

ADVERTISING GUIDELINES FOR INCUMBENT CANDIDATES IN THE 2018 GENERAL LOCAL ELECTIONS

These guidelines outline which advertising and other activities, conducted by or on behalf of incumbent candidates in the 2018 General Local Elections, must be treated as election expenses. Nothing in these guidelines supersedes rules about the use of public funds by local governments or elected officials.

Local governments and incumbent candidates may continue to inform the public about their activities in an election year. However, advertising or activities that directly or indirectly promote a candidate are election expenses. As such, they must be recorded and disclosed and count towards the candidate's expense limit, and be paid from campaign funds.

Guidelines

The election period for the 2018 General Local Elections is January 1 to September 21, 2018. The campaign period is September 22 to October 20, 2018. Advertising or activities that directly or indirectly promote a candidate during the election period or the campaign period must be recorded and disclosed by the candidate as election expenses.

It can be difficult to determine if an advertisement or activity indirectly promotes an incumbent candidate. Incumbent candidates should ask themselves, "Would I be doing this activity if there wasn't an election?" If the answer is no, the activity likely needs to be treated as an election expense.

In general, the following indicate the intention to promote or oppose the election of a candidate and count as election expenses:

- advertising that directly or indirectly promotes or opposes a candidate
- advertising planned to coincide with the general local elections
- a material increase in the volume of advertising
- a material increase in the number and size of public events or announcements (ground breakings, ribbon cuttings, etc.)

The following indicate that an advertisement or activity may not be in relation to an election campaign and may not need to be treated as an election expense:

- advertising that is consistent with past advertising at the same time of year
- information about how to contact an elected official (not their campaign contact information)
- advertising that is consistent with previous non-campaign advertising conducted by or on behalf of the incumbent candidate
- advertising to promote a program or activity
- advertising or activities that are necessary for the incumbent candidate to carry out their duties as an elected official

Incumbent candidates are encouraged to contact Elections BC with questions about the campaign financing and advertising rules established by the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

Questions?

**For more information, contact
Local Elections Campaign Financing at Elections BC.
1-855-952-0280 | lecf@elections.bc.ca**