



Candidate Guide

2026 Municipal Election



Town of / Ville de Penetanguishene

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DECLARATION

This guide has been prepared for the purpose of supplying information that will be of assistance to persons intending to stand for elected office. It is important to note that the contents of this document are intended only as a guide to certain provisions of relevant legislation and do not intend to recite all applicable statutory references. Prospective candidates must satisfy themselves through their own determination that they are familiar with and understand all respective legislation pertaining to and governing Municipal and/or School Board Elections.



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INTRODUCTION

This guide has been prepared for the purpose of supplying general information to persons intending to run for elected office in the 2026 Municipal and School Board elections. This guide is available electronically on the Town of Penetanguishene website – <https://www.penetanguishene.ca/townhall/elections>.

It is important to note that the contents of this document are intended only as a guide. Prospective candidates must satisfy themselves through their own determination that they have complied with all legislated requirements to run for election and hold office.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring they are familiar with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (MEA)* and should consult the MEA for complete information and legislative requirements. A copy of the MEA can be obtained from Publications Ontario at 1-800-668-9938 or online at <https://www.ontario.ca/laws>.

Municipal Elections are conducted in accordance with the provisions of the MEA, the Municipal Act, 2001, the Assessment Act and the Education Act. The Clerk is the Returning Officer and is responsible for coordinating all facets of the election.

Candidates must comply with all the requirements relating to election campaign financing. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing produces a Candidates' Guide that also includes financial reporting requirements. The 2026 Guide has been uploaded to the Town of Penetanguishene website. See also the Resources section of this guide.

Candidates for School Board offices are encouraged to contact the office of the Director of Education of the appropriate School Board to obtain information on the duties and responsibilities of a trustee.

This guide will be updated periodically. Please check back during the campaign period.

Key Contacts

Kelly Cole, Director of Legislative Services/Municipal Clerk
Returning Officer
Town of Penetanguishene
10 Robert Street West P.O. Box 5009
Penetanguishene ON L9M 2G2
705-549-7453 ext.211 election@penetanguishene.ca

Jessica Armstrong, Legislative Services Coordinator
Deputy Returning Officer
Town of Penetanguishene
10 Robert Street West P.O. Box 5009
Penetanguishene, ON L9M 2G2
705-549-7453 ext. 241 elections@penetanguishene.ca



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ACCESSIBILITY

The Town of Penetanguishene is dedicated to providing a barrier-free election for those with accessibility needs.

MEA, section 12.1, requires the Clerk to prepare a plan prior to Voting Day regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect voters and candidates with accessibility needs. Please see the Resources section to view the 2026 Penetanguishene Elections Accessibility Plan. The Plan is also available on the Town website. The Clerk is also mandated to prepare a follow-up report within 90 days after Voting Day, and this report will also be made available as soon as it is available.

Voter Assistance Centres, both at the Municipal Office and at the three qualified long-term care and retirement homes, will be fully accessible and municipal elections staff will be available to provide additional assistance to voters if needed.

Candidates should also have regard to the needs of electors with disabilities. Campaign offices, election materials and canvassing should all be reviewed in order to ensure that they are accessible to all electors. The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) provides a Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections. Please see the Resources section.



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QUALIFICATIONS

Qualification of a Candidate - Council

It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that they are qualified to seek the office for which they are being nominated. Qualifications for members of Council are set out in Section 256 of the Municipal Act, 2001 and Sections 17 and 29 of the MEA. A person who is qualified to be a voter in the Town of Penetanguishene 2026 Municipal Elections is also eligible to be a candidate for office.

To be eligible, you must be:

- a resident of the Town of Penetanguishene, a non-resident owner or tenant of land in the Town, or the spouse of such non-resident owner or tenant;
- a Canadian citizen;
- at least 18 years old;
- not legally prohibited from voting.

A candidate and an elected member of Council must maintain their qualifications throughout the entire term of nomination/office.

Disqualification

The following people are disqualified from being elected as a member of Council, or from holding office as a Member of Council:

- an employee of the municipality, unless they take an unpaid leave of absence beginning the day they are nominated and resign if elected to the office
- a judge of any court
- a member of the Provincial Legislature, the Federal House of Commons or Senate who has not resigned from their office by the close of nominations. Proof of resignation must be provided by the close of nominations, or the Clerk will not certify the nomination
- an inmate of a penal or correctional institution
- a candidate who failed to file the necessary financial statement(s) in the 2022 elections
- Crown employees who are deputy ministers or in designated classifications under the Public Service Act
- one who is prohibited from voting in an election according to the MEA, the Municipal Act, 2001 or the Education Act
- one who has violated financial requirements for filing financial information in the previous election.

Town of Penetanguishene Employees

Employees of the Town who wish to run for Council must take an unpaid leave of absence before filing their nomination papers. The employee must provide the Clerk with a copy of the documentation showing that they have taken the leave of absence and the effective date. If they are elected, they must resign from their job. They cannot work for a municipality and be on its Council at the same time.



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Qualification of a Candidate – School Board

In addition to being a qualified elector, a candidate for school board trustee must also reside within the district school board's area of jurisdiction and be qualified to vote for members of that district school board:

- In the case of the Simcoe County District School Board (English Public), the candidate must be a public school elector;
- In the case of the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board (English Separate) the candidate must be a Roman Catholic and a separate school elector;
- In the case of the Conseil scolaire Viamonde (French Public) the candidate must be a public school elector who fits into one of the following French language rights criteria:
 - First learned and still understands French;
 - Received their elementary school instruction in Canada in French (this does not include French immersion or French as a second language); or
 - Whose children received, or are now receiving, elementary or secondary school instruction in Canada in French (this does not include French immersion or French as a second language).
- In the case of the Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud (French Separate) the candidate must be a separate school elector and fit into one of the above criteria for French-language rights.
- In the case of the Protestant Separate School Board, the candidate must be a protestant school elector

Disqualification

The following people are disqualified from being elected as a school board trustee or from holding office on any school board:

- An employee of the school board unless they take an unpaid leave of absence beginning the day they are nominated and resign if elected to the office
- A clerk, treasurer, deputy-clerk or deputy-treasurer of any municipality within the area of jurisdiction of the school board except those on an unpaid leave of absence
- A judge of any court
- A member of the Provincial Legislature, the Federal House of Commons or Senate who has not resigned from their office by the close of nominations. Proof of resignation must be provided by the close of nominations, or the Clerk will not certify the nomination
- An inmate of a penal or correctional institution
- A candidate who failed to file the necessary financial statement(s) in the 2022 election
- Crown employees who are deputy ministers or in designated classifications under the Public Service Act
- One who is prohibited from voting in an election according to the MEA, the Municipal Act, 2001 or the Education Act



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- One who has violated financial requirements for filing financial information in the previous election.

School Board Employees

IMPORTANT DATES

Nomination Starts	Friday May 1, 2026 at 8:30 a.m.
Nomination Day (Deadline)	Friday August 21, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.
Certification of Nomination Papers	Monday August 24, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.
Election Signs may be erected	Monday August 31, 2026
Voters' List Available	Tuesday September 1, 2026
Voting Starts (Telephone and Internet)	Tuesday October 13, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.
Voting Day (Option for Paper Ballot)	Monday October 26, 2026 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Declaration of Results	ASAP after voting closes
Deadline to remove Election Signs	Saturday October 31, 2026 at 11:59 p.m.
Term of Office Starts	Sunday November 15, 2026
Council Orientation*	Thursday November 12, 2026 Tuesday November 17, 2026 Thursday November 19, 2026 Monday November 23, 2026
Inaugural Meeting of Council	Wednesday November 25, 2026
Candidate Deadline to Submit Financial Report	Wednesday March 31, 2027

*Tentatively booked – dates are subject to change. Candidates will be notified of any changes.



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ELECTED OFFICES

Candidates for School Board offices are encouraged to contact the office of the Director of Education of the appropriate School Board to obtain information on the duties and responsibilities of a trustee. Candidates for the position of representative on the French language section of a School Board should contact the Clerk of the municipality responsible for the election of persons to that office.

At this election, members will be elected for the period commencing November 15, 2026, and ending November 14, 2030, for the following offices:

MAYOR – One (1) to be elected (at large)

DEPUTY MAYOR – One (1) to be elected (at large)

COUNCILLOR – Five (5) to be elected (at large)

SCHOOL TRUSTEES

- English Language Public School District #17
 - Also known as the Simcoe Muskoka District School Board
 - One (1) to be elected

- French Language Public School District #58
 - Also known as Conseil scolaire Viamonde
 - One (1) to be elected

- English Language Separate School District #44
 - Also known as the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board
 - One (1) to be elected

- French Language Separate School District #64
 - Also known as Conseil scolaire catholique mon avenir
 - One (1) to be elected

- Protestant Separate School Board of the Town of Penetanguishene
 - Seven (7) to be elected

Annual Remuneration - Council

Currently, the Town's by-law outlines remuneration as follows:

Mayor	\$46,827.28
Deputy Mayor	\$32,242.92
Councillor	\$27,422.53

Annual Remuneration paid to Members of Council will be adjusted on January 1st of each year for cost of living based on the percentage increase in the Town's Pay Grid for non-union staff. Remuneration is reviewed each Council term during the last 12 months of the term.



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NOMINATION PROCESS

Step 1 - Complete the Prescribed Forms

1. Form 1 - Nomination Paper
 - Do not sign the form unless in the presence of the Clerk or Designate
2. Form 2 - Endorsement of Nominations Form
 - Obtain twenty-five (25) endorsement signatures from residents of Penetanguishene
 - The nomination must be endorsed by at least 25 persons. The person endorsing the nomination must be eligible to vote in Penetanguishene on the day that they signed the endorsement.
 - **To mitigate the consequences of a challenge to the qualification of a person endorsing your candidacy, we would suggest you obtain a few extra endorsements beyond the required 25.
 - The requirement to submit 25 nomination signatures does not apply to candidates running for School Board Trustee positions.
 - If a candidate files a nomination and then changes their mind and decides to run for a different office on the same Council, they are not required to submit new signatures.
3. Form EL18(A) – Declaration of Qualifications
 - Do not sign the form unless in the presence of the Clerk or Designate
 - Ensure any required documents are attached
4. Candidate's Consent to Release Personal Information
 - Agree or disagree with the requirement to release personal information to the Town's public platforms (website, social media etc.)

Step 2 – Filing for Nomination

Schedule an appointment with the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer to file the nomination by emailing election@penetanguishene.ca or calling 705-549-7453. Following, attend Townhall for the appointment at 10 Robert Street West, Penetanguishene during the operating hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays) during the nomination period of Friday May 1, 2026 to Thursday August 20, 2026 and Friday August 21, 2026 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with the following documents:

- Form 1 - Nomination Paper
- Form 2 – Endorsement of Nomination Form
- Form EL18(A) – Declaration of Qualifications and any required documentation required
- Candidate's Consent to Release Personal Information
- Photo ID with signature
 - Proof of identity and residence as prescribed in Ontario Regulation 304/13.
- Prescribed filing fee of \$100 (\$200.00 for candidates filing for the office of the Mayor) in the form of cash, debit, money order or certified cheque payable to the Town of Penetanguishene.



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*Forms are not accepted by fax or email.

If an agent is filing the Nomination Paper on behalf of a candidate, the candidate's Declaration of Qualification must be commissioned prior to the agent filing the paper with the Town. The agent must provide the candidate's identification as well as providing their own identification.

Refund of Filing Fee

A candidate is entitled to receive a refund of the nomination filing fee if they file financial statements on time after the election. In the case of the 2026 regular election, the date is March 30, 2027, for the campaign ending December 31, 2026.

Change of Office or Withdrawal

A person may withdraw their nomination by filing a written Withdrawal of Nomination before 2:00 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026. If a candidate wishes to run for a different position, they must re-file nomination paperwork before 2:00 p.m. on that date, which will trigger the original nomination to be withdrawn. There's no requirement to submit different signatures from the ones previously submitted. The filing fee is deemed to have been paid with the latest filing, if the two nominations are for the same council or local board. Candidates are responsible for ensuring that they meet all the qualifications and have followed the procedures with respect to the filing of nominations.

Step 3 – Acknowledgement of Filing for Nomination

Upon verification of the required documentation noted above, the Clerk or Designate will acknowledge receipt of the Nomination documents.

Certification of Nomination

The Clerk shall examine each nomination that has been filed, in accordance with the following:

- All nominations filed on or before nomination day shall be examined before 4:00 p.m. on the Monday following Nomination Day (August 24, 2026)
- If satisfied that a person is qualified to be nominated and that the nomination complies with the Act (Municipal Elections Act, 1996), the Clerk shall certify the nomination by signing the nomination paper.
- If not satisfied that a person is qualified to be nominated or that the nomination complies with the Act (Municipal Elections Act, 1996), the Clerk shall reject the nomination.
- When the Clerk rejects a nomination, they shall, as soon as possible, give notice of the fact to the person who sought to be nominated and to all candidates for the office.
- The Clerk's decision to certify or reject a nomination is final.

Reasons for Rejection of Nomination

Under the MEA, the Clerk is required to reject or certify nominations of candidates. The following criteria may be used by the Clerk to reject a nomination:



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- Candidate has refused or declined to provide proof of qualification
- Candidate has failed to provide a completed Form 2 – endorsement of 25 qualified electors
- Candidate does not satisfy Section 29(1) of the MEA regarding who may be nominated
- The Nomination Paper is not complete in its entirety
- The prescribed filing fee has not been paid
- The necessary financial disclosure was not filed for the previous regular election or any new election in which the individual may have been a candidate
- There may also be other circumstances in which a candidate is disqualified - it is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure they are not disqualified

Acclamations

If, at the certification of nominations the number of certified candidates for an office is the same or less than the number to be elected, the Clerk shall immediately declare the candidate or candidates as elected by acclamation.

Exception for Additional Nominations

If the number of nominations certified for an office is less than the number of persons to be elected to an office, additional nominations may be filed between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on the Wednesday following Nomination Day – August 26, 2026.

Public Information

Nomination forms and the information contained within them are public information. Any person wishing to look at a candidate's nomination may do so in person at the Municipal Office during regular office hours.

Nominated candidates will be asked to identify themselves and to sign a Consent Form regarding what information they want posted with the list of candidates on the Town website. At the least, the candidate's name, and office they are running for, will be posted. Other possible information:

- Address
- Telephone (contact) number
- Email address
- Website



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VOTER'S LIST

Elections Ontario now prepares the Permanent Register of Electors (the Voters' List) for both Provincial and Municipal elections.

Voters may access the Elections Ontario voter lookup portal at RegisterToVoteON.ca to check if they are on the voters' list, to update their information or to add a name to the list. A link to this portal is also currently available on the Town website. After the Voters' List is produced in September, the lookup icon will redirect the voter to a Town portal that will tell the elector how to file an application to the Clerk to be added to the list. Eligible voters without computer access, or who would prefer assistance, are invited to call or attend at the Clerk's Office to determine if they are on the Voters' List.

The Preliminary List of Electors (PLE) is delivered to the Clerk in August. The Clerk will make corrections to obvious errors, and the PLE then becomes the official Voters' List. This list may be available to a candidate should they wish, in hard copy or electronic format, on or after September 1, 2026.

Candidates must sign a Candidates' Declaration – Proper Use of Voters' List stating that they will use the Voters' List only for election purposes. The list cannot be used for commercial purposes and must be returned/destroyed after Voting Day.

The Town is encouraging all eligible voters to ensure they are on the Voters' List before Voting Day.

Candidates will be provided with Elections Ontario Voter Lookup information sheets to hand out to electors.

Revision Period

The Revision Period gives voters a chance to make corrections, additions or deletions to any of the information on the Voters' List. Voters may make these changes to personal information relating to them between Tuesday, September 1 and Monday, October 26, 2026 (Voting Day).



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CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

Candidates are advised to refer to the [Province of Ontario's Candidate's Guide](#) for information regarding campaign contributions, fund raising and campaign expenses. A copy of the Provincial Guide is posted on the Town website.

Campaign Period

The election campaign period begins the day the nomination form is filed and ends on Thursday, December 31, 2026. A candidate cannot accept campaign contributions until they've has filed the nomination paper.

The Clerk is the lessee of the premises used as a voting place. As the lessee of such premises, the Clerk does not permit electioneering of any nature in or on the premises used as a voting place on Voting Day. The premises are deemed to include the entire building and the property on which it is located. In the case of electronic voting, a municipally designated Voter Assistance Centre is deemed to be a voting place.

Section 48(2) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 provides as follows:

"No person shall display a candidate's election campaign material or literature in a voting place"

Section 48(3) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 provides as follows:

"For the purpose of this section, 'voting place' includes any place in the immediate vicinity of the voting place designated by the Clerk."

Deputy Returning Officers are instructed to remove forthwith from any voting place any material or literature of any nature, which may be deposited therein.

Access to Apartment Buildings, Condominiums, etc.

The MEA provides that candidates may campaign in apartment buildings, condominiums and non-profit housing co-ops or gated communities from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Landlords and condominium corporations may not prohibit tenants or owners from displaying campaign signs in their windows.

Scrutineers

Each candidate may appoint, in writing, any number of persons necessary to act as scrutineers to represent them during the opening and testing of the voting system, at the Voter Assistance Centre, and during the counting of the votes, including during a recount.

Scrutineers must show proof of their written appointment to Election Officials upon request.

Only one scrutineer per candidate may be in the Voter Assistance Centre during voting. If a candidate enters the Voter Assistance Centre, the scrutineer must leave.

Candidates and scrutineers have the right to:



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- Enter the Voter Assistance Centre; and
- Object to an elector if they believe the elector is not qualified.

If you are appointing scrutineers, please note the following:

- The appointment must be made in writing; Forms are available on the Town website and at the Office of the Clerk;
- Scrutineers must take an Oral Oath of Secrecy (available at the Voter Assistance Centre);
- Scrutineers may not interfere with the activity of the vote or the counting process;
- Scrutineers may not obtain or attempt to obtain, in a Voter Assistance Centre, any information about how an elector intends to vote or has voted;
- Candidates are entitled to be represented at the Voter Assistance Centre, either personally or by a scrutineer. It should be noted that acclaimed candidates are not entitled to be at the Voter Assistance Centre unless appointed as a scrutineer by another candidate;
- Campaigning is not permitted within the Voter Assistance Centre.

Each scrutineer shall be responsible for his/her conduct, rights and prohibitions as set out on the appointment form.

Election Signs

The location, size and type of election signs permitted during the election period are regulated by municipal by-law #2014-01. A copy of the Election Signs By-law is included in the Candidates Package or on-line at [Find a By-Law - Town of Penetanguishene](#). Any question related to the election sign by-law can be directed to email: by-law@penetanguishene.ca or by phone: 705-549-7453.

Election signs cannot be erected prior to Monday August 31, 2026.

Election signs must be removed no later than five (5) days following Election Day – Saturday October 31, 2026 at 11:59p.m.

Use of Logos and Municipal Resources

The use of any Municipal logo, crest or image by candidates on signs, brochures, websites or any other election related material is strictly prohibited.

Candidates may provide a link to the Town's election website on their material. Candidates may re-tweet/share a municipal social media post or share a link from the Town of Penetanguishene website on their own websites including social media. Candidates wishing to share information/pages from the Town of Midland official sites must do so by providing links rather than screen captures.

The Town of Penetanguishene Use of Corporate Resources during Municipal Election Policy prohibits the use of the Town's resources by a candidate. A full copy of this policy is included in this package for your review and can also be viewed on the Town's election website.



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GENERAL VOTING INFORMATION

Voting Method

In the 2026 Municipal Election, Penetanguishene voters will cast their ballot using the Internet, Telephone during the voting period starting on October 13, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. or by paper ballots on the designated election day, October 26, 2026. These methods provide flexibility, which allows for a longer voting period than traditional ballot-only voting. Providing three options as voting methods allow for convenient, accessible voting, and better enables electors to exercise their right to vote.

Voting Period

Voters will be able to conveniently cast their ballot between October 13 to 26, 2026 using the Internet or Telephone. On election day, October 26, 2026, electors will have the option to cast their vote by paper ballot.

A Voter Assistance Centre will be available at Town Hall, located at 10 Robert Street West, where voters can cast their ballot using the computers provided (with assistance if needed). The Voter Assistance Centre will be open during regular business hours throughout the voting period: October 13–16, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and October 19–23, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Election Officials will also attend qualifying long term care homes and retirement homes based on the requirements of the *Municipal Election Act, 2001* to ensure on-site voting is available. The dates and times for these voting sessions will be coordinated with the required institutions.

No assistance centre will be available for online and telephone voting on Election Day (October 26, 2026). On Election Day, voting will open at 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. where electors can vote using a paper ballot. This polling location will be located at James Keating Elementary School, 20 Lorne Avenue, Penetanguishene, ON. Results will be posted on the town website and social media accounts as soon as they're available.

Voter Instruction Letters

A Voter Instruction Letter (VIL) will be mailed to each voter, advising of the dates and times of the voting period, locations and operating times of the Voter Assistance Centre and the methods of voting. The VIL will contain information specific to each voter to allow the voter to cast their vote online or by telephone.

The VIL will be mailed seven (7) to fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of voting on October 13, 2026. Please call the Election staff at (705) 549-7453 or email election@penetanguishene.ca If you do not receive your VIL.

Voter Assistance Centre

A Voter Assistance Centre will be located at the Municipal Office, 10 Robert Street West, Midland, ON. Electors can be added to the Voters' List, apply for corrections or deletions,



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and receive assistance and clarification on the election process. Electors will have access to internet and telephone if they wish to vote at the Voter Assistance Centre.

The Voter Assistance Centre hours will be as follows:

Tuesday October 13, 2026	10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday October 14 – Friday October 16, 2026	8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Monday October 19 – Friday October 23, 2026	8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Individual Voter Assistance Centres will be set up at nursing/retirement residences on specific days during the voting period to assist the residents.

Candidates or their agents and scrutineers must not engage electors in conversations at the Voter Assistance Centre. They may not wear campaign buttons or distribute material of any kind in and around the Voter Assistance Centre.



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ELECTION CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPENSES

The MEA places limitations on contributions and expenses for candidates and also sets out candidate reporting responsibilities.

There are limits on the amount a candidate may spend during the campaign period. The formula is based on the number of electors entitled to vote for the office:

- Mayor: \$7,500 + .85 cents per elector
- Deputy Mayor, Councillor: \$5,000 + .85 cents per elector
- School Board: \$5,000 + .85 cents per elector entitled to vote for that office

The Clerk will provide each candidate, at the time of filing Nomination Papers, with a preliminary certificate of the maximum amount of the campaign expenses they may incur. This will be based upon the number of electors on the Voters' List for the office on September 15 in the previous (2022) election.

The Clerk will then determine the number of electors eligible to vote for each office as of September 20, in this (2026) election. The higher of the two calculations shall be the final spending limit for the office.

A copy of this final certificate will be delivered to each candidate by September 30, 2026.

Preliminary estimated spending limits for Council, based on the 2022 Voters' List, are as follows:

Office	Electors as of September 15, 2022	Base Amount	Amount per Elector	Maximum Amount
Mayor	7,669	.85	\$7,500	\$14,018.65
Deputy Mayor	7,669	.85	\$5,000	\$11,518.65
Councillor	7,669	.85	\$5,000	\$11,518.65

Maximum Expenses for After Parties

There is a separate spending limit for expenses related to the holding of parties and other expressions of appreciation after the close of voting. This spending limit is calculated as ten percent (10%) of the amount of the spending limit. For specifics, see the [Ministry's Candidates' Guide](#).

As a candidate:

- You must file a Nomination Paper before you collect or spend any funds;
- You should open a separate bank account immediately upon filing your nomination paper. All contributions and expenses should go through this account – if you do not spend any funds, or incur any expenses, you do not need to open a separate bank account;
- Receipts shall be issued for every contribution and obtained for every expense;
- Proper direction shall be given to the persons who are authorized to incur expenses and accept or solicit contributions on your behalf;



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- Any contribution of money in contravention of the MEA shall be returned to the contributor as soon as possible after you become aware of the contravention;
- Any such contribution not returned shall be paid to the Clerk;
- All contributions shall be valued;
- Any anonymous contribution shall be paid to the Clerk;
- Records shall be kept of the following:
 - Receipts issued for contributions, the value of every contribution, whether a contribution was in the form of money, goods or services, and the contributor's name and address;
 - Every expense including the receipts obtained for each expense;
 - Any claim for payment of expenses that you as the candidate dispute or refuse to pay;
 - The gross income from a fund-raising function and gross amount of money received at a fund-raising function by donations of \$10 or less; and
 - Any loan and its terms.
 - Your campaign period runs from the day you file your Nomination Paper until December 31, 2026. (some exceptions may apply); and
 - You must file a Financial Statement prior to March 30, 2027.

The records described above must be retained until after the next election is completed (2030).

Campaign Contributions

Contributions can only be made to candidates who are nominated. It is illegal to contribute to a candidate who is not nominated.

You can accept contributions only from individuals who are residents of Ontario. Corporations and trade unions are not permitted to make contributions to candidates. If your spouse is not a resident of Ontario, they can still make contributions to your campaign. They may not make contributions to any other candidate. Groups such as clubs, associations or ratepayer's groups are not eligible to make contributions. The members of these groups may make individual contributions from their personal funds (as long as they are residents of Ontario).

The following individuals and organizations are not permitted to make contributions to municipal council and school board campaigns:

- A corporation
- A trade union
- An individual who is not normally a resident in Ontario
- A federal political party, constituency association, or a registered candidate in a federal election
- A provincial political party, constituency association, or a registered candidate or leadership contestant
- A federal or provincial government, a municipality or a school board



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Contributions under \$25 may be made in cash. Any contribution over that amount must not be made in cash. No contributor may contribute more than \$1,200.00 to any one candidate in an election regardless of the number of offices for which the candidate has been nominated. A contributor shall not make contributions exceeding a total of \$5,000 to two or more candidates for office on the same council or board.

Contributions From Self or Spouse

There is a limit on how much you and your spouse can contribute to your campaign. Contributions include goods and the replacement value of any inventory from a previous campaign that you are using in your current campaign.

The contribution limit, again, is based on the number of electors entitled to vote for the office:

- Mayor: \$7,500 + .20 cents per Elector
- Deputy Mayor, Councillor: \$5,000 + .20 cents per Elector
- School Board: \$5,000 + .20 cents per Elector entitled to vote for that office

Similar to the Certificate of Maximum Campaign Expenses process, a preliminary estimate, based on the elector count as of September 15, 2022, and a secondary, final certificate based on the elector count as of September 20, 2026, will be provided. Again, the higher of the two calculations shall be the final spending limit for self or spouse.

Third Party Advertisers expenses

New in 2018, was the requirement that individuals, corporations or trade unions who wish to advertise on behalf of a candidate must register with the Clerk. During the restricted advertising period (Friday, May 1 – Monday, October 26, 2026) third party advertisers are required to comply with legislation regarding advertising and promotion.

Registrations to become a third party advertiser may be filed between May 1, 2026, and October 23, 2026.

Third party advertising is a message in any medium (billboard, newspaper, radio, pamphlet etc.) that supports or opposes a candidate or series of candidates or a “yes” or “no” answer for a referendum question. Third party advertising must be done independently of candidates, who would not be able to direct a third party advertiser on where they should focus their efforts, or what the advertisement(s) should say.

Please refer to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing – [Third Party Advertisers' Guide](#) for further information on Third Party Advertisers.

Notice of Penalties

Before Voting Day, the Clerk will provide each person nominated for an office a Notice of Offence/Corrupt Practice setting out the penalties related to election campaign finances.

A person who contravenes any provision of the MEA or a regulation under the Act or a by-law under the Act is guilty of an offence. If an individual is convicted of an offence, they may be subject to the following penalties (in addition to any other penalties provided for in the Act):



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1. A fine of up to \$25,000
2. Ineligibility to vote, run or register in the next general election
3. Up to six months in prison
4. Forfeiture of elected office if the judge finds that the offence was committed knowingly. If a candidate is convicted of exceeding the spending limit, they may also be fined the amount by which they exceeded the limit. A corporation or trade union that is convicted of an offence under the Act is liable to a fine of not more than \$50,000 in addition to any other penalty provided for in the Act

Filing Financial Statements

All nominated candidates, including those not elected, those who withdrew their nominations and those whose nominations were rejected by the Clerk, must file a Financial Statement on or before March 30, 2027, by 2:00 p.m. The Financial Statement details all contributions and expenses incurred during their campaign (date of filing nomination paper to December 31, 2026)

Candidates must have their Financial Statement audited and submit the auditor's report to the Clerk along with their Financial Statement if their income or expenses exceed \$10,000.00.

Financial Statements are public documents and will be available on the Town website. The Clerk will advise at least 30 days prior to the March 30, 2027, filing deadline of all the filing requirements of the MEA, and the penalties for not complying with those requirements.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to file a complete and accurate financial statement by the filing date.

A candidate may apply to the Clerk to extend their campaign in order to eliminate a deficit. Please contact the Clerk for further information.

Joint Compliance Audit Committee

The Compliance Audit Committee is comprised of appointed members of the community. For the 2026 Municipal Election, the Town of Penetanguishene will be participating in the Joint Compliance Audit Committee with the County of Simcoe.

An elector may apply to the Clerk of the municipality or the secretary of the Joint Compliance Audit Committee for an audit of the campaign expenses of any candidate within ninety [90] days of the filing of the financial reports of the candidate.

The Clerk of the municipality or the Secretary of the Compliance Audit Committee shall place the matter before the Committee and a decision must be made whether to grant the audit within thirty [30] days.



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AFTER VOTING DAY

Election Results

The unofficial results of each candidate shall be made available by the Clerk after the close of voting at 8:00 p.m., on Voting Day at the Municipal Office, 10 Robert Street West, Penetanguishene, ON. The Clerk shall post the unofficial results on the Town website.

As soon as possible after Voting Day, the Clerk shall declare the official results and post them at the Municipal Office and on the Town website.

Meetings

The Inaugural Meeting of Council is schedule to take place on Wednesday, November 25, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at 10 Robert Street West, Penetanguishene, ON. Each elected member present will make their Declaration of Office.

Currently, the first Regular Meeting of the Council is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., however, the procedure by-law is currently under review and the dates and times of meeting are subject to change dependent on Council decision.

A copy of the 2026 Meeting Calendar is included in the candidate's package. Any revisions to the schedule will be posted on the Town of Penetanguishene's website.

The details pertaining to the composition, roles and meeting dates can be obtained on the Town of Penetanguishene's website in the Candidate Portal.

[Election Candidate Portal - Town of Penetanguishene](#)

Council Members will approve a regular schedule of meetings each year.



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GENERAL COUNCIL INFORMATION

Council Responsibilities

The role of Council and the role of the Head of Council can be found and defined in Sections 224 to 226 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

The Mayor is responsible to provide leadership and act as a spokesperson for the Town of Penetanguishene to the public and to work with other levels of government. Council is made up of seven (7) individuals who act as the primary decision-making body for the Municipality.

Council relies on reports and recommendations from its administration and the help of its various committees to make decisions. The role of Council is to develop policies and adopt by-laws or resolutions based on these recommendations.

Strong Mayor Powers

In addition to the responsibilities of the Mayor listed above, 'Strong Mayor Powers' in Ontario grant Heads of Council significant authority, including the ability to set budgets, veto bylaws, and pass legislation with minimal council support, aimed at expediting local governance and housing development.

Part VI.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001 details these special powers and duties.

Time Commitment

As a Council member, you serve as a representative, policymaker, and steward—often in overlapping roles. You will make decisions on complex, sometimes controversial issues, many with lasting effects beyond the four-year term. These choices should align with the Municipality's goals and objectives.

The current time commitment for the Town of Penetanguishene consists of (but is not limited to and subject to change):

- Council meetings held on the second Wednesday every month at 7:00 p.m.;
- If closed Council meetings are required, they generally occur prior to the regularly scheduled 7:00 p.m. meeting;
- Special and Public meetings as required;
- Budget Meetings;
- Attendance at board and/or committee meetings for which appointed to;
- Telephone calls, emails, texts and contact with constituents; and
- Reading agendas and research time (agendas generally provided to Council the Friday before the Council meeting).

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor also sit on Simcoe County Council, which requires additional meetings and research time. County Council meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month starting at 9:00 a.m.

The Penetanguishene committee structure consists of a variety of standing, statutory, advisory, Ad Hoc and external Boards and Committees. Individual Council members are appointed annually to committees/boards. Please note the frequency and dates of



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meetings can occasionally fluctuate based on various factors such as holidays, availability of members, as well as staff.



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OTHER RESOURCES

Town of Penetanguishene Resources

- [Poll Boundaries](#)
- [Council Remuneration By-law 2025-01](#)
- [Procedural By-law 2023-50](#)
- [Regulate the use of Election Signs 2014-01](#)
- [Corporate Resources Election Policy Feb 2010](#)
- [2026 Council and Committee of the Whole Meeting Schedule](#)
- [Election Accessibility Plan 2026](#)

County of Simcoe Resources

- Information for Mayor and Deputy Mayor (*Coming Soon*)

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

- [2026 Candidates' Guide to the Municipal and School Board Election](#)
- [2026 third-party advertisers' guide](#)

Legislation

- [Municipal Elections Act Review](#)
- [Municipal Elections Act, 1996](#)
- [Municipal Act, 2001](#)
- [Education Act](#)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)