

Candidates' Guide to Civic Elections in Saskatoon

Thinking of running for civic office? The following is a general introduction to the procedures, regulations and qualifications pertaining to candidates for municipal and school board elections. The next general election in Saskatoon is scheduled for the fall of 2016. As that date approaches, more detailed information specific to that election will be posted here.

This information is provided as a guide only. In all cases, potential candidates are responsible for consulting the appropriate legislation.

Qualification of Candidates - Mayor and City Council:

Anyone can run for mayor or city councillor of Saskatoon provided he or she is at least eighteen years of age on the day of the election and, at the time of submitting the nomination paper:

- is a Canadian citizen;
- has resided in Saskatoon for at least three consecutive months immediately preceding the date on which nomination papers are submitted; and
- has resided in Saskatchewan for at least six consecutive months immediately preceding the date on which nomination papers are submitted.

Judges, and the auditors or solicitors of the municipality may not run for mayor or city council. While an employee of a municipality or of a board or commission appointed by council can run for election, they must first get a leave of absence in accordance with subsection 80(1) of *The Labour Standards Act*. If elected, he or she is deemed to have resigned from the position of employment on the day before the day on which he or she is declared elected, unless for some reason the results of the election are overturned.

Note that while all candidates must live in Saskatoon, candidates for councillor do not have to live in the ward in which they are running. But all of the people signing his or her nominations form do.

School Board Election

Any person who is an elector of the school division on the day of the election can run for and serve on the school board, provided that he or she is a Canadian citizen and has resided in the school division for at least three consecutive months, and in Saskatchewan for at least six consecutive months, immediately preceding the date on which the nomination papers are submitted.

In order to run for the Separate School Board, you must be Catholic and all of the people signing your nomination form must be Catholic.

Before a school board employee can run for election, he or she must first get a leave of absence in accordance with subsection 80(1) of *The Labour Standards Act*. If that employee is elected, he or she is deemed to have resigned from the position of employment on the day before the day on which he or she is declared elected unless for any reason the results of the election are overturned.

Candidates for the Public School Board do not have to live in the ward in which they are running. However, all of the people nominating them do.

Nomination Papers

To become a candidate, individuals must first be nominated by a group of electors (eligible voters). Nominations forms will be provided during the nomination period. Potential candidates must get their forms signed by the required number of electors and then must give them to the Returning Officer, along with a deposit (see below), by the deadline given for the election.

Nomination Papers must be signed as follows:

- for mayor, by 25 electors of the municipality;
- for city councillor, by 25 electors of the ward;
- for public school board trustee, by 10 electors of the ward; and
- for separate school trustee, by 10 electors of the school division.

The nomination papers must state the name and home address of the person nominated as well as the name and address of each nominator.

No nomination is valid unless the candidate's acceptance of nomination statement is signed by the candidate and witnessed by two people and the nomination is accompanied by the required deposit.

Section 155 of *The Local Government Election Act* states:

- (1) Every person who signs a candidate's acceptance form which contains a false statement is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine of not more than \$500.
- (2) Where a person convicted of an offence against subsection (1) has been elected, his election is void, and the council or board shall forthwith declare the office to which he was elected vacant and provide for the holding of a by-election in accordance with Section 6. 1982-83,c.L-30.1,s.155.

Deposits:

Nominations for all offices must be accompanied with a deposit of \$100 cash or certified cheque or money order, payable to The City of Saskatoon. The deposit will be returned to the candidate if the candidate is elected or if the candidate receives at least 10% of the total number of valid votes cast for all candidates in that office. The deposits of candidates who do not file a Statutory Declaration in accordance with *The Campaign Disclosure and Spending Limits Bylaw* or the respective School Board Policy will not be returned.

Other Requirements:

- Only one person can be nominated for election on each nomination paper.
- An elector may sign the nomination papers of more than one person.
- Candidates cannot nominate themselves.
- The onus to file a bona fide nomination paper is on the person nominated.
- No person can be nominated as both mayor and councillor of the same municipality or as councillor in more than one ward in a municipality.
- A person can be nominated and hold office as the mayor or councillor of a resort village and mayor or councillor of another municipality.

Public Disclosure Requirements (City Council members)

- *The Cities Act* requires Council members to file with the City Clerk, within 30 days after being elected, a public disclosure statement in order to reflect information which could create a conflict of interest.
- The form requires the disclosure of land holdings in the City of Saskatoon or Rural Municipality of Corman Park that the member of Council or his or her spouse owns, or is owned by a corporation of which the member or his or her spouse is a director or senior officer or in which the member or his or her spouse has a controlling interest, as well as the name of the member's employer, each corporation in which the member or someone in the member's family has a controlling interest, or of which the member or family member is a director or a senior officer, and each partnership or firm of which the member of Council is a member.
- The City Clerk is required to make each public disclosure statement available for public inspection during normal business hours.

Campaign Contribution and Expense Disclosure:

All candidates for City Council must comply with campaign contribution and expense disclosure requirements under Bylaw 8491, the *Campaign Disclosure and Spending Limits Bylaw, 2006*. All candidates must keep complete records of all campaign contributions received between January 1st of the year following the preceding general election and December 31st of the year of the next general election. For the 2016 election, this means January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2016. Candidates are also required to prepare and file a Statutory Declaration that discloses to the public all of their campaign contributions and expenses.

Candidates should note that *The Campaign Disclosure and Spending Limits Bylaw, 2006* (Bylaw 8491) defines a campaign expense as “the cost of goods and services and the value of any donation in kind, used by or for the benefit of the candidate during the election expenses period for the purpose of a candidate’s election campaign, regardless of whether those costs are incurred, or the donation in kind provided, before during or after the election expenses period, but does not include audit fees, volunteer labour or services”. All expenses that are incurred for the purpose of being elected – even if they are incurred prior to August 1 – must be disclosed.

The Campaign Disclosure and Spending Limits Bylaw, 2006 sets a limit for total campaign expenses for mayoral and council candidates. In 2012, that was \$171,955.50 and \$17,195.55 respectively, with total campaign expenses for both public and separate school board trustees capped at \$10,000. Potential candidates should contact the Office of the City Clerk (306-975-3240) for more information about campaign expenses.

More information:

For more information, contact the Office of the City Clerk at 306-975-3240, by email to city.clerks@saskatoon.ca, or use the form on the elections website at:

<https://www.saskatoon.ca/city-hall/voting-elections/election-question-form>