

ELECTOR ORGANIZATION NEWSLETTER

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Introduction

Welcome to the March 2017 edition of the Elector Organization Newsletter published by Elections BC. In this edition, we focus on legislative changes which introduce election expense limits that will be effective for the 2018 General Local Elections.

New Legislation

Last year, the B.C. Legislature amended the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* (LECFA) and the Local Elections Campaign Financing Expense Limit Regulation was created. The changes are effective for the 2018 General Local Elections and any election thereafter.

The Act and its regulation limit the amount of election expenses a candidate can incur during a campaign period.



In addition to limiting election expenses, the Act established two new election related periods:

- Election period (for general local elections) – January 1 to the start of the campaign period
- Campaign period – 29 day period up to and including General Voting Day

For the 2018 General Local Elections, the election period is from January 1 to September 21, 2018. The campaign period starts September 22, 2018 and ends at the close of voting on General Voting Day, October 20, 2018.

Expense limits will apply to the campaign period and will be calculated by the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development and the Ministry of Education. The ministries will then provide the limits to Elections BC. They are based on the population of the election area and on the office sought. For example, a mayor will have a higher expense limit than a councillor. After the ministries provide the expense limits to Elections BC, they will be posted on the Elections BC website by May 31, 2018.



Election Expenses

Under the new legislation an election expense is the value of property or services used in an election campaign. The expense limits will apply to campaign period expenses – those election expenses used in the campaign period (September 22 to October 20, 2018). It is important to remember that it is *when* the goods or services **are used** and not when they are purchased or contributed that determines if they are a campaign period expense. For example, even if election signs are purchased prior to January 2018 but used during the campaign period, the full value of the signs must be disclosed as a campaign period expense subject to the applicable limit.

Another significant change to the rules is all campaign period expenses incurred by an elector organization must be attributed to the applicable candidate. Elector organizations will need to carefully consider the new limits before making any purchases for their candidates.

Campaign Financing Arrangements

The legislation also establishes that an elector organization will not have their own expense limit. The new legislation requires elector organizations to enter into a Campaign Financing Arrangement (CFA) with each of their endorsed candidates. The CFA is a signed document between the elector organization and the candidate that allocates an amount of the candidate's expense limit to the elector organization to incur. Future editions of our newsletter will provide more information about campaign financing arrangements.

Elections BC is currently revising all relevant local elections guides to include information on the new rules. We are also updating the required disclosure statement forms. These materials will be available in early 2018.

For more information about expense limits and other changes to the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, please contact Elections BC using the information below.



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