



February 12, 2026

Region of Durham Area Broadcasters and Publishers



Re: Notice of Rules for Broadcasters and Publishers under the Municipal Elections Act



On behalf of the Municipal Clerks in the Region of Durham, I am writing to advise you of rules in effect for the 2026 municipal election respecting election campaign advertising and requirements imposed upon broadcasters and publishers in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act.



Candidates and third-party advertisers must follow certain campaign advertising rules. Broadcasters and publishers who publish election campaign advertising must also comply with requirements, such as the requirement to collect mandatory information before permitting an election campaign advertisement to appear and to maintain records for a period of at least four years.



These requirements are in effect during the campaign period which runs from May 1, 2026, until the close of voting on Voting Day, Monday, October 26, 2026. Attached, please find a notice to help clarify these regulations and assist you in complying with the applicable election law.



If you require further information or have questions, please contact the Municipal Clerk of your area municipality using the information included in the attached notice.



Chris Harris
Clerk, Town of Whitby



Encl.

- cc: A. Harras, Regional Clerk, Region of Durham
J. Grossi, Clerk, Town of Ajax
F. Lamanna, Clerk/Deputy CAO, Township of Brock
J. Gallagher, Clerk, Municipality of Clarington
S. Cassel, Clerk, City of Pickering
B. Labelle, Clerk, Township of Scugog
D. Leroux, Clerk, Township of Uxbridge
M. Medeiros, Clerk, City of Oshawa

Notice to Broadcasters and Publishers Municipal Elections Act Campaign Advertising Rules

Municipal elections in the Region of Durham will take place on Monday, October 26, 2026 to elect a Regional Chair, and a Mayor, Councillors, and School Board Trustees in each of the 8 area municipalities.

The [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#) (the Act) establishes rules for election campaign advertising. This notice provides information intended to assist broadcasters and publishers in understanding their obligations under the Act. The information contained in this notice does not and is not intended to constitute legal advice. The content of this notice is provided for informational purposes only. Broadcasters and publishers should seek their own advice with respect to any legal matter.

Candidate Campaign Contributions Prohibited

For the purposes of the Act, money, goods and services given to and accepted by a person for their election campaign, or given to and accepted by another person who is acting under the person's direction, are contributions to the campaign of a candidate. For more information, see [Section 88.15](#) of the Act.

For the purposes of the Act, money, goods and services given to and accepted by an individual, corporation or trade union in relation to third party advertisements, or given to and accepted by another person who is acting under the direction of the individual, corporation or trade union, are contributions to the third party advertising campaign. For more information, see [Section 88.15](#) of the Act.

Only individuals who are normally residents in Ontario, or the candidate and their spouse may make contributions to a campaign. Corporations and trade unions shall not make contributions. For more information, see [Section 88.8](#) of the Act. Broadcasters and publishers should consider how this prohibition may affect their activities as it relates to municipal elections.

Please note that the value of free political advertising, provided that such advertising is made available to all candidates and is in accordance with the Broadcasting Act (Canada) is not considered to be a contribution.

Candidate Election Campaign Advertisement

An election campaign advertisement means an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic, or other medium that has the purpose of promoting or supporting the election of a candidate.

In accordance with the Act, an election campaign advertisement purchased by, or under the direction of, a candidate shall identify the candidate. For more information, see [Section 88.3](#) of the Act.

An expense shall not be incurred by, or under the direction of, a person unless they are a registered candidate. Additionally, an expense shall not be incurred by, or under the direction of, a candidate outside their election campaign period. For more information, see [Section 88.20](#) of the Act. Candidates file their nomination with the appropriate Municipal Clerk in each area municipality within Durham Region. Each municipality in Durham Region will include and regularly update a list of registered candidates on their respective election website.

Third Party Advertisement

A third party advertisement means an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic, or other medium that has the purpose of promoting, supporting, or opposing a candidate in the election, or a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot. Individuals, corporations or trade unions who wish to undertake third party advertising between May 1, 2026 and October 26, 2026 in a municipality in Durham Region must:

- Register between May 1 and October 23 with the Municipal Clerk in each municipality where they intend to conduct third party advertising; and,
- Ensure third party advertising contains:
 - The name of the registered third party advertiser;
 - The municipality where the third party advertiser is registered; and,
 - A telephone number, mailing address, or email address at which the registered third party may be contacted regarding the advertisement.

For more information, see [Section 88.4](#), [Section 88.5](#), and [Section 88.6](#) of the Act.

Each municipality in Durham Region will include and regularly update a list of registered third party advertisers on their respective election website. As noted above, third party advertisers have to register in every municipality that they intend to advertise in.

Broadcaster and Publisher Obligations

Broadcasters and publishers must comply with the following obligations under the Act:

Broadcaster or Publisher as a Third Party Advertiser

Broadcasters or publishers who wish to conduct third party advertising must register as a third party advertiser and follow the requirements of the Act. Requirements include specific responsibilities relating to campaign contributions and expenses, spending limits and financial reporting. For more information on these requirements, please see [Section 88.5](#) of the Act, consult with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, or consult with the Municipal Clerk of your area municipality.

Mandatory Information for Broadcasters

Broadcasters and publishers are required to collect certain mandatory information from a candidate or third party advertiser before an advertisement can appear.

For Candidate Advertisements:

The candidate must provide the following information to a broadcaster or publisher, **in writing**:

- Name of the candidate; and,
- Name, business address, and telephone number of the individual who deals with the broadcaster or publisher under the candidate's direction (Note: this individual may be the candidate themselves).

For more information, please see [Section 88.3](#) of the Act.

For Third Party Advertisements:

The third party advertiser must provide the following information to a broadcaster or publisher, **in writing**:

- Name of the third party advertiser (Note: this may be the name of an individual, a corporation, or a trade union);
- Municipality where the third party advertiser is registered; and,
- Name, business address, and telephone number of the individual who deals with the broadcaster or publisher under the direction of a registered third party advertiser.

For more information, please see [Section 88.5](#) of the Act.

Maintaining Records

Broadcasters and publishers shall maintain records of candidate advertisements and third party advertisements for a period of 4 years after the date the advertisement appears. The public must be allowed to inspect these records during normal business hours.

Records maintained must include:

- The mandatory information collected in writing, as described above;
- A copy of the advertisement, or a means of reproducing it for inspection; and,
- A statement of the charge made for the appearance of the advertisement.

For more information, please see [Section 88.3](#) and [Section 88.5](#) of the Act.

Ongoing Obligations

Broadcasters and publishers should be mindful of other requirements under the Act, including any rules that may apply if they contribute money, goods, or services to the campaign of a third party advertiser.

Additional Resources

Broadcasters or publishers who have additional questions are invited to contact the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing or Municipal Clerk of their respective area municipality using the contact information provided below.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Central Municipal Services Office

- Website: www.ontario.ca/municipalelections
- Phone: 416.585.6226 or 1.800.668.0230
- Email: mea.info@ontario.ca

Region of Durham

- Elections Website: www.durham.ca/elections
- Phone: 905.668.7711
- Email: clerks@durham.ca

Town of Ajax

- Elections Website: www.ajax.ca/vote
- Phone: 365.282.VOTE(8683)
- Email: election@ajax.ca

Township of Brock

- Elections Website: www.townshipofbrock.ca/election
- Phone: 705.432.2355
- Email: clerks@brock.ca

Municipality of Clarington

- Elections Website: www.clarington.net/votes
- Phone: 905.697.4747
- Email: votes@clarington.net

City of Oshawa

- Elections Website: www.voteoshawa.ca
- Phone: 905.436.3311
- Email: vote@oshawa.ca

City of Pickering

- Elections Website: www.pickering.ca/vote
- Phone: 905.420.4660 ext. VOTE (8683)
- Email: elections@pickering.ca

Township of Scugog

- Elections Website: www.scugog.ca/election
- Phone: 905.985.7346
- Email: election@scugog.ca

Township of Uxbridge

- Elections Website: www.uxbridge.ca/elections
- Phone: 905.852.9181
- Email: election@uxbridge.ca

Town of Whitby

- Elections Website: www.whitby.ca/Vote
- Phone: 905.430.4300
- Email: elections@whitby.ca