

Opponents, proponents and expenses limits

The proponent initiative vote expenses limit is shared between all the proponent groups. Likewise, the opponent initiative vote expenses limit is shared between all the opponent groups. The overall limit is \$1.52 per registered voter in BC at the start of the initiative vote period. The \$1.52 will be adjusted for changes to the Consumer Price Index.

To ensure the initiative vote expenses limit is not overly divided when distributed between proponent groups the *Recall and Initiative Act* limits the number of proponent groups to six or less.

The initiative petition proponent's expenses limit is 50 percent of the calculated limit, if other proponent groups are registered. The remaining 50 percent of the expenses limits is proportionately shared between other proponent groups based on the number of proponent applicants in their group.

If no other proponent groups are registered, the initiative petition proponent is allotted 100 percent of the limit.

Opponent groups must be eligible for a share of at least 20 percent of the total opponent expenses limit. Thus the Act limits the number of opponent groups to five or less. The limit is proportionately shared amongst the groups based on the number of opponent applicants in their group.

For more information contact

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Application Process for Initiative Vote Opponents and Proponents



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Introduction

Other than registered initiative vote advertising sponsors, individuals or organizations who intend to incur expenses to promote or oppose an initiative vote must apply to Elections BC to register as an opponent or proponent. Opponents and proponents can be individuals or organizations and there can be a maximum of six proponents and five opponents.

An application must meet several legislated requirements for the Chief Electoral Officer to grant approval. This brochure is intended to clarify the application requirements for potential proponents and opponents to an initiative vote.

Applying to be an initiative vote opponent or proponent

At least 90 days before General Voting Day for an initiative vote, Elections BC sends a letter about the vote to the proponent and opponents for the initiative petition to which the vote relates. Notice of the initiative vote is also published in the *British Columbia Gazette* and in at least one newspaper with province-wide circulation.

If the proponent for the initiative petition intends to be a proponent for the initiative vote, they must notify Elections BC and file an appointment of financial agent form within 30 days after the notice is published in the *Gazette*.

Other potential opponents and proponents must apply to Elections BC within 30 days after the notice is published in the *Gazette*. An application package can be obtained from Elections BC and includes two application forms: an Initiative Vote Application for Opponent or Proponent Registration (997) and an Initiative Vote Application for Financial Agent (927).

Applications must be completed in full.

Potential opponents or proponents must propose an individual to act as their financial agent. Applicants who are individuals may propose themselves to act as their own financial agent.

It is important to note that a fully completed application form does not guarantee that the applicant will be registered by the Chief Electoral Officer. It is the process of designating financial agents that determines which opponents and proponents will be registered.

Designating financial agents

After the end of the 30 day application period, the Chief Electoral Officer designates financial agents in accordance with the *Recall and Initiative Act*. Applicants who are not designated a financial agent under this process will not be registered as opponents or proponents.

If one financial agent is proposed by 50 percent or more of all opponent applicants or all proponent applicants, that person is appointed as financial agent for those applicants who proposed them.

If two or more financial agents are proposed by 20 percent or more of all opponent applicants or all proponent applicants, they are appointed as financial agents for the applicants who proposed them.

If no financial agents are appointed according to the above criteria, all applicants are notified by Elections BC and provided with contact information for the other applicants. They may then propose an alternate financial agent within 29 days after the end of the original 30

day application period. The new proposed financial agent may be the same person who was proposed originally, or it may be a financial agent proposed by another applicant.

After the 29 day period, Elections BC repeats the process of designating financial agents as described above.

Any applicants who are not designated a financial agent during this process will not be registered as opponents or proponents.

Notice to opponents and proponents

After financial agents are designated, Elections BC notifies each successful applicant that they are a registered opponent or proponent. The notification also specifies the expenses limit for the group. An applicant must not act as an opponent or proponent until they receive this notice.

Those applicants for whom a financial agent was not designated are notified that they are not opponents or proponents of the initiative vote.

Unsuccessful opponent or proponent applicants may apply to become a registered initiative advertising sponsor; however their activities must be limited to sponsoring initiative advertising, with a maximum value of \$5,000 or a higher amount established by regulation.