

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE ACT

The information in this fact sheet applies to you if you have accepted a nomination for election as a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) in British Columbia.

ABOUT THE ACT

The *Financial Disclosure Act* requires that the following people make disclosures of assets, debts and sources of income:

- A nominee for election to provincial or local government* office, as a school trustee, or as a director of a francophone education authority.
- An elected local government official.
- An elected school trustee, or director of a francophone education authority.
- An employee designated by a local government, francophone education authority or board of a school district.
- A public employee designated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

*(“local government” includes municipalities, regional districts, and the Islands Trust.)

The intent of the Act is to identify what areas of influence and possible financial benefit an elected official, nominee or designated employee might have by virtue of their office, and to ensure the public has reasonable access to the information.

WHAT YOU MUST DISCLOSE

It is not necessary to disclose the value of your holdings or the amount of debt owed, but you must disclose:

- The name of each corporation in which you hold one or more shares, including shares held by a trustee on your behalf.
- The name of each creditor to whom you owe a debt, with the following exceptions: residential property debt (mortgage, lease or agreement for sale); money borrowed for household or personal living expenses; or any assets you hold in trust for another person.
- The name of each business or organization located or carrying on business in British Columbia from which you receive financial remuneration. You must also identify your capacity as owner, part-owner, employee, trustee, partner or other (e.g. director of company or society).
- The legal description(s) and address(es) of all land located in British Columbia in which you, or a trustee acting on your behalf, own an interest or have an agreement, which entitles you to obtain an interest. Your personal residence does not need to be disclosed.
- The following information with regard to corporations where you individually, or together with your spouse, child, brother, sister, mother or father, own shares which total more than 30% of votes for electing directors:
 - The name of each corporation and its subsidiaries.
 - The type of business the corporation and its subsidiaries normally conduct.
 - A description and address of land in which the corporation, its subsidiaries or a trustee acting for the corporation, own an interest or have an agreement entitling any of them to acquire an interest.
 - A list of creditors of the corporation, including its subsidiaries (you need not include debts of less than \$5,000 payable in 90 days).
 - list of any other corporations in which the corporation, including its subsidiaries or trustees acting for them, holds one or more shares.

You must include shares held by a trustee on your behalf, but not shares you hold by way of security.

FILING DISCLOSURE DOCUMENTS

You must use a "Statement of Disclosure" form to make your disclosures under the Act. You can obtain the form from the B.C. Government Web site at: www.gov.bc.ca [type 'Statement of Disclosure Form' in search bar].

You must submit your completed disclosure form with your nomination papers to the Chief Electoral Officer or your District Electoral Officer. If you are elected, you will have further disclosure obligations under the Members' Conflict of Interest Act.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Do I need to list mutual fund investments?

A. The Financial Disclosure Act was written many years ago and does not specifically address mutual fund investments. If you own mutual funds which do not contain corporate shares or interests in land located in British Columbia, you are not required to disclose your investment. If you own mutual funds which do contain corporate shares or interests in land located in British Columbia, your investment should be disclosed either as trusts (if applicable) or to comply with the spirit of the legislation.

Q. Do I need to list investments held in my RRSPs?

A. It depends on the type of investments you hold in your RRSPs. If you hold corporate shares or interests in land located in British Columbia in an RRSP, those investments must be disclosed to the same extent as if you held those investments outside an RRSP. However, if you hold in an RRSP investments which would not be disclosable if you held them directly (e.g. term deposits or GICs), they do not become disclosable because they are held in an RRSP.

Q. Do I need to list credit card debt for other than ordinary household or personal living expenses?

A. Yes, credit card companies for which you owe a debt for other than ordinary household or personal living expenses must be disclosed.

Q. Do I need to provide information about land holdings outside the province?

A. No, unless the land holdings are owned by a corporation in which you individually (including through a trustee), or with family members, own shares (other than by way of security) carrying more than 30% of votes for electing directors.

Q. What happens if I forget to include something on my form?

A. As a nominee for election to provincial office you are required by law to submit a complete disclosure form with your nomination papers. If you have forgotten to include something on your form, you should submit a supplement to your filed disclosure form or complete a new disclosure form and submit to the Chief Electoral Officer as soon as possible.

Q. Who will have access to the information on my disclosure form?

A. Your statement of disclosure form will be available for public inspection during normal business hours.

Q. How long is the information kept on file?

A. Elections BC keeps a copy of the information for one year. Following the close of nominations, the original form is sent to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly (the disclosure clerk for provincial nominees) and it is kept indefinitely.

FURTHER INFORMATION?

You should approach your solicitor or your political party's legal counsel if you require additional information on the Financial Disclosure Act and the disclosure form. The Chief Electoral Officer does not administer the Financial Disclosure Act. Neither the Chief Electoral Officer nor the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly (or their staff) are able to provide any assistance or advice regarding completion of the disclosure form.

DISCLAIMER

The purpose of this fact sheet is to help nominees for election to provincial office understand the general requirements of the Financial Disclosure Act. However, nominees should refer to the Act itself for specific interpretations. (The Election Act and Members' Conflict of Interest Act are also recommended as sources of information.)