



**Local Government Elections Reform:  
What do the changes mean for elections participants?**



UBCM Area Association Spring 2014



**Overview**

- Overview of the changes in LECFA
  - Task Force recommendations
  - Themes
  - Roles and Responsibilities
- What does this mean for you?
  - Running for Office
  - Campaign Financing
  - Election Advertising
  - Disclosure
- Key dates
- Questions



**Task Force Recommendations**

- Local Elections Task Force
  - Report released in May 2010
  - 31 recommendations; 5 themes
- Task Force themes:
  - Phase one:
    - Enhance accountability
    - Enhance transparency
    - Strengthen compliance and enforcement
    - Expand education and advice
  - Phase two:
    - Increase accessibility



**Enhance Accountability**

- A separate act for campaign finance provisions (*Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*)
- Expanded solemn declaration (awareness and compliance with the new rules)
- Third party advertisers to register with Elections BC



**Enhance Transparency**

- Clearer contribution and election expense rules
- New rules for election advertising
  - Sponsorship information required
- New disclosure rules:
  - Reduced filing deadline
  - Disclosure statements filed with/published online by Elections BC



**Strengthen Compliance and Enforcement**

- Elections BC responsible for enforcing election advertising and campaign finance rules
- Elections BC focuses on compliance
- New offences framework
  - New time limit for starting prosecutions
  - Elections BC must approve all prosecutions
  - Updated offence penalties



**Expand Education and Advice**

- Collaborative approach, coordinated through Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- TAC representatives appointed by parties involved in elections:
  - UBCM, LGMA, Elections BC, CSCD, MEd and Justice
- TAC considers matters of common interest, including
  - Education materials
  - Information sharing processes



**Roles and Responsibilities**

- Local Governments
  - Administer local elections (e.g. the vote)
  - Key contact for elections administration questions (e.g. eligibility, nominations, endorsement etc.)
- Elections BC
  - Administer, investigate and enforce campaign finance rules
  - Key contact for election advertising and campaign finance questions (e.g. recording contributions)
- Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development
  - Responsible for elections legislation framework
  - General elections advice and materials (not campaign finance)



**What this means for you:  
Running for office**

- Nomination process:
  - Same as current process (with new requirements)
  - Pick up and drop off nomination packages with local governments
- New requirements:
  - Local governments send information from nomination documents to Elections BC
  - Expanded solemn declaration requirement
  - Written consent for financial agent appointment

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### What this means for you: Elector Organizations (EOs)

- Endorsement process
  - EO officials submit endorsement information
  - Pick up and drop off endorsement packages with local governments
- New requirements:
  - Changes to EO qualification rules
  - EO officials:
    - Responsible and authorized principal officials
    - Written consent for financial agent appointment
  - New solemn declaration requirement

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### What this means for you: Campaign Financing

- Contributions
  - Anonymous contributions of \$50 or less still allowed
  - “No horizon” for contributions
- Expenses:
  - Campaign period = calendar year
  - Election proceedings period = Sept 30<sup>th</sup>-Nov 15<sup>th</sup>
  - assent voting advertising by candidates is an expense
- Campaign accounts
  - One account for each campaign

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### What this means for you: Election Advertising

- Election advertising
  - Any advertising for your election campaign that is “transmitted” to the public during the election proceedings period (46 days before general voting day)
  - 2014 general local election = Sept 30<sup>th</sup>-Nov 15<sup>th</sup>
- Sponsorship information must be included on election advertising
  - Name of financial agent and BC contact information.

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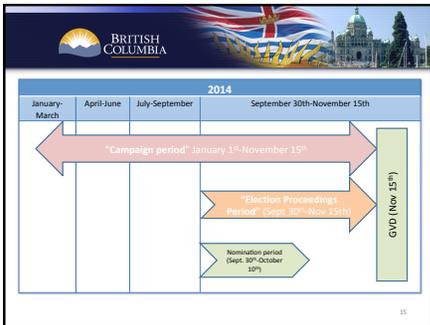
### What this means for you: Election Advertising

- Other advertising rules that still apply:
  - *Local Government Act* voting day rules
  - Local government sign bylaws
  - Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure sign regulations near highways

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### What this means for you: Third Party Advertising

- Third party advertising
  - Is a sub-set of election advertising
  - Includes election advertising not undertaken by a candidate or EO as part of their campaign
- Third party advertisers
  - Anyone who sponsors third party advertising
  - Must be independent from candidates and EOs
- Registration with Elections BC



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### What this means for you: Disclosure Statements

- Elections BC role
  - Standardized disclosure forms
  - File disclosure statements with Elections BC
  - Elections BC reviews and publishes disclosure statements online
  - Elections BC can require supplementary reports
- New filing deadlines
  - Regular filing deadline: February 13th, 2015
  - LATE filing deadline (with late filing fee): March 16<sup>th</sup> 2015
- Penalties for failing to file



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### Questions?

- Ministry and EBC are currently preparing guides and advisory materials (anticipated to be published in June 2014)
- For answers to legislative questions about **municipal, regional district or trust area elections** please call:
  - Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
  - Governance and Structure
  - Phone: 250.387.4020
  - Website: [www.escd.gov.bc.ca/gov/elections\\_home.htm](http://www.escd.gov.bc.ca/gov/elections_home.htm)
- **Once the legislation is passed, refer questions about election advertising and campaign financing to:**
  - Elections BC
  - Phone: 250.387.5325
  - Toll-free: 1.800.661.8683 / TTY: 1.888.456.5448
  - Email: [electionsbc@elections.bc.ca](mailto:electionsbc@elections.bc.ca)
  - Website: [www.elections.bc.ca](http://www.elections.bc.ca)