



Organizing and conducting public meetings during an election period

Reference: *Act respecting elections and referendums in municipalities* (CQLR, c. E-2.2) (s. 453[8])

PURPOSE

To establish the rules governing the organization and conduct of public meetings or virtual public meetings during an election period.

ACTIVITIES HELD BY NON-PARTISAN ORGANIZATIONS

Non-partisan organizations are generally defined as organizations that are not associated with a party or candidate (e.g., community organizations, chambers of commerce).

The costs associated with activities held by non-partisan organizations are not considered election expenses where the following conditions are met:

- The public meeting must be organized and conducted as part of the organization's regular activities.
- The public meeting must not be organized directly or indirectly on behalf of any party or candidate.
- Topics discussed at the public meeting must be relevant to the organization's mission.
- The organization must extend invitations to members of the organization and the general public in the usual manner.
- No partisan advertising may be distributed or broadcast on the occasion of or during the activity. The use of a partisan slogan or logo should not be tolerated, either in the invitation documents or outside or inside the venue used for the public meeting.
- Any live or recorded broadcast of the public meeting must be presented in a neutral manner.

In cases where the preceding conditions for holding public meetings are not met, a non-partisan organization could hold certain meetings if:

- the meetings are not organized directly or indirectly on behalf of a candidate or party;
- the total costs associated with all meetings held by the organization throughout the election period do not exceed \$200. These costs include, but are not limited to, those associated with renting the venue and inviting participants.

In such cases, the costs associated with holding these types of meetings are not considered election expenses.

ACTIVITIES HELD BY PARTISAN ORGANIZATIONS

The cost of all activities held by a partisan organization (e.g., the youth wing of a party or a party committee) during an election period must be treated as an election expense and be paid by the official agent of the party or of the authorized independent candidate.