

1. LOCAL AUTHORITIES ELECTION ACT SURVEY FOR ALBERTANS

The *Local Authorities Election Act* is the legislation that establishes the framework for local elections in cities, towns, villages, summer villages, municipal districts, counties, specialized municipalities, and school boards in Alberta. Metis Settlements and Irrigation Districts also use the act to conduct their elections.

The Government of Alberta is committed to ensuring the act meets the needs of all Albertans, including electors, potential candidates, elected officials, administrations, and third party advertisers, while ensuring that the democratic principles of fairness and transparency are achieved.

This survey seeks feedback on specific areas of the *Local Authorities Election Act* relating to the campaign period, nomination process, candidate campaign finance, third party advertising and potential recall of local elected officials. All Albertans are invited to share their feedback, which will be used to help inform potential amendments to the act.

The survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

FOIP Notice

Your personal information is being collected for the purpose of gathering input on provincial legislation governing municipal elections, which will be used to develop recommendations concerning this legislation. The collection of personal information is authorized under section 33(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and will be managed in accordance with the privacy provisions in the Act. If you have questions about the collection of your personal information, please contact:

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The first four questions are for general demographic information gathering.

Question Title

1. Please select your age category:

- ☐ 17 and under
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54

- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65 and over
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Question Title

2. Please select which group you represent:

- ☐ Alberta Resident
- ☐ Elected Municipal Official
- ☐ Municipal Administration
- ☐ Elected School Trustee
- ☐ School Board Administration
- ☐ Third Party Advertiser

Question Title

3. Which best describes the area of Alberta where you live?

- ☐ Calgary and region
- ☐ Edmonton and region
- ☐ Central Alberta
- ☐ Southern Alberta
- ☐ Northern Alberta

Question Title

4. Which best describes the community you reside in?

- ☐ City larger than 20,000
- ☐ Summer Village, Village, Town or City less than 20,000
- ☐ County or Municipal District
- ☐ Metis Settlement
- ☐ Special Area/Improvement District

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2. Campaign Period

The campaign period is when candidates may receive contributions and spend funds to support campaign. The act defines this period as January 1 to December 31 in the election year. In the case of by-elections, the campaign period is from when the by-election is called to 60 days immediately after election day.


Outside of the campaign period, candidates may only accept up to \$2,000 in contributions and spend up to \$2,000 in support of their candidacy.

Question Title

5. Based on the information provided on campaign periods, should the campaign period:

- ☐ Remain the same (January 1 to December 31 in the year of a general election).
- ☐ Be extended to 24 months.
- ☐ Be the entire four-year period between general elections.

Please provide any additional comments

below: 

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3. Nomination Period

In the year of a municipal or school board general election, nominations begin January 1 and remain open until six weeks before election day. For by-elections, nominations begin the day the by-election is called, and remain open until six weeks prior to election day.

Currently, the nomination period aligns with the beginning of the campaign period. If the campaign period becomes longer, the nomination period would also have to be extended, or separate campaign and nomination periods would have to be introduced. Previously, candidates were required to submit a notice of intent to run in order to engage in the campaign period (collecting contributions and expending funds), along with separate requirements to submit a formal nomination form in order to be a candidate in the election.

Question Title

6. Should the nomination period and campaign period:

- ☐ Continue to share the same time period and notice requirements.
- ☐ Become separate time periods, with their own set of notice requirements. (i.e., notice of intent to run, nomination form).

Please provide any additional comments below.

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4. Candidate Surplus

All municipal and school board candidates must file a campaign disclosure statement following a general election or by-election. If a candidate has a surplus, the funds are held in trust by the municipality or school board.

The funds remain with the municipality or school board until a candidate files nomination papers in a by-election or the next general election. If a candidate does not run in the next general election, the candidate must direct the municipality or school board to donate the funds to a registered charity within six months of election day. If the candidate does not provide direction to the municipality or school board, the money becomes the property of the municipality or school board.

Question Title

7. Based on the information provided on surplus funds, how should surplus funds be treated?

- ☐ They should remain in-trust of a municipal or school board until a person files nomination papers.
- ☐ If the nomination and campaign periods are separate, surplus funds should become available to a candidate upon submission of a notice of intent to run.

Please provide any additional comments below.

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5. Campaign Contribution Limits

Only residents of Alberta may make campaign contributions to a candidate, and only during the campaign period. Corporations and unincorporated organizations, including trade unions and employee organizations are not eligible to contribute to a candidate's campaign. Any individual who does not live in Alberta is prohibited from contributing to a candidate's campaign.

According to the current legislation, any Albertan may contribute up to \$4,000 in total, province-wide, to candidate campaigns. They may also contribute up to \$4,000 in total, province-wide, to school board trustee candidate campaigns. These limits apply to the one year campaign period.

Question Title

8. Based on the information provided above, should the limit on contributions:

- ☐ Remain at a \$4,000 maximum, province-wide, for municipal and school board elections within the one year campaign period.
- ☐ Be increased to another province-wide maximum amount for municipal and school board elections, within the one year campaign period.
- ☐ Be increased to a maximum per candidate, with no restriction on number of candidates, within a one-year campaign period.
- ☐ Be adjusted to a maximum total annual amount.
- ☐ There should be no campaign contribution limits.

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6. Campaign Contribution Limits (Continued)

Question Title

9. Should an individual who entirely self-funds their campaign have a different limit from those who collect contributions?

Yes, and the limits should be set at \$5,000

Yes, and the limits should be set at \$8,000

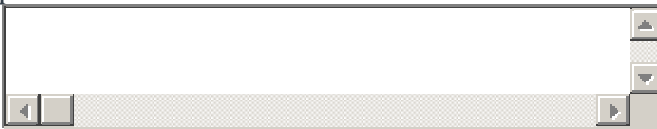
Yes, and the limits should be set at \$10,000

Yes, and the limits should be set at \$15,000

There should be no limit to self-funded campaigns

No, all Alberta residents should be allowed to contribute based on the same rules, including residents who entirely self-fund their campaign.

Please provide additional comments

below: 

Question Title

10. Please provide any additional comments on Campaign Contribution Limits below.



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7. Campaign Expense Limit

Currently, there are no limits on campaign expenses in local elections in Alberta. Any candidate in any local election can spend any funds they wish, with no limit. The Government of Alberta has the authority to establish limits on local election campaign spending by way of regulation; however, no regulation is currently in place.

Question Title

11. As it relates to expense limits for municipal and school board candidates, should

- ☐ Limits on campaign spending be established through a regulation under the Local Authorities Election Act.
 - ☐ Campaign expenditures remain unregulated, with no limits in place for local elections.
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8. Campaign Expense Limit (Continued)

Question Title

12. If maximum limits on local campaign expenditures are established, should they:

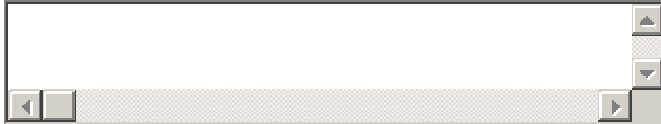
- ☐ Be a maximum of \$5,000
- ☐ Be a maximum of \$8,000
- ☐ Be a maximum of \$10,000
- ☐ Be a maximum of \$15,000
- ☐ Be established on a per capita basis so that expenditures can be larger in larger communities.
- ☐ Include both a common base amount and a per capita element, to ensure a reasonable minimum amount for candidates in smaller communities.

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9. Campaign Expense Limit (Continued)

Question Title

13. Please provide any additional comments on Campaign Expense Limits below.



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10. Third-Party Advertising

A third-party advertiser is any individual, corporation or group, excluding a candidate, that engages in election or political advertising. A group includes an unincorporated group of individuals or corporations acting together for a common purpose, and includes trade unions and employee organizations, as well as any combination of individuals, corporations, trade unions or employee organizations.

Election and political advertising include campaigning for or against a candidate, including an advertising message that takes a position on a municipal election issue. Currently, the only difference between election and political advertising is that election advertising is specific to the period of May 1 in the year of a general election to the close of voting stations on election day, whereas political advertising may occur any time.

Third parties participating in political and election advertising must register with the jurisdiction where they intend to advertise when they have reached, or intend to reach, \$1,000 in expenses or contributions.

Third parties are required to file disclosure statements with the local jurisdiction annually for political advertising, and by March 1 in the year following a general election for election advertising.

There are no limits on the maximum amount of contributions to third party advertisers.

Every third party is required to appoint a chief financial officer who authorizes any expenses incurred by the third party.

Third parties are also required to identify themselves in political or election advertising, including authorization for the advertisement, name and contact information. This mirrors the requirement of third-party identification during provincial elections. The government is required to establish guidelines for identification of third parties in advertisements.

Question Title

14. Should third-party advertising

- ☐ Be distinguished between election period advertising and political advertising during the non-election period.
- ☐ Only be defined during election periods.
- ☐ Only be defined as political advertising with no specific distinctions made during election periods.

Question Title

15. Based on the information provided above, should third-party advertisers:

- ☐ Be required to register with local jurisdictions when expenses or contributions reach \$1,000.
- ☐ Be required to register with local jurisdictions when expenses or contributions reach \$500.
- ☐ Be required to register with local jurisdictions regardless of the amount of expenses incurred or contributions received.

Other (please specify below)



Question Title

16. Based on the information provided above, should third-party advertisers:

- ☐ Be required to file disclosure statements with the local jurisdiction where they have registered.
- ☐ Not be required to file disclosure statements with the local jurisdiction where they have registered.
- ☐ Only be required to file a disclosure statement if the third party has incurred more than \$1,000 in advertising expenses.

Question Title

17. Based on the information provided above, should maximum limits on third-party advertising expenses:

- ☐ Be set for third-party advertisers during election periods.
- ☐ Be set for third-party advertisers during both political and election advertising periods
- ☐ Not be in place for third party advertisers.

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11. Third-Party Advertising (Continued)

Question Title

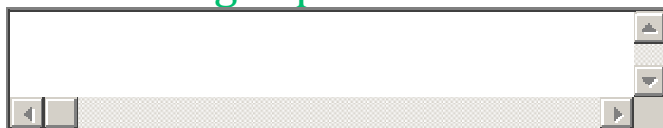
18. If maximum limits on third party advertising expenditures are established, should they :

- ☐ Be set at a maximum of \$5,000
- ☐ Be set at a maximum of \$8,000
- ☐ Be set at a maximum of \$10,000
- ☐ Be set at a maximum of \$15,000
- ☐ Be established on a per capita basis so that expenditures can be larger in larger communities.
- ☐ Include both a common base amount and a per capita element.
- ☐ Be set at the same levels as expenditures limits for candidates.
- ☐ Be set at lower amounts than those set for candidates.
- ☐ Be set at higher amounts than those set for candidates.

12. Third-Party Advertising (Continued)

Question Title

19. Please provide any additional comments on third party advertising expenditures below:



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13. Elected Official Recall

Recall is the ability for eligible voters to remove current elected officials through a defined process, such as a petition and a special recall vote.

Currently, Alberta legislation does not provide for the recall of local elected officials. Recall provisions are more widely available in the United States. Recall is also available in British Columbia, but only for provincial elected officials.

Question Title

20. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Recall legislation should be established for municipal and school board elected officials.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> Somewhat Agree	<input type="radio"/> Neutral	<input type="radio"/> Somewhat Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree

Question Title

21. Do you have any other comments regarding the concept of recall for local elected officials?

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14. Additional Comments

Question Title

22. Do you have any other comments regarding the Local Authorities Election Act?

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