



GUIDE FOR POLITICAL PARTIES

Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act

Introduction

Purpose of this Guide

This guide has been produced to help political parties understand the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* (EFCDA), and to ensure compliance with the legislation.

This guide should be reviewed thoroughly for a general understanding of the responsibilities of a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and the law regarding contributions, official contribution receipts, spending limits, banking, record keeping, and financial reporting.

This guide is established by the Chief Electoral Officer under the authority of the EFCDA. If there is a situation where the EFCDA and this guide come into conflict, the EFCDA is paramount. This guide has the force of law and must be complied with except where information is presented as a “recommendation”, “tip” or “best practice”.

Links to this guide, the EFCDA and any other relevant legislation can be obtained through the [Elections Alberta website](#). Copies of provincial legislation may also be obtained from the [Alberta King's Printer website](#).

It is not possible to cover every situation that may arise. If you are unable to find a suitable explanation in the EFCDA or in the materials provided by Elections Alberta, you may write, phone, or visit.

Contact Information

If you have any questions that this guide does not cover, please contact us:

Elections Alberta
Suite 100, 11510 Kingsway NW, Edmonton, AB T5G 2Y5
Telephone: 780.427.7191
Toll free: 310.0000.780.427.7191
Fax: 780.422.2900

For general inquiries: info@elections.ab.ca
For financial compliance inquiries: finance@elections.ab.ca
For OFS technical support: ofs@elections.ab.ca

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1 Overview

What is a Political Party?

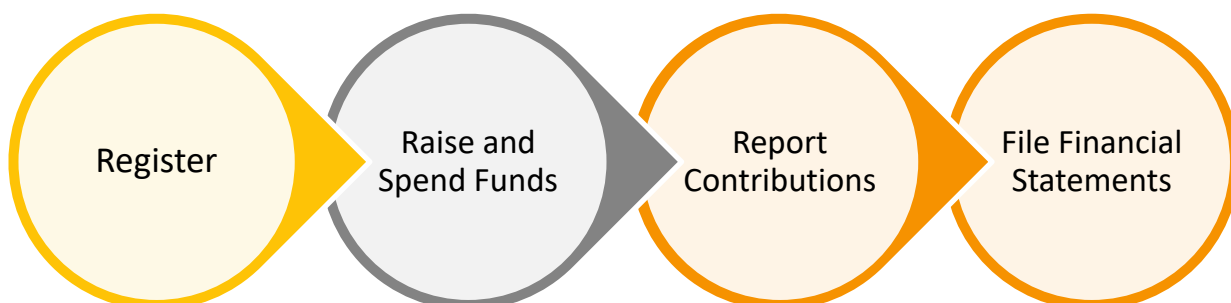
A **political party** (“party”) is an organization that participates in public affairs and aims to elect candidates to the Legislative Assembly. Activities can include, but are not limited to, membership drives, fundraising, candidate nominations, and promotion. Parties must register with Elections Alberta, maintain up-to-date registration information and ensure that they submit financial reports to disclose their activities.

Navigating This Guide

Section 2 provides information on how to register, how to update the party’s registration, and the duties and responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

Section 3 provides information on the rules for raising and spending funds, and filing your quarterly contribution reports, annual financial statements, and campaign financial returns.

Section 4 contains a glossary of terms used in the EFCDA and in this guide.



Legislative references are provided as endnotes. To view the relevant section of the EFCDA, navigate to the back of this guide or click on the roman numeral at the end of a sentence or paragraph.

e.g., “Cancellation of registration becomes effective starting on the third day following the date the notice was mailed.”^{vii}”



2 Registration

This section outlines the registration application process for parties, and the duties of their appointed CFO.

Requirements Prior to Initial Registration

A person or group wanting to register a political party must first submit, in writing, the proposed party name and abbreviation for review and approval by the Chief Electoral Officer. If your proposed party name and abbreviation are approved, the Chief Electoral Officer will reserve this name and abbreviation for you while you work to meet the qualifications for registration.

Reserving a Party Name

- Consult the list of Registered Political Parties and Reserved Party Names to ensure your desired name is not in use.
- Submit a written request to Elections Alberta stating your proposed party name and abbreviation, and include your contact information (name, mailing address, phone number, email address).
- We will notify you in writing if your request is approved or declined,
 - If declined, we will provide the reason(s),
 - If approved, your party name and abbreviation will be reserved for 6 months from the date of approval to allow you to fulfill your other requirements listed below.
- You can apply in writing for a 3-month extension stating the reason for your extension request and we must receive your request before your reservation has expired,
 - We will notify you in writing if your extension request is approved or declined,
 - You can apply in writing for a second 3-month extension, for a total of 12 months (one year),
 - There will be no extensions given past the one-year point.
- Once your reservation period ends, if you have not met the qualifications for registration, your political party, your party name and abbreviation will be removed from the reserved list
- If you want to re-reserve the same party name and abbreviation you must start the process anew (anything done previously is null and void).

Meeting the Qualifications for Registration

Parties can qualify to become a registered political party by achieving one of the following: ⁱ

- **Holding 3 seats** in the Legislative Assembly, or
- **Endorsing candidates** in at least half of the electoral divisions in Alberta, or
- **Completing a petition** containing at least 8,473 names and signatures of eligible electors (0.3% of the total number of electors that were eligible to vote in the last general election held on April 16, 2019). Elections Alberta recommends obtaining substantially more than the minimum number of signatures.



Registration Application and Approval

When the qualifications for registration are met you can apply, in writing, for initial registration as a political party with Elections Alberta. Your application for initial registration must provide all of the information required under the EFCDA section 7(1.2):

- the full name of the party and abbreviation to be shown in documents,
- the name of the leader of the party,
- the address of the place or places where records are to be maintained and of the place to which communications can be addressed,
- the names of the principal officers of the party,
- the name of the CFO of the party,
- the name and address of the financial institution(s) used by the party for the account(s) into which are deposited all contributions made to that party,
- the names of the party's signing officers responsible for each account referred to above,
- an indication of which of the provisions, as outlined in section 6 of the EFCDA, that the party intends to seek to qualify for registration,
- a statement by the leader of the party that one of the party's purposes is to participate in public affairs by endorsing one or more of its members as candidates and supporting their election, and
- a statement of the assets and liabilities of the party, as of a date not earlier than 90 days prior to the date of the application for registration, attested to by the party's CFO.

The Chief Electoral Officer may refuse to register a party if the above information is provided less than 60 days before the issuance of a writ of election, or if the party's assets, as set out in the statement of assets and liabilities required to be filed with the registration application, exceed \$5,000.ⁱⁱ

Most of the required information can be provided by submitting [Form PA-R-01 Registration of a Political Party](#) to Elections Alberta, signed by an authorized representative of the proposed party who is on record with Elections Alberta. The party representative signing the form can be the president, CFO, executive director, or leader. An electronic copy of your registration form can be submitted to initiate your registration, but the original must be mailed or delivered to Elections Alberta.



When we receive your registration form, we will process your application and confirm your registration in writing. Once registered, your party can raise and spend funds. Quarterly contribution reports, annual financial reports, and campaign financial reports must also be submitted, in compliance with the EFCDA. Your party must open a bank account before accepting funds or paying expenses.

See an example of the party registration form on the next page.

Successor Parties (EFCDA sections 11.1-11.3)

A successor party may, at any time other than during the campaign period for a general election, apply to the Chief Electoral Officer for registration under EFCDA section 7. An application for registration of a successor party must be filed in accordance with EFCDA section 7(1.2). The application must be signed by the leader and one principal officer of each of the registered predecessor parties of the successor party, and be accompanied by resolutions approving the merger passed by each of the registered predecessor parties of the successor party.

A successor party is not entitled to be registered if the successor party is not eligible for registration under the EFCDA, or a registered predecessor party of the successor party has not discharged its obligations under the EFCDA, including obligations to file financial statements and campaign returns and to maintain valid and up-to-date information respecting registration.


A successor party may be registered under the name of one of its registered predecessor parties.

Upon registration, the registered successor party is the successor of each of its predecessor parties. The registration of each predecessor party is cancelled. The registered successor party is responsible for the obligations of its predecessor parties and the constituency associations of its predecessor parties to file financial statements and campaign returns for any period before the registration of the registered successor party.

For more information, refer our interpretation bulletin on [Party Mergers](#).



Example of the PA-R-01 fillable form available on our website:

 ELECTION FINANCES AND CONTRIBUTIONS DISCLOSURE ACT REGISTRATION OF A POLITICAL PARTY FORM PA-R-01 Page 1 of 2				OFFICIAL USE ONLY			
<input type="checkbox"/> INITIAL REGISTRATION <small>Submit if all pre-registration requirements have been met (EFCDA s.6)</small>						<input type="checkbox"/> RE-REGISTRATION <small>Submit if registration was previously cancelled (EFCDA s.10)</small>	
PUBLIC CONTACT INFORMATION							
Political Party Name						Party Abbrev.	
Unit No.	Street Address or P.O. Box			City / Town / Village / Municipality		Prov.	Postal Code
						AB	
Phone		Toll Free		Fax			
Email				Website			

Mark one box only

Fill in all the details for the party

PERSONAL CONTACT INFORMATION COLLECTED BELOW IS FOR ELECTIONS ALBERTA INTERNAL USE ONLY AND IS NOT MADE PUBLIC.

LEADER					
Salutation	First and Last Name				
Address for correspondence, if different from party's public address				Email	
City / Town / Village / Municipality	Prov.	Postal Code	Direct phone	Cell phone	
	AB				
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR					
Salutation	First and Last Name				
Address for correspondence, if different from party's public address				Email	
City / Town / Village / Municipality	Prov.	Postal Code	Direct phone	Cell phone	
	AB				
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER					
Salutation	First and Last Name				
Address for correspondence, if different from party's public address				Email	
City / Town / Village / Municipality	Prov.	Postal Code	Direct phone	Cell phone	
	AB				
PRINCIPAL OFFICER (PRESIDENT)					
Salutation	First and Last Name				
Address for correspondence, if different from party's public address				Email	
City / Town / Village / Municipality	Prov.	Postal Code	Direct phone	Cell phone	
	AB				
SECRETARY					
Salutation	First and Last Name				
Address for correspondence, if different from party's public address				Email	
City / Town / Village / Municipality	Prov.	Postal Code	Direct phone	Cell phone	
	AB				

Fill in all the details for each of the roles



**ELECTION FINANCES AND CONTRIBUTIONS DISCLOSURE ACT****REGISTRATION OF A POLITICAL PARTY**

FORM PA-R-01 Page 2 of 2

LOCATION RECORDS ARE MAINTAINED AND COMMUNICATIONS ADDRESSED (IF DIFFERENT THAN PARTY'S ADDRESS)				
Unit No.	Street Address or P.O. Box	City / Town / Village / Municipality	Prov.	Postal Code
			AB	
PRIMARY FINANCIAL INSTITUTION				
Name of Financial Institution			Phone	
Unit No.	Street Address or P.O. Box	City / Town / Village / Municipality	Prov.	Postal Code
			AB	
Name(s) of Signing Officer(s)				
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION				
Name of Finance Contact		Direct phone	Email	
Name of Constituency Association (CA) Contact		Direct phone	Email	
STATEMENT FROM PARTY LEADER				
As required by Section 7(1.2)(j) of the <i>Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act</i> , I _____, Print Name				
Leader of _____ confirm that one of the party's purposes				
Print Party Name				
is to participate in public affairs by endorsing one or more of its members as candidates and supporting their election.				
_____			_____	
Leader Signature			Date	
ENDORSEMENT BY AUTHORIZED PARTY REPRESENTATIVE				
_____		_____		_____
Print Name		Party Representative Signature		Date
ACCEPTANCE BY ELECTIONS ALBERTA				
_____			_____	
Authorized Signature			Date	
Before using this form for Initial Registration, the proposed political party must be qualified to register with Elections Alberta. Contact Elections Alberta by phone at 780.427.7191 or by email at info@elections.ab.ca to receive detailed information and instruction on forming a political party in Alberta.				
Please do not use this form to request a change to the political party name or abbreviation. Submit your request, in writing, to the Chief Electoral Officer.				
FOR INITIAL REGISTRATION OR RE-REGISTRATION, FORWARD SIGNED ORIGINAL TO: ELECTIONS ALBERTA - Suite 100, 11510 Kingsway NW, Edmonton, AB T5G 2Y5			OFFICE USE ONLY ENTERED:	
FOR UPDATE TO REGISTRATIONS ONLY: FAXED OR SCANNED COPIES ARE ACCEPTABLE. Phone 780.427.7191 Fax 780.422.2900 Email: finance@elections.ab.ca Website: www.elections.ab.ca				

Fill in if the financial records are not kept at the party's address

Fill in all the details for your primary financial institution

Fill in, date and sign digitally or physically

Fill in, date, and sign digitally or physically



Registration Updates, Cancellations, and Re-registrations

Updates

It is important that you advise Elections Alberta of any changes to your party's registration information. Changes must be submitted to Elections Alberta as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after any change. The party must file all changes using [Form PA-R-01 Registration of a Political Party](#). Updates can be filed by faxing or emailing the completed form to Elections Alberta.ⁱⁱⁱ

If your party wishes to change its registered name and/or abbreviation with Elections Alberta, you must submit your request, in writing, to the Chief Electoral Officer.

If approved, the register of political parties will be updated effective on the date that the Chief Electoral Officer received your request. The Chief Electoral Officer will not approve your request if the Chief Electoral Officer assesses that your proposed name or abbreviation is likely to be confused with the name or abbreviation of another registered party, the name or abbreviation of a party that has been de-registered since the last general election, or a reserved party name or abbreviation. We will notify you in writing of the Chief Electoral Officer's decision.^{iv}

Cancellation of Registration

If, for any reason, a party decides to cancel its registration, the cancellation must be requested in writing. We will cancel the party's registration when:

- the party applies for deregistration in writing,
- the party confirms that it has ceased its activities,
- the party informs us how it plans to spend any remaining funds, and
- the party files a financial return with supporting documentation to confirm a nil balance.^v

The Chief Electoral Officer may also cancel a party's registration for any of the following reasons:

- the party has failed to file any required financial reports or comply with EFCDA sections 32, 42, or 43, or
- the party is no longer qualified to be registered, or
- the party's application contains false information.^{vi}

When a party's registration is cancelled, the registration of the party's CAs are also cancelled. Parties and CAs are notified, by recorded mail, if their registration has been cancelled. Cancellation of registration becomes effective starting on the third day following the date the notice was mailed.^{vii}

Upon cancellation of registration, any remaining funds in the party's account(s) and CA account(s), not required to pay outstanding expenses, must be paid over to the Chief Electoral Officer, to be held in trust. If the party does not re-register within one year after deregistration, the funds shall be paid into the General Revenue Fund.



Cancellation Review

A party can ask the Chief Electoral Officer to review their cancellation decision by submitting a review request, in writing, within 30 days of the cancellation notice. The Chief Electoral Officer will review the cancellation within 48 hours of receiving the request and give the party an opportunity to present their argument/s. The Chief Electoral Officer may choose to reinstate the party's registration or confirm the cancellation after this review and will provide the party with written notification of the final decision.^{viii}

Re-registration

Should a party wish to re-register after cancellation, the party must submit a new registration application. If the reason for the party's cancellation was due to failure to comply with financial filing requirements, the outstanding financial report(s) and late fee(s) must be submitted, by the party, before the Chief Electoral Officer will consider approving the re-registration application. If re-registration is approved, we will provide the party with written notification.^{ix}

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Appointment

Every party must appoint a CFO. The EFCDA stipulates the duties and responsibilities of the CFO, which the appointed individual must be aware of. Your CFO may also be the CFO for your party's candidate(s) and CA(s).^x

Parties must notify Elections Alberta, within 30 days and in writing, of any changes to their CFO.^{xi}

Duties of a CFO

CFO duties include ensuring:

- proper records are kept of all revenue, expenses, assets, and liabilities,
- contributions are placed in a bank account on record with Elections Alberta,
- official contribution receipts are issued in accordance with the EFCDA,
- every payment of more than \$25 is supported by:
 - a document from the supplier that states the particulars of the expense, or
 - a receipt or other proof of payment acceptable to the Chief Electoral Officer,
- financial returns and reports required under the EFCDA are filed with the Chief Electoral Officer, and
- non-monetary contributions are properly valued and recorded.^{xii}

The CFO must retain all financial records for three years following the filing due date for a financial return in case Elections Alberta requests to see the documentation. If the CFO changes, the financial records must be provided to the new CFO or to the party for safekeeping.





Bookkeeping Tips

Maintaining accurate and up-to-date records is crucial for ensuring compliance with legislation and makes preparing your financial statements easier.

CFOs should ensure that:

- ✓ bank reconciliations are completed regularly to maintain accurate balances,
- ✓ copies of all bank deposit slips are kept,
- ✓ bank statements match the CFO's record of deposits and withdrawals,
- ✓ contributions are recorded as they are received, with the date, contributor name, contributor address, amount, and whether the contribution was money or valued (non-monetary),
- ✓ details of fund-raising events are recorded including the date, name of event, ticket price, ticket sales revenue, auction revenue, the value of donated items, fund-raising expenses, etc.
- ✓ a generic receipt book or other method is used when cash money is received, to record the date, amount, and source,
- ✓ all expenses are recorded and categorized by type,
- ✓ all supporting documents are filed in sequence by date or other acceptable filing method,
- ✓ all books of account and supporting documents are securely stored and,
- ✓ extra attention is given to identifying annual operating expenses, party campaign expenses, party election expenses, candidate campaign expenses or candidate election expenses.

Bank Accounts

The CFO is responsible for ensuring that the financial institution and signing officer(s) information remains current and up to date with Elections Alberta, for the party's bank account where all money received by the party is deposited, and all expenses of the party are paid.



The party's bank account should only be used for your party's revenue and expenses.

Records Retention

The CFO must retain all the financial records for three years after the date a financial statement or return is due to be filed with Elections Alberta. This is because the CFO may be required to produce and provide this documentation to support the financial filing and records if it is requested by Elections Alberta. ^{xiii}



3 Finance Rules and Reporting

This section outlines the rules for contributions, fund-raising, expenses, transfers, and filing financial reports with Elections Alberta. Your CFO must understand and follow these rules to avoid non-compliance situations and consequences.

Contributions

Your registered party can only accept contributions from persons ordinarily resident in Alberta. Contributions are any money, real property, goods or services, or the use of real property, goods or services, provided to benefit your party, without compensation to the contributor. The received date of a contribution is the date it is received by and under the CFO's control.^{xiv}

All amounts received over \$50 must be recorded as contributions by the CFO. Amounts up to \$50 are recorded as "other income", unless the donor specifically requests that the amount be considered a contribution, in which case the CFO must record a contribution and issue a contribution receipt.^{xv}

Money contributions may be via cash, cheque, e-transfer, credit card, online donation, etc.

When is an annual membership fee not a contribution from an individual?

An annual membership fee paid by a person for their own membership in a party or a CA of that party, or in both, is not a contribution if:

- *the total of fees paid to the party and the CA do not exceed \$50, and*
- *the party and CA each maintain a membership list showing the amount of the fee or fees paid by each member that is allocated to the party and/or CA.*

When is an annual membership fee a contribution from an individual?

If the fee or total of those fees exceeds \$50, the amount of the excess is a contribution.

An annual membership fee, paid by a person on behalf of another person for that person's membership in a party or in a CA of that party, or in both, is a contribution by the person who paid the fee.

For more information, refer to our interpretation bulletin on [Purchasing Political Party and Constituency Association Memberships](#).



Valued contributions include in-kind donations of real property, goods, or services or the use of property, goods, or services. The value of the contribution is the fair market value (FMV) at the time of the contribution.^{xvi} Your CFO is responsible for determining and documenting the FMV of goods, services, or property received. Examples of valued contributions include, but are not limited to:

- use of a computer, furniture, or car,
- promotional items and materials including signage, pamphlets, buttons, etc.
- use of any office or venue,
- legal or consulting services,
- cryptocurrency¹, and
- services from a person who normally charges for that service (e.g., a self-employed graphic designer who provides graphic design services)

Example: John is an eligible contributor who personally owns 10 folding tables. He lends them to his party for a fundraising event. The party CFO checks online and confirms that the current rental rate is \$20 per table. The CFO uses this information to record a valued contribution received from John for \$200. This contribution counts toward John's annual contribution limit.

Some services do not qualify as valued contributions, including:

- volunteer labour provided by a person, if that person does not receive compensation or paid time off, to volunteer from their employer or any other person, and
- free audit and professional services and free CFO services for work relating to compliance with the EFCDA.

Your party can buy FMV real property, goods, or services from any individuals and businesses. If you purchase real property, goods, or services at a discounted price from an individual, the difference between the FMV and the discounted price is considered to be a contribution.^{xvii} **Note: businesses are prohibited from making contributions, and therefore would not be allowed to provide a discounted price.**

Contribution Limits

Your party must be registered with Elections Alberta before accepting contributions or incurring expenses.^{xviii} The timing of when the party accepts a contribution, determines if the contribution should be recorded as “annual” or “campaign”. For a provincial general election, all contributions accepted by your party during the campaign period must be recorded as campaign contributions, separate from annual contributions.^{xix} The following tables outline how to classify contributions.

¹ Please see Elections Alberta's [Cryptocurrency Guidelines for Political Participants](#) for more information.

Accepting Contributions in Non-Election Year

←	←	←	January 1	to	December 31	→	→	→
Annual Period								
Record annual contributions								

Accepting Contributions in Provincial General Election Year

← ← ← January 1 to December 31 → → →				
Annual Period	Start of Campaign Period & Election Period	End of Election Period	End of Campaign Period	Annual Period
January 1st to the day before Writ of Election is issued	Writ of Election is issued	Election Day	Two months after Election Day	Day after campaign period ends to December 31st
Record annual contributions	Record campaign contributions*			Record annual contributions



***If your party runs a candidate in a by-election and your party accepts contributions during the campaign period, you can choose which contributions relate to the by-election, if any, and record these as campaign contributions.^{xx}**

Contributions made by an eligible contributor to your party or any combination of parties, CAs, candidates, and leadership contestants, shall not exceed \$5,000 in total, per calendar year.² CFOs are responsible for making reasonable efforts to inform contributors of the rules relating to contributions and for keeping track of contributions received.^{xxi}

*Example: Alex is an eligible contributor who donates \$1,000 to two different CAs in February for a total of \$2,000. As a graphic designer, Alex also donates \$1,200 in graphic design services in September to an independent candidate during a by-election. Alex later buys a ticket to attend a political party fundraiser in November, of which \$150 is the contribution portion. At the fundraiser, Alex places a winning bid on a silent auction item and pays \$50 more than its value. Alex's total contributions to date are **\$3,400** (\$2,000 + \$1,200 + \$150 + \$50). Alex still has \$1,600 of contribution room for the remainder of the year.*



² This limit came into effect on January 1, 2024. The previous limit was \$4,300.



Prohibited Contributors and Contributions

Your party cannot accept contributions from:

- a person not ordinarily resident in Alberta,
- a corporation,
- any unincorporated association or organization,
- an individual whose funds were furnished to them by someone else,
- a federal political party or federal electoral district association,
- a candidate registered under the Canada Elections Act, and
- an anonymous source (i.e., contributor's name and address are unknown) for an amount over \$50.

Contributions cannot be directly or indirectly solicited, or accepted from any prospective contributor if your party or CFO knows, or should know, that:

- the prospective contributor is not eligible to contribute (e.g., contribution from a business or person living outside of Alberta), or
- the amount of the contribution would exceed the annual \$5,000 limit in aggregate for that contributor.

Prohibited contributions, including contributions exceeding the limit, must be returned/refunded to contributors by your CFO. If your party accepts a prohibited contribution, within 30 days after learning of it, your CFO is responsible for notifying Elections Alberta in writing of the fact and circumstances, and the steps taken to rectify the matter. If the source of a contribution over \$50 is anonymous, your party cannot keep the funds—the funds must be paid to Elections Alberta for deposit into the General Revenue Fund of the Government of Alberta.^{xxii}

To help contributors comply with contribution rules under the EFCD, access our [Guide for Contributors](#) from the Elections Alberta website.

Collusion

Political parties are prohibited from colluding with third party advertisers to circumvent or avoid contribution limits or expense limits.^{xxiii}



Fund-raising Functions

A fund-raising function is any event or activity intended to raise funds for your party. In most cases, a ticket or admission is charged to attend. Examples include dinners, golf tournaments, barbecues, meet & greets, etc. Silent auctions (or live or online auctions) are another type of fund-raiser that is commonly held in conjunction with a ticketed event.

Your CFO should keep a detailed record of each event, including the date, name of the event, cost to attend, who paid for tickets or admission (if any), and the total realized revenue at the event. For an auction, your CFO should keep a record of each auction item, its value, who donated the item, who paid the winning bid, and how much was paid.

Activity or Auction?

For reporting purposes in Elections Alberta's Online Financial System (OFS), your party has a choice of two categories for reporting your fund-raising functions:

1. Activity: A fund-raising event where tickets are sold, or admission is charged to attend. A fund-raising activity can be an event that does not require a ticket or admission to attend, but those who attend are expected to make a contribution. Fund-raising activities include raffles, 50-50 draws, etc.

Most fund-raisers charge admission, but some do not. Regardless, details about the fund-raiser must be reported.

2. Auction: An auction fund-raiser can be any type of auction—live, silent, online etc. Auction details must be recorded separately from Activity details, even if they occur at the same time.

The gross income of a fund-raising activity or auction must be recorded, as well as the total amount of contribution receipts issued to individuals who attended or participated in the fund-raiser (calculated using either Method 1 or 2 below). The difference between these amounts can result in net revenue (the non-contribution receipted revenue). This revenue must be recorded as fund-raising function revenue.^{xxiv}

1. Activity

Only eligible contributors (individuals living in Alberta) can pay for tickets or admission to attend party fund-raisers. This is because a portion of the price paid comprises a contribution, which results in the issuing of a contribution receipt. Notably, prohibited persons, corporations and trade unions cannot pay for tickets or admission, or reimburse an individual for their ticket or admission price because of the contribution portion. They can, however, pay the non-contribution (expense) portion only, in order to attend.

The non-contribution (expense) portion of the ticket or admission price, recognizes that the person received compensation for attending (e.g., a meal, refreshments, golf game).



Calculating the Contribution Receipt Amount

When planning a fund-raiser, your party needs to decide on the ticket or admission price. Based on the price, your CFO will determine what portion of the price paid for admission constitutes a contribution and issue a receipt in this amount to each individual who pays to attend the event. The EFCDA provides an easy calculation, via Method 1 below, or the actual costs per person can be calculated via Method 2.

Method 1^{xxv}

Ticket / Admission up to \$50: Any price paid up to \$50 is not required to have a contribution portion and all sales can be recorded as fund-raising function revenue. However, the CFO or any individual who paid for a ticket or admission, can opt for half of the price paid to be considered a contribution. In this case, the other half is allowed for expenses, even if actual expenses are less or more.

Ticket / Admission \$50.01 to \$100: The contribution portion is the price less \$25 which is allowed for expenses, even if actual expenses are less or more.

Ticket / Admission over \$100: The contribution portion is 75% of the price and 25% is allowed for expenses, even if actual expenses are less or more.

Method 2^{xxvi}

The contribution portion is the amount paid above the fair market value (FMV) of what the ticket or admission purchaser received as compensation for attending (e.g., a meal, refreshments, golf game). Calculate the actual cost per person to determine the contribution portion vs. the non-contribution portion.

The table below shows examples of fund-raising events and how to determine the contribution portion vs. non-contribution portion (expense portion) of each ticket sold or admission charged.

Fund-raising Function	Ticket / Admission Price	Method	Contribution Portion (tax receipted)	Non-Contribution "Expense" Portion (Not receipted)
Barbecue	\$35	Method 1	\$0 -or- \$17.50 (50%)	\$35 -or- \$17.50 (50%)
Dinner	\$80	Method 1	\$55	\$25
Meet the Candidate	\$200	Method 1	\$150 (75%)	\$50 (25%)
Golf Tournament	\$400	Method 2	\$163.55	\$236.45 (actual cost/FMV)

Recording Revenue from Ticket or Admission Sales

When there is a contribution and non-contribution portion applied for each sale of a ticket or admission, the revenue must be recorded in two categories:

- 1) the contribution portion is recorded on your party's financial statement as "receipted contributions" revenue, and
- 2) the non-contribution portion is recorded on your party's financial statement as "fund-raising function" revenue.

If the fund-raising function uses some means of raising funds other than selling tickets or charging admission, and if the price paid is more than the fair market value for goods or services received, the excess is a contribution and is eligible for a contribution receipt.^{xxvii} In addition to recording the revenue from ticket or admission sales, all event expenses must be recorded.

2. Auction

If an auction is held in conjunction with a fund-raising activity, a separate record of the auction revenue and expenses must be kept as different rules apply.

Your party can buy items for the auction and accept items donated by persons ordinarily resident in Alberta.

For items valued over \$50 donated by individuals, your CFO must record a valued contribution and issue a valued contribution receipt to the donor. For items valued up to \$50 donated by individuals, your CFO records it as valued fund-raising function revenue, unless the individual specifically requests that their donation be considered a contribution. In this case, the CFO must record a valued contribution and issue a valued contribution receipt to the donor for the value of the item.

Your CFO should retain documentation verifying the amount paid for purchased auction items and the FMV of donated items. In addition to donated items being recorded as revenue, they must be recorded as expenses.

Only eligible contributors can bid on auction items, as bids that exceed the value of the donated items are considered contributions made by the individual.



Recording Revenue and Expenses from Auctions

The following scenarios illustrate how to report the revenue (and expenses) from silent auctions. In all cases, keep a record of the date, names, and addresses of auction item donors and winning bidders, the amounts, and whether these were valued or money contributions, for tax receipt purposes.

Scenario 1

An accountant donates a gift certificate for personal tax preparation, with a stated value of \$300. The CFO verifies that the stated value is FMV. The winning bidder pays \$375 via cash, cheque or by e-transfer. The CFO records:

Donation:

- \$300 valued contribution received from the donor, and \$300 expense³,

Bidding:

- \$300 as fund-raising revenue received from the winning bidder,
- \$75 contribution received from the bidder.

Scenario 2

A store wants to donate a \$700 art deco lamp, but businesses are prohibited from donating under the EFCDA. Instead, an individual purchases the lamp for \$700 and donates it to the auction with a copy of the store receipt to validate the value. The winning bidder pays \$550 via cash, cheque or by e-transfer. The CFO records:

Donation:

- \$700 valued contribution received from the donor, and \$700 expense,

Bidding:

- \$550 as fund-raising revenue received from the winning bidder,
- No contribution recorded for the bidder because the bid was lower than the value.

Scenario 3

A member of the party owns a cabin in the mountains and wishes to donate two night's accommodation. The member estimates the total value for two nights at \$1,000. The CFO conducts online research on similar cabins and locations and decides the value should be \$800. The CFO advises the donor, who acknowledges the revised value. The winning bidder pays \$2,000. The CFO records:

Donation:

- \$800 valued contribution received, and \$800 expense,

Bidding:

- \$800 as fund-raising revenue received from the winning bidder,
- \$1,200 as a contribution received from the bidder.

³ The valued contribution received from the donor must also be reported as an expense to recognize that the donor paid for or provided the item on behalf of the party.

The CFO needs to be mindful of contribution limits when accepting auction items at FMV, and maximum bids accepted, to ensure they are appropriate and defensible, and to reduce the risk of over-contributions.

Social Events

Social events are activities where the purpose is not to raise funds. Such events may include meetings and small gatherings. Amounts charged at social events are designed to cover the expenses for holding the social event only. The gross (total) amount collected and expenses from social events must be separately recorded and reported as part of the annual financial statement under other income and operating expenses, not under fund-raising functions.

Door Prizes

Your party can buy items for door prizes and accept prizes donated by persons ordinarily resident in Alberta.

For prizes valued over \$50 donated by individuals, your CFO must record a valued contribution and issue a valued contribution receipt to the donor. For prizes valued up to \$50 donated by individuals, your CFO records it as valued fund-raising function revenue if the prize was for a fund-raising event, or as valued other income if the prize was for a social event, unless the individual specifically requests that their donation be considered a contribution. In this case the CFO must record a valued contribution and issue a valued contribution receipt to the donor for the value of the door prize.

Your CFO should retain documentation verifying the amount paid for purchased prizes and the FMV of donated prizes from individuals. In addition to donated prizes being recorded as revenue, they must be recorded as expenses.

Golf Tournaments

Only individuals can pay an entry fee to a golf tournament. If the entry fee exceeds the FMV of goods and services received, the excess should be recorded as a contribution. The entry fees should be recorded as a contribution and non-contribution (expense) per s. 23(3) of the EFCDA. A corporation or union is not allowed to pay an entry fee or reimburse a fee paid by an individual.

Trade Union and Corporate Sponsorship

Elections Alberta urges parties to exercise caution before accepting trade union or corporate sponsorships for fundraising events. This is because the EFCDA prohibits contributions from any entity other than an individual ordinarily resident in Alberta. Unless it is a fair market value transaction, money from a union or corporation will be a prohibited contribution.

A payment by a trade union or corporation to a party is only permissible if the compensation received by the party is not greater than the FMV of the benefit obtained. You must be able to demonstrate that the fair value of the benefit is reasonable, relative to equivalent advertising opportunities in the local market. For instance, sponsoring a golf hole at a party's tournament and advertising at that hole must be valued similarly to any other advertising opportunity, for a similarly attended golf tournament, at the same facility.



Corporate advertising that is affiliated with an individual (e.g., Ms. Smith, Realtor for XYZ Realty Co.) is generally prohibited. It is Elections Alberta's position that such an affiliation makes it difficult for fund-raising event attendees to discern whether the contributor is the individual or the corporation. This restriction does not apply to the normal social networking that occurs at such events (e.g., exchange of business cards amongst attendees).

If you have questions about trade union or corporate sponsorship activities please contact our Office, prior to engaging in any such relationship or contract, at finance@elections.ab.ca.

Recording and Reporting Contributions

Elections Alberta provides your CFO with access to our Online Financial System (OFS) to report contributions. Your CFO must report all amounts over \$50 as contributions, and any amounts up to \$50 for which the donor specifically requests that the amount be considered a contribution.

The CFO must enter the following information in OFS for each contribution, or provide data files for Elections Alberta to upload, before official contribution receipts can be generated:

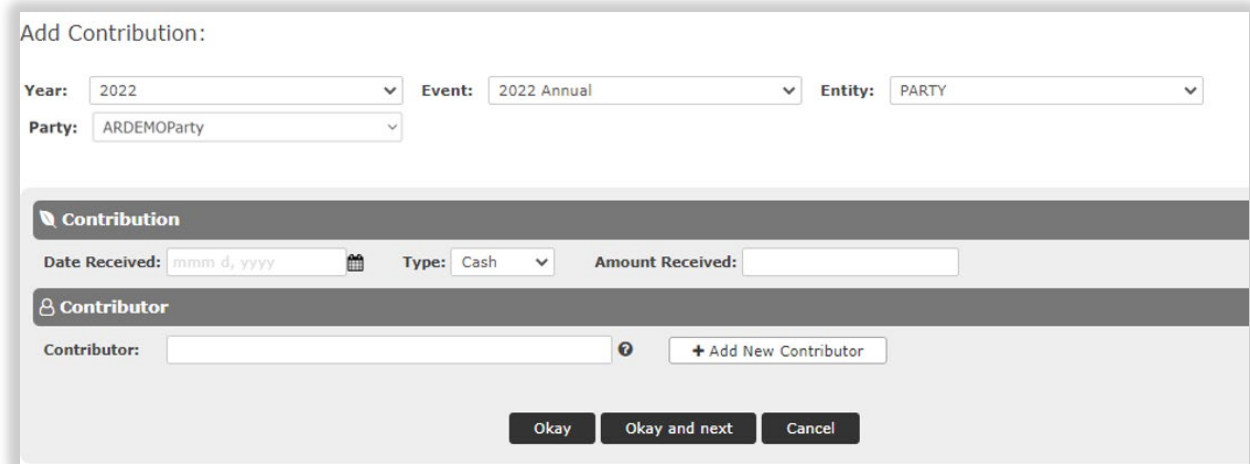
- date received
- money or valued
- amount
- contributor first and last name (one name per contribution)
- contributor mailing address
- contributor email address (optional for e-receipting purposes)

Separate records must be kept for annual contributions vs. campaign contributions.

Online Financial System Login screen



Sample of Contribution Data Entry Screen in OFS



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add Contribution:". It contains several dropdown menus for "Year" (set to 2022), "Event" (set to 2022 Annual), "Entity" (set to PARTY), and "Party" (set to ARDEMOParty). Below these is a section titled "Contribution" with fields for "Date Received" (placeholder: mmm d, yyyy), "Type" (set to Cash), and "Amount Received". Underneath is a section titled "Contributor" with a "Contributor:" field and a "+ Add New Contributor" button. At the bottom are three buttons: "Okay", "Okay and next", and "Cancel".

Party ID for Each Contributor

Your party must assign a unique identifier—a Party ID—for each contributor, and provide this information as part of the contribution information required to be reported in OFS. The contributor and contribution information that your party reports in OFS links to the contributions that your CAs and candidates may report, to help you track and prevent over-contributions.

Each party can use their own numbering method for their Party IDs, as long as the method does not duplicate any IDs. The most common numbering method simply starts at 1 and goes up as the party gets more contributors.

Once an individual is assigned a Party ID it follows that individual from year to year, even if the contributor's address or other information changes. OFS maintains each contributor's history for the party, including any name changes, address changes, etc.

The party's CAs and candidates benefit from having access to the party's contributor list in OFS when entering their contributions. If a contributor is not on the list, a new contributor can be added, and the party must assign a Party ID to the new contributor. The party can manually add the new Party ID or provide it with the party's next contributor data file.

If your CAs accept contributions, you are encouraged to have the CAs enter contributions as they are received throughout the year. This helps your party to monitor for over-contributions, and assists with Elections Alberta's periodic compliance review. Waiting until the end of the year to record contributions significantly increases the risk of violations and penalties under the EFCDA.



Official Contribution Receipts

Your CFO must issue official contribution receipts to all contributors using OFS.

There are two ways to issue receipts through OFS:

- for persons preferring an **electronic receipt**, your CFO generates the receipts and emails them to contributors from OFS, or
- for persons preferring a **hard-copy receipt**, or those who do not have an email address, your CFO generates the receipts, prints them off from OFS, and mails them to the contributors.

Your CFO must ensure that all electronic contribution receipts are successfully delivered to contributors.

If a contributor misplaces their receipt, your CFO can resend or reprint a copy for the contributor. If a receipt is issued incorrectly (e.g., wrong address or amount), your CFO must cancel the original receipt and issue a corrected replacement, following the prompts in OFS. The system maintains all records of contributions and official receipts, including any cancelled and reissued receipts.

Your CFO must issue separate receipts to contributors for their annual and campaign contributions. Contribution receipts must be issued no later than the filing deadline for the financial statement that the contributions relate to. The following table provides approximate timelines for when receipting is available in OFS and when all receipts must be issued by.

Receipt type	Receipting available in OFS	Receipts issued and delivered to contributors
Annual - Prefix "A"	Beginning of February, for previous year's contributions	March 31st, the annual financial statement filing deadline
Campaign - Prefix "C"	Two months after Election Day	Six months after Election Day, the party's campaign return filing deadline

If a person makes one or more annual contribution to your party, OFS will produce one annual or "A" type receipt for that contributor, listing their annual contribution(s). In an election year, if the same individual makes one or more campaign contributions to your party, OFS will produce one campaign or "C" type receipt for that contributor, listing their campaign contribution(s).

Sample of Official Contribution Receipt

ADP **OFFICIAL CONTRIBUTION RECEIPT**
A220000304
2022 TAX YEAR

Issued to:

JOHN S DOE
1212 SWEET HOME
EDMONTON BEACH, AB T1T 1T1

Receipt Date: November 14, 2022
Period: Party Annual
Receipt Total: \$ 100.00
Tax Deductible: Yes

Issued by: ARDEMOParty
Signed by: John Doe, Chief Financial Officer

If any information is incorrect on this receipt, contact the issuer named above.

Date Received	Contribution Type	Amount
November 14, 2022	Money	\$ 100.00

Income Tax Credits

Both money and valued contributions made to a party can be claimed for Alberta income tax credits in the year the contribution is made. CFOs are not responsible for calculating tax credits that contributors may be eligible for. The table below is provided as an example of how tax credits are calculated and administered under the *Alberta Income Tax Act*. The maximum tax credit of \$1,000 is reached when a contributor's aggregate contributions total \$2,300 across all political participants.

Amount Contributed	Available Tax Credit	Maximum Credit	Cumulative Amount
Up to \$200	75%	\$150	\$150
Next \$900 (\$201 to \$1,100)	50%	\$450	\$600
Next \$1,200 (\$1,101 to \$2,300)	33.3%	\$400	\$1,000
Over \$2,300	Nil	Nil	\$1,000



Public Disclosure of Contributions

Elections Alberta publishes your party's reported contributions in two categories:

- for contributions from an individual contributor that exceed \$250 in aggregate for the reporting period, the total amount contributed, and the contributor's name and municipality. Addresses are redacted on Elections Alberta's public website, and
- the total amount of all contributions received that did not exceed \$250 in aggregate for the reporting period, from any single contributor.^{xxviii}

The party's reporting periods are quarterly, annual, and campaign, and the contribution reports are published shortly after the filing deadline that applies to each of these reporting periods. Finalized contributions reports are published after Elections Alberta's financial audits for the annual and campaign periods are complete and the party has been notified.

Other Revenues

Examples of revenue other than contributions, that must also be reported, include:

- Collections at party meetings of up to \$50 per person at the meeting
- Contestant fees and deposits*
- Interest earned on investments and bank deposits
- Sales of annual memberships (see information at the beginning of this section)
- Money and in-kind donations up to \$50
- Sales of goods
- Any other revenue not listed above

*Fees and deposits collected by your party from leadership contestants and nomination contestants must be reported as other income revenue, not contributions. Any refunds issued for fees or deposits must be reported as operating expenses.

Loans from Financial Institutions

Your party can borrow money from any recognized financial institution, except an Alberta Treasury Branch (ATB Financial). Your CFO must record and report loan details as part of your financial statements.^{xxix}

Guarantees

Only a person ordinarily resident in Alberta may sign, co-sign, guarantee or provide collateral for a loan on behalf of your party. The amount of the guarantee or collateral is considered a contribution in the year the guarantee or collateral is provided and counts towards the guarantor's annual contribution limit under section 17(1) of the EFCDA. However, no contribution receipt is issued to a guarantor or person providing collateral until the guarantor is required to make payment or the collateral is applied to the loan.^{xxx}



Loan Payments

Only a person ordinarily resident in Alberta may make a loan payment or guarantee payment on behalf of your party. Loan payments made by you or on behalf of your party are considered contributions and count toward the annual contribution limit under section 17(1) of the EFCDA. The contributors can be issued a contribution receipt unless they are reimbursed by the party.^{xxx}

Incurring Expenses

Your party can incur expenses any time after your party is registered with Elections Alberta. It is important for the party's CFO to know when an election is called, and the dates for the election period and campaign period.

The nature of an expense and when the expense is incurred, determines which type of expense to record. Some expenses can be classified as **operating expenses** regardless of when the expense is incurred. Some expenses must be recorded as **election expenses** or as **campaign expenses** based on the nature of the expense and when the expense is incurred.

Operating Expenses

There is no limit to the amount that a party can spend on operating expenses (ongoing costs to run the party). Operating expenses include, but are not limited to:

- audit and professional fees necessary for compliance with the EFCDA by the party,
- expenses incurred to hold a conference or convention of the party,
- expenses incurred by the party to operate a permanent office, including the salaries and wages paid to permanent staff members working in the office during an election period, and
- reasonable incidental expenses incurred by or on behalf of volunteers.^{xxxii}

Election Expenses and Campaign Expenses

Expenses to promote your party, or to promote two or more of your registered candidates, or for your party to oppose others in a provincial general election or by-election, must be tracked and reported as election expenses or as campaign expenses. The nature of an expense, and when the goods or services are used or consumed, determines whether to record them as an election expense or a campaign expense.

An election expense incurred by the party on behalf of a specific candidate, is an election expense of that candidate, not the party.



Election Expenses and Spending Limits

Expenses that your party incurs to promote your party, or to promote two or more of your registered candidates, or for your party to oppose others during an election period, must be recorded as “election expenses” of the party. In addition, your CAs can incur election expenses on behalf of the party.

Your party’s election expenses are subject to a spending limit which applies during the election period, from the date a Writ of Election is issued to the end of Election Day.



For a provincial general election, the election expense limit is based on \$1.3275 times the total number of electors in the Register of Electors on the 1st day of the month, in which the date 3 months before Election Day falls.⁴

For provincial by-elections, the election expense limit is **\$28,000** per electoral division, and applies if the party runs a candidate in that electoral division.

Your party and your party’s CFO will be liable to a fine of not more than \$100,000 if your party exceeds the election expense limit.^{xxxiii}

Parties are prohibited from colluding with third party advertisers or other registered parties to circumvent or avoid expense limits.^{xxxiv}

⁴ The election expense limit for the 2027 Provincial General Election will be calculated and published in that year. The expense limit for the 2023 Provincial General Election was \$3,208,127 based on \$1.16 times the total number of electors in the Register of Electors on February 1, 2023.



The chart below provides further information to help you with recording expenses.

Type of Expense	Election Expenses – Subject to Spending Limit	Campaign Expenses – Not Subject to Spending Limit
Applies to	Election period	Campaign period
Definition	Any expense incurred, or non-monetary contribution received, by a registered party, constituency association or candidate to the extent that the real property, goods or services that the expense was incurred for, or that were received as a non-monetary contribution, are used to directly promote or oppose a registered party, its leader or a candidate during an election period.	Any expense incurred, or non-monetary contribution received, by a registered party, constituency association or candidate to the extent that the real property, goods or services that the expense was incurred for, or that were received as a non-monetary contribution, are used to directly promote or oppose a registered party, constituency association or candidate during a campaign period.
Examples of Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the production of advertising or promotional material, the distribution, broadcast, or publication of advertising or promotional material in any media or by any other means during an election period, including using a capital asset, the payment of remuneration and expenses to or on behalf of a person for the person's services as a CFO or in any other capacity, securing a meeting space, or the conduct of election surveys or other surveys or research during an election period.^{xxxv} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the production of advertising or promotional material, the distribution, broadcast, or publication of advertising or promotional material in any media or by any other means during a campaign period, including using a capital asset, the payment of remuneration and expenses to or on behalf of a person for the person's services as a CFO or in any other capacity, securing a meeting place, or the conduct of election surveys or other surveys or research during a campaign period.^{xxxvi}
Examples of Expenses Exempt from Spending Limit	<p>Operating Expenses are exempt from spending limits. Record the following expenses as operating expenses on your party's annual financial statement even if the goods or services are used or consumed during the election period or campaign period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> audit and professional fees necessary for compliance with the EFCDA, expenses incurred to hold a conference or convention of a registered party, expenses incurred by a party to operate a permanent office, including the salaries and wages paid to permanent staff members working in the office during the election period, and <p>reasonable incidental expenses incurred by or on behalf of volunteers (that relate to the above bullets)^{xxxvii}</p>	



Expenses that Span Multiple Periods

Some goods or services for promoting your party or opposing others may be used or consumed during both the election period and campaign period. In these cases, the expense should be claimed as both in proportion to the period of their consumption, impact or use. Refer to our interpretation bulletin No. 2 (Campaign Period Restrictions and Overlapping Reporting Periods) for additional guidance.

Use of Previous Elections Goods

The use of election goods in a 2nd or subsequent election is a non-monetary contribution.^{xxxviii}

If your party uses its previous goods, such as signage, the use of the goods must be reported at fair market value at the time. The value is carried in as valued other income and expensed accordingly.

Expenses Paid on Behalf of a Specific Candidate

If your party incurs expenses for a specific candidate during an election, there are limits on the amount that the party can spend, as it counts toward the candidate's spending limit.^{xxxix} The candidate election expense limit is \$53,100.

Examples of the types of expenses include advertising in all formats, advertising production, fundraising events and activities, polling including surveys and research, honoraria and salaries, office and technology, etc. Expenses on behalf of a specific candidate must be tracked and reported separately from the party's operating and the party's election/campaign expenses.

When the goods or services are used by the candidate specifically during an election period, they are "election expenses" and are subject to the candidate's spending limit.

The party's CFO must work closely with the candidate's CFO(s) to ensure that the expenses are recorded and allocated appropriately.

Start of Campaign Period / Election Period	End of Election Period	End of Campaign Period
Writ of Election is issued	Election Day	+ 2 months after Election Day
Goods or services used by candidate for their promotion or opposing others <u>are</u> subject to the spending limit, including those purchased pre-writ by the party		Goods or services used by candidate for their promotion or opposing others <u>are not</u> subject to the spending limit, including those purchased pre-writ by the party

Pre-paid Election and Campaign Expenses

Your party can pay for the party's election and campaign expenses prior to a Writ of Election, as well as expenses for a specific candidate. Pre-paid expenses must be properly recorded and reported following the guideline below.

Timing of Expense	How to Report the Pre-paid Expense
Incurred in the year immediately prior to the election year	<p>Party expense: Record the expense as an asset on the party's annual financial statement balance sheet, and carry the asset forward to the party's campaign return to expense it</p> <p>Specific candidate expense: Record the expense as an asset on the party's annual financial statement balance sheet, and carry the asset forward to the candidate's campaign return for the candidate's campaign to expense</p>
Incurred in the election year, prior to the Writ of Election	<p>Party expense: Report the expense on the party's campaign return</p> <p>Specific candidate expense: Record the expense on the party's campaign return as an expense on behalf of candidate (the candidate's campaign will report goods/services received and used)</p>

Forgiven and Unpaid Expense Debts

If, in the ordinary course of a commercial transaction, the party defaults on payment of an expense because of insufficient revenue, the commercial transaction is not automatically converted into a "contribution" by the vendor. Rather, the party is still liable for the expense and its liability would be dealt with through the ordinary procedures used by vendors (e.g., settlement, legal action, enforcement), which are not regulated by the EFCDA.

However, if a vendor forgives a debt in whole or in part, the result may be a contribution by the vendor to the party and it would be regulated by the EFCDA. If the vendor is a person ordinarily resident in Alberta, a contribution would be allowed within the contribution limit. **If the vendor is a prohibited person or entity, such as a union or a corporation, no amount of contribution would be allowed.**

Under the EFCDA, the responsibility of ensuring a contribution is not prohibited rests on the potential contributor.

Q: When does a failure by the party to pay an expense become a "contribution" by the vendor?

A: When, at the time the party incurs the expense, the intent between the party and vendor was not to receive payment but a contribution instead.

Example 1: A volunteer with a party has, as an individual, contributed the maximum annual amount allowed under the EFCDA. The volunteer also owns a computer hardware business. She instructs her staff to generate an invoice in the name of the computer hardware business and delivers a printer to the party. The invoice gets filed but is never paid, although the party has enough funds to cover payment. The records of the computer hardware business show the amount of the printer not as an account receivable, but as a write down item. This is an example of a forgiven expense that is likely a contribution, which is prohibited.



Where the vendor and the party fabricate an invoice for which there was never an intention to pay (see Example 1 above), then this could be an attempt to circumvent the rules. If the forgiveness of the debt is a prohibited contribution, the vendor would be in contravention of section 16 of the EFCDA, and the accepting party would be in contravention of section 35 of the EFCDA.

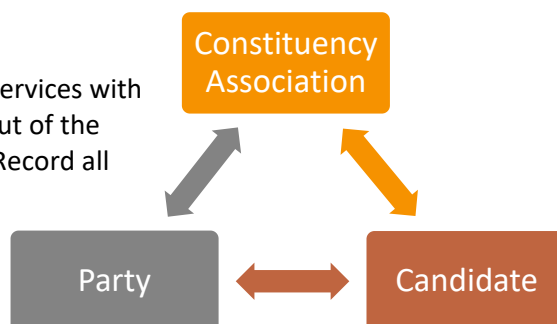
Example 2: A party enters a contract with a corporation to purchase a printer for the party. The corporation delivers the printer to the party accompanied by an invoice requiring payment by a certain date. By that date, due to a lack of funds, the party is insolvent and unable to pay the invoice. After some discussion, the corporation agrees to forgive the debt. This is an example of a forgiven expense that is likely not a contribution. The party will need to provide Elections Alberta with evidence of insufficient revenue and written documentation specifying the arrangement, including any court documents, to justify the write down of the expense not becoming a contribution.

The party that agreed to buy the real property, goods, or services, or the use of goods, services or real property should make all reasonable efforts to pay the vendor. Provided the transactions were made in good faith and without any intention to circumvent the rules in the EFCDA, the expenses should be considered payable and outstanding. Forgiveness by the vendor should only be an option when the inability to pay is due to circumstances beyond the party's control.

Transfers

Your party can transfer money, real property, goods, and services with your CA(s) any time. All transfers of money must be paid out of the issuing account and deposited into the recipient account. Record all transactions between your CA(s) and party as transfers.

Candidates can only receive transfers from your party or CA(s) during a campaign period, and during a deficit retirement period to help them clear outstanding campaign debt. Candidates can transfer surplus funds to your party or CA(s) from time to time after the campaign period.



Transfers are not contributions, but must be recorded by the party, CA, or candidate that issues or receives the transfer, including:

- date the transfer was issued or received,
- name of the party, CA, or candidate that issued or received the transfer, and
- amount or value of the transfer and, if applicable, a suitable description of the goods.

OFS is able to connect transfers between the party, CA(s), and candidate(s). When a transfer is entered in the financial statement in OFS, it will appear on the other financial statement that the transfer relates to. Only transfers that have taken place should be reported. Reporting future transfers as receivables or payables in OFS is discouraged.

Parties can only receive surplus funds transfers from leadership contestants and nomination contestants. Parties cannot transfer any money to leadership contestants or nomination contestants for their own use. Transfers of goods and services are allowed.

Financial Reports

Quarterly Reports

Your party must file quarterly reports via OFS to disclose contributions received in each quarter of the calendar year. The “received date” of a contribution is the date it is received by, and under the control of, the CFO. If no contributions are received in a quarter, a “nil” quarterly report is still required to be filed.

Only contribution revenue is included in quarterly reports – this includes both money and valued contributions, including any amounts of \$50 or less where the contributor has requested that their donation be considered a contribution. When a contributor’s aggregate contributions exceed \$250 at any point in the year, that contributor’s name and contributions are published on Elections Alberta’s financial disclosure website at efpublic.elections.ab.ca.

Quarterly reports are based on the date ranges shown in the table below, with the reports due 15 days after the end of each quarter. If the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday, the next business day will be considered the due date. The due date applies even if the report is nil.

Quarter	Dates Covered by Quarterly Report	Filing Deadline
1	January 1 to March 31	April 15
2	April 1 to June 30	July 15
3	July 1 to September 30	October 15
4	October 1 to December 31	January 15

OFS contains Quick Help guides with step-by-step instructions for entering contributions and submitting quarterly reports. For OFS questions and for technical support, contact Elections Alberta during business hours by phone, toll free, at 310.0000 then 780.427.7191, or by email at ofs@elections.ab.ca or finance@elections.ab.ca.

Financial Statements

Your party must file **annual financial statements** to disclose all revenue, expenses, assets, and liabilities of the party. If there has been no financial activity whatsoever, a “NIL” annual financial statement must still be filed.

Your party must also file **campaign returns** to report all campaign period revenue and expenses following election events. If there has been no campaign-related revenue or expenses, a “nil” campaign financial statement is still required to be filed.

All registered parties must file a campaign return for a general election. Only parties that run a candidate in a by-election must file a campaign return for that by-election. The components of the campaign return are:

- a financial statement,
- a contribution detail report per EFCDA section 32(4),
- a campaign expense report,
- an expense limit report per EFCDA section 41.2(4) for parties and 41.3(4) for candidates, and
- any supporting information and documents relating to the campaign return.



The deadline for filing the party’s annual financial statement is March 31st each year.

The deadline for filing the party’s campaign return following a general election or a by-election, is six months after Election Day.



Requirement for Professional Audit

Annual and campaign financial statements required to be filed by a party may be required to be audited by a person authorized by the *Regulated Accounting Profession Act*. A copy of the audited financial statement and auditor's report must accompany each financial statement by the filing deadline.

An audited financial statement is not required if the revenue and expenses for the reporting period do not each exceed \$25,000; however, a non-audited financial statement must still be filed by the filing deadline, including a nil return where applicable.^{x1}

Electronic Filing in OFS

Your CFO is responsible for entering the party's financial statements in OFS. The entire filing process is electronic. Keeping up-to-date records of all financial transactions enables smoother and faster completion of the financial statements. Electronic sign-off is required by both the party CFO and President. Other authorized party officials may be authorized to sign-off if the CFO or President is unavailable. Each person is provided with a unique user ID and password for system access.

Data entry of financial transactions and balances is completed through a series of user-friendly screens with "help" features. Contributions must be receipted in OFS to allow the totals to auto-populate in the financial statement. Bank account statements and other supporting documents must also be uploaded. Automated calculations and cross-referencing schedules within the financial statement bring significant benefits to both your party and Elections Alberta's financial analysts, who review each submission.

OFS Welcome Screen for Financial Statement Module

FINANCIAL REPORTING

2021 ANNUAL ARDEMOPARTY PARTY

WELCOME

ANNUAL REVENUE
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Summary

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Summary

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ATTACHMENTS
Attachments

FINALIZE
Review

AUDIT REVIEW
Audit Review

Welcome to OFS Financial Reporting:

Welcome to Elections Alberta's tool for completing your financial statement and submitting it electronically, to meet your annual financial reporting obligations under the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* (EFCDA).

Information that you key in here is automatically saved so the next time you login you can start where you left off. Make note of these navigation buttons and their function:

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Help Get information, tips and examples

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Done View your work before proceeding to the next screen

Cancel Cancel what you're doing

Failure to File

Failure to file any of your party's financial reports with Elections Alberta by the filing deadline will result in an **automatic late filing fee of \$500** for each missed filing.



Both the party and the party's CFO are jointly liable for payment of the fee. If the late fee is not paid within 30 days after the filing deadline, a notice may be filed with the clerk of the Court of King's Bench. On being filed, the notice will have the same force and effect and may be enforced as if it were a judgment of the Court.

Your party also has 30 days to file any outstanding financial statement, or Elections Alberta may cancel the registration of your party. The issue will be referred to the Election Commissioner for investigation, where further administrative penalties may be imposed on the party and the party's CFO.



4 Glossary

This section provides definitions for common terms in the EFCDA that may be used in this Guide. Terms are listed in alphabetical order.

Term	Definition
By-election	An election other than a general election that is held in an electoral division to vote for a new member of the Legislative Assembly. A by-election can be triggered when a member resigns, becomes disqualified, dies, is recalled through a recall vote, etc. ^{xli}
Calendar Year	January 1 st to December 31 st
Campaign Expense	Any expense incurred (whether paid or unpaid), or non-monetary contribution received, by a party or candidate that is used for their promotion or to oppose others during a campaign period, excluding the election period. ^{xlii} A campaign expense includes: the production and distribution of advertising or promotional material in all formats and by all means; payment for a person's services as a chief financial officer or in any other capacity; meeting, office, event costs; conduct of election or other surveys or research, etc. Campaign expenses are not subject to spending limits.
Campaign Period	The period starting on the day a writ is issued for an election and ending 2 months after Election Day. Applies to parties and candidates. ^{xliii}
Candidate	A person who seeks to be elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly, who has been endorsed by a party or who runs as an independent. ^{xliv}
Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)	An independent, non-partisan officer of the Legislative Assembly, responsible for administering provincial elections, by-elections and referenda.
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	An individual appointed to be responsible for managing the finances of a political participant. Every political participant must appoint a CFO.



Term	Definition
Constituency Association (CA)	<p>A volunteer-run organization endorsed by a political party, or by an Independent member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), to support political activities on their behalf such as fundraising and membership drives. A party may register up to 87 CAs in Alberta—one per electoral division. An Independent Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) may register only one CA, in the MLA's electoral division.^{xlv}</p> <p>Note: CAs are not the same as MLA Constituency Offices, as their purposes are different. CAs are regulated by Elections Alberta, whereas MLA offices are regulated by the Legislative Assembly.</p>
Election Day	The day set for voting at an election. ^{xlvi}
Election Expense	<p>Any expense incurred (whether paid or unpaid), or non-monetary contribution received, by a party or candidate that is used for their promotion or to oppose others during an election period.^{xlvii}</p> <p>An election expense includes: the production and distribution of advertising or promotional material in all formats and by all means; payment for a person's services as a chief financial officer or in any other capacity; meeting, office, event costs; conduct of election or other surveys or research, etc. Election expenses are subject to spending limits.</p>
Election Period	<p>By-election: The period starting on the day a writ is issued to hold a by-election in an electoral division and ending at the end of Election Day.</p> <p>General election: The period starting on the day the writs are issued to hold a general election in all electoral divisions, and ending at the end of Election Day.</p>
Electoral Division (ED)	A geographic area in Alberta established under the <i>Electoral Divisions Act</i> . In Alberta there are currently 87 provincial electoral divisions. Other terms such as "ridings" or "districts" may be used incorrectly to refer to electoral divisions, as these can come from other provinces or jurisdictions. ^{xlviii}
Eligible Contributor	A person who is ordinarily resident in Alberta. ^{xlix}
General Election	An election to vote for new members of the Legislative Assembly in all electoral divisions. ⁱ



Term	Definition
Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA)	A person elected to represent the people in an electoral division in Alberta
Nomination Contest	A process used by a party or constituency association to select a person for endorsement as their official candidate in an electoral division.
Nomination Contestant	A person who seeks to be endorsed as the official candidate for a party in an electoral division.
Online Financial System (OFS)	Elections Alberta's secure online financial reporting system used by political participants to report details of their activities.
Political Party	An organization whose primary purpose is to participate in public affairs by endorsing one or more of its members as candidates and supporting their election. ^{li}
Writ of Election	A Writ of Election is issued by the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to an order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, to initiate an election in an electoral division.



i EFCDA s. 6
ii EFCDA s. 7(2.01)-(2.02)
iii EFCDA s. 7(4)-7(5)
iv EFCDA s. 7(3.1)-(5)
v EFCDA s. 10(1)(a)
vi EFCDA ss. 10(3), 10(5)
vii EFCDA s. 10(6)
viii EFCDA ss. 10(7), 10(9)
ix EFCDA s. 10(11)
x EFCDA s. 29(1)
xi EFCDA s. 7(4)
xii EFCDA s. 30
xiii EFCDA s. 10.1
xiv EFCDA ss. 16, 1(1)(e)
xv EFCDA ss. 13(2), 33
xvi EFCDA s. 22(1)
xvii EFCDA s. 22(2)
xviii EFCDA s. 7(1)
xix EFCDA s. 32(2)
xx EFCDA s. 32(4.01)
xxi EFCDA s. 30(2)
xxii EFCDA ss. 1(1)(l), 1(1)(1.01), 16, 17, 19, 21.1, 34, 35, 36
xxiii EFCDA ss. 41.42, 44.11
xxiv EFCDA s. 23
xxv EFCDA s. 23(3)(a)
xxvi EFCDA s. 23(3)(b)
xxvii EFCDA s. 23(4)
xxviii EFCDA ss. 4(1)(e), 11, 32
xxix EFCDA s. 40(1)
xxx EFCDA s. 41(2)-(4)
xxxi EFCDA ss. 41(5), 41(7)
xxxii EFCDA s. 41.2(3)
xxxiii EFCDA s. 48.1(1)
xxxiv EFCDA s. 41.42
xxxv EFCDA ss. 41.1(1)(a), 41.1(3)
xxxvi EFCDA ss. 1.1(1)(a), 1.1(3)
xxxvii EFCDA s. 41.2(3)
xxxviii EFCDA s. 41.1(2)
xxxix EFCDA s. 41.3(3)(a)
xl EFCDA ss. 1(1)(a.02), 42(1.1), 43(7)
xli EFCDA s. 1(1)(a.1)
xlii EFCDA s. 1.1(1)(a)
xliii EFCDA s. 1(1)(b)
xliv EFCDA s. 1(1)(c)(i)
xlv EFCDA s. 1(1)(d)
xlvi EFCDA s. 1(1)(f.02)
xlvii EFCDA s. 41.1(1)(a)
xlviii Election Act s. 1(1)(k)
xlix EFCDA s. 16
l Election Act s. 1(1)(n)
li EFCDA s. 1(1)(j.1)





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