file your Election Finance Statement.

Candidates must keep financial records (e.g., copies of receipts, cancelled cheques, bank statements, etc.) from their campaign for at least 2 years after the election. This information must be available on request to your municipality's Chief Administrative Officer.

Each municipality will determine in its Campaign Expenses and Contributions Bylaw how candidates are to keep records of contributions and expenses. Basic information will include:

- Monetary Contributions: Date received, Contributor name, Contributor Address, Amount.
- Non-Monetary Contributions: Date received, Contributor name, Contributor Address, Good or Service, Monetary value of Good or Service.
- Election Expenses: Date expense incurred, Date paid, Goods / Property / Services received, Cost.

12. What is an Election Finance Statement?

All registered candidates must file an Election Finance Statement. This includes both elected candidates and unelected candidates (those who were registered but never nominated, those who withdrew, or those who were not elected).

Once the election is over, all registered candidates must file an Election Finance Statement with the municipality's Chief Administrative Officer. The Chief Administrative Officer or the Senior Election Official can provide you with the Election Finance Statement to be filled out.

Candidate's statements are available for public inspection at your municipal office. They must include:

- All contributions received and expenses incurred;
- The name, residential address and contribution of anyone who contributed more than \$250;
- An itemized list of campaign expenses;
- The contributions and expenses related to any fundraising event;
- Details of any loan made to the candidate for the purpose of the election campaign including the name of the financial institution that made the loan, principal amount of the loan, interest rate on the loan and the terms of repayment;
- Any other information required by your municipality. Municipalities may require Election Finance Statements to be audited.

13. When do I have to file my Election Finance Statement?

There are strict deadlines for filing Election Finance Statements. The deadline is established in your municipality's Campaign Expenses and Contributions Bylaw. Check with your Chief Administrative Officer for the filing date for your municipality.

It is recommended that candidates file their Election Finance Statement as soon as possible after the election, to ensure that there is enough time to address any matters that may arise.

14. What happens if I don't file my Election Finance Statement on time?

Candidates must file their Election Finance Statement on time or face penalties.

Elected candidates who do not file on time will not be allowed to sit on council, or may be disqualified from council.

Registered candidates who are not nominated, withdraw, or not elected, and who fail to file will not be allowed to run for council until after the 2026 general municipal election.

15. What do I do if my Election Finance Statement shows a surplus?

Any surplus showing on a candidate's Election Finance Statement must be turned over to the municipality.

The municipality will return the funds to the candidate if the individual registers as a candidate in the next general election. If the individual chooses not to run, the money will be transferred in to the general funds of the municipality.

16. Am I allowed to show a deficit on my Election Finance Statement?

It is very important for candidates to manage their campaigns to ensure their expenses do not exceed their contributions.