

# NOMINATION CONTEST & CONTESTANT RULES IN ALBERTA PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

## WHAT IS A 'NOMINATION CONTEST'?

This is any process used by a registered political party or a party constituency association to elect or select a person to be the party's official candidate for election in an electoral division. (There are '87 electoral divisions' in Alberta).

## WHO ARE THE 'NOMINATION CONTESTANTS'?

This is any person who is participating in a nomination contest, seeking the endorsement of a registered political party, competing to become the party's official election candidate in an electoral division.

## HOW LONG IS THE CAMPAIGN PERIOD FOR A NOMINATION CONTEST?

This period varies by contestant. It starts on the date a nomination contestant is required to register with the Chief Electoral Officer and ends 2 months after the nomination contest finishes.



## HOW DOES A NOMINATION CONTEST BECOME FORMALIZED?

The Chief Financial Officer of a registered political party, or registered constituency association, must file a statement with the Chief Electoral Officer prior to holding a nomination contest in an electoral division.



## WHEN DO NOMINATION CONTESTANTS NEED TO REGISTER?

Nomination contestants must file an application for registration with the Chief Electoral Officer as soon as they:

- Announce their intention to become a political party's official candidate in an electoral division, OR
- Incur campaign expenses related to their nomination, OR
- Receive contributions related to their nomination campaign

The registration must include the name and contact information of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) appointed by the nomination contestant.



## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A NOMINATION CONTEST IS FINISHED?

Within 10 days after a nomination contest is concluded, the party or constituency association must file a statement with the Chief Electoral Officer indicating:

- The names of nomination contestants considered
- The full name of the selected contestant endorsed as the official candidate in an electoral division
- The names of any persons who withdrew as contestants

The endorsed nomination contestant is then deemed to be a registered candidate for election.



## SPENDING LIMITS

- Spending limit per nomination contestant is set at \$10K (inflation adjusted at future elections)
- Expenses subject to this limit include: preparation of advertising and promotional material; distribution or broadcasting of promo material; meeting location rentals; surveys and research; payments for other services



## FINANCIAL FILING REQUIREMENTS

- Every registered nomination contestant is required to file a 'campaign return' within 4 months of the nomination contest completing
- Nomination contestants who are not elected (or otherwise selected) as the official candidate for election, who withdraw, or who have their registration cancelled are also required to file a return
- Contributors who donated more than \$250 must be listed with name/address; total contributions received in amounts less than \$250 per person must be reported
- Contribution and expense details for each nomination contestant are made public
- The CFO for a nomination contestant must keep all financial records for 3 years following the filing of the campaign return



## CONTRIBUTION RULES

- Nomination contestants cannot accept contributions if they are not registered
- Only a person who ordinarily resides in Alberta can make a contribution to a nomination contestant
- Contributions to nomination contestants can only be made during the nomination contest campaign period, and only through the CFO
- Contributions from a single contributor cannot exceed \$4K in calendar year, and this maximum includes combined contributions to any party, candidate, constituency association, leadership contestant or nomination contestant
- Official contribution receipts must be issued to each person who contributes to a nomination contestant (except for "pass-the-hat" donations of less than \$50)
- Contributions must be deposited to a financial institution account which is on record with Elections Alberta
- Non-monetary contributions must be properly valued and recorded



## PENALTIES FOR RULE VIOLATION

- Nomination contestant who colludes with a third party advertiser to circumvent contribution or spending limits is liable to a fine of up to \$100K
- Contravention of the \$10K spending limit can result in a nomination contestant, or their CFO, being liable to a fine of up to \$5K
- Failure to file a campaign return makes both a nomination contestant and their CFO liable to separate fines of \$1K
- Non-compliance with direction from the Chief Electoral Officer or the Election Commissioner makes a nomination contestant liable to a \$1K fine
- Failure to file a campaign return by deadline results in an automatic late filing fee of \$500

## WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

See the [Nomination Contestant Guide](#) to the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* published by Elections Alberta. The guide and the referenced Act, as well as the *Election Act*, are all available online at: [www.elections.ab.ca](http://www.elections.ab.ca)