

Organizing and holding public meetings during an election period

Reference: *Election Act*, sections 402 and 404(12)

PURPOSE

To establish rules for organizing and holding public meetings or virtual public meetings during an election period.

PUBLIC MEETINGS HELD BY NON-PARTISAN ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations that are not associated with a party or candidate (e.g., community organizations, chambers of commerce) are generally considered non-partisan.

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

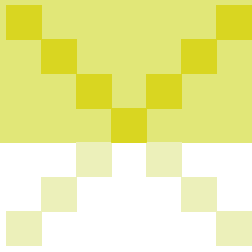
- The public meeting must be organized and held as part of the organization's regular activities.
- The topics discussed at the public meeting must be relevant to the organization's mission.
- The organization must extend invitations to its members and the public in the usual manner.
- Any live or recorded broadcast of the public meeting must be presented in a neutral manner.
- No partisan advertising may be distributed or broadcast at or during the public meeting, including outside or inside the premises used or in the invitation documents.
- The public meeting must not be organized directly or indirectly on behalf of any party or candidate.

OTHER ACTIVITIES HELD BY NON-PARTISAN ORGANIZATIONS

In cases where the preceding conditions for holding public meetings are not met, a non-partisan organization may still hold certain meetings, in compliance with section 404(12) of the *Election Act*, if:

- The meetings are not organized directly or indirectly on behalf of a candidate or party.
- All costs associated with meetings held by the organization during the election period do not exceed \$200. Costs considered include those associated with the renting of halls and the convening of participants.

Where these conditions are met, the costs associated with holding a meeting are not considered election expenses.



DIRECTIVE D-20

ACTIVITIES HELD BY PARTISAN ORGANIZATIONS

All costs associated with activities held by partisan organizations (e.g., the youth wing of a party or a party committee) during an election period must be treated as election expenses and be paid by the official agent of a party or candidate.