



Policy: CSD-2026-01 - Use of Corporate Resources During an Election

Policy Type: Administration

Responsible Department: Corporate Services

Effective Date: 2026-04-21

Next Revision Date: [Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

1.0 Policy Statement

In compliance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (the MEA), public funds and resources are not to be used for any election-related purposes, including the promotion of or opposition to the candidacy of a person for elected office, or the promotion or opposition to a question on the ballot.

Specifically, Section 88.18 of the MEA provides that municipalities "... shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of [municipal resources] during the election campaign period." In addition, Subsection 88.8(4)5 of the MEA provides that a municipality shall not make a campaign contribution.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify that members of Council, Election Candidates, and Registered Third Party Advertisers are required to follow the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and that:

- No person shall use the facilities, equipment, supplies, services, staff or other resources of the municipality for any election campaign, third-party advertisement, or campaign-related activities.
- No person shall undertake campaign-related activities on municipal property during regular working hours.

As a contribution may take the form of money, goods or services, any use of the Township's resources for an election campaign would be viewed as a contribution by the municipality to the Member, which is a violation of the Act.

2.0 Application

This policy applies to all members of Council, acclaimed, or not seeking re-election, and Election Candidates, Registered Third Party Advertisers, and Township staff and



applies in the occurrence of a municipal election, by-election, or any campaign-related question on the ballot.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 **Candidate** means a person who has filed nominations paper under section 33 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

Election Campaign Period mean the period beginning on Nomination Day and ending on Voting Day.

Municipal Resources mean any property, equipment, supplies, services, staff time, facilities, systems or funds owned, leased or operated by the Township of Hamilton. This includes but is not limited to: municipal buildings, vehicles, computers, phones, email systems, social media accounts, websites and domain names, municipal branding and logos.

Registered Third Party Advertiser means an individual, corporation, or trade union that is registered under section 88.6 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* to promote, support, or oppose a candidate or a question on the ballot.

4.0 General Policy Requirements

4.1 Municipal resources shall not at any time be used to sponsor or produce any materials that promote or oppose the candidacy of a person for elected office or that promote or oppose a question on the ballot.

4.2 Members of Council may not use their office, or any municipally-provided facilities for any election-related purposes, which includes displaying of any campaign related signs in the window or on the premises, as well as displaying any election-related material in the office.

4.3 Staff 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.

4.4 Employees who involve themselves in an election campaign by posting or sharing campaign-related materials through personal social media accounts shall separate these activities from their role as a municipal employee and shall ensure that none of these activities are done during the employee's Township work hours or using Township resources.



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- 4.5 Any municipal information obtained by an employee through their employment with the Township shall not be used for election-related purposes.
- 4.6 Nothing in this Policy shall preclude a Member of Council from performing their job as a Councillor, nor inhibit them from representing the interests of the constituents who elected them.

5.0 Attendance at Township and Community Events

- 5.1 Members of Council may attend Township and community organized events and act as participants in their capacity as elected officials, including speaking at the event and partaking in ceremonial activities, provided that they do not promote or oppose the candidacy of a person for elected office, or promote or oppose a question on the ballot.
- 5.2 Candidates and Registered Third Party Advertisers may attend Township events in their capacity as private citizens but shall not campaign, engage in third party advertising activities, or distribute campaign-related materials while in attendance.

6.0 Rental and Use of Township Facilities

Members of the public, including community groups, candidates, and Registered Third Party Advertisers, and their representatives, may book space in Township facilities for election-related activities or third-party advertising activities, subject to the following:

- a) The booking and any activities shall be subject to applicable Township by-laws, rules, policies and procedures with respect to matters such as facility use, signs and campaigning;
- b) Any event booked by a Third-Party related to the election must provide equal access and opportunity to all candidates registered and in good standing;
- c) The subject organization/individual shall make its own arrangements directly with Township staff and pay all of the associated costs for the event;
- d) Township resources, including staff, shall not play a role in the event outside of the general support associated with booking the space;
- e) With respect to Township facilities that are used as a voting location:
- f) Space in such facilities shall not be booked for election-related activities on any day on which voting is to take place at the facility; and



- g) Any signs or promotional material relating to forthcoming election-related activities/events shall be removed from such facilities on any day on which voting is to take place at the facility. This does not apply to signs or promotional material placed by municipal staff in relation to the voting process.

7.0 Communications and Related Matters

- 7.1 Township resources shall not be used to pay for, access, develop, maintain or update election-related communications platforms such as campaign websites, third-party advertising websites, and campaign-related social media accounts. This includes but is not limited to the use of municipally-funded computers, tablets and phones and Township wireless networks not available to the general public.
- 7.2 Communications materials, including branding (symbols, logos, graphics) and photographic or video materials, which were or are created or produced by Township employees or with Township resources shall not be used in campaign materials or for any other election-related purposes except to link to the Township's website to obtain information about the municipal election.
- 7.3 Constituent information (including telephone numbers, email, and mailing addresses) that is collected, stored, accessed, maintained or updated using Township resources shall not be used for election-related purposes.
- 7.4 Township information provided upon request to one Candidate or Registered Third Party Advertiser shall also be provided to any other Candidate or Registered Third Party Advertiser that requests the same information, subject to applicable legislation.
- 7.5 Municipally funded websites or domain names shall not include any campaign materials, make reference to and identify any individual as a Candidate or Registered Third Party Advertiser, or profile any slogan or symbol associated with a Candidate or Third Party Advertisement. This prohibition does not apply to the identification of Candidates on official municipal election or by-election pages of hamiltontownship.ca.
- 7.6 Municipal social media accounts shall not reissue or repurpose (for example, by way of "reposting," "liking," or linking to) any posts by a nominated candidate or registered third party advertiser.



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- 7.7 Township communications shall remain neutral during the election campaign period and shall not promote or oppose any candidate, Registered Third Party Advertiser, or position on a question on the ballot.
- 7.8 Members of Council may not:
- a) use the Municipal's voice mail system to record election related messages.
 - b) print or distribute any material paid for by municipal funds that illustrates that a Member of Council or any other individual is registered in any election or where they will be running for office.
 - c) profile (name or photograph), or make reference to, in any material paid by municipal funds, any individual who is registered as a candidate in any election.
 - d) print or distribute any material using municipal funds that makes reference to, or contains the names or photographs, or identifies registered candidates for municipal elections; and that Minutes of municipal Council and Committee meetings be exempt from this policy.

Cross-Reference

- Corporate Communications Plan
- Council and Human Resources Codes of Conduct
- Emergency Management Plan
- Accessibility Standards

8.0 Revision Dates

Date	Changes