



Rules you must follow before you are nominated in the 2026 Ontario Municipal Election

1. You cannot campaign until after you file your nomination

You are not allowed to campaign before you officially submit your nomination papers. This means you cannot:

- Put up signs
- Hand out flyers or brochures
- Fundraise or accept donations
- Spend money on campaign activities
- Advertise or introduce yourself as a candidate
- Publicly say you are “running” in an official way

You can privately explore the idea of running, talk to supporters, and do personal planning — but nothing that looks like campaigning.

2. Make sure you are eligible to run

On the day you file your nomination, you must:

- Be a Canadian citizen
- Be at least 18 years old
- Live in the municipality or own/lease property there (or be the spouse of someone who does)
- Not be disqualified under the Municipal Elections Act or any other law

If you don't meet the requirements on nomination day, you cannot run.

3. Municipal employees must take leave before being nominated

If you work for the municipality or certain local boards, you **must take an unpaid leave of absence before you file your nomination.**

4. You cannot accept donations or spend any money before nomination

Before you file your papers:

- × You cannot accept financial contributions
- × You cannot spend money on a campaign

After nomination, before spending or receiving money:

- ✓ You must open a campaign bank account, advise the city clerk your account number
- ✓ You can only do this **after** filing your nomination

5. You may prepare privately, but not act like a candidate

Before you are officially nominated, you can:

- Research issues
- Attend meetings as a resident
- Build personal connections
- Learn about the role
- Attend municipal information sessions

But you **cannot** do anything that signals you are already a candidate.

6. Prepare your paperwork (but don't submit early)

You can get ready by preparing:

- Your ID
- Your 25 endorsement signatures
- Your financial tracking tools
- Your campaign planning materials

You can only submit nomination papers **after May 1, 2026.**

7. Attend candidate information sessions

Municipalities, AMO, and the Ministry host sessions that explain:

- Legal responsibilities
- Campaign rules
- Finances
- What the role involves

These sessions are educational — **they do not count as campaigning**

For additional information, go to these sites:

- [Municipal elections | ontario.ca](#)
- [Election Resources: Supporting your Run for Municipal Office in 2026 | AMO](#)