



Elections – Use of Municipal Resources Policy

Created By:	Clerk's Department	Approval Date:	August 15 th , 2017
Policy No.:		Revisions:	March 3 rd , 2026

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent approach and direction regarding the use of Municipal Resources during an election Campaign Period.
- 1.2 This policy is intended to:
- a) ensure compliance with the *Municipal Elections Act* with regards to the prohibition of a municipality from making contributions to a Candidate or a Registered Third Party in the form of money, goods or services;
 - b) ensure Candidates and Registered Third Parties are treated fairly and consistently within the Township;
 - c) ensure the integrity of the election process is maintained at all times; and
 - d) establish the appropriate use of Municipal Resources during an election Campaign Period in order to:
 - protect the interests of Members of Council, Candidates, Registered Third Parties, Employees and the Township; and
 - ensure accountable and transparent practices.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

- 2.1 Section 12 of the *Municipal Elections Act* states that a Clerk who is responsible for conducting an election may provide for any matter or procedure that is not otherwise provided for in an Act or regulation, and, in the Clerk's opinion, is necessary or desirable for conducting the election.
- 2.2 Section 88.18 of the *Municipal Elections Act* states that municipalities and local boards shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal or board resources, as the case may be, during the election Campaign Period.
- 2.3 Section 88.8(4) of the *Municipal Elections Act* states that a municipality shall not make a contribution to a Candidate.

2.4 Section 88.12(4) of the *Municipal Elections Act* states that a municipality shall not make a contribution to a Registered Third Party.

3.0 APPLICATION

3.1 This policy is applicable to all Candidates and Registered Third Parties during the Campaign Period, including Members of Council, acclaimed Candidates, or current Members of Council not seeking re-election.

3.2 Additionally, this policy is applicable to municipal Employees.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

“Campaign Period” means the official campaign period of a municipal election, namely from May 1st to December 31st in a regular election year, or, in the case of a by-election, as determined by the *Municipal Elections Act*.

“Campaign Purposes” means any activity in an election that seeks to promote or oppose the candidacy of an individual seeking office, or a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot, and includes any materials produced for that purpose.

“Candidate” means a person who has filed a Nomination Form for an office pursuant to Section 33 of the *Municipal Elections Act*.

“Clerk” means the Clerk, or their designate, for the Township of Montague.

“Employees” means all employees of the Township of Montague.

“Members of Council” means the Council of the Township of Montague.

“Municipal Elections Act” means the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 32*, as amended.

“Municipal Property” means any municipally-owned property and, for the purposes of this policy, includes the road allowance directly in front of the municipally-owned property.

“Municipal Resources” means real property, goods and services, owned, controlled, leased, acquired or operated by the Township including, but not limited to: facilities, parks, vehicles, equipment, monetary funds, technology, IT systems and resources, social media, logos and supplies.

“Registered Third Party” means an individual, corporation or trade union that has filed a Notice of Registration with the Clerk in order to promote, support or oppose a Candidate, or a “yes” or “no” vote related to a question on the ballot, in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act*.

“Township” means the Township of Montague.

5.0 SPECIFIC POLICY TERMS

5.1 In general, Candidates shall follow the following regulations related to the use of Municipal Resources:

- a) No Candidate shall use the facilities, equipment, supplies, services, Staff, or other Municipal Resources of the Township for any Campaign Purposes.
- b) No Candidate shall undertake campaign-related activities on Municipal Property.
- c) Employees may not provide services to Candidates during the hours in which the Employee receives compensation from the Township.

5.2 For greater clarity, specific examples are defined below:

- a) Corporate resources, assets and funding may not be used for any Campaign Purposes.
- b) Employees may not canvass or actively work in support of a municipal Candidate or party during normal working hours unless they are on a leave of absence without pay, lieu time, float day or vacation leave.
- c) While engaging in election campaign activities, Employees shall not wear any Township-issued clothing that identifies them as a Township Employee.
- d) While engaging in election campaign activities, Employees shall not use any vehicles, equipment, technology, supplies or other Municipal Resources that are owned, leased or issued by the Township
- e) Members of Council may not use a municipal office or any municipally-provided facilities for any Campaign Purposes. Neither campaign-related signs, nor any other election-related material, will be displayed in or in front of any municipal facility.
- f) Websites or domain names that are funded by the Township may not include any election-related campaign material.
- g) Members of Council may not use the Township's website to provide links, directly or indirectly, to external websites for Campaign Purposes. Candidate information will be displayed by the Clerk on the Township's election webpage for all Candidates under the Candidates section only.
- h) Members of Council may not use the Township's voicemail system or the computer network (including the e-mail system) to record or distribute election-related correspondence.
- i) The Township's corporate identity (logo, crest, coat of arms, slogan, etc.) shall not be printed or distributed on any election-related materials or be included on

any election campaign-related website, except in the case of a link to the Township's website to obtain information about the municipal election.

- j) The Township's technology resources including laptops, printers, tablets, phones and any other corporate technological resources, as applicable, shall not be used for the creation, distribution or recording of election material.

6.0 LIMITATIONS

- 6.1 Nothing in this policy shall preclude a Member of Council from performing their duties as Councillor, Reeve or Deputy Reeve, nor inhibit them from representing the interests of their constituents.
- 6.2 A specific exemption for campaigning on municipal property is for the provision of an "All Candidates Night" at a municipally-owned facility (i.e. Rosedale Hall) in which all eligible Candidates are invited to participate in an open event for Township residents. Provisions related to signage and other promotional material will continue to apply.
- 6.3 Nothing in this policy precludes Employees of the Township from responding to or addressing inquiries or requests for information from Candidates or Members of Council, as it pertains to their positions. However, Candidates shall make every effort to direct informational requests through the Clerk or Returning Officer, in writing, to ensure fairness for all Candidates.

7.0 ENFORCEMENT

- 7.1 The Clerk, or designate, shall have the delegated authority to investigate and resolve any issues arising from any written complaint regarding a contravention of this policy. If a breach of the policy is confirmed, the Member of Council or Candidate will be subject to any penalty provisions under the *Municipal Elections Act*.

8.0 REVIEW CYCLE

- 8.1 This policy shall be reviewed at least once per Term of Council.

9.0 REFERENCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 32, as amended
Elections - Municipal Employee Involvement Policy
Elections - Election Campaign Material Policy