

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Becoming a Municipal Candidate – By-Election

Revised by	Returning Officer
Revision Date	August 5, 2026

Definitions

- 1 (1) In this procedure,
 - (a) **Prospective Candidate** means a person who has not yet filed their nomination papers with the Returning Officer but is telling people that they are “running” or they are campaigning and putting up signs, etc. They have every intention of becoming a candidate. Even though they may not have filed their papers, for all intents and purposes they are considered a candidate.
 - (b) **Declared Candidate** means sometimes a person will go to the press or social media and “declare” their intentions to run in the election.
 - (c) **Official Candidate** means a person whose nomination papers have been accepted and signed by the Returning Officer and whose name will be placed on the ballot.

Candidate Status and Nomination Process

- 2 (1) An individual is not considered an official candidate until their nomination papers have been submitted, reviewed, and accepted by the Returning Officer, and the nomination form has been signed by the Returning Officer. Only candidates whose nomination papers have been accepted will have their names placed on the ballot.
 - (2) Prior to the acceptance of nomination papers, an individual may identify themselves as a prospective candidate or declared candidate and may publicly announce their intention to run for office or engage in campaign activities. For administrative purposes, an individual may be treated as a candidate once they have publicly declared their intention to run or have commenced campaigning with the clear intention of seeking election.
 - (3) Nomination packages do not need to be picked up at the time an individual declares their intention to run; however, prospective candidates should obtain a nomination package as soon as it becomes available to ensure they have sufficient time to complete the nomination requirements.

Nomination Package

- 3 (1) A Nomination Package consists of the forms and supporting materials required for a candidate to file a nomination with the Returning Officer. At a minimum, the package should include:

- (a) **Form 11** – Nomination Paper
 - (b) **Form 3** – Certificate with Respect to Charges that are Taxes/Liens
 - (c) **Form 17** – Appointment of Official Agent
 - (d) **Form 17A** – Oath/Affirmation of Official Agent
- (2) The package may also include additional information and resources, such as:
- (a) a Letter of Direction from the Returning Officer outlining important dates, deadlines, and filing requirements.
 - (b) the Department of Municipal Affairs Candidate's Guide.
 - (c) a description of the polling district.
 - (d) polling district maps.
 - (e) campaign guidelines and protocols.
 - (f) contact information for the Returning Office and election staff.
 - (g) any other information deemed relevant by the Returning Officer to assist candidates throughout the election process.

Nomination Papers

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- (1) The Nomination Paper (Form 11) is the primary document required to nominate an individual for municipal office. To be nominated, a candidate must obtain signatures from electors whose names appear on the List of Electors for the district in which the candidate intends to run.
 - (2) A minimum of five (5) qualified electors must sign the nomination paper; however, obtaining additional signatures is recommended in the event that a nominator is later found to be ineligible.
 - (3) The nomination paper must be completed in accordance with the instructions provided. Candidates may sign the required declarations and oaths in the presence of the Returning Officer on Nomination Day.

Nomination Day

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- (1) Nomination Day is the designated date on which nomination papers are formally filed and reviewed by the Returning Officer. For the 2026 Municipal By-Election, Nomination Day is Tuesday, September 22, 2026, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. No appointments are required but are encouraged.
 - (2) On Nomination Day, the Returning Officer will:
 - (a) Review all nomination documents for completeness and compliance with legislative requirements.
 - (b) Verify the candidate's eligibility to run for office.
 - (c) Confirm that the required forms have been properly completed and submitted.
 - (d) Administer any required oaths or affirmations.

- (e) Accept or reject the nomination based on whether all requirements have been satisfied.
- (3) A nomination is not considered official until the Returning Officer has reviewed and accepted the nomination papers and signed the nomination form. Only candidates whose nominations have been officially accepted will have their names placed on the ballot.

Advance Filing Period

- 6 (1) In addition to Nomination Day, candidates may file their nomination papers during an advance filing period. During this period, candidates must make an appointment with the Returning Officer to have their nomination papers reviewed and processed. Appointments are conducted during regular business hours and follow the same review and acceptance process used on Nomination Day.
- (2) For the 2026 Municipal By-Election, advance filing appointments are available on the following dates between 9:00am-4:00pm:
 - (a) September 15-18, 2026
 - (b) September 21, 2026
- (3) Candidates are strongly encouraged to file their nomination papers during the advance filing period whenever possible. Early filing provides an opportunity to identify and correct any deficiencies, omissions, or errors in the nomination documents before the nomination deadline. If revisions are required, the candidate may make the necessary corrections and schedule a subsequent appointment with the Returning Officer prior to Nomination Day.

Steps to Become a Candidate

Obtain a Nomination Package

- 7 (1) Contact the Returning Officer to obtain a Nomination Package. Candidates typically run in the district where they reside; however, a qualified candidate may choose to run in a different district if they wish.

Review the Election Materials

- (2) Carefully review all information contained in the Nomination Package, including eligibility requirements, campaign contribution rules, filing deadlines, and the responsibilities associated with holding elected office. Candidates should consider whether serving as a councillor is the right commitment for them before proceeding.

Begin Campaign Activities (Optional)

- (3) Campaigning may begin at any time. Candidates are responsible for complying with all applicable laws, bylaws, policies, and restrictions related to campaign activities, including signage requirements established by agencies such as Nova Scotia Public Works, telecommunications providers, and property owners. Campaign activities may be

conducted in person, through social media, or by other lawful means.

Appoint an Official Agent (If Accepting Contributions)

- (4) Candidates who intend to accept campaign contributions must appoint an Official Agent and establish a separate bank account for campaign funds.
 - (a) The Official Agent is the only person authorized to accept campaign contributions on behalf of the candidate.
 - (b) If a candidate wishes to act as their own Official Agent, Form 17 (Appointment of Official Agent) must be completed and filed with the Returning Officer.
 - (c) Candidates should familiarize themselves with all campaign financing requirements, including record-keeping obligations and the requirement to file a Campaign Contribution Disclosure Statement following the election.

Complete the Nomination Forms

- (5) Complete all required nomination forms and obtain the necessary signatures from qualified electors. Review all forms carefully to ensure they are complete and accurate before submission.

Schedule an Appointment to File Nomination Papers

- (6) Candidates are encouraged to book an appointment with the Returning Officer to submit and review their nomination papers during the advance filing period. Filing early allows time to correct any deficiencies before the nomination deadline.

File Nomination Papers

- (7) Nomination papers may be filed:
 - (a) On Nomination Day, Tuesday, September 22, 2026, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. No appointment is required; however, appointments are recommended.
 - (b) During the advance filing period, on the designated filing days preceding Nomination Day. Filing during this period is by appointment only and takes place during regular business hours.

Receive Confirmation of Acceptance

- (8) The Returning Officer will review the nomination papers to ensure all legislative and procedural requirements have been met. A candidate becomes an official candidate only after their nomination papers have been accepted and signed by the Returning Officer. Once accepted, the candidate's name will be placed on the ballot.

What to Expect on Nomination Day

- 8 (1) Nomination papers for the 2026 Municipal By-Election must be filed at the Municipal Elections Office. Candidates should arrive prepared with all required documentation to ensure the nomination process can be completed efficiently.

Visit the Municipal Office

- (2) Report to the front counter of the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL)

office.

Pay the Nomination Deposit

- (3) A nomination deposit must be paid before nomination papers can be accepted.
 - (a) Candidates will receive a receipt as proof of payment.
 - (b) The deposit may be paid prior to Nomination Day.
 - (c) The receipt must be presented during the nomination appointment.

Obtain Form 3

- (4) Candidates must obtain a signed Form 3 – Certificate with Respect to Charges that are Taxes/Liens from the MODL office on the day their nomination papers are filed.
- (5) A sample copy of Form 3 is included in the Nomination Package; however, the official signed form will be prepared by the Municipality and made available for pickup on the day of filing.
- (6) Prior to the nomination appointment:
 - (a) The candidate's name will be provided to the Municipal Clerk.
 - (b) A search will be conducted to determine whether municipal taxes are outstanding on any property owned by the candidate within the Municipality.
 - (c) A search will be conducted to determine whether any liens exist against property owned by the candidate within the Municipality.
- (7) Form 3 is required for all candidates and must be signed, regardless of whether the candidate owns property within the Municipality.

Attend the Nomination Appointment

- 9 (1) Proceed to the designated nomination appointment location. Directions will be provided by front counter staff if required.
- (2) Candidates should allow sufficient time for their appointment and for any wait times at the municipal office, as regular municipal business may also be taking place. Delays are typically minimal.

Review of Nomination Documents

- 10 (1) The Returning Officer will review all nomination documents and supporting materials to ensure legislative requirements have been met. Nomination papers cannot be accepted unless all required documentation has been provided and completed correctly.
- (2) The following documents will be reviewed:

- (a) Receipt for the Nomination Deposit
- (b) **Form 3** – Certificate with Respect to Charges that are Taxes/Liens
- (c) **Form 17** and **Form 17A** – Appointment and Oath/Affirmation of Official Agent (required even when the candidate is acting as their own Official Agent)
- (d) **Form 11** – Nomination Paper, including verification that:
 - (i) The form has been completed in full;
 - (ii) All required signatures have been obtained; and
 - (iii) The names of the nominators appear on the List of Electors for the district in which the candidate is running.

Acceptance of Nomination

- 11 (1) Once the Returning Officer determines that all required documents have been properly completed and submitted, Form 11 will be signed by the Returning Officer and the individual will be officially declared a candidate. The candidate's name will then be placed on the ballot.
- (2) A candidate may withdraw their nomination up to 4:00 p.m. on September 23, 2026. Candidates who withdraw before this deadline will have their names removed from the ballot. Withdrawals received after 4:00 p.m. on September 23, 2026, will result in the candidate's name remaining on the ballot; however, any votes cast for that candidate will not be counted.

Post-Nomination Package

- 12 Following the acceptance of the nomination, candidates will receive a post-nomination package containing election information, forms, and resources required throughout the remainder of the election process.

Confidentiality Agreement and List of Electors

- 13 (1) Before receiving a copy of the List of Electors, candidates must sign a confidentiality notice acknowledging their responsibilities regarding the use and protection of elector information.
- (2) Once the nomination papers have been accepted and signed by the Returning Officer, the candidate will receive access to the List of Electors. This is typically provided electronically on a flash drive or, where alternative voting systems are utilized, through access to a secure voter database. Printed copies may be provided upon request.
- (3) The List of Electors may be available in various formats, including:
 - (a) Alphabetical order;
 - (b) Geographic order by community and street name; or
 - (c) Geographic order by street name and community.

Additional Forms and Information

14 (1) The following forms and information will be reviewed and provided to candidates:

- (a) **Form 12** – Affidavit Respecting Removal of Advertising Materials and Return of the List of Electors
- (b) **Form 12A** – Declaration of Candidate Withdrawing from Nominations
- (c) **Form 40** – Candidate's Campaign Contributions Disclosure Statement
- (d) Information regarding alternative voting procedures
- (e) Additional election information and instructions, as required

(2) Candidates will also have an opportunity to ask questions regarding election procedures, campaign requirements, or candidate responsibilities.

Official Agent Attendance

15 (1) If a candidate is appointing an Official Agent at the time of filing nomination papers, the Official Agent must attend the nomination appointment so that the required oath or affirmation can be administered.

(2) Where an Official Agent has already been appointed, they may also accompany the candidate to the nomination appointment.

(3) Candidates should remember that an Official Agent may act on the candidate's behalf throughout the election process in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act and applicable election procedures.