

Promoting Transparency in Municipal Elections: Candidate Registration, Nomination and Public Disclosure FAQ

To help ensure transparency, consistency, and public trust, this FAQ explains the difference between campaign finance registration and nomination, outlines when a person officially becomes a candidate, and clarifies when candidate information is made public. It is designed to help residents, prospective candidates, and other interested parties better understand the municipal election process.

This FAQ was developed in consultation with the Province of Manitoba - Department of Municipal and Northern Relations to help ensure that the information provided is accurate, consistent, and aligned with applicable legislation and election requirements.

Registration

1. When does registration take place?

For the 2026 municipal general election, registration begins:

- May 1, 2026 for people intending to run for Head of Council; and
- June 30, 2026 for people intending to run for councillor.

Registration remains open until **September 22, 2026**, the close of nominations.

Registration is a separate campaign-finance process and does not make a person a candidate.

2. Should registration information be available to the public when a person's registration papers are submitted?

Yes. *The Municipal Councils and School Boards Election Act* states that documents or materials relating to an election in the custody of the SEO are public records and must be made available for public inspection under conditions acceptable by the SEO. Registration papers that are submitted by people are documents relating to an election in the custody of the SEO.

3. Should registration information be posted publicly when the registration papers are submitted?

As the information is publicly available, municipalities are encouraged to publicly post the names of people who have registered for ease of access. Municipalities could consider posting on their website, or posting physically at the municipal office or another location, or through other methods.

Proactive disclosure can:

- provide the public with clear information about who has registered for campaign-finance purposes;
- promote transparency around campaign activities;
- allow potential donors and others to confirm that an individual has registered before participating in campaign-related activities; and

- reduce the need for members of the public to make individual information requests.

Proactive disclosure is a recommended best practice, rather than an explicit disclosure requirement under the campaign-finance provisions of *The Municipal Act*.

4. Can members of the public request information about who has registered?

Yes. Where registration information has not been proactively disclosed, members of the public may arrange to inspect the registration papers received by the SEO *under The Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Act*. Access to registration papers could also be requested under *The Municipal Act*, or through the processes available under *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)*, subject to any applicable requirements or exceptions under that legislation.

Proactively disclosing registration information may help avoid the need for individual requests and provides greater transparency about who has registered to campaign.

Nominations

5. When does nomination take place?

For the 2026 municipal general election, the nomination period is: **September 16–22, 2026.**

Nomination is governed by sections 38 to 47 of *The Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Act (MCSBEA)*. Once the SEO accepts a person's nomination papers, the person is officially a candidate and the accepted nomination papers must be available for public inspection.

6. Should information be posted when someone takes out nomination papers?

Information should not be posted when someone takes out nomination papers.

A person becomes a candidate only when their nomination papers are submitted during the nomination period and accepted by the SEO.

7. Should candidate information be posted available to the public when the nomination papers are submitted?

Yes. Once the nomination papers have been accepted by the SEO, the person is a candidate and the accepted nomination papers must be available for public inspection under the *Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Act*.

8. Should candidate information be posted publicly when the nomination papers are submitted?

Yes. Once the nomination papers have been accepted by the SEO, the person is a candidate and the accepted nomination papers must be available for public inspection under the *Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Act*.

As the information is publicly available, municipalities should post the names of candidates publicly for ease of access.

Additionally, the SEO is required by *The Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Act* to publish the candidates' names and their disclosures of any offences from their nomination papers on the municipal website. This includes any cases where no offences were disclosed.

9. Can nomination papers be submitted before the official nomination period of September 16–22?

No.

10. Can an individual begin campaigning before their nomination has been officially accepted by the SEO during the September 16–22 nomination period?

For the 2026 municipal general election, the campaign period begins:

- May 1, 2026 for people intending to run for Head of Council; and
- June 30, 2026 for people intending to run for councillor.

However, candidates cannot accept donations or spend money on their campaigns until they have registered.