

Title: Use of Corporate Resources in Election Policy	
Policy Group: Your Government and People	Policy Administrator: Corporate and Legislative Services
Resolution No. CW-63-2022	Policy Number: CLS-02
Approval Date: 2022-03-10	Revision Date: 2025-12-11

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Corporation of the County of Prince Edward (The County) is committed to ensuring accountable and transparent election practices, relating to the use of corporate resources.
- 1.2 The [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#), as amended, establishes rules and regulations governing the financing of municipal election campaigns in Ontario. Section 88.8(4) prohibits a municipality from making a contribution to a candidates' election campaign and Section 88.12(4) prohibits a municipality from making a contribution in relation to third party advertisements. Further to the above, the Act stipulates that a contribution may be accepted only from a person or an entity that is entitled to make a contribution. In accordance with Section 88.15(1), a contribution may take the form of money, goods and services.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Use of Corporate Resources in Election Policy is to meet the County's responsibilities under the Municipal Elections Act as amended by establishing rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal resources during the election campaign period. This policy is established to protect the interests of Election Candidates, Members of Council, Third Party Advertisers and the County.

2. Policy Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to members of Council and its local boards and committees, County Staff and Volunteers, registered Candidates (including acclaimed Candidates), and Registered Third Parties.
- 2.2 The Act prohibits a municipality from contributing resources to a Candidate on the basis that the use of corporate resources would provide a distinct advantage to Candidate(s) able to access them. Corporate resources include discretionary

budgets, County facilities and equipment, County Staff, County Volunteers and County funded programs and services. Corporate resources also include County funded communication resources, which include but are not limited to, any material sponsored, printed or distributed by the County, the County's voice mail system, licensed communications software (Microsoft TEAMS or Zoom accounts), websites or domain names that are funded by the County, and the County's computer network or related IT systems.

- 2.3 It is the responsibility of Council, Candidates, Registered Third Parties, Staff and Volunteers to follow the protocol outlined in this Policy to ensure a fair and transparent election process.

3. Legislative Authority

- 3.1 The legislative authority for this policy is derived from the Municipal Elections Act. Where a conflict exists between the provisions of this Policy and any legislative or legal requirement, the legislative or legal requirement will prevail.
- 3.2 The Clerk/Returning Elections Officer is responsible for interpreting and administering this Policy, and such interpretations shall be final.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 "Act" means the Municipal Election Act, 1996, as amended.
- 4.2 "Candidate" means any person who has filed the prescribed nomination form to run in a Municipal, School Board or By-election in accordance with the Act.
- 4.3 "Campaigning" means any election-related activity for the purpose of supporting or opposing the election of a Candidate or a question on the ballot, and includes, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the production and distribution of materials (paper or electronic), advertising (including any form of electronic advertising), any form of promotion (including by means of social media), display of signage, etc.
- 4.4 "Campaign Office" means a building or structure, or part of a building or structure, used by a Candidate or Registered Third Party to conduct an election campaign.
- 4.5 "Clerk" means the Clerk and Returning Officer for the Corporation of the County of Prince Edward (The County), or their designate.
- 4.6 "Corporate Resources" means budgets provided by the County, County facilities and equipment, County Staff, County Volunteers and County funded programs and services, and County funded communication resources, which include but are not limited to, any material sponsored, printed or distributed by the County, the County voice mail system, licensed communications software websites or domain names

that are funded by the County, social media, and the County's computer network or related IT systems.

- 4.7 "Council" means the Council of the Corporation of the County of Prince Edward.
- 4.8 "Councillor" means a Member of Council of The County, including the Mayor.
- 4.9 "Election" means any Election or By-election at the Municipal, School Board, or the submission of a question or by-law to electors.
- 4.10 "Election Related" means anything that relates directly to an Election, including campaigning.
- 4.11 "Nomination Day" is the date in a regular Election or By-election (as defined in Municipal legislation) where nominations close.
- 4.12 "Nomination Period" is the period of time between the Opening of Nominations and Nomination Day in a regular Election or By-election (as defined in Municipal legislation).
- 4.13 "Opening of Nominations" is the first date in a regular Election or By-election (as defined in Municipal legislation) where nominations can be filed.
- 4.14 "Registered Third Party" means any individual or corporation as defined in the Act.
- 4.15 "Staff" means an individual who is hired on a temporary, part-time, contract or permanent basis by The County and received financial payment from the County for their employment.
- 4.16 "Volunteer" means an individual who performs duties on behalf of The County and who does not receive financial payment from The County for their work as a volunteer.
- 4.17 "Voting Day" means the last day to cast a ballot in a regular Election or By-election.

5. General Provisions for Members, Staff, Candidates, Registered Third Parties

- 5.1 The Act prohibits The County from making a contribution to a Candidate or registered third party. The Act also prohibits the Candidate, or someone acting on the Candidate's behalf, from accepting a contribution from a person who is not entitled to make a contribution. Since contributions may take the form of money, goods, or services, any use by a Member of Council, or Candidate or Registered Third Party of The County's resources for their Election Campaign would be viewed as a contribution and, therefore, a violation of the Act and this policy.
- 5.2 Information made available to the public on The County's website and social media does not constitute a contribution to a Candidate. This information may

include the phone number and email address provided by the Candidate on their nomination form, as well as a hyperlink to the Candidate's website or social media.

- 5.3 Corporate resources and funding, as defined above, shall not be used for any Election Related purposes.
- 5.4 County Staff shall not canvass or actively work in support of a Candidate or Registered Third Party during normal working hours unless they are on a leave of absence without pay, lieu time, float day or vacation leave.
- 5.5 County facilities/property shall not be used for any Election Related purposes, which includes displaying of any Campaign materials on such premises, except in accordance with this policy and the County's Election Sign By-Law.

6. Election Related/Campaign Activities at County Owned Facilities/Spaces

- 6.1 Candidates and Registered Third Parties shall not display Election related material or undertake any election related and or campaigning at County facilities, except on the same basis (including paying a fee if any) as such resources are normally made available to members of the public, under the following circumstances:
 - a. Candidates and registered third parties may use any County owned facility or space that provides for public rentals, with the exception of Shire Hall, and any premise used as the elections headquarters, provided that the application process for use of the facility/space is followed, and that all applicable fees for use of the facility/space are paid.
 - b. Candidates and Registered Third Parties will set up and remove all election related material, including but not limited to signs, posters and other campaign material within the allotted rental period.
 - c. Election related material can only be displayed within the rented area designated within the rental agreement.
 - d. Candidates and Registered Third Parties shall not use any County facility/space that is leased in accordance with the County's leasing policy for election related activities and campaigning.
- 6.2 Candidates and Registered Third Parties shall not rent County facilities as a campaign office.
- 6.3 Candidates and Registered Third Parties shall not rent County facilities for Election Related activities or Campaigning while there is a voting location or ballot return station operating out of the facility.

- 6.4 Councillors, candidates and registered third parties shall not be permitted to sponsor, in whole or in part, any County event or portion thereof during the nomination period.

7. Provisions for Sitting Members Council

- 7.1 From the commencement of the Nomination Period until the end of the Voting Day Members of Council, whether they are seeking re-election or not, shall not:
- a. Use the facilities, equipment, supplies, services, County Staff or other resources of the County for any Election Campaign or Campaign Related activities. Such resources would include newsletters, desktop publishing and graphic services, corporate software, corporate social media platforms, postage, voicemail or the use of fax machines;
 - b. Use County funded expense allowances for Election Related purposes or electoral gain;
 - c. Use municipally funded services such as mobile phones, laptops/computers or printing/photocopying services for Election Related purposes or electoral gain. Where it is impractical for Councillors to discontinue their use of these services during the nomination period, Councillors shall notify the Clerk of their use and reimburse the County for usage that exceeds the normal usage levels;
 - d. Undertake any Election Related activities on any County property unless the prescribed rental fee is paid. No Election Related activities shall be allowed at Shire Hall, and any premise used as the election's headquarters, at any time;
 - e. Undertake any Election Related activities or Campaigning in the workplace;
 - f. Use business cards, envelopes or letterhead imprinted with municipal logos or crests for Election Related purposes;
 - g. Use any photographs produced for and/or owned by the County, or any photos taken utilizing County equipment or sent through County email accounts for any Election Related purposes;
 - h. Enlist the use of County Staff to work in support of a Candidate or registered third party during working hours unless they are on a leave of absence without pay, lieu time, or vacation leave;
 - i. Print or distribute any material paid for by the County that illustrates or otherwise conveys if a Councillor or any other individual is running for municipal office or which office they are running for;

- j. Profile, or refer to, in any material paid for by the County, any individual who is registered as a Candidate or registered third party in any election;
 - k. Print or distribute any material using County funds that refers to, or contains the names or photographs, or identifies Candidates for municipal elections; minutes of Council and/or Committee meetings being exempt;
 - l. Use the County's voicemail system to record Election Related messages;
 - m. Undertake any Election Related activities in the Council Chambers;
 - n. Use any websites or domain names that are funded by the County for the dissemination of Election Related messages and material;
 - o. Use any websites, domain names, corporate licensed software, other corporate systems, County owned crests or logos, or any trademark owned by the County for Election Related purposes;
 - p. Benefit from the use of any corporate pricing established under the County's Purchasing By-Law, and utilize a corporate issued credit card;
 - q. Use constituent information (including email and mailing addresses) collected by Councillors as part of their constituent communications for Election Related purposes; and,
 - r. Hold a ward or community meeting, unless authorized by Council.
- 7.2 For further clarity, Members of Council are encouraged to disseminate (republish or share) only County produced and approved public messaging about an Election (method of voting, voting dates, voting locations and times) to the public, in accordance with the provisions of this Section. No member of Council shall disseminate information about an Election (method of voting, voting dates, voting locations and times) that they know to be false, misleading, contradictory to County messaging, malicious, or otherwise inaccurate.

8. Provisions for Candidates and Registered Third Parties

- 8.1 From the commencement of the Nomination Period until the end of the Voting Day, Candidates and Registered Third Parties shall not:
- a. Use any County owned websites, domain names, other corporate systems, communication channels, the County crest or logo for Campaigning throughout the period from Nomination Day until Voting Day, inclusive or in the case of a municipal by-election, for any election related purposes;

- b. Use County property, County equipment or County Staff in any Campaign photos videos or images. Photos, videos or images of external County facilities are permitted. Photos, images or videos of internal County facilities are not permitted;
 - c. Use any County facility/property for any election related purpose unless the application process for use of the facility/space is followed and all applicable fees for use of the facility/space are paid;
 - d. Notwithstanding Section 8.3, no facility/property shall be rented or used for any Election Related purpose by a Councillor, Registered Candidates, Registered Third Parties, or the public during any day that voting is taking place on the property, including set-up, hosting, or take-down activities;
 - e. Enlist the use of County Staff to work in support of a Candidate or registered third party during working hours unless they are on a leave of absence without pay, lieu time, or vacation leave;
 - f. Print or distribute any material paid for by the County that illustrates or otherwise conveys if a Councillor or any other individual is running for municipal office or which office they are running for; or
 - g. Undertake any Election Related activities in the Council Chambers.
- 8.2 For further clarity, Candidates and Registered Third Party Advertisers are encouraged to disseminate (republish or share) only County-produced and approved public messaging about an Election (method of voting, voting dates, voting locations and times) to the public, in accordance with the provisions of this Section. No Candidate or Registered Third Party shall disseminate information about an Election (method of voting, voting dates, voting locations and times) that they know to be false, misleading, contradictory to County messaging, malicious, or otherwise inaccurate.

9. Provisions for County staff

- 9.1 Municipal Elections are administered by the County. County Staff and County Volunteers are representatives of the municipality. As such, County Staff and County Volunteers are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with the professionalism and neutrality that is required to conduct impartial, fair and unbiased Elections in accordance with the principles underpinning the Municipal Elections Act.
- 9.2 County Staff are discouraged from assisting with or any involvement in Election Campaigns, including posting election signs on their property, phone and e-mail solicitations, signing nomination papers, providing endorsement signatures to

Candidates, distributing Candidate brochures, wearing Candidate buttons and participating in the activities of a Registered Third Party Advertiser.

- 9.3 County Staff may be involved in provincial and federal election Campaigns as long as this involvement does not affect the objectivity with which they must discharge their duties as a representative of the County.
- 9.4 County Staff and County Volunteers may not canvass, or work in support of, a Councillor, Candidate, Registered Third Party Advertisers or political party while wearing a County uniform, badge, crest, logo or other item identifying them as County Staff or County Volunteer, or while using a County owned or leased vehicle.
- 9.5 County Staff, including full time, part time and contract employees shall behave in a manner that is impartial, fair and unbiased toward all Candidates and Registered Third Parties Advertisers, as well as voters.
- 9.6 County Staff shall consult with their direct supervisor and the Clerk prior to agreeing to perform any task requested by a Councillor, Candidate, or Registered Third Party Advertiser that exceeds their normal duties or could be construed as contributing to an Election Campaign.
- 9.7 County Staff and County Volunteers may not use corporate resources, including County communications or advisory board and committee meetings for Election Related purposed, or assisting in the Campaign of a Councillor(s) and/or Candidate(s) and/or Registered Third Party Advertiser.
- 9.8 County Staff shall take care to separate personal activities from their official positions and shall not canvass or actively work in support of a Candidate or Registered Third Party Advertiser during normal working hours unless on a leave of absence without pay, lieu time, float day or vacation leave.
- 9.9 The Clerk/Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officers, Election Assistants and any individual or vendor hired/contracted by the County to work in any capacity related to an Election, particularly as election staff preparing for and/or conducting an Election and an election official at a voting place, shall at no time, participate in any Campaign activity, so as to preserve the objectivity, neutrality, and impartiality, or the perception thereof, of the Election in which they are working to conduct. Any individual found to be participating in Election Related activities contrary to this Section shall be removed from their prescribed role in the Election immediately. For greater certainty, this Section applies to all County Staff actively working in the Clerk's Office, Directors of the County, and the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

- 9.10 County Staff or employees of local boards registering as a Candidate in an Election must take an unpaid leave of absence, beginning as of the day they file their nomination papers with the Clerk and ending on Voting Day, in accordance with Section 30(1) of the Act. This provision excludes volunteer firefighters; and
- 9.11 If the County Staff or local board employee is elected to office of Council, they shall be deemed to have resigned from their employment immediately, in accordance with Section 30(4) of the Act. This provision excludes volunteer firefighters.
- 9.12 County Staff may be involved in provincial and federal Campaigns as long as this involvement does not affect the objectivity with which they must discharge their duties as a representative of the County.

10. Limitation

- 10.1 Nothing in this Policy shall preclude Councillors, County Staff and County Volunteers from performing their duties.

11. Enforcement

- 11.1 The Clerk is authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect to this Policy. For further clarity, the Clerk shall be responsible for enforcing this Policy, and is hereby delegated the appropriate authorities to enforce this Policy during an Election period.
- 11.2 The Integrity Commissioner may at any time be consulted by members of Council and candidates with regard to complying with any part of this policy.
- 11.3 Candidates and Registered Third Parties hereby acknowledge that accepting any contribution from the County (use of Corporate Resources) is a contravention of the Act and may result in a compliance audit.

12. Documentation and Forms

Not Applicable.

Amendments	
December 11, 2025	Motion CW-205-2025