

HEALTH PROTOCOL

Authorization, political financing and expenses

2021 municipal general election

Health protocol to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 during the municipal general election of November 7, 2021 in matters of authorization, political financing and expenses

August 10, 2021 version

Preface

The *Health protocol to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 during the municipal general election of November 7, 2021 in matters of authorization, political financing and expenses* was developed by Élections Québec¹ in collaboration with the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux. The applicable health guidelines, the recommended measures and the new measures developed for the purposes of the municipal general election of November 7, 2021 in matters of authorization, political financing and expenses are combined in this protocol, which addresses electors, political entities, private intervenors, the returning officer, including the assistant designated for the application for authorization, and the treasurer².

1. Élections Québec is a neutral and independent institution that reports directly to the Assemblée nationale. The Chief Electoral Officer oversees the application of the rules in matters of authorization, political financing and expenses. The treasurer acts under his authority in the performance of his duties as do the returning officers or the assistants designated for the application for authorization.
2. "Treasurer" means the treasurer, the secretary-treasurer or the director of finance of the municipality.

This protocol involves three types of measures.

Mandatory health guidelines

- This involves integration in matters of authorization, political financing and expenses of the mandatory health guidelines established by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and by the government.

The new measures introduced by the Chief Electoral Officer's regulation or by Bill 85

- For certain measures, the *Regulation amending certain municipal provisions to facilitate the conduct of the municipal general election of November 7, 2021, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic*³ (the "Regulation") adopted by the Chief Electoral Officer establishes rules specially applicable to the municipal general election of November 7, 2021.
- The measures introduced by the *Regulation* replace the usual application of the *Act respecting elections and referendums in municipalities*⁴ (AERM) **only for the purposes of this general election or for any procedure recommenced following it, in accordance with section 276 of the AERM.**
- The *Act to facilitate the conduct of the 7 November 2021 municipal general election in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic*⁵ (Bill 85) also extends the election period, which exceptionally will begin on the 51st day before polling day.

Recommendations

- This involves situations for which the AERM confers the necessary discretion to establish an adequate response.
- The recommendations constitute adaptations to the administrative measures currently in place.
- To limit the risk of spreading COVID-19, the persons concerned are encouraged to implement the recommendations of the protocol. In case of an outbreak, the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux could conduct an investigation with the aim of establishing if the recommendations of this protocol were applied.

3. (2021) 153 G.O.Q. II, 2111B.

4. CQLR, c. E-2.2.

5. S.Q. 2021, c. 8.

This protocol must be applied by every person concerned, regardless of the size of the municipality. It will be amended to account for the evolution of the epidemiological situation and knowledge of COVID-19. However, considering the frequent changes to anticipate during the deconfinement period, we invite you to go to [Québec.ca](https://quebec.ca) to study the most recent updates concerning the sanitary measures. Every person concerned by this protocol is responsible for complying with the sanitary measures in force.

For any question relating to political financing, the persons concerned are invited to contact a political financing coordinator by email at financement-municipal@electionsquebec.qc.ca, or at the following phone numbers: from Québec, 418-528-0422; from elsewhere, toll free, 1-888-ELECTION (1-888-353-2846). If you have questions concerning the authorization, contact the Register of Authorized Political Entities of Québec (RAPEQ) by email at repaq@electionsquebec.qc.ca, or by phone at 418-528-0422 or toll free at 1-888-ELECTION (1-888-353-2846).

Table

Measures intended for the elector, the political entity, the private intervenor, the returning officer and the treasurer in matters of authorization, political financing and expenses

→ IMPORTANT

For the purposes of the municipal general election of November 7, 2021 or any procedure recommenced following it, in accordance with section 276 of the AERM, the election period exceptionally will begin on the 51st day before polling day.

Under the *Regulation*, the official agent may report reasonable expenses related to the purchase of sanitary services and materials as election expenses. The official agent may also decide not to report them as such so they are not counted in the limit on election expenses, unless these expenses have a partisan aspect.

Block A – Adapt our procedures and our forms to favour a remote service offer

The remote service offer is already well implemented. The extranets allow dissemination of information and documentation to the treasurer and the political entity.

1 Favour the transmission of certain documents by email to Élections Québec

Measure	Type of measure and comment
1.1 Application to have a name reserved for a political party (DGE-1036-VA)	RECOMMENDATION <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The name reservation application form is accessible online and must be returned to Élections Québec by mail or by email according to the procedure <i>Reserving a name for a municipal political party</i> (DGE-1036.1-VA);• According to the recommended measure, transmission by email is favoured.

CONTINUED

1 Favour the transmission of certain documents by email to Élections Québec (*continued*)

Measure	Type of measure and comment
1.2 Application for authorization of a municipal political party (DGE-1042-VA)	<p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The political party authorization application form is not accessible online. It is currently provided on request by mail and returned by the same mode of delivery according to the guide <i>Submitting an application for authorization of a municipal political party</i> (DGE-1057-VA). According to the recommended measure, the form may be transmitted and returned to Élections Québec by email. This mode of delivery is preferred.
1.3 Supporting signatures for the party application (DGE-1042.1-VA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application for authorization of the party require a number of supporting signatures of electors that ranges from 25 to 100, depending on the population of the municipality involved. The AERM requires that the signatory also be a member of the party. Each signature must normally be collected on a separate slip attached to the application for authorization. This slip has three copies: the original for the Chief Electoral Officer, a copy for the elector and a copy for the party. The slips are sent by mail at the same time as the application for authorization of a municipal political party (DGE-1057-VA). <p>MEASURE PROVIDED BY THE REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To limit contacts, the <i>Regulation</i> establishes at 50 the maximum number of signatures required for such authorization in the case of municipalities of 100 000 or more inhabitants. The number of signatures required for other municipalities remains the same as provided in section 397. <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The slip may be transmitted to the party by email at the same time as the authorization form. This mode of transmission is preferred. The slip may be transmitted to the elector by the party by email and then, once signed, returned to the party in the same way. The party may send Élections Québec a copy of each slip by email with the application for authorization. In the event the supporting signatures are solicited in person, the measures provided in point 6 apply.

2 Favour the transmission of certain documents by email to the returning officer

The supporting signatures for the nomination paper of an independent candidate, which are used for the purposes of the application for authorization formulated from the nomination paper (s. 400, para. 2 AERM), may not be collected remotely. In this case, the rules applicable to the collection of supporting signatures for a nomination paper must be respected. In particular, this collection must be done in the elector's presence according to the *Health protocol to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 during the 2021 municipal general election*.

Measure	Type of measure and comment
2.1 Application for authorization of an elector who undertakes to run as an independent candidate (DGE-1028-VA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The authorization application form is accessible online. Normally the original must be sent to the returning officer. <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the recommended measure, a copy of the application for authorization may be sent to the returning officer by email. This copy then may be sent by the returning officer to Élections Québec in the same way. In the event the application is filed in person with the returning officer, the measures provided in point 9 of this table must be respected.
2.2 Supporting signatures for the application for authorization of the elector who undertakes to run as an independent candidate (DGE-1028.1-VA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of signatures required ranges from 5 to 200, depending on the population and the office involved. The signatory must be an elector of the municipality. The signatures are collected from the schedule of the authorization form (DGE-1028.1). The original must be sent to the returning officer. <p>MEASURE PROVIDED BY THE REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To limit contacts, the <i>Regulation</i> lowers to 50 the number of signatures required for such an authorization for the office of mayor, borough mayor or warden in the case of municipalities of 50 000 or more inhabitants. The number of signatures required for the other municipalities remains the number provided for in section 160. <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An elector who undertakes to run as an independent candidate may choose to have the electors supporting the application for authorization sign Schedule 1028.1 of the form entitled <i>Application for authorization of an independent candidate or of an elector who undertakes to run as an independent candidate</i> or slip DGE-1028.2, if the elector prefers that each of the supporting signatures be collected on a separate document.

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2 Favour the transmission of certain documents by email to the returning officer (*continued*)

Measure	Type of measure and comment
2.2 Supporting signatures for the application for authorization of the elector who undertakes to run as an independent candidate (DGE-1028.1-VA)	<p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The form entitled <i>Application for authorization of an independent candidate or of an elector who undertakes to run as an independent candidate</i> (DGE-1028) and its Schedule 1028.1 and slip DGE-1028.2 are accessible online. If the individual slip is used for remote solicitation of signatures, it may be sent to the elector by email and then returned to the candidate in the same manner once it is signed. The candidate may send the returning officer a copy of each slip by email with the application for authorization. <p>Note: The remote collection of signatures may not apply in the case of supporting signatures serving for the nomination paper, which must be obtained in the elector's presence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event the supporting signatures are solicited in person, the measures provided in point 6 apply.

3 Favour the transmission of certain documents by email to the treasurer

Measure	Type of measure and comment
3.1 Power of attorney — co-owner or co-occupant entitled to make a contribution (DGE-1419-VA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The co-owners of the building must complete and sign a power of attorney to designate the person entitled to make a political contribution. The form is currently accessible online. The original of the power of attorney must be remitted to the treasurer before payment of a contribution. Procedure P-M-A.8 governs the transmission of this power of attorney by the treasurer to Élections Québec. <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the recommended measure, the power of attorney may be sent by email, directly to Élections Québec, at the following address: contribution-municipal@electionsquebec.qc.ca, or to the municipality. If transmission by email is not possible, the power of attorney may be sent by mail or delivered in person to the treasurer of the municipality, in compliance with the sanitary instructions applicable at the office of the municipality. If the document is not delivered directly to Élections Québec, the treasurer must send a copy to Élections Québec.

4 Remind the authorized entities of the possibility of soliciting political contributions remotely

A provisional receipt to collect the elector's signature is accessible online and allows remote solicitation of contributions. The official receipt, in the form prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer, must be issued nonetheless. Any monetary contribution of more than \$50 must be made by cheque. The party or the candidate may also use a website for payment by credit card, according to the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer (D-M-21).

Measure	Type of measure and comment
4.1 Provisional contribution receipt (DGE-1431-VA)	<p>Official receipt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AERM requires that an official receipt be issued by the person who receives the contribution. • The contribution receipt form is prescribed. It includes four copies to the attention of the following intervenors: the official representative, the elector, the Chief Electoral Officer and the treasurer. <p>Provisional receipt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A provisional receipt is accessible online. The elector may print, complete and sign the receipt and send it to the official representative. • The official representative will issue the official receipt, but without the signature. • The official receipt and the provisional receipt are sent to the Chief Electoral Officer. <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The authorized entities are invited to solicit contributions remotely by using the provisional receipt and payment by cheque or developing a transaction site for payment of the contribution by credit card, in accordance with the guideline of the Chief Electoral Officer. • In the event the contributions are solicited in person, the measures provided in point 6 apply.

5 Favour payment of a sum of money by transfer of funds

Measure	Type of measure and comment
5.1 Expenses of authorized entities (including election expenses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our guides specify that both the election expenses and the current expenses must be paid by cheque. Directive D-M-4 provide for the requirement of the two-sided copy of the cheque as a voucher. <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the recommended measure, it is possible from now on to pay an expense by transfer of funds according to the conditions stipulated by the Chief Electoral Officer. Directive D-M-34 presents the different payment modes accepted and the vouchers to provide.
5.2 Disbursement of a loan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AERM provides that any loan granted by an elector must be made by means of a cheque or another payment order signed by the elector. <p>MEASURE PROVIDED BY THE REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To limit exchanges and handling of documents, the <i>Regulation</i> offers an additional possibility, to disburse a loan by transfer of funds according to the conditions stipulated by the Chief Electoral Officer.
5.3 Payment of expenses incurred but not claimed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When an authorized political entity obtains goods or services for which it did not receive an invoice within 60 days after polling day, its official agent must send the treasurer of the municipality, with its return of election expenses, a cheque drawn on the election fund covering the total amount of this unclaimed debt. <p>MEASURE PROVIDED BY THE REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To limit exchanges and handling of documents, the <i>Regulation</i> offers an additional possibility, to transmit the total amount of these unclaimed debts by transfer of funds to an account held by the treasurer in the context of his or her duties, according to the conditions stipulated by the Chief Electoral Officer.

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5 Favour payment of a sum of money by transfer of funds (*continued*)

Measure	Type of measure and comment
5.4 Insufficient amount to cover payment of expenses incurred but not claimed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event the amount initially provided for payment of expenses incurred but not claimed does not cover the totality of the invoices, or no amount has been transferred by the official agent or the expense has not been contested by the official agent, the official representative must send an additional cheque to the treasurer so the treasurer can pay the claim or its uncontested portion.
	MEASURE PROVIDED BY THE REGULATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To limit exchanges and handling of documents, the <i>Regulation</i> offers an additional possibility, to transmit the amount in question by transfer of funds to an account held by the treasurer in the context of his or her duties, according to the conditions stipulated by the Chief Electoral Officer.
5.5 Expenses of private intervenors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AERM provides that the private intervenor must pay expenses by cheque or a payment order signed by the private intervenor personally, or by its representative in the case of a group.
	MEASURE PROVIDED BY THE REGULATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To limit exchanges and handling of documents, the <i>Regulation</i> offers an additional possibility, to allow the private intervenor or the private intervenor's representative to pay an expense personally by transfer of funds according to the conditions stipulated by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Block B –Facilitate the application of health guidelines by educating stakeholders

To favour the application of the health guidelines, we propose they be adapted to the processes in matters of authorization, political financing and election expenses.

6 Remind people of the health guidelines applicable to collection of supporting signatures for the authorization

Type of measure and comment

RECOMMENDATION ASSOCIATED WITH MANDATORY HEALTH GUIDELINES

The Chief Electoral Officer encourages the party wishing to apply for authorization to collect its signatures remotely (see measure 1.3 of this table).

The returning officer is invited to remind the person wishing to apply to an authorization as an elector who undertakes to run as an independent candidate that this elector may also collect supporting signatures remotely (see measure 2.2 of this table).

If the supporting signature is collected in person, the Chief Electoral Officer and the returning officer invite the person wishing to apply for an authorization to use a health guidelines checklist to collect supporting signatures. This checklist provides, in particular:

- before meeting any signatories, the canvasser has confirmed that none of the following circumstances apply:
 - he or she has been in quarantine or isolation due to travel abroad;
 - he or she has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and is still considered a carrier of the disease;
 - he or she is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19;
 - he or she has been in contact with a suspected, probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days;
 - he or she is waiting for a COVID-19 test result;
- the canvasser has acknowledged the heightened risk of contracting a more severe form of the disease among people aged 70 and over, as well as among those affected by a chronic disease or a weakened immune system;
- the rules governing physical distancing in force were respected at all times between the canvasser and the signatory and direct contact has been avoided (e.g., handshakes) when greeting a person;
- the canvasser wore a face covering, in accordance with the health guidelines in force;

CONTINUED

6 Remind people of the health guidelines applicable to collection of supporting signatures for the authorization (*continued*)

Type of measure and comment

RECOMMENDATION ASSOCIATED WITH MANDATORY HEALTH GUIDELINES

As of August 1, 2021, the following items also appear on the list of health guidelines:

- The meeting with signatories took place either:
 - on the exterior grounds of a private residence, while complying with the rules in effect regarding the maximum number of persons permitted;
 - in a predetermined location that allows for limiting gatherings to the number of persons currently permitted (e.g., outdoors, preferably by appointment);
 - Disinfectant was provided to allow the signatory to disinfect his or her hands both before and after handling any forms.
 - The signatory was encouraged to wear a face covering, in accordance with the health guidelines in force.
 - The signatory was encouraged to use his or her own pen.
 - Applicable hand hygiene rules were respected when handling any forms completed by a signatory.
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7 Remind people of the health guidelines applicable to solicitation of political contributions or gifts

Type of measure and comment

RECOMMENDATION ASSOCIATED WITH MANDATORY HEALTH GUIDELINES

Political contributions are solicited under the responsibility of the official representative and through persons the official representative designates in writing for this purpose. Political contributions may only be made to these persons.

The Chief Electoral Officer (for the party) or the treasurer (for the independent candidate) invites the official representative of the political entity to solicit political contributions remotely by using the provisional receipt accessible online and payment by cheque, or a transaction site for payment by credit card (measure 4.1 of this table).

If contributions are solicited and collected in person, the Chief Electoral Officer or the treasurer invites the official representative of the political entity to proceed according to point 6 of this table.

The Chief Electoral Officer and the treasurer ask the official representative to present these measures to every person authorized to solicit a contribution.

Concerning Chapter XIV of Title I of the AERM, the candidate is invited to solicit gifts remotely. Any candidate who solicits gifts in person is invited to proceed according to the measures provided in point 6 of this table, making the necessary adaptations.

8 Remind the authorized entity of the health guidelines for holding political activities or rallies

Type of measure and comment

MANDATORY HEALTH GUIDELINES

The Chief Electoral Officer (for the party) or the treasurer (for the independent candidate) invites the official representative of the political entity to comply with the health guidelines regarding indoor and outdoor rallies.

You can go to the Élections Québec website, in the section "[Elections in the time of COVID-19](#)", for more details on this subject.

9 Remind the treasurer and the returning officer of the health guidelines applicable for meetings in person

Type of measure and comment

RECOMMENDATION ASSOCIATED WITH MANDATORY HEALTH GUIDELINES

The returning officer is invited to:

- offer remote support to answer the questions of persons wishing to file an application for authorization.

The treasurer is invited to:

- offer remote support to answer the questions of persons concerning political financing.

If a meeting in person is necessary, the returning officer or the treasurer must comply with the health guidelines in force, including:

- post applicable health guidelines at the entrance to the meeting location;
- if possible, install a physical barrier (solid transparent partition) where distancing cannot be maintained, along with any appropriate floor signage (direction of movement, compliance with the physical distancing rule);
- remind the person concerned that he or she must wear a face covering;
- provide the person concerned with hand sanitizer;
- avoid handshakes;
- wear personal protective equipment (e.g., a procedure mask and, if a physical barrier has not been installed, eye protection), in accordance with the health guidelines in effect;
- disinfect any equipment used (e.g., a chair), both before and after the meeting, in accordance with the health guidelines in effect;
- avoid sharing any objects with the person concerned (e.g., a pencil);
- disinfect hands before and after handling any documents;
- regularly disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as tables, counters and door handles, in accordance with the health guidelines in effect.

**Block C –Send any relevant correspondence
to the persons concerned**

**10 Deploy the necessary means of communication to ensure
the dissemination of the health protocol**

Means of communication deployed:

- Publication of the health protocol on the institutional website
- Online forms made accessible
- Fillable forms favoured
- “Questions and answers” section on our website
- Publications on the extranets
- Dissemination of a summary table of the measures provided for in the health protocol
- Personalized support (email and phone) offered to each intervenor in case additional details are needed.